NATIONAL, LINGUISTIC, AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY OF LEBANESE
MARONITE CHRISTIANS THROUGH THEIR ARABIC FICTIONAL
TEXTS DURING THE PERIOD OF THE FRENCH MANDATE IN
LEBANON

A Dissertation
submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
of Georgetown University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in Arabic

By

Amaya Martin Fernandez

Washington, DC
April 1, 2009

NATIONAL, LINGUISTIC, AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY OF LEBANESE MARONITE CHRISTIANS THROUGH THEIR ARABIC FICTIONAL TEXTS DURING THE PERIOD OF THE FRENCH MANDATE IN LEBANON

Amaya Martin Fernandez

Thesis Advisor: Reem Bassiouney, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

This research questions and challenges the assumptions made about Lebanese Maronite Christians and their relation with the establishment of the State of Greater Lebanon. It focuses on three overlapping aspects of their identity - national, linguistic and religious - in order to clarify their thoughts about the new state and its foundations, their feelings of Arabness, the role of religion, and their relation with other religious communities. The primary source materials used for the research are prose fictional texts written during the period of the French Mandate by Maronite Christians who did not emigrate.

The research shows that the Lebanon described in the texts rarely reaches the borders of the new state, and that there is no exclusive correspondence between Lebanon and the concepts of homeland, country, and state. Despite their association with French language and the emphasis over the Arabic- French bilingualism of many members of this community, the research proves that the linguistic identity of the non-emigrated community is purely Arabic, being Classical Arabic or an Arabic dialect their mother tongue. The research also shows that the sectarian character of the society is not strongly manifested in

the texts, despite the common insistence upon this characteristic in any study related to Lebanon.

The prose works analysed in this research belong to the famous prose writers Marun Abbud, Tawfiq Yussuf Awwad, and Karam Melhem Karam, the famous poet Salah Labaki, the writer and historian Lahad Khater, the priest Marun Ghosen, and the lawyer and historian Michel Shibli.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

vii

viii

LIST OF FIGURES

SPELLING CRITERIA FOR NAMES OF PEOPLE AND PLACES

The names of people do not normally follow an extract transliteration, but they appear as they are normally written using the Latin alphabet. For example, the name Mīshāl Shiblī will appear simply as Michel Shibli, the name Laḥad Khāṭir as Lahad Khater, and Mārūn Ghuṣn as Marun Ghosen. Some names appear in transliteration the first time they are mentioned, especially if they are not well-known.

The names of places inside Lebanon follow the spelling used in the map *Lebanon with the city map of Beirut and Beirut Central District*, published by GEOprojects s.a.r.l. in Beirut, Lebanon (2001).

TRANSLITERATION OF ARABIC ALPHABET

ء	’	خ	kh	ش	sh	غ	gh	ن	n
ب	b	د	d	ص	ṣ	ف	f	ه	h
ت	t	ذ	dh	ض	ḍ	ق	q	و	w/ū
ث	th	ر	r	ط	ṭ	ك	k	ي	y/ī
ج	j	ز	z	ظ	ẓ	ل	l	ة	-/t
ح	ḥ	س	s	ع	‘	م	m		

Chapter 1: Introduction

Literary texts are one major source of investigating culture, societal developments, national independence, religious conflicts and many more humanistic issues, as literature by its nature encompasses the deepest problematic conflicts in the human social psyche. The conscious mode in which a society envisions itself, the ways its members perceive the conflicts striking their social strata, and how they react to them are all, in one way or another, encoded in the literature of this particular society. One task that a researcher can undertake is to decode the meanings present in literary texts, in whichever genre they may be, in order to determine the undercurrent social, political, gender, religious, or linguistic conditions that may explain social phenomena.

Taking as a ground of departure the significance of literature in social and humanistic analysis, this research employs fictional texts written in Lebanon during the period of the French Mandate (1920-1943)[1] to analyze the intellectual life of the newly established state. This research aims to clarify some of the thinking present in Lebanese society using prose fictional works written by Lebanese Christians who worked and lived within Lebanese borders during the Mandate period. The analysis will focus on various overlapping aspects of their identity as expressed in the texts: national identity, ethnic and linguistic identities, and religious identity.

This dissertation tries to go back in history to give a better understanding of the thinking present in Lebanon during the period of the French Mandate. The State of Greater Lebanon was established at the beginning of the Mandate, and the interwar period is

---

[1] As will be explained in the third chapter, the French Mandate started precisely in September 1919, and it finished theoretically in 1941, after British and Free French troops began the incursion in Syria and Lebanon from Palestine. However, it is considered that the Mandate extended a few years more, until independence in 1943.

essential to understand Lebanese society as a whole, not only at that time but also in today's world. The research aims to filter out the louder voices of the Mandate period, which were the best heard then and which have remained the best heard even today. These loud voices were the source of some assumptions that are still prevalent today at different levels of Lebanese society: for example, the preference of many Maronites to learn the French language, or their disregard of any feelings of belonging to an inclusive bigger Arab community. In order to overcome all these assumptions, this research endeavours to search deep inside the intellectual life of Lebanese Maronite Christians who worked and lived inside the Lebanese borders during the Mandate period. The research employs literary fictional works that members of this religious community wrote and published in Arabic in order to clarify their thoughts about the new state and its foundations, the role of religion, and their relation to other communities. Although all these thoughts have a high degree of overlap, the main body of the analysis is divided into three sections, each related to a different aspect of identity: national identity, ethnic and linguistic identities, and religious identity. The concept of identity is multifaceted, a collective human phenomenon that has run deep in societies throughout human history. This research focuses on the notions of social and cultural identity rather than those of personal and psychological identity. More than the concept of the *self* of an individual that separates him from another individual, *identity* applies here to the sense that gives the individual the feeling of community or belonging to a certain group or reality.[2]

---

[2] The concept of identity is a very broad and complex issue. For one approach to the topic, see for example *Handbook of Self and Identity*, edited by Mark R. Leary and June Price Tangney (Guilford Press, 2003). This book contains a chapter dedicated to Social Identity (Chapter 23). There are other texts that cover specific aspects of identity following a general approach. For national identity, see for example the work by Anthony D. Smith *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991). For linguistic identity, see *Language and identity: national, ethnic, religious*, by John E. Joseph (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

The Maronite community has attracted much attention among those researching Lebanon and writing about its conflicts,[3] and many researchers and writers constantly refer to the Maronites when talking about Lebanese history. However, feelings of either sympathy or animosity tend to emerge from many writings dealing with the issue.[4] Generalization due to superficial knowledge creates absolute statements that, even if they are not completely false, lack accuracy and increase the sectarian character imposed over Lebanese society.[5] For example, it is common to hear some people inside and outside Lebanon claiming that the French and the Maronites "created" Lebanon; and when asked about intellectual tendencies among the Maronites, some people in neighboring countries would say that the Maronites lean towards the French culture because most of them are anti-Arabs, and many of them do not know how to write in Arabic, even if they were fully involved in the Arab Renaissance.[6] Obviously, this kind of answer reflects a very shallow knowledge of that period, and an understanding based on prejudices and subsequent times.

---

[3] The high percentage of Maronite Christians in Lebanese society is among the reasons that make this community attractive to researchers. In the Lebanese census of 1932, however controversial it may have been, the percentage of Maronites in the society was 29%, much higher than any other Christian community in Lebanon and in any other Arab country. The president of the Republic of Lebanon has also been a Maronite since 1933, giving the individuals of this community a role in the political life of the country that individuals of other communities cannot get. For information about the 1932 census, see Kais M Firro, *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the State under the Mandate* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 120.

[4] The examples for this statement are numerous. Even in more academic work, it is not unusual to find comments by the author, as in this example: "The Maronites are immensely proud of their long struggle for survival and of their unique position in Catholic Christendom. They feel, with considerable justification, that modern Lebanon is their creation," in Christopher, John B., *Lebanon. Yesterday and Today*, (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966)

[5] See for example the following text, taken from *The Republic of Lebanon. Nation in Jeopardy*: "After World War I, the sixth transformation came with the imposition of the French mandate, opposed by all groups except the Maronite community, especially after the French proclaimed the establishment of Greater Lebanon in 1920." Gordon, David C.: *The Republic of Lebanon. Nation in Jeopardy* (Colorado: Westview Press; London : Croom Helm, 1983)

[6] These generalizations and superficial statements are not limited to oral, informal prose, but are also found in textbooks. Take for example this sentence, taken from a book entitled *Guerres Maronites*, written in 1995: "Tout en brandissant la bannière du Libanisme, les maronites ont souvent rejeté le nationalism arabe, synonyme, selon eux, d'Islam". Sneïfer-Perri, Régina: *Guerres Maronites* (Paris: Harmattan, 1995).

The most famous literature written by Lebanese Christians was produced in Lebanese lands[7] during the nineteenth century, with names as the Bustanis and the Yazijis, and it later moved to emigration lands at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, with names as Jibran Khalil Jibran or Ilya Abu Madi. Those who lived and wrote in Lebanon from a Lebanese perspective at the beginning of the twentieth century have often been placed in a second row, and only a few writers have managed to stand out and survive until today, such as Marun Abbud or Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad.[8] This research focuses then on the intellectual life of those Maronite Lebanese Christians who, during the Mandate Period, lived and produced their works inside Lebanese borders. The prose works analyzed in this research belong to famous prose writers such as Marun Abbud, Tawfiq Yussuf Awwad, and Karam Melhem Karam, to the famous poet Salah Labaki, and to other individuals less famous today such as the writer and historian Lahad Khater, the priest Marun Ghosen, and the lawyer and historian Michel Shibli. This research analyzes their prose fictional works written or published in Lebanon during the Mandate period. It extracts direct or indirect citations to relevant issues from the texts, such as religion, feelings of Arabness, or the concept of homeland and state, in order to clarify the writers' thoughts and compare them with the stereotypes made about this community as a whole. Stereotypes include Maronites' tendency towards the French language and culture,

---

[7] "Lebanese" lands is used here to refer to the geographical surface that falls inside the borders of present Lebanon, and that corresponds to the borders of the State of Greater Lebanon as established in 1920 after the Versailles Conference. The Lebanon before 1920 was smaller. For a map with the borders of Lebanon before 1920, see George Samne's *La Syrie, avec 30 photographies et 6 cartes hors texte* (Paris: Éditions Bossard, 1920), 224.

[8] Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad (1911-88) could be considered to belong to a later period, but his early works written in the thirties are still among his most famous works.

4

the obsession on focusing on the Phoenician past at the expense of other later traditions, or the complete rejection of any kind of Arab identity.

In order to reach my objectives, I have started dividing the Lebanese society into religious sects, even if this may lead the readers at first to believe that a particular thinking can be assigned to a religious community as a whole. However, this will not be the case, and the results of the analysis will show that many of the assumptions about this community are not grounded on the way the community portrays itself throughout the texts. The analysis will show as well how this community shares some of their thinking with other religious communities living in the same environment.

Fictional prose works are the source material for the research. Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad, one of the authors whose works are analyzed in this research, made this observation in the introduction of *The Lame Boy,*[9] one of his most famous works:

أنا أكتب هذه القصص وأدفعها إليك عبثا، بل هي الحياة التي عشتها وهي قليلة حتى اليوم بعدد سنّيها، ولكنها كثيرة بالتجارب التي تمرست بها، فتحت عينيّ على أشياء جميلة هنا وقبيحة هناك فأردتُ وصف هذه الأشياء، فلم أجد وسيلة إلى ذلك خيرا من القصّة.

I write these stories and I push them to you in vain, rather they are the life that I lived, being short until now in terms of its number of years, but abundant in the experiences that I have lived out. I opened my eyes to beautiful things here, to ugly things there, and I wanted to describe those things, not finding a better way to do it than through the story.

Awwad then tried to reflect in his stories scenes or experiences of the world in which he lived. All the stories written during this period have a mainly realistic character, even if some of the earliest still have a romantic nature and some of the latest have a strong surrealist character. According to the semiotic approach, each story is a linguistic and stylistic structure born inside a definite cultural system. Each text is a "creature of

---

[9] Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad's *al-Ṣabī al-Aʿraj* was published in 1936 and it was his first collection of short stories. It was published when he was only 25 years old.

5

culture,"[10] related to the society in which it was born as much as to the author who produced it, the author himself also being an element of the same cultural system. The texts are then used as bridges to reach both the cultural system where they were born and the subsystem of the author who created them. Citations of different issues such as religion, Lebanon, Phoenicia, Arab/Arabic or foreign realities are extracted from the texts and they will be grouped in categories that will facilitate the analysis of different topics. The similarities found related to these topics will serve to reach the generalities of the cultural system that produced the texts, and the differences will reveal the particularities of each author or subsystem. Because what they say is as important as how they say it, all the texts used are in the original Arabic.

The scheme of the work will be as follows: the first two chapters after this introduction – Chapters Two and Three – presents the review of related literature on the topic or similar topics and the methodology used. Chapter Four comprises an introduction to the period of the French Mandate, including the main political events and the intellectual life of the time, together with a presentation of the authors, their biographies and a brief introduction of the works used for the analysis. Chapter Five is dedicated to National Identity, and it contains the topics of Lebanon, Phoenicia; concepts of Homeland, Country and State; and City and Mountain areas. Chapter Six focuses on linguistic and ethnic identity, and it has two main sections. The first section focuses on the references to the adjective *'arabi* , both applied to ethnic and linguistic connotations, and the second analyzes the reference to foreign languages. Chapter Seven is devoted to religious identity and it comprises the highest number of topics, including clergy and anticlericalism, lay people, the term "maronite," other religions and foreign references, among others. All

---

[10] Robert Scholes: *Semiotics and Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 14.

sections in the last three chapters include abundant quotations taken from the prose works, and an extensive analysis of the information extracted from the quotations. The last chapter presents the conclusions of the analysis and proposes future directions for research.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

As stated in the introduction, this study analyzes prose fictional works written during the period of the French Mandate in Lebanon. The main sources for the analysis are consequently literary texts written between 1920 and 1943. However, many other secondary sources were necessary to analyze the texts properly, and these sources are not limited to literature. In a sense, literature is never limited to literature, and a good knowledge of both the language and the historical period in which the texts are written is necessary to understand the texts themselves.[11] For this reason, this section tries to cover many of the aspects surrounding the chosen texts, such as the political and social history of the Mandate period, studies of Lebanese literature, or works on identity and literature, and the relationship between nation formation and literature.

2.1. Political and Social History

The French Mandate in Lebanon is a period that seems to have received less attention than other periods in Lebanese history, especially in literature. Even from the historical perspective, there are fewer works about this period compared to other periods, such as the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1991). Despite its relatively smaller size, there exists a group of works about the Mandate Period that sufficiently portray the period, mainly in its political and social aspects. The main texts in English published in the last two decades are those by Kais M. Firro, *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the State under the Mandate* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003); Meir Zamir, *The Formation of Modern Lebanon* (London; Dover: Croom Helm, 1985), and *Lebanon's Quest: The Road to Statehood 1926-*

---

[11] In his *Literary Theory*, Terry Eagleton defines literary criticism, methodologically speaking, as a "non subject," in the sense that the different ways of approaching literary texts have more in common with other disciplines as linguistics or sociology, than between themselves. Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory. An Introduction,*(Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2nd ed., 2003), 172. This is clearly reflected in this review of literature, in which the references to texts in other disciplines are abundant.

1939 (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997); and Elisabeth Thomson, *Colonial Citizens. Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).[12] These texts add much detailed information to previous works by other authors, such as Kamal Salibi, Edmond Rabbath, or Stephen Longrigg. Each of the three texts mentioned above has a different approach to the period. Meir Zamir has two works dedicated to the Mandate period. The first work, *The Formation of Modern Lebanon*, goes from 1918 to 1926 and covers the formative years of Greater Lebanon, including the local and worldwide developments that led to its establishment in 1920, and the first years of the Mandate until the declaration of the constitution in 1926. Zamir centered his second work, *Lebanon's Quest: The Road to Statehood 1926-1939*, around the constitutional period, between the declaration of the Lebanese Republic until the beginning of the Second World War. Zamir's work mainly discusses political events. He intends to present a picture of the events that surpasses the sectarian approach, focusing on the power struggles among the elites, whether religious, political, or economical. However, the division of the society into religious sects is a starting point in both of his works. Kais M. Firro's *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the State under the Mandate* also has a certain sectarian approach to many issues, and this fact is reflected in the titles of some chapters of his book, such as "Maronites and Sunnis Seek Common Ground", and "The Entrenchment of the 'Lebanese System': Sunnis and Shi'is after 1939." The first part of Firro's work is devoted to different nationalistic discourses about Lebanon, both at the time of the creation of the State of Greater Lebanon and through the twentieth century; the

---

[12] The works in French are also significant, and it would be unfair to ignore them completely. However, the analysis is not an historical analysis and the information contained in the three sources mentioned suffices to place the texts in their historical context. Nevertheless, we can mention the work by Denise Ammoun, *Histoire du Liban contemporaine*, 1860-1943, (Paris: Fayard, 1997), and *L'Armée française et les Etats du Levant, 1936-1946* by Maurice Albord, (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2000) to include a couple of texts written in French lately, that cover the periods of the Mutasarrifiyya, the First World War, and the French Mandate.

second part focuses on analyzing the historical events that ended in the creation of the modern Lebanese state. Firro's idea of Lebanon, as clearly reflected in the book's title, is based on Eric Hobsbawm's concept of nation as a 'recent historical innovation.'[13] Throughout his work, he follows the different stages of the process in which, according to him, the diverse Lebanese elites "forged or engineered the cultural construct that became the Lebanese nation" (p.11). Elisabeth Thomson, on the other hand, focuses on the social and gender issues, and her book covers both Lebanon and Syria. She presents many insightful details about the society that, even if often ignored by other texts, tremendously increase the understanding of the period and, in the particular case of this study, help to place the literary texts into their social context. Her description of public and private spaces, her insight into urban life through less common approaches such as the cinema and the press, make this work closer to the life of the common citizen, often distant from the political issues described in most other history work.

There are also Arabic sources that cover this period, some of them very new. Some titles reflect a very strong sectarian approach such as *Durūz Sūriya wa Lubnān fī 'ahd al-Intidāb al-Faransi, 1920-1943. Dirāsa fī Tārīkhihim al-Siyāsī*, by Ḥasan al-Biʿayni (al-Markaz al- ʿArabī li-l-Abḥāth wa al-Tawthīq, 2001); and *Al-Mujāhidūn al-Durūz fī 'Ahd al-Intidāb*, ʿIzzat Zahr al-Dīn (Muʾassasa al-Turāth al-Durzī, 2005), that focus on the role that the Druze had during the Mandate. Leaving aside the sectarian approach, most of the works have a nationalistic approach, portraying the French as invaders and focusing more

---

[13] See Eric J. Hobsbawm's *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*. In this work, Hobsbawm states clearly in the introduction how he stresses "the element of artifact, invention and social engineering which enters into the making of nations" (p. 10). This is the view shared by other theorists of nationalism such as Ernest Gellner and, in this case, Kais Firro.

on the military and political history than on the social life of the time. Some of these titles are: *al-Waḥda al-Sūrīya al-Lubnānīya taḥta al-Iḥtilāl al-Faransī, 1918-1939,* by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Bayṭār (Homs, 1996); *Dirāsāt fī Tārīkh Lubnān al-Muʿāṣir, 1913-1943: Min Jamʿīyat Bayrūt al-Iṣlāḥīya ilā al-Mīthāq al-Waṭanī al-Lubnānī* by Ḥassān Ḥallāq (Beirut: Dār al-Nahḍah al-ʿArabīyah, 1985); *Maʿrakat Maṣīr Lubnān fī ʿAhd al-Intidāb al-Faransī, 1918-1946,* by Shafīq Juḥā (Beirut, 1995); *Tārīkh Lubnān: Min al-Iḥtilāl ilā al-Jalāʾ, 1918-1946,* by ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Munʿim Shuʿayb (Beirut: Dār al-Fārābī, 1990).

All the above works mention in one way or another the years prior to the French Mandate, the understanding of which is necessary to comprehend the Mandate period fully. However, there are other works that present the pre-Mandate period with more detail. This is the case of Georges Adib Karam's *L'opinion publique libanaise et la question du Liban (1918-1920),* published in 1981 by the Lebanese University. This work offers a comprehensive description of all the ideological movements that preceded the creation of Greater Lebanon, and how different groups in Greater Syria reacted to the historical events of the time, such as the establishment of independent Syria under King Faysal. The book presents valuable material for the understanding of the period, including private correspondence between the Western powers and various local leaders, and it helps to frame the Mandate period from the point of view of public opinion.

Another work that covers the period from the last half of the nineteenth century to the first three decades of the twentieth century is *The Arab Awakening*, by George Antonius, published in 1939 and reprinted many times since then. Nowadays, this book is considered by most authors more as a source for understanding Arab Nationalism than as a history book by itself. The way the historical and social events are described is very biased, and this can be taken as an argument against the validity of this work as a source of

historical events. However, the bias is so clear that it is easy to filter the emotional input of

the author, allowing the book to remain a good source of data on the analyzed period.[14]

Another interesting work is *Inventing Home: Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in*

Lebanon (1870-1920), by Akram Fouad Khater (Berkeley: University of California Press,

2001). This work examines the emigration movements that took place in Lebanon, mainly

Mount Lebanon, during the fifty years that preceded the beginning of the Mandate period.

Akram Khater prioritizes the social-gender issues over the political ones, and he examines

the changes that took place as a result of emigration and how this affected the social

structure of the Lebanese villages. He presents interesting details about less crucial issues

that are very helpful in contextualizing the stories of this research, such as detailed accounts

of the money needed to emigrate. *Essays on the Crisis of Lebanon*, edited by Roger Owen

(London: Ithaca, 1976), also includes essays about more unusual topics that help to fill the

gaps left by more politically oriented works. Paul Saba is the author of the first essay,

which is dedicated to the creation of the Lebanese economy in the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries. Albert Hourani is the author of another essay, "Ideologies of the Mountain and

the City," that proves to be essential in some sections of this analysis. Even if they have not

been mentioned until this point, Albert Hourani's works are practically required for

understanding the cultural history of Lebanon, even today and when other works may

complete, enlarge, or debate Hourani's information. Some of his works have become very

popular in the field of the history of the Middle East, including *A History of the Arab*

Peoples (1991) and his *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939*, published in 1962.

---

[14] For an analysis of the importance of Antonius' work, the validity of its arguments, and some reactions by later scholars, see for example the chapter by Albert Hourani entitled "*The Arab Awakening* Forty Years after" in *The Emergence of the Arab Middle East* (London, 1981). For an analysis of George Antonius as Arab Nationalist, see "The Arab Nationalism of George Antonius Reconsidered," by William L. Cleveland, in *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East*, J. Jankowski and I. Gershoni (eds.), New York, 1997.

Even today, more than forty years after his publication, this work is still extremely valuable to get a full picture of the political, social, and cultural changes that occurred in the Arab lands during the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century.

2.2. Literary History

The above works mainly cover the political and social history of the period but not the literary history. Most works dealing with Lebanese literature focus on Lebanon mainly until the end of the nineteenth century, move later to *Mahjar* lands after that period, and go back to Lebanon in the second half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, there are some studies that prove to be invaluable despite their general approach, not limited to Lebanon or the years of the Mandate. This is the case of the four volumes by Yūsuf Asʿad Ḍāghir entitled *Maṣādir al-Dirāsāt al-Adabiyya* (Sayda: Maṭbaʿat Dayr al-Mukhalliṣ, 1950-1983). Even if it is more of a reference book that puts together scientists with musicians, lawyers and literary writers, and whose four volumes make research somewhat difficult, it contains precious information about many people's lives and works, especially because it includes figures almost forgotten nowadays, hand in hand with the most famous ones. Even today, it is the main reference work for authors of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. A detailed analysis of this work, in fact, has served to find the lesser known authors for this research, such as Marun Ghosen and Michel Shibli. There are other general texts that also include lists of writers, but are less clear and useful than Daghir's. For example, Louis Cheikho's *Tārīkh al-Adab al-ʿArabiyya*, first published in Beirut in 1924, covers all of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century, but it bases its divisions on nationality and, inside Lebanon, on religious sects. These divisions and the lack of analytical approach to the authors' work turn the work into almost an encyclopaedia. A work that applies more specifically to Lebanon is William Al-Khazen's

13

al-Shiʻr wa al-Waṭaniyya fī Lubnān wa al-Bilād al-ʻArabiyya : Min Maṭlaʻ al-Nahḍa ilā

ʻām 1939 (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1979). This book presents the authors from a more

analytical approach than the two texts mentioned above. As noted in its title, it is limited to

poetry, but the first part tries to present a general historical background of the period

covered in the book. It has a very strong political approach to the poetical works, dividing

them into four currents of thought: Ottoman, Arab, Oriental, and Lebanese. The work

covers a period in the history of Lebanon with many social and political changes, and the

four marked categories better define the currents of thought during certain years in that

period, mainly the end of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth century.

However, by the end of the target period of this work, the Ottoman trend, for example, had

almost disappeared and it would have probably been more appropriate to redefine the

currents of thought for that period. Nonetheless, the book is extremely valuable, not only

for the data presented, but also for any analysis focusing on the development of political

tendencies in literary texts. It also contains an index with the lives and works of the authors

mentioned during the text, taken mostly from Daghir's work, but presented in a clearer

way.

Before continuing with other works dealing with the literature of the time, it is

convenient to mention the work by Asher Kaufman entitled *Reviving Phoenicia: In Search*

of Identity in Lebanon (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). This book falls between the

political and the cultural/literary categories, and it reflects how the cultural past of Lebanon

was used and abused following certain nationalistic ambitions. The author describes how

the phenomenon of the revival of Phoenicia started in the second half of the nineteenth

century, and fully succeeded by the end of the Mandate period. The book provides useful

information about the more francophone writers who, even if they are not the focus of this

study, occupy a significant percentage of the Lebanese literature of the time and of twentieth-century Lebanese literature as a whole.

