

■ The Ceaseless Cycle of Martyrdom...

This is how the world has become - shallow and meaningless, just like faces without features and hands without fingerprints!

Why?

We have mastered the arts of vulgarity, debasement, and falsehoods. Words have lost their true meanings; meanings have lost their goals, goals have lost their paths, and paths have lost their way to spiritual enlightenment.

We flounder in man-made falsehoods; falsehoods that we believe and trade with our blood and the blood of our children, as if they were goods.

What possesses us to behave so despicably?

Every day, we carry coffins, brandish pictures of the deceased, wave banners, defend dogmas and causes, and demand for even more martyrs.

This is a state of madness!

Who dares allege and claim that these obscure deaths do not cause the very wombs from which these martyrs were born to weep?

Are these deaths truly obscure?

Yes.

If not, then let someone step forward and tell us exactly what a truly sacred cause is, and why it is worth dying for. Nothing in life is sacred anymore.

True martyrdom is to accept to die for a sacred cause and not to die for petty monetary gains like mercenaries do.

Anything other than dying for a sacred cause would be akin to humoring the family of the deceased by calling him a 'martyr,' offering them financial compensation, and consoling them with empty words!

Ultimately, life is for living!

NDU Spirit

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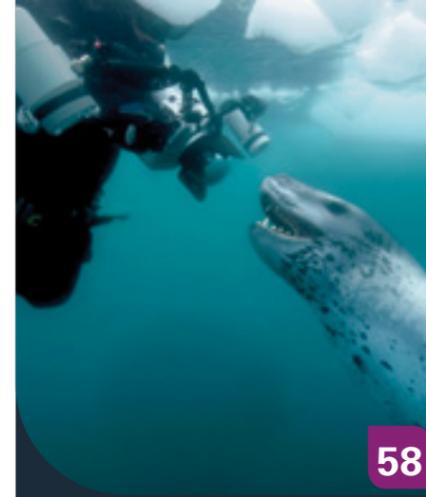
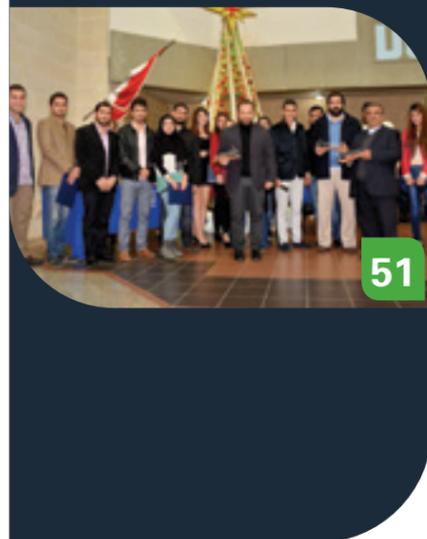
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“ALREADY, NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES POP UP PRACTICALLY EVERY DAY IN ALL SORTS OF ORGANIZATIONS, AND GRASPING THESE NEW OPPORTUNITIES DEMANDS AN ABILITY TO THINK CREATIVELY. INSIGHTFUL LEADERS NOW RECOGNIZE THAT A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION PREPARES GRADUATES TO THINK MORE BROADLY, TO CONCEPTUALIZE AT A MULTIDISCIPLINARY LEVEL THAT’S MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE INCREASINGLY BROAD ISSUES CONFRONTING PEOPLE IN ALL WALKS OF LIFE.”

HERMAN, R. E. "THE CASE FOR LIBERAL ARTS". THE FUTURIST, JULY-AUGUST 2000.



PROFESSIONAL DEGREES - AN EVOLVING STRATEGY

Technology and social innovations have created new challenges on several fronts, the fact which requires new educational approaches, new thinking, and certainly new partnerships. Universities, driven by the advent of the knowledge based society, cannot risk navigating alone without the support of industry and the community at large. Central to this strategy is the sharing of experience between the university where leaders of new generations are nurtured and industry where knowledge is explored and tested.

Such a reality has not put us off our stride while enhancing and developing our educational programs, infrastructure, and services across our three campuses. Thus far, we have decided to use effective strategic planning as a measure to articulate where we are heading and the actions needed to ensure strong, sustainable, and balanced growth in the face of rapidly changing technology. Accordingly, lots of efforts have been exerted to further solidify our standing. A new *Strategic Plan 2015-2020* has been formulated and adopted, taking into consideration the concerns of the contemporary society in all its facets. The new *Plan* reveals quite explicitly the strategic initiatives, which are necessary to connect Notre-Dame University Louaize (NDU) to industry without compromising the University’s identity and integrity.

In the past couple of years, our curricula have been aligned more consistently to the new challenges and ever-changing environment. A good balance between theory and practice has been improved in those programs leading to professional degrees; applied research, involving students, has been fostered; sharing professional experience with experts from industry has been felt; new facilities (labs, ateliers, studios, etc.) have been set up and old ones updated; students’ orientation and career services have been enhanced. There remains a significant scope for NDU to further consolidate its relationships with local, regional, and international industry. The move toward establishing and solidifying ‘advisory boards’ within the different Faculties goes in this direction. Such initiative is necessary for the continuous improvement of the programs offered.

On the other hand, the most noteworthy element when developing those strategies and actions is the focus on values. As academics, our main concern lies, not only on immediate, short-term interests, skills, or knowledge spheres but also on the long-term responsibility to promote and protect the transferrable and fundamental values that are attributed to them.

I invite you to read this issue of the *NDU Spirit*, which features a variety of events and activities that shed light on NDU’s endeavor to achieve distinction at all levels.

Father Walid Moussa O.M.M.
President



ACADEMIC AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

CENTER FOR APPLIED RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

Brown Bag Series

The Brown Bag (BB) Series opened at the Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) Main Campus with two lunch sessions each month. One session focuses on approaches to learning and teaching, a theme under the "Program for Learning and Teaching Excellence." The second session focuses on approaches to research across the disciplines at NDU. Full-time and part-time NDU faculty shared their own challenges, successes, and approaches. A few readings were also handed out and discussed to provide conceptual frameworks to think about.

During the learning and teaching BB session, "Course Design and Development," the group discussed ways of reading and developing their syllabi. Attendees across the faculties challenged and questioned approaches to reviewing the course objectives and learning outcomes. In particular, discussions focused on how we use concepts of higher-level thinking without seeing them as levels of progression and the alignment between learning outcomes and classroom pedagogies. The session on "Active Learning" examined how we give feedback and how students use this feedback in subsequent work. This notion of active learning is drawn from Dennison and Kirk's (1990) cycle of Do, Review, Learn, and Apply. Throughout the lunch session, instructors revealed various understandings of active learning and prompted a discussion on the quality of feedback provided. We then explored Hattie and Timperley's (2007) four types of



feedback: Task, process, self-regulation, and self. On "Collaborative Learning," the group reflected on practices that encouraged students to draw on each other's understandings and work so that their end product was original. Many shared examples on how their students worked together. One that stood out was when students compared and contrasted different translations to a concept studied in class.

In the Brown Bag sessions on approaches to research, "Hot Topics and Grants" explored the first stages of conceptualizing a study with attendees sharing their own journeys of finding their research questions. Presenting and networking at conferences were some of the main sites of developing timely research topics. Reflections opened up conversations on the roles of governments and donors in setting the research agendas. At the "Literature Review" session, discussions focused on four main points: (1) purposes of writing a literature review, (2) fields of literature to review, (3) elements to consider, and (4) approaches to presenting the review. In addition to enhancing the quality of the research study, literature reviews were also seen as fundamental to continuously updating concepts and readings for the courses. When sharing experiences or plans to gather information through interviews, we invited Eric Van Ommering to join the session on "Interviews and Conversations." Eric is in the final writing up stages of his doctorate on education and reflected on much of his ethnographic work in a number of schools in Lebanon over the course of two years. Probing, ethics, and observations emerged as critical dimensions to learning more about a phenomenon through conversations.

The Brown Bag Series is an initiative aimed at creating a space for informal and informed conversations about our approaches to improving classroom learning and producing high quality research. With small groups meeting during its first year, we may consider organizing multiple sessions if numbers grow during the 2015-16 academic year. Do follow the session summaries and resources shared on the CARE webpage.



LEBANON DIALOGUE INITIATIVE

Latin-American and Caribbean Ambassadors

The Lebanon Dialogue Initiative (LDI) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) introduced on Wednesday, June 25, 2014, Latin-American and Caribbean Ambassadors to Lebanon as a Land of Dialogue Among Civilizations and Cultures.

Representing both NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa and the Vice-President of the Office of Public Affairs and Communications Mr. Souheil Matar, Dr. Nada Saad, Director of the Public Relations Office opened the floor at the NDU PR Conference Room with a warm welcome note. Dr. Saad mentioned said, "Housing this Initiative at NDU is definitely another manifestation of how determined NDU is on expanding its role beyond its academic higher education activity. We, at NDU, wish to not only support dialogue initiatives but also to be part of productive exchange and cooperative relations with local and international entities, and higher education institutions."

Dr. Edward Alam, Executing Officer of the LDI, began with a few introductory remarks, and then Dr. Guita Hourani, Campaign Director of the LDI, explained how the petition and endorsement letters are gaining increasing support worldwide. The discussion also attempted to clarify how the Ambassadors can help LDI achieve its ultimate goal of gaining the United Nations recognition of Lebanon as a Land of Dialogue among Civilizations and Cultures, and the establishment a Center for this in Lebanon. After that, Dr. Pierre Gedeon, Director of the International Office, said a few words of thanks before they all went to the VIP lunch at the NDU restaurant.

The gathering was fruitful, and the ambassadors promised to promote Lebanon as a land of peace, culture and civilization in their respective countries, embassies, and also during events. They also noted that they looked forward to participate in future LDI events.



Mixed Feelings

October 22 - 29, 2014

At the suggestion of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Ms. Nisreen Kaj approached Lebanon Dialogue Initiative (LDI) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), concerning a photography exhibition titled, "Mixed Feelings," which was presented in six locations around Lebanon, including the American University of Beirut (AUB). This event engaged 150 students and professors in a dialogue on Racism and 'Othering' in Lebanon from a Lebanese Perspective among Dr. Elie el-Hindy, Ms. Noor Baalbaki, Ms. Marta Bogdanska, and Dr. Eugene Sensenig Dabbous, moderated by Ms. Nisreen Kaj and sponsored by the Heinrich Boell Stiftung, Middle East.

The exhibition promoted dialogue and understanding between Lebanese and Lebanese of mixed marriages (Lebanese-African, Lebanese-Asian, etc.) living in Lebanon. NDU's distinguished faculties, offices, centers, and clubs, namely the Faculties of Architecture, Art and Design (FAAD); Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS); and the Faculty of Humanities (FH), along with the Public Relations Office, the Students Affairs Office, the Human Rights Club, and the Dialogue Club, all strongly welcomed the exhibition and played a key role in making the discussions valuable and engaging.



Rotary Clubs Organize Conference-Dinner to Raise Awareness of the LDI

The Rotary Clubs of Baabda, Beirut Metropolitan, and Sahel-Metn organized a conference-dinner themed, "Lebanon Dialogue Initiative (LDI)," on the evening of Tuesday, November 25, 2014, at Le Maillon restaurant, Beirut. Mr. Henry Aoun, Baabda Rotary Club President, opened the floor with a welcome notes, followed by a few welcome notes by Mr. Rida Asmar, Beirut Metropolitan Rotary Club President. Mr. Joe Hatem, former Baabda Rotary Club President, then introduced the current and upcoming Rotary projects to the audience and invited the participants to enjoy the delicious meals accompanied by the beautiful musical atmosphere, which made this event a special, friendly, and professional milieu.

This event was exceptional in that Dr. Edward Alam, Professor and Executing Officer of the LDI and Dr. Guita Hourani, International Campaign Director, spoke in the name of Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) about this Initiative. More than 170 Rotarians participated in this event and many were interested in knowing more about it, and promised to sign the petition and share it with their friends, families, and professional networks on the following link: <http://chn.ge/1nl7fv4>

Memorandum of Understanding Between BMA and NDU



Beirut Marathon Association's first visit to NDU.



Mrs. May el-Khalil and the BMA team visiting the CRVP.



Recognition of NDU as a pioneer for Peace and Social Responsibility.



Fr. Walid Moussa, NDU President, and Mrs. May el-Khalil, BMA President, signing the MOU between BMA and NDU at the President's Office.



Peace – Love – RUN for a CAUSE

Nov. 9, 2014

If you would like to know more about the LDI activities and upcoming events, please visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LebanonDialogueInitiative>

Running the Good Race

The Faculty of Humanities (FH), the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (CRVP), and the Lebanon Dialogue Initiative (LDI) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), in collaboration with the Beirut Marathon Association (BMA), organized a dialogue session titled, *“Running the Good Race, A Dialogue in Three Voices: Haile Gebreselassie, May el-Khalil, and Maxime Chaya,”* in the presence of the Sports Legend Haile Gebreselassie, Ms. May el-Khalil, and Maxime Chaya. Dr. Edward J. Alam, Director of the CRVP and Executing Officer of LDI, moderated the session.



After brief welcome speeches delivered by Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communications Mr. Suheil Matar and NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa, the event began with screening of three videos, highlighting the achievements of the three highly distinguished guests. Following the screening, Dr. Edward Alam presented his introduction, placing the event in the proper context and ended it by posing two questions to the speakers who then opened the floor for discussion among NDU professors and students, especially the Sports Education students.



In his introduction, Dr. Alam said, “It is my distinct pleasure to introduce our event this evening ... It comes as one of many activities in a series of events that fall under an exciting and dynamic NDU Initiative titled, ‘Lebanon Dialogue Initiative,’ a civil society driven movement, which calls upon the United Nations to recognize Lebanon as a Land of Dialogue among Civilizations and Cultures. By such international recognition, we believe that Lebanon will be able to secure the international solidarity it needs to recover its historic vocation—a vocation that Lebanon somehow still manages, if only in fits and starts, to be faithful to. Events such as these, and the previous activities under the auspices of NDU’s Lebanese Dialogue Initiative, events at NDU like the Conversation with Robert Fisk in 2013, or the International Colloquium with Nobel Prize winner Wole Soyinka in 2014, or events abroad like the International Conference in Sao Paulo, Brazil, last year on Lebanon’s role in the Dialogue of Civilizations, which was patronized by some of Brazil’s highest ranking officials. These events, and many like them, though only drops in an ocean of darkness, are the repeated

bursts of light that make all the difference. And the presence of every single individual here this evening is one precious drop in that ocean of light sustaining Lebanon and helping it to hold on to this most critical historic vocation ... Soon, for the first time in the region since 1948, a synagogue will be opened for worship in the district of Wadi Abu Jamil, the traditional Lebanese Jewish neighborhood that had been abandoned during the war. These drops in the ocean, once again, make all the difference in helping Lebanon to recover its historic vocation of promoting dialogue and genuine coexistence among people of different religious and ethnic traditions. This evening’s event... I would like to believe is one such small event. In two days, tens of thousands of Lebanese and many others from all around the world who believe in Lebanon will descend upon Beirut, not just to run a Marathon, but to make a statement, and three prominent voices to make that statement are with us this evening, May el-Khalil, and Maxime Chaya, two exceptional human beings that need no introduction here... But what makes this evening even more significant is that we have the honor of also listening in person to an international sports legend, Mr. Haile Gebreselassie, who, through his global fame, has been helping his own native country of Ethiopia to face their own challenges.”



The evening was memorable given its fruitful discussions, questions, and comments, and its crowning moment when the Running Club students of Champville School presented Gebreselassie with an artistic portrait of himself. The astounding gift delighted Gebreselassie.

Finally, the Dean of the FH Dr. Kamal Abou Chedid completed the conversation with a few concluding remarks, thanking the accomplished guests and all those who participated in making the event a resounding success. The video of the event can be found at the CRVP office at NDU.



PASTORAL WORK

Congregation of the Rosary Spiritual Retreat
- FADIA EL-HAGE



The Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) Spiritual Retreat for spring 2015 took place on March 14 at the Rosary Sisters Convent, Beit Mery.

Following morning prayers, Fr. Fadi Bou Chebl, University Chaplain General at NDU, introduced Sister Ghada Nehme, Head of the Office of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, who had prepared a PowerPoint presentation to explain to us how Mother Marie Alphonsine began the Congregation of the Rosary.

Sultanah Maria Ghattas was born in Jerusalem on October 4, 1843. At the age of 14, in 1858, she joined the Congregation of St. Joseph of the Apparition. She was favored with several apparitions in 1874, of Our Lady who revealed to Mother Alphonsine Her desire to begin the Congregation of the Rosary Sisters, the first local religious community in the Holy Land. The Virgin Mary appointed Fr. Joseph Tannous as her director to administer the Congregation of the Holy Rosary.

In 1880, the new Congregation of the Holy Rosary started, and Fr. Tannous administered it during those critical times. On October 6, 1883, she joined and received the Habit of the Rosary Congregation from the Patriarchal Vicar, together with nice sisters, Mother Alphonsine was admitted to vocation and pronounced her three vows in a ceremony presided by the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. The vows are: Chastity; Poverty, and Obedience.

The objectives of the Congregation are to serve the public through the development of schools and cultural centers; to establish and develop hospitals; and to open centers for teaching the tailoring and needlework.

In July 1885, Mother Alphonsine was assigned to Jaffa in Galilee, where she performed her first miracle on a young girl who had fallen into a deep well filled with water. The only thing that Mother Alphonsine could do was to pray her large Rosary, invoke Our Lady to save the girl, and throw the Rosary into the well. Finally, the girl climbed out safely and said that she saw a light and a ladder shaped like a Rosary to help find her way out.

In 1886, Mother Alphonsine was sent to a new foundation in Beit Sahour (the Shepherds' Village) where, she was expected to open a school. In 1887, she left Beit Sahour for Salt, the first mission in Jordan. Later on, she was sent to Nablus, but due to health reasons, she was instead sent to Mother House in Jerusalem to rest. In 1892, she was sent to Nazareth to assist Fr. Tannous during his illness and until the time of his death.

In 1893, Mother Alphonsine established in Bethlehem a workshop to support poor girls. She remained for 15 years in Bethlehem, full of enthusiasm, and in 1909, was recalled to the Mother House in Jerusalem where she remained until 1917, and in-charge of founding an orphanage in Ain-Karem. There she returned to her life of praying the Rosary, fulfilling Our Lady's wish. She founded Confraternities and Associations and promoted the devotion to Our Lady through the prayer of the Rosary.

On March 25, 1927, she breathed her last, while praying the Rosary, and was left to Divine Providence. She was the apostle of hope and trust in God and Our Lady, and the apostle of the Rosary. She firmly believed and stated Our Lady's words, "The Rosary is your treasure."

In addition, the Rosary Congregation was established to serve in the Middle East. It grew and prospered and several branches were established in Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, and Sharjah. A branch was also established in Rome.

His Holiness, John Paul II, proclaimed her Venerable in 1995, and in 2009, she was beatified in Nazareth. Pope Francis will announce her saint on May 17, 2015, along with three other nuns from different Orders.

Following this inspiring subject, we had a coffee break, and then Fr. Bou Chebl explained to us more about the spirituality of the Blessed Marie Alphonsine, and how she followed the example of Jesus Christ, where her spirituality stems from the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the permanent inner peace and joy. She was eager to meet the Lord, "And sought your face, O Lord." She followed Jesus Christ with her strong faith and kept in mind his words, "I AM the way, the right and the life". She was desperate to unite with the Lord, the Creator, and her love to God gave her the inner peace, which reflected to love all creatures and human beings.

Mother Alphonsine used to be in the Holy Mass on a daily basis, and when receiving the Holy Eucharist, a strong light used to appear from thin air and strike her heart, and she could not resist it. She stayed at St. Joseph Congregation for 23 years, and learned from St. Joseph the acts of sacred quietness, and listening to her Lord. Her sister Joanna, was the Mother Superior at the Convent, but did not know that the Virgin Mary was revealing Herself to her sister. Mother Alphonsine had wisdom, calmness and spiritual clearness, and learned modesty and chastity from the Virgin Mary. She used to say, "We buy Heaven by keeping quiet."

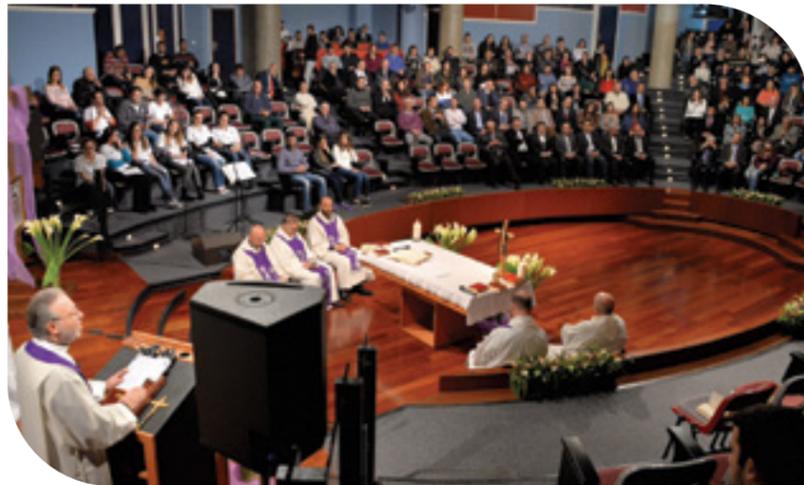
Finally, we celebrated Holy Mass at noontime with Fr. George Nassif, Fadi Bou Chebl, and Fr. Walid Nassif. After the Mass, we had a delicious lunch at the Convent, thanking the Lord for all his graces.



Holy Week Mass

On April 1, 2015, NDU celebrated Holy Mass on the occasion of the Holy Week before Easter. Before Mass, which started at around 12:30 p.m., a short documentary was screened and focused on Pastoral Work members and how each student joined it. Six priests of the Maronite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary were present. Fr. Khalil Rahme presided over the Mass and read the Gospel of Luke (10:25-37). In this part of the Holy Bible, Jesus Christ teaches us to love one another and show mercy just as he had loved us and had shown us mercy. When Mass ended, everyone went back to complete the day's work before starting the Easter vacation.

Christ is risen! Hallelujah!



FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE, ART, AND DESIGN - MUSIC DEPARTMENT

First Master's Degree Thesis Defense at the Department of Music

The Department of Music at the Faculty of Architecture, Art and Design, Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), held on Monday, March 23, 2015, its first Master's degree thesis defense. Mr. Walid Bou-Serhal presented a thesis titled, "*Al-'UD: Origin, Form of the Instrument, Development and Role in the History of Arabic Music Theory.*"

The presentation compared different techniques among Oud players and offered some analysis, and traced the instrument's evolution and its place in the contemporary world of music. The thesis also revealed a gap between the old theories, philology, and modern practices.

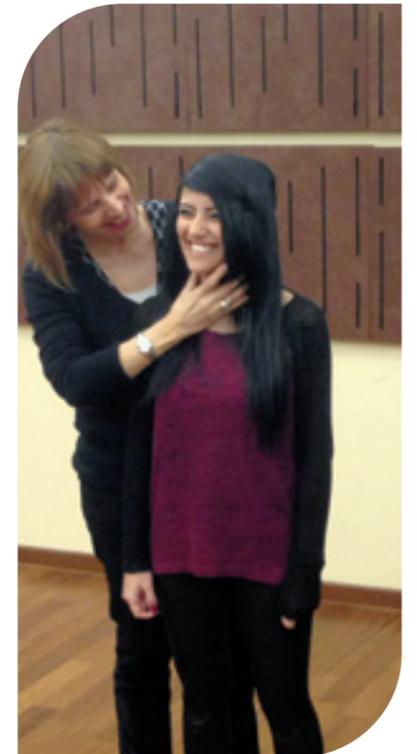
Department of Music Students Benefit Again from Alexander Technique Training

The Department of Music at the Faculty of Architecture, Art and Design (FAAD), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), benefited on Wednesday, February 25, 2015, from a second unique workshop held at the Main Camus with acclaimed instructor Ms. Agnes De Brunhoff.

The Alexander Technique teaches students how to stop using unnecessary levels of muscular and mental tension during their everyday activities by teaching them unique techniques in improving the way they use the body's support system and applying these techniques to help them attain excellent performances and augment their abilities while playing instruments.

Frederick Matthias Alexander, born in Tasmania in 1869, developed the Alexander Technique in the 1890s. Alexander's promising career as a young actor was threatened by recurring vocal problems. He sought the help of doctors, but to no avail. Since there was no clear medical cause for his problem, Alexander thought he might be doing something wrong when reciting, leading him to strain or "misuse" his vocal organs... He studied with music students a correlation between objective postural changes and performance then invented a technique based on students improving physically both in their singing, playing musical instruments and acting abilities...

The highly successful workshop was open to all NDU students.



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Advertising and Marketing Students at NDU Graduate with IAA Diploma

Advertising and Marketing major students at the Faculty of Humanities (FH) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) further celebrated their graduation upon receiving a diploma from the International Association of Advertising (IAA).

Attending the recent event were the President of the IAA Mr. Fares Bou Hamad; the President of IAA Beirut Chapter Mr. Joe Ayache; and the President of NDU Fr. Walid Moussa.

Dr. Kamal Abou Chedid, Dean of the FH, opened the floor with a welcome address. In it, he said, "The advertising program at NDU is among the programmatic accredited by the IAA. Quality assurance and accreditation, as one of its multifarious forms, are part of the NDU culture that strives for continuous improvement at all levels. In fact, today's event is coterminous with the NDU strategy to pursue both institutional and programmatic accreditation, as part of the University's commitment to quality assurance and institution-wide systematic self-study essential to sustainable reform."

Mr. Melhem Rechdan, Instructor and Advisor of the Advertising Club at NDU, said, "Some of our graduates are working at ad agencies, media agencies or media buying units, in media houses, in marketing departments, in production houses, and in third party ad serving companies... NDU has the strongest network in the marketing communications field."

For his part, Mr. Ayach highlighted the 20 years of close collaboration with NDU, and the hard work it took to acquire "this accreditation in Lebanon," and he added that the IAA is "extremely proud that NDU is the recipient."

Mr. Hamad congratulated the students on their achievement, and he invited them to develop their strengths and skills. Mr. Hamad spoke from the vantage point of having first-hand knowledge of their strengths and skills given that he led the workshop, which took place in Dubai (2013-2014), with the participation of NDU students.

In closing, Mr. Souheil Matar, NDU Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communication, said that despite the volatile situation in Lebanon, no one can take away from the beauty, talent, and love represented in this event.

Certificates were then distributed to students.

Finally, as a token of thanks for inviting NDU students to the Dubai workshop, NDU representatives awarded Mr. Ayach and Mr. Hamad each a trophy.



UNESCO World Radio Day 2015: A Youth Revolution - VERONICA AKOURY

Every time a new medium is born, all that comes before it does not fade, but adapts instead. This is why, radio, print, television, etc. are still used and have an international day that we observe each year.

Many people believe that the Italian physicist Guglielmo Marconi invented the radio; however, this is a common mistake. Serbian physicist and mechanical engineer Nikola Tesla was behind this invention. UNESCO's World Radio Day was born based upon a suggestion made by the Spanish government, which pushed the general conference of UNESCO to declare a World Radio Day in 2011, to help spread awareness among the public and the media on the importance of the radio.

World Radio Day also aims to encourage decision-makers to support radio stations and the provision of information through them, as well as to strengthen networks and international cooperation between those responsible for radio broadcasting. The first World Radio Day was celebrated on February 13, 2012, which was also the day when the United Nations launched their radio station in 1946. In 2012, the United Nations General Assembly voted to approve the World Radio Day as an International Day at the United Nations, making it a main international celebration throughout the following years.

UNESCO, Lebanon, celebrated this day this year, under the theme, "Youth and Radio" in order to involve youth, not only as listeners, but as producers and broadcasters as well. UNESCO, Lebanon, decided to observe the event by collaborating with Notre

Dame University-Louaize (NDU) and the *Voice of Lebanon (VDL 93.3 FM)* to produce a unique radio show on Friday, February 13, 2015, at 12:30 p.m. This event could not have been possible without the assistance of the Community Service Office (CSO) at NDU, as well as the supportive teams at both UNESCO and VDL.

Four novice students, most of whom do not have any experience or background in radio programming and producing, produced the segment. They worked on interesting and diverse subjects that are currently absent from the radio scene today. They also discussed issues that they, as youths, are facing in their everyday lives. "For this reason, we came to occupy the *Voice of Lebanon* radio station," said Mirella Bou Khalil, a Journalism student at NDU. Alongside fellow NDU peers, the always charming Roland el-Khoury, an Engineering student, the always hilarious Jasmin Lilian Diab, a graduate student of International Law, and the poised Veronica Akoury a Journalism student. VDL's Mr. Chady Akkad directed the segment.



(from left) Mr. Roland el-Khoury, Ms. Mirella Bou Khalil, Ms. Veronica Akoury, and Ms. Jasmin Lilian Diab at VDL, Dbayeh (2015)

The students only had six days to work on the segment's content. In this short period, they put in a lot of energy and effort to impress their listeners. What they did was new to the public, and the students considered it a revolution; a revolution that would break the traditional ways of broadcasting, change the image of the broadcasters, and change the way content is delivered. They also proved that the presence of the youth is necessary in the media field, especially radio.

Although Lebanese youth constitute around 40% of the total population, radio fails most of the time in transmitting their voices and opinions about different issues in society. "This year UNESCO's focus was on the importance of programs for youth, and by the youth," said Mr. George Awad, Manager of the Communication and Media unit at UNESCO, Lebanon. Mr. Awad added, "This program is a perfect opportunity for young people in Lebanon to have a voice and express their views freely."

Chady Maalouf, Director of Programs at VDL, also commented on this project, saying that it is “part of the message that stations aim to deliver.” He continued, “The station got used to supporting new ideas and projects in different areas... World Radio Day directly affects our station, and this is the third year in a row that we observe it... We are delighted to collaborate with NDU students, who collectively succeeded to express their visions and ideas on the radio.”

The radio is considered one of the most available, widespread, and easy to access mediums: It is an inexpensive media tool and does not require complex technology skills. It also affects decision-makers and officials, rural communities, and marginalized groups. While there is a lack of variety of programs that focus on concerns and interests of the youth, this collaboration serves to emphasize the responsibility of the media and universities toward Lebanese citizens in general and students in particular.

Some studies indicate that what increases the limitation of youth participation in radio are the exhaustive efforts and low income. On the other hand, a study published by Mindshare Foundation in 2014, discussed the orientations of media globally. Young people aged between 18 and 24 years old prefer listening to the radio; however, 26% of them would rather listen to the radio through modern ways such as mobile applications or websites, and women favor the radio more than men do. “This might not be the case in Lebanon,” says Journalism Instructor at NDU, Ms. Rouba el-Helou. She said, “The absence of any census of the quality of viewing of programs and how the media is consumed pushes us to rely on what the West provides us, and this is not totally negative or positive. The work that unprofessional students in the media field have presented is proof that there is need to put foundations of an ‘educational-media strategy,’ which embodies all the categories of society. This experience, no matter how modest it was, was good proof that the new generation understands individual planning more than we do.”

“THIS EXPERIENCE, NO MATTER HOW MODEST IT WAS, WAS GOOD PROOF THAT THE NEW GENERATION UNDERSTANDS INDIVIDUAL PLANNING MORE THAN WE DO.”



Ms. Rouba el-Helou gives some pointers to Ms. Akoury and Ms. Diab, VDL, Dbayeh (2015)



JOU 340 Public Relations Techniques Students Perform Civic Service - Dr. NADINE ROBEHMED

Each semester, I require the students of JOU 340 Public Relations Techniques at the Department of Media Studies, Faculty of Humanities (FH), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), to plan an event with civic service as its main goal to assure that they apply the theory they have learned to improve society in some way. The students are required to gain sponsors to aid them in their projects, which will be donated 100% to the cause.

This semester, my students, Melanie Rahme, Maryjoe Srouji, Dayana Naccache, Jeff Bourjaili, Lynn Bitar, Gabriella E. Bou Jaoude, Carine Fenianos, Léa R. Chammas, Michelle Barouki, Joe Zeitouny, Ibrahim Audi, Romy Hindi, Mayssa Bou Merhi, Sandy Abi Fadel, Natalie Touma, Rawai Chahine, and Joe Haskour, found a family in grave need and renovated their home from A to Z. This family consists of a man, his wife, son, and two daughters who live in Broumana in a rundown home with conditions unfit for a family to live in.

The renovation took place between the December 4 and 7, 2015, and during that time, the Ramada Hotel, Downtown Beirut, sponsored the family’s accommodation needs. Members of the family were chauffeured around Beirut in Taxi 4 You to enjoy a makeover offered by Simon Mendelek for the women and Salon Charleston for the men, and meals, which were sponsored by Classic Burger Joint, Links, 88 Restaurant, Cosmo Cafe, Moulin D'or, All in, and Crepaway.

With the aid of generous sponsors, my students and me treated and repainted their walls with paint donated by Happy Wall, along with treatment of the doors and ceilings. We replaced their broken windows, renovated their bathroom with new tiling, sink, and toilet, installed a shower donated by Rifico and also installed a new water heater. Khoury Home donated new appliances, including an oven and vacuum, while private donors offered a microwave and refrigerator. Mahfouz Stores donated all new kitchen supplies. Galerie Joseph Hajj donated new furniture for their living room and Galerie Adonis donated a double bedroom set. We were also able to provide them with new mattresses, pillows, and bedding from FAP for their bedroom. Sajad donated new carpeting, Khat-tab Curtains donated wall-to-wall curtains, and Simon Electric donated light fixtures for the entire home. Adidas and Retail Group provided new clothing for the entire family! Both Damas & Kallas Jewelers provided lovely gifts for the mother and eldest daughter while Chi Chic donated watches for the father and son. A laptop was donated by HSC and 7s Library donated school supplies for the youngest daughter. Matahen Frem also donated a complete pantry of food supplies while Wooden Bakery donated bread and dairy products. Masij Galerie was kind in donating décor items for the living room. All these gifts were placed surrounding a beautiful two-meter Christmas tree donated along with its decorations by BabyWorld!

The students also did fundraising at Here's To Life, Publicity along with personal donations made by Mr. Hourani the Minister of the Municipality of Jdeidet Marjaayoun and Saleh 4x4, which were utilized to purchase items that were not donated, such as towels, blankets, new



closets, supplies, and a center table. Throughout the renovation students were energized with the help from the Red Bull team who passed by and offered them refreshments. Red Bull was also kind enough to offer a truck to help empty the old contents of the home.

The students were aided by many generous and kindhearted field workers, including painters from Sheib Company, Nabatieh, Mr. Raymon Chaiban, electrician, plumbers, Mr. Julien Abi Rached who fixed the faulty aluminum windows, Mr. Firas from KGlass who replaced the glass on the broken windows and installed a new aluminum window in the kitchen, and electric technicians who donated a UPS for the family along with tile experts who worked on the kitchen wall and bathroom from BELINEA sal.

Everyone worked endless hours for five days straight in the hopes of giving this family some happiness during the Christmas season for the joy of giving surpasses that of having. We learned so much more than any book can teach and this lesson will carry on in our hearts for many years to come!



FNAS

Have a Taste of Arab Countries

- ZEINA NAKAT*

Students enrolled in NTR 215 “Foods and Nutrition of World Cultures,” one of the general education courses offered by the Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences (FNHS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), organized and hosted on January 14, 2015, an event in which NDU students, faculty, and staff members were invited to savor the taste of national dishes from a selection of Arab countries and to learn about the diverse factors that influence their food preferences and habits.

The event aims to develop students’ understanding of the relationship between foods and culture, economic factors, availability of ingredients, taste preferences, environmental conditions, social and religious determinants, among others. Besides preparing the various national dishes, students were asked to research the country, its facts, habits, and culture, and communicate their findings to the public. Students, moreover, were expected to simulate the spirit of the country, using appropriate decoration, outfits, table settings, and music. Fifty-two students divided into thirteen groups participated in the event. A jury consisting of Dr. Jessy el-Hayek and Dr. Antoine Aoun, both from the FNHS, evaluated the groups for the best presentations. The Morocco group came in first place followed by the Iraq and Saudi Arabia groups. As always, the event was a flavorful day for the NDU community.



Morocco group at the new Exhibition Hall (January 14, 2015).



Iraq group at the new Exhibition Hall (January 14, 2015).

*Part-time faculty member, FNHS.

**Conference Report:
“How are the Lebanese Labs Controlling our Food Safety?”**

- Dr. CYRINE NEHMÉ



Dr. JOSEPH MATTA presenting the lecture.



The audience listening attentively.

The Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences (FNAS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) held on December 12, 2014, a lecture titled, “How Are the Lebanese Labs Controlling our Food Safety?” which Dr. Joseph Matta delivered.

Dr. Matta began his lecture with a small introduction, which presented the laboratories of the Industrial Research Institute (IRI) in terms of essential resources, industrial sectors of their expertise, and operations. He shed light on the fact that the IRI general directorate and his team have been working to protect public safety in several fields: Food laboratories, construction materials, electrical appliances, welded metallic structures, children toys, medical devices, steam boilers, LPG cylinders, etc.

In his talk, Dr. Matta focused on the food laboratories. The latter encompass six important laboratories: Wet Chemistry, Physical Chemistry, Microbiology, Packing and Packaging Materials Testing, Water and Central Laboratory for Bread and Wheat. Dr. Matta revealed that these laboratories currently receive 350 specimens per day to analyze in order to assure the chemical and microbiological conformity of products. The same laboratories also receive around 20,000 food samples per year to test for the presence of pathogenic material, pesticide residues, traces of heavy metals, aflatoxins, food additives, etc.

The IRI is the first accredited laboratory in Lebanon since 2005, and the only organization on the national level to cover both testing and calibration. More than 350 methods are accredited, as per ISO 17025:2005. It is also the first non-European organization to be an active member of EUROLAB (European Federation of National Associations of Measurement, Testing, and Analytical Laboratories). The IRI Laboratories have several partners and maintain close cooperation with official institutions, such as the Ministries of Industry, Economy and Trade, Agriculture, and Interior as well as municipalities, Lebanese Civil Defense, Lebanese Customs, etc., for the protection of the consumer.

In addition, the organization assists the Chambers of Commerce and Industry as well as LIBNOR in studying and issuing of the Lebanese Technical Standards. The IRI also initiated a quality awareness campaign through numerous seminars, workshops, and training sessions at national and international levels.

Following Dr. Matta’s presentation, discussions followed and focused on the following:

- Toys imported from China and their conformity;
- The competence of every single toy;
- Safety of clothing imported from several countries;
- Safety of plastic bottles.

In general, toys are tested to verify their electrical safety only. Plastic bottles are not being tested. Dr. Matta explained the general state of the conformity assessment inspection procedure in Lebanon.

The last discussion revolved around the most recent announcement issued by the Minister of Public Health Mr. Wael Abou Faour. Dr. Matta reported that the IRI is a leading actor in the food safety campaign and expounded on the technical requirements for sampling and the competence of testing

FNHS

"Food Allergy and Weight Loss: Myth or Reality?"
- MAYA ABOU JAOUDE

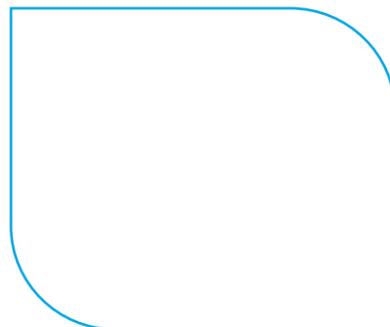
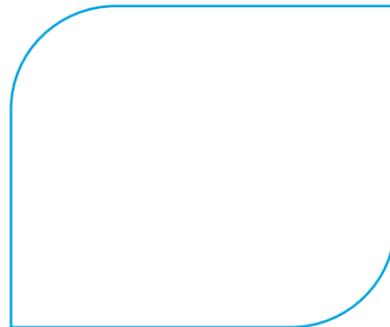
The Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences (FNHS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) had the pleasure to host on Wednesday, March 11, 2015, Dr. Carla Irani, M.D., and Ms. Perla Harfoush, M.S. Nutrition. Both professionals were speakers at a lecture titled, "Food Allergy and Weight Loss: Myth or Reality?" The lecture was held during lunch break at Abou Khater Auditorium, NDU Main Campus.

During the presentation, Dr. Irani explored the major differences between food allergy and food intolerance. She spoke in detail about the symptoms, consequences, and treatment of food allergy and its impact on our dietary consumption and daily life. She emphasized the danger of a food allergy left untreated and gave various personal clinical experiences to support her point. She denied any significant correlation between weight loss and food allergies based on her overview of the literature as well as her professional opinion.

Ms Harfoush, on the other hand, defined and explored food intolerance, its etiology, symptoms, and consequences. She described the current nutritional practices to treat or alleviate it. She demonstrated and evaluated the current clinical testing procedures being done to identify the different food intolerances. Furthermore, she warned about common practices, which could increase the rate of occurrence of these food intolerances.

At the end of her presentation, Ms Harfoush agreed with Dr. Irani on the fact that relating food allergy treatment with weight loss is highly unlikely and not scientifically supported in the literature. She explained that the reduction in weight observed sometimes is probably because the patients are following a specific restricted diet (automatically restricted in calories and choices) more than the fact that they are removing a particular food culprit.

The attendees included students from different backgrounds, staff, and faculty who asked many questions at the end of the lecture, which gave way to interesting interaction between the attendees and the speakers. This topic has become one of heated debate nowadays due to numerous malpractices occurring in this regard. The lecture shed some light on these issues and hopefully increased the awareness of attendees on the risks and consequences.



Panel Presentation:
"Life Interrupted- Awareness for Suicide Prevention"

Following Lebanon's first National Awareness Campaign for Suicide Prevention launched in September 2014 under the patronage of the Ministry of Public Health, the Department of Nursing and Health Sciences (FNHS) and the Department of Psychology, Education and Physical Education at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) jointly organized on December 10, 2014, a panel presentation on suicide prevention. The event targeted the NDU community at large and NDU students in particular. Guest panelists were Dr. Francois Kazour, a psychiatrist and part-time faculty member, Dr. Marie Khoury, Counselor at the Students' Affairs Office, and Fr. Boulos Wehbe, a full-time lecturer.

According to the first global report on suicide released by the World Health Organization (WHO) in September 2014, more than 800,000 individuals kill themselves each year - the equivalence of one death by suicide every 40 seconds. Suicide is the second leading cause of death in young people, aged 15 to 29. In Lebanon, one person commits suicide every three days, according to official records for the year 2012. Though the reported rate of suicide in Lebanon is among the lowest in the world, yet it is believed that it is an underestimation of the scope of the problem given the social, religious, and legal views of the Lebanese culture, which bias the reporting of suicide cases.

The event succeeded in starting talks around a taboo subject as well as raising awareness, as a step toward preventing suicide. Students and faculty members turned out in large numbers to attend the panel presentation.



FLPS

LERC News
IOM Conducts International Migration and Development Training at NDU
 - JASMIN LILIAN DIAB, LERC Staff

The Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), held at the NDU Main Campus from February 10 to 13, 2015, a four-day training module titled, "International Migration and Development."



(from left) Mr. Tauhid Pasha, Dr. Nada Saad-Saber, Dr. Maan Bou-Saber, Mr. Suheil Matar, Mr. Fawzi Al Zioud, Dr. Ghazi Asmar, Mr. Michael Newson, and Dr. Guita Hourani (NDU, Feb. 2015)

The IOM designed the training modules "to provide trainers, policymakers, and practitioners with structured training sessions covering both theoretical and practical elements intended to strengthen their professional capabilities. The modules promote a highly participatory training methodology, fostering teamwork and participants' engagement in stimulating discussions and reflection."

The training constituted of seven modules with lectures and group exercises that addressed the following issue areas: The migration–development nexus, frameworks for cooperation on migration and development, migration and development policy and planning, strengthening the collaboration between policymakers and diasporas for development, facilitating labor mobility, and mobilizing the financial resources generated through migration.

