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Challenges of Academic Freedom

In one of the interviews with Professor David Horowitz, at Columbia University, about his book *The Professors*, Horowitz said: "In my Contemporary Civilization course at Columbia we did read both Marx and his critics – e.g., Bakunin and Hayek. So I was indeed challenged, but in an appropriately academic fashion. Unfortunately, it took me twenty years to benefit from the lesson." One might well ask if twenty years are needed to benefit from studying a certain point of view, or ideology, or a system of thought, and its critics! What kind of benefit would one get from studying the two opposite faces of the same issue, the same coin?

I guess this is the kind of challenge that faces us nowadays, whether at the national, or the regional, or the international level. How far are we ready to deal with one of the intellectual problems from all its perspectives, from all the different points of view that surrounded it? To what extent are we ready to accept other ideas on the issue that we think we own the right and proper position concerning it? How can we reach a certain truth if we do not accept to analyze it academically, and this analysis requires comparing and evaluating all the different, and perhaps contradictory, related factors?

I am raising these concerns because they apply not only within a university campus but, more seriously, within the community and within the nation. It is our academic responsibility to train our students how to face the challenges of academic freedom and make it a part of their research activities to consider and study and evaluate the other point of view, the other position, if we are seeking the truth and nothing but the truth. Part of academic freedom is to care about the other situation, the other circumstances, the even unexpected other ideas, and perhaps ideologies. Only then shall we be practicing, in some sense, what we call freedom of pure knowledge.

Fr. Walid Moussa
President



The new appointments announced by President Walid Moussa, carry two clear aspects:

- A. The new Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Geoffrey Mills, brings with him a rich experience in strategic planning, accreditation procedures, and curriculum development. Each of these areas represents a new and timely professional challenge to NDU.
- B. Some new Deans are quite young and fresh to the job meaning that they bring with them the kind of energy, vision, ideas, and imagination needed for the University Administration.
- C. This new team is expected to make a significant academic difference for which we all applaud. Congratulations for the newly appointed Deans and Administrators, and for those who were reappointed to their present posts. Let us hope for the best for the future of NDU.

The following administrative appointments/reappointments are effective October 1, 2006:



Dr. Geoffrey Mills,
Vice President,
Academic Affairs



Dr. Ameen A. Rihani,
Vice President, Sponsored
Research & Development



Fr. Boutros Tarabay,
Presidential Advisor



Mr. Suheil Matar,
Presidential Advisor &
Director General, Public
Relations & Information



Dr. Georges M. Eid,
Presidential Academic
Advisor for Branches



Dr. Youssef El-Hage,
Dean, Faculty of Natural
& Applied Sciences



Dr. Assaad Eid, Dean,
Faculty of Architecture
Art & Design



Dr. Elie Yachoui, Dean,
Faculty of Business
Administration &
Economics



Dr. Chahine Ghais,
Dean, Faculty of
Political Sciences,
Public Administration &
Diplomacy



Dr. Carol Kfoury,
Acting Dean, Faculty of
Humanities



Dr. Elias Nassar, Dean,
Faculty of Engineering



Mr. Edgard Barakat,
Director, Division of
Continuing Education



Fr. Jean Abou Chrouh,
Director, NDU-North
Lebanon Campus



Fr. Boutros Bou Nassif,
Director, NDU-Shouf
Campus



Fr. Bechara Khoury,
Director, Student Affairs
Office



Mr. Fawzi Baroud,
Director, Division of
Computing Services &
e-Learning Center



Dr. Viviane Naimy,
Director, Admissions
& Office of Test,
Measurement & Evaluation



Mrs. Leslie Hage,
Director, University
Libraries



Mrs. Lea Eid, Registrar

NDU is pleased to announce the new appointment of Dr. Geoffrey Mills as the Vice President for Academic Affairs, starting October 1, 2006. Dr. Mills enjoys a rich experience in strategic planning, accreditation, and curriculum development, within the American system of higher education. He has been the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Dean of Business Administration at the American College of Greece, and previously the Associate Dean of Business Administration at the University of Northern Iowa. He was a Fulbright Professor of Economics at the Chinese University in Hong Kong, a Fulbright Scholar with the Fulbright Commission Program for International Education. He was also a visiting Professor at the University of Aalborg in Aalborg, Denmark, University of Bildungswissenschaften in Klagenfurt, Austria, and the School of Economics and Business Administration in Helsinki, Finland. Professor Mills taught Economics and Finance, for several years, at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo. Author of two books, and of tens of articles published in refereed journals in his field of specialty, Dr. Mills is eager to work at NDU and make a significant addition to the educational move at the University. He is enthusiastic to get to know more about Lebanon and the Middle East while he is affiliated with NDU.

First Impressions

By Dr. Geoffrey T. Mills

I have just completed my first extended visit to campus since I was appointed the incoming (Fall 2006) Vice President for Academic Affairs. I came away from my week at NDU with very favorable impressions of the university, its leadership, my administrative colleagues, and especially the bright future that lies before the NDU community. On a personal level I was humbled by the confidence placed in me by President Moussa for my appointment to this position, and am aware of the work and challenges which lie before us in the next few years. These challenges present us with enormous opportunities for utilizing the vast potential of NDU, and for raising the quality and reputation of the university in Lebanon, the region and internationally.

