

The Peace Building In Lebanon

Joint news supplement

Issue n° 15, April 2017



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Special Edition

This is a special supplement issued by the UNDP «Peace Building in Lebanon» project, funded by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development through the German KfW Development Bank, distributed with the An-Nahar newspaper in its Arabic version, with the The Daily Star in English, and with L'Orient-Le Jour newspaper in French.

The supplement brings together writers, journalists, media professionals, researchers and artists residing in Lebanon, and addresses issues relating to civil war memory and civil peace, through objective approaches far removed from hate speech.



Ammar Saleh

A heart-shaped locket, holding photos of Ammar Mohammad Saleh and his father, hang on a chain. Ammar was 21 years old in March of 1982 when he took a taxi from Beirut and headed back home to Baalbek, to his parents' house. He never reached home that day, nor on any of the days that followed. His fate remains unknown.

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Our Stories in War and about It



© Carli Hallal

Secret Heroes

«What would you do if your house were to catch fire? Would you run and leave all your possessions behind? Would you stay and do your best to put out the flames before rebuilding it?» someone once asked me.

In remembering the Lebanese civil war, the main theme of this supplement, I would like to pay tribute to every person who rolled up their sleeves and helped to rebuild Lebanon. I would also like to emphasise the role of «secret heroes» who by risking life and limb documented, processed and reflected the civil war through music, poetry and theatre.

In that tradition, I salute those who today try to convince the Lebanese youth that peace, and

not violence, is the resolution to conflict, and that it is futile to believe that only oneself or one's community are the sole victims of the civil war and to blame the other(s) for a precarious situation. We have to be aware that such divisions and social constructions of «us» and «them» are the foundations of enmity.

War and especially civil war is monstrous. It cuts right through a society's fabric, through neighborhoods, villages and cities. But war also pushes people to hope, work and sometimes risk their lives for peace. Building peace is a process that requires a much longer timescale than anger and escalation and that has to be founded on a long-term vision for reconciliation.

In that regard, I cannot but reaffirm the importance to reflect on a nation's/societies' violent past to become aware of the overarching value of peace and non-violent conflict-resolution. In that regard, I wish that the memory of older generations can translate into a peace-orientated consciousness of the youth. May the cruel experience of 1975-1990 further strengthen Lebanon's ability for moderation and understanding.

His Excellency Mr. Martin Huth,
Ambassador
Embassy of the Federal Republic of
Germany in Beirut

«Let it be remembered but not repeated.»

This is the phrase most Lebanese people say in response to any mention of the Lebanese civil war (1975-90). However, it would be imprudent and inaccurate to interpret this phrase as a call for aimlessly dwelling on the past.

Countries that suffer through civil wars aspire to usher in a new chapter of their history. However, they soon realize that the process of healing the wounds can be long and arduous. Their experience tells us that understanding the past, dealing with painful questions, and arriving at difficult answers are the key components for achieving reconciliation and building a brighter collective future.

In this special issue of the news supplement commemorating the Lebanese civil war, we offer a platform for a debate on its repercussions, and for remembering it through the eyes of those who experienced it. Not only will this allow us to share their memories, stories, and experiences, but also to examine the physical and psychological scars the war has left in all of us.

In this issue, there are stories of people who lost close friends and family during the war; stories of people who got married during the war, defying bombs and roadblocks; stories of those who refused to leave the country; stories of people disappearing; and stories of families living in constant dread and uncertainty, disillusioned by the hope of seeing their children again as their fate hung in the balance. The trauma resulting from these stories and memories are resurfacing as the Lebanese people relive the war through the unfolding events in neighboring Syria. Thus, our own war stories have the ability to humanize our relations with other people coming from war-torn countries. This supplement seeks to provide readers insight into the human dimension of the war and the complexity of the challenges the survivors have faced during the past years. We hope it will resonate with the universal message of «Our wars may differ, but our suffering and losses are the same.»

While preparing this supplement, we encouraged the Lebanese and Syrians to speak openly and share their pain and stories of hope and war. Some were reluctant to revive bad memories, while others were eager to share the most intense moments of their childhoods and adult lives.

While many organizations commemorate the war in various ways this year, we hope this supplement serves as a token of remembrance and a guide to a long process of reflection on civil war: its repercussions on torn societies, the importance of transitional justice, the need to find tangible answers for the families of disappeared persons, and the tools available for remembering and identifying the cultural aspects of war.

We do not want to speak about the war from a historical or political standpoint. Instead, we seek to promote collective memory of the civil war and reconciliation as the means for establishing lasting civil peace and social stability.

We believe the time has come to build peace founded on notions of human rights, justice, and accountability rather than on amnesty and amnesia.

Luca Renda
UNDP Country Director

Mature Citizenhood

To the extent that there is a positive outcome-as paradoxical as this may sound-to the Lebanese civil war, it is the lesson learned by the entire political class and the overwhelming majority of the population, and that can be summed up in a single lapidary phrase: «Never again!».

The tally of 15 years of fierce fighting is more than 100,000 people dead, three times the number of wounded, missing and disabled persons, and massive destruction of homes and infrastructure. What followed was 15 years of instability under Syrian tutelage. All this played into the hands of the most radical of the political class and the bellicose militias proliferating in the country. Thirty years in total that eventually forged a certain mature citizenhood.

Today, despite the many differences of opinion on governance in Lebanon, no one would consider taking up arms again to settle political squabbling. The Lebanese have experienced, with their own eyes and flesh, the horrors of war, and its consequences on families, society and the economy. A once flourishing country, it saw its development be suddenly brought to a halt, and missed the dawn of the technological revolution, as if sidelined from the evolutionary course of the rest of the world.

It is enough to look today at the turmoil within the political class on thorny topical issues such as a new electoral law, the budget, the wage scale bill, restructuring the electricity, water, telecommunications sectors, and environmental protection, among other things, to see that virtually not a single solution is on the table to any of them. And yet, not a single day goes by without a minister, a member of parliament, a politician or a party leader proclaiming his faith in «the virtues of dialogue, national unity, and respect for others despite their differences». Even when one of them raises his voice, he does so to swear that the conflict remains confined in the political arena, «in the name of democratic debate».

All this is certainly good, provided that this debate eventually pays off. But that's another story.

Gaby Nasr

Managing Editor - L'Orient-Le Jour supplements

Why Aren't the Lebanese Concerned about War?

Foreigners often ask the Lebanese whether they're concerned that the uprisings that have been engulfing so many of the countries in the Middle East will also erupt in this small country, and even express astonishment that they haven't yet reared their head.

The answer is as simple as it is complicated. We're not concerned for two reasons: First, because in Lebanon not only does every sect and every party have representation in the government, but also every leader has a say in decision-making, with consensus ruling supreme in order to ensure no segment of the population feels slighted.

The second reason is that we've already gone down that road, and during Lebanon's 15-year Civil War we learned the hard way that there are no winners in such conflicts, and the only outcome is grief, pain and destruction across the board.

Unfortunately, the very concept that helped this country's leaders finally put an end to the bloodshed has denied closure for its population. The agreement that there would be no victor and no vanquished ensured that all participants in our conflict emerged with their dignity and honor intact, and allowed them to proceed with the business of rebuilding a nation.

At the same time, however, many of the truths remain obscured nearly three decades after the end of the war. With no one coming forward to shed light on any of the atrocities that occurred, or on the killings that claimed countless lives, to this day their families still harbor hope that their loved ones may still be alive. As a result, a significant portion of the population remains chained to the last vestiges of the conflict, unable to move on until they discover the fates of the missing.

We may not be concerned about a new war, but we have yet to lay the last one to rest.

Nadim Ladki

Editor in Chief - The Daily Star

Memories of War Are Indelible

If any one of us wished to search the nooks and crannies of their Lebanese war memories for positive points, they would find nothing but scenes of oppression, humiliation and tragedy. Just like all wars-in Syria, Yemen, Libya, and Iraq-and every land that is destroyed by fire, surrounded by smoke, and dominated by murder.

We may have been children during the war, rejoicing at missing school. But we were also afraid and terrified, suffering from the lack of water and bread, of freedom of movement, of entertainment. In other words, the positive never prevailed.

Some say that there was economic prosperity during the Lebanese war. That may be true, but what good is money when facing the risk of losing your life at every moment, or, at least, losing an arm, leg or any other limb.

Remembering the war does not require much effort, as it is before us in many situations close to imploding. And then there are the archives to be used if necessary to revisit scenes, images, tears,

crying and destruction.

What matters more than remembering the war is coming out of it, or working towards preventing its recurrence, and that is an important challenge, which we did work for. At a time when wars are encircling us from every direction, and its harbingers warn of their spread to engulf us in their flames, do we just stand and watch, or should we fortify our national unity in order not to relive this experience?

To escape a war that has repeatedly recurred in our history, there is a therapeutic act that we have not performed to erase the effects of war inside us. This is not about forgetting, but rather about treating the wounds, soothing them, and making its anniversary a lesson not a desire for revenge. Reconciling with oneself is the starting point for reconciling with the other.

Ghassan Hajjar

Editor in Chief - An-Nahar newspaper

On Memory and Politics

Tarek Mitri*

It is no secret that individual and collective memories have a guardian that watches and censors. Disturbing memories are driven away from our consciousness, but they are not eradicated. They are constantly reorganized in order to protect us from their painful and damaging effects. Be that as it may, events of the past sometimes play a malicious game. Liberating oneself from its grip invites a considerable and demanding effort, since wounded and repressed memory exacerbates, more often than not, our reactions to present events.

Memory is not identical to the preservation of our heritage nor does its revival imply attachment to tradition. The latter evokes an ideological and political tendency that does not stop at defending a legacy in face of modernity, but goes as far as conferring a normativity or exemplarity on our fidelity to the past.

The conscious will to revive memory, as well as the motivations, involves individual and political ethics, especially when we go back to the past to talk about the present or to look forward into the future. In the words of the French Arabist Jacques Berque, we often «draw the future from the memory.» If we consider the construction of «founding myths» that Ahmad Beydoun talks about in as he examines the crafting of «the splendor of separate histories» of Lebanon's communities, we learn that the legitimacy of mobilization and justification policies, or those of condemnation and accusation, make their arrangements with the past the past-distant and recent-in relation to the present needs. Many powerful leaders, especially the talented and charismatic, do not hold back their unbridled desire to control the collective memory. They reinvent it under the pretext of reviving it, and by that they aspire to control the sources of legitimacy.

In democratic systems, political elites do not need to use memory in the service of legitimacy—at least not as much. They may be less compelled to look back to the past in order to build the future, though they cannot completely disregard it. Democracies build their legitimacy not only through elections, but also on the basis of foundational texts from the past, such as the constitution, a component of a shared memory and the will to live together in accordance with agreed rules. Although the sentiments most compatible with democracy are those looking to the future, looking back to the past is not incompatible with the democratic spirit, especially when it purports to retrieve the best of our shared life experiences. To be sure, democracy has multiple meanings. It is, at the very least, an alternation in political power without resorting to violence. It is also a mode of relationship between political forces that respects shared memory, especially its foundational texts such as the constitution, while promoting a reasonable and equitable participation in power. It also presupposes discussions and open dialogue, on the one hand, and honoring agreements, on the other, regardless of any tension between them. This tension is particularly visible in the transition from a strong and authoritarian regime to a democratic and weak one, from a stable system two necessities: getting out of violence by political means and responding to the demand for justice.

Seeking to contain one tension or another may lead us to make decisions and establish institutions that would help us forget certain things and remember others. It is often said that those who forget the past are doomed to seeing it recur. Others assert that getting over the past is a prerequisite of the future, which

is impossible without forgetting the past—so as not to allow the old hatreds to destroy the will to live together, a prerequisite for democratic advancement.

For this reason, or rather for both those reasons, communities seeking post-war peace need to deal with memory and work to heal it. When we remember calamities, we remember those who brought them on us, and we hold a grudge against them; this is revenge, even if only symbolic. It may be impossible to ban revenge in all its forms, but it would be preferable to cut short the perpetuation of hatred through political action.

In this context, politics bears a heavy burden, particularly in post-civil war societies, where politics is responsible for searching for the facts of the past without slipping into considering the disputes of the present as a continuation of the wars of the past. Memory, therefore, is and can always be instrumentalized. It becomes a political tool, by choosing the timing to rekindle it and its context. Rekindling it is not an innocent process; it is in fact a matter of reconstituting or rearranging.

It is evident that, in a country like Lebanon, the memory that is reconstituted is not shared. For the memory belonging to each community or political group is the primary object of reinvention. This makes the pursuit of truth of utmost importance. But the search for truth requires a joint effort with reconciliation as its main goal. And truth is a precondition for reconciliation.

Of course, the pursuit of the objective or what may call a legal truth is the jurisdiction of courts. This truth is one that liberates, ends impunity and contributes to the deterrence of violence. However, the quest for truth in pursuit of reconciliation is multidimensional, as it involves facts and their influence on personal lives. The latter appears in the accounts and testimonies of the victims and the stories of their pains and fears. The truth that comes out of experience or suffering is capable of being shared by people divided by political loyalties and communal affiliations. It can be compared, contrasted and discussed. And the knowledge it generates calls for acknowledgment.

This truth belongs to the public sphere that is the political sphere, where worldviews confront each other, half-truths are questioned, and the manipulation of people's opinions and feelings is unmasked. In addition, emphasizing truth in pursuit of reconciliation leads us to forgiving without forgetting, whereas the prevalent practice of superficial and at times hypocritical exchanges lead us to forgetting without forgiving.

Our present-day dominant political and media discourse makes us forget but not forgive. And when this happens, memory is stirred up selectively to make politics an interminable quarrel, reenacted repetitively as if we remain on the brink of war.

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The Many Sources of Hatred

Hazem Saghieh*

When World War II ended, hatred seemed to be a loathsome emotion. It had cost 50 million human beings and a Holocaust of a scale never imagined industry could manufacture. Although Europe came out of its war impoverished and wretched, it did not dwell on what it did in the 1930s. Then, on June 5, 1947, the memorable day was here: General Marshall, US Secretary of State under president Truman, called on Congress to pass a plan for the reconstruction of Europe.

What has come to be known as the «Marshall Plan» re-built and stimulated investment, thus creating jobs. This huge event opened up a market too abundant for the Europeans, so the doors were flung open to the young people from the colonies and former colonies: Come to us and come with your families. And indeed, the workers came.

Belgium's embassies and consulates in the Maghreb circulated a famous brochure reading «Living and Working in Belgium». Its aim was to entice young Maghrebis to emigrate to «provide our country with your strength and talent».

The Belgian statement was distributed in 1964, two decades after the beginning of decolonization. Brotherhood and the right of peoples to equality and self-determination were the symbols of the time. As for the believers, a fresh breeze began to blow their way starting in 1958 with the arrival of John XXIII at the Vatican. He was the Pope who convened the Second Vatican Council and who was eager to reconcile Christians with the Jews, always reaffirming his liberal views and championing human rights.

This European climate was reinforced in the US by the presidencies of Kennedy and Johnson. Great Britain, on the other hand, suffered a setback that struck horror in the progressive public opinion. In mid 1968, the politician and aristocrat Enoch Powell delivered his Rivers of Blood speech, attacking immigration from the Commonwealth and opposing anti-discrimination legislation, foreboding «rivers of blood» if this process was not stopped.