The opening of the training was held under the auspices of the President of NDU Fr. Walid Moussa, represented by Mr. Suheil Matar, Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communication. Director of the VPAC Office Dr. Nada Saad-Saber opened the ceremony and introduced the IOM and NDU representatives. The representatives were Mr. Fawzi al-Zioud, IOM Representative in Lebanon; Dr. Maan Bou-Saber, Dean of the FLPS; Dr. Ghazi Asmar, Assistant Vice-President for Research and Graduate Studies; Dr. Khaled Abdel Mageed, Director of Secretariat of the Sudanese Working Aboard of the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs of Sudan; Mr. Michael Newson, the IOM Regional Labour Migration/Migration and Development Specialist; Mr. Tauhid Pasha, the IOM Senior Specialist on Migration and Human Development; and Dr. Guita Hourani, Director of the LERC.



(front, from left) Dr. G. Hourani, Mr. M. Newson, Dr. M. Bou-Saber, H.E. Dr. Ahmad Hassan, Ambassador of Sudan to Lebanon, Mr. F. Al Zioud, the IOM Rep in Lebanon, and Dr. K. Abdel Mageed of Sudan (NDU, Feb. 2015)

The approximately 30 participants came from Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, Italy, and Lebanon, and represented various government, local, non-governmental, and academic institutions. The participants attended all the sessions and showed keen interest during the training; their professional and academic backgrounds gave each module the added value needed to become more relatable and less theoretical.

Guest speakers came from the IOM, NDU/FLPS, the Investment Development Agency of Lebanon (IDAL), the International Labor Migration (ILO), the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS), the United Nation Development Program (UNDP) Live-Lebanon Program, Byblos Bank, and the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

The closing ceremony was attended by H. E. Dr. Ahmad Hassan, Ambassador of Sudan to Lebanon, Mr. Al-Zioud, Dr. Bou-Saber, Mr. Newson, Dr. Hourani, and Dr. Elie el-Hindy, Chairperson of the Department of Government and International Relations. Following a closing word from each of the aforementioned attendees and from two participants and one trainer, each participant was handed a Certificate of Completion for his/her successful participation in the training.

The IOM trainers, participants, and guest speakers informed the LERC and the IOM that the training was a success. Everyone appreciated NDU's hospitality and welcoming spirit. Both Lebanese and foreign participants who stayed in the Guest House were satisfied with their accommodations and loved the Campus.

Mr. Al-Zioud, Mr. Michael Newson, Ms. Nur Fitrana, and Ms. Dima Haddad of the IOM have expressed interest in continuing cooperation with the LERC and NDU. A debriefing between the IOM and the LERC will take place in the coming weeks for the planning of future activities of common interest.

Muslims in America in Context: A Roundtable Discussion with Dr. Andrea Stanton at NDU

- JASMIN LILIAN DIAB, LERC Research Assistant

The Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), in collaboration with the NDU Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC), welcomed Dr. Andrea Stanton from the University of Denver, Colorado, U.S.A., for the purpose of holding a roundtable discussion titled, "Muslim, Arab, American: An American Immigrant Community in Context."

Dr. Stanton discussed what local histories add to the story of the twentieth century Arab/Muslim/American communities in the U.S., particularly taking the city of Cedar Rapids in Iowa as a case study. Using the local press as a key source, Dr. Stanton tried to shed light on the ways in which this particular Muslims community — a primarily Levantine community that had begun immigrating to the U.S. in the late 1800s — was perceived within the broader lowan community. Reviewing the daily newspapers published in Cedar Rapids from the 1920s through the 1970s, Dr. Stanton noted in covering this community, as individuals and as part of a shared faith community, local journalists were challenged in developing an appropriate terminology for the mosque and the Muslim community associated with it. The coverage, according to Stanton, indicated (a) the increasingly important role played by the mosque or temple, as it was known for decades in the community's religious and social life; and (b) that the coverage focused broadly on social and religious activities, notably weddings, deaths and burials, religious activities, and community fundraisers.

Dr. Stanton argues that the narrative framing of Cedar Rapids Muslim community in local newspapers demonstrated the need for a more nuanced approach to studies of religious and ethnic minorities in the



(from left) Dr. G. Hourani with Dr. A. Stanton at NDU (Feb. 2015)

mid-twentieth century, including sensitivity to the local context. Dr. Stanton stated that three labels were assigned to this community by the non-Muslim, non-Arab majority population: Muslim, Arab, and American, and argues that 'Muslim' dominated local press coverage, but that 'Arab' was used to indicate heritage rather than foreignness. She concluded that the coverage concentrated on the degree of 'congregation-ization' of the community than anything else.



(from left) Dr. Doumit Salameh, Ms. Hon-oree Eid, Ms. Dalia Atallah, and Ms. Jasmin Lilian Diab (Feb. 2015)

Dr. Stanton is an Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Denver, Colorado. She focuses on twentieth and twenty-first century Islam in the Middle East. She obtained her M.A. and PhD from Columbia University, and her B.A. from Williams College, U.S.A. Her research focuses on "Media and Religious Identity," and investigates the sometimes conflictual, sometimes cooperative relationships between new technologies and claims to religious authority. The University of Texas Press published in 2013 her first book titled, *This is Jerusalem Calling: State Radio in Mandate Palestine*.

Her teaching interests include Quranic studies, contemporary fundamentalisms, globalization and its impact on religious identity and practice, gender and Muslim practice, and embodied practice and notions of piety, as well as the Internet and social media's evolving impact in these areas.

NDU and Lebanese University (LU) professors, staff, and students attended the roundtable discussion.

BBC Solicits LERC for Documentary on Christians in the Middle East

- DALIA ATALLAH, LERC Akiki Grant Recipient

Ms. Jane Corbin, broadcaster, journalist, and writer for the *British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)*, visited on Friday January 23, 2015, the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU). There, she met with Dr. Guita Hourani, Director of the LERC, regarding her new project: A documentary on the plight of Christians in the Middle East, mainly in Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq.

The *BBC* senior reporter, accompanied by Producer Ms. Tima Khalil, interviewed Dr. Hourani, who is knowledgeable about both the Maronite history and the topic, particularly in the Lebanese context. The meeting, which Ms. Liliane Haddad, LERC Chief Indexer and Archivist, also attended, centered around the history of Christians in Lebanon, the current concerns of the Maronites, the nature of their interaction with other religious groups in the country, and the impact of insecurity on the migration of Christians.

The documentary highlights not only by the current threats in the region but also the memory of the Armenian Genocide, which marks its centennial this year. The documentary will be broadcast on *BBC Two's This World*, a program that reports on international current affairs by producing documentaries on important subjects. It will be directed by Robin Barnwell, produced by Tima Khalil, and written by Jane Corbin.

Associate Professor from San Diego University Visits LERC on Syrian Refugees Project

- JASMIN LILIAN DIAB, LERC Research Assistant

Dr. Shawn Flanigan, Associate Professor of Public Administration in the School of Public Affairs at San Diego State University (SDSU), U.S.A., visited the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), to interview Dr. Guita Hourani, LERC Director, regarding the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Dr. Flanigan also took the opportunity to discuss her interest in diaspora philanthropy.

Dr. Flanigan discussed with Dr. Hourani her interest in the role of power and coercion in service provision to vulnerable populations in Lebanon, particularly the Syrian refugees. She wishes to address this dynamic in health and social service provision by examining the role of faith-based organizations, political parties, and civil society organizations in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey.

Dr. Hourani presented Dr. Flanigan with an overview of the Center's capacity, particularly concerning field research, methodological approaches for conducting research in conflict zones and on hard-to-reach populations, literature review, and media monitoring, among other topics of interest. Dr. Hourani also shared her conclusions and observations, which she gathered during her research and writing of four reports on the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Dr. Hourani mentioned to Dr. Flanigan that the Center has performed a brief research on the philanthropy of the Lebanese diaspora and added that this is an under-researched topic, which is of great interest to the LERC and the diaspora field.

The Associate Professor specializes in Comparative Public Administration and Non-profit Organizations, as both policy actors and service providers. Her research focuses on the role non-profit organizations play in meeting the health and social service needs of minorities and marginalized groups, with a specific interest in the developing world and low-income populations in the United States of America. She has conducted field research throughout the world in countries, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, Romania, Sri Lanka, and the United States of America, and has collected additional data from Mexico, Palestine, and the Philippines.

Dr. Flanigan is currently applying for funding to finance her research project in Lebanon. She expressed explicit interest in collaborating with the Center and Dr. Hourani.

Maronite Archbishop of the Holy Land Visits LERC

- DALIA ATALLAH, Akiki Grant Recipient

Archbishop of the Maronites in Haifa and the Holy Land and Patriarchal Exarch of Jerusalem, Palestine, and Jordan Monsignor Moussa el-Hage visited on November 10, 2014, the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), accompanied by Antonine Father of the St. John Convent in Keserwan's Ajaltoun Fr. Antoine Daou. The Archbishop sought the Center to request information and documents on the migration of Christians from Lebanon since the beginning of the Civil War in 1975 for a conference titled: "*New Trends of Research: Palestinian Christian Identity in Israel.*"

LERC Director Dr. Guita Hourani who offered to prepare a paper on the topic for the Archbishop to use for the conference warmly welcomed both Monsignor El-Hage and Fr. Daou. The Archbishop thanked Dr. Hourani for her offer and thanked her for her invaluable help. Dr. Hourani began preparing the report with the help of her Research Assistant Ms. Jasmin Lilian Diab. Akiki Internship Grant Recipient Ms. Dalia Atallah will translate the paper into Arabic, and both the English and the Arabic versions will be published as part of the conference proceedings.

IC Students Seek Information on Lebanese Migration at LERC

- DALIA ATALLAH, Akiki Grant Recipient

Escorted by their teachers, Mses. Najia Kambris and Veronique Karam, sophomore students from the International College (IC), Beirut, visited on November 25, 2014, the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU).

The purpose of their visit was to learn more about the migration of the Lebanese people. Mrs. Liliane Haddad, Chief Indexer and Archivist at LERC, and Ms. Jasmin Lilian Diab, LERC Research Assistant, delivered a presentation on the topic. The presentation included an explanation on the history of Lebanese migration, the push and pulls factors, and the advantages and disadvantages of migration. Students were encouraged to share their viewpoint on the issue of migration.

Lebanese Social Entrepreneur Seeks LERC's Database
- DALIA ATALLAH, Akiki Grant Recipient

Ms. Patricia Bitar Cherfan, Founder and CEO of PIDRAYA, and the company's Project Director, Ms. Marina Abourgely, visited on Monday, November 17, 2014, the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), to seek the Center's collaboration on a new project.

Mses. Cherfan and Abourgely were looking for information on Lebanese emigration to write an article in a new magazine, which targets people of Lebanese descent returning to Lebanon during different seasons of the year. The magazine also targets tourists and residents. They plan to launch the magazine with an issue titled, "Home for Christmas."



(from left) Ms. Abourgely and Ms. Cherfan at the LERC Nucleus Museum at NDU (Nov 17, 2014)

PIDRAYA, the company that will publish *Home Magazine*, is one of the companies she founded. It promotes sustainable development and "believes in society's advancement through arts, cultural events, and active cross-sector partnership." The company is also a Business Network member to CSE (Centre for Sustainability and Excellence).

The enterprise has organized several cultural events, the most recent being the Bacchanalia Art Exhibition held in September, 2014, at IXIR winery in Batroun under the high patronage of the Minister of Culture H.E. Raymond Araygi. The exhibition featured selected works by a number of important contemporary Lebanese artists.

PIDRAYA has also organized a number of workshops, the latest being the Certified Sustainability (CSR) Corporate Social Responsibility Practitioner Training. It was hosted by the Economic and Social Council (ECO-SOC), Beirut, and was held under the patronage of Minister of Economy and Trade H.E. Dr. Alain Hakim.

Colonel George el-Khoury Solicits Research Material from LERC

- DALIA ATALLAH, Akiki Grant Recipient

Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) Colonel George el-Khoury visited the Lebanese Emigration

Research Center (LERC) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), in search of information on Lebanese emigration for a research paper he has to present to his superior.

The colonel met with LERC Director, Dr. Guita Hourani, who shared her expert knowledge on the matter, notably the history of Lebanese migration, the integration of expatriate Lebanese in host countries, and the role their remittances play in developing their motherland. Col. El-Khoury was "amazed by the vast amount of information that [he] received from Dr. Hourani," as he remarked in writing in the center's *Golden Book*.



(from left) Ms. Haddad, Colonel El-Khoury, and Dr. Hourani at the LERC Offices (Nov. 2014)

“THIS CONSTITUTIONAL DAY PAR EXCELLENCE PROVES ONCE AGAIN THE NDU COMMITMENT TO SHAPE THE NATION'S FUTURE LEADERS AND ITS KEENNESS ON DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE TOWARD FOSTERING A BETTER SOCIETY.”

International Scholars Take Part in FLPS Conference on Constitutional Law

- CELINE NADER EL-HAJJE*

The Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), under the auspices of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, organized on March 7, 2015, a full-day conference on Constitutional Law in which a number of renowned scholars, academicians, politicians, and notable speakers took part. This conference provided a platform for experts and students to discuss constitutional issues based on case studies from Lebanon and Germany.

The Dean of the FLPS Prof. Maan Bou Saber delivered the opening speech and focused on the philosophical differentiation among the terms equality, rights, liberty, justice, and constitutionalization of law. This empowering essence was maintained throughout the lectures and gave students of political science, international affairs, and law a taste of legal reality. Prof. Antoine Messara, Member of the Lebanese Constitutional Council, delivered his talk following that of Prof. Saber's. Prof. Messara provided the audience with a rich introduction of the German contribution to Lebanese constitutional life since 1980 with dated references; copies of these references were later handed out to attendees.

Three panels comprised the conference, two of which addressed case studies from Lebanon and the third discussed the pillars of federalism. Dr. Antoine Hokayem kicked off the first leg of the conference with a lecture titled, "The Genesis of the Lebanese Constitution: A Researcher's Experience." Dr. Khaled Qabbani, former Minister and Magistrate, and current Professor of Law, continued with a detailed presentation of the system of checks and balances in the Third Republic, and later gave the floor to lawyer Rabih Kay whose contribution was on the prerogatives of the president of the republic after the Taif Agreement. The first panel ended with a heated yet civilized debate, which helped attendees shape new objective perspectives on the matters at hand.

The seminar went on to tackle constitutional justice in Lebanon and in Arab countries, an issue that Dr. Issam Sleiman, President of the Lebanese Constitutional Council, detailed. Dr. Tarek Majzoub, Professor of Law at La Sagesse University, later presented a constitutional perspective on the rule of law in Lebanon and was followed by a discussion moderated by Prof. Messarra on Lebanese constitutional law, as a case study in Legal Acculturation from 1926 until 2015. The second panel also ended with an interactive one-hour discussion during which the participants' questions were answered.

Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of Bonn, Germany, Jörg Menzel presented a rich and intense lecture on the theory and practical relevance of federalism. Following his valuable contribution, Prof. Messara wrapped up the conference by emphasizing solutions to all existing gaps in the law, particularly constitutional law.

This constitutional day par excellence proves once again the NDU commitment to shape the nation's future leaders and its keenness on disseminating knowledge toward fostering a better society.

*First-year Law student at NDU

Internships at the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization
- GRACE EID

"An internship for first-year students in Intellectual Property (IP)," was the hard-to-believe statement we, first-year law students, heard from Prof. Maan Bou Saber, Dean of the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU). It seemed impossible; however, our dean, is renowned for his ability to make the impossible possible. Given his many connections, he managed to grant us internships at the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh (TAG) Organization, a pioneering firm in intellectual property protection in the world.

The TAG is the largest global group of professional service firms in the fields of accounting external audit, internal audit, corporate governance, taxation, educational consultancy, real estate management, management advisory service, e-government, e-commerce, IT and security audit, IP business and asset valuation, and many more.

Our journey in this organization started on March 7, 2014. We were divided into two groups; each week, one of the groups met with the firm. We would stay there for four consecutive hours discussing intellectual property, patents, and trademarks. The internship was headed and organized by Miss Aline Matta, legal consultant at the firm. She gave us the largest portion of information she could on these two topics. She handed us cases and the most legal rules used in this field. We analyzed and interpreted them together, and sometimes we would translate legal terms into either English or French. Thanks to her we were able to fully understand and grasp the concept of intellectual property and trademarks. This successful journey ended on May 30, 2014.

Due to this internship, we got a chance to experience in detail a branch of law we never knew before. We saw what it is was like to be a lawyer or even a legal consultant. In addition, we were awarded certificates, which will give us a boost in our future legal career.

On behalf of all the law students, I would like to thank the TAG for being the first firm to offer an internship for inexperienced law students, and for putting so much effort and determination in helping us. Most importantly, special thanks go to our beloved dean, Dr. Maan Bou Saber, for giving us the chance to reveal our potentials with respect to our low level of experience. It takes a big heart to help shape little minds. Thank you again, and I am sure this internship was only the beginning... the best is yet to come!

GIR organizes Training for the Foreign Service Entrance Exam
- MARIA NOUJAIM*

The Lebanese Council of Ministers announced that it would be scheduling an entrance exam on March 7, 2015, for positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants Diplomatic Service. As a result, the Department of Government and International Relations at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), organized a training session for NDU students and alumni from all Faculties interested in taking the exam.

From the approximately 1,000 candidates who took the exam, only 70 will fill the vacancies in the diplomatic corps.

The training sessions took place at NDU from January 22 to February 19, 2015, totaling about 45 hours. The instructors were mainly GIR professors along with a couple of instructors from outside NDU, who have unique experience in government exams.

The training covered all the material required for the exam with an average of six hours set aside for every topic required. The topics covered were: Public International Law; Budgeting and Public Accounts; Constitutional Law; International Relations; Administrative Law; Employees, Notary, Nationality, and Personal Status

* Graduate Assistant

Laws; General Information; Arabic Language; and Presentation and Protocol.

A dozen of our students, who applied for the exam, enrolled in the training. We trust that the training sessions provided our students with not only a reminder and update of the information they already knew but also provided them with important and beneficial guidelines to utilize during the Foreign Service Entrance Exam. We look forward to hearing that an NDU alumnus have successfully qualified to be part of the Lebanese Diplomatic Corp like many of their colleagues before, building a career in Diplomacy and advancing Lebanon's name and interests around the world.

Price Media Law Moot Court Competition

Students from the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) participated, from February 2 to 5, 2015, in the Middle East Rounds of the Price Media Law Moot Court Competition in Cairo, Egypt. The Faculty of Law at the University of Oxford, U.K., organized the event, which focused on media law and policy, and in particular, freedom of expression.

Through the dedicated efforts of FLPS Dean Prof. Maan Bou Saber, first- and second-year law students were able to partake in this competition despite the fact and NDU was the only Lebanese university competing against teams from other countries: Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Serbia, Italy, and Saudi Arabia. The advice and support provided throughout the process by the dean and Mr. Jihad Rizkallah was a primary factor in helping the NDU team bag the Best Spirit of the Competition award.

The Moot Court Competition simulates a court hearing (usually an appeal against a final decision) in which participants analyze a problem, research the relevant law, prepare written submissions, and present oral arguments. Moot problems are typically set in areas of law that are unsettled or that have been subject to recent developments. They usually involve two grounds of appeal, argued by each side (applicant/defendant). The procedures imitate the proceedings held in real courts: The judge enters, the clerk announces the matter, the mooters give their appearances and are then called upon to present their submissions, the judge asks them questions, then returns to deliver a brief judgment and some feedback. Mooting is not the same as public speaking or debating, although it shares some common elements with these activities. It is "a specialized application of the art of persuasive advocacy."

Students benefited greatly from this experience, as it was an ideal way for them to engage in typical and interesting legal issues. The competition helped students to enhance skills in advocacy, legal research, and writing, and to work closely with and learn from peers who were all generally in their fourth year of law studies, with some studying for their Master's in Media Law. Even though students considered the competition nerve-racking and frustrating at times, many considered mooting intellectually rewarding and enjoyable.

Human Rights Trivia Competition - MARIA NOUJAIM*

For the third consecutive year, the Department of Government and International Relations at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), in collaboration with the students' Human Rights Club, organized on January 16, 2015, a "Human Rights Trivia Competition," at Issam Fares Hall. The competition targets high school students and is aimed at raising awareness and testing their knowledge on basic human rights.



Students from 15 schools from different regions competed against each other in two rounds. Each team was composed of five main students constituting the panel along with other supporters and a coordinator.

Two training sessions were provided for the participants to introduce them to the rules and procedures of the competition, prizes, judges, and topics. The teams were given a period of two months to prepare the following topics:

- Evolution of Human Rights;
- International Humanitarian Law;
- International Courts;
- Transitional Justice; and
- Lebanon and the Human Rights Treaties.

The two rounds were divided as follows: Round One required all competing schools to answer in writing the same fifty general questions (ten from each topic) on Human Rights and submit their answers to the judges.

The five top ranked schools qualified to the Round Two and were required to answer advanced questions on Human Rights. In Round Two, the five qualified schools competed by orally answering more complex questions on the chosen topics. The judge marks each question on a scale of 1, 2, or 3 points and the first to reach a total of 15 points wins.

The schools that qualified for the Round Two were (in alphabetical order):

- Antonine Sisters School;
- College des Apotres-Jounieh;
- College des Freres Maristes Champville;
- Jesus and Mary School; and
- Saint Joseph School.

* Graduate Assistant

A committee of six judges, including Human Right professors from different universities as well as experts and practitioners from national and international NGOs, refereed the competition. The highly acknowledged level of judges guaranteed fairness, professionalism, and the proper execution of the competition. The judges were present during the competition to monitor and grade students' answers.

The judges were (in alphabetical order):

- Ms. Carmen Abou Jaoude: Head of the International Center for Transitional Justice – Beirut Office;
- Dr. Karim el-Mufti: Director of the Human Rights Clinic at Sagesse University;
- Mr. Jean-Pierre Katrib: Activist and Expert in Human Right – Foundation of Human and Humanitarian Right;
- Mr. Julien Courson: Activist and Expert in Human Right – ALEF act for Human Rights;
- Dr. Omar Hourri: Assistant Dean of Law and Director of the Human Rights Center in Beirut Arab University; and
- Ms. Olga Kovran: Head of the Outreach Office of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

The winning schools for this year were:

- 1st Place: Jesus and Mary School;
- 2nd Place: College Des Apotres- Jounieh; and
- 3rd Place: College des Freres Maristes – Champville.



Judges



1st Place



2nd Place



3rd Place

After the results were announced, certificates and shields were distributed to all the participating teams and the top three prizes were distributed to the three winning teams. After that, the FLPS hosted a dinner for the school administrators along with their representatives.