One of the first things that attracted me to NDU during my job search process this past ten was that this was a Catholic educational institution which placed a great importance on a values-based education. Being raised in the American Midwest in a family that attended church every Sunday and where family life revolved around Christian teachings, the notion of working in this type of environment was both familiar and

very comfortable. It also fondly reminded me of my wonderful professional appointments I had early on in my career at two prominent Catholic universities in the U.S.

The strength of the Maronite traditions assimilated at NDU was clear to me from my very first meeting with President Moussa and Dr. Rihani in Washington DC this past February, that being my very first contact with NDU and its people. As our interview process continued through various meetings and forums over the next four months, it was made obvious to me that NDU's mission is committed to advancing academic excellence, expanding liberal and professional knowledge, creating a diverse and inclusive community, and preparing leaders dedicated to ethical conduct and compassionate service. This mission is grounded in Catholic social teachings, a tradition of thought and action that affirms NDU's commitment to work for a just and peaceful society.

As Vice President for Academic Affairs, it is my own personal mission to always have the lives and spiritual growth of our students at the top of our agenda – always encouraging tomorrow's citizens and leaders to explore how faith and reason are compatible in education and to develop strong moral convictions to support their future life endeavors. I have it as a credo that human rights, social justice and economic equity and perfectly compatible with modern capitalism and that an NDU education should champion these ideals.

During my interview process, and reinforced while I was on campus last week, President Moussa highlighted that he wanted me to (especially) accomplish the following goals: 1) Develop and implement a University wide strategic plan, with clear goals and priorities, 2) lay the infrastructure for the achievement US based institutional accreditation in a reasonable time frame and 3) utilize all ways and means to improve the quality of academic activities at NDU. Clearly this is an ambitious, and far reaching, vision for the institution, one that will require a good deal of hard work and long hours from all of us, but it is a vision, I am convinced, which is well within the capability of the University and its people.

I had the opportunity to meet this past week with the senior leadership of the University, my administrative colleagues in academic and student affairs, and make a visit to the North Lebanon Campus. I also attended the opening session of a faculty led workshop on "Teaching Creativity/Creatively" by the FAAD Faculty, listened to a guest lecture by Mr. Walid Ma'louf, a top US diplomat in the USAID. All in all I was very impressed by the quality of the people I met and the eagerness and passion with which they are embracing their work.

My meetings with the senior administrative leadership of the University made me realize the quality of the

leadership team now in place and the dedication which they have to the school, its faculty staff and especially the students under our care. To a person they all expressed support for me, my role on campus, and an obvious willingness to make NDU the best possible institution possible and to help in continuing its ascent to one of the best universities in the region, if not the world.

The six new academic deans for next year, in cooperation with current VP-AA, Dr George Eid, went well out of their way to make me feel comfortable and welcome, and they provided me a mountain of information about the school, my future role here, and the work of the Vice President. My initial meetings with them confirmed what President Moussa and Vice President Rihani had told me about the dedication and professionalism of this group, and the willingness that they have to embrace new leadership and to help achieve the goals which the President has established for us all.

My colleagues in Student Services were equally impressive with respect to their functions. The Library, Computer Services, Admissions, the Registrars Office, Admissions and the SAO are all staffed by qualified and enthusiastic professionals who have the best interests of our students at heart and in their minds. I came away from my meetings with the feeling that our students were in very good hands under the tutelage of this group.

As I told the deans during my exit meeting with them on Friday afternoon "There are a lot of universities in the world who would gladly pay for your (NDU's) problems" Certainly it is the case that President Moussa has laid out a bold plan and an enormous challenge for us all in the few years ahead, but it is both a challenge with is worthy of a high quality University, and well within our grasp. It will require hard work and the ability to focus on the 'task at hand' over an extended period of time. But I have every confidence that working as a team; we will achieve all three major goals which the President has laid before us.

I must admit, though, that the best part of this turn my life and career has taken at this time, is for me to have the joy and honor to live in this beautiful, multifaceted land of Lebanon. Of course, it goes without saying, but I will say it anyway, that Lebanon is rich and proud in its culture and traditions and it is a privilege to live in what is one of the most fascinating cities of the Mediterranean. But certainly, the jewel that I discovered in Lebanon's crown is its people. Without exception, in my first extended visit to this wonderful land, everyone I met, on and off campus, were warm, kind, engaging and generous with their time to help me make my way around and about as a foreigner in their country.

I walk away from my first week at NDU, Beirut and Lebanon with a great fondness and respect for its people. I have left Beirut this week inspired by everyone I met to live and work in your hospitable country, respectful of the gift of living in Lebanon at this stage of my life.

On a personal note I want to thank all of those who have helped to make this next chapter in my career a reality, and I am looking forward with eager anticipation and high hopes for the start of the 2006/2007 year. All best wishes to you for a productive, happy and prosperous summer.

Dr. Charles El-Achi His Visit to NDU Adds to the International Dimension of NDU Engineering

On Tuesday May 23, 2006, NDU hosted Lebanese-American Professor of Electrical Engineering and Planetary Science Dr. Charles El-Achi. **Dr. El-Achi** is the Director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and Vice-President of the California Institute of Technology. Dr. El-Achi received his Engineering degree from the *Ecole Polytechnique* in France and his PhD from the California Institute of Technology. In the following we give a brief report of Dr. Elachi's visit to NDU.



Dr. Charles El-Achi

After making a tour of the NDU campus with Father Walid Moussa, President of NDU, and NDU administrators, Dr. El-Achi gave a lecture in the NDU New Auditorium entitled *The Excitement and Challenges of Space Exploration*.