Blood did not flow. But what the experience had revealed, as an early warning—and which is exactly what has exploded in recent years—is that «hardworking British masses» were sympathetic with him, while the leadership of his «elitist» party punished him. Edward Heath, the Conservative leader, dismissed him from his position as Shadow Defence Secretary. Later, Powell leaned to Labor, and his switch was one of the reasons for Labour's victory in the 1974 elections.

Powell's experience invalidated the Leninist hypostasis on the unity of the workers of the industrial West and the national liberation movements in the colonies. This is what the future will aggrandize. But Powell's foreboding, which had shocked the 1960s, youthful and sympathizing with Vietnam, suggested that the waters were more mixed than they appeared to the eye.

Envenomed Backgrounds

The countries of the Eastern camp, which had not been exposed to the debates witnessed in the democratic West, were more discreet about this issue in particular. They were not societies sought by immigrants, nor did they encourage such immigration.

But those countries, with the semi-propagandist banner of «brotherhood among peoples», served as envenomed backgrounds

for the debate.

Soviet rhetoric continued to use the accusation of «fascism» lavishly and without restraint. Thus it stripped the concept of its uniqueness and specificity, undermining the uniqueness and specificity of the struggle against racism and hatred. Its discriminatory and intolerant security measures against foreigners and Jews were accompanied by a Stalinist antagonism of the «cosmopolitan» (often referring to Jews) which is «subversive» and «espionage ideology».

But the democratic West carried on with its take off. In 1971, Canada adopted «multiculturalism». In 1973, Australia followed suit, and Britain and the rest of Europe imported the concept from those two remote countries. However, pluralism raised as many problems as it solved. Pluralism is based on the assumption that cultural, ethnic and religious «identities» are solid social units, even though it exhorts tolerance. Moreover, even if it replaced «assimilation» with «integration», it did not specify who integrates into whom. With regard to equality among cultures, there is no longer a culture in itself with something to offer to modern society, and integrates the others coming to modernity.

Those issues were only to become more serious. By the second half of the 1970s, Western economies had begun to contract and slow down, driven by rising oil prices. Thus, the tendency to make immigrants the scapegoats was strengthened, and racism began knocking on doors.

The French National Front expressed this shift. In 1972, Jean-Marie Le Pen founded the party to be a voice challenging established views of Pétain and Nazi collaboration, and at the same time a platform for anti-immigration and xenophobia, opposing inter-European rapprochement. This movement led by Le Pen, the old fighter in the movements of the populist right, alerted to three indicators:

- Racism was no longer based on alleged biological differences or claims of essential superiority. It was now characterized by cultural differences: we are equal but different. So let each reside in their own house.

- Hostility to foreigners and immigration became inseparable from hostility to Europe (a project that was accused by most of the left as to be bourgeois). Thus, the interests of immigrants and foreigners were not only not irreconcilable with the interests of workers, but also were more reconcilable with the bourgeoisie.

- Anti-Semitism and apologist views of Hitler were a theoretical opponent to the interests of foreigners and immigrants, and a practical opponent when required.

The Seventies Course

In 1977, the grip of the parties associated with their countries newly won independence began to show cracks. For the first time

► since its 1947 independence, India witnessed the defeat of the Congress party. Israel also witnessed the fall of its Labor Party for the first time since its establishment in 1948. Two years later, Iranian anger erupted. In the name of Islam, the Shah was overthrown and the country fell into the hands of the angry cleric Ayatollah Khomeini. But Iran was not the only arena in which religious identity took center stage in 1979. At the time, Polish Pope John Paul II made his famous visit to Poland. Half a million people greeted him. Ten million attended his masses. The communist power recoiled. A year later the Solidarity labor union was founded.

Also in 1979, Afghanistan rose up in the name of «jihad» against Communist rule, which was stoked by the Soviet invasion end of that year.

God had become a more active political actor than the state.

The «pre-» state was now gnawing at the state. The «post-» state was also gnawing at it. Neoliberalism, reinforced by the Chicago school doctrine, captured the horizon. In Britain, Thatcher came to power in 1979 carrying her neoliberal gospel. A year later, Reagan arrived at the White House.

Neoliberalism preached that it was important to encourage investment and remove the tax sword hanging over its head. The State, its services and its benefits should be reduced. «Government is the problem» not the solution, according to Reagan, and «there is no such thing as society», according to Thatcher. And the poor? They have to arm themselves with patience and endurance.

(Our) Hatred Discourse

The Arab world did not remain silent. It too had something to say on hatred. In contrast with the exclusive link prevailing between that discourse and the West, Arab political discourse ventured beyond politics to culture and society, and from the specific to the general.

Between the 1940s and 70s, anti-colonialism dominated the racist and essentialist discourse. This was the case of the Nasserism at its height. But with Khomeini's revolution, which was preceded four years earlier by the collapse of the state in Lebanon, things became different. Essence opposed essence. Good against evil. We are all good. They are all evil. The Khomeinist imagination had «a bigger demon» and a «smaller demon» capering around.

This came in parallel with the decline of Arab nationalism that Saddam Hussein personified. The world was Arabs, non-Arabs, Safavid, Persians and Majus. An anti-Semitic library translated in Iraq. Capture Babylon again? Why not. Saddam had dexterously reached his hand into the museum to borrow an image of the future.

The Iranian and Iraqi museums of hatred consumed the 1980s in fierce fighting.

The 1967 Israeli intoxicating victory and the unification of Jerusalem, followed by the electoral victory of the Likud a decade later, provided part of the right, especially its most fanatic rabbis, with implacable hatred. With its Law of Return, the partial identification of Israel with Judaism, and the remnants of confrontations with the Arabs, the State of Israel developed an unappeasable predilection for hatred. In 1994, this predilection put itself on display when Baruch Goldstein, a settler

and a member of the Kach party, killed 29 Palestinian Muslims who were praying in Hebron. The government of Israel had banned Kach, but the hiss of hatred bit off half the peace accord signed a year earlier in Oslo. The suicide operations of Hamas, the assassination of Rabin, and the Israeli barricades took care of the rest.

Globalization and Its Contradictions

With the floodgates of identity open and the shift of the conflict with the West from politics to culture, hatred of America became a feature of a cultural, European and third-world movement, rightist and leftist alike. It had become legitimate at every mention of a denounced American political position, to bring up that it had slaughtered the American Indians, or to label it as the country of hamburgers and the culture of Coca-Cola.

With each rise of cultural relativism, the meanings of enlightenment and progress were falling ever lower. The values of rival groups began, day after day, to expel the singularity of the values of society and state. Globalization, meanwhile, was making its way. As its birth was linked to neoliberalism, its effects were strikingly contradictory: unprecedented wealth, and unprecedented lopsided wealth distribution. As the presence of the state and its benefits diminished, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, neoliberalism began to act as if it were having its revenge on the social question as a whole. What collapsed was not only the totalitarian system, but also the ideas of equality and well-being. Thus, the luster that surrounded the great gains following the end of the Cold War, such as the end of apartheid in South Africa and the military dictatorship in Latin America. The progress of freedom appeared to be a companion to declining well-being.

In terms of values, profit-seeking dominated all other values. The new capitalist is no longer the capitalist Max Weber who saves and practices self-restraint. The new capitalist spends and puts on display. The center-left began to go back on its former convictions politically and ideologically: it is the «third way». Britain's Blair, America's Clinton, France's Jospin, and Germany's Schroeder all found their own ways to reconcile with neoliberalism.

The cocky one was Berlusconi, the swindler millionaire who, as of 1994, ruled the country of Machiavelli and Gramsci. The rich, who were no longer the old rich industrialists and agriculturists, began to express their displeasure at living alongside the poor. In Italy, for example, the Northern League emerged, with its cause the independence of the rich north from the impoverished south. It wanted to establish Padania as an independent country for the northerners. Berlusconi was a crude expression of a broader phenomenon. In terms of the composition of elites, pursuing a university education became more difficult for the middle classes, and practically impossible for the children of the lower and working classes. The new elites became haughtier and citizens despaired ever more from their policies: the differences between the parties became negligible, and the election results no longer brought change. The turnout on election day declined, as did the membership of the center-right parties. The populist fringes, left and right, were swelling. Democracy was in crisis.

In 2000, the pseudo-Fascist Freedom Party in Vienna, led by Jörg Haider, made it in a government coalition. In 2002, in Paris, Le Pen was able to reach the second round of the presidential election. Le Pen's expansion and new front in labor fortresses that long championed communists were revealed.

Fundamentalism and Terrorism

The poor, with television and other means of communication, have gained more access to the rich and their lifestyles. They no longer need to snoop from behind high walls. The whole world lives in one age. But in this «global village», anger has grown stronger precisely because it was a global village. Those rushing into the future do not offer hope to the inhabitants of alleyways and the ghettos. The latter have turned to the past, actual and imagined. It is in this past that they sought that their countries of origin lie-countries where the bells of identity are ringing loudly, where tyranny, violence and intolerance reign. They only migrate with their bodies while their souls remain there. Cheap travel has made things easier, and having over family, or visiting them once or twice a year has become possible. In London or Paris, the immigrant can now watch Al Jazeera while eating a falafel sandwich. It has become possible for a migrant to live for years without speaking to the native residents of the country. Integration environments, such as political parties and unions, have been hit. Neighborhoods and children schools segregated. The West has become just a place.

Since migrant workers are poor by definition, they have become candidates for exclusion, which has brought attention to their differences of religion and culture. The inhabitants of the suburbs among them are an exploitable class. They are not even a class, placed outside the economy. Their implicit demand is to be exploited.

At the same time, technological advances result in the aging of old industries, from the Detroit car industry to the textile industry of northern Britain. The displacement of production units abroad, and transboundary trade agreements have reduced the number of available jobs which were already at a low as a result of technological progress. On the other hand, rehabilitation programs for the new economy remained poor and limited due to lack of resources, although the stock market blows billions over the heads of citizens amid the silence of the state and its impotence—and tax evasion grows in the billions. The 2008 crisis made matters worse: banks caused the crisis, but the aid went mostly to them.

Anger...

The angry, then, are many: poor whites whose anger is compounded by their fears akin to fears of extinction, as the number of people of color in pluralistic societies grow at a higher rate than their number. Non-whites, especially Muslims, are also angry. Terrorism no longer comes from their countries of origin only, as descendants of immigrants in the West are also producing their own terrorists.

Among the poor whites, there are those who have felt, since Bin Laden's 2001 attack, that «Muslims» are a threat that resides among them. The other terrorist acts in the cities of the West have convinced them that the «state of law» no longer guarantees or

protects. Previously, they lost confidence in the «welfare state» and «elite state».

Among Muslims, the feeling that they are hated and oppressed has been reinforced. They face oppression both in their own countries and in their host countries. They are outcasts there and outcasts here, and they have nothing but Allah, so let them be the soldiers of Allah. In Iraq in 2003, the cruelty of the American war and the atrocities of Abu Ghraib prison bolstered anti-American sentiment with pretexts and justifications. «Our» worst values were galvanized in the face of «their» worst values.

And since anger does not think but feels, and sees only with one eye, the angry have designated their partner in pain as the enemy. When the miserable refugees, in their vast numbers, crept northward, crossing borders and seas, some inhabitants of host countries thought they saw the barbarians arrive. Some of them attributed to these refugees their past and future poverty; others felt afraid for their own numbers; others still, in central and eastern Europe, blamed them for their political shortcomings, which are caused by chronic political repression, their bewilderment in the present, and the border with which they have not reconciled since the collapse of the Habsburg empire a century ago.

In the United States, the Mexicans served this function, coupled to a white-vs-black ethnic crisis, aspiring to a «Southern confederacy». Muslims have not fled to America, but the legacy of 9/11 is capable of rearing its ugly head at any moment and including them in its curse.

There are many titles summoned by the reactionary mind in order to sustain hate. In Europe, as well as refugees, immigrants and foreigners, there is the Brussels red tape. In America, where less than half of voters voted for Trump, many things were said: eight years of a woman presidency after eight years of a black presidency? Satan's rule should be resisted.

Putin's Russia has in turn broadcast a borderline consciousness, from Zhirinovskiy to Dugin: white Christian civilization is threatened by Muslims. ISIS, in the meantime, was beheading and spreading its images, declaring that Islam was threatened by white Christian civilization. And all, east and west, have expanded their presence on website lacking credibility and going viral, providing hatred with its loudest and most vicious voices.

Many reasons have come together to make hatred a crime of many authors: economics and politics, isolation and mixing, backwardness and progress, right and left, East and West. We are all, in a sense, perpetrators because we are all human beings. But this pseudo-metaphysical interpretation does not get in the way of pointing the finger for most of the blame to the transitional era in which we live. To its transformations and anxieties. Each of us chooses, according to his background and the history of his biases, an enemy of his, that he hates and takes pleasure in this hating him.

The Lebanon War: The Referents of Memory Constructions

Melhem Chaoul*

The first survey of publications covering the period between 1975 and 1977 was carried out by Salam and Sadaka, and published in a limited edition. The book should certainly be available at the Jafet Library where Sadaka worked as librarian.

The challenge for our memories is dividing this long period of 15 years into segments and periods that share a series of coherent facts, political goals and implemented actions.

Despite the existence of numerous chronologies, a periodization of this long period is yet to be carried out. I propose considering the period from 1975 to 1982 as a coherent whole, as this is the war of some Lebanese (mainly Christians) against armed Palestinian presence. The second period, which spans the period from the Israeli invasion of 1982 to 1990, draws its coherence from the efforts to restructure the State in the shadow of the Syrian military presence, and by considering the Christian component as the loser of this new interval, and brought to a close with the Taif Agreement.

The war on... the names of the war

Ten appellations define this war and at the same time reflect the continuation of the war in the perception that we have of it.

1 - The Civil War

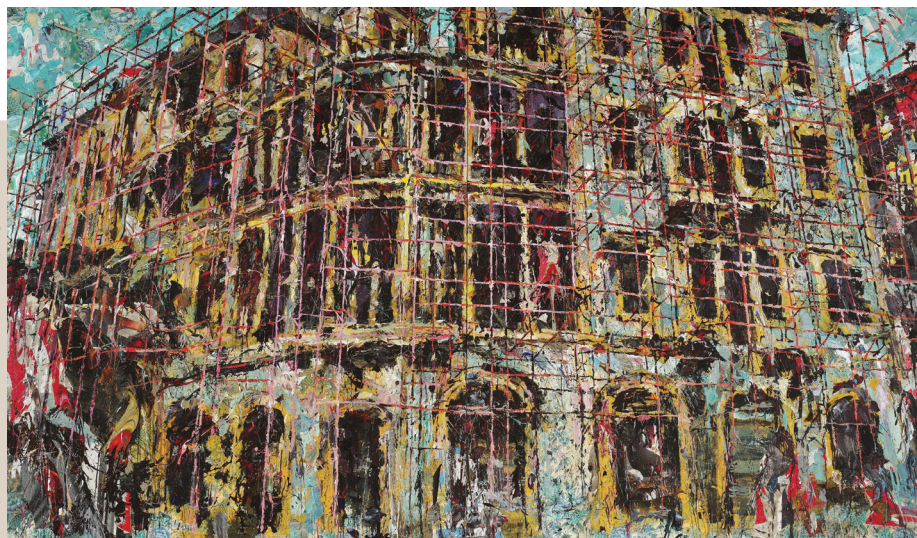
As early as 1976, Kamal Salibi, an eminent scholar, had introduced the term "civil" to describe the war that was breaking out. In his famous work, *Crossroads to Civil War*, the historian adopts this term and analyses the historical roots of the war through the social gaps and disparities inherent in the Lebanese society. This notion of the war, as well as this designation, will be the one the National Movement would adopt, as well as the left-wing circles and intellectuals, dubbed at the time the islamo-progressives (Kamal Hamdane, Fawwaz Traboulsi) and many Anglo-Saxon academics and journalists.