As occurs in any work dealing with Lebanese issues, the sectarian divisions tend to be present in all works related to literary issues, whether stated directly or indirectly. Some of them, as in Chaikho's book, classify the Lebanese writers by their religious sects when the authors name the writers. Other writers do not divide the Lebanese writers into groups, but mention their religious origins in their biographies or give enough information to deduce the writers' religious community without mentioning it explicitly. There are some other works that just deal with a specific religious sect, as is the case in Jean Fontaine's *La crise religieuse des écrivains syro-libanais chrétiens, de 1825 à 1940* (Tunis: Publications de l'Institute des Belles Lettres Arabes, 1996). This work does not focus only on writers who wrote inside Lebanon or Syrian lands, but also discusses *Mahjar* writers. It presents the writers from the perspective of their beliefs, and it offers information about issues that relate to this study, such as anticlericalism. With regard to anticlericalism, this phenomenon is usually linked to writers outside Lebanon at the beginning of the century, and some works have dealt with this issue as part of their description of the *Mahjar* literature outside Arab lands. As mentioned earlier, the works about Lebanese writers who emigrated to the West around the beginning of the twentieth century, especially in the Americas, are far more numerous than the works that deal with "inside" writers. The most famous of all is *Adab al-Mahjar*, by 'Isā al-Nā 'ūrī, published in Cairo in 1977. In his work, al-Nā 'ūrī analyzes the main subjects and characteristics of the *Mahjar* literature, and he provides information about its most important writers. Despite the fact that the author provides the reader with only the main highlights of each topic and does not offer a very detailed analysis, the book is unique in that it presents a general, broad view of the subject and can

be viewed as a springboard to future studies. Many other works deal with *Mahjar* writers of Lebanese origin, especially Jibran Khalil Jibran, Amin al-Rihani, and Mikhail Naʿime. Even a Web site is dedicated to Amin al-Rihani that includes his biography, all his works, and updated information about events related to this author (www.ameenrihani.org). However, the works dealing with writers who wrote inside Lebanese borders at that time are very rare, and they are limited to writers such as Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad, to whom *al-Adab al- Lubnānī al-Ḥayy* (Bustani, S et al., Beirut: Dār al-Nahār, 1988) dedicates a chapter and who has also had some theses written about him, such as *al-Mujtamaʿ al-Lubnānī min khilāl qiṣaṣ Tawfīq Yūsuf ʿAwwād ḥatta al-Thalāthīnāt*, by Muḥammad Amīn Farshūkh under the direction of Dr. Mīshāl Jiḥā, (Lebanese University, Beirut, Feb. 1973); or Karam Melhem Karam, with a work published about him in 1993, written by Ilyās Nāṣīf and called *al-Ṣaḥāfī Karam Mulḥim Karam wa al-Ḥayā al-Siyāsiyya wa al-Ijtimāʿiyya fī Lubnān min khilāl Maqālātihi fī Majallatihi al-ʿāsifa* (originally published as a PhD dissertation in 1990). It is true that most of the writers who wrote in Lebanon at that time never achieved the level or attention that their fellow citizens achieved in foreign lands, but this is not a reason for the lack of interest toward their works in the academic world. The production of academic works about these writers is therefore a necessary work.

2.3. Identity in Literature

This analysis focuses on several aspects of identity as reflected in literature. This binary combination – literature and identity – seems to be a trend in the last two decades. The literature in this field has been growing rapidly since the early 1990s, covering a wide range of people and geographical areas: Indian, Irish, Jewish, Scottish, African

American[15]… Concerning Arabic literature, there are also some titles published in the last two decades that deal with literature and cultural identity. The identity-literature pair works in both directions. Some works study the influence of certain literary works on identity formation, while others analyze how identity is reflected in literary works. One of these texts is *Arab Culture and the Novel. Genre, Identity, and Agency in Egyptian Fiction*, by Muhammad Siddiq (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), in which the author approaches the relationship between literature and different aspects of culture, such as personal identity, politics, and religion. Even if the main title of this work refers to the general "Arab Culture and the Novel," Siddiq limits the scope of his book to Egyptian novels, claiming that Egypt is the perfect example of the postcolonial country in the crossroad of European and Arab interests, with the logical conflicting issues in its national and religious identity. However, Siddiq leaves aside other Arabic literary works produced in other Arabic-speaking countries. It would have been very useful to compare the works of Najib Mahfuz described in Siddiq's texts with those of the Syrian Zakkaria Tamer or the Lebanese Tawfiq Y. Awwad, for example. Comparing Egyptian novels to Syrian, Lebanese, or Palestinian novels in order to find similarities is a good way of stating that what they share is enough to

---

[15] This field is relatively new, but the number of works is very large. It is difficult at this point to give a list of the "classical" works in the area, but as an example, the following titles are some of the oldest among them: *African Literature in English : Development and Identity : Papers Delivered at the Twenty-Third Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, 17 October 1980*, African Studies Association. Meeting (23rd : 1980: Philadelphia, Pa.), The Association, c1981; Nunes, M.L.: *Becoming True to Ourselves: Cultural Decolonization and National Identity in the Literature of the Portuguese-Speaking World*, New York, Greenwood Press, 1987; Vance, N.: *Irish Literature: a Social History: Tradition, Identity, and Difference*, Oxford, Cambridge, MA, B. Blackwell, 1990; *Nationalism in Literature : Literature, Language and National Identity = Literarischer Nationalismus : Third International Scottish Studies Symposium Proceedings*, Frankfurt am Main; New York: Verlag Peter Lang, c1989; Dixon, M.: *Ride out the Wilderness: Geography and Identity in Afro- American Literature*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, c1987; Muñoz, B.: *Sons of the Wind: The Search for Identity in Spanish American Indian Literature*, New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, c1982.

consider the Egyptian case as an example of the Arabic literary tradition in relation to culture.

Another title that deals with literature and identity is *Israeli and Palestinian Identities in History and Literature*, edited by Kamal Abdel-Malek and David C. Jacobson (New York: St. Martin Press, 1999). This book focuses on literature produced inside and outside Palestinian/Israeli lands after 1945, and it includes both poetry and prose. Popular writers such as Mahmud Darwish and Ghassan Kanafani have chapters dedicated to them. It also contains other chapters that deal with more general issues, such as the use of Arabic and/or Hebrew by both Palestinian and Jewish writers, and how the fact of choosing one language over the other has immediate implications in the writers' linguistic and ethnical identities. Another title that deals with Palestinian identity is *Giving Voice to Stones: Place and Identity in Palestinian Literature*, by Barbara Parmenter (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994).

The texts that relate identity and literature are not limited to the Eastern Arab countries. There are also titles that deal with this issue in the Arab Maghreb countries. A good example of this group is *Nomadic Voices of Exile: Feminine Identity in Francophone Literature of the Maghreb*, by Valerie Orlando (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999). Orlando analyses contemporary texts written by authors from the Maghreb in French, whether they live and write in North Africa or in France. The analysis focuses on feminine identity change since the end of the colonial era, and how this identity is perceived. The texts include the analysis of works by Assia Djebar and Tahar Ben Jelloun, among others.

The approaches to identity are also quite numerous: linguistic, religious, and national. The last one is probably the most popular, the national identity, due to the current interest in nationalism and national movements, and the political implications that these

18

movements often carry. National identity in literature has often been used to trace the birth

or development of national movements or to determine the roots of certain national

conflicts. Some works deal with the issue in general, such as *Making Subject(s): Literature*

and the Emergence of National Identity, by Allen Carey-Webb (New York: Garland Pub.,

1998) and *Children's Literature and National Identity* (Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books,

2001). As mentioned earlier, the large number of books on identity and literature cover a

wide range of peoples and countries. Among all identities, German national identity and

Jewish identity are perhaps those with the most titles.[16] The approaches to national identity

in these titles are very numerous, as numerous as the different theories of nationalism.[17]

---

[16] On German national identity: Lyon, J. B.: *Crafting Flesh, Crafting the Self : Violence and Identity in Early Nineteenth-Century German Literature,* Lewisburg [PA]: Bucknell University Press, c2006; *German Literature at a Time of Change 1989-1990: German Unity and German Identity in Literary Perspective*, Bern; New York : P. Lang, c1991; *The Individual, Identity, and Innovation: Signals from Contemporary Literature and the New Germany*, Bern ; New York : P. Lang, c1994; *German Memory Contests: the Quest for Identity in Literature, Film, and Discourse since 1990*, Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2006; Fennell, B. A.: *Language, Literature, and the Negotiation of Identity: Foreign Worker German in the Federal Republic of Germany*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
On Jewish identity – and related topics – see for example: Oster, J.: *Crossing Cultures Creating Identity in Chinese and Jewish American Literature*, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, c2003; Fiedler, L. A.: *Fiedler on the Roof: Essays on Literature and Jewish Identity*, Boston: D.R. Godine, 1991; Domb, R.: *Identity and Modern Israeli Literature*, London; Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2006; *Ideology and Jewish Identity in Israeli and American Literature*, Albany: State University of New York Press, c2001; Zakim, E. St.: *To Build and Be Built: Landscape, Literature, and the Construction of Zionist Identity* , Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, c2006.

[17] Explaining the different concepts of nationalism goes beyond the scope of this work. Even the concept of nation does not have a single approach. It suffices to mention that, in the Lebanese case, Ernest Renan's concept of nation as a kind of solidarity, as a desire to live together, somehow supported the idea of Greater Lebanon at the time of its establishment. Renan's idea of nation diverged from the other concepts of nation, such as the ones defined by the German Maximilian Weber or the Russian Joseph Stalin, which are based in common culture or common language, among other factors. With reference to different theories of nationalism, the authors that are more referenced nowadays are Benedict Anderson, with his concept of nation as an imagined community; Anthony Smith with his ethnic approach to the formation of nations, which will be explained in detail in Chapter Four; and Eric Hobsbawm and his concept of nation as invented tradition. For a comprehensive and concise text that gives a good first understanding of the phenomenon of nationalism, see *Nationalism*, by John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford University Press, 1994).

2.4. Lebanese Identity in Literature

In the case of Lebanese identity in literature, there are some works that, even if they do not specify the term "identity" in their titles or in the main chapter headings, deal with issues that are directly related to national identity by linking literature and national history. Elise Salem's *Constructing Lebanon: A Century of Literary Narratives* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003) reviews the history of Lebanon during the twentieth century hand-in-hand with the most significant literary productions in each period. Due to the vast period covered, the author can focus only on the most important writers, leaving aside the more marginal ones. Nevertheless, the book is an excellent and valuable gate both to Lebanese literature and to Lebanese history in the twentieth century, and the fact that both areas are presented together reaffirms the strong link between them, often neglected in many literary studies. Another title is *War's Other Voices: Women Writers on the Lebanese Civil War*, by Miriam Cooke (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988). In this case, the author centers her study around the Lebanese Civil War that started in 1975, and she examines the works of women writers, such as Emilie Nasrallah, Hanan al-Shaykh, Daisy al-Amir and Ghada Samman, from the perspective of feminist literary theory. Cooke calls these woman writers *Beirut decentrists*, because "they have been decentred in a double sense: physically, they were scattered all over a self-destructing city; intellectually, they moved in separate spheres. They wrote alone and for themselves […] yet their marginal perspective […] united them and allowed them to undermine and restructure society around the image of a new center" (Cooke, p. 3).

There are other works that cover some aspect of Lebanese identity, but they do not link them specifically with literature. This is the case of Raghid El-Solh's *Lebanon and Arabism: National Identity and State Formation*, published in London in 2004. This work

20

focuses on the shift towards Arabism that occurred between 1936 and 1945, the year of the unwritten National Pact. It tries to explain why a state with such a big French influence at the time it was established in 1920 turned into a more moderate position by the end of the Second World War, defining itself as "a country with an Arab face." The book is very politically oriented, focusing mainly on political instead of social events, and it may parallel the three books about the history of the Mandate period mentioned at the beginning of the section. Another work, published only a year later, is Fruma Zachs's *The Making of Syrian Identity: Intellectuals and Merchants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut* (Brill, 2005). The author here revisits the topic of how educated secular Christians, backed by Western institutions, started expressing their sense of belonging to a Syrian identity in the nineteenth century, preceding in this way the national identities that resulted from the European domination in the area after the First World War.

Another aspect of identity is linguistic identity. John E. Joseph, a Lebanese descendant, published in 2004 a book entitled *Language and Identity: National, Ethnic, Religious* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) that links different aspects of the identity of a group with the language they speak or the language with which they identify themselves. The book introduces different theories linking language with identity from an historical perspective, and it studies the relationship between national, ethnic, and religious identity and language, providing many examples. The eighth chapter of the work, "Case Study 2: Christian and Muslim Identities in Lebanon," is dedicated to Lebanon. The approach to identity in this case is not territorial but religious, and the divisions are presented almost as sharp lines. The chapter exposes together the Lebanese linguistic situation in the last two decades, the Renan approach to national identity through language, and Amin Maalouf's "utopian anti-identity," as the author defines it. All those issues are

presented in thirty pages and therefore the author is unable to give an in-depth analysis of all of them. Nonetheless, the book may serve as an initial frame to set a future, more detailed picture of the peculiar linguistic reality of Lebanon, if used as a first reference book on the topic. Other, more specific, works that deal only with Arabic language and national identity give a more detailed and exhaustive view of the linguistic identity of Lebanon. This is the case in *The Arabic Language and National Identity. A Study on Ideology*, by Yasir Suleiman (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003). In the same way that the previous work focused on the last part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, Sulayman's main focus is on the second half of the twentieth century, especially in the case of Lebanon. He breaks the sectarian divisions by presenting different theories that have no relation to the religious belonging of their authors. In fact, all the cases presented in relation to Lebanon are linked to Lebanese Christians, and all of them have little to do with each other. The author first presents Antun Saadeh (1904-49), whose concept of nation is linked to a physical geographical environment, and where language is just an attribute of the nation but not a defining criterion (Suleiman, pp.165-7). Suleiman then presents 'Abdallah Lahhud (b.1899), who tried to prove that Arabic is the national language of Lebanon and was like that at least for the last thousand years, and therefore should be protected both from the colloquial and from French (pp. 208-9). Finally, the author presents Kamal Yusuf al-Hajj (1917-76), who supports confessionalism, and who considers Arabic to be part of the Lebanese national identity, together with geography, economy and history (p. 210). Another work about the linguistic situation of Lebanon is *Le Bilinguisme Arabe - Française au Liban. Essai d'anthropologie culturelle*, by Selim Abou (Paris, 1962). Abou is a well-known francophone, so the reader needs to approach the work with that in mind. The author sees Lebanon as a bridge between East

and West, between Christianity and Islam, and bilingualism is one of the essential materials that builds that bridge. French, then, would be a fundamental part of the linguistic identity of Lebanese Christians.

2.5. National Identity in Literature

The national identity of Arab peoples and its relation to literature is also a recurrent topic these days. Apart from the works mentioned above that relate to identity in general, there is a relatively new work entitled *Literature and Nation in the Middle East*, edited by Yasir Suleiman and Ibrahim Muhawi (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006). The book contains eleven studies plus an introduction, all relating diverse forms of literary productions to modern Arab states. Six of the eleven studies are devoted to Palestinian and/or Israeli literature, but there are also chapters dedicated to Egypt, Sudan, and Lebanon. The chapter on Lebanon is written by Syrine C. Hout, and it deals with the literature produced in English by Lebanese writers living outside Lebanon. It is noteworthy that only in the Lebanese case, the analyzed literature is produced outside the country, reflecting clearly the large percentage of Lebanese people – or those of Lebanese origin – living outside Lebanese lands. There are also other works dedicated only to a particular country, such as *The Novel and the Rural Imaginary in Egypt, 1880-1985*, by Samah Selim (London; New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), in which the author relates Egyptian national history with the narratives produced at the time, with a special emphasis on the rupture between the village and the city.

As we have seen, not much has been written about literature and identity in Lebanon. However, the interest in literature seems to be decreasing in relation to the interest in Lebanese politics, at least when considering the number of works published on

each topic. This dissertation will discuss topics of high interest at this time in history, such as identity and nationalism, linking them with literature, which is often considered less crucial or urgent for the understanding of a country, adding the need to preserve the lesser-known literary heritage of Lebanon.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The ways to approach and analyze literary fictional texts are numerous. Today, most methods of analysis are not restricted to literary works, but they are part of more general analytical approaches that go beyond literature. Some methods focus on all possible manifestations of a text or discourse – whether oral or written – while others go beyond the discourse to reach any manifestation contained in a culture – whether textual, pictorial, or gestural. As an example of the first, we could mention discourse analysis, content analysis, or functional pragmatics. As an example of the second, we could mention the approach offered by semiotics, or the research method of the grounded theory (generation of theory from data). The analysis of literary works is considered then a particularization of a certain method of analysis or approach, which is restricted because of the specific characteristics of the literary text. However, the restrictions would not affect the philosophy behind the method or approach, which would always be present in the analytical procedure.

The method of analysis used in this work relies mainly on the semiotic approach to culture and its manifestations as a system of signs. Semiotics, defined below, is considered to be an approach to interpret cultural facts,[18] more than as a method; semiotics presents itself "not as a method but as a perspective."[19] For this reason, most semiotic analyses parallels other methods of interpretation and uses concepts taken from other approaches or analyses, like structuralism, post-structuralism or, in this case, different theories of narratology.

---

[18] This is the way it was defined by Cesare Segre in his Semiotica Filologica in 1979: "progetto d'interpretazione globale dei fatti culturali" (Semiotics is 'a global project to interpret cultural facts') in Cesare Segre: *Semiotica Filologica* (Torino: Einaudi, 1979), VIII.

[19] "Non come metodo ma come prospettiva" (Semiotics can be seen 'not as method but as perspective'). In Franca Mariani Ciampicacigli, *Semiotica della letteratura* (Milan: F. Angeli, 1980), 13.

The definitions given to semiotics are often too vague. The word *semiotics* comes from the Greek σημειωτικός, *semeiotikos*, meaning "an interpreter of signs." It is from here that semiotics is often defined simply as "the study of signs." The term was first used by Charles Pierce in the first decades of the 20th century,[20] together with the term *semiology*, used by Ferdinand de Saussure in his *Cours de Linguistique Générale*, published in 1916.[21] However, as mentioned above, the definition given is too vague and could mean anything, and it is necessary to make a careful study of its meaning. I do not intend to present a summary of semiotics as a whole, including its history and its main developments.[22] Instead, I will focus on certain authors who have specifically treated literary texts using a semiotic approach, together with certain theories that, even if they are almost a century old, present ideas and concepts that represent turning points in the development of semiotics and that are still the base for almost any semiotic analysis. Among the different schools or trends, I will focus on the Italian and American semioticians, because they offer a view that is more useful and appropriate for the approach taken in this study. The works of Cesare

---

[20] Charles Pierce, *Collected Papers* (ed. Charles Hartshorne, Paul Weiss, and Arthur W. Burks, Cambridge, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1960).

[21] At the beginning, the term "semiology" was used for verbal communication in which "l'intenzionalita dell'emitenza e postulata" (the intentionality of the emission is postulated), and semiotics was used in all communicative processed, whether intentional or accidental. The term "semiotics" has prevailed over "semiology" since the seventies, especially after the works by Umberto Eco. Mariani Ciampicacigli: *Semiotica della letteratura*, 11.

[22] There are many introductory books to semiotics that cover the basic main concepts and that can serve as a gateway to further readings. Some of them are: Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiology*, trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (1963; New York: Hill and Wang, 1977); Daniel Chandler, *Semiotics: The Basics* (London: Routledge, 2002); Marcel Danesi, *Messages and Meanings: An Introduction to Semiotics* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1994). John Deely (2005 [1990]). *Basics of Semiotics* (1990; 4th ed, Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2005); David Lidov, *Elements of Semiotics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999); Pierre Guiraud: *Semiology*, trans. George Gross (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975); Winfried Nöth, *Handbook of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990). An excellent recent publication is *Semiotics Unbounded: Interpretive Routes through the Open Network of Signs* by Susan Petrilli and Augusto Ponzio (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2005). It covers elementary to more advanced topics, presenting the thoughts of the most important semioticians together with how semiotics can be applied in diverse disciplines.

Segre, Jonathan Culler, and Jonathan Barthes have been the basis for the development of the methodology used here. This does not mean, of course, that other groups were not taken into account, like the group of semioticians established at Tartu University. The influence of one group over the others is unavoidable, and it can clearly be seen in the sources used by all authors mentioned here, who include many different traditions in their studies.

The semiotic traditions mentioned above provide us with the main concepts that constitute the basis of the method of analysis employed in the fictional texts used in this work. The final procedure used in the study will be the result of the interconnection of all the following ideas. The basic concepts used for the analysis are (numbers do not indicate importance or progression):

1 - The concept of literary text as structure, as defined by Cesare Segre in *Semiotica filologica*. Each literary text, each structure, is the realization of a linguistic and stylistic system that represents a culture. System and structure would be related as *langue* and *parole* are related.[23] The aim of the analysis is getting as close as possible to understanding a certain system that corresponds to a specific time and a specific place by way of analyzing different structures born inside that system. The system and the culture it represents change over time, so the structures are chosen using a criterion based on their temporal proximity, belonging to a certain, defined period of time, and produced inside a defined, geographical area.

---

[23] Segre, *Semiotica filologica*, 56.

The same idea was expressed by other authors, such as Robert Scholes, but without explicitly using the terms *system* and *structure*.[24] Referring to the author, Scholes states that "the producers of literary texts are themselves creatures of culture, who have attained human subjectivity through language. What they produce as literary text is achieved by their acceptance of the constraints of generic or discursive norms. […] And the author is not a perfect ego but a mixture of public and private, conscious and unconscious elements…"[25]

2 - The cycle "analysis-synthesis-analysis-synthesis" described by Segre in his *Semiotica filologica* (fig. 1).[26] According to Segre, the author of the text creates a synthesis of analytical elements based on his own experience. The reader then analyzes the synthesis offered by the author and then he creates his own interpretative synthesis. I intend to examine the author and his background, together with the system in which he produces his work, in order to deduce his processes of analysis as best I can, using the resulting synthesis as it is shown in the text. Therefore, I attempt to bring the two extremes of the cycle closer together.

---

[24] Prior to Scholes, the lesser-known Franca Mariani Ciampicacigly said in her *Semiotica della Letteratura* (1980): "l'emittente non lavora *in vacuo*: quando decide di 'investire' il suo materiale in una forma, questa forma non nasce dal nulla: le forme sono gia costituite all'interno del sistema, possono essere ripetute, semplificate, violate ma impongono sempre la loro esistenza con la quale ogni nuovo testo deve misurarsi." ("The sender does not work *in vacuo*: when he decides to put his material into a form, this form is not born out of nothing: forms are already set up inside a system, whether repeated, simplified or violated, but they impose their existence to which each new text must measure.") (Mariani Ciampicacigly, *Semiotica della Letteratura*, 29)

[25] Scholes, *Semiotics and Interpretation*, 14.

[26] Segre: *Semiotica filologica*, 7.
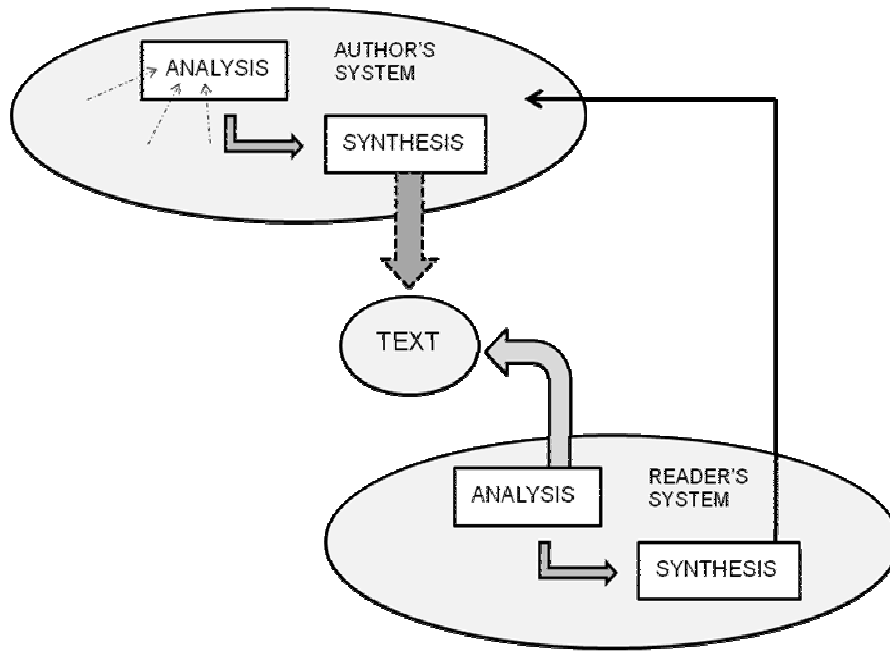
Fig. 1: Cycle "analysis - synthesis - analysis - synthesis"

At the same time, the formalization of the structure produced by the author will

follow the axis "author – narrator – reader," which implies the production of the text, its

formal and narrative specification, and its fulfillment through the reading.[27] In our case, the

processes of reading would not stop near the reader's coordinates, as happens when a text is

read only for the purpose of enjoyment, but it will try to go back as much as possible to the

author's coordinates with the objective of getting close to his process of analysis.

3 - The concept of "kernels" and "satellites" events, as defined by Seymour

Chatman in his work *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*,

published in 1978.[28] *Kernels* are narrative events that link up to form the plot and that

---

[27] Wladimir Krysinski, *Encrucijada de signos: Ensayos sobre la novela moderna* (Madrid: Arco Libros, 1997), 165-6.
[28] As Chatman states in his work, the concepts of kernels and satellites were described before him with different names. Barthes called them *noyau-catalyse* and Tomashevsky used the terms *motif associé-motif*

"cannot be deleted without destroying the narrative logic."[29] *Satellites* are "minor plot events" that "can be deleted without disturbing the logic of the plot, through its omission will […] impoverish the narrative aesthetically."[30] This is linked to Barthes' conception of the text as a sign sequence.[31]

Each work or structure can be represented by a sequence of kernels surrounded by satellites (fig. 2). A line representing the plot would be created by linking all the points symbolizing the kernels of the story. An undefined number of other points representing the satellites would be linked to each one of these kernel-points:
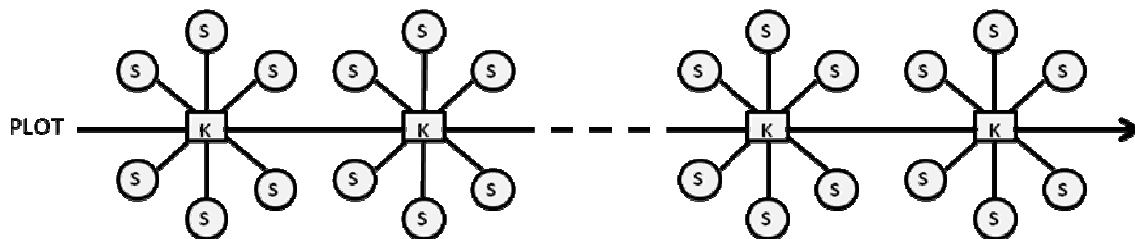
Fig. 2: Division of the structure in kernels and satellites

In the graphic above, the squares through the line represent the kernels and the circles represent the satellites. The satellites do not necessarily have to be next to their kernel in the narration, and their events can appear in an anticipatory or retrospective way inside the narration. This study focuses on the satellites more than the kernels, that is, it focuses more on the secondary information than on the events that form the plot. What is important is the information that, while not essential for the plot, relates and reflects the author's world and its culture, which constitute the system in which the text is born.