Mr. Suheil Matar, Director General, Public Relations and Information, welcomed Dr. Elachi to NDU by stating that the presence of Dr. Elachi was an honor for the University and that his position at NASA was an honor for Lebanon as a whole.

Then **Dr. Shahwan** Khoury, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, introduced Dr. Elachi by quoting what US scientists and engineers say about him. NASA administrator Dan Goldin for example called Dr. El-Achi "*both an effective administrator and visionary*". Also the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) employees where Dr. El-Achi serves as Director called him "*a breath of fresh air*" when JPL was ruffled with problems. Quoting from Dr. Elachi himself, Dr. Khoury said that Dr. El-Achi's desire is "*to make JPL a better place to work, where top scientists want to come instead of leave and to create an environment of excitement where everybody looks forward to coming to work every day like I do.*" Finally Dr. Khoury thanked all those who had contributed to the preparation of this event namely the President of Diwan Ahl AlKalam, **Dr. Salwa Al-Khalil Al-Amin**, the NDU Administration, the Student Cabinet and the Professional Societies namely the IEEE, the ASME and the ASCE as well as the Astronomy Club.

In his address, Father Walid Moussa, said that it was a great honor that the first lecture to be given in the new Auditorium after its inauguration should be that of Dr. Charles El-Achi, the scientist distinguished by his education, drive and nationalism. Father Moussa noted the pleasant coincidence between the Asteroid named after Dr. El-Achi as Asteroid 4116 and the NDU establishment decree 4116.

Father Moussa said that the goal of the University was the search for truth, as expressed by the motto on its entrance *Gaudium de Veritate*. Addressing the students, Father Moussa stated that Lebanon was not a demonstration or a political slogan or a minister or a deputy or a president, but Lebanon was Charles El-Achi and his Lebanese colleagues who were spread all over the world. He stressed that Dr. Elachi was more helpful to Lebanon than some politicians; therefore if students really loved their country they should take Dr. El-Achi as an example and look for the truth and not for empty and deceiving appearances. Father Moussa reiterated NDU's pleasure at receiving Dr. El-Achi and hoped for continued contact and cooperation with him.

Finally Father Moussa thanked Diwan Ahl AlKalam for hosting Dr. El-Achi.

Dr. El-Achi started his talk by stating that he was proud to be Lebanese and quoted from Theodore Roosevelt in order to describe work in space exploration:

"Far better is it to dare mighty things, to win glorious

triumphs – even though checkered by failure – than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much; because they live in the gray twilight that knows not of victory, nor defeat."

In his talk he emphasized the importance of having persistence and curiosity when doing exploration. Then he proceeded to state some of the major steps taken so far in planetary exploration. He pointed out the similarities between planet Mars and Earth and mentioned the strong possibility of finding water on Mars.



Dr. El-Achi addressing an attentive audience.

Then Dr. El-Achi showed two movies made during the landings of two spacecrafts on Mars. The first movie illustrated the excitement of the space exploration team after a successful landing. The following movie included information about the development stage of the spacecraft and the many challenges and disappointments faced by JPL engineers and scientists. Dr. Elachi made the point that one learns more from failure than from successes. He therefore urged students to take the tough courses because one does not learn much from an easy course.

Dr. El-Achi then explained the importance of exploring Saturn and its moon Titan due to very strong evidence that it may contain frozen ice. Comets are also interesting targets for exploration since it is believed that they were the source of water on earth.

Future plans at JPL include sending a probe to the north pole of Mars to look at the layers of ice which contain historical temperature information about this planet in the same manner that is done in Antarctica and Greenland. Also a rover will be sent in 2009 that is able to do chemical analysis in order to find out if there is organic material on Mars.

Dr. El-Achi concluded by saying that information obtained from space exploration is used to improve life on earth. Currently the big challenge is to conserve

the ozone layer that protects the earth from radiation. Also using satellites to detect earthquakes from space before they happen is an ongoing field of research. Finally Dr. El-Achi showed a three-dimensional image of Lebanon made by superimposing data from satellites.

Father Moussa then presented Dr. El-Achi with the NDU Medal, while Mr. Matar offered Dr. El-Achi four books from the NDU series.

Receiving a distinguished engineer such as Dr. El-Achi illustrates the excellent image of NDU and the international dimension of NDU Engineering. NDU Engineering under the leadership of Dr. Houry has in recent years received recognition from local and foreign reputable universities due to the quality education of its students who enroll in graduate studies and the publications of faculty members in international journals and conferences.

The Faculty of Engineering has reached agreements with several universities for student and faculty exchange; these agreements were the results of the excellent performance of Engineering students at those universities. In the Electrical, Computer and Communication Engineering Department two such agreements have been reached, with the University of ULM in Germany and Ohio University in the United States. In the Mechanical Engineering Department an agreement with Vaxjo University in Sweden has also been signed.

"Our rich diversity... is our collective strength."

The Johannesburg

Declaration

Transnational Lebanese Migration: Using Traditional, Alternative, and Information Communication Technology (ICT)-Based Methodologies

On the occasion of the 3rd anniversary of founding of LERC and under the patronage of His Excellency A. K. Alli Assayouti Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to Lebanon, the Friends of the LERC at NDU called for a forum to discuss the use of traditional, alternative, and information communication technology as methodologies in the study of transnational Lebanese migration on April 5, 2006.