2 - The Uncivil War

Although the term «uncivil war» was coined in 1992 by Ahmad Beydoun, in «Le Liban, Itinéraires dans une guerre incivile», it covers the war starting from 1976. Many things lie hidden under the term «uncivil»; in fact, it includes the whole apparatus of the Lebanon war: the militias, exactions, racketeering, robbery, and, above all, the massacres of the «civil» by the «uncivil» and the forced displacements of populations. A war continues to be waged against the civil and civility.

3 - The War for Others

In the heat of the debate about the internal causes of the war and its civil character, Ghassan Tuani's book comes out in 1984 to establish an approach to the Lebanon



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war based on the theory of a proxy war. According to Tuani, external and regional factors were the locomotive elements of the Lebanon war. They financed, armed, provided equipment and manpower. The internal factors, the Lebanese groups are not, nevertheless, exonerated, their complicity is complete—they have accepted to play in politics the same role they had played for centuries in trade: to be the exclusive representatives of external actors.

4 - The War of Others

With a semantic shift and a generous dose of clearing one's conscience, the war for others becomes the war of others. Here, we find ourselves in a completely different explanatory field of the war, as it exculpates the Lebanese who become through the term «of others» the passive spectators in a confrontation that goes beyond them. This appellation of the Lebanon war takes on a quasi-official connotation during Elias Hrawi's presidency.

a) The Lebanon war

b) The war in Lebanon

c) The Lebanese war

For researchers and intellectuals, it was imperative to find a «neutral» term to describe this war. Therefore, it was no longer the stakes that determined the appellation but the identity of the space that hosted it. So, it became the War of

Lebanon (Samir Kassir, Ahmad Beydoun, Antoine Jabre) or the War in Lebanon (Jonathan Randal).

d) The Lebanon wars

e) The wars of others in Lebanon

f) The Lebanonised wars

As studies on the war advanced, it became clear that the use of the singular (war) did not convey the reality of the phenomenon that stretched over 15 years, stoked by a Syrian military intervention and two Israeli invasions. So, there was not a war but wars. In their French-language 1993 book, «Bilan des guerres du Liban», Boutros Labaki and Khalil Abou Rjeily present an account of the Lebanon wars. The plural is also the preferred designation of the researcher Waddah Charara and the journalist Hazem Saghieh. The former invented the term «the Lebanonised wars» (al-houroub al-mulabnat) and Saghieh talks of Lebanon's external and internal wars.

As a conclusion to this attempt to define the object of our collective memory, I propose considering the term «civil war» as the most misleading and «the Lebanon wars» as the most faithful to reality.

Main Print Sources

Memoires

Amine Gemayel, *L'Offense et le pardon*, Gallimard, 1988.

of Shame, 1975-1978.

- Zeina Abirached, *A Game for Swallows*, a graphic on the war as experienced in Achrafieh.

Film

- The films of Maroun Baghdadi: *Little Wars*, *Out of Life*, *The Veiled Man*.

- Burhan Alawiye: *Beirut, the Meeting* (Bayrou al-Likaa').

- Rami Doueiri: *West Beirut*

- Nadine Labaki: *Where Do We Go Now?*

Audio Sources: Songs

- Marcel Khalife: *Rita*, *Ya Bahrieh*, *We'll pick*

Camille Chamoun, *Mémoires et souvenirs*, Imprimerie catholique, 1979.

Kamal Joumlatt, *Pour le Liban*, Stock, 1978.

Places and Their Designations

Places and actors were given designations during the war separately from their common official names.

Beirut: If you said at a roadblock «I'm from Beirut», it wouldn't work! You had to specify whether you were from «East Beirut or West Beirut». East meant the Achrafieh area that was under the control of the Lebanese Forces, led by the Christian parties of the Lebanese Front. West, on the other hand, meant the opposite zone that was controlled by the militias of the National Movement, left-wing parties and Palestinian organizations.

The regions: It was also necessary to know what each party used to refer to «its» region and how its opponents refer to it. The area that extends from East Beirut to the northeast suburb, half of Matn, Keserwan, Jbeil, and the south part of Batroun was called by the Lebanese Forces «liberated regions», *manatiq mouharrara*. The National Movement parties and the left referred to them as «isolationist regions», *manatiq in'izaliyyah*, and to the Lebanese Front parties as «the isolationist forces», *kiwa in'izaliyya*. The area that extends from West Beirut in the direction of South Lebanon and the south of Mount Lebanon was called by the National Movement «the national regions», *manatiq wataniyya*, and by the Lebanese Forces «the occupied regions», *manatiq muhtallat*.

Beginning in 1977, North Lebanon and the Bekaa valley became the «Syrian regions».

Demarcation Lines and Crossings

The main demarcation line, *khatt tamass*, went through Beirut from area of the Port to the east, to exit at the level of Hazmieh, on the Mount Lebanon road. Thus, it cut Beirut into two distinct sectors. There were crossing points on this line, *ma'aber*, which could be closed or opened without users having advance notice of their status.

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Photos and Chronologies

- As-Safir, Documentation Center, Loubnan 1982: *Yawmiyyat al-ghazou al-Isra'ili, wathaiq wa souar*. Photos and documents on the 1982 Israeli invasion.

- Joseph Chami, *Le Mémorial de la guerre, 1975-1990*. It covers the Sarkis and Gemayel presidencies.

- Joseph Chami, two volumes on the war from 1975 to 1976, and on what followed from 1977 to 1982. Photos, documents and chronologies.

- René Chamussy, *Chronique d'une guerre, Le Liban, 1975-1977*, Desclé, 1978.

- Stavro Jabra, *Vie et mort sans légende*,

1982, photos.

- Zaven Kouyoumdjian, *Shot Twice*, 2003. This is an illustrated book dealing directly with memory, showing the same places and the same people at an interval of 30, 20 or 15 years. How they were and what they have become.

Creative Works

- The plays of Ziad Rahbani, Rafik Ali Ahmad, Roger Assaf and Yacoub Shedrawi.

- The CDs and DVDs on the Lebanon war produced by Al Jazeera network.

- The works of Maria Chakhtoura on graffiti: *The War of Graffiti and the exhibition Walls*

hundreds of poppies in Chyah, etc.

- The Lebanese Forces songs available on CD at the Bachir Gemayel Foundation, most notable track: Achrafieh is the beginning, the beginning of Bachir...

- The songs of Pascale Sakr, most notable: *One Lebanon*.

All of these tracks support a political cause and their composers/performers are militants affiliated to one camp (islamo-progressive left) or another (Christian militias). There are also the patriotic songs of Fairuz (*Behebak ya Lebanon*) and Majida El Roumi (*Rajeh yetaamar Lebanon and Ya Bayrou*).

«No Justice, No Peace»

Transitional justice in Lebanon: An approach that brings justice to the victims of the war and political violence, and restores citizens' trust in the State

Carmen Hassoun Abou Jaoude*

To remember the 1975-1990 war, it has to have ended first. But has it really ended? Is the silence of cannons a sign of peace? And what are the components of a real and lasting peace?

It is striking that we remember and commemorate April 13, 1975 as the official start date of what has come to be known as the «civil war», and yet we do not remember or commemorate its end-the same way we commemorate the end of other events, like that of World War II in 1945. Why do we not celebrate the beginning of peace, but rather the beginning of war? Is it because many people feel that the war has not ended yet and that it continues by other means and tools? War still makes its presence felt through incendiary rhetoric, sectarian and political battles, or through localized wars. And the war will continue to feel as if it never ended as long as we fear its possible return at any moment, and talking or writing about it remain almost a taboo. It feels as if it never ended as long as we have not integrated it into educational and cultural programs, which recount its facts and results, and enables children and young people to understand their country by thinking critically about history, thus contributing to preventing recurrence of violence and crises, and to building a real and lasting peace.

A generation that knows nothing of the war but its name

When I communicate with groups of students during my lectures at schools and universities about the war and its impact on people and society, I am surprised to discover that a vast majority knows nothing of the war but its name, whereas only a minority has valid historical information. I not only talk to them about the past that I lived when I was their ages, or the past of their mothers and fathers, but also about the ongoing violence that they live and may also be victims to. In the last decade, the young generation has lived through wars near and far. They have been watching the war in Syria since 2011 and its consequences that include killings, forced displacement, enforced disappearances and direct violence that has spread to their country. They remember the 2006 war, which had a significant impact on many of them, and did not forget the series of assassinations, bombings and internal armed clashes that started in 2005, from Beirut to Nahr al-Bared, Tripoli, and Abra. We have to admit that we have not succeeded in protecting our children from political violence, and state institutions have not succeeded in ensuring their security and defending them from recurring human rights violations.

This generation has the right to wonder why the cycle of violence continues. It has the right to know the causes of this violence, and it has also the right to protection from it by the state. As specialists and professionals in peacebuilding and transitional justice, we try to raise awareness among the Lebanese youth and society about the importance of dealing with political violence from a humanitarian and educational perspective that contributes to laying the proper and sound foundations for a true and lasting peace.

We will not go into the circumstances in which the Taif Agreement was reached and what followed, which has been extensively covered. But we will try to place it in the context of transitional justice based on mechanisms or initiatives that focus on victims of political violence and serious violations of human rights, in the transitional period from war to peace, or during democratic transformation from an authoritarian regime to a state that respects freedoms. In addition to prosecuting the main perpetrators, non-criminal proceedings contribute to providing remedies to the victims, and they include truth commissions that may contribute to revealing facts and recognizing their suffering. In contrast to trials that involve only a small number of victims, truth commissions allow large numbers of victims to express their stories, their suffering and the violations committed against them. These commissions often recommend creating individual and collective reparations programs if entire groups or villages were victim of gross violations. Moreover, remembrance initiatives, commemoration and public apologies are also considered a form of remedy, recognizing the truth and the suffering of victims. The basic procedures in the transitional phase also include institutional reform, in particular of the judiciary and the security sector, and may include the amendment of



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the country's constitution and laws to be brought in line with international standards of human rights.

What justice in Lebanon?

In post-1990 Lebanon, transitional justice was not the choice of the «civil peace» governments. It was out of the question for ruling political leaders that were produced by the war to hold themselves accountable, and disclose the whole truth in history books or commemorate the war. While the Lebanese remember April 13 as a dire date, and some civil society organizations commemorate it as «not to be repeated», the Lebanese State continues to refuse to consider it a national day of remembrance and drawing lessons. Hence, the use of the term «amnesia» or the official memory loss created by the political class in an attempt to erase 15 years and more-so as not to exclude 15 years of Syrian tutelage and violations-from the memory of the Lebanese and preventing it from school curricula. The State also relentlessly continues to use its security services to ban films and monitor artistic products tackling the war, under the pretext of «maintaining civil peace» and avoiding «sectarian tensions», and other unconvincing and useless arguments.

The war came to an end with a political settlement—not a peace agreement-between the militia leaders, and with the blessing of Arab and international actors. They reconciled among themselves and promoted the myth of «neither winners nor losers», as, in fact, part of the forces that participated in the war came out lost and defeated. Another legend of the many legends of the war that we echo: «All are perpetrators and all are victims.» It is a slogan that obliterated the rights of war victims, especially the missing and their families, and justified the amnesty for the perpetrators through the «let bygones be bygones» law, with exceptions categorizing and discriminating among victims. The amnesty law adopted in 1991 by MPs of Parliament of a dubious legitimacy, elected in 1972, excludes crimes committed against political and religious leaders, and foreign diplomats, which were remitted to the Justice Council, while exempting perpetrators of crimes against ordinary people. Thus, «civil peace» was imposed on the ruins of justice, reparations and the rights of the people. After years of suffering and war, the Lebanese did

not try to challenge or reject the settlement—the deal and its subsequent related procedures. They just wished for the cannons to be silenced and to lead normal and dignified lives. Justice was exchanged for a promised civil peace and the rule of law under the guardianship of a system that did not respect justice or human rights. And with that the culture of impunity continued from the top of the pyramid to the bottom.

Transitional justice is a foundational approach to confronting the violence of the distant and near past, and building a real and lasting peace. In Lebanon, the handling of the war displaced dossier was the only measure taken by the State in terms of material reparations, with the establishment of the Ministry of the Displaced and its compensation fund. But we know full well that the process fell short of the expectations of tens of thousands of victims of displacement, by not explicitly acknowledging their suffering, by equating them with perpetrators directly responsible for their displacement and the killing of their families, or by a suspicious process marred by corruption and clientelism. There was talk of return and reconciliation in the villages of the Mountain, but no one mentioned the victims or their feelings, or their right to a remedy and justice. In addition, the issue of the missing remains central to any attempt to build a real peace in Lebanon. But is the political class willing to seriously address this issue, including that of the people responsible during the war for abductions, disappearances and killings of thousands? What can be done then to build a real and lasting peace in Lebanon? What can the transitional justice process offer? And how to pressure the Lebanese State to adopt it in its policies? In the absence of a political will to deal with the outstanding war issues, in recent years, civil society organizations led the initiatives contributing to confronting the past and centering on projects and activities reviving the memory of the war and promoting intergenerational dialogue and reconciliation. Certain initiatives focused on raising awareness and motivating society, and pressuring governments to address the issue of missing persons. Many reports and studies on the repercussions of the war have been published highlighting the importance of addressing its effects through transitional justice. In 2014, a consortium of civil society groups and academics, with the support of the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), developed a set of recommendations that may constitute an effective roadmap to address the past and ensure the victims of political violence the right to a remedy, to allow building a sound foundation for genuine reconciliation between groups and individuals, including Palestinians and Syrians.⁽¹⁾

No Justice, No Peace is not just a slogan. It is also a practice and a path chosen by nations that have known wars and tyranny. Criminal accountability is an essential part of justice to prevent the recurrence of violence and wars, and end impunity. But justice is also the right to a remedy for victims of political violence, especially those who continue to suffer, such as the families of the missing. And justice is also making it possible for the new generation to learn what happened in its country and why, by allowing historians and educators to develop integrated educational programs chronicling the historical facts of Lebanon, and recounting and showing respect to the memories of the Lebanese and non-Lebanese communities living on its land. And justice is to put an end to the discrimination between citizens in Lebanon and allow its refugee guests to live in dignity and humanity so as not to be driven to hatred, extremism and violence. Justice is in developing underprivileged and poor areas, reforming state institutions and applying the rule of law to restore citizens' trust in them. When justice and remedies are achieved, and only then, can we talk of peace and draw lessons from the past-so as it does not happen again—and build a safe and stable tomorrow for our children and future generations.