The competition's success re-affirms the leading role of NDU in Human Rights Education in Lebanon and plays a key role in establishing a special connection between the Faculty and the participating schools. We hope that next year's competition will include a larger number of schools and will be equally successful.

Women’s Rights in Lebanon: GIR and Human Rights Club Host Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering
- RITA ABU MRAD*



On the occasion of the International Human Rights Day, the Human Rights Club at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), in collaboration the Student Affairs Office (SAO) hosted a talk by the Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering under the title, “Women’s Rights in Lebanon.”

A group of female activists, feminists, mothers, and homemakers participated in the panel and shared their stories, providing facts about women issues in Lebanon, and highlighting the challenges and circumstances facing women today in a supposedly democratic country like Lebanon. Laws in Lebanon still do not serve the basic rights of women. For instance, women are not fully protected from domestic violence and rape. In addition to other problems facing their identity as effective members of society, women are not allowed to grant citizenship to their husbands or children.

A short public awareness film, produced by the GIR, was screened. It was a witty demonstration of the social and cultural faces of sexual harassment dominating the Lebanese mentality and was aimed at grabbing the attention of the audience and demonstrating that what is seen as a normal is not in fact normal.

Finally, an open discussion was held between the representatives of the NGO, professors, and students. The Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communications concluded the conference by expressing NDU’s clear support to the NGO, and the resolve to organize future collaborations.



* Secretary of the Human Rights Club

FLPS Students Rank in Top Positions in Inter-University Program on International Criminal Law and Procedures

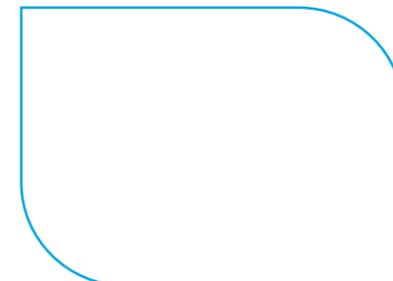
The 4th Inter-University Program on International Criminal Law and Procedures, recently organized with the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, TMC Asser Institute, and seven Lebanese universities was successfully completed with a special flavor for the GIR. Three of the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS) students at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) ranked among the top positions from 120 students representing eight different Lebanese Universities (AUB, AUST, BAU, LU, ULS, USEK, USJ, and NDU). The NDU students ranked, as follows:

Rama Keyrouz	1st place
Mary Joe Alavalas	3rd place
Francesca el-Asmar	8th place

The exam was the final assessment after long months of hard work and 14 online lectures from top notch experts in the field, including lawyers, judges, and university professors in The Hague. The three students and their top 20 colleagues participated in a field trip to The Hague, Netherlands, to visit the international courts and become acquainted with the work of these courts work first-hand.

Moreover, Dr. Maan Bou Saber, Dean of FLPS and Dr. Elie Al-Hindy, Chairperson of the GIR also participated in an Academic Study Visit to The Hague, which included different international courts and institutes, such as the International Criminal Court, International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, as well as The Hague Academy of International Law, Leiden University, and T.M.C. Asser Institute. They also participated in roundtables, lectures, and seminars with various judges and lawyers of the courts, and experts in international justice. This visit was beneficial for the updating and development of our curriculum and enhancement of our courses.

We are happy to share with you this news, which reflects the pioneering role and advanced knowledge in International Justice of the FLPS. We also thank NDU for its continuous support and encouragement.



Student Exchange Program with University College of Copenhagen

- VANESSA EL-KHOURY
MIKHAEL*

Five students from the Department of Government and International Relations (GIR) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), were selected last year to complete their fall 2014 semester in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The selections were based on the Danish-Arab Partnership Program exchange agreement between Professionshøjskole UCC - Håndarbejdets Fremme and NDU.

The NDU students were Vanessa el-Khoury Mikhael, Ghinwa Abou Jaoudeh, Joseph Abou Jaoudeh, Jinane Saleh, and Rebecca Zammar.

Three main courses were offered for both the Lebanese and international students selected from other countries, such as Spain, Germany, Norway, Turkey, Switzerland, Iceland, Russia, and Denmark. The courses were:

Didactics of Dialogue and Reconciliation (DIDAR)

The DIDAR course gave students the opportunity to study the role schools and teachers play in facilitating mutual understanding, conflict transformation, and the practice of dialogue. The fact that the class was formed of individuals from different countries; hence from divergent backgrounds, provided students with the chance to engage in interesting and beneficial debates. The DIDAR combined theoretical studies with the development of practical competences and the fostering of inclusive attitudes to religious and cultural diversity. The program was based on the principles of equality in differences, mutual respect, and human rights.

Innovation Lab

This course asked students to present innovative plans, which would serve to improve a student's output. The Lebanese team presented a research concerning the gap between public and private schools in Lebanon. The presentation included an overview of the status of both schools, along with an improvement plan that must be carried out to develop public educational institutions and reduce the aforementioned gap.

Nordic Model

The course focused on workshops. The class was divided into several groups composed of individuals from different nationalities. The instructor planned different activities for each session, such as school and museum visits. From these activities, each group was asked to create a monument to symbolize certain values that must be upheld within schools and classrooms. Each group had to present its work along with a video containing explanations and information about the entire working process.

After completing the three main courses, students participated in the DIDAR intensive week, which included several lectures delivered by prominent global figures, such as:

Rev. Mpho A. Tutu: Episcopal priest, the Executive Director of the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation. She is an experienced preacher, teacher, and public speaker. Tutu co-authored *Made for Goodness* with her father, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and in 2014, they co-authored *The Book of Forgiving*. She presented a lecture on dialogue and reconciliation in post-conflict societies; and the concept of forgiveness in South Africa and in other contexts. She also explained the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation through the four steps outlined in *The Book of Forgiving*.

Dr. Norman Richardson: Lecturer in Religious Studies and Diversity/Intercultural Education at Stranmillis University College, Belfast. In writing, research, and teaching, his focus is inclusive, and he presents intercultural approaches to the content and teaching of religious education in schools. Dr. Richardson presented a lecture on religious plurality, dialogue, and conflict transformation in schools and in the community, taking Ireland and Lebanon as an example. He also introduced new didactic tools.

Prof. Tony Gallagher: Professor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor at Queen's University Belfast, Ireland. His main research interest is the role of education in divided societies, and while the focus of his work has been Northern Ireland, he has worked in Israel/Palestine and south-east Europe. Prof. Gallagher has acted as a consultant for many government departments, non-governmental public bodies, voluntary and community organizations, and a range of international organizations. He presented a lecture concerning the religious divisions within schools in Ireland and explained how the interpretation of values and rules is related to exclusion and inclusion.

Both, Dr. Richardson and Prof. Gallagher also organized workshops and deeper studies/ discussions of the DIDAR themes throughout different sessions.

Students were also given the opportunity to participate in lectures given by Dr. Ziad Fahed, who created several activities and workshops, concerning dialogue and religious conflicts in the Middle East.

In return, and since the Danish students could not an entire semester in Lebanon due to security concerns, five Danish students and two professors from the UCC spent a week in Lebanon in February 2015. During their visit, they had the chance to practice dialogue and study religious diversities, conflict transformation and reconciliation along with NDU professors and students.

Altogether, this exchange program proved to be beneficial for the participating students, and it encouraged the GIR Department to continue with this program for another semester. In spring 2015, two students from the GIR were studying in Denmark, and a new Danish group is expected to visit Lebanon in May 2015. Aside from the courses and academic aspect of the trip, NDU students valued the special opportunity to travel to a new country and get accustomed to a culture that was foreign to them before their visit. Students were also able to appreciate and to experience first-hand the concepts of intercultural dialogue that they had studied in classes.



* GIR Exchange Student

FBAE

Venetian Masquerade Ball

The Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management at the Faculty of Business Administration and Economics (FBAE), Notre Dame University Louaize (NDU), held on Friday January 16, 2014, its 11th Annual Gala Dinner at the NDU Dome Restaurant under the theme, "Venetian Masquerade Ball." Students of the FBM351 (Food, Beverage and Labor Cost Control) and their instructor, Dr. Ghassan Beyrouthy, organized this event in its entirety.

Present were the Ambassador of Italy in Lebanon His Excellency Mr. Giuseppe Morabito, Public Relations Officer at the Italian Embassy in Lebanon Mr. Antonio Righetti, NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa, various sponsors as well as NDU vice-presidents, deans, administrators, faculty members, friends, and students.

The event featured a Venetian photo booth alongside the red-carpeted entrance, glittering masks, chandeliers, and a blend of colors inspired from 19th century Venice. The Restaurant was completely transformed into a glamorous gala venue.

Event hostesses greeted the 300 guests as they arrived and served each a chocolate-champagne welcome drink. The evening was followed by a six-course set-menu with a five-act entertainment program: A cello, a saxophonist, a pianist, an enchanting soprano, and a band. The evening ended with a raffle draw in which the winner was treated to a two-way business-class ticket to London, courtesy of British Airways. As a parting gift, guests received a CD compilation of classic and nostalgic Italian songs, a goody-bag, and a printed photograph.



GENERAL NEWS

WAYNON RECOGNIZED

In an unprecedented initiative, Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) proved once again to be a cradle of innovation and a haven for talents. *Waynon*, a feature film produced by NDU and directed by seven of its gifted Audio Visual Arts students, positioned the University in a hard-to-beat level of competitiveness.

NDU invested in its students because it believed in their skills and endeavors, resulting in eight national and international awards, and 13 official selections at various international film festivals.

Written by Georges Khabbaz and directed by Najji Bechara, Jad Beiruty, Zeina Makki, Tarek Korkomaz, Christelle Ighniades, Maria Abdel Karim, and Salim Habr, *Waynon* featured an outstanding ensemble cast of best Lebanese actors and actresses. The movie was screened for two weeks in all Lebanese cinemas and participated in many national and international cultural events and festivals.

Waynon, the successful project, would not have existed without the hard work of its godfather, Mr. Emile Chahine, and his foundation for cinema and culture, and its producers Mr. Sam Lahoud and Dr. Nicolas Khabbaz.

At NDU we never compromise our belief in individual initiatives and collective work!



“IT’S A VERY FUNNY THING ABOUT LIFE; IF YOU REFUSE TO ACCEPT ANYTHING BUT THE BEST, YOU VERY OFTEN GET IT.”
W. SOMERSET



Waynon National and International Film Festival Official Selections, Screenings and Prizes:

Winner

- Best Feature Film - Silk Road Film Festival - Ireland - 2014
- Best Actress Award - Diamand Bou Abboud - Dakhla Cinema Festival - Morocco - 2014
- Best Screenplay - Malmo Arab Film Festival - Sweden - 2014
- Special Jury Award - Alexandria Film Festival - Egypt - 2014
- Best Original Score - First Time Film Festival - New York - USA - 2015
- Three Awards for at the Lebanese Cinema Movie Guide Awards - 2015
 - Best Screenplay: George Khabbaz
 - Best Actress: Diamand Abou Abboud
 - Best Ensemble Cast

Official Selection and Screenings

- Dubai International Film Festival - Dubai - 2013
- Arab Film Festival - Amman - Jordan - 2014
- Arab Women Film Festival - The Hague- Netherlands - 2014
- Yakutsk International Film Festival - Yakutia - Russia - 2014
- Arab Women Film Festival of Sale - Morocco - 2014
- Norrkoping Arab Film Festival - Sweden - 2014
- VÄXJÖ Arab Film Festival - Sweden - 2014
- Original Narrative Film Festival - AUD - Dubai - 2015

CAMPUS SOCIETY: YOUR CAMPUS ONLINE!

Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) recently hosted, a team, representing the London-based Campus Society (CS), a free-of-charge social platform for anyone related to universities (students, faculty, staff, and even businesses) to connect and share online by broadcasting events, contacting lecturers, sharing timetables, and quickly finding paid and academic jobs.

NDU students were given the unique opportunity to learn first-hand how, unlike other social networks, the content on the CS website and its audience is directly relevant to them and how they can search with ease for anyone, anything, or any event as long as it is university-related.

The benefits to students include no longer have to go through the hassle of missing events, news, notes, classes, exams, or even communication with each other, as CS offers boundless opportunities.

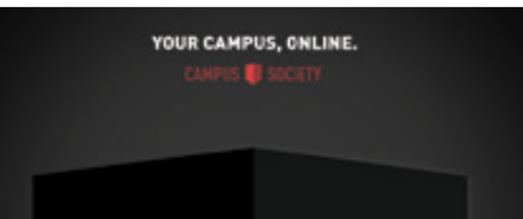
Interested in finding out about a certain event? Just look it up on the NDU college wall. Need a tutor? Post the request in the CS Tutors section. Looking for a new flatmate? Start a listing in the CS 'Accommodation' section. Looking for a job? Search for the words "job" or "career" and check out the latest vacancy listings.

Imagine a big virtual campus where an NDU student can speak to anyone at any time, from any university. Students can also trade class notes, buy and sell clothes, rate professors, see what kind of events are on in and around campus, or even share photos and videos with friends, post messages, articles, and participate in online polls.

The platform has reached 30,000 users so far and has recently been launch across the Gulf States. The CS goal is to go global, but the starting point will always be the *Lebanese student*.

The website's mobile application has been slated for release, making it easier for students to be in the know every second and receive notifications directly on their smartphones. In addition, the CS will soon offer students the opportunity to upload their schedules on their profiles. For instance, the application will send them a reminder every time they have a class or an exam, with specifications about the time and location of each.

For those interested, you can sign up now for free at www.campussociety.com



RABIA AL-ZAYAT CELEBRATES MOTHER'S DAY AT NDU

The Office of Public Affairs and Communications at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) celebrated Mothers' Day 2015 in the presence of television host and presenter Rabia al-Zayat and her husband, poet Zahi Wehbe.

Also present at the event were: NDU President of Fr. Walid Moussa, Vice-President for Finance Fr. Bechara Khoury, Vice-President for Administration Fr. Pierre Najem, Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communications Mr. Suheil Matar, the University Chaplain General Fr. Fadi Bou Chebel, and all working mothers at NDU.

Dr. Nada Saad Saber, Director of Public Relations and Cultural Affairs at NDU, welcomed guests, and then stepped back from the podium, handing it over to Rabia who discussed her experience of juggling motherhood and fame. Rabia paid tribute to the mothers of martyred soldiers in the Lebanese army and acknowledged the plight of mothers whose children are unable to acquire Lebanese nationality. She also recognized mothers who are victims of domestic abuse.

Her husband, Zahi, then took the podium and talked about the importance of motherhood and the vital role mother plays in the lives of their children.

For his part, Fr. Moussa saluted all the mothers present and invited them to live their motherhood like the Virgin Mary.

In closing, Mr. Matar presented Rabia and her husband with a copy of his most recent book in addition to an encyclopedia covering the works of the late poet Said Akl, and famed painter Wajih Nahlé also received a trophy for his efforts in artistically writing in Arabic calligraphy all the names of mothers working at NDU.



ADMISSIONS OFFICE-A SUCCESS STORY

- KARLA SFEIR*

Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) offers that "just right" feel! With around 7,600 students across three Campuses —Main Campus, North Lebanon Campus (NLC), and Shouf Campus (SC) — the University is classified as not too large or too small but just right to meet the needs of students from diverse backgrounds while shaping their personal and academic development in line with the NDU Identity, Mission, Vision, and Values.

NDU is a private non-profit Lebanese Catholic institution of higher education that is legendary for its strong sense of community. Its beautiful Main Campus, small classes, and engaging faculty make students feel at home and encourage them to get involved. NDU blends a rich liberal arts tradition with practical, hands-on professional education to prepare all its graduates for a successful future, brimming with unlimited opportunities where they can unleash their true creativity.

* Coordinator, Office of Admissions

The growth of NDU has broader lessons for higher education. It is one of the pioneers in closing the achievement gap between teenagers from different academic, social, cultural, and religious backgrounds. Through its extensive Academic, Art, and Sports Scholarships, and the Sibling and Work Study Grants, alongside the wide variety of majors and new majors being offered, NDU has become the first choice university for a large number of national and international students.

Keeping in mind all of the above, the NDU Admissions Office team across the three Campuses visits more than 500 schools around Lebanon from north, south, east, and west in addition to international visits to schools all over the Middle East and the Arab World. The Admissions Office continues to spread the respected standing and goodwill of NDU, and maintains the University image to ensure that it firmly leaves its mark in the hearts and minds of everyone.

The school visit marathon cumulates in the annual NDU Open Doors event titled, "Step into Your Future" where all school administrators, parents, and prospective students are welcome to visit the Campus, meet with faculty members in their areas of academic interest, and participate in a multicultural gathering that will enrich their experience in the NDU community.

The NDU Admissions Office list of inter-university school events repertoire is growing. Starting from the NDU and Schools: Facts and Figures Seminar, and the regional forums that reach out to schools in remote areas to the Open Doors, which welcomes more than 5,000 students in all three Campuses, and the annual School Principals' Dinner, which takes place in an elegant setting carefully chosen to reflect NDU's esteemed image.

The continuous strive to succeed and reach perfection has put NDU at the forefront of academic excellence for years to come.

For his part, Fr. Moussa saluted all the mothers present and invited them to live their motherhood like the Virgin Mary.

In closing, Mr. Matar presented Rabia and her husband with a copy of his most recent book in addition to an encyclopedia covering the works of the late poet Said Akl, and famed painter Wajih Nahlé also received a trophy for his efforts in artistically writing in Arabic calligraphy all the names of mothers working at NDU.

OPEN DOORS 2015

The Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) held its annual Open Doors event between Thursday, March 26 and Friday, March 27, 2015, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Themed, "Step into Your Future," and held at the Main Campus, the event presents to prospective secondary school students from across the country the potential of NDU to deliver a first-rate level of higher education in all fields. NDU faculty member, staff, and students participated in the two-day event, which featured many academic activities, entertainment, games, etc. Students from many schools toured the Campus, met with advisors and instructors, and were introduced to Campus facilities and services.

Sponsors from Rim, Dunkin' Donuts, McVities, Aruba, among many others, were present to offer refreshments and snacks. Overall, this year's event was a resounding success.



NEW APPOINTMENTS

Mr. SOUHEIL MATAR
Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communications

Mr. Souheil Matar, Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communications at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), was recently elected Member of the Council for Higher Education.

As a result, the American University of Beirut (AUB), Université St. Joseph (USJ), and NDU are the three universities representing private institutions of higher learning in the Council for Higher Education at the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

Sincere congratulations and best wishes for success!



Prof. EDWARD ALAM
 Consultor on the
 Pontifical Council for Culture

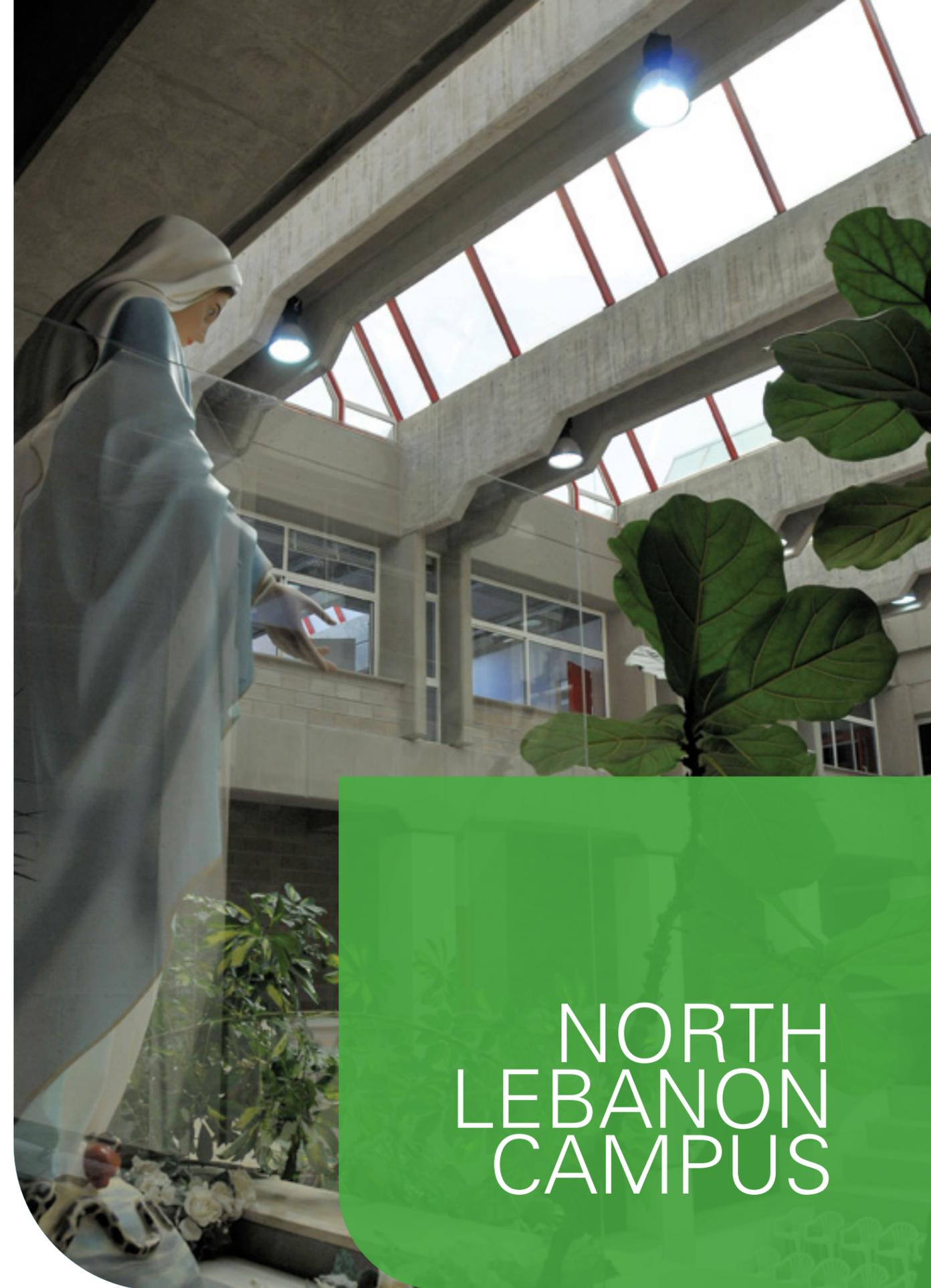
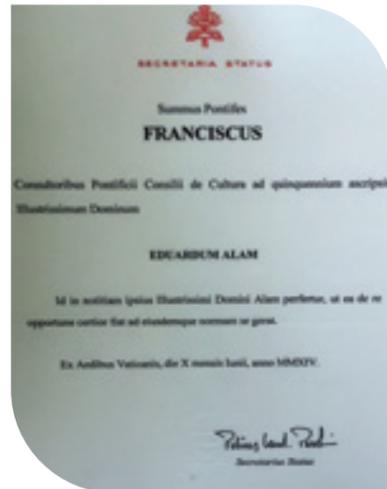
Pope Francis recently appointed Prof. Edward Alam, Professor at the Faculty of Humanities (FH), Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), as a Consultor on the Pontifical Council for Culture - a department of the Roman Curia charged with fostering the relationship of the Catholic Church with different cultures. The history of the Council dates back to the Second Vatican Council. Pope John Paul II founded it on May 20, 1982. He later merged with it the Pontifical Council for Dialogue with Non-Believers (founded in 1965). Pope Benedict XVI gave the Council new impetus in his desire to build 'a dialogue with contemporary artists.' "We are reminded of the urgent need for a renewed dialogue between aesthetics and ethics, between beauty, truth, and goodness not only by contemporary cultural and artistic debate but also by daily reality," said Pope Benedict XVI in a November message to pontifical academies. The Council currently fosters relationships between the Holy See and exponents of the world of culture and promotes dialogue with various contemporary cultures.