---

libre (or bound and free motifs). See Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980), p.55, and Selden, Widdowson and Brooker, *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* (Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1997), 36.

[29] Chatman: *Story and Discourse*, 53.

[30] Ibid. 54.

[31] Roland Barthes, *Chritique et vérité* (Paris, 1966), 62.

This study will analyze a number of structures produced by different authors, similar to the one represented above. The structures' number will be equal to the number of fictional works analyzed, whether short stories or novels (fig. 3).
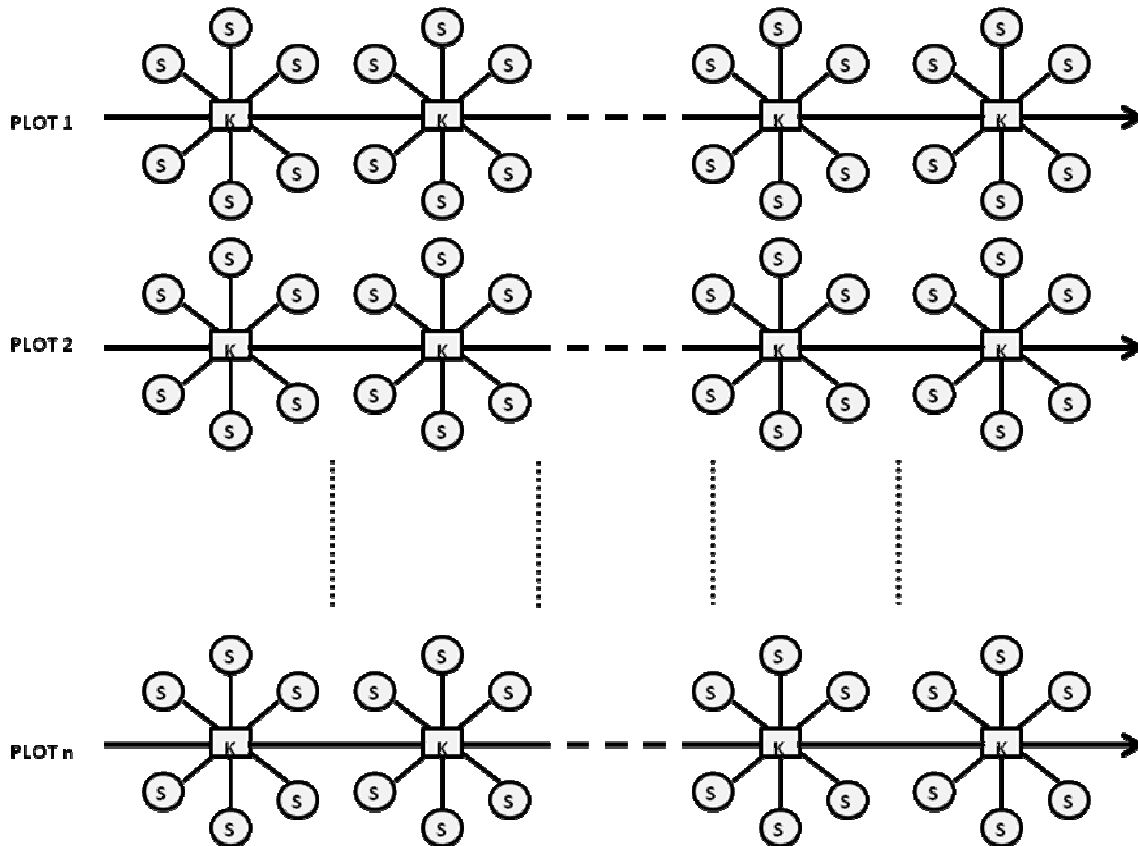
Fig. 3: Division of the different structures/texts in kernels and satellites

The satellites of the kernels in all plots will be examined and selected in order to group them according to topics. Then, the elements of each topic group will be analyzed to find similarities and coincidences on one side, and dissimilarities and variations on the other. In this way, I attempt to find what is general to the system and what is more specific to a particular author, even if it is also part of the system. This procedure is designed to fulfill the objective described in the first point above, that is, to get as close as possible to

31

an understanding of the system. Barthes described a similar procedure with the following statement: "an important part of the semiological undertaken' is to divide texts 'into minimal significant units […] then group these units into paradigmatic classes, and finally to classify the syntagmatic relations which link these units."[32] This analysis works more at the paradigmatic level within each text, but the paradigmatic classes are formed at the system level, in the sense that they include elements of all texts. When the classes are formed, the analysis compares and contrasts each of the units in order to consider the significance of the elections made by the authors and of the possible absences within each class.

4 - The treatment of the written compositions as *texts* as opposed to *works*. Scholes describes the difference saying that a work is "a complete, self-sufficient object, constructed of words on a page, which should yield its meaning to anyone trained in critical criticism. […] A text, as opposed to a work, is open, incomplete, insufficient. As a text […] a piece of writing must be understood as the product of a person or persons, at a given point of human history, in a given form of discourse, taking its meaning from the interpretative gesture of individual readers using the grammatical, semantic, and cultural codes available to them."[33] This approach overlaps with other concepts expressed above in the first point, but it is crucial to understanding the openness of the literary text and how its context and the reader's background are essential in the analysis.[34] Other approaches, like the New Criticism, denied this openness and treated the written materials as closed, isolated entities.

---

[32] Barthes, *Elements of Semiology*, p.48 (cited also in Chandler, *Semiotics*, 83)
[33] Scholes, *Semiotics and Interpretation*, 15-6.
[34] See also "From Work to Text" in Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 155-64.

5 - The triadic relation described by Pierce as "sign/representament- object- interpretant," and "firstness- secondness- thirdness" (fig. 4).[35] The sign, also called *representament*, is "something that stands for somebody for something in some respect or capacity." The sign that is created in the person that is addressed by the representament is called *interpretant* of the first sign. And finally, the first sign or representament stands for an *object*.[36]
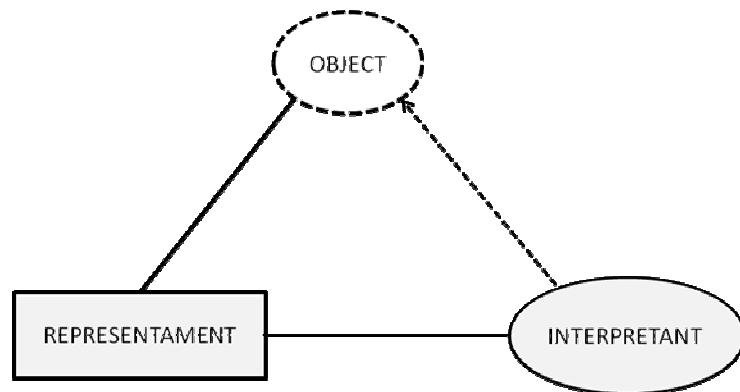
Fig. 4: Peirce's concept of the sign

The triadic relation does not assume that the sign or representament is always a firstness because, at the same time, it can be the thirdness of some other firstness. The number of triadic relations linked with one another can be countless. This chain makes us think of the literary text in the way in which it reaches us more as an interpretant than a representament.[37] Pierce defined a large number of triadic relations according to the characteristics of each one of its components.[38] However, what matters here is not the

---

[35] For a comprehensive description of Peirce's concept of the sign, see Floyd Merrel's "Charles Sanders Peirce's Concept of the Sign," in *The Routledge Companion to Semiotics and Linguistics*, edited by Paul Cobley (London; New York: Routledge, 2001), 28-39.

[36] *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, vol.2 paragraph 228 (ed. Charles Hartshorne, Paul Weiss, and Arthur W. Burks, Cambridge, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1960)

[37] See John K. Sheriff "Charles S. Peirce and the Semiotics of Literature," in *Semiotic Themes*, edited by Richard T. De George (Lawrence: University of Kansas Publications, 1981).

[38] For a simplified description, see Sheriff, "Charles S. Pierce," 58-60.

classification of the triadic relation but the union of the sign, its object, and the sign produced in a single entity. The three constituents of the triadic relation cannot be treated independently, and they have to be analyzed as linked to one another.[39] This differs from the dyadic relationship *signifier – signified* stated by Saussure, and the triadic relation was privileged in this analysis over the dyadic one because it implies the existence of an outside referent. In a sense, this study aims to get as close as possible to the outside reference, even if by definition it is impossible to reach it completely because this would destroy the concept of the sign itself.[40] According to John K. Sheriff, Peirce "provides a frame of reference which will allow semioticians to see beyond the limitations of Saussure's analysis of the sign and will clarify many of the issues that have been problematic in the semiotic of literature."[41] He criticizes the view of the texts of some semioticians as Roman Jakobson or Roland Barthes because "they seem to think that they are objectively treating the text itself when they are in fact interpreting their own interpretants with codes and language games which are transformations of the texts." This means that, objectively, the text should always be seen as thirdness and not as firstness, even if for convenience it tends to be treated as firstness.

Along the same line, the text has been defined as being both a mirror and a window,[42] which suggests the existence of the text as a living element. What we understand by this image is that every time a reader approaches a text, he produces a reading of the text that depends on his background, his knowledge, and even his emotional state. The number of readings does not just depend on the number of readers, as some authors have

---

[39] Sheriff, "Charles S. Pierce," 62; a good view of the interpretant used in literary semiotic has been offered by Michael Riffaterre: "The interpretant in Literary Semiotics," *The American Journal of Semiotics*, Kent: 1985. Vol.3, Iss.4; 41-56.
[40] Chandler: *Semiotics*, 58.
[41] Sheriff, "Charles S. Pierce," 51.
[42] Scholes: *Semiotics and Interpretation*, 23.

suggested,[43] but it also depends on the specific time in which a single reader accesses the text, because his readings vary with time. Through his reading, the reader tries to access the events and feelings that the text describes or transmits, but at the same time, in the process of doing so, he projects himself onto the text, producing a very specific reading that can provide as much information about him as the information that was found in the narration of the text.

Before reaching the conclusion that the analysis of the text, as written by the author, is almost inaccessible, we are going to remember the words of Lotman, and we are going to suppose that the text "selects its public."[44] Therefore, although deformation of the text is inevitable, we are going to assume that the reader here is not a common reader, but an academic reader who tries to understand the system of the author in order to reduce the deformation of the text. We are going to try to bring the sign or representament and the interpretant as close as we can, using our knowledge of the system in which the sign was created.

After having mentioned these ideas, we cannot forget the importance of language throughout the process of analysis. Jonathan Culler and Cesare Segre emphasize this fact in their works. Segre affirms that all interpretation is done through the language: "un atteggiamento e un'esperienza filologici son indispensabile per affrontare lo studio di codici e sistemi culturali."[45] Culler, in his *Structuralist Poetics* (1975), emphasizes the need to

---

[43] See for example Robert Scholes, *Structuralism in Literature: An Introduction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 142: "Reading is a personal activity, and there are as many readings of any text as there are readers of it."

[44] Jorge Lozano, Cristina Peña-Marín, Gonzalo Abril, *Análisis del discurso: hacia una semiótica de la interacción textual* (Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1982), 29.

[45] "A philological attitude and experience are necessary to face the cultural codes and systems," Segre, *Semiotica Filologica,* 6.

understand the language and its connection with the cultural world that it represents: "To

understand the language of a text is to recognize the world to which it refers." A good

knowledge of the language is necessary then when interpreting the structure, and it is the

only bridge that links the author with the structure, and the structure with the reader.

Therefore, it is the main instrument that the specialized reader possesses in order to

understand the system of the author. In this study, specific items in the language, whether

phrases, sentences or paragraphs, can be both firstness (sign) and secondness (object),

following the triadic relation explained above. The focus then can be both on what the

language says and on how it is said.

Segre and Culler emphasize the link between the literary works and their authors as

members of a society with specific cultural facts. The text cannot be analyzed in isolation,

as mentioned in point four. Segre explains our role in the reconstruction of the system in

which the author is just a member: "ogni testo e la voce di un mondo lontano che noi

cerchiamo di recostruire;"[46] "La filologia rivendica la fiunzione dell'emittente, non come

individuo isolato ma come membro de una comunita culturale, come espressione e

interprete de un sistema de codici."[47] For Culler, the semiotics of literature tries to "analyze

the system of conventions which enable literary works to have the meanings they do for

members of a given culture."[48] And as mentioned by Ciampicacigli, who followed the

theories of the semioticians of Tartu University, "la cultura de un dato periodo e di una data

---

[46] "Each text is the voice of a distant world that we are trying to rebuild," Ibid., 7.

[47] "Philology claims the function of the sender, not as isolated individual but as member of a cultural community, as expression and interpreter of a system of codes," Ibid., 20.

[48] Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (London; New York: Routledge, 1975).

comunita si structtura come sistema di *linguaggi* che trovano concreta manifestazione nei testi."[49]

It has not been mentioned until now that the texts used in this study are the original texts and not translations. Translation would alter the text to a point at which the reconstruction of the author's system would be inaccessible. The analysis is done through the language, our main tool in the process. How something is said may be as important as what it says, and specific vocabulary items in a certain language can never be substituted by other vocabulary items in some other language.

All fragments of the texts employed in the study, when quoted, will be written down in their original language, followed by an English translation. It is recommended, however, to focus on the original texts whenever possible, because that is the only way to really understand the author's system.

All the concepts and ideas expressed above specify into the following:

- The system, of which we are trying to define some of the characteristics, is limited by the temporal coordinates from 1920 to1943 – this is, the period from the establishment of Greater Lebanon to the end of the French Mandate in Lebanon; and by the space coordinates that include the geographical area covering those lands including what was named in 1920 "The State of Greater Lebanon."

- The structures/texts that will be analyzed were produced by authors with the following characteristics: their families were originally from the mountain, even if they may have lived and wrote in the city of Beirut, and may have even been born outside the

---

[49] "Culture from a certain period and a certain community is structured as system of languages that find concrete manifestation in texts," Mariani Ciampicacigli: *Semiotica della letteratura*, 56.

country; they did not emigrate to the West; they wrote mainly in Arabic; and they are Christians, belonging to the Catholic Maronite community.

The texts are classified according to their place of origin and the time they were produced, with the year of publication provided as approximate dates, while trying to deduce a more accurate date by the data obtained from the story.

The background information of the system will be given by the general historical events that affected all of the writers, whether political, social, or cultural, and by specific events that relate to the personal circumstances of each writer. Treating the system as a semiotic system, each structure is considered to be related not only to its author and the historical events around it, but also to the other structures produced in the same system. This is important when considering that the author's biography is not the main referent when analyzing the structure produced by him.[50] The narration of the text represents a "middle ground between the individual conscience of the author and the collective conscience of the system he is in."[51]

The main focus of the analysis is not placed in the narrative events of the plot, the kernels, as described above, but in the satellites, the secondary events and information surrounding the different kernels. After having classified the satellites of the different structures by topics, they will be grouped into categories (national identity, linguistic/ ethnical identity, and religious identity) and subcategories to facilitate the analysis. The statements will be treated as signs or interpretants in order to reach the social facts that they

---

[50] In his *Image, Music, Text*, Roland Barthes presents quite a radical view about the author in the essay entitled "The Death of the Author," in which he considers the reader more important than the author himself in the realization of the text: "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author" (p.148). Even if we do not focus our analysis only on the figure of the author, we cannot forget that he is also part of the system in which the text was born. Therefore, he will also have a "share" in the analysis.

[51] Krysinski, *Encrucijada de signos*, 176.

point to or represent. The analysis will also try to determine the degree of passiveness and interference from the author, the narrator, and the characters in the events presented.

The analysis of the kernels of each category will be included in a separate chapter. There will be, then, a first chapter dedicated to national identity, a second chapter dedicated to ethnic and linguistic identity, and a third chapter dedicated to religious identity.[52] The chapter will start with a theoretical introduction on the category itself, followed by the findings of the chapter in comparison with other previous findings, the analysis of the texts, a comparison with similar topics as reflected in texts outside the target group, and a brief conclusion.

All the issues and views presented in this section have served to prove that the literary works presented in this analysis represent an invaluable, precious, and unique source material to reconstruct and better understand Lebanese society during the period of the French Mandate, as viewed by those living there during that time period.

Restrictions of the study

This section did not include many of the issues that surround the analysis of texts and that tend to question the validity of the analysis itself. These issues include topics related to questions, such as "what is a text?" or the relation between the author and the narrator and how the distance between them can prevent us from reaching the author

---

[52] The different layers of identity – personal identity; enacted identity, i.e., how identity is expressed in language; relational identity, which relates the self to the other; and communal identity - will not serve as criteria for the classification, but they will be pointed out whenever necessary. For a clarifying view of the different identity theories based in language, see Joseph: *Language and Identity*. In relation to the identity of the fictional characters of the texts, John Joseph pointed out that, on many occasions, many characters seem to be more real than the living people, because their identities can be taken as fully contained in the texts. Also, many characters surpassed the limit of their own role, and they embody an entire group's identity (Ibid. 4)

through the narrator. Discussions about this topic can be found in many works.[53] All these issues, although essential in any textual analysis, can prevent us from making progress in the analysis, and they can even discourage us. For this reason, they will be left aside, but that is not to suggest that we are not aware of the limitations of all analyses.

The limited number of authors included in the analysis is probably one of the main restrictions of this study. The number of authors analyzed is seven, with a total number of thirteen works. This does limit the scope of the analysis, and the arrival of new data can challenge the conclusions obtained in the study. This limitation is not exclusive to this research, and will always emerge in any study that tries to reconstruct a system with a limited number of structures. As said above, an absolute knowledge of the system is by principle unachievable. Of course, more texts will always provide a better picture, but seven writers and thirteen works offer adequate data to recreate the thinking during that time period. However, as said above, any of our conclusions can be challenged with the arrival of new data.

This study analyzes only works written in Arabic, both as main material sources and as secondary sources for the comparison. This leaves aside all other works written in French or in English at that time and when dealing with the situation of Lebanon as a whole, this non-Arabic corpus can never be ignored. Nonetheless, this exclusion has a purpose: focusing on the Arabic production written by Lebanese Christians in order to reach their Arabic linguistic identity, often neglected in favor of an overemphasis on the French-Arabic bilingualism of a group inside the community. This is the reason why the

---

[53] About the text, see the second chapter of Segre's *Semiotica Filologica* and Lozano, *Análisis del discurso: hacia una semiótica de la interacción textual*. About the narrator, see the third chapter of Krysinski, *Encrucijada de signos*.

title of this work is "National, Linguistic, and Religious Identity of Lebanese Maronite Christians through their Arabic fictional texts during the period of the French Mandate in Lebanon", that clearly includes "*through their Arabic fictional texts.*" The results may well have been different had we included texts written in French, especially at the national and linguistic levels. The writers chosen are targeted for the reason mentioned above, knowing that this selection will give more in-depth details of a group inside the community, but will also prevent us from obtaining more general but superficial conclusions of the community as a whole.

Chapter 4: Background

4.1. Texts' historical background

The texts analyzed in this study belong to the cultural system defined between the temporal coordinates of the years 1920 and 1943, that is, during the period of the French Mandate, and within the spatial coordinates that lay inside the borders of Greater Lebanon as defined in 1920. As stated in the methodology section, texts are creatures born inside the cultural system, and a good knowledge of the circumstances that surrounded their creation is needed to understand them.

To begin with, the texts are first approached from the outside. The distant look will provide a brief historical introduction, both political and cultural, not only to the time period between the years mentioned above, but also to the period that preceded the French Mandate, mainly since 1860. The years between 1860 and 1920 are key to understanding the epoch under study, in addition to being a constant source of references in the analyzed texts. The up-close look will consist of descriptions of the authors' lives and the particular circumstances in which the texts were created.

It seems a difficult task to present an objective description of the historical events that surrounded the creation of Greater Lebanon in 1920. Until now, there are constant discrepancies among historians and non-historians in relation to the reasons why the state was created, from both inside and outside Lebanon and among both contemporary scholars and thinkers from before and around 1920.[54] Public figures of the time are often described

---

[54] For the different approaches to the history of Lebanon, see the first two chapters of Kais Firro, *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the State under the Mandate* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 16-67. See also "Lebanon: Historians and the Formation of National Image", in Albert Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press,1981), 149-169.

using subjective adjectives,[55] and historical claims or events are sometimes taken for granted and presented without giving any proof or having any objective, scientific base.[56]

For all these reasons, the approach taken now will consist of presenting the facts mentioned in most reference books when describing the history of the French Mandate, avoiding any judgment or analysis at this point. The main texts used as sources for the task are:

- Georges Antonius: *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement,* first published in 1938, especially for the events happening during First World War and the preconstitutional period;[57]

---

[55] Talking about Emile Eddeh, Kamal Salibi describes him in the following way: "As an individual, Edde was arrogant, short-tempered, and lacking in resilience. In politics, he tended to be outspoken and could rarely appreciate a point of view other than his own," [Kamal Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon* (New York: Praeger, 1965), 172]. Meir Zamir, on the other hand, says that "Edde was a controversial politician, whose contribution to the creation of the Lebanese State has often been underestimated or misrepresented" [Meir Zamir, *Lebanon's Quest: The Road to Statehood 1926-1939* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997), 70] about Bishara al-Khury, Zamir says: "Khury rarely made any serious decision without prior consultation with Chiha" (Zamir, *Lebanon's Quest* , 33). Talking about the Patriarch Antun Arida, he says "he was impulsive, outspoken and arrogant…" (Zamir, *Lebanon's Quest,* 121).

[56] For example, Georges Corm says about Greater Lebanon: "En 1920, le Liban est géographiquement 'déficelé' **récupérant** ses périphéries géographiques naturelles et ses accès tout aussi naturels a la mer", Georges Corm, *Liban: les guerres de l'Europe et de l'Orient 1840-1992* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 63-4. Bassem Khalifah in *The Rise and Fall of Christian Lebanon*: "When several territories were added to Mount Lebanon under the French Mandate to form the 'Grand Liban' – **with the borders of historic Phoenicia** – …" [Bassem Khalifah, *The Rise and Fall of Christian Lebanon* (Toronto: York Press, 2001), 3]. These comments are heavily influenced by the written declarations made both by the French authorities and the Maronite Patriarch Eliyas Butrus al-Huwayik between the years 1919 and 1920. As an example, Alexander Millerand, Premier of France at the time and future President of the Republic, wrote in August 1920 to the Maronite Patriarch : "Mais c'est le Grand Liban que la France veut faire en assurant á votre pays **ses limites naturelles**. Le Liban doit comprendre au Nord le Djebel Akkar et, s'étendre au Sud, jusqu'aux confins de la Palestine, et les villes de Tripoli et de Beyrouth doivent lui être étroitement associées, sous la seule réserve d'une autonomie municipale tenant compte de la différence économique existant entre les villes et les montagnes." Mouïne Haddad, *Le Liban. Milieu et Population* (Kesrouan: Uni Print. Press, 1881), 216-7.

[57] Today, this book is considered by most authors more as a source to understand Arab Nationalism than as a history book by itself. The way the events are described is very biased and this can be taken as an argument against the validity of this work as a source for historical events. However, the bias is so clear that it is easy to filter the emotional input of the author, which allows the book to remain in this way a good source of data of the analyzed period. For an analysis of the importance of Antonius' work, the validity of its arguments, and some reactions by later scholars, see for example the chapter by Albert Hourani entitled "*The Arab Awakening* Forty Years After" in his work *The Emergence of the Arab Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press,1981). For an analysis of George Antonius as Arab Nationalist, see "The Arab Nationalism

- Kamal Salibi: *The History of Modern Lebanon*, published in 1965. Chapter VIII

presents a comprehensive, clear summary of the main political events from the First World

War until 1943;[58]

- Meir Zamir: *Lebanon's Quest: The Road to Statehood 1926-1939*, published in

1997. This book presents a more detailed analysis of the period between the instauration of

the constitution and the beginning of Second World War, both politically and socially;

- Kais M Firro: *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the State under the Mandate*,

published in 2003. It presents an analysis of the whole period of the French Mandate, and it

also offers different ideological approaches to the phenomenon of Lebanon as an

independent state.

All these texts can be criticized for their omissions or biases, but together offer a

sound base for the understanding of the period, good enough to frame the texts analyzed in

this study and to serve as a shell in which to place additional information.

****

As stated above, in order to present the various historical events surrounding the

period of the French Mandate, it is convenient to go back to the nineteenth century to

clarify the major historical events that preceded and affected the period under analysis. The

events happening before 1920 are reflected or mentioned directly in most of the analyzed

texts, more so than the events happening at the time the texts were written.

---

of George Antonius Reconsidered", by William L. Cleveland, in J. Jankowski and I. Gershoni (eds.),
Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).
[58] About this chapter, Albert Hourani writes: "The last chapter of the book is entitled 'Greater Lebanon' and it
is a description of the French Mandate and the first years of independence down the civil war of 1958; it is the
best description we have had, written with more insight than the older works of Longrigg and Hourani, and
only rivaled by Rondot's 'Institutions politiques du Liban'", (Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle
East*, 145)

What follows is a concise chronology of the main events that happened before the establishment of Greater Lebanon in 1920 and that, in one way or another, affected the life of the writers or their works. The chronology starts in 1840, since this year marks the beginning of a new period in the history of the region and it directly affected the authors' parents' generation.

Chronology from 1840 to 1920

1840   Ottoman rule restored in Lebanon after eight years of Egyptian rule under Ibrahim Pacha, son of Muhammad Ali. Deposition of the prince Bashir Shihab II after his support and collaboration with the Egyptian authorities.

1842   Mount Lebanon divided into two *Qaimmaqamat*, or districts: a northern one under Christian rule, and a southern one under Druze rule.

1860   After a series of violent clashes between the Druze and Christians, in which many were killed, French troops landed in Beirut in August 1860.