The forum began with an opening note by Ms. Guita Hourani, Associate Director of LERC, stating that "April 2003 marked a milestone for NDU. It was decided in that year to establish LERC, the world's premier academic center on Lebanese migration. This was a courageous undertaking. I said 'courageous' because of the magnitude of the Lebanese migration, past and present, 'courageous' because of the diversity of subjects and geographic areas to be researched both at home and abroad, and 'courageous' because the need for information, data, research, policies on migration in Lebanon was overwhelming for a government body to undertake, let alone to be tackled by a research center."

Ms. Hourani added that, regardless, "NDU went ahead and for the past three years LERC has been germinating from an idea into a center. The accomplishments of the foundation years are hard to demonstrate; however, I would mention just three that can be traced. First, LERC made itself the reference for anything related to migration from-to, and through Lebanon; second, LERC was able to twin Lebanese migration with NDU, so when people in Lebanon and abroad thought of Lebanese migration, they associated it with NDU; and third, LERC was able to amass the largest and most diverse collection on Lebanese migration anywhere."

She declared, "prior to LERC, a researcher on Lebanese migration would have to suffer martyrdom to conduct research on the subject. But when LERC was established, LERC began, quietly but diligently, building infrastructure for scholarly work on Lebanese migration. In general, the basis of this infrastructure consists of libraries, archives, and museums that preserve information; bibliographies, search engines, and databases that made the information retrievable; websites, journals, and university presses that distributed the information; librarians and archivists who link the operation of this structure to the scholars who use it; and scholars, students, businessmen, etc. who benefit from it to promote research, disseminate knowledge, formulate and evaluate policies, and enhance social and economic networking."

Ms. Hourani then announced, "because of its determination, LERC has been working on establishing an electronic archive and database that would soon be made public. The Lebanese Emigration Archive and Database (LEAD) is a tool that encompasses not only books, articles, papers, monographs, photos, documents, manuscripts, journals, newspapers, pamphlets, posters, postcards, audio and video recordings, films, stamps, jokes, caricatures, paintings, sculptures, cultural material, etc., but also businesses, institutes, associations, clubs, organizations, religious institutions, personalities, migrants, and genealogical information."



Group of audience

Ms. Hourani acknowledged, "LERC is happy with what it has accomplished, but this is only the beginning. LERC determined to carry on research and capacity-building in the field of migration in general and migration in Lebanon in particular. Among others, LERC is committed to studying the relationship and the networks between Lebanese immigrant communities in the world and the growth and development prospects of Lebanon."

Ms. Hourani then ended her introduction saying "LERC is now indispensable in the field of Lebanese

migration research because it has made itself a repository of resources, data, and information and a hub for in-house experts and a network of international researchers."

H. E. Ambassador A. K. Alli Assayouti of Nigeria, who was the patron of the event, said that the Lebanese community in Nigeria played an important role in strengthening the relations between Nigeria and Lebanon. He also stressed the significant role that the Lebanese business entrepreneurs made to Nigeria's economic development. He ended his speech by commending NDU for creating LERC and for inviting Dr. Peter Adebayo to be a visiting researcher to further his studies on the Lebanese-Nigerians. He promised to closely work to secure academic agreements between NDU and universities in Nigeria.

Dr. Dunia Fayad Taan, Associate Researcher at LERC, began with an overview of the Lebanese migration to the Ivory Coast. She declared "migration towards the French and British colonies of West Africa was fueled by the growing global demand for tropical products, the French mandate, and the annual quota of migrants instituted by the USA at the beginning of 1921. The Ivory Coast was among the colonies targeted by migrants; and since 1924, it has witnessed an unprecedented development. Well before this date, some Lebanese had already settled in the Ivory Coast. Among them were Said and Assaad Mansour, who originated from a small village in ShouEIFat and who disembarked in Senegal in 1907. He established a company called the African Commercial Company." Then she discussed the methodology used during her study. She mentioned that in her own research in the 80s, technology was not as advanced as today, so her work was based on qualitative and quantitative analysis. Beside consulting newspapers, magazines, the national archives and the Lebanese Embassy in the Ivory Coast, Taan's quantitative analysis was based on interviews and the use of questionnaire which affected more than 5% of the Lebanese migrant population.

She ended by saying that her study is available in French and was translated into Arabic to be published by LERC in the coming academic year.

"There are Lebanese who have been living here for more than one hundred years. Some of them settled in our country well before my birth. One must remember that Lebanon was a French colony. The first Lebanese who came here settled ...in the hinterland. They worked in trade and no one complained of their presence... After the eruption of war in Lebanon, many Lebanese came here seeking refuge. I believe that we should welcome them...It is God who has sent them to us." - Felix Houphouet Boigny, late president of Nigeria, October 14, 1985.

Dr. Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, Professor of Political Science at NDU and Associate Researcher at LERC, spoke about the methodology that he and LERC's team used in researching the right of Lebanese migrants to vote in absentia in the parliamentary elections. He said that "although the study of migrant populations has developed radically over the last 100 years the methods have changed, the behaviour of diaspora communities has remind relatively constant. Immigrants have always attempted to act politically, economically and culturally, both in their newly adopted home and in the village, town or urban centre from which they originated."