(1) <https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Lebanon-Recommendations-2014-ENG.pdf>

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Mass Graves in Lebanon: Remnants of the Past or Challenges for the Future?

Wadih el Asmar*

In a country struggling to come out of a civil war and to begin real memory and reconciliation efforts, raising the issue of mass graves is akin to a provocation given the extent to which the wounds of the war are still felt. And yet should we keep quiet and not give thought to the best approach to adopt in any attempt to provide answers to all those affected by this tragedy?

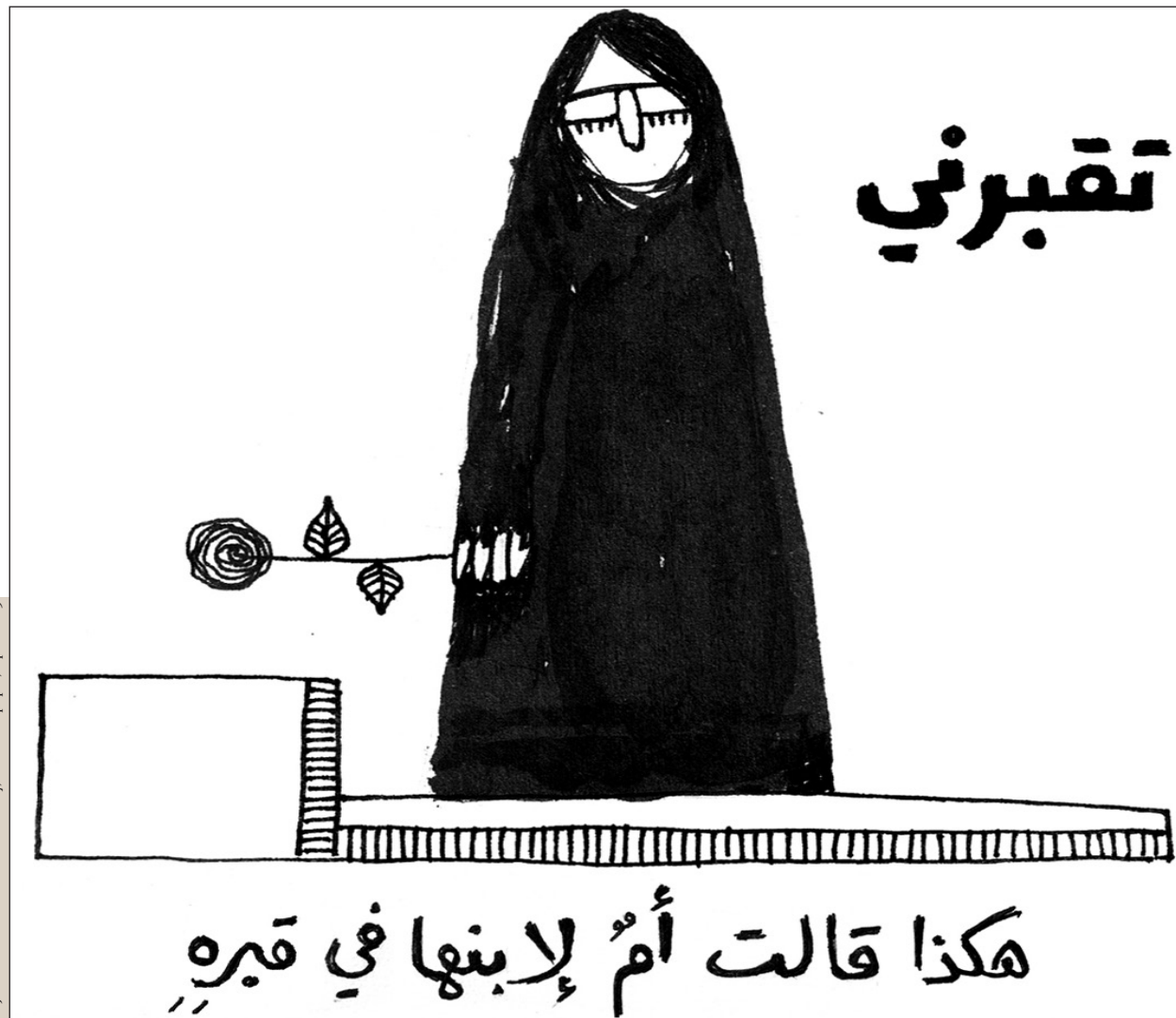
The answer to this question is complicated. It is important to emphasize first that raising the issue of mass graves in no way implies accepting that all the victims of enforced disappearances in Lebanon are dead. The CLDH⁽¹⁾ and SOLIDE⁽²⁾ have identified and documented around 100 victims who were deported to neighboring Syria and whose families have continuously received proofs of life. Apart from these hundreds of cases, it is essential to ponder the question of how to provide answers to the victims' families who have remained in Lebanon, and to the Lebanese society at large.

To tackle this sensitive issue, it is clear that the approach should be thorough, as it is above all a matter of human remains and the memory of a conflict that still smolders under the ashes of an exceedingly fragile peace. In a statement to AFP on April 13, 2015, Waddad Halawani⁽³⁾ said, «We only want to know, and offer them a grave to be able to reflect on their memory.» This is not about pitting the opening of mass graves against forgetting their existence. The debate in the Lebanese society is manifold, and the issue of mass graves quickly summons the demons of the past, for acknowledging the existence of mass graves equates to accepting the fact that the war was not a mishap but a succession of organized and planned crimes. Supporting the opening of mass graves without a real strategy is taking a twofold risk. This runs the risk, on the one hand, of opening the wounds of the past while nothing has been undertaken to deal with them and heal them, and, on the other, of losing on account of our incompetence the information nature has so meticulously preserved for us.

When speaking of mass graves today, it is important to keep in mind that we are talking about around 400 sites across Lebanon—the UAM NGO has documented around twenty as a result of a colossal effort⁽⁴⁾. The organization's work focuses today on identifying mass graves in the vicinity of old detention centers. This work is part of a long struggle and was initiated in the 1980s by the Committee of the Families of Kidnapped and the Disappeared in Lebanon, and which has since obtained the support of numerous civil society organizations. Going beyond efforts to archive and identify, this work has led to filing a number of complaints with the support of lawyers, especially those from the Legal Agenda⁽⁵⁾, an organization that has supported the families in their complaints lodged before the State Council, that resulted in a ruling by the highest administrative court in Lebanon recognizing the families' right to the truth. Earlier, another ruling had allowed legal protection for three mass graves identified in Beirut and its Suburb.

These efforts, combined with those of several other committees of families and NGOs, have kept the issue of the disappeared on the national agenda. They have also made it possible to stand up to any attempts to destroy mass graves—when such attempts came to light. Protecting mass graves to preserve the buried memory is important for as long as Lebanon has not developed the technical and legal mechanism necessary to investigate them.

It would be catastrophic to embark on a risky opening of mass graves without an identification, archiving and a data management mechanism put in place, similarly to what is



taking place in neighboring Cyprus⁽⁶⁾, for example. There, a commission involving all the parties to the conflict has implemented a process for the identification, exhumation, and returning of victims' bodies to their families. Yet Lebanon is not ready to confront its past or still less to investigate the data thus gathered to provide the necessary answers to victims' families, and to ensure that the opening of mass graves would not reopen divides and conflicts of the civil war.

The mass graves in Lebanon represent not only the memory of the war but also the bodies that would allow thousands of Lebanese families to turn the page of that war. To tackle this subject without being aware of either of these dimensions is running the risk of a double injustice with respect to the victims, as having deprived them of a dignified grave in the past, they are now transformed into a divisive actor by the risky exhumation of their bodies.

To tackle the issue of mass graves and exhumation without concern for truth, justice or reconciliation in Lebanon is a danger for the future, as these buried victims are the victims of a conflict that wants nothing more than to be resuscitated and because we owe the victims, out of respect for their pain and the pain suffered by their loved ones, not to make them the trigger of a new conflict.

So are we to do nothing? Certainly not. I believe that it is essential to prepare for the future by demanding that the Lebanese State set up an independent national commission for the victims of enforced disappearances and the missing of the war, and also to initiate the training of security forces on handling mass graves and exhumed bodies, the management of DNA data thus collected, and also collect DNA data from families to be able to compare samples.

Accidental discoveries of mass graves can never be ruled out and the State must be able to handle the remains thus excavated appropriately and to hand them over to their families in dignity.

Finally, mass graves are only the consequences of the barbarity of war criminals in Lebanon. Any approach that would cover up this crime only serves to prepare similar crimes in the future.

Lebanon needs to make peace with its memory to be able to build itself a pacified future. And mass graves are the symbolic passage toward this future, and the way the future treats us depends on the way we treat them today.

(1) Lebanese Center for Human Rights (www.cldh-lebanon.org)

(2) Support of Lebanese in Detention and Exile (www.solidelb.org)

(3) Présidente du comité des familles des disparus et des personnes enlevées au Liban

(4) <http://www.memoryatwork.org/index.php/subtopic/1/2013/10081>

(5) www.legal-agenda.com

(6) www.cmp-cyprus.org

* President of Lebanese Center for Human Rights

Our Stories in War and about It

Did you experience the civil war in Lebanon? Have you experienced or still experience the war in Syria?

These were the questions shared by the UNDP on its social media pages in a call for stories about war that reflect a personal experience in a shelter, hiding from shelling at home, or of fleeing.

Many stories were sent in; the following are the stories that made it into our selection.

Memory Shrapnel

Aicha Yakan

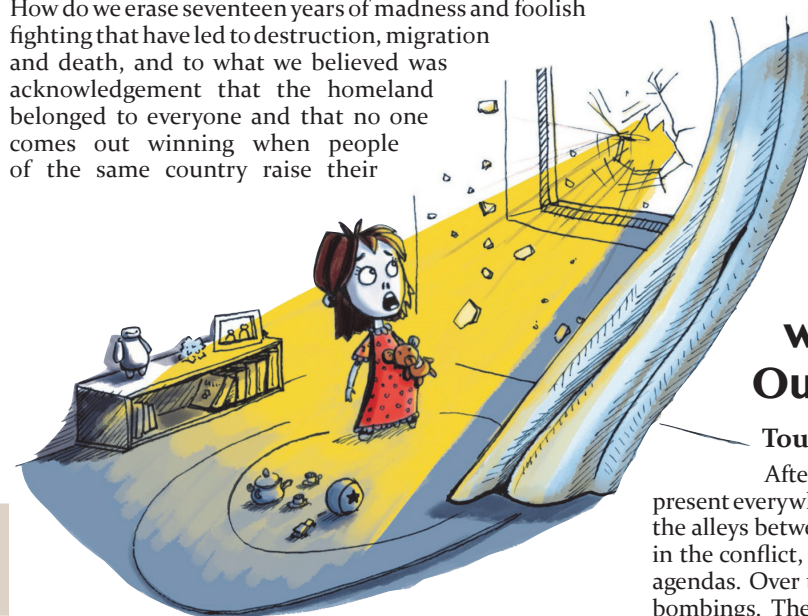
I do not usually write colloquially... But the memories of the war took me back to the depths of my scattered childhood which I was not able to express in formal language. Who are they? Who are we? Can anyone tell me who... Where were they? Where are we? Where are they and we going? We are the children of the war... Whose children are they? What were we? What have we become? How did we cross? We never knew Why did they die? Why do we live? Who are they? Who are we? They left... Why did we remain? We, the war generation... They called us thus... thus they brought us up... thus we grew... And we remain the war generation... What war? Why the war? Who wants the war? Can anyone tell me who... «Daddy, daddy... how did our neighbor become our enemy? And the visits stopped... If we're in the wrong, we're sorry... give us back our bikes... Let's play together and continue the stories... Let's remove the barricades and play in the streets...» Boom boom boom «Run my dears... Get away my dears Move away from the windows... Don't get close... hide, hide, and take cover behind the post» Bullets are falling like rain Bullets are coming into the house... Stray bullets... Not stray bullets... Rockets going up and down Showing no one mercy Shrapnel-strewn buildings... Buildings were being bombed All hit their targets... All kill... All destroy... All burn... How long are you going to go on with this? Let me sleep... let me grow... let me live in safety I want to jump... I want to play... I want to dream of peace... «Mommy, what are these sounds? Why are we sleeping in hallways? Why is the glass shattering? And the walls shaking?» Boom boom boom «Move away my dears... Come back my dears... Get back in from the balcony Hide, hide from the shells that are ripping through the walls What did you do, you fool? Why are you out While all your brothers and sisters are in hiding» «Mommy, I was worried that my dress would be hit by shrapnel That's falling on the balconies... I want to wear it for the holidays... And celebrate with the neighbors» «Can't you see the bullets are like rain and the rockets like fire... What holidays are you talking about, let's hope we make it to tomorrow... And let's be grateful to God for the blessing of seeing a new day» Boom boom boom «Granny, granny, hide me in your lap, give me a sense of security

Tell me a story with no bombs or guns in it... If you know a tale whose heroes lived in peace Let me dream... let me stay in your lap... build my homeland anew» Boom boom boom Who's dead? Who's injured? Whose ticket was drawn today? Who's turn is it today? Ask our neighbor, Abu Amin... He's keeping record, making a note every time a new dream dies... And that's the disappeared book, its pages are in the millions now... Killed... disappeared... displaced... emigrated... A war with who? For who? Can anyone tell me who? They say it's a civil war... Daddy, what's a civil war? What parents make war? What parents kill their children? Why do parents make war? Why do parents destroy their country? This is not a civil war... this is a barbaric war... We died in this war and no one recognized us... We got lost in this war and no one found us... We live through the years of the war and no one asked us... How did we grow after the war? No one answered us They said we are the war generation! No, it's not true We are the peace generation... But what peace? Peace is for God

Our Memory

Raghd Assi

It is our memory betraying us again. We have even forgotten the tears of separation. Is there a family that hasn't had its share of separation? Is there a person who wasn't bereaved at the loss of loved ones? Is there a city that hasn't been destroyed by blind hatred? Is there a village that didn't grieve its children? Is there a street that hasn't witnessed naïve fighting between brothers who had lost their way? How do we forget? How do we erase seventeen years of madness and foolish fighting that have led to destruction, migration and death, and to what we believed was acknowledgement that the homeland belonged to everyone and that no one comes out winning when people of the same country raise their



swords to fight each other but everyone comes out a loser? O Memory, by God, have mercy on us. By God, remind us and rouse us, perhaps we can still come to our senses before it is too late.