1861   Instauration of the system of the *Mutasarrifiyya* of Mount Lebanon, separated administratively from the Syrian Ottoman province, with special privileges and under a Christian, non-Lebanese governor, appointed by the Ottoman Sultan. Period of relative calm.[59]

1914   Beginning of First World War. The Ottoman Empire entered the war on the German side. The privileges of the Mutasarrifiyya of Mount Lebanon are abolished and a military government is established in Aley under the direction of Jamal Pasha, famous for his hard-line policy in Syria.

---

[59] About this period of relative calmness and stability, see Engin Akarli, *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1993).

45

1915 Famine caused by several events: plague of locusts in Mount Lebanon, decay in silk trade, and policy of Jamal Pasha.

1916 Sikes-Picot Agreement: France and Great Britain divided the Middle East into regions of influence.

1918 End of First World War and of Ottoman Rule.

1919 Arab government of Faysal b. Husayn in Damascus. Beginning of French Mandate over Lebanon and Syria.

1920 Establishment of Greater Lebanon with expanded frontiers.

The First World War marked a turning point in the history of the region. In 1917, the Allied forces of Britain and France entered the area of Mount Lebanon, putting an end to Ottoman rule. Following the Sikes-Picot Agreement of 1916, Lebanon and Syria fell under French influence. A French mandate was imposed in those territories beginning in 1919.

At this time, several forces and tendencies tried to materialize their view of a new government for the area. The Arab nationalists, whose center was at the time in Damascus around the figure of Faysal b. Husayn, son of the Sharif of Mecca, saw the area as part of Arab lands, and therefore intended to have a single, unified government in the region. This movement lost strength and its main chances when the French troops defeated Faysal's armies in Maysalun, near Damascus, in July 1920.[60]

Another possibility considered by the French authorities was a unified Syria, of which Lebanon would be a part. However, pressures from inside and outside Lebanon led

---

[60] Firro, *Inventing Lebanon,* p.84. See also Georges Adib Karam, *L'opinion publique libanaise et la question du Liban (1918-1920)* (Beirut: Lebanese University, 1981), 251-2.

the French authorities to divide the territories under its influence and establish an

independent Lebanese state.

This decision was made, as stated above, because of inside and outside pressures.

Inside Lebanon, it was mainly the Maronite Church that demanded the creation of an

independent state.[61] Outside Lebanon, most emigrants were in favour of the partition,

organizing several committees and associations to pressure the French government to

institute an independent Lebanese state.[62] Therefore, the project of a Greater Lebanon with

extended frontiers gained strength, and in August 1920, the French High Commissioner

General Henri Gouraud issued a decree for the establishment of the "State of Greater

Lebanon," which came into being September 1 of the same year. The State of Greater

Lebanon embraced the territories of the Mutasarrifiyya, also known as "Smaller Lebanon"

or "Petit Liban," together with the coastal line, including the cities of Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon

and Tyre; Akkar to the north, all the Biqaa Valley to the East, and Jabal Amel to the South.

The borders became then Ras al-Naqurah in the South, Nahr al-Kabir in the North, the

summits of Anti-Lebanon in the East, and the Mediterranean Sea in the West. This added

additional agricultural lands and also ports and urban centers to the region of Mount

Lebanon. Greater Lebanon doubled the territory of Smaller Lebanon, and it was divided

into four administrative units:[63] Northern Lebanon, with its capital in Zgharta; Mount

Lebanon, with its capital in Ba'abda; Southern Lebanon, with its capital in Sidon; and

Beqaa, with its capital in Zahle. The coastal cities of Beirut and Tripoli had their own

---

[61] Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon*, 163.

[62] Some of these associations were *Hizb al-Ittihad al-Lubnani*, created in 1908 by Yusuf al-Sawda in Cairo; *Jam'ia-t al-Nahda al-Lubnaniyya'*, created in 1911 by Na'um Mukarzil in New York; the *Alliance Libanaise*, led by August Dib and aiming for a total independent state without French mandate; and the *Comité Libanaise de Paris* created in 1912 and led by Shukri Ghanem, Khairallah Khairallah and Georges Samneh. See: Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, 18-9; and Asher Kaufman *Reviving Phoenicia: The Search for Identity in Lebanon* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 61-75.

[63] Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, 75.

independent administrations. The percentages of the religious communities also differed from those of Smaller Lebanon: if the Christian population was an overwhelming majority in Smaller Lebanon, the addition of the new territories, whose inhabitants were mostly Muslims, changed the situation to a six to five ratio (Christians to Muslims) according to the 1932 census.

Not all inhabitants of Smaller Lebanon had been in favor of an *extended Mount Lebanon*. Some of them, especially those living inside Mount Lebanon in Keserouane region, preferred to maintain the borders of "Smaller Lebanon," maintaining in this way the overwhelming Christian majority so that the new state could be a homeland for Christians in a predominantly Muslim area.

Before the creation of Greater Lebanon and even after that time, there were different views about Lebanon, about its entity, and about the relations it should have with its neighboring territories. During the two years before the creation of Greater Lebanon, according to Georges A. Karam, the currents present among Lebanese people, inside and outside the borders of the future country, were:[64]

1. Independent Lebanon

    1.1 Total independence, with full sovereignty

        1.1.1. Full sovereignty with no tutelage from any foreign country

        1.1.2. Full sovereignty under the protection of foreign powers

    1.2 Independent Lebanon under the aegis of France

2. Non-Independent Lebanon, linked to other state

    2.1. Lebanon as a French department

---

[64] Karam: *L'opinion publique libanaise*, 145-208.

2.2. Lebanon linked to a French Syria

2.3. Lebanon linked to an Arab Syria

The currents mentioned above represent the different political views toward Lebanese territory that were present before and during the peace conferences celebrated after the end of the First World War. A simpler division that exemplifies the approach to Lebanon from more different perspectives is given by Elise Salem:[65]

* Lebanon as part of a bigger reality:

- Syrian;

- Arab;

- Islamic.

* Lebanon as independent entity:

- Seen as a "refuge for Christians," reduced mainly to Smaller Lebanon;

- Secular state with no sectarian "laws;"

- Confessional state with compromises between the religious communities.[66]

These views gained or lost strength at different times and depending on the circumstances of each moment. For example, Arab Nationalism was very strong during Ottoman rule and at the time of the First World War, when there was a feeling of hostility against Turks. Syrian and Arab Nationalisms lost their strength among many Christians living in Mount Lebanon and Lebanese Nationalism became stronger when Faysal b. Husayn created the Arab government in Damascus. Many associated this government with

---

[65] Elise Salem, *Constructing Lebanon: A Century of Literary Narratives* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), p.57. The different views are also expressed in one way or another in most texts, for example: Corm: *Liban, Les Guerres de l'Europe et the l'Orient 1840-1992* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 63, 77-81; Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon*, 154-161; or Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, in which the author defines the views as "three conflicting discourses" (p.40)

[66] The view that would finally succeed is this last one, which was lately materialized in the unwritten National Pact of 1943.

the creation of an Islamic Empire.[67] Syrian Nationalism gained strength at different times of the French Mandate, especially after the creation of the Syrian National Party by Antun Saade in 1936.

Going back to the account of historical events, the events happening after the creation of Greater Lebanon will be divided now into two general categories: "political" and "cultural," recognizing, though, that they are not independent categories, but that they overlap constantly. This structured division aims to facilitate an understanding of the different events and currents that took place during the period under study.

4.1.1. Political Events of the Mandate Period

The Mandate period lasted for over 20 years, and the political life of the country may be divided into two clear periods:

1. The preconstitutional period, which lasted from 1920, the year of the establishment of Greater Lebanon, to 1926, the year in which the Constitution was approved and the Lebanese Republic was proclaimed.

2. From 1926 to 1943, the year of the National Pact and independence.

During the twenty-three years of the entire period, there were eleven French high commissionaires and, since the constitution was approved in 1926, there were seven presidential terms (until November 22, 1943), that formed over fifteen different cabinets. The following table shows the high commissioners, the governors, the presidents and prime ministers, together with the main political events from 1920 to 1943:

---

[67] Salibi, *The History of Modern Lebanon,* 161.

Date	High Commissionaire	Governors		Events
1919	General Henri Gouraud			Peace Conference of Versailles
1920		Captain Georges Trabaud		Proclamation of the *State of Greater Lebanon*
1921				First Lebanese Census[68]
1922				
1923	General Maxime Weyggand	M. Privat-Aubouard		
1924	General Sarrail	General Vandenberg		
1925	Henri Jouvenel (first civilian as HC)	Leon Cayla		Syrian Revolt (until 1927)[69]
		President	Prime Minister	
1926	Henri Ponsot	Charles Dabbas (GrO)[70] 1st term	August Adib Pacha (M)	Constitution approved; establishment of the *Constitutional Republic of Lebanon*
1927			Bishara al-Khury (M)	First constitutional amendment (Senate abolished)
1928			Habib Pasha al-Sa'ad (M)	
1929		Charles Dabbas (GrO) 2nd term	Emile Eddeh (M)	Second constitutional amendment (extension of presidential term from three to six years non-renewable). Educational reform project by Eddeh that mainly affected the Muslim population and developed into confessional clashes (he intended to close 111 of the 162 public schools).
1930			August Adib Pacha (M)	
1931				
1932		Charles		Second Lebanese Census.[71]

---

[68] For data about the 1921 census, especially analyzed from the perspective of the emigrants, see Kohei Hashimoto, "Lebanese Population Movement 1920-1939: Towards a Study," in Hourani and Shehadi (eds.), *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration*, London: Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I.B. Tauris, 1992), 65-108.

[69] The Syrian revolt intended to free Syrian lands from what it considered French occupation. Even if the main focus of the revolt was set in rural areas of Syria, it also extended to some parts of Lebanon, mainly the southeast regions. It lasted for two years and, even if it failed to attain its objective, it is remembered as the first revolt against colonialism in the Middle East. For an analysis of the Syrian Revolt, see Michael Provence, *The Great Syrian Revolt and the Rise of Arab Nationalism*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005).

[70] The people mentioned in the table have been divided into their religious sects: GrO- Greek Orthodox, M-Maronite, S-Sunni, and P-Protestant. The purpose is to show how certain religious communities such as the Druze and the Shia were excluded from the main political posts. It also shows how the Sunna community did not reach one of those high posts until 1933.

		Dabbas (GrO) extension by appointment (He resigned in January 1933)		Suspension of the Constitution by French authorities to avoid presidential elections and the possible election of Muhammad al-Jisr (May 9). Presidential election postponed. Antun Sa'ade founded the *Syrian Social Nationalist Party*.
1933	Count Damien de Martel	Habib Pasha al-Sa'ad (M) by appointment for 1 year	Abdallah Bayhum (S) (Secretary of State)	Conference of the Coast I
1934		Extended 2nd year		
1935		Emile Eddeh	Ayyub Thabet (P) (Secretary of State)	Establishment of the *Constitutional Bloc* of Bishara al-Khury
1936				Conference of the Coast II (demanded union to Syria, attended by SSNP). Antun Sa'ade arrested. Sept: Franco-Syrian treaty. Nov: Franco-Lebanese treaty. Street riots. Foundation of the *Lebanese Phalanges*.
1937			Khayr al-Din al-Ahdab (S)	Foundation of *Al-Najjada*.
1938			Khalid Shihab (S)	
1939	Gabriel Puaux (Jan)		Abdallah al-Yafi (S) Abdallah Bayhum (by appointment)	Second World War starts; Lebanese Chamber dissolved (21 Sept); Constitution suspended.
1940	G. Henri Dentz (Dec) (Vichi regime)	Eddeh forced to resign. Alfred Naccache (M)	Bayhum forced to resign Ahmad Da'uq (S)	Vichi Regime

---

[71] The 1932 census was very polemical. Each religious community representation in the different administrative and political positions would depend and be proportional to its percentage in the Lebanese population. As soon as the census came out, there were immediate complaints about it, especially in the way in which the emigrants had been included and how certain communities had been classified. For example, the Maronite Patriarch complained because the Alawis, Syrians and Iraqis living in Lebanon had been considered Muslims, enlarging then the number of Muslims. Muslims, on the other hand, complained because the vast majority of the immigrants included in the census were Christians, mainly Maronite, so that had increased the percentage. Also, they complained because many Muslims had been defined as "foreigners" whereas Christians refugees arriving shortly before to Lebanon, mainly Armenians and Syriacs, had been given the Lebanese nationality. The Lebanese Government population calculation estimated 45.50% Muslims (Sunni 20.78%, Shi'i 18.26%, Druze 6.46%) and 52.65% Christians (Maronite 30.96%, Greek Orthodox 10.72%, Greek Catholic 6.36% and Armenian Orthodox 3.01% among the biggest Christian communities). For the percentages, see Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, p.120. For the polemics around the census, see Rania Maktabi's 'The Lebanese Census of 1932 revisited: Who are the Lebanese?', *British Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 26, Issue 2, Nov 1999; and Meir Zamir, *Lebanon Quest: The Road to Statehood 1926-1939* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris), 123-4.

1941	G. Catroux (title: Delegate General)	Alfred Naccache appointed (Dec 1)		June 8- British and Free French troops begin the incursion in Syria and Lebanon from Palestine. Technical end of the French Mandate over Lebanon and Syria. Sept 27- Syrian independence proclamation Nov 26- Lebanese independence proclamation.
1942			Sami al-Sulh (S)	Major General Sir Edward Spears appointed British Minister to Syria and Lebanon. Tensions between British (supported by Khury's Constitutional Bloc) and French (supported by Eddeh); National Bloc (Eddeh); Sulh-Khury agreement (will develop into the future National Pact)
1943		Ayyub Thabit (P) (President, Chief of State, Premier)		March 25- Restoration of the Constitution;
		Bishara al-Khury (M) Eddeh temporary appointed by French authorities Bishara al-Khury	Ryad al-Sulh (S)	6:5 ratio (Chr/M) decided; Summer elections: victory of the Constitutional Bloc. Constitutional amendments (some of the mandatory restrictions removed without previous French authorization); Nov 11- President, premiere, and other members of cabinet arrested in Rashayya by French authorities; Suspension of the Constitution. General strikes; Nov 22- Khury & co. liberated End of French Mandate (real)

4.1.2. Ideological divisions

As mentioned in the introduction, there is a tendency to relate ideological trends to religious sects as a whole. However, the political life during the time of the French Mandate provides numerous examples that suggest that the divisions among members of the same sect were many times stronger than the divisions between them and members of other sects.

For example, the personal and political differences between Emile Eddeh and Bishara al-Khury, both Maronites, marked the political scene during the constitutional period. Emile Eddeh's "Pour le Liban avec la France" clearly shows his Francophile tendencies. He was inclined to consider Lebanon as a country predominantly Christian and for Christians, and at some points he was even in favor of a smaller Lebanon with less of a Muslim population, instead of keeping the borders of Greater Lebanon and losing the overwhelming Christian majority of Smaller Lebanon.[72] Bishara al-Khury, on the other hand, was more inclined to collaborate with his Arab neighbours and also to reach agreements and compromises with Muslim citizens of Greater Lebanon. The unwritten pact between him and Ryad al-Sulh would serve as the basis of the political system for years to come after independence.

There were also divisions inside the Maronite Church, especially after Patriarch al-Huwayek's death and the start of the process to elect a new patriarch. Patriarch Elyas Butrus al-Huwayek died on December 24, 1931. He had been very influential during the 31 years of his patriarchate, and he played a key role in the formation of the State of Greater Lebanon, being the leader of the Lebanese delegation in the Peace Conference of Versailles in 1919. This patriarch had led his community since 1899, and the election of his successor divided the Maronites.[73] There were two main factions, one supporting Monsignor 'Abdallah Khury of Tyre, backed by the Jesuits, and another faction supporting Bishop Ignatius Mubarak. The French authorities did not support either of these two candidates and had preference for a third one, Mgr. Yusuf al-Khazen. Finally, as a compromise solution, Mgr. Antun Arida was elected the new patriarch of the Maronite community when he was

---

[72] Meir Zamir, "Emile Eddé and the Territorial Integrity of Lebanon", *Middle Easter Studies*, 14 (2) (1978), 232-39.
[73] Firro, *Inventing Lebanon,* 128.

70 years old. The new Patriarch was not well received by many of the members of the Maronite Church, who attacked him after his election. One of his most prominent opponents was Bishop Mubarak, who had been a strong candidate to the patriarchate.

The Sunni community was also divided.[74] Some members of the community kept demanding union with Syria after the creation of Greater Lebanon, and they refused to take any part in the administration of the new state. This is the case of Abd al-Hamid Karami and Salim abd al-Salam, who organized the first Conference of the Coast in 1933. Another group, despite being against the creation of Greater Lebanon at the beginning, agreed to participate in the administration of the country and finally reached a compromise solution with other sects, accepting the existence of Lebanon as an independent political entity but without losing Lebanon's ties with other neighboring countries. The most famous member of this group is Ryad al-Sulh who, despite being against the creation of Greater Lebanon, finally reached an agreement with Bishara al-Khury in the unwritten National Pact of 1943.

The Druze community was not an exception. It was also divided into two main groups:[75] a group led by the Jumblat family and a second group led by the Yazbaki family, whose main branch was the Arslan family.

Hence, despite the emphasis normally put on assigning an ideology to a certain community or on clarifying the differences inside a community, as we have just done above, many individuals of different communities were ideologically close to each other, even if their shared ideologies are not usually mentioned as classifying groups. For example, in the Second Conference of the Coast celebrated in 1936, the participants were Maronite, Greek, Shia, Sunna, and Druze. People who, at first sight, would be considered

---

[74] Ibid., 134-5.
[75] Ibid., 180.

apart as Abd al-Hamid Karami and Salah Labaki, signed the same manifest, demanding the union with Syria.[76]

The political life of the Mandate Period is complex and rich in events, and there are many details that could enrich the account made above. However, what is described should be sufficient to understand the political complexity of the period and the main ideological trends presented at the time. Thus, instead of giving more details about the political life of Lebanon, it is more appropriate to start the account of the cultural life that directly influenced the intellectual life of the authors analyzed in this study.

4.2. Cultural life during the Mandate Period

In order to understand fully the cultural atmosphere that surrounded the creation of the analyzed texts, we need to analyze not only the cultural life in Lebanon during the Mandate period, but also the cultural life of the years preceding the establishment of Greater Lebanon.

The description of the cultural atmosphere will focus on five main areas: the Arabic renaissance that took place in the nineteenth century; the educational institutions and the contact with Western countries; the press and printing houses; the revival of Phoenicia; and the cultural activities of Lebanese intellectuals in the *Mahjar*, mainly in the Americas.

4.2.1. Arabic Renaissance and Institutions of Higher Learning

According to Albert Hourani,[77] in the early nineteenth century a group of Christians from Aleppo, which had a relatively big community of Maronite Christians,[78] started

---

[76] Ibid.,142-3.
[77] Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 56, 95-6.

mastering the Classical Arabic language, learning from the Muslim shaykhs of the city and passing this knowledge to other Christians living in Mount Lebanon. A good knowledge of Arabic was one of the professional requirements to become an official of the Ottoman Empire, and some individuals started mastering the Arabic language for professional reasons. They transmitted the knowledge to their children, resembling in this way families such as the Bustanies or the Yazijies. Therefore, what started as a practical interest to get an official position, developed into a real, personal passion for both the Arabic language and its literature. Most of these individuals were born Maronites or Greek Orthodox, but tensions with their religious leaders and the freedom that other, less-deeply rooted communities offered them, especially the Protestant Community, caused some of the most famous to break away with their religious communities.[79] Some of these examples are Butrus al-Bustani (1819-1883) who became Protestant, and Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq (1804-1887), who became Protestant and then converted to Islam.[80] What is important to point out here is that this tension with the hierarchy of their religious communities of origin gave their writings an anticlerical flavor.[81]

---

[78] As an example of the importance of the Maronite Community in Aleppo, it was in this city where Bishop Germanos Farhat was born in 1670. He composed *Baḥth al-Maṭālib*, a book of Arabic grammar that was very influential during the following centuries. Even if he was originally from Aleppo, he actually wrote his book while he was in residence in Mar Elyshaa monastery, in the northern region of the Lebanese Mountains. (http://www.bsharry.com/Bsharry_MarLishaa.htm)

[79] Hourani: *Arabic Thought,* 96. See also Jean Fontaine, *La crise religieuse des écrivains syro-libanais chrétiens, de 1825 à 1940* (Tunis: Publications de l'Institute des Belles Lettres Arabes, 1996).

[80] The reasons for al-Shidyaq's conversions are of much controversy. Some indicate that only personal interest made him convert, first to gain influence among the newly arrived Protestants and later to get the favor or the Ottoman Sultan. Some like Marun Abbud said that he died Muslim and others like Louis Cheikho said that he died Maronite. Fontaine: *La crise religieuse*, 28.

[81] Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, 96. The anticlerical flavor remained with later writers like Amin al-Rihani (1876-1940), whose works were lightly modified in the editions published after his death, softening some passages in which he criticized the Maronite Community. Fontaine: *La crise religieuse*, 36.

The Catholic Church began its contact with the Eastern Communities (Orthodox, Armenian, Coptic, Syrian Orthodox and Nestorian) as early as the sixteenth century.[82] An agreement with the Maronite community was achieved in 1736, and its missionaries, mainly French Jesuits, managed to create a group of Uniate churches among the Eastern Communities. The Christian Catholic centers became centers of education and contact with the West, especially France, which had supremacy in Europe at the time, and many Catholic schools were founded around these communities. The most famous of those institutions is Saint Joseph University, founded by the Jesuits in 1875. It started as a seminary-college at Ghazir, and then moved to Beirut in 1870 to become a university in 1875. The language of instruction, as in most of other Catholic educative institutions, was French.

The Protestant community followed a similar path, although their missionaries arrived much later and their conversions were much more limited. Presbyterian missionaries arrived in Lebanon in the first half of the nineteenth century,[83] and the Protestant community was recognized by the Ottoman Sultan in 1850.[84] They founded the "Syrian Protestant College" in 1866, which would change its name to the "American University of Beirut" in 1920. This university hosted the most important figures of the Arabic renaissance, such as Butrus al-Bustany, Faris al-Shidyaq and Jurji Zaydan. Its first language of instruction was Arabic, but this changed in 1880, when English became the official language of instruction.[85] Therefore, from 1880 on, the two most important

---

[82] Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, 55.
[83] The first American missionaries arrived in Beirut in 1820. Among them was Eli Smith, who arrived in Beirut in 1827 and who established the first school for girls in the area in 1834. He also contributed to the first modern translation of the Bible into Arabic. Georges Antonius, G: *The Arab Awakening: the Story of the Arab National Movement* (repr. London: Kegan Paul, 2000), 36.
[84] Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, 96.
[85] Antonius, *The Arab Awakening,* 94.

institutions of higher education in Beirut used either French or English as the language of

instruction. This weakened the use of Arabic at high levels of education, as well as its use

to approach different topics in all disciplines, to the benefit of foreign languages. This does

not mean that there were not cases of individuals who excelled in their use of Arabic

language and wrote important works about it but, as a general movement of Arabic

renaissance, the focus on Lebanon ended at the end of the nineteenth century, moving to

other countries or regions, mainly Egypt and the Americas. Between the second half of the

nineteenth century and until the end of the First World War, many Syrians left their

homeland to emigrate. The bad situation, both economic[86] and political, with the decay in

the traditional production goods and the political persecutions by the Ottoman authorities,

made many citizens emigrate to Egypt (mainly Alexandria), Europe, or the Americas

(mainly to the United States and Brazil).[87] Among those who emigrated to Egypt were

many members of the intellectual elites, who found more freedom and more opportunities

in Egypt than in their homeland.[88] This population movement can also be noted in the

press, whose center and importance moved from Syrian lands to Egypt in the late 1870s,[89]

keeping the majority of the most important publications in the hands of Syrian émigrés.[90]

At the end of the First World War, some of the émigrés who had settled temporarily in

---

[86] For a description of the changing economical situation in Lebanon in the centuries preceding the French Mandate, see Paul Saba, "The creation of the Lebanese Economy - Economic Growth in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in Roger Owen (ed.), *Essays on the Crisis in Lebanon* (London: Ithaca, 1976), 1-22. For the specific situation around the First World War, see the last three pages of the chapter (pp. 20-2).

[87] For a good description of the different reasons for emigration, see Akram Fouad Khater, *Inventing Home. Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 52-61. Khater argues that, despite the bad economical situation of some peasants in Mount Lebanon, their situation was not desperate. As he describes it, "peasants were not seeking financial salvation, but rather financial amelioration" (Khather, *Inventing Home*, 56). Emigration was a means to maintain the standards of living reached by their parents in the sixties and seventies.

[88] See Albert Hourani, "Lebanese and Syrians in Egypt," in Hourani and Shehadi, *The Lebanese in the World,* 497-508.

[89] Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East. A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 29.
[90] Ibid. 52.

Egypt went back to Lebanon following the entry of the French armies. Among them, we find many significant personalities who would play important roles during the mandate period, such as Emile Eddeh or Bishara al-Khury.

4.2.2. Press

Since its appearance and popularization in the second half of the nineteenth century, the press played an important role in spreading ideas, and was used as an instrument of propaganda by different ideological groups, either political or religious.[91] The period of the French Mandate is not an exception, and the presence of the press was a constant factor in the ideological battles of the time. During the interwar period, there were at least 250 new Arabic newspapers, and over 30 in other languages such as French or Armenian.[92] Most of them had a short life, but some of the newspapers that were founded at the time are still published today, such as *al-Nahar* and *L'Orient-Le Jour*. For example, between 1930 and 1932, there were a total of 66 periodicals and 36 publications issued irregularly, and the total circulation of the 12 daily newspapers was 42,000 copies.[93]

As said above, each newspaper was normally associated with a specific group or political tendency.[94] Some of these examples are:

L'Orient, founded by Georges Naqqash[95] and Jibrail Khabbaz in 1924, was identified with Emile Edde's faction.

---

[91] As an example of the power and strong role attributed to the press, during the First World War, under the rule of Jamal Pasha in Syria and Mount Lebanon, 16 journalists were hanged in the public executions of 1915 and 1916 in Damascus and Beirut. Others were also accused and tried *in absentia* and condemned, such as Faris Nimr and Rashid Rida. Journalists were considered a threat to the Ottoman authorities. See Ayalon *The Press in the Arab Middle East*, 70-1.

[92] See Yusuf As'ad Dagher, *Qamus al-Sihafa al-Lubaniyya, 1858-1974*, (Lebanese University, 1978).

[93] Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, 113.