The Council has two sections: Faith and Culture, and Dialogue with Cultures. The Faith and Culture section concentrates on the work the Council did before the Council for Non-Believers was merged with it, while the Dialogue with Cultures section continues the work of the latter Council, establishing dialogue with those who do not believe in God or profess no religion, but who are open to genuine cooperation. The Council cooperates with Episcopal conferences, universities and international organizations such as UNESCO with regard to its fields of interest.

The permanent staff at the Council's headquarters consists of the President (currently Gianfranco Ravasi), the Secretary and the Under-Secretary. The Council has a Plenary Assembly at least once every three years. This year, during the month of February, a Plenary Assembly will take place—the theme of which is "Women's Cultures: Equality and Difference". Prof. Alam will participate in this Plenary Assembly. Its purpose is to evaluate the day-to-day running of the Council, to plan the department's programs and to pool experiences and reflections on the variety of cultural situations in contemporary societies. All of this is done in the context of evangelization and the Church's dialogue with cultures. The Members of the Assembly are cardinals and bishops appointed by the Holy Father for five-year terms.

The Pope also appoints Consultors, (priests, religious, and laity predominate in this group), who can be called on at any time for advice and assistance. The Council relies on the Consultors for the study of particularly important questions. Consultors are appointed by the Holy Father for five-year terms. There are currently 33 of them: They come from around the world, and are specialists in the field of culture and dialogue with non-believers. They assist the Council by their research and the information and opinions they provide.

This Papal appointment is not only an honor personally for Prof. Alam but also a great honor for NDU and for Lebanon as well. Congratulations!



OPEN DOORS 2015

Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) organized on March 13, 2015, its annual on-campus Open Doors event in Basra, North Lebanon, in which all staff, faculty members, and students participated. NLC is always happy to share with all secondary school students across the northern region its educational Mission and social nature.

This year's fruitful and successful event featured many academic activities from six Faculties and ensured a host of fun activities, such as IQ quizzes, for all students to enjoy. More than 300 secondary school students from different schools attended the event. The schools included the following:

- North Lebanon College;
- College des Freres Deddeh;
- Bkeftine Secondary Orthodox School;
- Ecole des Filles de la Charite Dar Ennour;
- Tripoli Evangelical School;
- Chekka Official School, Rawdat al-Fayhaa;
- Ecole des Soeurs de la Sainte Therese;
- Lycee Saint Pierre Orthodoxe; and
- The Official School of Amioun.

The school students were also given the opportunity to visit the stands set up by the various NLC Faculties and ask questions about the University, its facilities, and its academic programs, as well as listen to current University students recounting their unique experiences about Campus life.



NLC BASKETBALL TEAM VICTORIOUS

The Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) male basketball team recently won the AUL tournament held at North Heaven Club in Kalamoun.

Director of NLC Sport Facilities George Nader was present at the tournament to encourage the team.

The next day, the winning team visited NLC Director Fr. Samir Gh-soub and handed him the trophy. Fr. Ghsoub congratulated the team on its notable achievement and wished them continued success.



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 December 19, 2014, at 5:30 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 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. Antoine Farhat, Dean Faculty of Nursing & Health Sciences (FNHS). Dr. Farhat 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 for his hard work in developing a viable transportation means for students, providing financial aid, and considering the economic situation of some parents.

Ms. Elsie Kfoury Gerges, Public Relations and Faculty of Business Administration and Economics (FBAE) Assistant, then took the podium to call Faculty coordinators individually to present the Honor List certificate to the students of their respective Faculty. Each student, upon hearing his/her name, walked up to the stage, accepted the certificate from their respective coordinator, and had their picture taken with Fr. Ghsoub.

In between the awards ceremony, a 35-piece orchestra from Harf Ardeh took to the stage to perform a few Arabic classics and Christmas songs, inspiring hope, peace, and conviction. Following the awards ceremony, some students from the Faculty of Architecture, Art and Design (FAAD) paid special tribute to their instructors.

In closing, 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 sumptuous buffet.

NLC PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF ANHALITE NAHHAL

Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) offered a Mass at the Chapel on Thursday, December 4, 2014, which served as a special and touching tribute for the repose of the soul of Anhalite Nahhal, an NDU student.

NLC Director Fr. Ghsoub delivered a moving sermon in which he stressed Anhalite's good nature and her politesse even though she sometimes had opposing viewpoints. He thanked everyone for their presence, especially her relatives. Before the service ended, Fr. Ghsoub on behalf of the University presented her family with a token to honor her memory.



AN EMPOWERING SESSION ON YOUTH LEADERSHIP IN CIVIL SOCIETY

Students taking POS 345 (Ethics and Leadership) at Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) were treated in December 2014 to an inspiring and uplifting lecture (followed by a talk) on the topic of youth leadership in civil society.

UTOPIA Founder and NDU Graduate Mr. Chadi Nachabe, who is the holder of a Master's degree in Political Science and a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration and Diplomacy, outlined the various ways in which Lebanese youth can become empowered through their participation in NGOs, ranging from development, to services, as well as advocacy and policy work.

A participant in the Lebanese Shadow Government, as Shadow Minister of Youth and Sports, Mr. Nachabe earned firsthand experience in founding legislation to promote the role of youth in Lebanon. The lecture addressed the obstacles that Lebanese youth face in trying to ascertain their role in public life. Particularly, the discussion revolved around the potential for youth empowerment in underprivileged areas. Following the talk, simple measures and initiatives that could assist young leaders to emerge were discussed, including the role of women at the grassroots level.

For more information, please contact Dr. Noura Assaf at nassaf@ndu.edu.lb

A REFLECTION SESSION ON LEBANESE HISTORY AND POLITICS

Students taking HIT 211 at Notre Dame University-Louaize North Lebanon Campus (NDU-NLC) hosted in December 2014 an open lecture on Lebanese history and politics under the title of "A Plural State for a Plural Society? Comparing Lebanon and Bosnia-Herzegovina."

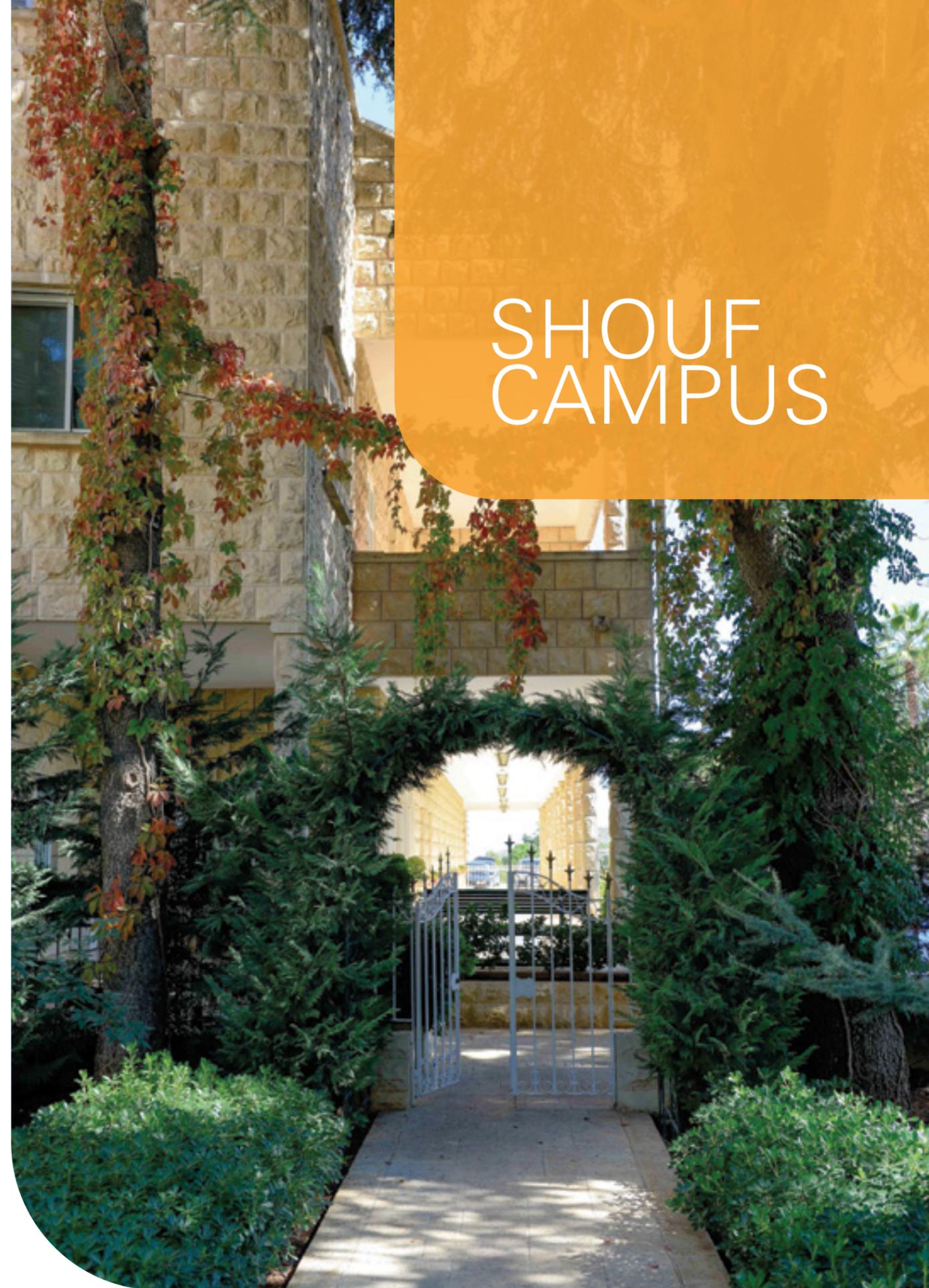
Guest Speaker Dr. Karim el-Mufti, a professor of Political Science & International Law and the Director of the Human Rights Legal Clinic at the La Sagesse Law School in Beirut, engaged students in a reflection and discussion session around essential citizen issues, such as pluralism, social diversity, educational rights, the role of the army, elections, and the Lebanese political process in general. Throughout the talk, the mechanisms of rebuilding state institutions in war-torn societies were highlighted.

Dr. El-Mufti raised insightful points in light of his engagement with various international organizations, research centers, and think tanks from the Arab region and abroad, mainly in the field of civil society pertaining to human rights, youth empowerment, and social development.

Commenting after the session, Dr. Noura Assaf (HIT 211 Course Lecturer) said, "Student interest and interaction during the session were at their peak, and this is yet more proof of the importance of engaging youth at NDU in similar platforms for exchanging their thoughts, ideas, and perspectives on Lebanese and regional issues."

For more information on the lecture, please contact Dr. Noura Assaf at nassaf@ndu.edu.lb

SHOUF CAMPUS



ASH MONDAY MASS

To mark the beginning of the Lenten season, Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) celebrated on February 16, 2015, Ash Monday Mass at the Mar Abda Church. Fr. Hanna Tayar, Director of the SC, presided over the Mass, in the presence of Chaplain General Fr. Walid Nassif, Brother Charbel Doumani, as well as faculty and staff members and students.

In his sermon, Fr. Tayar spoke of the significance of Lent and the importance of living the period of Lent in accordance with the teachings of the Church. Recollecting Pope Francis' sermon, Fr. Tayar said, "Lent is a blessed time," and added, "Lent calls upon us to awaken from indifference, as God is never indifferent." One way to resist indifference, he said, was through true commitment to the Lenten journey, which invites everyone to prayer, almsgiving, and fasting. Fr. Tayar warned against falling prey to temptations that distance people from the meaning and practice of Lent. People often abandon fasting and wrongly mistake it for a mere formality, they also abandon almsgiving by claiming that what they give may reach the wrong hands and abandon prayer, which they consider as a waste of time. He emphasized that such temptations can only be removed when we reestablish trust in ourselves and with Jesus, by shedding our indifference and accompanying Him on this journey of rebirth.

Fr. ended his sermon by inviting everyone not to allow the Lenten season to pass without one tangible, heartfelt, and true expression of Lent. He finally wished everyone a blessed Lenten journey and a wonderful start to the new Spring 2015 semester.



SC BASKETBALL TEAM TRIUMPHANT

Thumbs-up to the Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) basketball team for winning 91 – 75 on Monday, February 16, 2015, against the Khatib and Alami team at the Hoops Club in Beirut.

Congratulations to all the team players.



FACTS AND FIGURES SEMINAR

The Admissions Office at Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) recently organized a "Facts and Figures Seminar." The seminar was a good opportunity to foster collaboration between the SC and the schools in the region. The fervent presence and participation of school principals and orientation counselors, some of whom had traveled great distances from areas, such as Rachaya, Saida, Aley, Metn, and Shouf, to attend the event; thus, reflecting their interest and trust in the SC and its educational Mission. Fr. Hanna Tayar, Director of the SC, opened the seminar by welcoming the school principals and emphasizing the importance and value of cooperation for both the schools and NDU. Fr. Tayar assured the attendees that NDU shares with them the sacred mission of educating the upcoming generation and guiding them into becoming effective, well-rounded citizens of their community. Fr. Tayar said that NDU takes this mission seriously and its main concern has always been to nurture the individual toward success.

Dr. Simon Abou Jaoude, Assistant Vice-President for Academic Support (AVPAS), gave a brief update

“REMEMBER, MAN, YOU ARE DUST AND TO DUST YOU WILL RETURN.”
Genesis 3:19

of the accreditation process at NDU. Dr. Abou Jaoude's word was followed by explanatory presentations by Mrs. Viviane Nakhle, Director of Admissions and Office of Tests Measurements and Evaluation (OTME), who went over the main pillars of admission work, rules, and policies. Ms. Maya Abou Khzam, Admissions Officer at the SC, then gave a presentation titled, "NDU Shouf Campus and Schools," which highlighted the main figures related to students' admission, performance, and choice of majors. The presentation also featured the main findings related to the students from regional schools who had joined NDU as their university of choice. A documentary on the SC was featured followed by a Q&A session with the SC Director, the AVPAS, and the admissions officers.

The event ended with everybody joining in a friendly toast.

DONNER SANG COMPTER: A DROP OF BLOOD SAVES A LIFE

Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) organized an all-day blood drive in December 2014. The blood drive was done in collaboration with Donner Sang Compter (DSC), a non-government organization that raises awareness about safe voluntary blood donations with the aim of connecting donors to patients and hospitals.

Well aware of the difference that blood donation can make to the life of others, NDU-Shouf Campus students, faculty, and staff enthusiastically donated blood amid an encouraging atmosphere of excitement and care. The DSC volunteers managed the blood donation process and the blood units collected were donated to the Ain W Zein Hospital in the Shouf region.

The blood drive was a rewarding experience; it is one of the many ways through which NDU gives back to the community for which it cares.



“KNOW YOURSELF:” A LECTURE ON POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC) hosted in December 2014 a lecture on positive psychology titled, "Know Yourself." The lecture delivered by Dr. Khalida Abdel Baki, an expert in positive psychology, focused on the promotion of personal well-being and the creation of a fulfilling life.

Dr. Baki began her lecture by mentioning that the aim of positive psychology is for individuals to have a satisfying life full of meaning, positive relationships, engagement, and achievement. She discussed with students some of the ways through which they can develop more meaningful and successful lives.

Through cultivating insight into their inner selves, people can train their minds to think positively and turn moments of weakness into strengths, said Dr. Baki. She mentioned that people can develop the ability to control their thoughts and emotions to develop strategies and skills to tackle life's challenges in a more effective manner, despite the hardships they may face.

Dr. Baki discussed the importance of being part of a positive community and the impact that such a community can have on the individuals living within it.

Students showed much interest in the topic of Positive Psychology and hoped the University would organize more in-depth discussions and lectures on the subject, as they found it to be highly beneficial and valuable.

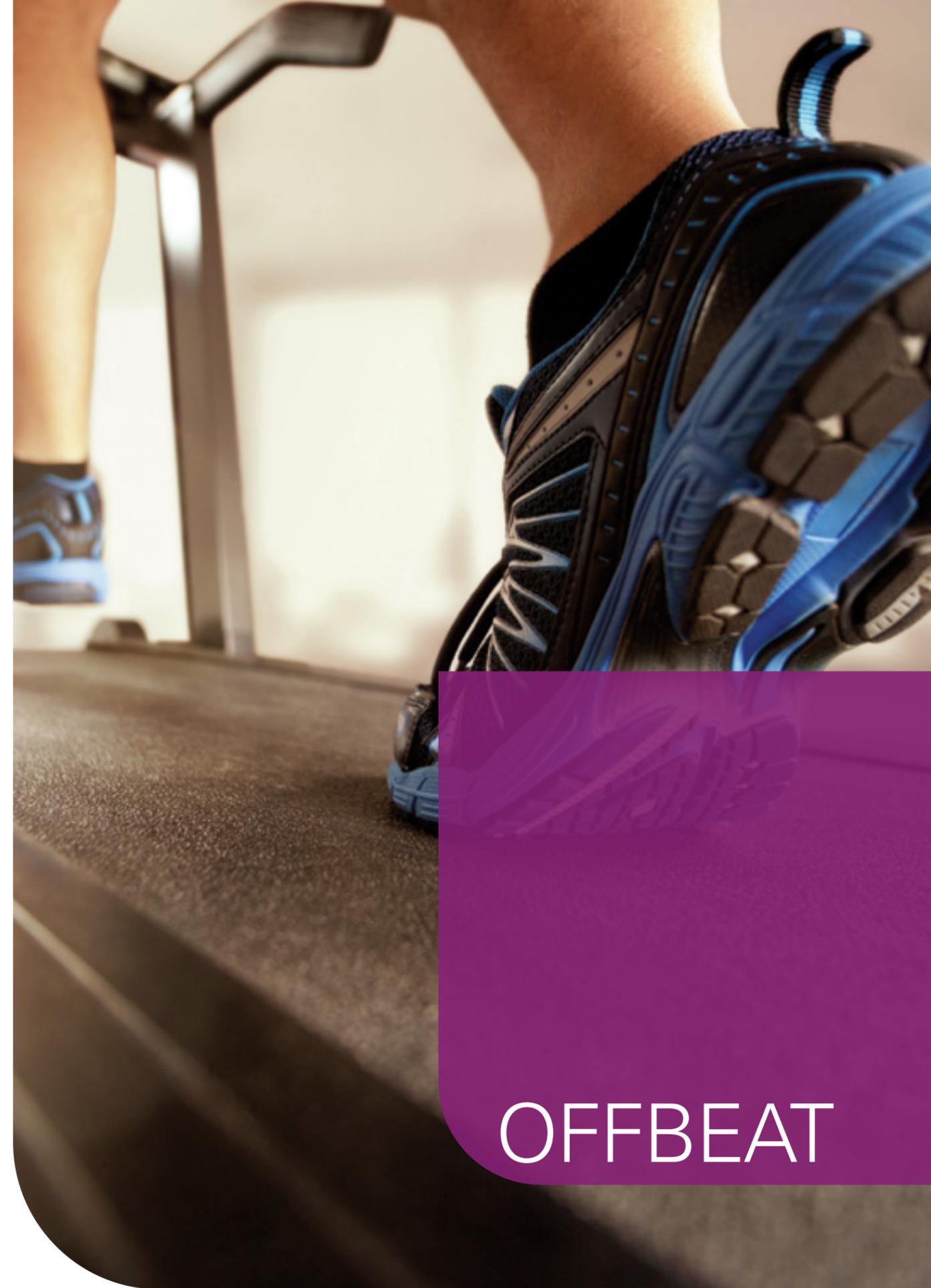
SAFE DRIVING, SAVES LIVES

The AIE Club at Notre Dame University-Louaize Shouf Campus (NDU-SC), in collaboration with KUNHADI, organized late last year a lecture in the SC Conference Room on road safety. The purpose was to spread awareness of the importance of safe driving among the Lebanese youth especially given the increasing number of fatalities resulting from road accidents.

Fr. Hanna Tayar, Director of the SC, and Br. Charbel Doumany, Director of the Student Affairs Office (SAO) at the SC, were among the many students, staff, and faculty members present at the event.

Ms. Venus Kaasamany, President of the AIE Club at the SC, welcomed the attendees and thanked KUNHADI for supporting the event. A short documentary about Hadi, who had passed away in a car accident, and who is the main reason behind the foundation of KUNHADI, was shown. Hadi's mother, the founder of KUNHADI, then took the podium to discuss the organization's main aims, which include spreading awareness concerning reckless driving, speeding, and driving under the influence, as well as emphasizing the importance of buckling up and safe driving. The lecture ended with tips on how to avoid risks on the roads and the distribution of road safety pamphlets and handouts.

The AIE Club thanked KUNHADI for their contribution and presented Hadi's mother with a bouquet of flowers as a token of appreciation.



OFFBEAT

BITE-SIZE NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD...