The Shelter

Adel Nassar

In the depths of the night, inside a warehouse, below a building standing on the demarcation lines that divided the capital Beirut into East and West Beirut, many big families sought refuge from the shelling exchanged between the parties to the conflict, which never lulled or subsided expect to give the fighters time to catch their breaths in between their draining rounds of hostilities. During that time, snipers stood in for them, and, on their behalf, lay in wait for civilians who tried to take advantage of these periods of relative calm to fulfill their basic needs outside their shelters, and took aim at them whenever an opportunity presented itself or they found them in the range of their rifles. Time was going by slowly and dragged, and boredom was creeping inside the people in the shelter after the children had fallen asleep and their voices and noises had died down, when they heard soft whimper reached them. It began to gradually grow, to take the form of intermittent wailing, soon turning into weeping. Fear gripped the place, and men and women began going around the place in search of the source of that sound, amidst clamor and an indescribable fetid stench due to overcrowding, rare washing up, and excessive heat. One of the mothers reached the source of the sound, and threw herself on her it; it was her daughter. She wanted to silence her and find out why she was wailing, so as to be able to deal with the matter before the others had learned about it. So she stretched out her hand, patting her daughter's body, and whispered in her ear to reassure her and inquire about what was wrong. The girl vomited on the spot and muttered one phrase over and over again: it's a scandal, mother, it's a scandal, mother. Fear and horror gripped the mother's heart, so she went silent, stunned and dumbstruck. The mother's wretched expression made the girl rush to explain the causes of her scandal, saying that they were caused by the stinking smell of her body that she could no longer stand and that had blocked her nose. This restored calm and peace to the mother and daughter's hearts alike.

The Spring of Our Youth Faded along with the Autumn of Our Homeland

Toufic Manafikhi

After so many years of war in Syria, with death present everywhere, horror in the streets, in schools, and in the alleys between buildings, war is no longer taking sides in the conflict, and the people are a bridge on all political agendas. Over time, I have become used to the sounds of bombings. They no longer terrify me after all this time

has passed since the extensive destruction that has swept through Syria. And my eyes are used to the scenes of rising smoke-they no longer tear up. And my body, which used to be shaken by the screaming of children before the terror years, has adapted and now refuses to tremble in fear.

My university canteen in Aleppo, the time my family studied there, they described the general atmosphere there full of entertainment, scientific competition, and knowledge exchange. I am no longer able to visualize this scene. I was experiencing my first year at medical school. One day, I saw my friends sitting around a table, having their morning coffee to the music of Fairuz in the warm rays of the sun.

One of our boring lectures was over and we were back sitting as usual, enjoying ourselves waiting for our next lecture. Our laughs pealed around, and our minds were addicted to worries. We looked into a future just two or three days ahead, and dreamt of fulfilling our desires. Some time later, some of the young men approached a fellow student sitting next to us, wishing him happy birthday. They were carrying a humble cake with lit candles, dancing to the tunes of their joy. They cut off our boring conversation, no longer interrupted by the sounds of bullets and guns. The moment, which we shared, smiling, was not complete. A mortar shell dropped nearby and managed to silence everyone who was in the university-lecturers, students, trees, and stones. A moment of powerful silence prevailed in the place. If not for the music of Fairuz we would have felt that we all went silent deliberately in complicity with the birds!

We turned to each other, without uttering a word, as if we drew strength from each other's looks, so as not to panic in that situation, despite our hearts pounding in fear! The sweat on our foreheads had not dried and the blood in our veins had not flown and something unexpected happened. Another shell fell few meters from where we were! The glass was shattered by shrapnel from the shell, the smoke filled the place, and loud cries and calls could be heard! We ran for our lives, rushing with the crowd of students fleeing the canteen. We left our books and pens behind with our dreams and hopes. I could hear my friends calling me but I could not see them amid the throng and the smoke. I saw one of them and headed towards him. I realized the state of shock he was in. I asked him about the others but he could not speak. His tears dared not flow as if afraid of coming out. And before I had time to talk to him and encourage him to collect himself, another shell fell-I hoped it was the last-right before my eyes. It fell next to my friend on the ground. I did not move. I did not know at the time whether I was wounded, but I was not able to move or speak.

I made an effort to look at the sky, the clouds were smeared with black smoke. I felt a cold breeze sweep through my body, and the sunlight could no longer restore the warmth I was enjoying just minutes ago. The fall transported me to another world, as if I were leaving this earth.

I did not understand what had really happened, and my thoughts drifted for moments that felt like hours, until I felt my friend pulling me by the hand and calling the others. I got up surprised and moved as he led me to them, until I joined them and we walked on.

Thus I will live the rest of my life collecting nightmares instead of memories, hearing the sound of guns instead of Fairuz, waiting for the sun of Syria in January, and trying to tell myself that what does not kill you will make you stronger in this life.

* * *

Love on the Walls of Your Citadel

Hassan Jabkaji

I ran as fast as I could, and my footfall pushed the dust off my way... I stumbled on empty bombshells that fill the place...

I stood dumbfounded in that place that was about a hundred thousand red roses from me, I had left at the doors of your sad balcony one September night...

I closed my eyes... to summon your lost shadow between the paths of a war that has gone on for years...

And years...

I wiped off your big eyes a bottle of aged wine in a cold winter...

«Are you here?»

She did not answer

«I've looked for you for long...»

She did not answer either...

I held the shadow of her hand and ran away from the city market...

Maybe I have not yet loved stones like those.

At that moment, I was about to run away as far as a wounded heart from my love; I did not have the courage to look in your eyes again...

I do not know what I would tell my mother if I were to fail to recover my love

...

I stealthily glance at my city...

Will I tell her that I was stealing the stones of the city...

Or eavesdropping like women do!

Do you remember when you entered the citadel through its large gate and I said to you:

«Let's play hide and seek.»

You would run from my cold kisses in the heat of July... You climbed its big stones that separate you from my heart the distance of longing...

I guessed that you were hiding in the «Prison of Blood», I called it then the prison of lovers...

You broke the iron, you were about to break your small warm heart...

I saw all cities in your big eyes...

«That's my castle and my life in its chapters...»

We dangle on the walls of the citadel like two lost children, and people stare at us...

I failed to recover you...

I did not dare to enter history any further...

My mother said to me: «Hold your head up... The answer to the past means digging in the bowels of the earth...

I remembered the day of the history exam. I was trying to cheat and copy from my friend Muhammad. I told him that it's just this one question...

He ignored me...

I told him we would play football together and then we would go to Sallora Sweets* and eat delicious ice cream... While Muhammad came to his friend's aid in Kurdish, I understood that he was helping him cheat.

«So even you, Muhammad, won't help me.

Fine, I'll rely on Bougous... He's a hinter...

I looked at him, he was up to his ears in his work...

Therefore, I have failed spectacularly in history and in every term...

I haven't seen them for a while, each has crossed to a different continent...

They fled the dark shadows to reach a small light that grows every day in their minds...

«Life is so harsh, and it feels good to resist life and death all at once.»

My father was killed in front of the bakery and the bread was stained with his blood...

So my brother decided not to stay another day in that house...

As for my mother, the house became her children...

«Here I was born and here I shall die... I won't leave my children.»

She pointed to the rooms of the house...

By the citadel... Not far from the Prison of Blood

There's nothing here but ash on the ground...

I have nothing to do but look at the sky, wait for the sun to rise and shine on its white stones...

Place: Citadel of Aleppo, Aleppo
 Prison of Blood: an old prison inside the Citadel of Aleppo

* * *

My Academic Pursuits in Homs Come to an End

Rim Haswa

A frightening acceleration of unfolding events, divergent views here and there, small and big gatherings, strident discussions and loud voices-sometimes leading to fights, feeling of hatred, and even the rejection of the other to the point of cutting off all communication-refusal of dialogue and discussion, even fear of sharing one's views and ideas. These are all new aspects of our lives that suddenly



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appeared. Before, they were never prevalent or at least did not manifest themselves as violently. Leading a normal life has become difficult. There is random shooting in the sky at random times, day and night, and, overall, tension prevails.

I still remember that day when my friend and I sat on a bench in the park of our faculty despite the tense situation and the menacing sky that promised rain. I suddenly heard the sound of continuous shots fired from the direction of my neighborhood, which was only a few minutes away from university by car. I was anxious and worried. Many questions rushed through my head: What's happening? What's the reason for the shots? My parents, my brothers? Are they okay?

Our lectures and classes were over for that day, and, several minutes later, after things had calmed down, we decided to go home. She stayed with me until I got into a taxi and the taxi drove off.

On the road, the situation deteriorated again and the sound of shots grew louder and louder. The driver decided to change course quickly and took a backroad for fear of being shot at if we were to stay on the main road.

During those few minutes, I could feel each second go by, all alone in the taxi, afraid and anxious. Perhaps what made me even more afraid was the state of the elderly driver who was visibly anxious and afraid too as he sped down the road, going from side to side and maneuvering. Finally, we arrived at the destination. I told him that I wanted to get off up the street where I lived with my family. He said, «Go ahead, but be quick.» I got off and quickly rushed home. Most of the men were outside, standing in the doorways of their houses and chatting. I entered the house and made sure that each member of my family was safe. I also called my friend to let her know that I had made it safely home. She was worried about me then although she too was at risk, as her neighborhood was adjacent to mine. But she had always been, and remains, a person who worries and cares about her friends and feels responsible for them. I used to consider her like a mother of our group of four girlfriends who had bound by a close relationship for many years, and remain so today.

This scene was repeated over and over again in recent times, until it became difficult and dangerous to attend university. It may have resulted in my death, just like the deaths of some students at the door to the university or inside, according to the news I received at the time. That was why my family and I decided that I interrupt my studies until the situation changed, praying to God that it would change for the better.

At the time, I did not know yet that my academic pursuits and my residence would soon come to an end in Homs...

The Many Capitals of My Homeland

Tareq Chams

When Israeli planes began shelling the city of Nabatieh in South Lebanon, and the bombs were dropping on its neighborhoods in 1978, everyone realized that an invasion by the enemy was underway, especially with the announcement of the launch of Operation Litani. This was the time when many Lebanese families decided to move to safe regions, such as Beirut. Beirut in 1978 was divided into two parts: East and West. I remember that we were staying in my aunt's apartment in the Ras al Nabaa district in the western part of the capital. The view from the apartment presented the two tall buildings of Rizk Tower and Abu Hamad Tower in East Beirut, in the neighboring district of Achrafieh.

As soon as we arrived and I was enrolled in the primary school in that same neighborhood, violent clashes broke out between the Syrian forces, their Palestinian allies, and the so-called national forces, on the one hand, and the Lebanese Phalange Party and the Liberation Tigers and their allies, on the other. We felt like we had moved from one front to another, from one conflict to another, where the bodies of the sniper victims were strewn on both sides of the demarcation line going through the capital. That same year, Beirut witnessed an internecine war between its inhabitants that lasted about fifty days. Sniper shots hit my aunt's apartment. At the time, I would tremble in fear seeing sniper bullets heading our way from the Rizk and Abu Hamad Towers. I would wake up terrified when these towers appeared in my nightmares. That same year too, my classmate Ahmad, who was 9, died. We were told that he was hit by a mortar shell. A friend in class said that he had seen his body and it was in pieces.

In the course of 1979, 1980 and 1981, I would go to my school through streets protected by sand barricades to protect us from the crosshairs of snipers trying to hunt us down. I used to think that the residents of East Beirut were not humans like us. A classmate once told me that they had three feet. Then I borrowed a pair of binoculars to watch those who were killing us. The flat in the building across from us had been hit by a shell, and there was now a wide opening in its wall presenting a view of the eastern part of Beirut. So, I began observing that area. I was so happy to see cars driving there that looked just like our cars! Then I saw a woman hanging her laundry on a clothesline and I stared, petrified... She's one of those residents in East Beirut and she looks just like us! Maybe it is difficult to see her three feet from where I'm standing!

The next day, I talked about this at school. I said, «I saw the people of East Beirut.» My classmates were eager to hear about them. «How do they look?» I said, «Very much like us.» They were silent...

A few years later, in 1983, the border between the two «Beiruts» was opened and I went to that border to see Achrafieh, the area inhabited by the sniper and the people who were different from us. I was frightened and I was on edge. I was afraid of my own shadow. They might kill me or cut me to pieces. But I had to enter that area. I arrived at Rizk Tower and stared at it for a while. That was the tower that was killing us and terrifying us, and here I was standing right by it. I walked to Burj Abu Hamad, observing it carefully. But I quickly retraced my steps, my heart pounding, back to my country, West Beirut. Before crossing the border to my devastated homeland, I entered a candy shop and bought a biscuit. It was a shop in Achrafieh and I was careful in how I talked to the vendor, afraid of my identity being discovered. I quickly returned to my area as I munched on a biscuit from the country of East Beirut...

Civil War Through the Eyes of a 6-Year-Old Boy

Wassim Katerji

On a regular school day, back in 1989, I, only six years old, was sitting in class at the Saint Joseph School in Jbeil. My daily routine was suddenly interrupted when I heard my father rushing through the hallway. He stood at the door of my classroom, holding my older sister in one hand, and waving at me with the other to take my things and follow him quickly. The principal of the primary section was following him in confusion. I didn't see the fear in his eyes; I was too happy to skip class.

On the way home, he didn't say a word. Even though he was an easy driver, that day he was driving at full speed. Although I merely recall that the roads were practically empty, I clearly remember how we crossed the bridge of Fidar so fast in our old VW wagon that I felt we were going to fly off that bridge. We reached home in no time to find my mother waiting anxiously at the front door.

When we stopped, we heard deep sound of rifle shots. These terrifying sounds got louder and more intense so fast that we didn't get a chance to say a word. We slid down a wooden ladder inside our home that led us to the underground level, where the four of us hid in a two-by-one corner next to the bathroom on the floor. I don't remember my parents getting the chance even to lock the front door before we went down. We sat there for hours as the sound of the bullets and shells ripped the air. We didn't eat or drink, nor dared to go to the bathroom in front. We just waited for the sound of terror to stop by the end of the day... The rest of that year was even worse, and we spent most of our time in that basement hiding in fear. However, it was precisely that day that I realized, despite being a very young boy still that we were living in a war.

Many years later, I asked my parents about that day to understand what had happened and why. Back then, my parents were sitting in our front garden facing the coastal road in the town of Halat. As the highway was blocked to be used as a military airport, the coastal road was the main link between Beirut and Tripoli, and therefore was usually busy. On that day, the traffic suddenly stopped completely, which made my parents very curious. They stopped a worker who was passing on foot in a rush, and asked him if he had noticed anything on his way. He told them the Lebanese Army blocked the road at the nearby town of Okaibi, and was mobilizing its troops and tanks to advance toward Jbeil to face the Lebanese Forces.



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My parents freaked out as my sister and I were at school in Jbeil...

My Reason Telling me About War

Samira Fakhoury

Looking at my blank page, I wonder whether the war that has ravaged Lebanon since 1975 is really over. I wonder whether in our Hearts we feel the calmness of peace.

My reason suddenly rebels:

«Are you trying to kid yourself? Or are you trying to convince me, your reason!»

«No, no!» I try to sum the experienced situations and dangers to date them. You know full well that days and events succeeded one another. They seemed to resemble one another. But I have to begin at the beginning. That real first shock, in a country where the majority was not aware of what was being plotted in the shadow. In a serene village that had been forever protected by a Lebanese Army barracks... It was 1976.

There's shattering news: The Army has left the place-it has divided. And the bolt of lightning is promptly followed by a crash of thunder. «Don't leave your houses: a convoy armed to the teeth will be passing through the village to join the others.» Armed, yes. But not the Army.

Just passing through. But no. They have left on their way some young and not-so-young people shot down, some in the streets and others on their doorsteps. More than a dozen corpses on this first day of a terrible cycle that would change faces but retain the same heart: division, carnage, terror, and it went on, and on, and on.

I can no longer remember how long... maybe days? Months? Years?