He assured that "today we can use a variety of methods to study migrant behaviour, which all run parallel to the tools at the disposal of the diaspora communities themselves. Along with traditional sources, such as the records of border officials, shipping companies and the courts, alternative migration studies began paying attention to the day-to-day lives of migrants as early as the 1960s. Photos, letters to home, the minutes of immigrants' cultural and sports clubs, baptismal records and the lyrics of popular songs were collected and evaluated. More recently, so called 'material culture,' e.g. the way families furnish their homes or dress their children, has also been added to the repertoire of alternative methods."

He then ended by stating, "Modern technology has not altered, but actually accelerated and intensified already existing patterns and methods of linking the diaspora with the "old country." Email, cheap flights and telephone calls, the rapid transfer of money and the use of blogs and websites have added a new dimension to the way immigrants influence their countries of origin."



Dr. Peter F. Adebayo

Dr. Peter F. Adebayo, Lecturer in History at the University of Illorin in Nigeria and Associate Researcher at LERC spoke about the methodologies he used during

his research on the Lebanese migrants in Nigeria and their role in the economy of the country. He said that "Lebanese started arriving in Nigeria, in Lagos in 1890, from Miziara, North Lebanon. They worked in peddling mainly coral beads, which gave them the nickname 'Coral'. After twenty years of petty trading, they began diversifying into produce, livestock and general merchandise and into wholesale. They eventually moved into property development and the production of beverages and confectionaries, followed by iron, other metals, plastic, and the like." He then affirmed, "Outside the public sector, the Lebanese remain the largest employer of labor in Nigeria."



Dr. Akram Khater

Adebayo then summarized the main methodological tools he used in his research which were mainly traditional and alternative since technological tools were almost non-existing in Nigeria. He said that the most valuable tool was the use of Colonial Records and the Intelligence Reports of the National Archives of Nigeria, as well as the ground survey that was done with the assistance of students to document Lebanese owned companies.

Dr. Akram Khater, Director of Middle East Studies Program, Associate Professor of History at North Carolina State University (NCSU) and Member of LERC's International Advisory Board spoke about the use of high-tech in the course and research he is proposing as a joint venture between NCSU and LERC. Khater said, "Trans-nationalism is a growing phenomenon that is transforming global economies and local societies. Yet, most studies of this historical dynamic have been limited in scope and theoretical framework.

Specifically, most such scholarship focuses on the transplanted community but rarely on the influence of immigration on the "home" country. However, it

is only by studying the two communities in tandem and by exploring their relationship to each other that we can fully understand the past, present and future of immigration and its impact on cultures, societies and economies. To that end, the project "Tracing Immigrant Lives" that I am working on with LERC is to teach a course at my university and at LERC simultaneously to conduct a study of Lebanese immigrants in North Carolina and their families and communities in Lebanon."

He then detailed that "students enrolled in both classes will acquire the theoretical framework for understanding immigration, as well as study specific historical examples of immigrants from the Middle East. Moreover, the course will require both sets of students to share with each other their different perspectives on immigration. Structurally, this will be accomplished through the use of high-tech such as on-line chat-rooms dedicated to the class where the students will have to provide substantial weekly commentary on the readings. Then, every four weeks the students from both universities will hold a 1-hour videoconference centred around one of the themes of the course."

He ended by saying that "the main project in the course will be for the students at both universities to conduct detailed and videotaped interviews of immigrants and their families. These interviews will form the beginning of a database about the immigrants, the transformative nature of the immigration process and experience, about those who stayed behind, and the course of their relationship. This database will be digitized and housed at NDU's LERC and at NCSU and made available on the web."

it was understood for its close connection to the surprising twists and turns of history. Within a more contemporary view, theme-collecting has created new paths for philately, which is now considered not only as a clear auxiliary science of history, but one which also takes history as its own aid."



Group of Audience

A postage stamp is a piece of art in miniature form that most of us pass by unnoticed. However, for those who have attended the presentation of Mrs. Srage, this can no longer be the case.

To celebrate the 3rd anniversary of the founding of LERC and the first Lebanese philatelic exhibition at the headquarters of the Universal Postal Union in Berne, Switzerland, the LERC organized a lecture entitled Visualizing Lebanese Migration: Lebanese Stamps as Political Messengers, on May 24, 2006.

The lecture began with a welcoming note by Ms. Diane Mikhael, Graphic Design instructor at NDU. Ms. Mikhael introduced Mrs. Srage with the declaration: "Mrs. Srage is a researcher in postal history and philatelic iconography. She is an AUB graduate. She published Lebanon Through Its Stamps - Chafic Taleb Collection (Dar An-Nahar, Dec 2001), which is classified as an elite book. In addition, she has published numerous articles and a lengthy study about The Stamp and its Images. She has contributed to seven philatelic exhibitions in which her father Mr. Taleb exhibited, three of which had her signature on the documentation, presentation, and creativity. The most recent one was in April 2006 in Berne, Switzerland, at the Universal Postal Union headquarters. Her first solo exhibition was Women in the Stamps of the Arab World presented at AUB in December 2006, one that is considered a pioneer work. Mrs. Srage and Mr. Taleb are working on establishing a Philatelic Museum to house Mr. Taleb's precious collection (above 100,000 stamps covering complete and semi-complete collections from 60 countries). This Museum will hopefully comprise facilities for a research unit, a specialized library, and permanent stamp exhibitions.