[94] The names of the different publications are the first indication of its political orientation and its origins. For example, *L'Orient* reflects a clear approach to the region from a French perspective, this newspaper being the most Francophile of all. It is not surprising also that the main "Sunni" newspaper was named *Beirut*, the place where most of the Sunni population lived and had its strength. *Al-Bashir* carries strong religious connotations, and not surprisingly, it is the newspaper of the Jesuit community in Lebanon.

Le Jour, founded in 1933, was identified with Bishara al-Khury's faction. Its founder, Michel Chiha, was his brother-in-law.

Beirut, founded in 1935, was linked to the Sunni elites and called for Arab Nationalism and unity with Syria.

Al-Irfan, edited by Ahmad Arif al-Zayn, was the voice of the Shi'i elites.

Al-Nida, founded by Ryad al-Sulh and his cousin Khazim al-Sulh in 1929.

Al-Bashir represented the views of the Jesuit Community.

Other publications that also were significant were *al-Barq*; *al-Ma'rad* founded in 1921 by Michel Zakkur; and *al-Nahar*, founded in 1933 by Jibran Tuwayni, who had previously founded *al-Ahrar* newspaper in 1924, together with Khalil Kassab and Sa'id Sabagha.

4.2.3. Significant Publications

Parallel to the diverse currents present in the area at the beginning of the twentieth century, there were some publications that were very influential at the time and that reflected the different trends and positions adopted by different people just before the creation of Greater Lebanon. These publications reflected the distinct views across the area, and how the idea of Syria and Lebanon changed in a short period of time. Some of their authors were also among the most influential personalities of the time. The most significant of these publications, preceded by the years of publication, are:

1864- *Mission de Phénicie*, by Ernest Renan. Ernest Renan was a French philologist who accompanied the French military mission that disembarked on the Beirut coast in 1860 to end the violent struggles in the Shuf area. His book, published four years

---

[95] George Naqqash is an example of the "Lebanese elite movement" around the beginning of the century. He was himself born in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1904, the son of Lebanese émigrés, but later returned to Lebanon after the end of the First World War.

after the expedition, became very popular in France, and it would have an important role in the "Revival of Phoenicia" some years later.[96]

1893- **Kitāb Tārīkh Sūriya**, by Yūsuf al-Dibs. This Maronite archbishop of Beirut wrote a history of Syria in eight volumes, focusing on greater Syria in early periods but drifting to Mount Lebanon and its surroundings when dealing with modern times.[97] His works of reference were mainly written by Jesuit priests teaching at Saint Joseph University.[98]

1905- **Le réveil de la nation arabe**, by Négib Azoury. Azoury, a Syrian Christian with a French education, was in favor of an Arab nation with no religious distinctions. His Arab nation comprised all Arabic-speaking countries of the area, excluding Egypt and North Africa.[99] This Arab nation would be free of Ottoman influence, but collaboration with Great Britain and especially France was accepted.

1908- **La question du Liban**, by M Jouplain. The Maronite Christian Bulus Nujaym (b.1880, Junieh), who received his education in the Lazarist College in 'Aintura,[100] wrote this work under the pseudonym of M Jouplain. He reflects the aspiration of Lebanese nationalists, and in this book, he already enumerates the territories that should be attached to Mount Lebanon to create the Lebanese Nation.[101] He admitted that Syria "formed a distinct historical entity […]. But inside it, Lebanon had a special place: there had been a Lebanese nation since the beginning of history."[102]

---

[96] See Kaufman's *Reviving Phoenicia*, 21-2.
[97] Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, 276.
[98] Kaufman: *Reviving Phoenicia*, 37.
[99] Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, 277-9.
[100] For more details about Nujaym's life and work, see Kaufman's *Reviving Phoenicia*, 45-8.
[101] Nujaym wrote: "But the most serious and most urgent problem of all is the extension of the Lebanese frontiers…. And for this, first Beirut and the fertile Biqa', then Bilad Bishara, 'Akkar, the Hula, and Marj 'Uyun, must be incorporated in the autonomous province". (Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon* , 118).
[102] Taken from Hourani: *Arabic Thought*, 275.

1919- ***Fī sabīl Lubnān***, by Yūsuf al-Sawda. Yusuf al-Sawda, often written as al-Saouda, (b.1891, Bikfaya), received his education in al-Hikmeh school and in Saint Joseph University. In his work, written during the Peace conference after World War I, he described the history of "Lebanon" from the Phoenician city-states until after 1861,[103] assuming in this way a past for Lebanon of over 5000 years and giving Lebanon a special identity. He wrote his books in Arabic and felt closer to the mountain life than to the city atmosphere.[104]

1919- ***La Revue Phénicien***, by Charles Corm. Charles Corm (b.1894, Beirut), was born inside the bourgeois environment of the city and received his education in Jesuit schools and universities.[105] *La Revue Phénicien* was a publication that lasted only four issues, from July 1919 to December of the same year. The writers who participated in the publication, issued totally in French, were mostly Francophiles and among them we find Shukri Ghanim,[106] Hector Klat,[107] Paul/Bulus Nujaym and Henri Lammens.[108]

1920- ***La Syrie***, by George Samne. Samne, a Greek Catholic born in Damascus, reflected in his work the concept of Syria as historical nation. However, he focused mainly on the territories of Greater Lebanon,[109] probably under the influence of the creation of the new state. He was a member of the *Comité Central Syrien* in Paris.

---

[103] Kaufman: *Reviving Phoenicia*, 61-2.
[104] Ibid. 169-70.
[105] For Corm's family background, see Kaufman: *Reviving Phoenicia*, 87-8.
[106] Shukri Ghanim (1861-1929), Maronite Christian émigré in Paris, member both of the Comité Central Syrien and of Comité Libanaise de Paris. He wrote the introduction of George Samne's *La Syrie*, and he constantly linked the term "la Phenicie" with that of "Le Grand Liban." See Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, 19, 24-5.
[107] Hector Klat, born in 1888 in Alexandria of Lebanese parents, was probably the most famous poet after Charles Corm in the "Phoenician revival." He wrote all his works in French, and the title of his poem *Le Cèdre et le Lys*, published 1935, reflect clearly his tendencies and sympathies. Kaufman: *Reviving Phoenicia*, 63-4.
[108] Ibid., 89-93.
[109] Firro, *Inventing Lebanon*, pp.24-26. Also Kamal Salibi, *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1988), 132.

1920- *La Syrie*, by Jacques Tabet, published in 1920 but written in 1915. Jacques Tabet, another émigré born in Alexandria in 1885, proposed in his book a Syrian federation in which Lebanon would have a primary position. The Arabic language was not a factor in the identity of Syria.[110]

1921- *La Syrie: précis historique*, by Henri Lammens. Henri Lammens (1862-1937)[111] was a Jesuit priest born in Belgium. He travelled to Lebanon when he was fifteen, and he received most of his education in the Jesuit seminaries and institutions. He became a professor in Beirut Jesuit College, where he first taught Arabic, and then geography and history. He worked also as editor of the periodicals *al-Bashir*, the newspaper of the Jesuits in Beirut, and *al-Mashriq*, a Jesuit periodical. His work *La Syrie: précis historique* was written at the request of the High Commissioner General Gouraud, and it was "intended for use at a project school for training administrative officials for the mandated territory."[112] In this work, together with other articles that appeared in the publication *al-Mashriq*, he defended Syria as a defined territory with natural frontiers, whose people had a defined identity and nationality, based on race and the unity of the land, non-Arab and non-Muslim. However, he also developed the idea of Lebanon as "refuge:" "la montagne [...] deviendra le dernier asile de l'indépendance syrienne,"[113] maintaining its Christian identity. In this way, the works of Lammens served both Syrian and Lebanese nationalist ideas. He and his works were very influential among the educated elites surrounding Saint Joseph University and, consequently, among many politicians during the French Mandate.

---

[110] Kaufman: *Reviving Phoenicia,* 67-8.

[111] The biography of F. Lammens and the details about his work were mainly taken from Kamal Salibi, "Islam and Syria in the writings of Henri Lammens," in Lewis and Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East* (London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), 330-342. There is a good summary also in Kaufman, *Reviving Phoenicia*, 32-3.

[112] Salibi "Islam and Syria in the writings of Henri Lammens," in Lewis and Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East*, 340 (n).

[113] Ibid., 341.

All these publication were very influential among the educated people at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The authors analyzed in this research were probably aware of their existence, and some of these publication may have influenced their thinking.

4.2.4. Phoenician Revival

Many of the books mentioned above reflect, in some way or another and in different stages, the phenomenon of the *Revival of Phoenicia*. This revival was not an isolated phenomenon and paralleled similar trends happening in other countries or regions at the time. The clearest example is the emphasis on the Pharaonic past of Egypt at the beginning of the twentieth century.[114]

The concept of nation as it is understood in European terminology started taking root in the Middle East in the second half of the nineteenth century. The victory of European powers such as France and England in the First World War and the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire led, as indicated above in the historical section, to the partition of the territories that had been under Ottoman rule. The divided territories fell under French or British influence, and these European powers designed the new map of the area following different considerations and pressures from groups inside and outside the territories. It is within this atmosphere and around the institution of the new states that the distinct nationalistic movements started to come into being. The different political or intellectual trends had to justify their vision and arguments of their new ideal states, and it is here

---

[114] To see how the Pharaonic past of Egypt in the national movements was used at the beginning of the twentieth century, see the chapter written by Donald M. Reid entitled "Nationalizing the Pharaonic Past: Egyptology, Imperialism, and Egyptian Nationalism, 1922-1952", in Jankowski and I. Gershoni, *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East*.

where the revival of old historical periods and civilizations start having an important function in some of their theories.

As indicated by Anthony Smith in his work *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*,[115] the state is, first of all, a "territorial entity" with defined borders that gives the sense of inclusion and exclusion,[116] of what is *us* and what differentiates *us* from the *others* living in the territories that surround us. The cultural side goes hand-in-hand with the territorial space: the individuals living inside the territory believe in a set of myths, meanings, and symbols that are shared by all of them and that link them both with the land and with the individuals living on that land centuries before them. Their community, of which they are just a stage, goes back to ancient times, and it follows a "linear development"[117] with a birth, a growth, a golden age, a decline, and a rebirth.[118] The reconstruction of the past then becomes central for the establishment of the state as part of the construction of its identity, and sciences as archaeology or philology[119] play a central role in this work.[120] Through archaeology, the remains of ancient civilizations are brought into light, recovering the past of the peoples living in those territories in previous times. However, more than the discovery of the archaeological ruins by itself, their selection and interpretation play a more

---

[115] Anthony Smith is just one among the most important theorists of nationalism. Others like Eric Hobsbawm or Benedict Anderson have also published key texts to the understanding of the phenomenon of nationalism. However, I found Smith's observations to be more useful to the topic treated here. Hobsbawm's "invented traditions" and Anderson's "imagined communities" serve more to interpret the phenomenon, in my opinion, than to explain it. Also, I found that their works are born out of the European experience in which topics such as religion have completely different value in the creation of the new states. Besides, at this point, the focus is not placed in the validity of the arguments by themselves but in how those arguments appeared at that specific time in history.

[116] Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford, UK: New York, NY, USA: B. Blackwell, 1987), 135.

[117] Ibid. 191.

[118] These are part of what Smith defines as "motifs or elements in any national mythology or myth of ethnic origins and descent." Other myths are ancestry, migration, and liberation. Ibid. 192

[119] The philology is especially important through the toponymy of the villages and places in nature, together with the origins of certain words and expressions that are linked to ancient languages.

[120] Smith: *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 180.

important role in this process.[121] Archaeologists have the power to choose which ruins are brought into light and how much emphasis is given to the discoveries and their interpretation.

Going back to the specific case of Lebanon, the first publication mentioned in the list above was *Mission de Phénicie*, written by Ernest Renan and published in Paris in 1864. The title of the book indicates clearly where Renan's focus was and to which ancient civilization he linked the land that was to become Greater Lebanon. When reading about the creation of Greater Lebanon, it is common to find expressions like *natural frontiers* or *natural and historical borders*, referring to the borders of the new state. These borders followed almost completely the lines described by the French Chief of Staff according to archaeological discoveries made after the expedition of 1860,[122] of which Renan was a member.[123] Therefore, Renan's work[124] served as catalyst for future works that would include the ancient Phoenician civilization as cultural reference of the historical past of the new state. Two works, both written by members of the Maronite church, serve as perfect examples of the shift in approach that took place after Renan's book. The first work is entitled *Notice historique sur l'origine de la nation maronite et sur ses rapports avec la France*, written by the Bishop Nicolas Murad and published in Paris in 1844. In his work, Bishop Murad did not mention the Phoenician origin of the habitants of Mount Lebanon,

---

[121] Ibid., 180.

[122] George Samne's *La Syrie* includes a map that shows the "anciennes limites du Liban, revendiquées par les Libanais, d'après la carte de l'Etat-Major française en 1860." This map was used to claim the extension of the Lebanese territory. These limits correspond almost to the borders of today's Lebanon, with the exception of the south. The extension shown in Samne's map reaches only the Litany river in the south. George Samne, *La Syrie, avec 30 photograpies et 6 cartes hors texte* (Paris: Éditions Bossard, 1920), 225.

[123] The expedition of which Renan was a member followed the tradition started in 1789 by Napoleon Bonaparte. A scientific expedition then accompanied the military expedition to Egypt, making discoveries that were crucial in the development of the studies of the Pharaonic periods.

[124] Renan's work about Phoenicia was not the first one about the topic, but it became the most famous. The first European Scientific studies about Phoenicia are dated in the eighteenth century. Kaufman, *Inventing Phoenicia*, 22.

and the beginning point in his history was the birth of Christianity in the area.[125] In 1893,

less than fifty years later and after the publication of Renan's book, Yusuf al-Dib already

included in his *Kitāb Tārīkh Sūriya* the Phoenician past of the region.[126] Bulus Nujaym,

Yusuf al-Sawda, and Jacques Tabet[127] each made references to the Phoenicians and their

good qualities that, in one way or another, were shared by the inhabitants of the present

Lebanon. We cannot forget that almost all the intellectual elites of the time had received

French education and/or had emigrated mainly to France or to Egypt, especially

Alexandria, following the hardline policy of the Young Turks movement.[128] The political

activity of the "Lebanese" groups was set mainly outside Lebanon, with the inevitable

influence of foreign elements. The foreign elements were very influential not only outside

Lebanon, but also inside Lebanon. Father Lammens, with his anti-Arab, anti-Muslim

tendencies was very influential among the educated elites of the time. The Phoenician past

was then ideal to give the sense of exclusion needed in the Lebanese territory, providing at

the same time all the necessary elements for a national mythology.[129]

The references to the Phoenician past and to its link with Lebanon started becoming

common at the beginning of the twentieth century. For example, in *Une enquête aux pays

du Levant*, a book written by Maurice Barres and published in 1923 in Paris, the Christians

of Mount Lebanon were linked directly with the Phoenicians.[130] Publications such as *La

---

[125] Ibid. 36.

[126] Ibid. 37

[127] Jacques Tabet would become the first director of the Lebanese National Museum, inaugurated in 1922. The focus of the Museum was the pre-Arab / Islamic periods, especially Phoenicia. Kaufman, *Inventing Phoenicia*, 123.

[128] Ibid. 57.

[129] The invention of the alphabet, the high skills in commerce and navigation, the colonies: all this is linked to the Golden Age of Phoenicia. The mythology is built around Adonis and Astarte, and the decline is often associated to the Arab invasions, even if the decay of the so-called Phoenician city-states happened in the third century, BC with the Greek occupation.

[130] Kaufman: *Reviving Phoenicia,* 24-5.

Revue Phénicien became well known, despite the fact that it only lasted for one year.

Corm's poem "The Sacred Mountain,"[131] written in 1934, became almost a symbol of the

aspirations of the time.

Before concluding this topic, there are some points that need to be clarified. The

first one is that the Phoenician images did not take root into the society until late in the

Mandate period. Until then, as we have seen, it had been an ideology almost exclusive to

the educated elites with French background, whether they were French by nationality or

had received French education at some point in their lives. Also, it had been developed

around urban centers, whether Paris, Alexandria, or later Beirut, and had little influence in

the mountainous areas.[132] Finally, it is necessary to emphasize that the Phoenician revival

did not start by the initiative of the Maronite Church, even if later it may have been used as

an instrument to achieve the Church's interests.[133]

4.2.5. Looking Back

As mentioned in the introduction, the prominent position of the Lebanese prose

writers living in Lebanon moved from Lebanese lands to other countries at the beginning of

the twentieth century. Most of the memorable Lebanese writers of the time, such as Jibran

Khalil Jibran, Mikhail Naimeh, or Amin al-Rihani, belong to those who emigrated to

foreign countries at the end of the nineteenth century or the beginning of the twentieth

century. Only a few prose writers writing in Lebanon during the Mandate Period managed

to remain prominent until today, occupying a place in the collective memory of the

---

[131] *La Montagne Inspirée*, written by Corm in French as all his works, was inspired in *La Colline Inspirée* by the same Maurice Barres mentioned above. (Ibid., 144)

[132] The texts analysed later in this study will reveal this point clearly.

[133] For example, Patriarch Eliyas al-Huwayik used a double discourse if he was talking to his flock in Mount Lebanon or if he was addressing the European powers in the Versailles peace conference after World War I. In his discourse there, he minimized the importance of the Arabic language and emphasized the Phoenician past of Lebanon, which gave it a distinct identity different than that of their neighbors, together with a link to the European countries. (Kaufman, *Reviving Phoenicia*, 85)

Lebanese. A good example of this fact is found in a work recently published in Lebanon. In November 2001, the well known Dar An-Nahar Press published a volume entitled *LIBAN. Le Siècle en images. 1900-2000.*[134] As the title indicates, it contains groups of photographs representing the most significant events and personalities of each year, from the beginning of the twentieth century to its end. The photographs include also the covers of the most representative publications of the century. The publications chosen for the Period of the French Mandate are:

1919:　- *La revue phénicienne*, Charles Corm

　　　　- *Pour le Liban*, Joseph Saouda

　　　　- *L'Etat Juif an Palestine*, Cheikh Youssef el-Khazen

1920 :　- *La Syrie*, Georges Samne

1923 :　- *Al-Gharbal (Majmū'at maqālāt naqdiyya)*, Mikha'il Na'ime

1924 :　- *Mulūk al-'Arab*, Amin al-Rihani

1926:　- *La main d'Allah*, Eveline Bustros

1927 :　- *al- Jadāwil*, Iliya Abu Madi

1934 :　- *La Montagne Inspirée*, Charles Corm

　　　　- *Le Château Merveilleux (Poèmes)*, Elie Tyane

1935 :　- *Le Cèdre et les Lys*, Hector Klat

1936 :　- *Al-'Awsaja al-Multahiba*, Yūsuf Ghaṣūb

　　　　- *Poèmes de l'Eté*, Fouad Abi Zayd

　　　　- *'Abqar,* Shafīq Ma'lūf

1937 :　- *'Ashar Qiṣaṣ*, Khalīl Taqī al-Dīn.

---

[134] *LIBAN. Le Siècle en images. 1900-2000*. Sous la direction de Nawaf Salam et Farès Sassine. (Beirut: Les Editions Dar An-Nahar. Arab Printing Press S.A.L. November 2001).

- *The history of the Arabs*, Philip K. Hitti.

1938: - *Urjūḥat al-qamar*, Ṣalāḥ Labakī

- *Afāʿī al-Firdaws*, Ilyās Abū Shabaka

As we can see, nine of the eighteen works mentioned are written in French, one in English and eight in Arabic. Among the eight works written in Arabic, five are works in poetry, two are non-fictional works, and one is a collection of short stories. Among these same eight works, five are written by *Mahjar* writers. Therefore, among the eighteen titles, there is only one prose fictional work mentioned that was written in Arabic inside the Lebanese borders, and it is the collection of short stories by Khalil Taqi al-Din.

A similar conclusion is taken from Elise Salem's *Constructing Lebanon. A Century of Literary Narratives*. This work also covers twentieth-century Lebanese history, but this time it is through its most significant narratives. Around the period of the Mandate, she analyzes mainly the works of Jibran Khalil Jibran and Abu Shabaka, mentioning other authors who wrote during the Mandate, but analyzing their works written outside the Mandate period, as is the case of Tawfiq Awwad.

This is very revealing, and it proves that, from today's perspective, the most significant works produced during the mandate period were written in French, or written by Mahjar writers and, if written in Arabic in Lebanese lands, they are mainly works of poetry. This is one of the main reasons for this research: to analyze texts that are not normally taken into consideration when researching the Mandate period. There are extensive works dealing with the literature of the Mahjar, that provide excellent analysis of the main authors and the achievements reached in their works. The outstanding work by ʿIsā al-Naʿūrī,

entitled *Adab al-Mahjar*,[135] presents a clear view of the Mahjar writers in both North America and South America. According to the author of this work, the writers in the *Mahjar*, who were mainly Syrians and Lebanese, were the ones who broke with the classical Arabic literary traditions and opened a new way to modernity, far away from restrictions or traditional canons. Their liberation was both formal and in content, sharing all specific characteristics that distinguish them from other authors writing in their homeland. Some of the topics that characterize their writings, all according to al-Naʿūrī,[136] are: the nostalgia for the homeland; contemplation; deepness in their feeling for nature; a superior skill in description and depiction; and religious freedom. It is interesting to realize that two of the most famous literary groups in the Mahjar were founded during the mandate period: *al-Rābiṭa al-Qalamiyya*, founded in New York in 1920 by Jibran Khalil Jibran, Mikhaʿil Naʿime, and Ilya Abu Madi among others; and *al-ʿAṣba al-Andalusiyya*, founded in 1932 in Brazil by Michel Maʿluf, Daud Shakkur and Habib Masʿud, among others.

4.3. A Closer Look at the Texts: Authors and Introduction to the Texts

After having analyzed the shared background that surrounded the production of the texts, it is time to get closer to the texts and describe the particular circumstances that surrounded their production. As a first approach, the following table includes the authors whose texts are analyzed in the study, the place and date of their birth and death, together with the analyzed texts written during the period:

---

[135] Al-Naʿuri, ʿIsa: *Adab al-Mahjar* (Cairo: Dar al-Maʿarif, 1977).
[136] Ibid., 69.

	Awwad	**Abbud**	**Ghosen**	**Karam**	**Khatir**	**Labaki**	**Shibli**
Birth	1911 Bhersaf (Metn, Mount Lebanon)	1886 Ain Kifaa (Jbeil, Mount Lebanon)	1881 Beirut	1903 Dayr al-Qamar (Shuf, Mount Lebanon)	1881 Btater (Aley, Shuf, Mount Lebanon)	1906 Brazil (at 2 years, he moved to Lebanon)	1897 Daqqun (Aley, Shuf, Mount Lebanon)
Works analyzed	1936 "The Lame Boy" 1937 "The Wooden Shirt" 1939 "The Loaf" 1944 "The Virgins"	1945 "Faces and Stories"	1927 "The blessing after the curse" 1927 "The son's defense of his father's honor"	1936 "The cry of pain" 1937 "Father Antun"	1930 "Habuba Khatir"	1945 "From the deepest of the Mountain"	1938 "The Oak's Hill"
Death	1988	1962	1940	1959	1976	1955	1962

The table presents a total of seven authors and twelve prose writings: six novels, five collections of short stories, and a biography. The authors can be divided into two groups: those who were already adults by the time the French Mandate started, and those who reached their adulthood during the period of the French Mandate. The authors' ages by 1920 were: Awwad, nine years old; Labaki, 14 years old; Karam, 17 years old; Shibli, 23 years old; Abbud, 34 years old; and Ghosen and Khater, 39 years old. Even if the age difference reaches 30 years in the extreme cases, all of the authors had already received their primary education by the time the French Mandate started. We can assume, then, that they were not affected by the educational reforms imposed in the country by the French authorities.

All the authors - with the exception of Marun Ghosen and Salah Labaki - were born in territories that fall inside the limits of the Mutasarrifiyya or Smaller Lebanon. They all belong to what have been called Lebanese lands before the establishment of Greater Lebanon. Marun Ghosen was the only one who was born in a territory belonging to extended Lebanon, and also the only one who was born in the city. The case of Salah Labaki can be considered an exception in the group, being the only one who was born outside Lebanon. He was born in the Brazilian city of Sao Paolo, but he moved to Beirut when he was only two years old. He received his education in Lebanon, and he spent his adult life in the country. He is also an exception because he is the only one who is considered more of a poet than a prose writer. In fact, his works in prose do not have the realist character that distinguishes most of the works analyzed, and their themes and topics deal with legends and myths related to the Lebanese Mountains. Even from a stylistic perspective, the works could be included with poetical prose more than with fictional prose. Despite these differences, his work is very valuable in the analysis because it serves as a bridge to other styles and backgrounds, providing a certain openness to the group.

What follows is a summary of the authors' biographies, together with a description of the analyzed works.

4.3.1. Lahad Khater (1881-1975)[137]

Lahad Khater was born in the village of Btater, Aley district, on March 1, 1881. He received his primary education at Qornet Chehouane School, in the Metn, and his secondary education at al-Hikme School in Beirut. He taught in some schools in the mountain areas, and later he moved to Saint Joseph University and al-Farir College. He was

---

[137] His biography was taken from Yūsuf Asʿad Ḍāghir, *Maṣādir al-Dirāsāt al-Adabiyya.*, vol.4, 252-5.

the founder of a school in his home village *al-Madrasa al-Ahliyya*, where he worked as an instructor for many years.

Besides his work as an educator, he worked also as a journalist and as an editor for *al-Bashir* newspaper, the Jesuit publication, from 1924 until its disappearance in 1947, helping Father Louis al-Maʻluf. He worked in other newspapers and magazines as well, providing information related to Lebanese history, its traditions, and folklore. He is primarily known for his work as a historian and social writer. He wrote almost always in Arabic, and some of his works are: *Tārīkh Lubnān*, 1914; *Habūba Khāṭir. 1835-1929*, 1930; *al-Lubnāniyyūn fī al-Mahjar aw Mudhakkirāt al-Mūnsiniyūr Būlus ʻAql fī Niyābatihi al-Baṭriyarkiyya*,1931; *al-Shaykh Bishāra al-Khūrī al-Faqīh (1805-1886)*, 1957; *Qiṣaṣ min Lubnān: Bayna al-ḥaqīqa wa al-khayāl*, 1962; *ʻAṣr al-Mutaṣarrifiyya fī Lubnān*, 1967; *Aḥdāth wa Aḥādīth min Lubnān*; and *al-ʻĀdāt wa al-taqālīd al-Lubnāniyya*, 1977.