That's what I'm trying to sum up. By adding dates.

Fleeing seemed to be the only option. Today we call it emigration.

But it was not a solution we chose: How do we abandon our three houses on the hill?

My parents' house where my mother lived; my sister's house, already living in exile with her husband who left for work, since before the «war»; and ours. Our house.

Thus the decision was made: make sure that the kids are safe in a house in Beirut (choosing the lesser of two evils?); transform our garage into a shelter. This became easy after our car was stolen. When then? 1978? No, the beginning of the 1980... but also in 1976. With the car.

Indeed! Makes no difference surely. It was such a long time ago.

In that garage, then, which was actually on the ground floor but sheltered from three sides by the mountain, my husband and I survived the shelling on an enemy army targeting another enemy army that was camped just outside our house.

We survived the bombs of the wonderful very Western warship that was aiming at the same targets. Was it 1983? 1984? Incredible.

We survived the terror. And we protected our houses.

«Maybe so,» says my reason, «But at what cost?»

And today I ask myself, did we also protect Lebanon?

I won't listen to my reason. My heart tells me yes.

The Missing

Dalia Khamissy*

They say that the missing are neither dead nor alive.

They must be floating in a middle world, waiting for their fate to be unveiled.

I was 7 in 1981 when my father was detained in Beirut. Three days later he was set free. Years later, I understood he had been luckier than many others. There is an estimated 17,000 missing and victims of enforced disappearance whose families still await their return. They all disappeared during Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war. They were from diverse religions, gender, age and political persuasions and were kidnapped by different Lebanese militias that took part in the war, as well as Syria and Israel.

Since 2010, I have been telling the stories of the families of the missing and photographing their ongoing struggle.



Mohammad Abbas

Zahra Abbas sits on her bed at her apartment in Tyre, south of Lebanon. Zahra's husband Mohammad went missing in 1978 as he was on his way to Lebanon from Saudi Arabia after finishing his work contract there. Mohammad who drove his car with 2 other colleagues, crossed the Saudi Jordanian border, the Jordanian Syrian border and then the Syrian Lebanese one but never made it back home to his family in Tyre. He was 32.

In December 2015, a month after photographing her Zahra passed away without knowing the fate of her husband! She raised her 4 daughters alone and spent her life looking for him. She was 25 when he disappeared.



Qozhaya Shahwan

Nahil sits in the garden of the house where her husband, Qozhayya Shahwan, was born and brought up, and where she later moved in after their marriage and had their four children, in Batroun, North Lebanon. Qozhayya was 28 years old when, in 1980, militants took him from work for investigation. He never came back home since that day.

Nahil, who was 25 at the time, had to work to bring up their children, send them to school, and support her in-laws, with whom she lived for 25 years after her husband's kidnapping. She looked for him everywhere; she went from one detention center to another until she finally saw him several months later for few minutes in a Syrian prison. Since then, his fate has been unknown.

Georges Ghawi

A photo torn in half, taken in the mid 1960s, showing Marie Ghawi and her son Georges holding a big candle on Palm Sunday, lies on one of the two beds in the one-bedroom apartment where Marie lives alone.

Georges was 22 years old when he was kidnapped while on a business trip in West Beirut, on December 30, 1983. He had planned to elope with his fiancée the following day.

Years after his kidnapping, Marie tore most of the photographs of Georges to remove relatives and friends. The only photos she kept intact were those Georges took during his trip to Hong Kong few months before his kidnapping.

Marie looked for her son everywhere, but she has never found him. She is still struggling to know his fate.



Rashid Liddawi

Imm Rashid watches TV in her house in Tripoli, North Lebanon. Above her hangs a photo of Rashid who went out on April 10, 1976 to buy cigarettes and never came back. He was 15 years old. His mother looked for him all around the country but never got information about his whereabouts... Imm Rashid says that her heart tells her he is still alive.

Many of the missing and victims of enforced disappearance were under 18 at the time of their abduction.



Wajih Zahalan

A shoe lies in an abandoned building that was used as a detention center during the 1975-90 Lebanese civil war in Bhamdoun, east of Beirut

In 1982, a pile of passports belonging to people who were kidnapped was found inside the building, among them, the passport of Wajih Zahalan, a month after his kidnapping.

Wajih left his home in Aley one early morning in winter, and headed to the Bekaa with his business partner for work. That morning, Wajih left without waking his four children-he never said goodbye. A couple of days later, a friend of the family learned that they were both stopped on the road and taken away by force. He was 38 years old.

When they found his passport, it was missing his photo, but information about his identity was still there.

Wajih's son Ayman entered the building in 2014 for the first time since the kidnapping of his father. He started looking for writings on the wall, hoping to find a message from his father. But he found nothing.



Kariman Mohammad

A fur coat belonging to Kariman Mohammad Ahmad hangs on a wardrobe inside her daughter Rasha Jomaa's bedroom in Saida, South Lebanon.

Kariman left her husband and two children at home in Saida one day in 1986, and headed to her parents' in Beirut.

Not being in touch, her husband and parents only realized a couple of months later that Kariman never reached Beirut that day and that she was in fact missing.

Rasha was only 5 years old at the time. Over the past few years, she started investigating her mother's disappearance.



News Bulletin Introductions and the Civil War

George Sadaka, PhD*

To this day, news bulletin introductions on Lebanese television and radio stations generate strong interest and remain a controversial subject, given the problematics raised, and the implications and the risks entailed.

Academic studies and specialists agree that these introductions run counter to the principles of journalism. What is more serious is that they sometimes amount to a threat to civil peace, given that the origins of this practice are rooted in martial journalistic practices that prevailed during the war years.

Problematics of News Bulletin Introductions

The problematics raised by news bulletin introductions fall within four categories: professional, political, legal and ethical.

- **Professional:** These introductions often appear to flout professional standards in setting news priorities, in adopting an oriented or ideological discourse far removed from the priority of events and professional rules, and in responding to political agendas set by the owners of the stations or of those pulling the strings.

- **Political:** Introductions are used as a platform to deliver political messages, for promotional and propaganda campaigns against opponents, or to settle scores between parties. Thus, their discourse sometimes tends to be scathing or violent, leading to growing tensions between internal parties, and stirring up political or sectarian agitation.

- **Legal:** News bulletin introductions are often inconsistent with the audiovisual law pursuant to which these outlets obtained licenses to operate. The law provides that «media organizations shall not in news bulletin introductions not designate any political entity using terms that are indicative of attitudes, nor shall they disseminate names that are inconsistent with the approved designations by the targeted party, nor shall they present an event or an incident while adding in the same phrasing an accusation against a particular political party, and by law they shall not intervene in dealing with issues or cases under consideration by the judiciary.»⁽¹⁾ Many of the things enumerated above appear in news bulletin introductions.

- **Ethical:** Disregarding professional principles, and the use of violent and accusatory rhetoric are inconsistent with the ethics of the profession whereby the media should be committed to their mission of building awareness among the public by providing it with facts and actual events that would allow it to understand its environment and the obligations of public interest. Moreover, the violent and accusatory rhetoric that these outlets use sometimes conflicts with the requirements of civil peace and undermines public affairs.

An analytical study of the introductions on television and radio showed that 33% of the discourse of these introductions was promotional and critical, indicating a trend that is moving away from a news-based approach.⁽²⁾

Another study⁽³⁾ showed that these introductions use psychological warfare tactics, such as deception through insinuation, arousing anxiety, refuting the opponent's aspersions, threats, spreading terror and rumors, slander, instigation and misinformation.

The Position of the Media Stations

Despite repeated criticisms and complaints about them, the stations maintain and defend these introductions, knowing full well that they violate the principles of good professional practice. In their view, they are a means to attract the audience with their sensationalism, consequently attracting advertisers looking for high viewer ratings. Given the financial crisis facing the Lebanese media in general, the ratings race has become

a priority. News bulletin introductions have become such a focal point that they have now achieved a fully-fledged media status (in the sense of an event), subsequently relayed by radio stations and digital news websites. Moreover, journalists at times draw on them for their analyses and the positions of different parties.

The journalist Walid Abboud says, «The introduction has become necessary and is considered a tool to attract audiences, as evidenced by the experience of MTV news when it was first launched. It had tried to have a news bulletin without an introduction, the western way, but it did not see a good reception from the audience [...] Although the audience claims to not want the introductions on the news because these are biased, but deep inside it demands this introduction and experience has proven that.»⁽⁴⁾ Muhammad Afif, Al Manar TV channel's news director, says, «The importance of introductions to the station: We deliver through it the position of the political party that we represent [...] to suit the nature of the audience we address.»⁽⁵⁾

Karma Khayat, chairwoman of the board of directors of Al Jadeed TV channel, says, «We are proud that Al Jadeed channel has instituted the model of news bulletin introductions; statistics have shown that viewers start with the opening of newscasts and then move on to other stations.»⁽⁶⁾

The Martial Origins of the Introductions

The inconsistency of news bulletin introductions with media principles generally goes back to the role entrusted to the introductions by the owners of television and radio outlets, since the political and sectarian power-sharing involved in granting licenses has left the ownership of these stations in the hands of political parties or persons along the lines of their sectarian and political affiliations. Thus, the stations have become an extension of the views of their owners, and, consequently, a tool in the service of political, partisan and sectarian activity, involving distortion and misrepresentation of content and programs to serve the chosen course.

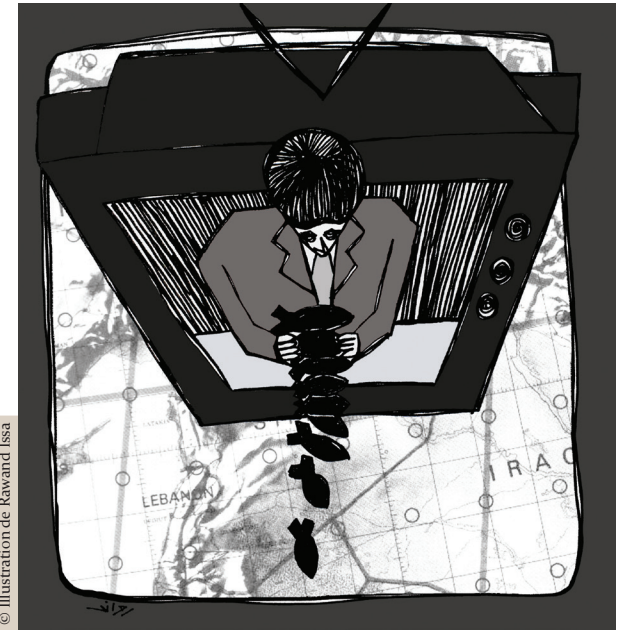
In order to understand the basic premises underlying news bulletin introductions in Lebanon, we must go back to their origins, i.e. the launch of private media institutions in Lebanon—first radio stations and later television.

News bulletin introductions were launched in the newscasts of radio stations that emerged in Lebanon with the onset of the civil war in 1975. These stations originated under the wing of militia forces on the ground, where each formation had its own radio. Whereas the military force was fighting the war on the ground, the radio led the media and propaganda fight on the air waves. The list of radio stations of the time affiliated with militias is long and they include: Sawt Loubnan, Sawt Loubnan Al-Arabi, Loubnan El-Hourr, Sawt Al-Amal, Sawt Al-Jabal, Sawt El-Watan, Sawt Al-Chaab, Sawt Loubnan Al-Hourr Al-Mouwahad, Radio of the Islamic Resistance, Sawt AL-Haqiqa.

Radio is the Military Tool Par Excellence

The emergence of radio stations in Lebanon, with the onset of the civil war in 1975, is not an exceptional case. In many countries around the world, radio has accompanied the outbreak of revolutions and liberation movements, in addition to the wars that were waged by states. The radio is the rear of the canon because it wages the psychological war and the ideological war. It is a reflection of the military and political presence on the ground and a symbol of the presence of this force.

Since its launch in the first quarter of the twentieth century, radio has been characterized by its ability to overcome barriers and distances, to enter every home, and to penetrate the opponent's defense lines—even seventy years ago before satellite broadcasting. Something no other form of media



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could have achieved.

So, the radio played a key role in various wars and revolutions in the world since World War II. The Lebanese war, as early as 1975, was one of the radio battlefields par excellence. It stood out as being a weapon of psychological war and political propaganda, and its role in the media war was achieving victory. So, radio stations were bombed like other military sites. It was also noted that a military loss for a militia did not entail the closure of its radio.

Radio at the time was the number-one media outlet, given the barriers facing the written press, which was often unable to cross checkpoints between regions, and the radio enjoying unrivalled advantages, such as speed, real-time access, ease of broadcasting and receiving, ability to overcome barriers and distances. So, it accompanied the Lebanese all through the day, from their cars to the shelters, guided them to «safe and passable» roads, and informed them of shelling locations.

It was in this environment that news bulletin introductions originated: the radio's military role par excellence, accompanying the gun to achieve victory, revolutionary songs, oriented news to fire up the enthusiasm of fighters. News introductions stepped in to translate this goal. These introductions were firmly established in radio bulletins, and later moved to television stations that followed their lead, especially that the first television stations were launched by radio journalists who transplanted their experience to new format.

In 1976, the first government under President Elias Sarkis that was headed by Selim Hoss deemed radio stations pernicious and unlawful. Hoss accused them of carrying out «radio shelling». The Beiteddine conference of 1978 adopted a decision to close all privately-owned radio stations. That same year, a government memorandum was issued banning officials from making statements on private radio broadcasters in order to harass and silence them. However, private radio endured and obtained licenses, and was later followed television stations.

Conclusion

Dealing with the situation of news introductions cannot be undertaken in isolation from the legal, financial, ethical and union-related structure of the Lebanese media, nor in isolation from the general political situation. Nevertheless, those heading media institutions should realize that the public interest overrides all other interests and that there are red lines that should not be crossed so as to preserve civil peace, and that the transition from a state of war to a state of peace requires a change in the prevalent discourse.

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(1) These are some of the violations presented by Abdel Hadi Mahfouz, President of National Council of Audiovisual. Annahar newspaper, March 6, 2017. Television News Introductions and the Requirements of the Law.

(2) Role of News Bulletins Introductions in Consolidating Civil Peace, Jocelyne Nader, Tony Mikhael, Maharat Foundation, 2016. The study concluded: «The war has not ended' yet. This is what we sense in introductions. The same conclusion was reached by the 'International Center for Transitional Justice' in its final report of field observation in the Greater Beirut area, about the view of this area's inhabitants on the Lebanese wars (1975-1990), through the vocabulary and terminologies used by several generations about this period.»

(3) Ali Rammal. TV News Bulletin Introductions: Political Alignments, Psychological Warfare and Law Violations. Journalists and Professional Ethics. Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE), Beirut, 2009.

(4) <http://maharat-news.com/News12.2016>

(5) Caroline Akoum, August 3, 2007, Asharq Al-Awsat. On the overly dramatic facial expression on the faces of the station's journalists when delivering the newscast, Afif says, «This performance could only bother opponents of the station's policy [...] the professional journalist should combine proper reading and exciting performance to attract viewers.»

(6) <http://nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/show-news/271932/>

Problems of Citizenship in Lebanon

Nizar Rammal*

In Lebanon, there are several problems relating to citizenship. However, I chose to speak about two of them in particular here because I believe that they are the most prevalent.