Following the introduction, Mrs. Srage defined Philately and then gave a brief historical overview on

Visualizing Lebanese Migration: Lebanese Stamps as Political Messengers

"Philately," Mrs. Srage said, "is the branch of knowledge that studies postal stamps and/or studies all forms of franking used in the postal service. Philately is one of the most sophisticated and wide-reaching hobbies created in the contemporary world. Classically

the history of stamps. She emphasized that "since its birth in Great Britain in 1840, the postage stamp has fascinated a large segment of the public and played a vital role in the history, politics and culture of the world. The stamp is no longer a private postal document, which is collected for its historic-documental purpose, but is the accessory or elemental piece of a theme that is chosen. Postage stamps are a very political, territorially grounded and yet overlooked part of visual culture. Furthermore, in 1947, the Canadian artist Charles Comfort argued that the postage stamp was 'a valuable instrument of discreet national publicity'."

She summarized by saying, "The postal vignette, besides its function (name of the issuing country, value, etc.) has developed a formal structure with figures, events, ideologies, and diverse symbols in the form of graphic representations, which can be infinitely varied. The postal object becomes in this way an iconic object and it is in this precise sense that we shall study it."

Lebanese Stamps

According to Mrs. Srage, Lebanese stamps are a source of modern Lebanese history that reflects the political and ideological processes that have occurred during the last 80 years. The stamps are investigated against the background of historical events and developments that are necessary for understanding these stamps. The examination of 1,440 Lebanese stamps issued between 1924 and February 2006 shows that the desired visual representation of the Lebanese state, nation and society has not dramatically evolved over time along with the changing outlook of the national elite, and its relationship with ordinary citizens and the country's geopolitical context.

The appearance of illustrated Lebanese stamps with Lebanese geography (1925-1929) (thirteen different images were issued and reprinted with different additions in addition to Chiffre Tax- Postage Due stamps depicting six additional places) was a symptom of the efforts made for the realization of the newborn state "Liban", its stamps being issued to identify and consolidate its newly gained territories. Thirteen stamps representing the Cedar Tree plus nine other historical places were first issued and thus established the first contextual icons. The Lebanese identity was born parallel to the iconic parameters focusing on geography.

Between 1930 and 1943, sixteen series were issued, seven of which were commemorative; these stamps install a symbolic presence of ideological fundamentals of statehood as an instrument of structural modernization.

The period 1943-1976 witnessed the issuance of 208 sets, out of which 143 sets were commemorative. These stamps were issued during five presidential mandates. Stamps continued to appear following the

basic pattern concerning geographical identification as those from the previous period. Technical progress in picturing and printing was implemented and resulted in the evolution of the stamps' features. The repeatable prevailing discourse of the stamps was built on an ideology that is summarized by saying that a State's political legitimacy is gained through its achievements.



Right to left, Mrs. Huda Taleb Srage and Ms. Diane Mikhael

The period 1975-1989, which saw political conflicts that led to the retreat of the State, was a time when new issues were rare or even lacking. Only 26 sets were issued most, of which were commemorative.

From the Taef Agreement until today, (1989-2006), the revival of the Lebanese stamp has continued; but the process of issuing stamps is still in intensive care. A major feature is the Commemoration of Independence every 10 years (1993, 2003). The existence of themes related to Women, Human Rights and Celebrities is a positive indication, yet there was still no indication of concern about emigrants.

Visual Presentation

Mrs. Srage showed seven sets commemorating Emigrants as the first category (total of 23 stamps): Lebanese Emigrants' Congress (1950); Tourist Propaganda, The Summer of Emigrants (1955); Emigrants' Conference (1959); World Lebanese Union Meeting (1960); World Lebanese Union Congress, Beirut (1964); 3rd World Lebanese Union Congress, Beirut (1968); World Lebanese Union (1971).

The second category she showed was The Abduction of Europa by Zeus and a Phoenician Sailing Ship, which are considered two icons of Lebanese emigration (11 stamps).

The third category was Lebanese Emigrants in Brazil and Uruguay for the Anniversary of Brazil's Independence and World Festival of Lebanese Youth in Uruguay (3 sets).

The fourth category was Lebanese Celebrities who

lived abroad, such as Hassan Kamel As Sabbah, Gebran Khalil Gebran, and Mikhail Neayme (plate 18).

Mrs. Srage concluded by saying that "in this study of the politics of commemoration through stamps, we point out that public memories and identities are socially constructed and are embedded in complex power relationships that determine what is remembered or forgotten. In general, the Lebanese identity was shapeless, all through the collection, which explains the absence of emigrants as a basic component of the nation."

She stated that "Lebanese emigrants were commemorated in Lebanese stamps mainly through emigrants' congresses in Lebanon. This implies that the 'State' overlooked emigrants as an important economic power. Each of the five presidential mandates, from Independence up to the mid-seventies of the last century, corresponded positively to this philatelic pattern. One can consider these sets as a rich subject, rather than a poor one, by merely comparing them to other philatelic themes."

Her analysis led her to conclude that "by focusing on the socially constructed visual qualities of the Lebanese stamps, we argue that their 'reading' as political, socio-cultural and specific texts offers valuable insights into the evolution and outlook of 'Lebanon' the state, and the 'imagined community' within its boundaries."

She remarked that "over the course of the last thirty years, Lebanese nationalism has grown increasingly 'banal' and exclusive in character. The stamps, for their part, were not used to play their central role in citizenship education."