The work that will be analyzed in this study is *Habūba Khāṭir: 1853-1929*. *Hububa Khatir* is the biography of Lahad Khater's mother. It was published in 1930 by the Catholic Press in Beirut, and it is extremely short, with only 24 pages.

It is not possible to classify this text as a "fictional work," at the same level of the other texts used for this study. At the same time, having been written by the subject's son, we can expect a high level of subjectivity. This is helpful when analyzing the author's focal point or perspective when describing the historical events that affected him and his family directly.

The story is set mainly in Rouaisset en Naaman, a village in the Shuf, in Mount Lebanon. It was in this village where the author's mother, Habuba, was born.

4.3.2. Marun Ghosen (1880-1940)[138]

Father Marun Ghosen (Marūn Ghuṣn) was born in Beirut in 1880, where he studied in the School of the Jesuit Fathers and other missionary schools. He was ordained a priest in 1907, and appointed pastoral director of al-Hikme School for four years. He dedicated his life to education, and he taught in some schools, such as the School of the Jesuits Fathers, where he stayed 18 years, teaching oratory and rhetoric.

Apart from the works analyzed in this study, he has other works, among them: *Salwa's Garden* (*Bustān al-Salwā*) (1911), *al-'Uthmāniyyāt* (1916), *The life and death of languages. The colloquial* (*Ḥayāt al-lughāt wa mawtuhā: al-lugha al-'āmiyya*) (1925), *Studying and researching/reading* (*Dars wa Muṭāla'a*) (1925). Also, he published poems in different media, as *The glory of Lebanon* (*Majd Lubnān*), published in the thirties, and a poem about the Lebanese Phalanges, published in 1937.

Maroun Ghosen has several works written during the mandate period, two of them novels: *The Blessing After the Curse* (*al-Baraka ba'da al-La'na*) and *The Son's Defense of his Father's Honor* (*Difā' al-ibn 'an Sharaf Abīhi*). Both of them were published in 1927 by the Catholic Press in Beirut, and it seems that they were also written close to that date. What is unclear is which novel precedes the other. Only the first one mentions historical events, while the other tries to transmit an "eternal" message, avoiding mentioning places or dates.

In the introduction of *The Blessing After the Curse*, the author presents his work with the following words:

---

[138] The details of the brief biography of Marun Ghosen were taken from William Al-Khāzin: *al-Shi'r wa al-Waṭaniyya fī Lubnān wa al-Bilād al-'arabiyya : min maṭla' al-nahḍa ilā 'ām 1939* (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1979), 507. The works were also taken from the online catalogue of the American University of Beirut libraries.

هذه رواية لبنانية، عصرية. تصوّرنا وقوع حوادثها في ميروبا وبيروت. تحبّبُ
إلينا أرض الجدود، وتُرينا ما في لعنة الأب لبنيه من وخيم العاقبة؛ وتعلّمنا أن لا راحة
للبنين في هذه الدنيا، ولا هناء حقيقي، إلا ببركة الوالدين.

*This is a contemporary Lebanese novel, (which) we imagined its events happening
in Mayrouba and Beirut. It makes us love the land of our forefathers and it shows us that
the father's curse towards his son is of terrible consequences. And we learnt that there is
no rest in this world for the sons or true happiness if it is not with their parents' blessing.*

And the *The Son's Defense of his Father's Honor* is dedicated to:

إلى الأبناء الأبرار أقدّم روايتي هذه، فيرون فيها مثال الدفاع عن شرف الآباء.

*I present this novel to the devoted sons, so they can see in it an example of the
defense of their parents' honor.*

Both works have a strong moral message. In fact, that is the main purpose of the

novels. We cannot forget that their author is a priest, and all events in the novels have the

objective of teaching and transmitting Christian values. For this reason, most of the details

that surround the main events which carry the messages in the novel are put on a secondary

level by the author.

The first novel, *The Blessing After the Curse*, the events are set between Mayrouba

and Beirut, as mentioned in the introduction. Mayrouba is a village 38 km from Beirut in

the area of Keserouane, in the mountains. It appears that the novel was inspired by a true

story, because of the use of the first-person singular at the end of the narration:

ولما غابت الشمس، كان العروسان واقفين أمام مائدة عليها الإنجيل والصليب،
وحولهما الشموع مضاءة؛ ويوسف ويوسفية وبنوهما، وأبو العروس وأهلها مغتبطون
سرورا؛ والكهنة وبينهم الأب بولس، أخو سليم، وعليهم الملابس البيعية، وهم يتلون صلاة
العرس. **فنظرتُ** إلى وجه "سليم" **فرأيتُ** أن آثار تلك اللعنة قد أمحت، وحلّت مكانها أنوارُ
بركة الأب على بنيه.

*And the sun set, the bridal couple stood in front of a table with the Gospel and the
cross, surrounded by lighted candles; Yusef, Yusufiyya and his children, the father of the
bride and her family, full of happiness; and the priests – among them Father Bulus, Selim's*

77

*brother – wearing liturgical garments, saying the marriage prayer. **I looked** at "Selim's" face and **I saw** that the traces of that curse had been erased, the lights of the father blessing over his son occupying its place.* (M.G. I p. 95)

In the second novel, however, the author avoids mentioning any name, whether city, village, or river:

إنطلقت إلى المدينة ...، واشترت، هناك، في ضواحي القرية ...، على ضفات النهر ...، منزلا ضغيرا، يدعى "البيت الأخضر"، لكثرة الأشجار المحيطة به.

He went to the city ..., and she bought there, in the suburbs of the village ..., next to the banks of the river..., a small house named "The green house" because of the high amount of trees surrounding it.[139] (M.G. II p. 10)

This ambiguity serves the purpose of the universality of the message transmitted in the novel. This intention of universality and non-temporal validity prevents the author from mentioning contemporary events or elements that can divert the reader from the main purpose of the texts. This will limit the usefulness of this text for the purpose of the analysis, but it will still be the source of many interesting quotations.

4.3.3. Marun Abbud (1886-1062)[140]

Marun Abbud was born February 9, 1886, in Ain Kfaa, near Byblos, in Mount Lebanon. His parents, Hanna and Katrina, were both children of priests, Father Yuhanna Abbud and Father Musa Abbud. He received his primary education in schools in his home village or near his home village, and he was finally sent in 1900 to Saint Yuhanna Marun School in al-Batrun, where his family intended him to start his preparation to become a priest. He stayed in that school for four years, during which time he started publishing some of his poems in *al-Rawda* newspaper. He refused to continue the religious career, however.

---

[139] The dots appear in the original text.
[140] The biography was mainly taken from One Fine Arts web page: http://onefineart.com/en/artists/marounabboud/index.shtml.

After that, he spent two years in al-Hikme School in Beirut, where he met some students who were to become important literary figures in the country, such as Rashid and Ahmad Taqi al-Din, and Sa'id Aql.

Abbud started his professional career in 1907 as an editor for *al-Rawda* newspaper and as a teacher in a school in Beirut. The following year, he moved to *al-Nasir* newspaper to work as an editor and started working too as a teacher at Saint Joseph College. Due to ideological clashes between *al-Nasir* newspaper and the Maronite authorities, he had to leave his work in the schools since both were directed by Maronite clergy. Later, he also left his work as editor in Beirut and returned to Byblos in 1909, where he started working as an editor for *al-Hikme* newspaper and as a teacher. He was obliged to leave Byblos at the beginning of the First World War, staying in his home village until 1923, when he moved to Alaye to teach Arabic language and literature at the National School. He stayed in this post until 1957. He retired from teaching in 1959 because of health problems, moving to Junieh, where he stayed until his death in 1962.

During his life, Abbud wrote many works, mainly in fictional and non-fictional prose: short stories, novels and literary criticism. Among them, we find *Faces and Stories* (published in 1945), *Giants' Dwarfs* (1948), *Pioneers of the New Renaissance* (1952), *The Red Prince* (1953), or *Village Stories* (1957).

Among all the collection of short stories written by Marun Abbud, only the first one, *Faces and Stories* (*Wujūh wa Ḥikāyāt)*, can be included in this study. This collection, the first collection of short stories written by the author, was published in 1945, therefore after independence. However, many indications point to the fact that the stories were written

before that year, and if not all, at least the majority of them. The stories included in this collection are:

1. Dayim Dayim (دايم دايم)
2. Teacher (معلم)
3. Jabbur Bek (جبور بك)
4. The Village's Goatherd (معّاز الضيعة)
5. People (الناس)
6. Jean Effendi (جان أفندي)
7. Umm Lattuf (أم لطّوف)
8. A Strange Face (وجه غريب)
9. The Sunday of Resurrection Sermon (موعظة القيامة)
10. A Generous Thief (لصّ جوّاد)
11. The Deputy's Prayer (صلاة نائب)
12. Umm Nakhkhul (أم نخّول)
13. A Sermon and a Chicken (وعظة وديك)
14. A Vigilant Face (وجه مقيت)
15. The Emigrant (مهاجرة)
16. Blow, blow! (نفّخ نفّخ)

Of the sixteen stories, only the last one can be said to belong to the post-independence period. "Blow, blow!," set around Jesus' birth, starts with the following sentence:

منذ ألف وتسعمائة وأربع وأربعين سنة وقعت حوادث قصّة الليلة

The events of this story happened 1944 years ago… (M.A. p. 196)

This means that this story was most likely written in that year, in 1944. There is another story that gives us enough data to place it in the year it was written. Story number 8, "A Strange Face," starts with the following sentence:

في ميلاد الأربعين يبلغ عدد ميلادي أربعة وخمسين

In the beginning of the Lent period, my age reaches 54 (M.A. p. 108)

80

Abbud was born in February 9, 1886. February 9 can easily coincide with the beginning of the Lent period, and assuming that he wrote this story when he was 54 or about to reach this age, this story was written 54 years after his birth in 1886, that is, in 1940. We can then assume that most of the stories of the collection were written before 1943.

All the stories have a very strong, realistic character. The only exception is the last one, "Blow, blow!," in which the main characters are the ox and the mule that were present during the nativity of Jesus. This story was written during the Second World War and, as happened with Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad's stories written during this period, the story mixes real and unreal scenes. The main ideas come from inside the characters and not from outside circumstances. None of the other stories share this characteristic, apart from "People;" this story is also an internal, personal reflection of the author about the role and influence of people on someone's life.

Most of the stories are set in a small village, with the exception of "People" (5), "A Strange Face" (8) and "A Vigilant Face" (14), which are apparently set in a city or big village; "A Generous Thief" (10), which is set in New York; "The Deputy's Prayer" (11), which is set in the city; and "Blow, blow!" that, as said above, is set in Bethlehem the year Jesus was born.

The line that separates reality and fiction in Marun Abbud's stories is blurred. Marun Abbud himself seems to have an active role in many stories whose events are told as the narrator; he is identified as the author and seems to witness them. Therefore, it is not clear at which point the stories can be considered fictional or, looking from the other perspective, how much truth there is in what appears to be a real story. Whatever the case, the narrative follows the short-story structure and, in the complete works of the author, is

81

classified as such, so there is no reason to exclude this collection from the bulk of fictional short stories written in Lebanon before independence.

4.3.4. Michel Selim Shibli (1897-1962)[141]

Michel Shibli was born in Dakkoun (Daqqun), in the Aley district. He was known as an historian, lawyer, man of letters, and journalist. He studied in al-Hikme School from 1909 to 1914, after which he entered the French Law Institute in 1919, obtaining a law degree in 1922. He worked in the law office of Emile Eddeh, and both men maintained their friendship throughout their lives. He also had a strong relationship with Michel Chiha.

Shibli wrote multiple articles in numerous newspapers, including *al-Jarida*, *al-Barq*, *al-Bashir*, *al-Ma'rad*, *L'Orient* and *Le Jour*, both in Arabic and in French. He also published various works, including *al-Muhājara al-Lubnāniyya* (1927), and *al-Yūbīl al-Dhahabī lī-madrasa al-Ḥikma* (1926), in Arabic; and *Fakhredinne II Maan, Prince du Liban* (1946), and *Une histoire du Liban á l'Epoque des Emirs, 1635-1841* (1955) in French.

The Oak's Hill (*Tall al-Sindiyāna*) is the only known novel by Michel Shibli. The introduction is signed in Dfoun, August 13, 1938, and the novel was published by Sader Press in Beirut the same year, so we may assume that it was finished shortly before its publication. The book is dedicated to the author's father, the priest Yusuf Shibli.

The novel narrates the story of a man of Lebanese origin, Jamil, who emigrated to Brazil in his youth and who decides to go back to his home country in 1919 due to a serious illness. A doctor in Sao Paulo, the city in which the man has important business, advises

---

[141] For Michel Shibli's biography, see Ḍāghir, *Maṣādir al-Dirāsāt al-Adabiyya,* vol.3 (part 3), 604-4. Some of the data was taken from Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East*, 164.

him to travel somewhere with good weather, and the man's first choice is his home village al-Kafir in Keserouane region. Back in the village, he builds a house in *Tall al-Sindiyana*, a piece of land inherited from his parents. He meets old acquaintances, mainly the priest of the village, Father Musa, and Jamil's old girlfriend, still single. He also confronts old enemies, led by Fad'us al-Safi and his son Salum, local leaders and sources of corruption, both in the previous Ottoman period and in the recently created French mandate. The whole novel, including its happy ending – marriage of Jamil with his first love Warda after his victory over the corrupt local chief, helped by the village priest with the support of the Maronite Patriarch and the French authorities – offers an image of this time period that reflects a clear approach towards the society and its institutions.

4.3.5. Karam Melhem Karam (1903-2003)[142]

Karam Melhem Karam was born in March 5, 1903, in Dayr al-Qamar, in the Shuf. He received his primary education in his home village, and then moved to Junieh at the age of 12 to receive his secondary education. Karam received a degree in Arabic and French from the Antonine Institute in Baabda, becoming familiar with the Arabic classical tradition and French literature, and also being interested in the history of Lebanon.

He dedicated his life to journalism and literature. He published several magazines, among them *Alf layla wa layla* and *al-'Āṣifa*, both during the time of the French Mandate.

Alf Layla wa Layla[143] was a literary magazine first issued in January 1928. Its publication was interrupted during the Second World War, between 1939 and 1945, but then it continued until 1954, at this time when it reached its 1,002ⁿᵈ issue. It was dedicated

---

[142] The biography was taken from Ilyās Nāṣīf: *al-Ṣaḥāfī Karam Mulḥim Karam wa al-Ḥaya al-Siyāsiyya wa al-Ijtimā'iyya fī Lubnān min khilāl maqālātihi fī majalla al-'āsifa*, (Beirut: s.n.,1993), 23-30.
[143] For more details about this magazine, see Nasif, *al-Sahafi Karam MilhimKaram*, 53-65.

to the publication of stories, both translation and original productions, and many of the most important writers of the time contributed to the magazine. According to his own words about the literary renaissance that took place in the area, Karam wrote in the editorial of the last issue: "Had it not been for *Alf Layla wa Layla* magazine, this Arabic short story renaissance would not have happened."[144]

Karam Melhem Karam has two long stories that were written before independence in 1945. The stories are *Father Antun (Būnā Anṭūn)*, published in its entirety in 1937, and *The Cry of Pain* (*Ṣarkhat al-Alam*), published in 1938, both in his own publishing house *Alf Layla wa Layla*. These stories have a strong romantic character, especially the first one. *Father Antun* is the story of a corrupted priest whose physical desires rule over his spiritual role. His obsession for a married woman makes him try to ruin the woman's marriage and, finally, it destroys him. *The Cry of Pain* is the story of a girl who is misled by a man after he promised her marriage, but who turned out to be a married man that abandons her after a single night encounter. The girl, because of internal remorse and external pressures, ends up committing suicide. Contrary to most of the other texts, these novels have their main setting in the city, providing valuable additional information about life in the city of Beirut, which had recently become Lebanese.

4.3.6. Salah Labaki (1906-1955)

Salah Labaki was born August 8, 1906, in Sau Paulo, Brazil, but he moved to Lebanon when he was only two years old. He studied law at the French Institute of Law in Beirut, and he worked as a lawyer. Interested in politics, he was member of Saade's Syrian Social Nationalist Party, and he participated in many of his political activities, including the

---

[144] In the original: (لولا مجلة ألف ليلة وليلة، لم تكن هذه النهضة في القصة العربية). Ibid. 54.

Coast Conference of 1936. Labaki wrote also in many newspapers, as *al-Bashir*, *al-Hadith*, *al-'Amal* and *al-Huda*. He was the director of *Ahl al-Qalam* association in 1953, and he presided over the first conference of Arab writers, celebrated in Bayt Mary in 1954. He died in Beirut in 1955.

Salah Labaki is better known as a poet. His most famous works in poetry are: *Urjūḥat al-Qamar* (1937), *Mawā'id* (1944), *Sa'am* (1948), *Ghuraba'* (p.1956), and *Ḥanīn* (p.1961). He also has two works in prose: *From the Deepest of the Mountain* (*Min A'māq al-Jabal*) (1945) and *Lebanon the Poet* (*Lubnān al-Shā'ir*) (1954).

The worked analyzed in this study is *From the Deepest of the Mountain*, a collection of stories that link a number of myths and legends of old times with the Lebanese mountains. The collection was first published in 1945, that is, after independence, but it seems from some parts of the text that it was written during the Second World War. Therefore, some of the stories may have been written before 1943. In the story "The Poet and the Devil," the demon tells the poet the following fragment:

أفلا تسمع بما يحدث اليوم في أوروبا والشرق البعيد؟ أنا مرتاح، مرتاح جدا فهؤلاء الأقوام فقدوا النور وها هم يتخيلون في سبيل التنكيل بعضهم بالبعض الأخر ما لم يخطر لي ببال بعد أن مرغوا انسانيتهم في الوحول.

Aren't you hearing what is happening today in Europe and in the Far East? I am comfortable, very comfortable. Those people lost the light and they are imagining ways that never occurred to me in order to harm each other, splashing his humanity on the mud. (S.L. p. 45)

Japan entered the Second World War on December 7, 1941, with the attack on Pearl Harbor. This paragraph is, then, written between this date and 1944, and it can be assumed that the other stories were also written also around that time.

85

Salah Labaki is known by his poems more than by his prose compositions and, in fact, the stories could be included inside the poetical prose, moving away from other texts included in this analysis. The themes and topics are also very different from the other texts. They do not have realistic character as the others have and they are far removed from the daily life of people. As stated above, they relate legends that link several places in the Lebanese mountains with events whose main characters are taken from ancient civilizations' mythologies. Some of these characters are the ancient gods Baal, Minerva or Baal Marcad, Adonis, and Astarte, and some others are even characters taken from the Bible, such as Cain and Abel. They also include model characters like "the poet" who interacts with evil forces materialized in the character of the "demon."

The fact that most of the stories are set in old civilizations greatly limits a parallel analysis with the other stories. However, the image presented of Lebanon is very useful for this study and also other aspects such as the differences between the costal cities and the mountains, which have many parallels with the differences between life in Beirut and life in the mountains as appear in the other texts.

4.3.7. Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad (1911-1988)[145]

Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad was born November 28, 1911, in Bharsaf, in Metn, Mount Lebanon. He was the son of Yusuf Daher, an architect and constructor, and of Mariam Sama'an al-Hajj Butrus, from Saqiya al-Misk, next to Bharsaf.[146] He knew the Ottoman occupation and its consequences during his childhood, during the period of the First World

---

[145] This biography was taken from: Tawfiq Y. Awwad, *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmila*. (Beirut: Maktaba Lubnan, 1987).
[146] His novel *The Loaf* is mainly set in his mother village, Saqia al-Misk.

War, and this greatly influenced his literary production.[147] He studied his primary education in Bhersaf, Saqia al-Misk and Bikfayia, and then his father sent him to Beirut to study in Saint Joseph School. There, he studied with Father Rafael Nakhla, who had a major influence over him. Before he finished his secondary education, he translated two novels from French to Arabic, signing only with his initials (ع ت).

Awwad started his professional life in 1927 in Beirut, as a writer for several newspapers. After a while and because of his father's insistence, he went back to the mountains to work in a construction materials business. The business did not succeed, so he went back to Beirut to work as an Arabic teacher and to continue writing in several publications. In 1928 he started working at *al-Barq* newspaper, owned by Bishara al-Khuri. There he worked with the poet al-Akhtal al-Saghir, in whose home he met other literati such as Khalil Mutran, Ilyas Abu Shabaka and Ibrahim Tuqan. He worked also at *al-Nida'* newspaper, founded by Kazim al-Sulh. There, he started writing short stories under the pseudonym *Hammad*.

In 1931, Awwad started working in *al-Bayraq* newspaper, directed by As'ad 'Aql. He wrote several articles about traditions and customs in the Lebanese villages. He was sent to Damascus as a correspondent that same year. There, he also studied law and, in 1933, married Hortense Bishara Khadij, daughter of a Lebanese merchant established in Damascus. He went back to Beirut that year to work as chief publisher of *al-Rashid* newspaper. Later, he moved to *al-Nahar* newspaper, called by Jibran Tuweyni, and he started publishing daily editorials called *al-Nahariyyat* under the pseudonym *Hammad*. He worked at *al-Nahar* for eight years.

---

[147] The clearest example of this influence is his first novel, *The Loaf*.

During the 1930s, he participated in a literary movement centered around *al-Makshuf* magazine, where he published articles, poems, and short stories, and he became one of the leaders of the movement. In 1936, he published his first collection of short stories, *The Lame Boy* (*al-Ṣabī al-A'raj*), followed by *The Woolen Shirt* (*Qamīṣ al-Ṣūf*) in 1937 and the novel *The Loaf* (*al-Raghīf*) in 1939.

In 1941, he was imprisoned for a month in 'Ashqut Monastery, in Keserouane, together with other journalists, accused of collaborating with the Allied forces of General Charles DeGaulle. That same year, he left *al-Nahar* newspaper to start a new weekly publication, *al-Jadid* magazine, in which many important writers of the time collaborated. The publication had a strong nationalist tendency, being against the French Mandate and for independence. In 1944, Awwad published his third collection of short stories, *The Virgins* (*al-'Adhārā*).

After independence, he began a diplomatic career, and he worked in Argentina, Iran, Spain, Egypt, Mexico, Japan, and Italy. He continued publishing, mainly after 1962, and wrote in several newspapers. His most famous work after independence was *Beirut's Mills*[148] (*Tawāḥīn Bayrūt*), written in 1969 but not published until 1973.[149] He died in 1988 during the Lebanese Civil War, while having dinner in the Spanish Embassy in Beirut, when a bomb fell into the embassy building.

The main fictional works written by Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad during the mandate period and that are analyzed in this study are:

- *The Lame Boy* (الصبيّ الأعرج) (first collection of short stories) - 1936

---

[148] This novel was translated in English under the title of "Death in Beirut", published in 1976.

[149] Awwad has a peculiar characteristic: the two main novels he wrote were written and published just before two main wars. The first one, *The Loaf*, was published right before the beginning of the Second World War, in 1939. His second novel, *Beirut's Mills*, was published in 1973, two years before the beginning of the Lebanese Civil War, which lasted for 15 years.

- *The Woolen Shirt* (قميص الصوف) (second collection of short stories) - 1937

- *The Loaf* (الرغيف) (first novel) - 1939

- *The Virgins* (العذارى) (third collection of short stories) - 1944

In total, Awwad wrote 30 short stories and a novel.

The stories may be divided between those whose background is the city – mainly Beirut – and those set in a village, mainly in Mount Lebanon. The first two collections of short stories, together with the novel, have a strong realist character. The stories describe scenes that have a contemporary character, and very few of them are written from a historical perspective. All these stories were written before the Second World War. However, in the third collection, written during the Second World War, the stories mixed real and unreal scenes, internal dialogue with description, surrealist thoughts with souvenirs of the past. The present seems to disappear, and the city is almost absent, excluding the short city scenes included at the end of the collection – not mentioned in the total number of short stories – describing characters and memories of the city. The author seems to escape from the daily events of the time, and his discomfort gets reflected in the stories describing death and life.[150]

Awwad published four volumes of fictional works during this period, three collections of short stories and a novel. The stories will be mentioned many times throughout the analysis; therefore, to avoid mentioning each time to which collection the story belongs and its original title in Arabic, the stories of each collection are listed here

---

[150] It is interesting to find parallels between Awwad's reaction during the time of the Second World War and the DADA movement, born as an artistic reaction against the barbarism of the First World War and its consequences in the society. This movement was followed by surrealism, which started mainly in France around the Second World War. We must remember that Awwad was educated in French schools and that he had both an Arabic and French cultural background.

together with the translation in English. Between brackets, the stories are classified between those that are set in the city (C) and those that are set in the mountains (M):

1936 – (الصبيّ الأعرج) "First Collection of short stories: "The Lame Boy

"The Lame Boy" (الصبيّ الأعرج) (C)
"The Desecrated Graveyard" (المقبرة المدنسة) (M)
"The Winter Rat" (الجرذون الشتويّ) (M)
"The Poet" (الشاعر) (C)
"The Fall" (الهاوية) (M)
"My Grandfather and his Stories" (جدّي وحكاياته) (M)
"The Burned Letters" (الرسائل المحروقة) (C)
"Palm Sunday" (أحد الشعانين) (M)
"Hannun" (حنّون) (C)
"The Widow" (الأرملة) (C)
"Lust for Blood" (شهوة الدمّ) (M)
"Omar Efendi" (عمر أفندي) (C)
"Coffee Sellers" (شقّاء القهوة) (C)
"The Small Carrier" (الحمّال الصغير) (C)

1937 - (قميص الصوف) "Second collection of short stories: "The Wooden Shirt

"The Woolen Shirt" (قميص الصوف) (M)
"The Medal" (الوسام) (C)
"Tuha" (توها) (C)
"Bahiyya" (بهية) (C)
"Kamil the Comrade" (الرفيق كامل) (C)
"Carajo!" (كاراخو) (M)
"The Death Document/Certificate" (ميثاق الموت) (X)

First novel "The Loaf" (الرغيف) (mainly M) – 1939

1944 – (العذارى) "Third collection of short stories: "The Virgins

"The Virgins" (العذارى) (M)
"The Spouse" (القرينة) (M/C)
"The Country of Gold" (بلاد الذهب) (M)
"The Schoolteacher" (المعلّم) (M)
"A Tomb for a Mother" (قبر أمّ) (M)
"The First Bill of change" (الكمبيالة الأولى) (M)

90

"al-Arbain" (الأربعون) (M)

"The Toast of Dead People" (نحت الموتى) (M)

4.3.8. Literary Movements related to the Analyzed Texts

The texts analyzed in this study were written in a period of less than twenty years. However, their character and themes vary noticeably from one another, and they parallel literary movements present in Western countries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism and Surrealism.