*** The first issue involves the relationship with place and geography as fundamental determinants of citizenship:**

Mere descent from a geographical place does not necessarily entail gratitude of full citizenship. This «descendant» must contribute to the continuation of life of his/her homeland, by paying taxes and the performing duties to obtain rights.

Is an expatriate, for example, who has spent decades outside his country, paying taxes to another country, who has not contributed to the transformation of his country's laws and the development of his society, and who does not bear the consequences of its economic difficulties or living conditions, entitled to decide the destiny of millions of citizens who residing in it and who bear all its pressures and daily difficulties by exercising his right to vote?

Is the blood line alone enough to determine whether a person fulfills all the conditions for citizenship?

This problem is reflected in the Lebanese electoral law. It is based on casting a vote based on the registry of vital records, and not based on the place of residence. Thus, a «citizen» who was born in Beirut, lives there, and pays the taxes owed to his/her municipality, must cast his vote in a village in another governorate for the sole reason that his vital records are kept there. Such a practice denies him/her the most important right of citizenship which is electoral accountability. Under such a law, he/she would not be able to hold the Beirut municipality accountable despite paying taxes and living within its scope. On the other hand, what about people residing in the country who do not hold citizenship, even though they have been there for decades, such as the Palestinians, the Filipinos, the Indians, the Iraqis, the Syrians, the Ethiopians, the Egyptians, the Sri Lankans, etc.? They now have grandchildren born in this country who pay taxes, contribute to its economic and urban progress, and suffer the hardships of daily life and the dangers of internal and regional threats; do they not deserve citizenship?! In short, how can people accept one another, and form civil and citizen relations under a political and societal system that promotes the opposite of citizenship, and even goes as far as to reward anti-citizenry conduct?

*** The second issue revolves around belongings or «allegiances».**

I have always wondered about the point of two bar associations, one in Beirut and the other one in Tripoli in the north. This applies to the orders of physicians and engineers as well. One of the reasons may be related to the legacy of the problematic creation of Greater Lebanon (as is the case with other Arab countries, such as Syria, Iraq, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, etc.) at the hands of the French/British colonialist powers in the early 20th century.

In any case, belonging remains an essential element in strengthening or undermining Lebanon.

Most of Lebanon's primary historical references (Philip Hitti, Kamal Salibi, Jawad Boulos, Georges Corm, Ahmad Beydoun, etc.) agree that the religious sects/denominations form the basis for Lebanon's modern political creation.

In terms of identity, the Lebanese oscillate between the different components of their individual belonging and the other collective belonging. Most of us find it very difficult to deal with this, especially since our upbringing does not help us see the complementarity between the different and sometimes contradictory elements. Instead, we are continuously brought up to seek to eliminate the multiple components of our identity in favor of one or two components at the most.

«[...] Is there a single Lebanese identity? Or are there contradictory identities that make coexistence among the Lebanese impossible?» (Corm).

«My identity is what prevents me from being identical to anybody else,» says Amin Maalouf in his book *In the Name of Identity*. On the same page, he goes on to say, «Each individual's identity is made up of a number of elements, and these are clearly not restricted to the particulars set down in official records. Of course, for the great majority these factors include allegiance to a religious tradition; to a nationality-sometimes two; to a profession, an institution, or a particular social milieu. But the list is much longer than that; it is virtually unlimited. A person may feel a more or less strong attachment to a province, a village, a neighbourhood, clan, a professional team or one connected with sport, a group of friends, a union,



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a company, a parish [...]» [penguin]

«Of course, not all these allegiances are equally strong, at least at any given moment. But none is entirely insignificant, either. All are components of personality—we might almost call them 'genes of the soul' so long as we remember that most of them are not innate.»

This particular element, namely the primacy of this individual identity over the collective identity, is an essential element in the production of the citizen and citizenship crisis as experienced in Lebanon and in many other countries.

The affiliations that are reckoned to be of consequence in our daily lives are not always those that are considered major belongings such as language, color, ethnicity, class and/or religion.

The so-called «Lebanese individual» suffers from the conflict between these affiliations and their overlap, and we see this in the perception of relations between this "individual" and «every» other «Lebanese or non-Lebanese individual». There is the Sunni Lebanese whose belonging to Egypt or some Gulf state predominates as is the case with Iran for the Shiite, France for the Maronite and Russia for the Orthodox.

These issues are still relevant and active in the actual formation and practice of citizenship.

Given the above, how can these individuals, who are unable to establish healthy relationships among themselves, on the foundation of accepting differences and building on common interests and needs, establish healthy relations with «others»? The others in this case are the «Syrians», the «Palestinians», the «Iraqis», the «Egyptians», the «Indians», etc.

Proposals to strengthen the relationship between people in Lebanon on the basis of citizenship:

We have intentionally used «people» in the title to this section and not other words such as «Lebanese», «Indian», «Palestinian», etc.

The «anxieties» and the «fears» existing between the «Syrians», the «Lebanese» and the «Palestinians» cannot be considered in isolation from the anxieties and fears—which are almost identical-between the Lebanese themselves. These fears take many forms, including political, economic and even demographic.

An example stood out powerfully during the civil war (1975-90) (one of many wars; we are now experiencing one of them in a completely non-military forms). The «Maronite Lebanese from Achrafieh» may share the same condescending view as that of the «Lebanese Sunni from Beirut» of the «other Sunni Lebanese» and the «other Maronites from Akkar», for example. They, the Maronite Lebanese from Achrafieh and the Lebanese Sunni from Beirut, also lead an inferior/superior relationship between them! This aspect of relationships between people has lately come to the foreground in two striking instances. The first was when the former Minister of Labor, Boutros Harb, called for banning the sale of land between the Lebanese sectarian communities, and the second following the proposal of an electoral law that provides that Christians vote for Christians and Muslims for

Muslims, in other words undermining a basic condition of citizenship!

In such an institutional environment, and with such methodologies and policies, it will be very difficult for people of other nationalities to receive equal citizen or even humane treatment.

I do not think there could be effective measures in this regard without introducing institutional reforms-legal and legislative first-which would eliminate and punish all forms of discrimination between the Lebanese (based on religious sects first, then on the basis of economic class and profession). These should be accompanied by educational and tax reforms. With regard to public schools, the Lebanese and Syrian poor are equally underprivileged. They are also equally burdened with indirect taxes (which is unfair in the absence of progressive direct taxes and the absence of tax on economic rent).

As for the relationship between the Lebanese, the Palestinians and the Syrians, it is necessary to examine at least three factors that have contributed and continue to shape this relationship and determine its form, type and future character.

The first factor is the shock of the Sykes-Picot Agreement by virtue of which the British and French colonizers divided and shared the area. It coincided (i.e., this agreement and its consequences, the shock) with other contemporaneous shocks (the Balfour Declaration, the division of Syria and Iraq, and the Great Arab Revolt).

The second factor is collective memory-often negative-of the relationship between «Syria» and «Lebanon», which reached its climax in the Syrian army's presence in Lebanon and in the wake of its withdrawal following the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafic Hariri. In the past five years, the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon, and the official and popular approach to dealing with it have compounded the problem. In addition to this collective memory, there is also what relates to the Palestinian guerrilla movement, or Fedayeen, and the armed Palestinian presence in Lebanon that started in the late 1960s and continues to this day (today confined within the limits of Palestinian refugee camps).

The third factor is the occupation of Palestine and the large numbers of its population coming as refugees to Lebanon in several waves (between 1948 and 1967), and the consequent political, economic, military, security, societal and demographic developments and complexities that have taken many forms since the end of the 1960s.

Finally, some proposals could work towards improving relations or at least preventing them from escalating into a larger crisis, both in the short and long terms, including:

1. Strengthening the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary in Lebanon. I believe that this will have a positive impact on all the people living in this country.
2. Abolishing discriminatory policies, decisions and laws against:
 - (a) Syrian refugees and Palestinians in Lebanon;
 - (b) any person who lives on Lebanese territory of any nationality whatsoever.
3. Holding accountable all politicians and media professionals who incite publicly or implicitly against any nationality, and at least morally criminalize them. (Hate speech must be prevented and those who practice it must be held accountable).
4. Holding accountable municipalities that take illegal racist and discriminatory decisions against refugees (such as curfews), and not tolerate them.
5. Launching civil society initiatives (and supporting existing ones) to promote meetings and human interaction at all levels (technical, cultural, intellectual and professional) between the Syrian and Palestinian refugees, on the one hand, and the Lebanese, on the other.
6. Putting an end to practices that infringe refugee rights (such as arbitrary arrests, torture, humiliation and collective punishment), holding perpetrators accountable instead of cover-ups.

To conclude, a quotation for Saadallah Wannous's *Fragments of History* seems apposite: «In this muddied reality and sickly age, accomplishing the possible may be the dream.»

War Is Not an Ammunition Dump

(Dario, everything is tied and related to you.)

Abido Basha*

Those who saw the country fall with its heart had black pupils. Others found it galvanized with the sparks of violent spinning from the fusion of hearts and creativity. The country had insight, not vision, for them. The country whimpered with rain. It heaved tens of missed seasons. For conflict would not-for the time being-go into hiding in the country's terrestrial layers. Some did not realize that the war had started. They found themselves on its trembling lines. They found in war all that was vague, all that was unknown. Yet, others found in war the earth yawning in a glow. Those are two brilliant examples. Many walked on the roofs of oblivion. They carried on with their days like somnambulists. They thought they would not live in safety nor in an old duty. They were in the grip of terror finding it to be an ugly anthem. Those who have ideas and dreams in their minds flocked in war. Their eyes and bodies opened, first to an innocent daze. Then to the country's tumorous tyranny. They found their coming of age in the war. They would not melt in the brain's raw naïveté nor in weeping. That was the age of singing. Roger Assaf was found on the ambushes in the Chyah district. His star exploded there, digging and rejoicing with every renewed round of fighting. This was his season. It was the season of those who found essence on the chains of freedom's wings, in its heroic exploits.

Those survived the horrors of past stages. They exploded like stars on axes between warring districts. Those named and unknown lost the heat of their bodies when they failed before the surprises and volcanoes on the ground, and the flying meteors in the sky. Soon those who had found their days in peace-transient days-were swirled in the dizzying feeling of change into clashes. Khaled El Haber, Ahmad Kaabour, Hassan Daher, Toni Wehbe, Naseer El Asaad, Fawaz Traboulsi, Raif Karam, Elias Khoury, and many more. Thus, they overcame the final hurdle.

The war was a heavy tarantula on some. The war was a reservoir swollen from corruption, repression and social inequality for others. They lend an ear at length. And they heard the sounds of the moving tectonic layers, their windows filled with days and skills, and the gasp flames of a long-bated breath. They came out of the empty pits into the world. They found themselves on the map of the world. They absolved old anger, indifferent to revolution, and set out towards hope. They mixed the sparkle in their eye with the sparkle of the world. Pioneer experiments were out in the light. Meyerhold, Mayakovsky, Mnouchkine, Appia, Craig, Vakhtangov, Brook, Pushkin, and many more. Brecht was shown in theatre houses as if he were a pretty girl. Peter Weiss was toured in the streets of Beirut and on the country's leaflets thirsty for radical change. The names broke out like fires. Julian Beck and Judith Malina, Bread and Puppet, underground theatre, high brothel theatre. Vaudeville, cabaret, exegesis, boulevard.

Theatre is a man of war. War is a woman of theatre. Men are many in war. Visual arts, political songs, new poetry, novels, short stories, cinema. War makes expression forms fertile. And it brought out other forms of anxiety, with the heads of its protagonists, to foreground duty. The experiment of political songs is the great flower of the war. A flower with dangling legs. Marcel Khalife, Khaled El Haber, Ahmad Kaabour, Ousama Hallak, Hanan Mayas, Ousama and Marwan Ghandour. Ghazi Mikdash is the number one patron of political song. Goldfish in the quagmires of blood, and fields of dreams.

The war is a hamper full of whatever is outside the confines of the market. Deluded feelings died with the political song. There is nothing in a beautiful voice but a fleeting smile. What matters is not being off-key. Dandelion blossoms will come in contact with other colorful flowers in the field of political song. The chorus is the voice of the group. New poetry the vocal chords of song. The voice is

the master of the instruments. Dozens of flowing groups of various were founded on the margins of the Al Kawras Al Shaabi (popular chorus) experiment with Ghazi Mikdash. As if they had come out of forgotten gift boxes lying at the bottom of Christmas trees. Khaled El Haber and the Band, Marcel Khalife and Al Mayadeen Ensemble, Sami Hawat and the Band, Ousama Hallak's Band. Ahmad Kaabour and the Band. The Sanabel Band brought out of the red breath Al Kawras Al Shaabi. The experiment of the new children's theatre. First, Sanabel, then Sunduq El Firje with Najla Jreissati Khoury and some child carers in Mme Falanga's school. Then Paul Matar's modern band, the butterfly. Dozens of groups across the country, after Nabil's adventures captured the Lebanese scene like grass withering in the sun of the other days.

Joseph Fakhoury's theatre dominated the scene for decades. The war revealed to him education not upbringing. For, new experiments were carried by avant-garde curricula around the world.

Nabil started out as a poor man upholstered in velvet. Unremarkable theater. His role was reproducing the prevailing ideology. Cleanliness, diligence at school and obedience at home. One round. Followed by seventy rounds. More than one hundred theatre groups. Amateur and professional. Murmuring and muttering, then exploded the moujammaa el fadalat el fadila (complex of residuous virtues). The war jumped on the pillars of the golden era of Lebanon's history, until the war reached the war. Old dysfunction exploded in the new space. It defeated all the shelves harboring large quantities of dust. Dusty dust. No dust came out. The dead conquered the dead.

In war, the Lebanese cried out that they were alive. Some of them, after transforming their experiment from shadow experiments to pillar experiments. Others, after escaping an artillery shell that came falling on walls and roofs, without advance warning. War is a high life. The life of high culture. The life of high arts. After artists and intellectuals drew their arches and fired their arrows from heart to heart. War is a pacifier of precedents. Not a pacifier of urbanization and civilization. An event that is an achievement, resuscitative, through gesture, hint and transformation. A lyrical breeze on the wind of change. Sharing the King's majesty, sharing the Queen's highness. All Kings and Queens. All symbolic horizons, realistic horizons and imaginary horizons are united on the arch of war, and they fuse with the pillars after planting them in fertile soil. Every condition in war is an abortive condition. The features of past years have been unveiled by the years of war. The elements of the years, the tools of the years have been unveiled with all their impressive qualities. Intentions are freed from waiting sites.

The culture of war is a culture that has not been preceded or followed with the gushing culture of things, words and days. As death gushes in the dead. Collectiveness is one of the passports of war. The collectiveness of performance in political song. The collectiveness of writing and directing in theater. The collectiveness in drawing. Annihilating the vision, by hand, with an experiment led by Samir Khaddaj by painting a work with dozens of hands. Collectiveness in children's theater. More than one writer for a single text. More than one composer. More than one opinion in directing. The wounds of music-making have healed and its leading thread is in song. Performance comes first.