Dr. Charles Rizk, representing Naamatallah Abi Nasr, M.P; The Public Affairs Officer at the US Embassy in Lebanon Ms. Juliet Wurr; the Head of the Cultural and Commercial Section at the Mexican Embassy Mr. Javier Góngora and his wife; former Ambassador of Lebanon to Nigeria Mr. Gilbert Aoun, Dr. Najwa Jammal, Dr. Mohsen, Nader Srage from the Lebanese University; Dr. May Kadoura; Dr. Ameen Rihani Vice President for Research and Development at NDU; Ms. Guita Hourani, LERC's Associate Director, and many professors, researchers and an interested public attended the lecture.

Meeting between the Brazilian-Lebanese Chamber of Commerce, IDAL, and LERC

On May 29, 2006, at the invitation and under the auspices of LERC's partner the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL), an introductory meeting was held between the Brazilian-Lebanese Chamber of Commerce and LERC. The meeting was attended by Messrs Nabil Itani, IDAL's Chairman and General Manager, and Mr. Laurent Aoun, Advisor to IDAL's Chairman, Mr. Guilherme Mattar, Mr. Mitri Moufarrege and Mr. Nasser Nasr of the Brazilian-Lebanese Chamber of Commerce, and Ms. Guita Hourani of LERC.

The participants introduced their entities and activities and addressed needs for information pertaining to investments, trade, and data.

Chairman Itani summarized IDAL's work and its ability to propose policy changes to better facilitate trade with Lebanon and promote interest in investment there.

Ms. Hourani introduced LERC's process of populating its archive and database (Lebanese Emigration Archive and Database-LEAD), which will have a sub-database on businessmen and Lebanese businesses abroad. She explained the agreement signed between LERC, NDU and IDAL to cooperate on sharing information related to trade by the Lebanese diasporic communities.

Mr. Moufarrege discussed the repeated initiatives undertaken by the diasporic Lebanese community in Brazil to interact with Lebanon not only on the commercial and investment levels, but also on the cultural level.



Messrs Brazilian-Lebanese Chamber of Commerce, IDAL, and LERC

Mr. Mattar spoke of Mont Lebanon Club's digitization project 'Maktoub'. The Club is one of the oldest in Brazil and that the digitization of its archive is an effort to safeguard its history as part of the history of Brazil and that of the Lebanese.

Mr. Nasr, who will be heading the Chamber's office in Lebanon, expressed concern about the stability of Lebanon as the major challenge for any investment.

Mr. Moufarrege stressed the need to do more for the young generations abroad to improve and strengthen their cultural attachment to Lebanon.

Ms. Hourani spoke about the NDU Summer Arabic and Cultural Programs that attracts young Lebanese descendents mainly from Mexico, and the possibility of accommodating the program to the youth needs of Lebanese-Brazilian.

Mr. Mattar offered to send LERC a copy of Mont Lebanon Club's digitized material and to continue discussion for future cooperation.



Mr. Zade Dirani playing the piano

The American Friends of Notre Dame University, Washington DC Chapter is a non-profit organization that was established in 2001 to assist NDU-Lebanon in achieving its goals in the United States. These objectives including fostering relationships with American educational and research institutions, strengthening ties with American and Lebanese-American communities, and promoting NDU as a multi-cultural and international university.

A four minute video gave the audience a chance to learn more about NDU's campus and mission. The video highlighted the university as a non-profit Catholic institution of higher education which adopts the American system of education. The video also talked about the mission of the University as one of promoting universally accepted humanistic, ethical and spiritual values, of enhancing intellectual inquiry, and intensifying awareness of human integrity and solidarity.

Zade Dirani Captivates AFNDU's Audience Washington, D.C .

The American Friends of Notre Dame University's (AFNDU) Washington, D.C. chapter hosted its second annual awareness and fundraising event on Friday, May 5, 2006. The event, which took place at St. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church in Potomac, Maryland, featured the musical talents of twenty-six year old Jordanian composer, pianist and Billboard Top New Age artist, Zade, who is world renown for his compositions that blend Eastern Arabic scales with Western contemporary influences.

The event began at eight o'clock on Friday night as more than 325 guests were given concert programs and seated in the church hall. AFNDU's president, Mr. Ramzi Rihani, opened the program with a brief word about Notre Dame University and the unique role it plays in Lebanon and the Middle East as a leading institution of higher education. He then briefed the audience about AFNDU and the scholarship it created for a student from the US to go to NDU-Lebanon for a full semester.



Audience

Zade took his place at the grand piano after the brief introduction and graced the audience with his exceptional talent that has been recognized and appreciated around the world. Before becoming a successful recording artist whose CDs have all charted on Billboard's Top New Age Charts, Zade studied music at both the National Music Conservatory in Amman and Berklee College of Music in Boston. He has been invited to join King Abdullah and Queen

Rania of Jordan on the official state visit to the United Kingdom where he performed before Queen Elizabeth and the British royal family in London. Zade has also had the honor of performing before President Nelson Mandela at a tribute organized by the United Nations Foundation and the Mosaic Foundation.

Zade's performance for the NDU fundraising event took place in two, forty-five minute parts. Between his two dazzling acts was a twenty minute intermission that gave audience members an opportunity to get a drink from two cash bars and mingle with one another. AFNDU members were also present, selling the Murex Book Series: Lebanon by Lebanese Authors before, during, and after the concert. At the end of a stunning second half, Zade was honored with a standing ovation from the enthusiastic audience. He then performed an impressive encore that was an improvisation of a theme.