(compiled from various sources by MARIO NAJM)

LEBANON

Food Leaves a Bad Taste Across the Country

Food safety took a new turn across Lebanon in late 2014, and Lebanon Health Minister Wael Abu Faour continues with his food safety campaign well into 2015. In a country famed for its food and tourism industry, the campaign unveiled a host of nasty surprises for consumers. Apparently, both the Lebanese and tourists alike have been unwittingly eating expired, rotten, and semolina-contaminated foods for close to two decades while paying top-dollar for such meals! Only in Lebanon!



MIDDLE EAST

Fattest Man Alive from KSA

Khalid bin Mohsen Shaari, who weighs 610 kilograms and is the fattest man on the planet, was airlifted from his home to the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, for medical treatment. The obese young man had to be forklifted from his apartment bedroom to an airlift heading to the King Fahd Medical City, according to CNN. Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health spokesman said that Shaari, who is between the ages of 18 and 20, was unable to move and had not left his apartment in over two years. Shaari is undergoing a series of dietary and physical programs to help him lose weight at the King Fahd Medical City. Special beds and trolleys have been made for him.



WORLD

Monopoly with Real Notes in France

There cannot be a Monopoly fan in the world who has not dreamed of one day playing a round with real money. Now, for the 80th anniversary of the game's first appearance in France, manufacturers are providing exactly that - at least for 80 lucky buyers. Only one set will land the major jackpot, in which every game note is replaced by real money - for a total windfall of 20,580 euros (US\$23,268). "We wanted to do something unique," said Florence Gaillard, brand manager at Hasbro France, which recently rolled out the prize sets.



BUSINESS

Wall Street Guru Gives Away US\$800 Million

Hedge fund multi-millionaire Robert W. Wilson, 87, leapt to his death from the 16th floor of his luxury San Remo apartment building, a prestigious address in New York's Upper West Side which has been the residence of Steven Spielberg, Demi Moore, Glenn Close, Dustin Hoffman, Bono, Steve Martin, Bruce Willis, and Steve Jobs in the past. According to the New York Police Department, he left a note at the scene. He had suffered from a stroke just a few months before and did not want to suffer. Maybe as his final act of redemption, he gave away US\$800 million to various charities to help make difference in the world.



ENTERTAINMENT

Fifty Shades of Grey: Voted Most Erotic Film in the Past Decade

Following close on the heels of the most successful novel *Fifty Shades of Grey*, the movie of the same name, which was released on Valentine's Day is said to be the most erotic film ever produced in the past 10 years. The movie has in it more sex on screen than the 100 raunchiest films released in 2014 put together. The film features a dozen sex scenes, which make up 20 minutes of its total 100-minute running time. Best leave mom at home for this flick.



OUT OF THE ORDINARY

Leopard Seals Have a Heart

While documenting leopard seals in Antarctica for a 2006 *National Geographic* magazine story, photographer Paul Nicklen had an experience that he says "will stay with me forever." That experience has recently resurfaced and gone viral on the Internet, thanks to remixing and postings on Facebook and other outlets. Nicklen explained how an encounter with one particular female leopard seal was especially poignant. The animal had a head larger than that of a grizzly bear, but instead of harming him, the seal began to "nurture" him. It began to bring him penguins, first alive, then dead, perhaps assuming that he was a "useless predator in her ocean." The top predator apparently tried to feed the weaker Nicklen for four days as he scuba dived in the area, working on the assignment.



SPORTS

Is Number One Seed Serena Williams a Man?

Serena Jameka Williams is one of the world's most famous professional tennis players and is currently ranked No. 1 in women's singles tennis. Frequently hailed as the "queen of the court" by the general media, Williams has come under fire on the Internet recently with many claiming she is, in fact, a man who has had a sex change operation and invaded women's tennis. To add fuel to the speculation, the head of the Russian Tennis Federation referred to her and older sister, Venus, as "brothers." An Adam's apple and way too much muscle on a female frame may serve as a clue.



CULTURE

Michelangelo's Bronze Sculptures Revealed

Two sculptures that languished in obscurity for more than a century may be the only surviving bronze works by Michelangelo, researchers announced in Britain recently. The international research team led by Britain's University of Cambridge and the Fitzwilliam Museum uncovered new evidence, linking the two nude works to Michelangelo, whose famed works include the painted ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Standing at a metre tall, the sculptures are of a young man and an older man riding panthers, and if confirmed the discovery would make them only surviving Michelangelo bronzes in the world.



SCIENCE

My, It's Hot in Here

The year 2014 was the hottest on record, "consistent" with a changing climate, the U.N.'s weather agency recently published. Average global air temperatures in 2014 were 0.57°C higher than the long-term average of 14°C in a 1961-1990 reference period, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said in a statement.



"Fourteen of the fifteen hottest years have all been this century," said WMO Secretary-General Michel Jarraud. "In 2014, record-breaking heat combined with torrential rainfall and floods in many countries and drought in some others - consistent with the expectation of a changing climate," he added.

TECHNOLOGY

Aircraft Set for Minute-by-Minute Tracking

All commercial flights worldwide could soon send out an automated signal every minute in times of distress to help rescuers find downed aircraft more easily. The new measures are in response to last year's disappearance of Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing in what remains one of history's great aviation mysteries. The aircraft, with 239 people on board, has never been found, nearly a year on. The new tracking rules, prepared by an industry working group, would be phased in by the end of 2015, said the

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), a United Nations agency. Currently, radar can track a plane, however, coverage fades when aircraft are out at sea or the plane is flying below a certain altitude.



HEALTH

Should You Hit the Gym Hungry?

Ditching food before the gym may not help you ditch your belly. Doing cardio workouts on an empty stomach won't help you lose weight any faster than training on a full stomach, according to research published in the *Journal of the International Society of Sports*. Study participants were split into two groups. Both groups ran on a treadmill for 60 minutes, three days a week. One group downed a meal-replacement shake before each workout, while the other group completed them without food. And after four weeks, both groups lost the same amount of weight. "There's a belief that when you exercise on an empty stomach, your body burns fat for fuel instead of the food you've just ingested," explains lead researcher Brad Schoenfeld, Ph.D. "But there's no evidence to support that fasted cardio has any benefit for fat loss."



TOP JOKE

A blonde and a lawyer are seated next to each other on a flight from Los Angeles to New York.

The lawyer asks if she would like to play a fun game. The blonde, tired, just wants to take a nap, politely declines and rolls over to the window to catch a few winks.

The lawyer persists and explains that the game is easy and a lot of fun. He explains, "I ask you a question, and if you don't know the answer, you pay me five dollars, and vice-versa."

Again, she declines and tries to get some sleep. The lawyer, now agitated, says, "Okay, if you don't know the answer you pay me five dollars, and if I don't know the answer, I will pay you five hundred dollars!"

This catches the blonde's attention and, figuring there will be no end to this torment unless she plays, agrees to the game.

The lawyer asks the first question. "What's the distance from the earth to the moon?" The blonde doesn't say a word, reaches into her purse, pulls out a five-dollar bill and hands it to the lawyer.

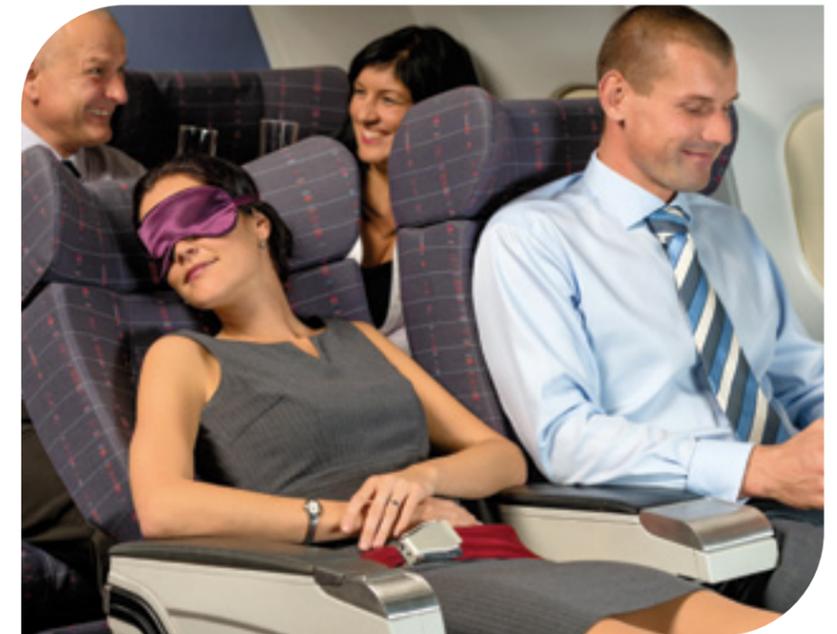
"Okay," says the lawyer, "your turn." She asks the lawyer, "What goes up a hill with three legs and comes down with four legs?"

The lawyer, puzzled, takes out his laptop and searches all his references, no answer. He taps into the air phone with his modem and searches the net and the Library of Congress, no answer.

Frustrated, he sends e-mails to all his friends and co-workers, to no avail. After an hour, he wakes the blonde, and hands her five hundred dollars. The blonde says, "Thank you," and turns back to get some more sleep.

The lawyer, who is more than a little displeased, wakes the blonde and asks, "Well, what's the answer?" Without a word, the blonde reaches into her purse, hands the lawyer five dollars, and goes back to sleep.

And you thought blondes were dumb!



DAUGHTERS OF THE SOIL:

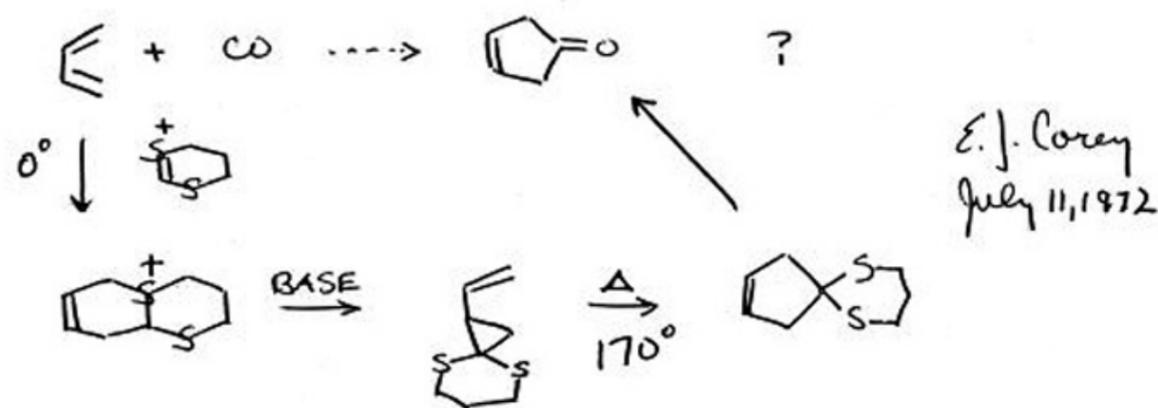
Sons of the Soil: Elias James Corey

Professor Elias James "E.J." Corey (born July 12, 1928) is a Lebanese-American organic chemist. He won the 1990 Nobel Prize in Chemistry "for his development of the theory and methodology of organic synthesis," specifically retrosynthetic analysis. Regarded by many as one of the greatest living chemists, he has developed numerous synthetic reagents, methodologies, total syntheses, and has advanced the science of organic synthesis considerably.

Corey (the surname comes from the Khoury family in Lebanon, and means priest in Arabic) was born to Christian Lebanese immigrants in Methuen, Massachusetts. His mother changed his name to "Elias" to honor his father who died eighteen months after the birth of his son. Despite his father's death, Corey's family remained very close and hard-working.

Corey has more than 1,100 publications. In 2002, the American Chemical Society (ACS) recognized him as the "Most Cited Author in Chemistry." He has received more than 40 major awards, including the Linus Pauling Award (1973), Franklin Medal (1978), Tetrahedron Prize (1983), Wolf Prize in Chemistry (1986), National Medal of Science (1988), Japan Prize (1989), Nobel Prize in Chemistry (1990), Roger Adams Award (1993), and the Priestley Medal (2004).

He was inducted into the Alpha Chi Sigma Hall of Fame in 1998. As of 2008, he has been awarded 19 honorary degrees from universities around the world, including Oxford University (U.K.), Cambridge University (U.K.), and National Chung Cheng University. In 2013, the E.J. Corey Institute of Biomedical Research (CIBR) opened in Jiangyin, Jiangsu Province, China.



SOCIAL

OBITUARIES

- It is with deep regret and sorrow that we announce the deaths of the following individuals:
- **Mr. JOSEPH HAJJAR**, father of Dr. Roger Hajjar, full-time staff member at the Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences (FNAS);
 - **IBRAHIM GERGES CHALHOUB**, father of Mrs. Mary al-Achkar, NDU Operator;
 - **Mrs. ISABELLE SAADE**, mother of Dr. Lola Beyrouthi, Chairperson, Music Dept., Faculty of Architecture, Arts and Design (FAAD);
 - **Mr. MANSOUR BECHARA**, former President of NDU Friends and father of Ms. Sandra Bechara, part-time faculty member at the Faculty Humanities;
 - **Phillip Daghfal**, father of Ms. Graziella Daghfal, full-time staff at the Faculty of Architecture, Arts and Design (FAAD);
 - **Michel Toufic Chamaa Bou Hadir**, father of Majed Bou Hadir, Head of the Community Service Office (CSO);
 - **ISABELLE BOUTROS ABI GHOSN**, mother of Mr. Gaby Saliba, Maintenance Supervisor;
 - **SIMON KHALIL JABBOUR**, father of Ms. Aline Jabbour, Admissions Office Assistant.

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

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

We are happy to announce the birth of Marven Madi who was born on Thursday, August 28, 2014. Marven is the son of Mrs. Sahar Nassar Madi, Web Designer at the Division of Computing Services and e-Learning Center, NDU. May God bestow his blessings on Marven.



BOOK SIGNING

Souhail Matar, Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communications at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), signed on March 12, 2015, his new book titled, *Dearest Friends, From the Heart to Heart, Part III*.

Hosted at the Cultural Movement in Antelias, the book-signing event witnessed a large turnout of notable political, military, and religious figures as well as a large number of friends and colleagues.

Prominent writers and philosophers, politicians, and leading figures in arts and culture delivered a number of speeches, praising Matar's efforts and creativity. The speakers also thanked him for his great service to Lebanese thought and for disseminating Lebanese cultural values around the world.



OPINION AND CULTURE

RUINS OF THE Umayyad PALACE
-TERRY BITAR

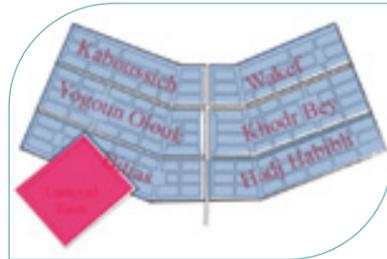
Geographical Locations And Climatic Zones

BRIEF OVERVIEW

- Anjar was built by Omayyad Caliph Al-Walid Ibn Abdel Malek in the early eighth century in the neighborhood of an ancient stronghold called Gerrha;
- The Remains of streets, three palaces, souks (bazaars), two hammams (public baths), and a mosque are still standing; and
- The walls of the Caliph's Great Palace are still largely intact, with clues to the former presence of forty towers. Traces of fluted columns are found, indicating that there may have been a Roman castle on the hill.

GEOGRAPHY

- Altitude: 950 meters above sea level;
- Area: 15.5-km²;
- 50 kilometers from the capital of Lebanon, Beirut; and
- Located in the Bekaa Valley.



NAME

Anjar is also known as Haoush Moussa. It is divided into six quarters: Haji Habibli, Kabusia, Vakif, Khedr Bek, Yogh Oluk, and Bitias. Originally, these names were the names of the six villages of Musa Dagh.



HISTORICAL FACTS

In 1939, Anjar was a dry, dusty land, full of insects and diseases, such as Malaria, and that was where 5,000 Armenian refugees from Musa Dagh, Turkey, were relocated with the help of the French navy. During the first few months in exile, more than 500 Armenians died due to disease and malnutrition. During that time, the refugees lived in tents. Later, conditions improved when water fountains and houses, with one room and an external bathroom, were built with the help of the French government.

GOVERNMENT

Today, approximately 2,400 people, 99.99% of them Armenian, live in Anjar. Anjar has its own municipality, under the District of Zahle; its mayor is Mr. Sebouh Sekayan. Besides the mayor, six *mukhtars*, or regional representatives, and 14 city council members form the local government.

TOURISM

A very popular place in Anjar is the Anjar Spring, where every Sunday hundreds of people from the surrounding villages gather to picnic and dine in the popular Lebanese restaurants, where freshwater fish is served. Trout being the most popular fish.

During the summer of 1993, a Musical Festival took place in the Umayyad ruins. The ruins attract a great number of local and European tourists, especially during summer.

Owner And Story Of The City

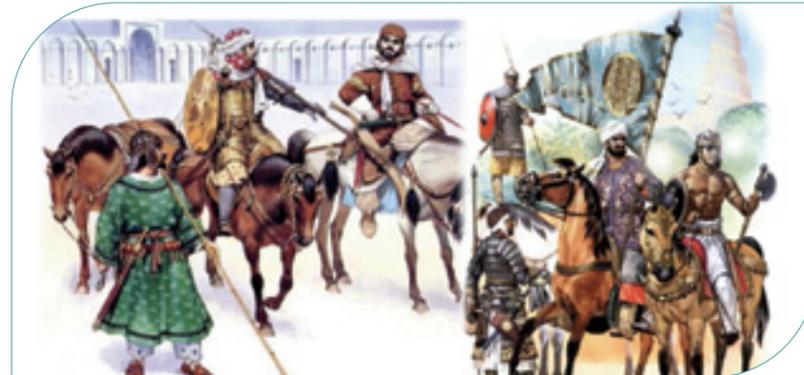
BRIEF OVERVIEW

- After being abandoned for several years, it was resettled in 1939 with Armenian refugees from Musa Dagh in Turkey;
- Completely different from any other historical site that have different civilizations super-imposed on top of each other; and
- Anjar is exclusively one period "the Umayyads."



UMAYYAD CIVILIZATION

- First heredity dynasty of Islam;
- Ruled after the Prophet Mohamed; and
- From 660 to 750 AD (approximately 100 years).



THE ONE WHO BUILT THE CITY

Some literary documents state that it was Walid I – Son of Caliph Abd El Malek Bin Marwan who built the city between 705 – 715 A.D.

WHY WAS IT BUILT?

- It was built as a summer residence for the Caliph to that he could escape the hustle and bustle of Damascus; and
- Later, transformed into an Inland Commercial Center.

SUMMARY

Founded during the Umayyad period under Caliph Walid Bin Abed Al-Malek (705-715), the city of Anjar bears outstanding witness to the Umayyad civilization.

Anjar is an example of an inland commercial center, at the crossroads of two important routes: One leading from Beirut to Damascus and the other crossing the Bekaa and leading from Homs to Tiberiade. Archaeologists only discovered the site of this ancient city at the end of the 1940s. Excavations revealed a fortified city surrounded by walls and flanked by forty towers, a rectangular area (385 x 350 m). Dominated by gates flanked by porticos, an important north-south axis and a lesser east-west axis, superposed above the main collectors for sewers, divide the city into four equal quadrants.

Public and private buildings are laid out according to a strict plans: The great palace of the Caliph and the Mosque in the southeast quarter occupies the highest part of the site, while the small palaces (harems) and the baths are located in the northeast quarter to facilitate the functioning and evacuation of waste water.

Secondary functions and living quarters are distributed in the northwest and southwest quarters. The ruins are dominated by spectacular vestiges of a monumental Tetrastylon, as well as by the walls and colonnades of the Umayyad palace, three levels of which have been preserved. These structures incorporate decorative or architectural elements of the Roman era, but are also noteworthy for the exceptional plasticity of the contemporary decor within the construction.

Anjar was never completed, enjoying only a brief existence. In 744, Caliph Ibrahim, son of Walid,

was defeated and afterward the partially destroyed city was abandoned. Vestiges of the city of Anjar, therefore, constitute a unique example of 8th century town planning.

Built at the beginning of the Islamic period, it reflects a transition from a protobyzantine culture to the development of Islamic art and this through the evolution of construction techniques and architectural and decorative elements that may be viewed in the different monuments.

Building Typology

THE UMAYYAD ARCHITECTURE

Umayyad architecture developed in the Umayyad Caliphate between 661 and 750, primarily in its heartlands of Syria and Palestine. It drew extensively on the architecture of the defeated Byzantine and Sassanid empires, but introduced innovations in decoration and new types of building, such as mosques with mihrab's and minarets.

Almost all monuments from the Umayyad period that have survived are in Syria and Palestine. The sanctuary of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem is the oldest surviving Islamic building.

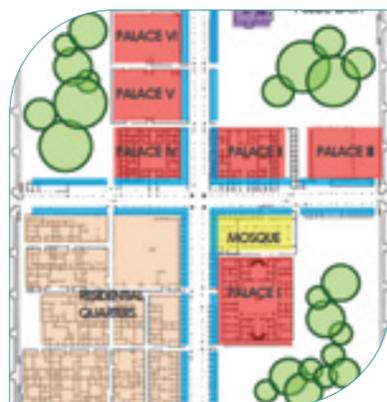
The Umayyads adopted the construction techniques of the Byzantine and Sassanid empires. They often re-used existing buildings. There was some innovation in decoration and in types of building. Most buildings in Syria were of high quality ashlar masonry, using large tightly-joined blocks, sometimes with carving on the facade. Stone barrel vaults were only used to roof small spans. Wooden roofs were used for larger spans, with the wood in Syria brought from the forests of Leba-

non. These roofs usually had shallow pitches and rested on wooden trusses. Wooden domes were constructed for Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, both in Jerusalem. Baked brick and mud brick were used in Mesopotamia, due to lack of stone. Where brick was used in Syria, the work was in the finer Mesopotamian style rather than the more crude Byzantine style.