The war completed quickly what past stages were preparing with great composure and patience. The many names echoed through political song to the twinkle of old dreams. Khaled El Haber took over the task of getting out of compulsory service in the Lebanese Army to embrace his visions. He held the rite of the birth of new song. Ahmad Kaabour derived some of the most prominent

French names, without filtering the study of methods of influence. Music and the salutary role of words in the songs of Jaques Brel, Brassins, Vera, Ferro, and many others. Through them he found ways to reach his song. He fused in the elements of their songs after performing their songs in the mother tongue. Then he embodied his new age with Unadikom (I call you) and the songs of his first album. Marcel Khalife made his first appearance in Amshit to the struggle with rightist parties there. He was forced to immigrate to France. He did not come back to Lebanon before Promises of the Storm. Few expected chemistry to be established between those who followed them and those came before them.

They encircled unoriginal ideas with original song. Enrichment is the main feature of the southern poets. The rhythms of understanding current concerns. Many are the poets and poetry has become only a floating probability over the land of conflict. The story was flooded with new points. The novels of Elias Khoury, Hassan Daoud, Jabbour Douaihy, and many more. The theatre mixed identity with pleasure. The theatre was not preoccupied with the idea of death. On the contrary. Playwrights hit the anvil of language, of the idea of breaking free from fetters. They delved into a rhythmic momentum and an emotional charge, which resulted in the blending of realism with mystical and non-mystical contemplation. Something in the vein of suluk poets. Every time they scratch a body, they peel it and reveal it. Then, they quickly filled the white spaces of the new era with everything that contributed to their transformation from emotion to action.

Dozens of experiments to unravel everything that is vague about life. Shows behind closed doors, in squares, in hospitals, at seam lines. Street shows. Giant puppet shows. Here, dreams and bodies became fertile. Here, wounds wed dreams. Joining the ribs directly to the universe. No longer is anyone monopolizing the districts. The Lebanese University is a purple valley, offering something whose shine does not fade. The entity of the university was linked to all the rights of life. No more taboos. War granted full freedom a full mark, to all the letters of the new city. Readings in the notebooks of disobedience, no readings in the notebooks of sin. The chasm is gaping between the two. War and culture; culture and war. The war did not look favorably on culture as a friend. And vice versa. A union of two bodies on the path to reproduction, on the psychological dimension of union and reproduction. Where love is union, and reproduction not a result. And where the social dimension exists, since the rights of the spouses and children are recognized. And where that happens, there is harmony between the elements of society, which leads to the rotation of its growth processes. A growth process, on the sacred dimension of the union of two bodies and two souls. Because humanity is only complete with love, for each of the lovers. Its compassion for the entire human race leads to nurturing the other element as a sacred being.

War here is a sacred being because it seemed, at the time, the most sacred gifts of wisdom. War is the meaning. A meaning required by reality. It was embodied not by bygone rules and dead rules and niceties. Through exchange. Through dialectical debates between war and the people of war, up to organized and methodical expressions.

War did not rage over major points. It raged over everything. That stage will not end without contradictions. This was used in the service of the unique goal. To write a new life. Writing in utmost freedom. Without following roads. Inventing roads. The war sentenced Lebanon to extensive freedom, resulted in serving its interests. It did not seek to connect with old freedoms. And yet it did. Not by virtue of connecting being a function. But by virtue of connecting being fate. Freedom is the creed of Lebanon.



© Roger Assaf's «Ayyam El-Khiyam», Assaf archive

Freedom is the creed of the Lebanese. Thus, theater became a wild jungle in which the armies of old theatre lost their way. The Greek army, the Roman army, the Germanic army. Many armies. Not equal in cruelty, for theater sowed its groves with the finest and juiciest vegetable and fruit. One platform at first. Followed by many platforms. Theatre stretched like a horizon on the country's new horizon. Not as a fountain. The first message is narrating the stories of the other, through thousands of new points. No one will ever again fall into totalitarian languages. The people's language not the Fuhrer's language. Old theatre became a killer grandmother. Everything was open to sabotage. Poetic sabotage. A resounding paradox. Theatre was spreading and bringing together. Because playwrights did not sign contracts and they did not go into excesses, like they did before, by capturing wind in their cages. A blow that deposits the hell of salt. Theatre was no longer a kite loose in the space of the world. Theatre put on the face of astonished and astonishing. There is a rich reflection of the sun, the experience of the Hakawati (storyteller) theater. I return to the Hakawati as an advanced example. Roger Assaf escaped the tyranny mire in a professional theatre experiment in Beirut. He worked inside Palestinian camps with Mahjoub Omar El Masri. He worked in Makassed Saida with Ahmad Zaazaa. He worked in Ainata with Abdel Latif Koteish and the people of the southern village. A village like a lamp that hung the words of its previous experiments in the night. Here were the pristine promontories, the spirit of the water and the unknown, the mysterious half. A world no one considered plunging into. A stream.

Roger Assaf gave up the sea of the sea. He was no longer addicted to meaningless theatre forms. For he looked for meaning in new walls and numbers; came back the same. The Hakawati was the promise of his new, pure life. Old theater a frank constraint.

The Hakawati group is a feral cat, soon tore away with its claws and teeth and a healthy instinct at all the old theatre anthems filled with the shame of being preoccupied with the smells of theatre's early years in the world, and not the private world. No play on stage. Play is in the audience hall. The hall is a hall, not a temple. The show is a crazy tent of tales. No more alienation. No laws of past abilities. The hot blood of hunting at the door to the theatre. He greeted the members of the audience team as guests. No traditional hakawati. No Brechtian hakawati. The Hakawati is the knight of evenings in people's houses. A person with the ability to control rooms inhabited by night owls. Someone who can revive evenings with tales, memories, good performance, signing and bright flashes. A naked body on strong legs. A naked body with a heart tracking every dead part in others, to revive it with its own palpitations. A playful hakawati, like a crown star high in the sky illuminating the earth.

The experiments appeared like fish in a huge, giant aquarium. No tranquility before dreams in the country of masked fear and loneliness decorated with black images. A daydream is different from night dreams. Everyone dreamt of war. They entered the folds of the beats of the hours. There were many experiments in a country against its old images. The crystal country. A lineage of groups and experiments.

The Lebanese Hakawati Group (Bil ibar wal ibar; Min hikayat Jabal Amel 1936; Ayyam El Khiyam-the latter won the musical theater award at the Carthage Theater Festival in 1983, and toured many European and Arab cities).

Al Manara Studio. Raif Karam and Adel Fakhoury founded the Studio. The Sindbad Group with Raif Karam (Dashar qamarnaya hout...). Yacoub Shadrawi's experiments headed to the centers of light with war plays. Gibran wal qaida; Naeema; Al Tarator; Bala le'eb ya wlad. The ambassador of Soviet theatre opened the nights of the silent and closed city, at the time of the Israeli invasion in 1982, on the tremors of turmoil, in a play full of dawn-Al Tarator. Satirical, it fanned the flames of the besieged city's poetry, a commedia dell'arte. Sharon playing with the water valve, to cut off water from the humans of Beirut. Beirut's humans are serving tarator (a tahini-based sauce). A spectacle staged against darkness and silence. Against death, hunger and thirst. Ziad Rahbani mixes his plays with his age. Fear and sadness in plays came mixed with the sounds of castanets of pleasure and an outpour of joy from the wings of laughter, breaking from under the skin. Bennesbeh la bourka shou; Film ameriki taweel; Shi fashel. Plays against the foulness of resentment and against planting poison in gold. Many came out of the pain of darkness. Siham Nasser (Al jayb el sirri), Mashhour Moustafa, Nidal Al Achkar and Fouad Naem (Al Halabah). Everyone put their heads in their hearts and theirs hearts in their heads. The names have always come out of the maze of the markets. Raymond Jbara, Rabih Mroué, Berge Fazlian, Antoine and Latifeh Moultaqa, Joseph Bou Nassar, Jean Daoud, Antoine Kerbaj, Noura Sakkaf, Laila Debs, Ziad Abou Absi, Lina Abyad. The last four names are the names of reciting the rites of university theatre. The Easter of theater not its church. War encouraged it to collect the value in university, away from rhetoric. The war nurtured new theatre and dozens of playwrights. New playwrights. And the playwrights' cheeks were rosy again, after looking more like fruit cast with the shadows of doubt. The theater rained in war, rained on a field, not rain on a flower. The war made theater fertile. It made fertile all forms of expression. The magical din of theatre sounded in the war. New roots without silk curtains. The absurdity of Raymond Jbara. For me his magical realism. The plays of Yacoub Shadrawi break their fast on a breath that mixes vagueness with the unknown with a body opening constantly towards clarity. Eyes in swords not on

the ground. The world burst with showers of awe. Theater was no longer a solitary man. Theater is the voice of the group in a war of many faces. A war intoxicated with the aroma of loud traffic in the streets of the city and its halls, to the point of providing the conditions for the emergence of amateurs and the theatre of amateurs (Abu Moussa El Zabbal, with Pierre Abi Saab and Fadi Abi Khalil, and others). War is not death papers. It is not an ammunition dump and military machines. It is not a corpse warehouse. War is life in more than one life. War is life multiplying life, as it brings it out of sealed chests of secrets to a long green street. Ink is the grave of sacred old arts.

There is no similarity between the Syrian war and the Lebanese war. The former is vertical, the latter horizontal. The civil war in Lebanon was conceived with care to push the Lebanese to overcome the game of confusion, by creating areas open to everything that is perfect. "Western Area". And areas that did not experience their happy times, in terms of culture. "Eastern Area".

Theatre in Lebanon and Syria was brought together by intertwined relations in war. And the two wars played out two universal scenes. Yet the Lebanese war is an abstract war in concise concepts. Whereas the Syrian war is a realistic war. The former war is a metaphorical war. The other one, a war of rhetoric-the more they are used, the more violent it grows.

Theater in Lebanon took on the role of intermediary between culture and the public. A theater not made fragile by attendance. The attendance of Syrian theater inside and outside, a fragile attendance. The fragility has increased with feeding delusions to one party and feeding fear to the other party. Growing delusions in the plays of the Syrian opposition, especially in Lebanon. And it increases fear in the play of the inside besieged with filming equipment of battles and the dangers their owners run in these battles, which increases the confusion of their owners. One of the brilliant examples is the Omar el-Jebai's *The Window*. It was shown at the Arab Theater Festival in Oran, Algeria. Theater beings become reality beings. Not the other way around. A man and a housewife in a fictional world watch a window with a light flickering behind it, or what they think is a light. War here is a war reflected on the web of relations between the spouses. A husband addicted to drinking alcohol and cigarettes. No words to be shared with the wife. Because he spends most of his days observing the light behind the window. The play ends with the wife joining the husband to observe the light just as he observes the light. I can't remember is a political manifesto. An detainee recounts his stories before an audience that does not find its new presence except through the story of the new detainee. That's how Osama Halal's *Above Zero* is, or Omar Abu Saada's *Can you please look at the camera?*, or Majd Fidda's *For a yes or for a now*, or Samer Fidda's *Al Muhajeeran*.

The war in Lebanon swept the old standards of artists. He is no longer in the middle of a game of cubes. He is now in a new atlas, moving cartographic forms by inputting special data on current circuit board. Hakawati Theater's *Ayyam El Khiyam* and *Min Hikayat 36* are exemplars of anti-quantitative perceptions of war. Other experiments, for the most part, raised the artist's control on the wings of utmost freedom.

War has opened the imaginary field of possibilities in Lebanon. There are no fields of fiction in Syria before the scenes of violence, killing, rape and mass destruction. Destruction of living flesh and regions, unlike humans. The Lebanese transformed the world into a thread in the civil war. Syrian playwrights have not been able to extract new data from a war still raging between one rupture and another. The lack of a cosmopolitan spirit in cities of war and villages of war in Syria made theater lose the artist's preoccupations in favor of rhetoric without embellishment. People volunteered in danger, they resisted death. Creators, fighters, do not want their collective life to be wasted. Or to descend to the bowels of the earth one final time. War is a feast. Politicians have pillages their great country. A loss. In Syria, war is still a cruel game, measured only on a scale of losses and gains. The Lebanese situation went beyond that with theatre, for it stressed the ambitious and cynical nature of artistic projects.

ADVOCACY THROUGH COMICS

LENA MERHEJ*

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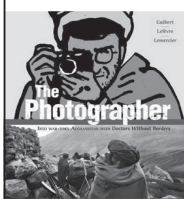


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Art Spiegelman wrote about The Holocaust

(Jablonka, 2016).

In journalism



Comics plays on the tension between metaphorical and factual data and open a new path for the cognition of news

(Vanderbeke (2010).

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(Lukas Plank).

Because non-fiction comics provide new knowledge, there needs to be an ethical engagement. Comics should and can have an honest and transparent way of presenting the material.



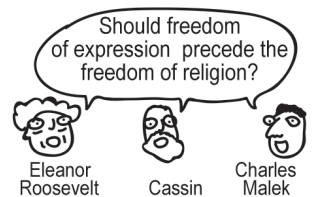
Lisa Mandel wrote about The Jungle of Calais

By using self reflection in personal narratives, journalistic accounts can be highly ethical.

Joe Sacco wrote about Gaza



In a comics book that just came out at Le Lombard, called "Les droits de l'homme" by the authors Thierry Bouuaert and Francois de Smet



Eleanor Roosevelt, Cassin, Charles Malek

It is precisely in its insistent, affective, urgent visualizing of historical circumstance that comics aspires to ethical engagement

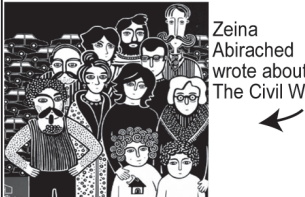


(Chute, 2008, p. 457).

Naji El Ali politically criticized Arab Regimes and Israel and was assassinated because of that!

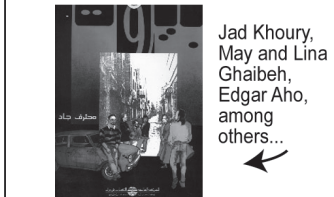


In Lebanon, comics are witness of the wars: almost half of the comics that were made were linked to the Civil War or to the 2006 war.



Zeina Abirached wrote about The Civil War

Beirut 89 by the Jadworkshop was the first anthology of personal narratives: stories of characters living during the Civil War.



Jad Khoury, May and Lina Ghaibeh, Edgar Aho, among others...

Mazen Kerbaj experimented with many ways of telling the war. He made a satire, an autobiography, a journal and a series of strips.



Jana Traboulsi played with different graphic combinations to create meanings of loss, of children's drawing and of memory.



Comics in Lebanon exist in newspapers, in magazines and in books. Many Lebanese read or have read comics at some point in their lives. Most importantly, a new generation of comic artists is on the rise.



Non-fiction comics have the potential to grow, to create new knowledge, expand serious debates while being critical through self reflection.



For all these reasons, comics can benefit civil society in forming, voicing out and debating its stories and its demands.



* Visual Artist

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The UNDP «Peace Building in Lebanon» project works since 2007 on enhancing mutual understanding and promoting social cohesion by addressing root causes of conflict in Lebanon. The project has been also lately working on addressing the impact of the Syrian crisis on social stability in Lebanon. The project supports different groups from local leaders and local actors, to educators, journalists, youth and civil society activists, in developing medium and long-term strategies for peace building, crisis management and conflict prevention.

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