Group of AFNDU members with Mr. Dirani

Immediately following the program was a reception held in the church hall with food provided by the Lebanese Taverna and two cash bars that supplied wine offered by United Beverages and soft drinks. Adults mingled over food and drinks while the children played in the courtyard. Zade was available for CD and program signing. He was also accessible for answering questions from fans and media representatives such as the Voice of America reporter, Fayza El Masry, who interviewed Zade about the concert and his "Roads to You: A Celebration of One World" tour. The tour's purpose is to combat cultural ignorance and spread messages of tolerance by performing concerts and holding workshops and discussions in Washington, D.C.; Houston; and Los Angeles this spring. El Masry also interviewed Ramzi Rihani and asked him several questions about the activities of AFNDU in support of NDU-Lebanon.

Prepared by: Haley Kalil

Implementing NGOs Degrees at NDU

On May 24, 2006, the Faculty of Political Science, Public Administration and Diplomacy prepared a conference to launch the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Degree Program.

The speakers of the conference included Dr. Ameen A. Rihani, NDU Vice-President, Sponsored Research and Development, H. E. Mrs. Nayla Mouawad, Minister of Social Affairs and President of René Mouawad Foundation, Dr. Abdel-Hussein Shaaban, Representative of Arab Gulf Program for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND), Dr. Michel Nehme, Dean of Faculty of Political Science, Public Administration and Diplomacy, NDU, Dr. Hassan Krayem, Policy Specialist, UNDP, Ms. Darine El-Sabeh, Regional Manager for Volunteering and Youth in MENA region at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent, Mrs. Elisabeth Sundström, Communication and Advocacy Officer, Save the Children Sweden, MENA Regional Office, Ms. Nina Jamal, Member of Executive Committee, Greenline, Dr. Raed Charafeddine, Member of the Board, Imam Sadr Foundation, Mrs. Faikaa Turkiyeh, President, Lebanese Council of Women, Mrs. Ruba Khoury, Area Development Programs' Coordinator, and Mr. Nassib Rahhal, Human Resources Office, World Vision.

The need to strengthen NGOs has many causes. In the Middle East and the Arab world there is a lack of sustainable structures and of a bottom-up approach to meet pressures of social and economic development. Most NGOs are controlled by political and/or religious factions and organized mainly on sectarian lines. Short-term objectives, linked to political considerations, mark most of the existing NGOs. The scope of work is more charity than development-oriented. The dependence on international aid is almost complete. Incentives for teamwork, democratic structures and real grass-roots organization are rare. There is a need to change the concept of leadership and organization development in the MENA region and expanding the networks between NGOs and faith-based organizations, as they have different organizational set-ups and orientations. The list of needs in our Arab World societies is endless and as a university committed to contributing to them to the best of our ability, we thought that the third sector, that of the NGOs, should be given its due attention, so in the measure of the means available to us and with the help of AGFUND we have devoted our efforts to the establishment of an NGO concentration degree.



Speakers of the opening session

The task of starting a program that offers NGOs degrees at NDU was not easy and was faced by many problems.

In cooperation with AGFUND, we believe that education through university degree formulation should play a major role in the initiation and development of NGOs and if positive social energy can be generated, it will find forms and tools to act. They need consolidation, supportive infrastructure building, networking, coordination, and common action. They need strong institutional academic and educational support. NGOs could become a positive factor in Arab societies, and the future measure of their success will be in their contribution to its transformation.

NDU has been able to fix the following six important objectives:

1. Developing appropriate operation.
2. Supporting innovation, demonstration and pilot projects.
3. Facilitating communication.
4. Giving training and technical assistance.
5. Monitoring and evaluating researches.
6. Advocating for and with the poor.

It is evident that there is a crisis of the welfare state in the developed world, of the developmental state in the developing world, and of the articulation of the state in the world in transition. In each of these worlds there is a deep change in the nature of relationship between state and citizen.

In some domains, such as the humanitarian one, NGOs have been showing superior performance (higher efficiency and cheaper services) than expensive and bureaucratic state agencies and social services, which spend more on self-maintenance than on servicing their clients' needs. That is why in some countries NGOs have got access to public tenders open for the state agencies. Although they are nonprofit

organizations, NGOs have become important economic actors in the national economies. In 1994, for example, some 250,000 charities were registered in the United Kingdom, with an income approaching five percent of the gross national product.

There is pressure from groups of citizens, local communities, or international NGOs and various public and private institutions, for the state to form nonprofit organizations. In many countries, official government policy circles have been supporting NGOs.

The NGOs' role is to complement, substitute, influence, and improve the state's activities. In "normal" societies the mutual relationship is inevitably competition and cooperation. The state should provide proper legal and financial support to the third sector. But in some cases, NGOs have had to opt for support from a "parallel society" of donors, acting outside the system.



Group of audience

However, independent NGOs have many difficulties and (self-) constraints in developing their activities in the Arab World and the MENA region at large. The NGO network is not evenly developed and spatially distributed. There is no clear and supportive legal environment. They are fragmented, limited in scope by the narrow circles of activists and users of their services, lacking a coordinated performance, and often mutually competing. There is an almost total media silence about the third sector in the Arab World, as well as a lack of funds, weak infrastructure, and meager international support.

Through coordination and the development of a common infrastructure, NGOs can significantly develop their strengths. They should diversify their approach to policy-making, the building of a parallel society, confrontation, and even issue-specific cooperation. Attracting allies should prevail in their strategy. They can act in decision making process by "anti-political" means, changing the political culture and building a new social project outside a mere power struggle.

ndu chronicle

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