The Umayyads used local workers and architects. Some of their buildings cannot be distinguished from those of the previous regime. In many cases, however, eastern and western elements were combined to give a distinctive new Islamic style. For example, the walls at Qasr Mshatta are built from cut stone in the Syrian manner, the vaults are Mesopotamian in design and Coptic and Byzantine elements appear in the decorative carving. The horseshoe arch appears for the first time in Umayyad architecture, later to evolve to its most advanced form in al-Andalus. Umayyad architecture is distinguished by the extent and variety of decoration, including mosaics, wall painting sculpture and carved reliefs with Islamic motifs.

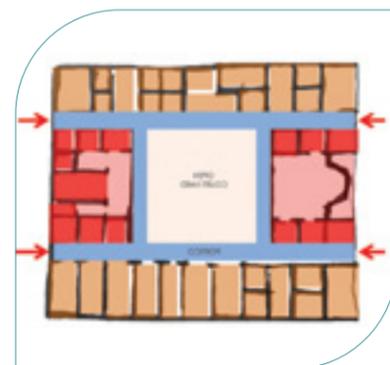
COMPOSITION OF THE CITY

- Composed of the Great Palace and a Mosque on the southeastern part (mainly the highest point of the site);
- Two other palaces and a public bath on the north-eastern part (lowest point of the site, easy for dispo-nible flushing of the bath);
- Three other palaces on the northwestern part;
- While, the residential quarters lay on the south-western part; and
- Three Hundred shops were laid on both sides of the main streets (constituting a kind of fencing for all the buildings).



TPOLOGY OF CASTLES

- The plan of the palaces re-sembles that of a basilica;
- Four main entrances, from North and South;
- Heading to the Portico;
- Leading to the Main Open-Court in the middle;
- Whereas lay two super-imposed Thrones for the caliph, one on the north-ern side and one on the southern; and
- While the Entourages' chambers spreading all over the palace.



TPOLOGY OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- First, the shops;
- Second, an entrance to an Open Courtyard in the middle with a fountain; and
- Third, chambers strewn all around the court (closely resembling the Syrian houses shown in Bab al-Hara).



Structural Systems

“Almost all monuments from the Umayyad period that have survived are in Syria and Palestine. The sanctuary of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem is the oldest surviving Islamic building. The Umayyads adopted the construction techniques of the Byzantine and Sassanid empires. They often re-used existing buildings. There was some innovation in decoration and in types of building. Most buildings in Syria were of high quality ashlar masonry, using large tightly-joined blocks, sometimes with carving on the facade. Stone barrel vaults were only used to roof small spans. Wooden roofs were used for larger spans, with the wood in Syria brought from the forests of Lebanon. These roofs usually had shallow pitches and rested on wooden trusses. Wooden domes were constructed for Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, both in Jerusalem. Baked brick and mud brick were used in Mesopotamia, due to lack of stone. Where brick was used in Syria, the work was in the finer Mesopotamian style rather than the more crude Byzantine style.”

“The Umayyads used local workers and architects. Some of their buildings cannot be distinguished from those of the previous regime. However, in many cases eastern and western elements were combined to give a distinctive new Islamic style. For example, the walls at Qasr Mshatta are built from cut stone in the Syrian manner, the vaults are Mesopotamian in design and Coptic and Byzantine elements appear in the decorative carving. The horseshoe arch appears for the first time in Umayyad architecture, later to evolve to its most advanced form in al-Andalus. Umayyad architecture is distinguished by the extent and variety of decoration, including mosaics, wall painting, sculpture and carved reliefs with Islamic motifs.”

GENERAL ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- The Umayyads mainly used local materials and architects;
- High quality ashlar masonry;
- Large tightly-joined blocks;
- Stone barrel vaults were only used to roof small spans; and
- Wooden roofs were used for larger spans.

CEILING SYSTEM

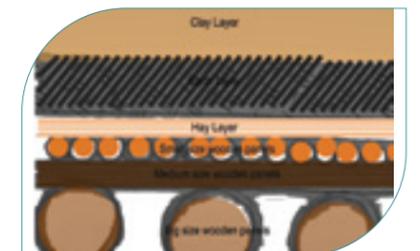
- Large-size wooden panels;
- Medium-size;
- Small-size;
- Hay;
- Earth; and
- Clay;

WALL FOUNDATION

- Large-size stone in foundation;
- Small-size constitute the wall; and
- Pebbles within.

CEILING - WALL CONNECTION

The wall extends higher than the ceiling to protect the whole.



Materials

THE Umayyad Architecture Materials

“The Umayyads adopted the construction techniques of the Byzantine and Sassanid empires. They often re-used existing buildings. There was some innovation in decoration and in types of building. Most buildings in Syria were of high quality ashlar masonry, using large tightly-joined blocks, sometimes with carving on the facade. Stone barrel vaults were only used to roof small spans. Wooden roofs were used for larger spans, with the wood in Syria brought from the forests of Lebanon. These roofs usually had shallow pitches and rested on wooden trusses. Wooden domes were constructed for Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, both in Jerusalem. Baked brick and mud brick were used in Mesopotamia, due to lack of stone. Where brick was used in Syria, the work was in the finer Mesopotamian style rather than the more crude Byzantine style.”

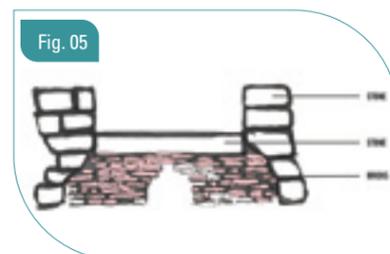
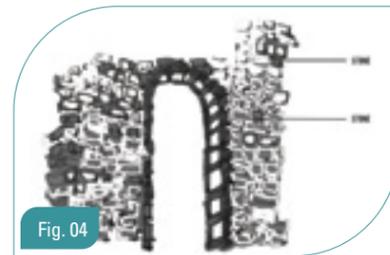
SUMMARY OF Umayyad TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS

- Adopted the construction techniques of the Byzantine Empire;
- Reused existing buildings;
- Innovation in decoration;
- Used high quality ashlar masonry;
- Used large tightly-joined blocks;
- Carvings on façade;
- Stone barrel vaults for small spans;
- Wooden roofs for larger spans;
- Wood was brought from the cedars of Lebanon; and
- Baked bricks and mud bricks used in Mesopotamia.

SUMMARY

In brief, the materials used within the construction of this city can be summed as follows:

- Stone (Fig 01 - 04) Due to lack of quarries in Anjar, stone was imported from “Kamed al-Lawz” which is 6 kilometers to the south of the city.
- Wood (Fig 02) Imported from the cedars of Lebanon.
- Bricks (Fig 03 - 05) Cast in place with the following materials (sand – clay – lime – magnesia – iron oxide).
- White Concrete (Fig 03) (Bonding material) Cast in place with the following ingredients (lime – sand – ash).



Reference Bacharach, Jere L. (1996). "Marwanid Umayyad Building Activities: Speculations on Patronage". In Necipolu, Gülru. Muqarnas: An Annual on the Visual Culture of the Islamic World 13. Leiden: BRILL. pp. 27-44.

DIVERSITY AND GENIUS OF HANS HOFFMAN'S ART -MIRNA FAWAZ*

Hoffman and the Abstraction in Nature

Abstract art is often difficult for most people to understand, because they have little to no comprehension of the theories that lie behind this particular art form. Unlike traditional art, late modernist paintings, such as those created by the lesser-known Hans Hoffman, sought to convey something more than the pictorial element while remaining free of the laws and rules of composition that had been constructed and built upon since the time of the ancient Greeks. These paintings seek to convey an emotional context that remains separate from any kind of recognizable subject. This is done through the artful use of color and form as they interact with or are a part of the materials and support. "In its purest form in Western art, abstract art is ... completely non-objective or non-representational"⁽¹⁾. The main concept behind abstract art is based on the idea that art is not static; rather, interactive with its audience, their political and social ideas, together with the symbols inherent in the particular forms used within the artwork. By reducing the recognizable forms, therefore, it becomes possible for the artist to attain a more pure expression in his or her creation. Jean-Francois Lyotard argues that avant-garde art uses experimental innovations in technique and structure to attempt "to make visible that there is something which can be conceived and which can neither be seen nor made visible"⁽²⁾.

As an abstract artist, Hofmann was known as a synthesist because he brought together traditional methods and avant-garde concepts concerning the nature of painting, largely based on the works of Modern painters Cezanne, Kandinsky, and Picasso's Synthetic Cubism. Because teaching dominated much of his creative life, his art was often critically measured against his theories.

Biography

Hans Hofmann was born in 1880 near Munich, Germany in a small city called Weissenburg, Bavaria. Growing up, he was surrounded by images of the past, as his city still retained many remains of its ancient Roman past and of the countryside, with the closest large city being Ingolstadt more than 30 miles away. While this does not seem that far away to a modern audience accustomed to the use of cars to drive to the city every day from far off suburbs, Hoffman grew up in a time when the automobile was just springing to life. Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach created the first practical working horseless carriage in 1889 in Germany, when Hofmann was already 9 years old ⁽³⁾. It is possible that Hofmann had a chance to experience some of the technologies that were being developed in association with the automobile, however, because his father moved the family to Munich when Hofmann was just six when he took a job working for the government. "Hofmann developed an interest in mathematics, science, music and art at a very early



Mirna Fawaz



Hans Hoffman

age. When he was sixteen, his father helped him obtain a job with the Bavarian government as the assistant to the director of public works. During this time, Hofmann further developed his technical knowledge of mathematics, even inventing and patenting an electromagnetic comptometer" ⁽⁴⁾. Despite this, Hofmann's interest in art was superior to his interest in mathematics and, when his father died in the late 1800s, Hofmann decided to pursue this interest in greater detail.

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¹Boddy-Evans, "Abstract Art: An Introduction." (Published by Marion, 2006).
²Lyotard Jean-Francois, The Postmodern Condition, (Trans.Geoff Minneapolis, 1997)
³- " The Great Idea Finder" ,(Troy, MI: Vaunt Design Group, March, Ament, Phil, "Automobile 2005).
<http://www.ideafinder.com/history/inventions/automobile.htm>
⁴-Hans Hofmann."(January 2007) . HansHofmann.net. Available February 28, 2008 <http://www.hanshofmann.net/index.html>

By 1898, Hofmann was studying art at the Mortiz Heymann's art school in Munich, where he encountered some of the new developments within the art world such as pointillism and impressionism. His skill and enthusiasm in embracing these movements spurred his instructor, Will Schwartz, to recommend Hofmann to continue his studies in Paris, the great art capital of the world at that time⁽⁵⁾. Hofmann gained the support of Berlin art patron Phillip Freudenberg and spent the years from 1904-1914 in Paris. It was here that he "became associated with the leading artists and readily absorbed the most vital ideas and styles, chiefly symbolism, neoimpressionism, fauvism and cubism. He worked with Matisse and was a friend of Picasso and Delaunay"⁽⁶⁾. With the outbreak of World War I, Hofmann felt it necessary to return to his homeland and opened a new modern art school in Munich, which he ran for 18 years. With the rise of the Nazi party in Germany, however, Hofmann decided, like many Germans nervous about the increasing restrictions on their artistic expression, to leave the country for New York in America. Hofmann reopened his school in New York "where many of the artists who were to become the leaders of the postwar generation became his students or were influenced by him, either through his teaching, his painting or by his powerful personality"⁽⁷⁾. Hofmann died in 1966 after having brought to America the new ideas of Europe and providing artists in this country with the means to continue developing concepts of abstract art and expression into the new age.

Approach to Art and Nature

For Hofmann, art was something that could not be separated from the basic concepts found in nature. This might not be immediately apparent to the casual observer of his paintings, most of which are characterized by blocks of color defining nothing specific but managing to evoke entire ranges of emotion. "He combined Cubist structure and intense Fauvist color into a highly personal visual language with which he endlessly explored pictorial structures and chromatic relationships. Hofmann created volume in his compositions not by rendering or modeling but through contrasts of color, shape and surface"⁽⁸⁾. In each of these explorations, Hofmann relied on the forms and structures of nature to inform the piece, allowing his thought and his motion to mirror one another in visible details on the surface of the canvas, building up texture and color to enhance an impression, a reaction or an interaction. "As an artist Hofmann tirelessly explored pictorial structure, spatial tensions and color relationships. In his earliest portraits done just years into the 20th century, his interior scenes of the 1940s and his signature canvases of the late 1950s and the early 1960s, Hofmann brought to his paintings what art historian Karen Wilkin has described as a 'range from loose accumulations of brushy strokes ... to crisply tailored arrangements of rectangles ... but that somehow seems less significant than their uniform intensity, their common pounding energy and their consistent physicality'⁽⁹⁾. To Hofmann, it was not necessary to view a landscape to be inspired by nature as everything the human mind conceives of is primarily informed by the shapes inherent in nature. An understanding of this passion for nature is the key to understanding his ideas on abstraction.

Ideas on Nature

As already stated, Hoffman believed that the natural world was the source of all human inspiration. Within the natural world, forms are created by the intersection of lines, squiggles, shapes, colors, and definition of space as it is divided and organized by a variety of these forms. "He incessantly probed natural elements, focusing on volume, and geometric forms in positive and negative spaces"⁽¹⁰⁾. This investigation into volume and form slowly developed into a highly abstract approach to representation that emerged in his teaching and his artwork. This development can be traced as one compares his work throughout the course of his career. Hofmann's development of the use of nature within his work can be seen to develop into more and more abstract representation as it progressed from the early *Landscape* of 1935 through *Provocation* (1946) to the later works such as *Frollicking* (1965).

Landscape portrays an impressionist-inspired and recognizable landscape image. Within the painting, one can clearly discern several small blue farm buildings scattered about the central ground with hay-colored hills stretching into the horizon, the suggestion of a tree to one side and the indication of a small farm garden in the foreground. The painting is done in somewhat washed out yellows, blues and greens, conveying a sense

of friendliness without being too inviting. Ten years later, Hofmann's paintings had shifted into a more abstract mode yet still seemed probably inspired by natural settings as in *Provocation*. Here, brighter colors and jagged lines are placed against a black central ground, giving the piece a much higher degree of impact. However, the spiked lighter form in the center of the canvas retains a sense of an old and bent tree, which is emphasized by bright red vaguely circular blotches seeming to 'fall' from the 'branches'. Without examining too far into the history of the piece, nature is still easily found within the forms used to express any ideas intended. In the year before he died, Hofmann created *Frollicking* in which there are no clearly naturally inspired elements unless one considers the concept of colored smoke. However, the wispy shapes and solid forms still manage to convey a sense of the natural.

These three paintings illustrate the development of Hofmann's abstraction while remaining focused on natural elements. "Hofmann produced a new type of landscape, one that is composed, not of trees and land, but of the tension between its space, form, color and planes"⁽¹¹⁾. As Hofmann perfected his concentration on forms, he began seeing them in terms of objects that helped to divide the scene into positive and negative space rather than specific forms such as trees, houses or haystacks. "It was the object, he said, that creates the negative or positive space, not, as traditionally conceived, that an object is placed in a space. If an object creates space, then it is light that creates form. Similarly, light makes color in nature, but color creates light in painting"⁽¹²⁾. Thus, from this conception of nature, Hofmann developed his ideas of abstraction.

Ideas on Abstraction

In keeping with the ideas of the later Modernist movement, Hofmann's ideas on abstraction had their roots in attempts to find the truth of reality. Modern art devotes itself "to presenting the existence of something unrepresentable; 'it will make one see only by prohibiting one from seeing'"⁽¹³⁾. This idea remains visible in Hofmann's work as he allows color to bring out the form of objects found in his images rather than the form to dictate the color. This is also expressed in his stated conceptions regarding abstraction and its value to art. "When the artist is well equipped with conscious feeling, memory and balanced sensibilities, he intensifies his concepts by penetrating his subject and by condensing his experience into a reality of the spirit complete in itself Thus he creates a new reality in terms of the medium"⁽¹⁴⁾. Through the process of creating art as an expression of the interaction between the artist and the landscape, the artwork becomes more than a mere image but instead manages to communicate to the viewer some of this original impression as well as a secondary reaction that is completely between the artist, the piece and the viewer.

An uneducated eye might suggest that, especially with his later works, the art of Hofmann consists of little more than meaningless squares and other shapes, nothing beyond the abilities of the smallest child and certainly nothing informed by complicated philosophical theories. "The difference between art produced by children and great works of art is that one is approached through the purely subconscious and emotional, and the other retains a consciousness of experience as the work develops and is emotionally enlarged through the greater command of the expression-medium"⁽¹⁵⁾.

Hofmann, as an instructor, was well aware of many theories relating to artistic expression, relativity, the medium of expression, pictorial laws, the influence of the picture plane and principles of light and color. Hofmann as a painter had an intuitive sense for his art and a spiritual, metaphysical connection to the images he produced. Together, Hofmann managed to effect a significant impact upon the development of art in the United States into the present day.

⁵-Hans Hofmann. (January 2007). *HansHofmann.net*. Available February 28, 2008

⁶-Herschel B. Chipp, "Theories of Modern Art", (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1968), 511

⁷-Herschel B. Chipp, "Theories of Modern Art", (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1968), 511

⁸-Catalogue Raisonne Project. (New York, 2007). <http://www.hanshofmann.org/catalogue>

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¹⁰-Carasso, Roberta. "Hans Hofmann." *Imago Galleries*. Palm Desert, (November 26, 2005)

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¹²-Carasso, Roberta. "Hans Hofmann." *Imago Galleries*. Palm Desert, (November 26, 2005)

¹³-Immanuel Kant, "The Critique of Judgment". (New York: Prometheus Books, 2000), 11.

¹⁴ & ¹⁵-Glenn Wessels., Search for the Real and Other Essays by Hans Hofmann. (Trans.) S.T. (1948), 73-74.



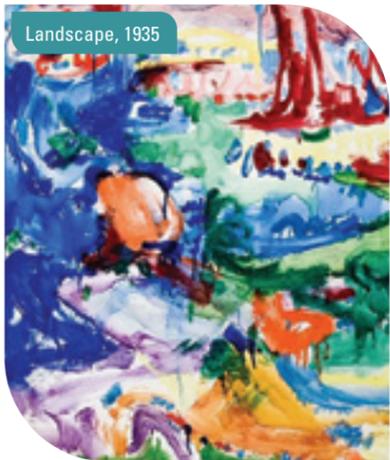
The Wind, 1942.



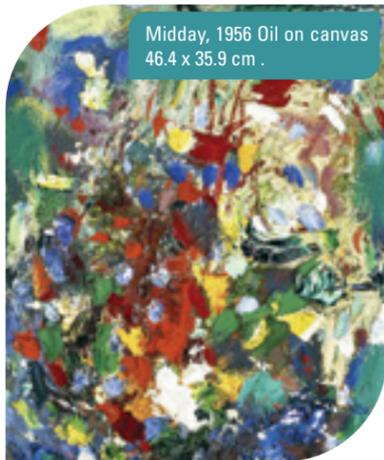
Sanctum Sanctorum, 1962



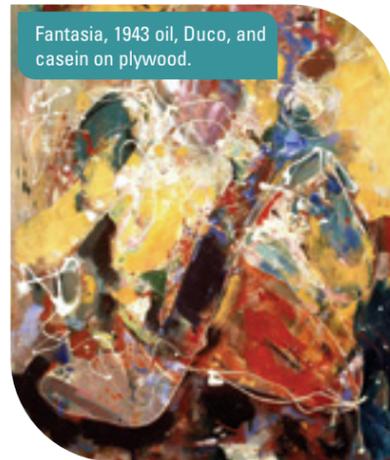
Mirage, 1946 Oil on canvas
64.1 x 73.2 cm.



Landscape, 1935



Midday, 1956 Oil on canvas
46.4 x 35.9 cm .



Fantasia, 1943 oil, Duco, and
casein on plywood.



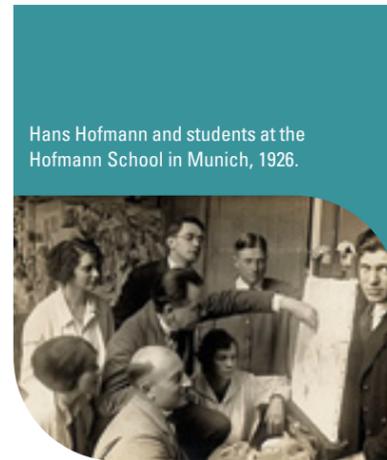
Chimera, 1959 Oil on canvas.



The Lark, 1960



Landscape, 1935



Hans Hofmann and students at the
Hofmann School in Munich, 1926.



Figures, 1945

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GÜNTER GRASS

The recipient of the 1999 Nobel Prize in Literature and renowned author Günter Grass passed away on April 13, 2015, at the ripe old age of 87. The German-born Grass was a multi-talented artist and prolific novelist, poet, playwright, illustrator, graphic artist, and sculptor. Born in the Free City of Danzig on October 16, 1927, Grass was raised a Catholic and served as an altar boy when he was a child.

His best-known work is *Die Blechtrommel (The Tin Drum)*, published in 1959 (and adapted by director Volker Schlöndorff as a 1979 film of the same name), the book was hailed as one of the greatest novels of the 20th century and praised for playing its part in helping Germans to revive their culture in the aftermath of World War II.

It was followed in 1961 by *Katz und Maus (Cat and Mouse)*, a novella, and in 1963 by the novel *Hundejahre (Dog Years)*. The books are collectively called the *Danzig Trilogy* and focus on the rise of Nazism and how World War II affected Danzig (now Gdansk, Poland), which was separated from Germany after World War I as the Free City of Danzig (Freie Stadt Danzig). *Dog Years* is considered a sequel to *The Tin Drum*, as it features some of the same characters. It portrays the area's mixed ethnicities and complex historical background in lyrical prose that is highly evocative.

The Tin Drum established Grass as one of the leading authors of Germany, and also set a high bar of comparison for all of his subsequent works, which were often compared unfavorably to this early work by critics. His other works included *Local Anesthetic, The Flounder, The Rat, The Call of the Toad, and Crabwalk*.

The life of Grass could be described as one full of ups and downs, moments of triumph and turmoil. Considered by some as a moral authority and by others as a radical leftist, his political views divided the nation. Grass always remained a very critical observer, an independent leftist who, making use of his reputation, interfered in political issues now and then. He spoke out against the deportation of Kurds, for the compensation of former forced laborers during the Nazi era, for human rights, for persecuted writers and against wars.

In 2006, he saw himself forced to admit that, during the World War II, he himself had not been altogether innocent. His former membership in the notorious Waffen-SS, mentioned in his 2006 autobiography *Peeling the Onion*, caused a stir both in Germany and abroad, besmirching his reputation as a moral authority. Suddenly he who had always advocated stringently dealing with Germany's Nazi past was accused of being a hypocrite.

A rift seemed to grow between the writer and the public, a moral authority holding up a mirror to the Germans was no longer needed. Grass caused yet another international uproar in April 2012 after publishing a text titled, *"What Must Be Said."* The text, which he labeled a poem, contained thinly veiled criticism of Israeli policy with Grass, warning of an Israeli nuclear strike against Iran and calling the state of Israel, its nuclear capabilities and its occupation policy a threat to world peace.

As all great men before him, his passing has now spurred new interest in his work, which will live on for centuries to come.



3RD MICHELANGELO WORKSHOP IN ITALY -LOULOU SALIBA*

After attending the 2nd Michelangelo Workshop, which was held in April 2012 in Italy, I became a member of the Réseau Méditerranéen d'École des Ingénieurs (RMEI). I, thus, received my second invitation to attend the third workshop, which was held between April 10 and 11, 2015.

The workshop dealt with the challenges facing the Mediterranean region. I along with two other Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) students, Roland Khoury (Civil Engineering) and Joy Sfeir (Architecture), represented the University.

Students from different countries shared their projects and focused mainly on the need for innovative solutions in the field of energy. For my part, I presented my senior project titled, "Design of an Eco-friendly Residential Building in Badaro, Beirut," in which I explained and detailed the three systems that were designed (green roof, building integrated photovoltaic system, and water recycling). Moreover, the impact of these systems on the structure itself was also presented. The project was very successful and attendees showed keen interest particularly since students found this type of implementation novel. The novelty of the implementation was a key factor in encouraging students to ask questions and interact.

It was one of the best presentations I have ever given, and the positive feedback and supportive comments from the attendees focused on how interesting, well-organized, and clear the presentation on the topic had been.

* NDU Graduate in Civil and Environmental Engineering

How to Maintain Work, Life, and Study Balance -CHANTAL SOUAID



Don't you sometimes wish you could squeeze in some extra hours into a day? How many times do we hear ourselves saying, "If only I had time, I would have done..." Most of us who have at least one job can easily relate to this sentiment. Work-life balance can become a hassle if not well maintained. Lose this balance and you find yourself in a head-to-head against time. Having said that, now try adding studying to the equation. In the blink of an eye, your life can turn upside down and become total chaos.

Managing our time effectively is an acquired skill; we gradually learn to perfect. The combination of work and study can be overwhelming, yet with the proper attitude and behavior, the pressure will fade.

Below are 13 tips that can help you maintain work, life, and study balance:

1. **Set your priorities:** Learn to set your priorities while you are juggling all these three and most important operate accordingly.
2. **Wake up half an hour earlier:** No matter what time you wake up, learn to wake up half an hour earlier and dedicate this time to indulge yourself in reading, meditating, praying, watching TV, or any other activity that is dear to your heart.
3. **Set goals:** Write clear goals for all these three aspects of your life, and make sure to implement them by seeing smaller monthly, weekly, and daily goals.
4. **Use an agenda:** Having an agenda where you write all your events, meetings, and deadlines is critical for organizing and planning your time effectively. Use your agenda to write tasks and assignments, and most importantly to schedule a study time.
5. **Delegate:** Rethink your daily tasks and consider what can be delegated. There are various things that we spend valuable time doing, while they can be easily delegated to others. You might even hire someone to do the things, which are not of priority to you. These trivial errands will only waste your time. Spend your time on what matters most to you.
6. **Learn to say "no":** Train yourself to say NO. You can never respond to all the requests, invites, or calls for support. If it is not on your priority list, then your answer should be NO.

7. **Study week by week:** Don't postpone your studying as it should be one of your priorities and must become a habit. From the first day in class make sure to keep up with your course and dedicate at least a couple of hours a week to review what you have learned during the past week. This will help you to keep the pace and stay on top of your academic requirements. By doing so, you can save some time; therefore, affording you a week or two without studying in case of an emergency or maybe a planned vacation.
8. **Create a study log:** While studying, create and use a study log where you can keep records of all your studies, assignments, and extra reading. As you may well know, you should study the same amount of time at home as you study at university.
9. **Enjoy the weekend:** there is a reason as to why people take a day (or two) off during the weekend. Even God rested on the seventh day. Remember to take at least one day off from all your weekly stress and enjoy yourself. And don't forget to dedicate a time for fun and outdoor activities, do what you enjoy the most.
10. **Eat well and exercise, exercise, and exercise some more:** Remember that you are what you eat, so eat a variety of foods, drink fresh juice, limit sugars and follow a healthy diet. As part of your weekly routine, make sure to exercise. Go on hikes, subscribe to a class, or why not visit the university gym before class!
11. **Rethink who you spend time with:** They say that you are the average of the five people that you spend the most time with. Who are you spending time with the most? Are these the people that you look up to? Are these the people who help and support you? Are they understanding? If most of the answers to these questions are "no," then you should consider reducing the time spent with them and spend more time with other people.
12. **There is no perfect balance:** Remember that each person has a different way of living, studying, and working. Work on balancing your life in a way that best fits you, making sure not to under deliver in any aspect.
13. **Live in the moment:** Enjoy every moment as it will never come back!

READ TO BECOME A BETTER WRITER

-MARIO NAJM

Contrary to popular belief, writing isn't something that only 'writers' do: Writing is a basic skill for getting through life. Strong writing skills in English come from practice and determination, they say, but that's not entirely true. The hard truth is that everyone needs to read... a lot. Books, magazines, and periodicals help us grasp the art of language and appreciate the finer points of words. Nothing inspires us to write like reading the works of an accomplished writer.

Use the following basic tips to help you master the art of this vital skill.

- Be a good reader first;
- Regardless of the length of the article, always read and review what you have written, and then read and review it a few more times;
- Learn the rules of good writing... then learn when and how to break them;
- Avoid wordiness. Professor Strunk put it best, "A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts";
- To be a good writer is to start writing everyday;
- Avoid long, winding sentences;
- If one word will work where three are, replace it;
- Try using new words, i.e. avoid repeating words. This way we learn the usage of different words;
- Start with small paragraphs, such as writing an article for the *NDU Spirit*, and proceed from there; and
- You are what you read... and write!

As the legendary Stephen King once said, "If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time (or the tools) to write. Simple as that."



ARTICLES
IN FRENCH

**LES TEMPS DE L'IMPARDONNABLE
DES LIVRES OSÉS ET UN AUTEUR QUI
NE CACHE PAS SA RÉVOLTE**

-Dr. ABDO KAH



Les temps se font durs. Nos régions, celles du Moyen-Orient comme celles de l'Afrique du Nord, sont dévastées par les guerres les plus sombres que l'humanité n'ait jamais connues. Il s'agit des guerres terroristes menées par les djihadistes qui tuent par rancune pour la civilisation qui leur a tourné le dos. Ils se tournent de leur côté vers leur Dieu vengeur pour se donner raison sur tous ceux qui ne leur ont pas donné raison.

C'est la version la plus dure des guerres des religions. Ce sont les religions qui se perdent dans les vices du pouvoir se recomposant sur la base de l'ignorance populaire, et se conjuguant à merveille avec les registres de la mémoire de l'orgueil, qui, en s'activant dans la violence la plus sanguinaire, arrive à tirer ses commandes de la plus obsolète parole qui légitime cette ignorance.

En partant de ce climat généralisé de perte de sens, j'ai réussi à écrire entre 2011 et 2014 les deux livres suivants :

***L'après religion(s) religare, le pourquoi de l'apocalypse ;
Le pouvoir des mots, de l'histoire des histoires de nos histoires.***

Ce qui est demandé dans ces livres, signés au Salon des Livres de Paris, le 20 Mars 2015, n'est pas du ressort de ce qui leur revient d'annoncer, ce qui fait qu'ils ne le disent pas. Ils le préconisent, cependant, dans un projet qui invite à outrer l'être dans ce qu'il est, pour qu'il puisse se construire selon le devenir d'humanité auquel il est destiné. C'est le projet d'outrance de ce qu'on croit être et de ce qu'on croit sur l'être en soi, outrance qui est considérée comme étant le cheminement le plus sûr vers la science et vers la foi.

Il reste, toutefois, que ce qui appartient à la vision lointaine de ces livres, ne se laisse entrevoir qu'au-delà de la dynamique de l'outrance. Cela fait que ce for intérieur de la vision qui a nourri ces livres revient, en fait, à l'intuition de science et de la foi qui précède la preuve scientifique et qui la dépasse ontologiquement en l'être. Cette intuition, ne serait, donc, rien d'autre que l'exceptionnelle force aimante accordée à l'homme par le créateur, et qui l'autorise à connaître la nature, y compris la sienne, à la nommer, à la respecter, à l'aimer, et à la parfaire.

Reste à savoir ce que c'est qu'une foi, là où la croyance est l'attachement à ce qui est, et à sa transcription en soi dans les registres de sa mémoire, cette mémoire qui ordonne, classe et régularise ses sujets selon la morale des liens de pouvoir qui se composent sur une base binaire, et en correspondance avec les principes de fonctionnement des lois de la nature terrestre.

C'est cette question de la foi que ces livres ont essayé de débattre pour libérer l'impossible univers céleste sur le plan de la vie terrestre, c'est-à-dire pour faire réussir la médiation entre les pôles opposés dans les relations binaires, jusqu'à faire réussir le lien entre les contraires : l'homme et la femme, Israël et la Palestine, le Ciel et la Terre, etc...

Pour cela, il a fallu ré-investiguer le champ du sens et ses chemins, à savoir :

- La religion
- La philosophie
- La science

Sur ce, la bonne question a été celle de savoir, dorénavant, davantage insister, non sur l'objectivation du sujet soumis à l'observation et sa définition minutieuse, mais sur l'indéfinition des sujets pour faire distancer :

- le religare de ses religiosités ;
- la raison de ses théologies ;
- l'épistème de ses logiques.

À la lumière de ces distanciations, la foi s'infléchit au cœur de l'homme comme étant cette force qu'il va suivre pour mener ses investigations qui vont pouvoir l'aider à indéfinir le sens des choses, de manière à les libérer des boucliers de leur asservissement précédents et à les aimer telles qu'elles lui paraissent à l'image de son amour et de son acceptation de se mettre lui-même en recherche, avec elles, dans une dynamique de quête de sens se perpétuant à l'infini.

Suite à cela, la foi devient cette ouverture au sens de l'existence au-delà de la connaissance qu'on a d'elle, et de toute connaissance qu'on en aura, pour permettre à celui qui acceptera de s'engager sur cette voie d'ouverture, de s'abandonner à cette dernière, comme seule issue le rassurant sur ses facultés d'altérité.

Elle se transforme, à partir de cet abandon, en une disponibilité à l'altérité par laquelle l'homme sera capable de résister à sa haine qui est inhérente à sa condition humaine primaire, et qui est responsable de tous ses malheurs.

Est-ce possible, donc, d'avoir la foi sur terre ?

Non, si nous les humains, allons continuer à insister à vouloir maintenir la force de la pesanteur de la terre dans l'équation du lien entre ciel et terre, car nous vivons trop aujourd'hui de nos religiosités radicalisées, en nous nourrissant de nos théologies polarisées et de nos logiques opposées, là où la foi n'existe que par-delà les religiosités, les théologies et les logiques binaires.

En effet, la foi ne peut naître que là où les croyances deviennent paix et silence, pour ne pas dire là où elles se transforment en une altération fatale d'elles-mêmes, dans une attitude de pardon total, pour parvenir à l'unité absolue de l'humanité de l'homme, l'homme qui est l'objet du lien entre le ciel et la terre.

Alors de quoi parle-t-on ?

On parle de ce qui reste à faire : de l'humanité à construire, du religare à recibler et à restituer, de la cité humaine à rebâtir et de l'apocalypse à éviter !!! Un nouveau livre s'annonce à cet effet, sous le titre :

De l'éducation à l'âge de l'alphabet numérique.

Aurions-nous l'occasion d'en parler ?

L'espérance relève de notre amour les uns pour les autres. Mais, en attendant, que faire de notre mémoire, quand nous savons que la mémoire n'est autre que le tissu matériel du croire : croire en ce qui est ? Comment, donc, allons nous pouvoir dépasser cette mémoire du croire pour que nous puissions atteindre celle qui n'est pas encore, mais qui pourra advenir en nous par la force de la foi ?

La mémoire peut être réduite à devenir une caisse noire où s'enregistrent les histoires des temps. Elle se laisse, de ce fait, encombrer par la chaîne des haines qui anime ces histoires. Elle peut, par contre, s'ériger en lieu de récréation de l'humanité de l'homme en rebâtissant l'histoire de cette humanité sur les débris des histoires des temps. Elle œuvrera, de la sorte, à amener chaque être humain à s'ouvrir sur cette histoire en relisant les histoires des temps, en cherchant à les comprendre comme autant de faiblesses dues à notre condition binaire, et en essayant de les dépasser, pour pouvoir rétablir le vrai « religare » à partir de l'oubli de ses haines sur terre, et entre le ciel et la terre, sur la base de son amour qui l'aidera à rebâtir sa cité.

L'après religare et le Pouvoir des mots racontent l'échec de cette expérience au Liban, échec, parce que les histoires des temps confessionnels ont été capables d'abattre tous les efforts établis par l'humanité pour faire renforcer l'histoire du temps de la foi. Mais le sens ne naîtra-t-il pas de l'échec sur terre quand cet échec aura été le résultat d'une endurance pour rester digne de l'amour du ciel ?

LA MAISON ABANDONNEE
- Professeur GEORGES LABAKI*

Abou Youssef et Imm Youssef habitaient une belle maison construite en pierre située sur la principale artère du village. Cette belle bâtisse aux sept colonnades du XIX siècle se dressait majestueusement au bord de la route. Tout passant devait longer cette maison qui se trouvait presque au milieu de la route.

Les Abou Youssefs étaient généralement toujours assis sur la véranda sous les imposantes colonnades entourées de rosiers rouges et blancs. De la sorte, les passants ne pouvaient leur échapper. Mais à chaque heure de la journée « ses clients ». Le matin, les vieux du village en route vers les champs se présentaient très tôt à l'aube pour prendre le café. Vers le début de la matinée se présentaient les élèves qui partaient à l'école. Les Abou Youssef leur remplissaient les poches de bonbons et de confettis. Il était interdit même aux étrangers de ne pas s'arrêter pour prendre au moins un café.

Abou Youssef était un homme très cultivé. La guerre l'avait poussé à abandonner son travail dans la capitale pour se réfugier à la montagne. Il tenait son salon littéraire sur sa véranda sous les voutes centenaires de sa maison familiale. Tout le village venait le consulter dans les choses sérieuses. Discret, il ne laissait jamais rien filtrer au grand jour. En secret, il aidait beaucoup de personnes en leur prêtant parfois des sommes d'argent assez coquettes.

Abou Youssef s'entretenait avec ses visiteurs de tous les sujets. Il parlait d'agriculture et de récoltes avec les paysans en donnant son avis sacro-saint sur le sujet. Personne ne le contestait car il visait toujours juste. Quant à la politique, il était un grand patriote qui raillait tous ceux qu'il jugeait inaptes à gouverner le pays. Conservateur, il trouvait que les jeunes devaient faire plus pour mériter la reconnaissance de leurs parents et de la société. Il fustigeait en particulier ceux qui quittaient le pays qu'il accusait d'avoie renié leurs origines.

En outre, il respectait fortement les traditions, on le consultait au moment des mariages et des enterrements. Il rédigeait lui-même les faire part dans un style et une langue classique sans s'éloigner d'un pousse des traditions reçues des anciens et dont il se croyait être le dépositaire. Et gare à celui qui lui résistait. Un jour une personne décéda au village. Abou Youssef était sur sa terrasse. Il vit un passant se hâter de traverser la route. Abou Youssef l'interpella.

- Dis moi es-tu allé à l'enterrement de Jamil.
- Bien sur que non ! Tu sais qu'il ne m'a jamais payé les dettes qu'il me devait et qu'il avait vendu un terrain adjacent au mien à un étranger.
- Alors tu va y aller tout de suite présenter tes condoléances à sa famille et après tu ne lui parles plus ! Si tu n'y va pas tu vas rendre toute réconciliation impossible pour plusieurs générations.
- Mais ya Abou Youssef !
- Il n'y a pas de mais ! Si on a raison, on risque par nos comportements de finir par avoir tort. Imagine qu'un enfant vole une pomme de ton jardin. Si tu lui tires dessus tu deviens toi le fautif. Alors va mettre ton costume et va l'enterrement. Le type s'exécuta et suivi à lettre les recommandations d'Abou Youssef qui était le gardien des traditions du terroir.

Somme toute Abou Youssef était avec sa femme très accueillant. Sa bonhomie cachait son sérieux et il était fort agréable d'écouter ses propos. Les gens prenaient plaisir à s'arrêter pour prendre un café pour échapper au soleil ou au froid écrasant. Il était devenu partie du paysage du village. Son absence -fort rare- était vite perçue et les gens accouraient pour voir s'il souffrait d'un quelconque problème. Abou Youssef avait planté un grand verger au bord de la route qui longe sa maison sans construire de grillages pour que les passants puissent se servir à volonté.

La vie continuait paisible au village. Les enfants d'Abou Youssef grandissaient. D'ailleurs, ils les forçaient à venir saluer les gens de passage ce qu'ils n'avaient pas l'air d'apprécier. Bientôt, ils partirent en ville continuer leurs études et finit par les voir rarement dans la maison aux sept voutes.



AbouYoussef avançait lui-même en âge. Ses propos gagnaient en sagesse et en pertinence. Il avait fini par conquérir le cœur de la majorité des villageois. Et, puis il était tellement accueillant. Il répétait que chacun devait tenir sa place dans la société et doit s'y maintenir.

Un beau matin, on vit plus Abou Youssef sur ta terrasse vouté. Les gens finirent par s'inquiéter. Ils se présentèrent chez lui. Sa femme le accueillait mais point d'Abou Youssef. Imm Youssef se contentait de dire qu'Abou Youssef ne se sentait pas bien. En fait, ce dernier souffrait du cancer des reins et il était dans la phase finale de la maladie. La dignité d'Abou Youssef l'empêchait de rencontrer les gens. Lui qui a été intègre et inflexible au cours de sa vie ne voulait pas montrer sa souffrance et sa faiblesse aux autres et susciter leur pitié. Il resta aux remparts jusqu'au dernier souffle.

Un bon matin, le glas sonna annonçant la mort d'Abou Youssef. Tout le village le pleura même ses ennemis. Il eut droit à de grandes obsèques. Il avait demandé que sept évêques assiste à son enterrement qui d'ailleurs fut fort impressionnant.

Imm Youssef continuait la tradition d'Abou Youssef. A son tour, elle se mettait sous les colonnades imperturbables de sa maison. Elle accueillait les passants, leur offrait le café et partageait avec eux la sagesse qu'elle avait reçu d'Abou Youssef. Ses cheveux devenaient blancs et elle quittait plus les habits noirs du deuil. Elle portait sur sa tête une écharpe noire qui cachait une chevelure blanchi par le temps. Même absent, l'ombre d'Abou Youssef était omniprésent. Elle ne s'éloignait pas d'un pousse du protocole qu'il lui avait imposé durant toute sa vie. D'ailleurs, elle ne trouvait aucun mal à s'y conformer. L'esprit d'Abou Youssef rodait dans la vieille maison. Il s'était opposé à sa rénovation car chaque détail lui rappelait le souvenir de sa propre lignée. Ici, les colonnades on était bâtis par la première génération qui était des chevaliers preux qui avaient achetés le terrain à un prince local. La grande salle a été érigée par la deuxième génération. Quand au toit en tuile rouge, il été l'œuvre de la troisième génération. Les meubles étaient tous d'époque. Et Imm Youssef veillait à leur conservation religieusement.

Imm Youssef finit par rejoindre son mari. La maison fut fermée car une partie des enfants avaient immigré en Amérique et ceux qui restaient autre étaient descendus vivre en ville et n'avait que faire des traditions.

Un matin alors que l'ainée d'Abou Youssef était en visite au village il fut interpellé fortement par un quinquagénaire.

- Ya Youssef, Abou Youssef votre père a eu neuf enfants, Vous êtes tous partis vivre à l'étranger ou en ville. Maa oulé -est ce possible- que vous laisser la grande maison qui a appartenu à quatre générations vide ! Il ne faut fermer cette maison qui respire l'appartenance et la tradition surtout toi qu'on nommait ton père Abou Youssef c'est-à-dire père de Youssef.

Embarrassé, l'ainée se reprit et répondit :

- Cette maison est trop vieille. Elle se situe sur un terrain qui vaut de l'or. Eh bien elle est à vendre. Le passé est le passé. Qui a de nos jours le temps de rester assis à longueur de journée pour recevoir les gens. Allah Yirham Al Maoutta- que Dieu ait pitié des défunts. Aujourd'hui, je travaille du matin au soir. Ma femme fait pareil. On n'a plus le temps de respirer et surtout pas d'ouvrir notre maison pour accueillir les gens. De plus, les enfants n'aiment plus monter à la montagne. Tous leurs amis vivent en ville. Ils font avec eux des programmes de sortie.

Aujourd'hui la maison vide se dresse au bord de la route qui est devenue une grande artère. Les gens la longe à toute allure sans s'arrêter. D'ailleurs, pourquoi le ferait-il ? Personne n'est là pour les accueillir. Petit à petit le souvenir des Abou Youssef tomba dans l'oubli surtout parmi la nouvelle génération qui n'a même pas connu les Abou Youssef. La gaité de la maison accueillante s'est transformée pour devenir anonyme. Plus personne ne dira plus ahlan wasahlan ou offrira le thé parfumé à l'eau de rose ! Seules les pierres de la grande maison gardent le souvenir de tant de peines et de joies effacées par le temps cet ennemi acharné de la vie. Les roses et les jasmins plantés par les Abou Youssefs leurs sont restées fidèles. Ils fleurissent tous les printemps comme pour célébrer le souvenir de ceux qui sont partis sans retour et sans laisser d'adresse.

* Président de l'Ecole Nationale d'Administration, Un des derniers humanistes