Romanticism originated in Europe in the middle of the eighteenth century, and it lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century.[151] The movement began as a reaction against the Enlightenment and the social reality produced by the industrial revolution. Artists of the Romantic Movement opposed rationality with emotions and industrialization and modernization of the society with a return to nature and to the local customs and traditions. This return to the land and the emphasis on ancient traditions were fundamental parts of the nationalistic movements.

The economic and social situation of eighteenth-century Europe was similar to that of Lebanon of the nineteenth century. In Lebanon, the feudal economy lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century and the industrialization of the society did not begin until the first four of five decades of the nineteenth century. From the second half of the nineteenth century to the first decade of the twentieth century, Lebanese society witnessed

---

[151] Most of the information about Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism and Surrealism was taken from *Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature* (Springfield, Mass: Merriam-Webster, c.1995).

economic growth due mainly to the weaving industry and the expansion of trade.[152] As happened in the European Romantic Movement, this industrialization in Lebanon paralleled literary works that reflected a preference for nature and traditional values and customs. Marun Abbud's collection of short stories clearly reflects this phenomenon, with its emphasis on traditional life in the village and the description of local customs. Marun Ghosen's two novels also reveal a reaction against industrialization, and the two novels favor the village over the city, giving nature and the land an important role in the life of the individual.

Realism and Naturalism followed Romanticism. These two movements occupied the second half of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth century, and they were born as a reaction against the imaginative idealization and artificiality of Romanticism. Journalism and its representation of real events were among the elements that promoted the Realist Movement. While Romanticism focused on the hero and the exceptional person, Realism and Naturalism focused on the average person, belonging mainly to the middle and lower classes. Realist works included moral judgments over the characters but, in Naturalism, the characters are seen as product of their internal instincts and outside social and economical conditions. Most of the texts analyzed in this study belong to these two movements. Karam Melhel Karam and Michel Shibli's texts have an undoubtedly realist character, and Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad's first two collections of short stories belong to the Naturalist movement. Even Marun Ghosen and Marun Abbud's works have elements belonging to Realism, especially the authors' preference towards the average person.

---

[152] See Paul Saba, "The Creation of the Lebanese Economy – Economic Growth in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *Essays in the Crisis in Lebanon*, edited by Roger Owen (London: Ithaca, 1976), 1-32.

The horrors of First World War and the Second World War influenced the artistic life that emerged since the second decade of the twentieth century. Dadaism and Surrealism are the most famous of these movements. Dadaism originated in Europe during the First World War as a negation of reality; Surrealism developed out of Dadaism also as a reaction against the social and political realities that had provoked the great wars. Lebanon suffered both wars, and some literary works since the thirties have a surrealist nature that reflects this reaction against rationalism and reality. Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad's last collection of short stories, *The Virgins*, and Marun Abbud's last story in the analyzed collection have a strong surrealist character. Maron Abbud's last story was set in Bethlehem, and the mule and the ox that witnessed Jesus' birth were the main characters of the story. Most stories of Awwad's *The Virgins* had their focal point inside the characters, and the link with reality was often blurred.

<p style="text-align:center">**************</p>

In the forth coming sections, the fragments of the texts quoted will be followed by the author initial and a page number, which relates to the edition used for the analysis. In the cases where an author has more than one text and they are taken from different books, the initials will be followed by a number corresponding to each reference. This is:

T.A. – Tawfīq Yūsuf Awwād: *Al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmila*. Beirut: Maktaba Lubnān, 1987.

M.A. – Marūn Abbūd: *Wujūh wa Ḥikāyāt*, Dār Marūn Abbūd, ed, year unknown.

M.G. 1 – Mārūn Ghuṣn: *al-Baraka ba'da al-La'na*, Beirut: Catholic Press, 1927.

M.G. 2 – Mārūn Ghuṣn: *Difā' al-ibn 'an Sharaf Abīhi*, Beirut: Catholic Press, 1927.

K.K. 1 – Karam Mulḥim Karam: *Būnā Anṭūn*. Beirut: Matabi' Alf Layla wa Layla, 1939.

K.K. 2 – Karam Mulḥim Karam: *Ṣarkhat al-Alam*. Beirut: Dar al-Nahar, ed. 2003.

L.K. – Laḥad Khāṭir: *Ḥabūba Khāṭir*, Beirut: Catholic Press, 1933.

S.L. – Ṣalāḥ Labakī: *Min A'māq al-Jabal*, Beirut: Manshūrāt Dār al-Makshūf, 1945.

M.S. – Mīshāl Shiblī: *Tall al- Sindiyāna*, Beirut: Sader Press, 1938.

Chapter 5: National Identity

National identity refers to the level of identification of an individual with a specific nation.[153] However, what seems to be a straightforward statement carries a complex corollary in the form of a question: what is a nation? As mentioned in Chapter II, defining a nation is a very controversial issue with many different approaches. The disagreement does not come when questioning the existence of nations, but when trying to identify the nations' components. Ernest Renan's concept of nation as a kind of solidarity, as "a soul" and "a desire to live together,"[154] diverged from other concepts of nation, such as the ones defined by the German Maximilian Weber or the Russian Joseph Stalin. Stalin defined the nation as "a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture."[155] Weber orients his definition of nation to the political side, linking directly the concept of nation with that of state.[156] The divergences come, then, on the emphasis given to a particular element inside the nation, whether political, cultural or ideological.

Another controversial issue is the academic approaches to the nation and the different theories of nationalism. As mentioned also in Chapter II, the authors that are more referenced nowadays are Benedict Anderson, with his concept of nation as an imagined

---

[153] This definition was directly inspired by the definition of ethnic identity given by Anthony Smith and John Hutchinson in their work *Ethnicity* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 5.

[154] Renan, Ernest: *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation* (Paris: Calmann-Levi, 1882), p.26. Quoted in John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 18.

[155] Franklin, Bruce ed., *The Essential Stalin: Major Theoretical Writings 1905-1952* (London: Croom Helm, 1973) (quoted in Hutchinson and Smith, *Nationalism*, 20)

[156] Gerth and Wright-Mills: *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1948) (quoted in Hutchinson and Smith, *Nationalism*, 25)

community; Anthony Smith with his ethnic approach to the formation of nations; and Eric

Hobsbawm and his concept of nation as invented tradition.[157]

   In the case of Lebanon, it has already been mentioned that Ernest Renan's view of the

nation supported the creation of the State of Greater Lebanon better than other views. When

establishing the new state, the feeling of belonging to a nation was more important than the

need to share certain cultural element, such as language or religion. Among the different

theories about the creation of nations, the ethnic approach of Anthony Smith seems to apply

better for the Lebanese case, as mentioned in Chapter IV in the discussion of the

Phoenician revival. The State of Greater Lebanon can be seen as the product of the

attributes of the ethnic community that Smith mentions in his work[158] (a collective proper

name, a myth of common ancestry, shared historical memories, one or more differentiating

elements of common culture, an association with a specific 'homeland,' and a sense of

solidarity for significant sectors of the population) together with a certain level of political

organization and defined borders.

       This chapter will analyze the above defined attributes of the nation in the Lebanese

context, and it will challenge their actual presence in the society during the Mandate period,

as it is reflected in the texts. The analysis will focus first on Lebanon, questioning its

validity as a collective proper name applied to all citizens and all territories inside the

borders of Greater Lebanon. The analysis will also study the myth of common ancestry, in

this case, the revival of Phoenicia. The last two sections will be related to the issues of the

association with a homeland - through the analysis of terms such as *homeland*, *country* and

---

[157] See *Nationalism*, by Hutchinson and Smith, for a summary of all these approaches.
[158] Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 21.

state, and the feeling of solidarity among the members of the nation through the clash between two different territorial areas: the mountains and the cities.

The analysis will prove that:

1. Despite the establishment of the State of Greater Lebanon, *Lebanon* continues to be associated mainly with nature and, more specifically, with the geographical region of Smaller Lebanon. Therefore, the *limites naturelles* described by the French authorities when defining the state did not correspond with the borders of the Lebanon that people had in mind in 1920.

2. The revival of Phoenicia was not fully assimilated at the beginning of the Mandate period. The texts will show that some writers still portray it as imposed by outside sources.

3. There is no exclusive correlation between Lebanon and the concepts of *watan*, *balad* / *bilad* and *dawla*. Lebanon is rarely linked to *bilad* and to *dawla*, and only once throughout the texts appears directly linked to *watan*: in the speech of a politician.

4. Based upon the clash between mountain and city, national unity from the moral perspective is completely absent. This may not imply the lack of national unity from the territorial perspective, or even the lack of solidarity between the members of the two milieus, but the writers present the coastal cities and the mountain areas as belonging to different regions, with different history and heritage.

Following the above objectives and results, the chapter will be divided into four sections. First of all, the analysis will focus on what the authors understand when they refer to "Lebanon," and to which territorial surface they are referring when they mention it. Secondly, the revival of Phoenicia will be analyzed through the texts, determining the stage

of the revival during the Mandate period, and how much it was considered part of the national past at that point. Thirdly, the terms *balad/bilad*, *watan*, and *dawla* will be located in the texts, and the analysis will focus on what they refer to when the author mentions them, and how much surface they cover. Finally, mountain areas and big urban cities were united for the first time in Greater Lebanon, becoming a single, recognized political entity. These two regions had been separated until then, and the natural clash between rural and urban areas was amplified by their recent union in a single state. This last part of the section will analyze the clash between mountain and city, examining whether it is described as an internal conflict within a country, or as a clash between two independent beings.

5. 1. Lebanon

What is Lebanon? What do the authors mean when they name it? To which territorial surface does it refer when it is mentioned? Is "Lebanon" "Greater Lebanon," or is it still "Smaller Lebanon?" This section addresses these questions, trying to clarify the degree of acceptance of the state's new borders during the Mandate period. Even if the authors wrote the texts after the establishment of Greater Lebanon, all of them were born before that time, under very different political circumstances. All writers mention in their texts the noun *Lebanon* or the adjective *Lebanese* in some way or another. The issue, then, is not the existence of Lebanon by itself, but its meaning for the writers.

The following analysis will show that there is a clear distinction between political Lebanon with its established political borders, and the area that seems to be referred to by *Lebanon* in the different texts. It will also show that, despite the fact that the texts were written after 1920, many writers still associate Lebanon more or less with the surface of Mount Lebanon or Smaller Lebanon, which corresponds essentially with the area of the *Mutasarrifiyya,* including at times some coastal cities. This association to a surface smaller

than the surface of Greater Lebanon is deduced from the various references to nature –

which correspond to Mount Lebanon and the coast – or by the some events mentioned. This

"unconscious" smaller surface contradicts what the French authorities described as the

"natural borders" of Lebanon, "recovered" with the establishment of the State of Greater

Lebanon in 1920.

5. 1.1. Lebanon before 1920

Lahad Khater, one of the oldest authors in the group, wrote in 1914 his *Mukhtasir*

Tarikh Lubnan (Summary of the History of Lebanon), a textbook for school students.[159]

The book is structured in groups of questions and answers, covering a physical description

of Lebanon, a portrayal of its inhabitants, their customs and traditions, and a review of its

ancient and modern history. In the section entitled "Geography of Lebanon," the author

presents the following description of what he defines as "present Lebanese borders:"

<div dir="rtl">

(15) ما هي حدود لبنان الحالية؟
حدوده الحالية شرقًا أقضية البقاع وبعلبك وحمص التابعة ولاية سوريا وجنوبًا
أقضية صيدا ومرجعيون من ولاية بيروت وحاصبيا من ولاية سوريا وغربًا البحر
المتوسط ومدينتا بيروت وطرابلس وشمالا لواء طرابلس ونحن نقصر الكلام هنا على
البلاد الواقعة ضمن هذه الحدود[160].

</div>

(15) What are the present borders of Lebanon?
Its present borders are: to the East, the provinces of the Biqa', Ba'albak and Hums,
belonging to the province of Syria; to the South, the provinces of Sidon and Marja'uyun of
the province of Beirut, and Hasbaya of the province of Syria; to the West, the
Mediterranean Sea and the cities of Beirut and Tripoli; and to the North, the province
Tripoli, and we refer with this word here to the lands that fall inside this borders.

At the beginning of the First World War, Lahad Khater's idea of Lebanon's borders

differed from the borders that would be established six years later. It was even far from the

---

[159] This text was not included in the table among the analyzed works of Lahad Khater because it is not a fictional prose work but a textbook for students, and because it was written before 1920.
[160], Lahad Sa'b Khater, *Mukhtasir Tarikh Lubnan li-Talaba-t al-Madaris 'ala Uslub Jadid* (Beirut: Yusuf Sadir Scientific Press, 1914), 9-10.

Lebanon presented by George Samne in his work *La Syrie*, published in 1920, following

the map drawn by the French expeditionary team in 1860. Khater's description corresponds

to the borders of the Mutasarrifiyya established in 1860. It is interesting to notice that in his

description of the Lebanese borders, he defines areas that would be later included in

Lebanon as part of the vilayet of Syria. Homs, Ba'albak, the Biqa', and Hasbaya are all

addressed as being part of the same territory, none of them belonging to Lebanon, but to the

Syrian vilayet. This description should not be taken as evidence of the author's inflexible

idea of Lebanese extension. He is conscious of the changing character of Lebanese borders

through history:

لم تكن حدود لبنان واحدة أطوار التاريخ لكنها اتسعت تارة وأضاقت أخرى متغيرة
بتغير الظروف ونزعات الكتّاب والشعوب السائدة عليه حتى أصبح تعيين تلك التغييرات
من المطالب الصعبة على الباحثين[161].

The borders of Lebanon were not one through history, but expanded sometimes and narrowed sometimes, depending on the changing circumstances, and the tendencies of the bureaucrats and the communities ruling over it, to the point that the identification of these changes are among the difficult tasks for the researchers.

5.1.2. Three Different *Lebanons*

Therefore, according to the changing character of the Lebanese borders, there are

three different Lebanons that need to be acknowledged when analyzing the texts: the

Lebanon before 1920, corresponding mainly with the area of the Mutasarrifiyya; Greater

Lebanon, with its defined borders of 1920; and, what matters the most in this analysis, the

perceived, unconscious Lebanon as reflected in the writings after 1920. As mentioned

above, the "unconscious" Lebanon is normally smaller than Greater Lebanon, even in the

text written lately in the Mandate, twenty years after the establishment of Greater Lebanon.

---

[161] Ibid., 9.

5.1.3. Lebanon Smaller than Greater Lebanon: Abbud.

Moving to the analysis with information taken directly from the texts, the first evidence of the "reduced Lebanon" is extracted from Marun Abbud's collection of short stories, *Wujuh wa Hikawat*. Abbud, whose stories were published later than almost all other texts, was already 34 years old at the time of the beginning of the Mandate period. He set most of his stories in a time before the First World War, that is, prior to the creation of Greater Lebanon.[162] His references to "Lebanon" then apply approximately to territories inside the borders of Smaller Lebanon, and even Beirut sometimes seems to fall outside this area. The noun Lebanon and its correspondent adjective are not mentioned very often in his texts. One of the few examples occurs when he alludes to the period of the "International Lebanon:"

كان مديرية جبيل – على عهد لبنان الدولي – أغلى المديريات مهرًا، لجودة مناخها وجود أهلها

The administrative district of Byblos was, in the period of the "International Lebanon," the most valuable district in term of its high quality of life standards, its climate and kindness of its people. (M.A. p. 67) (In "Jabbur Bek")

This "International Lebanon" is defined as "that happy era" (ذلك العهد السعيد) a few lines after this passage, reflecting a high degree of subjectivity from the author's perspective. The author's preference for the pre-war period is manifest. Even if the reasons for this preference are not clearly stated in the stories, the stories radiate certain nostalgic feelings that transmit melancholy for the lost past. The melancholy felt for the lost past at all levels may have had the preference for a Smaller Lebanon as one of its consequences.

---

[162] We must remember that Marun Abbud was over 30 in 1920, having lived his childhood and his youth in the time of the Mutasarrifiya. Most of his stories are inspired by his childhood, when he was living in the village. It is logical then that his stories are set in the period before the Mandate period, even if they were written almost at the end on the Mandate.

The dislike of present Lebanon would be, then, a dislike for the present in general, being in that case a consequence and not a cause.

In the story "The Sermon of Resurrection Sunday," the author describes the face of a priest the night from Holy Saturday to the Sunday of Resurrection in the following way:

كنت ترى وجهه يشرق رويدًا رويدًا كجبال لبنان عند دنو طلوع القمر.

You could see his face shinning little by little, as the mountains in Lebanon at the time of the rising of the moon. (M.A. p. 120)

In this second mention of Lebanon, Abbud associates the name of Lebanon with its mountains. The mountains, together with the cedar, are probably one of the most common images associated with Lebanon today, even if they correspond mainly to Mount Lebanon and the northern territories.

5. 1.4. Lebanon Associated with Nature: Labaki, Karam, Shibli

Abbud is not the only author who makes this association. Salah Labaki also uses the mountains as a recurrent image, mentioned constantly when talking about Lebanon. He also mentions the short distance that separates them from the sea. Lebanon is defined then using these two references, the snow-covered mountains and the sea:

...في أنحاء لبنان، فإذا هو "من مرمى الثلج إلى فقش الموج"...

...in Lebanon sides, so here he is "from the place where the snow falls to that where the waves cleave" (S.L. p. 25)

The image only corresponds clearly only with Mount Lebanon and the costal area in the west. Karam Melhem Karam and Michel Shibli have a similar approach:

وكنا جالسين على قمّة من قمم لبنان السواجي، الخرس، وأشجار الصنوبر حولنا كجيش من المظلات تخيم علينا وتكاد تردّ عنا حتى غمزات النجوم. وبيروت في قبضتنا كأنها بساط من نور يتقّد. بل كمرج رحيب صاحت فيه شموع الكهرباء، البحر أمامنا أزرق قاتم يكاد يمتزج بالأفق، فلا يبين.

We were sitting on the calm, silent peaks of Lebanon, and the pine trees stand around us like an army of umbrellas encamping over us, almost hiding the winkles from the stars. And Beirut, it was at our reach, as if it were a carpet of light illuminating, or like a large meadow in which the candles of electricity rejoiced. The sea in front of us was dark blue, almost blending with the horizon, so it did not stand out. (K.K II, p.9)

<div dir="rtl">

ونحن في بيروت، لا في قمم لبنان العالية.

</div>

We are in Beirut, and not in the high peaks of Lebanon. (K.K. II, p. 111)

<div dir="rtl">

ويقوم على قمة رابية الكفير دير مار إلياس تكتنفه أشجار السنديان الوارفة وهو مبني على أنقاض معبد رماني قديم كثر مثله على قمم لبنان

</div>

The Monastery of Saint Elias stands over the pick of the green hill of al-Kafir, surrounded by the green and branchy oak trees. It is built over the ruins of an ancient Roman temple, one of many of its kind that abounds on the picks of Lebanon. (M.S. p. 34)

With these four authors, the association between Lebanon and its mountains is recurrent.

5.1.5. Lebanon as Exclusive Territory: Ghosen, Shibli, Khater

As mentioned in the historical background, one of the first steps in the creation of a state is the existence of a territorial entity, with the feelings of inclusion and exclusion associated with it. Some authors transmit the sense of inclusion through an exclusive association between Lebanon and nature, that seems to distinguish Lebanon from its neighboring regions. In one of Marun Ghosen's novels, the author starts placing the story in space and time with the following description:

<div dir="rtl">

نحن الآن بلبنان، في أحد أيام نيسان، والشمس عند الأصيل، ترسل أنوارًا يشعّ فيها السرور: لأنها أنبتت في لبنان ملايين البذور، وأبرزت في المروج ألوف ألوف الأزهار.

</div>

We are now in Lebanon, one day of April; the sun, while it is setting, is sending light that radiates joy: because it sprouts in Lebanon millions of seeds, and it makes thousands and thousands of flowers rise in the meadows. (M.G. I p. 3)

The beginning of the novel coincides with the beginning of the day. Lebanon is first associated with nature, with a beautiful spring day. There is a feeling of exclusivity, as if the sun and its rays were familiar with the Lebanese borders. This exclusivity, when associated with green vegetation, is linked to the geographical characteristics of the land more than to political borders. Lebanon would have a specific geographic setting, with the image of Lebanon being that of the mountain, with flowers and green trees.

This feeling of exclusivity associated with nature is not exclusive to Ghosen. Michel Shibli, in *The Oak's Hill*, has an émigré go back to his home village after learning that he suffers from a dangerous illness. The doctor advised Jamil, the main character, to go to a place with a more appropriate weather, and Jamil takes the decision of going back to his country:

<div dir="rtl">

ـ لا بدّ لي من هواء لبنان

</div>

- *The air of Lebanon is a necessity for me.* (M.S. p. 23)

There is a permanent sacralization of the natural elements associated with Lebanon, which contrasts with the corruption of the individuals living in the land. The following two examples are also taken from Shibli's novel:

<div dir="rtl">

والآن لقد عدت إلى لبنان بلادي لأجل كل ما هو مقدس تحت سمائه.

</div>

Now I have returned to Lebanon my country for the sake of all that is sacred under its sky. (M.S. p. 38)

<div dir="rtl">

هي الحياة غالبة الموت. هو هواء بلادي وماؤه وسماؤه يعيد إليّ الصحة والأمل... والحب

</div>

It is life defeating death. It is the air, the water, and the sky of my country that has brought me back health, hope… and love (M.S. p. 110)

In the first example, which contains the expression "Lebanon, my country,"[163] nature is again associated with Lebanon. In this case, the author chooses three elements that cannot be easily particularized as occuring with mountains or valleys: air, water and sky. As with Ghosen, there is a sense of exclusivity and, in this case, almost sanctity. Common elements found everywhere have properties that distinguish them from the same elements found somewhere else. Therefore, it is not only the specific geography of the country that provides the land with its superior characteristics, but it is the land itself that makes common elements become superior. This idea is not unusual in the texts, and common elements or attitudes appear as superior just for being Lebanese. A good example of this is found in the introductory page of *Habuba Khater*, where Khater expresses the virtues of Lebanese people despite the apparent limitations of the country:

ولقد كانت هذه البلاد اللبنانية العزيزة رغم ضيق نطاقها وقلة عدد سكّانها وما تحويه من ذرائع الرقي في كل عصر، مظهرا لعدد عديد من المتفوقين والمتفوقات بأخلاقهم وفضائلهم ممن تحق المفاخرة بهم ويخلق النسج على منوالهم.

These beloved Lebanese lands were, despite its narrow surface, and the small number of citizens, and what it contains of means of sophisticated growth in each epoch, a place with great number of superior men and women who had morals and virtues, and who deserve to be proud of, and to be an example that we follow. (L.Kh. p. 3)

According to Lahad Khater, the characteristics of the Lebanese regions are: small surface, small number of citizens, and limited resources for development. Nothing is big or small if not compared to something else, so we can imagine that the author had in mind other geographical areas such as Greater Syria or Egypt. The mention of resources recalls again the image of Smaller Lebanon instead of Greater Lebanon. There is a clear feeling of superiority in the ideas expressed in the paragraph: despite all the apparent inconveniences

---

[163] This expression is similar to one used by Awwad in one of his stories. A detailed analysis of both expressions will appear in section 5.3. "Concepts of Homeland, Country, and State."

of the country in terms of surface and number of citizens, it is able to produce outstanding people, as if outstanding people were something extraordinary, exclusive to the Lebanese territory.

5.1.6. Smaller Lebanon because of its Association with the Past: Abbud, Awwad.

Going back to the the surface associated with Lebanon, Marun Abbud describes the condition of villages during the First World War in the story "A Sermon and a Chicken":

كانت الحرب التي مضت مفترسة غرزت أنيابها في القرية اللبنانية فأثخنتها بالجراح.

The preceding war was a rapacious war that pierced its fangs into the flesh of the Lebanese village, covering it with wounds (M.A. p. 162)

Here, the author is referring to the year of the famine (1917), as he explains later on the same page. Thus, it seems once more that "Lebanese" is referring to Mount Lebanon only because it was in this area where the famine had its worse consequences.   In "The Émigré", Lebanon seems to be applied also to a surface much smaller than Greater Lebanon.

فإذا بحرب سنة 1914 تعلن، وانسدّت أبواب البحر على لبنان

The 1914 War was declared and the gates of the sea were blocked over Lebanon. (M.A. p. 191)

In all these examples, whether because the stories go back to the time of the Mutasarrifiya or because it is the way the author perceived it, what seems to be Lebanon does not go beyond the borders of Smaller Lebanon. This is easily understood because Abbud places his stories in the time of the Mutasarrifiya. However, other stories that are set around or after 1920 also limit the surface of Lebanon by the historical events to which they

are associated. The following example is taken from Shibli's novel. It describes the condition of Lebanese villages after the First World War.

هاك قرى لبنان الجميلة أصبحت أطلالا دارسة متداعية جدرانها متهدمة سقوفها. يبس فيها الزرع ونضب الضرع... فقد أراد الله تلك المحنة لأننا عشنا في لبنان ردحا من الزمن منذ نظام الستين وقد تسلطنت علينا المادة وملك أنفسنا الرخاء تتأكلنا حمّى الفساد وتتنازعنا التحزبات البغضاء

Here we have beautiful Lebanese villages which have turned into ruins, whose walls are falling apart, and whose roofs are collapsing. Plants have dried up, and their cattle have ceased to provide milk. God wanted that crisis because we lived in Lebanon a time under the control of materialism, since the political system of the sixties, and prosperity became our goal to the point that we became infected by the fever of corruption and conflicted by hateful factionism. (M.S. p. 40)

As it happened with Abbud, it is clear that the author is referring to the villages of the Mutasarrifiyya. What becomes outstanding in this example is that the narrator blames the local inhabitants, making them responsible of their own misfortune. The cause of the present situation of the country is their moral degeneration, and not the Turks or another outside element, as in other works.

Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad mentions Lebanon in only two stories of his three collections. The first mention appears in "The Poet" and it goes hand in hand with the phenomenon of the revival of Phoenicia that will be discussed below; the second mention comes in "The First Bill of Exchange":

كان بو حبيب صاحب كرخانة حرير لها صيت بين أخواتها في طول لبنان وعرضها

Bou Habib was the owner of a silk factory that had fame among all over Lebanon. (T.A. p. 143)

إنّ شعرة بو حبيب أوّل كمبيالة في لبنان
Indeed, a thread of Bou Habib's was the first money bill of exchange in Lebanon (T.A. p. 144)

107

Other referents that are mentioned in the same story are the coast (الساحل) and the mountain (الجبل), already mentioned by other authors as indicated above, together with some specific names of villages, as Baskinta. The interesting detail here is that the story is set in 1870, a date in which Lebanon did not exist with the accepted borders of 1944, the time in which the story was published. The doubt here is to which Lebanon Awwad was referring to in the story. Using the data given in the story, it seems that this Lebanon contained Mount Lebanon and part of the coast – at least from Beirut to almost Tripoli, that is, Smaller Lebanon plus some of the coastal territories of Greater Lebanon. This description encloses almost all of the geographical references mentioned in Awwad's stories, which rarely include any territories in southern Lebanon, the region of Akkar and the Hermel, and even the Beqaa, the only exception appearing in his novel, *The Loaf*. Therefore, the Lebanon of this story, set in 1870, was an extended "Smaller Lebanon" that did not reach the borders of Greater Lebanon.

All these examples are not meant to demonstrate that most writers were partisans of Smaller Lebanon, or that they were against the extended borders of 1920. Rather they show that, when referring to Lebanon, most authors unconsciously associate it with a smaller surface, as if some territories of Greater Lebanon were not part of Lebanon in their minds yet.

5.1.7. Lebanon as State: Karam, Ghosen.

Even with the constant association between Lebanon and nature, the existence of the new State of Greater Lebanon is not ignored. With most of the writers, the concept of state is associated mostly with the government alone, or simply with preceding states such as the Ottoman State (*al-dawla al-uthmaniyya*). In Karam Melhem Karam's *Father Antun*,

however, Lebanon appears already as an organized state with its civil servants and public services. One of the main characters, Adib Rahmeh, works for the government in the *diwan* of public health:

زوج نائلة رحمه يحتلّ في الدولة اللبنانية مقاماً ليس بالرفيع ولا الوضيع. فهو من العاملين في ديوان الصحة. يتولى تدوين الأسماء المرضى الفقراء في مستشفيات الدولة.

Nayla Rahmeh's husband occupies in the Lebanese State a position neither high nor low; he is one of the workers in the Diwan of Health in charge of writing down the names of poor people with illnesses in state hospitals. (K.K. p. 115)

زوجها يشغل منصباً في دولة لبنان.

Her husband occupies a post in the State of Lebanon (K.K. p. 56)

What differentiates this text from most of the other texts is the fact that it is set in the city. The Lebanese state is clearly present from the perspective of someone living in Beirut, center and capital of the new state. There is a direct connection between the city of Beirut and the State of Lebanon:

تزوجها شاب من أرباب المناصب في لبنان وقطن وإياها مدينة بيروت

A young man, with a big post in Lebanon, married her, and both he and she resided in the city of Beirut. (K.K. p. 50)

If Lebanon is associated with nature, corresponding to the mountain areas, the State of Lebanon is associated with the city and, more specifically, with Beirut.

The area of the new Lebanese state is known, and some political borders of Greater Lebanon are explicitly mentioned. Among all the writers, Marun Ghosen is the first one who mentions some places in South Lebanon linked to the Greater Syrian Revolt that started in 1925. "South Lebanon" is also explicitly mentioned:

109

وفي تلك الأيام، هجم ثوار الدروز على حاصبيا وراشيا بقيادة حمزة الدرويش، فقتلوا ونهبوا وأحرقوا وظلّعوا... فأرسلت الحكومة المنتدبة عساكرها إلى القضاء، ومعهم بعض المتطوعة من اللبنانيين.

وكان العيش قد ضاق بسليم، فتطوّع مع من تطوّع، ومضى للدفاع عن أبناء الوطن

On those days, Druze rebels attacked Hesbayya and Rashayya under the leadership of Hamza al-Darwish, and they committed killings, looted, burned and brutalised. As a result, the government of the Mandate sent his armies to the region, and with them, some Lebanese volunteers.

And life had become very tight with Selim, so he joined the other volunteers, and he set out to defend the people of the homeland (M.G. I p. 16)

وإن خبر الثورة في جنوب لبنان ملأ قلبي هلعًا.

The news about the revolution in South Lebanon filled my heart with horror (M.G. I p. 34)

The existence of an extended Lebanon is well-known for the author, who names places that are not usually mentioned in other texts:

وبعدها انتظم في سلك الجندية بلبنان، فعُيّن في مخفر على طريق صيدا

And after he enlisted in the military in Lebanon, and he was appointed to a guard post on the Sidon road to (M.G. I p. 16).

We must remember that Marun Ghosen is the only author born in the city of Beirut and, remarkably, he is the oldest of all analyzed writers. He was 39 years old at the time of the establishment of Greater Lebanon. Nonetheless, even if he clearly recognizes the borders of the new state, an idealistic Lebanon is still present in his ideas, consciously or unconsciously. When talking about the "Lebanese People," he defines them as follows:

... شديد التعلّق بسنن وعادات أجداده الذين اشتهروا بالاستقامة وشرف النفس. وهاتان هما الصفتان اللتان جعلتا الشعب اللبناني باسلا قويًّا!

..strongly attached to the customs and traditions of his forefathers who were well known for their rightfulness and self dignity. These two qualities are the ones that made the Lebanese people brave and strong! (M.G. I p. 41)

There is nothing that indicates that these characteristics cannot be applied to some of the new territories of the Lebanese state. However, the reference to the forefathers alludes to the distant past, and links the Lebanon of today with the Lebanon of yesterday. Also, independence is a characteristic applied to the mountain villages in opposition to the cities, which tend to be submitted to some kind of authority, either coming from the city itself or from another city or foreign power. Therefore, the reader identifies the Lebanese people as defined here with villagers of Mount Lebanon.

5.1.8. Lebanon Linked to Christianity: Khater and Labaki.

Despite the idea of Lebanon as "refuge for Christians,"[164] only two authors linked Lebanon with Christianity in their works. The association between Lebanon and Christianity is not clear but deduced by the different references made by the authors. The first writer who mentions this idea is Lahad Khater who, talking about his mother, defines her as the "genuine Lebanese woman." This association is stated clearly from the beginning. The following passage appears in the cover of the book, under the title *Habuba Khater*:

مثال المرأة اللبنانية الصميمة – نموذج الفضائل الأنثوية في الأسرة – مسطرة
ممتازة من فضليات نسائنا في الجيل الماضي

Example of the genuine Lebanese woman – model of the feminine high virtues in the family – excellent organizer, belonging to the women of our past generation. (L.Kh. p. 3)

---

[164] See Henri Lammens's work *La Syrie: précis historique* in "Background" section, p.62.

He sees his mother as the model of the traditional, genuine Lebanese woman. He explains in the first page of the biography what he understands by this model of woman and by her virtues:

ولا خلاف أن نسائنا في الجيل الماضي، على تضاؤل العلوم وندرة المدارس في عصرهن، قد تفوق منهن كثيرات بشدة الاستمساك بالتقاليد اللبنانية الشريفة، من تدين وتقوى وبساطة زي وحشمة ملبس واقتصاد في المعيشة وطهارة وعفاف في الأحاديث والحركات والمعاطيات ونشاط وجد في إتمام أشغال المنزل وتقانٍ في كل ما يؤول إلى راحة الأسرة وسعادتها.

And there is no disagreement that many of our women in the past generation, even with the weakness of education and the scarcity of schools in their time, excelled in their adherence to the honorable Lebanese traditions, in terms of religiosity, piety and simplicity in style, modesty in dressing, economizing in living, purity, decency in their speech, in their moves and in their interactions, and their active role and hard work when completing house works, and their strong commitment to all that will make the family comfortable and happy. (L.Kh. pp. 3-4)

In this paragraph, we can see that the author links what he understands by "virtue" to the observance and keeping of the "noble Lebanese traditions," imbibed with religion, strength, and modesty, inside and outside the household. Apart from the adjective itself, there are no specifications of the "Genuine Lebanese woman" that distinguish her from "virtuous" women in other countries or religions. This is another example of a phenomenon mentioned above: common elements become superior when accompanied by the adjective Lebanese. Through the text, religion is a major topic related to the author's mother. Discussing the education given to his children, Khater describes some of his mother's habits:

... جمعتهم في غرفة نومهم أمام مذبح صغير عليه صورة العيلة المقدسة أمرتهم بإقامة الصلاة وتلاوة طلبة السيدة الزياح...

And she assembled them in their bedroom in front of a small altar that had a picture of the Holy Family, and she ordered them to say the prayers and to recite the Litany of the Virgin... (L.Kh. p. 13)

وفي غالب الأيام كانت تسير بأولادها إلى الكنيسة لسماع القداسات وحضور الصلوات الطقسية (...) وتسألهم عن معنى ما يتلى في الكنيسة من الأناجيل والرسائل

Most days, she walked with her children to the church to hear the mass, and to attend ritual prayers (...) and she used to ask them about the meaning of what was recited in the church from the Gospels and the Letters (L.Kh. p. 13).

Khater then associates the genuine Lebanese woman with a Christian mother, who is modest and educates her children following the traditional Christian values, forcing them to practice the rites of the religion.

The following passage also corresponds to Khater's text. It could be linked to religion more than to "Lebanon" but, at the same time, the adjective "Lebanese" is mentioned in a context that deserves attention. The example quotes a Lebanese saying related exclusively to Christianity. This takes us back to the relationship between the "genuine Lebanese woman" and the author's mother. For the author, there is a clear feeling of connection between the adjectives "Christian" and "Lebanese."

وفي أيام الصيامات والقطاعات كانت توجب عليهم الصوم والقطاعة موردة عليهم المثل اللبناني القائل: "ابن سبعة صوموه وإن ما صام تحرق أمه مع أبوه".

And the days of fast and abstinence, she forced them to fast and abstain, telling them the Lebanese proverb that says: "Make the child of seven fast and, if he doesn't, his mother and father will burn" (L.Kh. p. 14)

Lahad Khater talks also about "Lebanese Unity" and makes it sound as if it were an achievement of the Christian population only:

...عهد الأمير فخر الدين المعني الكبير الذي كان أول من سهل قدوم مسيحيي الشمال إلى الشوف تحقيقاً للوحدة اللبنانية التي كان يرمي إليها.

...the time of the Great Fakhr al-Din al-Maani, that was the first who facilitated the coming of the Christians of the North to the Shuf, fulfilling the Lebanese unity that he was launching. (L.Kh. p. 5)

He mentions the important figure of Fakhr al-Din al-Maani as the precursor of what he refers to as "Lebanese Unity." In this case, in the way expressed by the author, Lebanese unity seems to be achieved by a population movement of Christians from the Northern regions to the Shuf.

Salah Labaki also subtly links Lebanon to the values of Christianity. In the story "The Poet and the Devil", Lebanon acquires a special, superior status being the land of apostles, prophets, and gods. It is also described as "the country of love:"

فنحن هنا في لبنان، على رغم من سخريتك، في بلاد الرسل والأنبياء والآلهة، نحن في بلاد الحب

We are here in Lebanon, despite your sarcasm, in the country of apostles, prophets and gods. We are in the country of love. (S.L. p. 51)

As mentioned above, there is a feeling of superiority over other regions, and old mythologies and the foundations of Christianity are set as indisputable in Lebanon. Lebanon is defined as "the country of love," and it is precisely love that is first associated with Christianity.

There are many other references to Christianity in the texts, but they are not associated with Lebanon, and the analysis will address them in upcoming sections.

5.1.9. Conclusion

To summarize of this section, we may conclude with the following: despite the existence of Greater Lebanon, Lebanon continues to be associated mainly with nature and, more specifically, with the geographical region of Smaller Lebanon. The authors do not ignore or reject Greater Lebanon, but they associate it mainly with the state structure and

the government. There are no references to a direct, exclusive connection between Christianity and Lebanon, and both ideas are linked only in a couple indirect references.

5.2. Phoenician Revival

As mentioned in the background section, a nation does not need only a defined territorial space. It also needs a common cultural past, shared by all the citizens of the nation, which links them to the previous inhabitants of that territorial area. In the case of Lebanon, the Phoenician past served as reference for the common past of the new state. After the publication of *Mission de Phénicie*, written by Ernest Renan and published in Paris in 1864, the new works on Lebanese history started including the Phoenician heritage as part of its own history. The revival of the Phoenician past started mainly among the intellectual elites of the city, both foreigners and Lebanese nationals with foreign education.

The analysis in this section clearly shows the different stages of the Phoenician revival as expressed in the texts, keeping in mind that most writers were born in mountain areas and not in the city. The texts will prove that the Phoenician past of the country was not fully integrated and assimilated at the beginning of the Mandate, but this situation changed by the end of the period. Phoenicia is not mentioned as often as Lebanon, but four out of the seven writers reflect the phenomenon of its revival in one way or another. These writers are Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad, Marun Abbud, Salah Labaki, and Michel Shibli. Not surprisingly, the works in which this phenomenon is mentioned are among the ones that were written latest.

There are not many similarities in the way the writers address this issue in their texts, as they use it for very different purposes. However, all of the views together clearly reflect where the phenomenon of Phoenicia came from, and how its symbols were presented and used in the Lebanese society.

5.2.1. First Stage- Introduction of the Phoenician Past: Awwad

Starting with Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad, references to Phoenicia are reduced to one story, "The Poet," that appears in the first collection written in 1936. There are no more mentions to Phoenicia, its gods or legends in all the other stories and the novel. The main characters of "The Poet" are Elena, an Italian woman visiting the region, and a Lebanese teenager, Naʿim, son of the owner of the hotel in which the woman is staying. The boy falls in love with the Italian woman, whose love is directed only to what she calls *Orient*, *al-Sharq*, and undefined region that is real only because of its association with the past. The woman travelled to Beirut looking for the Phoenician heritage, and this is her only objective. Awwad, introducing this foreign element in the story, forces the local characters to position themselves towards their own local reality. Contrary to the other stories in which locals adopt a general view of the outside – saying, for example, "America" without specifying the country, even if it is North America or South America – it is the foreign woman who makes the generalization in this case, saying just *al-Sharq*, without specifying any region, country, or city. The foreign woman's attitude contrasts clearly with the particularizations made by the local character Naʿim, not only when talking about his region but also when referring to foreign lands. He does not say "Occident" or even "Europe," but he refers to the woman's home country as "Italy."

The distinction between Lebanon and Phoenicia is clear for the local character, who mentions both names referring to different entities. It is also in this story when Awwad uses the name "Lebanon" accompanied by the phrase *Ism biladi*. Lebanon is mentioned three times in the story. The first time occurs when the teenager has to write the place and the date on a present that he has prepared for the Italian woman. Instead of writing the name of the city, he writes "L – B – N – A – N 1925," "Lebanon 1925." When positioning himself

in front of a foreign individual, the place he chooses to position himself is Lebanon. The other two references are important when breaking the direct relationship between Phoenicia and Lebanon, especially the first one. The teenager gives the Italian lady an album with different pictures containing:

<div dir="rtl">مناظر لبنان وآثار فينيقيا</div>

The scenes of Lebanon, and the Archaeological sites of Phoenicia. (T.A. p. 26)

When describing then the views of Lebanon, he adds:

<div dir="rtl">...صور النواويس القديمة، والمراكب الفينيقية، ومناظر الشلالات في لبنان والجبال والأودية والغابات</div>

...portraits of the old sarcophagus, the Phoenician boats, and views of the waterfalls, the mountains, the valleys, and the forests of Lebanon. (T.A. p. 24)

The division for the local teenager is clear. There are archaeological sites of Phoenicia on one side, and there are scenes of Lebanon on the other. Lebanon is always associated with nature, as mentioned in the section above, and the archaeological sites are linked to Phoenicia. Nowhere in the story is Lebanon associated with the archaeological vestiges of the past, neither does Phoenicia seem to have a continuation with the present. The only "current Phoenicia" lives in the mind of the Italian woman, who even seems to ignore the emphasis put on nature by the local teenager:

<div dir="rtl">ـ ألبوم فيه مناظر لبنان وأثار فينيقيا. لتتذكرينني به في إيطاليا
ـ آثار من فينيقيا!</div>

- It is an album with views from Lebanon, and Phoenician archaeological sites. So you can remember me in Italy when you see it.
- Phoenician archaeological sites! (T.A. p. 24)

The author treats the woman's insistence with certain mockery and tiredness, both through the main character and through the narrator:

117

جمعت من بيروت –من الشرق، كما تقول هي

... They were collected (pictures) from Beirut – from Orient, as she says. (T.A. p.24)

الشرق، الشرق! هذا الشيء لا حد له. ماذا يفيده إذا نسيته وتذكرت الفينيقيين؟

Orient, Orient! This thing seems to have no limit. What could it be good for him if she forgets him and only remembers the Phoenicians?! (T.A. p. 25)

At one point in the story, the teenager is punished by one of his school teachers. The punishment consists of copying the first pages of a history book, which dedicates its first chapter to the Phoenician past. The teenager exclaims after starting to read the first page:

أتلحقه الفينيقيين إلى هنا؟

Have the Phoenicians arrived even here?!!!!! (T.A. p. 28)

Therefore, after all of the conversations that he held with the Italian woman about the Phoenicians, he finds out that his punishment at school also forces him to deal with the Phoenicians. As mentioned in the story, the book chosen for the punishment, entitled "General History", *al-Tarikh al-'Amm*, starts with a reference to the Phoenicians:

كان الفينيقيون شعبا نشيطا افتتحوا البحار بتجارتهم وبنوا لهم مستعمرات في قرطاجنة وغيرها من شواطىء البحر الأبيض المتوسط، وإليهم يرجع الفضل في اكتشاف الحروف الهجائية. من مدنهم المشهورة صيدا التي كانوا يسمونها صيدون، وجبيل بيبلوس. ولكن ديانتهم – ويا للأسف – كانت أشنع الديانات الوثنية، لأنهم لم يعرفوا الله الواحد الذي نعبده نحن... وكان الفينيقيون..."

The Phoenicians were entrepreneurial people who conquered the seas with their trade and built colonies in Cartage and other places on the Mediterranean coast. And they discovered the writing signs. Among their famous cities, we find Sayda, called Sidon by them, and Jubayl, called Biblos. But their religion – oh, what a pity! – was the most awful pagan religion because they did not know the God, one and only, that we workship.... And the Phoenician were..." (T.A. p. 27-8)

The author mentions only this passage of the history book. In the chosen passage there is an opposition between *we* and the Phoenicians, and there is no mention to any link between the two, no reference to "*our forefathers*" or anything similar. Furthermore, the distinction between the Phoenicians and the local inhabitants concerning religious beliefs is clearly stated.[165] Therefore, the boy receives his Phoenician "heritage" only through the foreign element, the Italian woman, and through his education at school.

5.2.2. Second Stage- Integration of the Phoenician Past: Abbud and Shibli.

The second author who mentions the Phoenician imagery is Marun Abbud. He does not treat the Phoenician past with mockery, as Awwad does, but he uses it as an instrument to enrich certain descriptions. In the story "A Sermon and a Chicken," Abbud uses the noun "Phoenicians" to indicate that something is very old. The priest in the story describes his church in this way:

كنيستي ليست كاتدرائية ولكنّها خشوعية قديمة من عهد الفينيقيين.

My church is not a cathedral but an old devotional resort from the Phoenician times. (M.A. p. 163)

The narrator presented this priest in the story as a little pretentious, so it is difficult to believe that he actually knew and meant that the building he used as a church was from Phoenician times. Here, the use of the adjective "Phoenician" gives the church a certain special status, together with the idea of antiquity.

The second example occurs in the story "The Émigré." The main character of the story is a woman who travels to America to try to pay her family debts. There, she has a

---

[165] We have already mentioned the dual discourse of Patriarch Huwayek in the Versailles conference, who linked Lebanon to Phoenicia when he was addressing foreign authorities, but marked the distinction between them because of religious reasons when he was among his flock.

relationship with a rich American man, and she starts living in the man's house, described

by the narrator as:

صـار ذلك العش الأدونيسي هيكل عشتروت لبنان يتركه صباحًا ليأوي إليه مساء
حيث يتهجّد ويسجد لدميته.

So that Adonisian nest became the temple of Astarte of Lebanon, leaving it in the morning to take refuge in it in the evening, where he stayed awake to prostrate in front of his doll. (M.A. p. 191)

It is very important to emphasize the direct link made between Lebanon and the

Phoenician gods, something that did not happen in Awwad's stories. As he does with other

traditions, Abbud uses the Phoenician mythology as integral part of his stories, as an

additional instrument to enrich his descriptions. Abbud does the same with other traditions,

especially the literary and the religious, drawing parallels between them and the characters

or situations of the stories. The use of Phoenician imagery does not appear as often as the

references to Arab literary figures, for example, and there are only two references in the

sixteen stories. However, it indicates that these images were active in the educated society

of the time when Abbud wrote the stories. What is important, as mentioned above, is the

direct link between Lebanon and Phoenicia. Lebanon is identified directly with the place

where the Phoenician gods lived, the inhabitants of Lebanon being their *territorial heirs*.

In addition, it is interesting to mention that the two references to Phoenician

mythology in Abbud's stories occur in two late stories in the collection, the thirteenth and

the fifteenth. These are among the latest in the collection, and Abbud probably wrote them

later than the other stories, close to 1945. This year is also the year of publication of

Labaki's *From the Deepest of the Mountain*, which also contains references to the

Phoenician past. But before getting into Labaki's use of the term *Phoenician*, which differs

from both Abbud and Awwad, it is necessary to mention Shibli's use of the term, which is somehow close to Abbud's:

كان شيخ صلح الكفير آنئذ رجلا كهلا هو طنوس القيدوم الذي قضى معظم حياته يحلم باستلام ختم البلدة فسعى وتزلف إلى أن أبلغه سلوم بك مبتغاه بعد استعمال تلك الوسيلة الناجعة التي اخترعها الفينيقيون عندما صكوا النقود

The Shaykh of Sulh al-Kafir was then a mature man, Tannus al-Qaydum, who spent most of his life dreaming of receiving the seal of the village. He tried hard and fawned on him until Salum Bek gave him what he wanted, by using that useful medium that the Phoenicians invented when they issued the money. (M.S. p. 69)

There is no direct link to Lebanon in this example, but it reflects another step in the enthronization of the Phoenicians: the increasing number of achievements associated with them. As in Abbud's stories, the image here is used to enrich the description.

5.2.3. Third Stage- Assimilation of the Phoenician Past: Labaki.

Among all the writers, Salah Labaki is the one that most directly associates Lebanon to Phoenicia and its mythology. In the following passage, he makes Adonis "a young man from Lebanon:"

غير أن هذا النغم ما كان ليجد له في الأرض وما فوقها مقرًا. فتاه طويلا حتى مرّ يوما بـ"أفقا" فإذا عند النبع فتى من لبنان... وحوّم وحل فيه. وأحسّ أدونيس أنه صار شخصا آخر

But this melody was not to find a residence either on Earth or on what is above it. It roamed around for a long time until it passed one day by "Afqa." And here there was a young man from Lebanon near the spring. It turned around him and descended into him. And Adonis felt that he had become a different person. (S.L. p. 20).

In this story, "The Wandering Melody," Cain kills Abel because of God's preference towards his chant. When Abel dies, his chant leaves him and, after wandering around Earth, he gets into Adonis' body. Labaki links Adonis then to Cain and Abel, tying the Phoenician mythology to the Bible. It is important to notice also the temporal sequence of the events: Cain and Abel come first and then Adonis. The Christian referents come

121

before than the Phoenician ones. Considering the Christian presence in Lebanon at the time of the story, the Phoenician allusion would be placed in between two Christian referents, almost becoming a link in the Christian historical chain.

A connection between Phoenicia and the inhabitants of modern Lebanon appears in the story "Melqart." Talking to a twentieth-century Lebanese resident, this god describes himself as having been worshiped by the ancestors of this modern Lebanese man:

<div dir="rtl">أنا ملكرت معبود أجدادك</div>

I am Melqart the divine of your forefathers. (S.L. p. 55)

Labaki then presents the association between Phoenicia and Lebanon in both temporal directions: from the past to the present, making Adonis a man from Lebanon; and from the present to the past, making the contemporary Lebanese's ancestors worship the ancient Phoenician gods.

5.2.4. Conclusion

The way these four authors present and use the phenomenon of the revival of Phoenicia is very different, yet represents four reflections of the same historical object. The following figure shows the three different stages of the revival of Phoenicia as explained above:
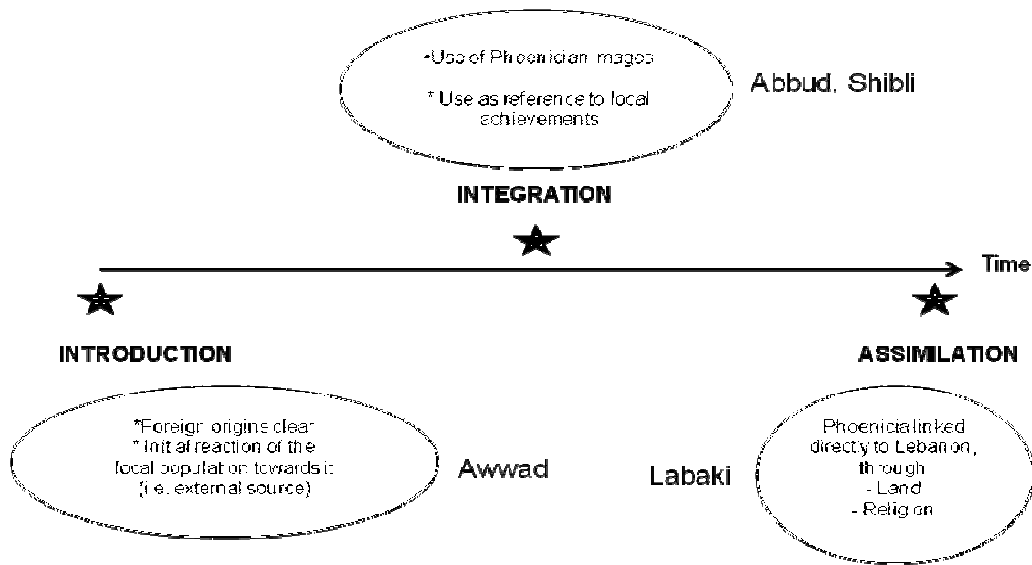
Fig.5: Stages in the Revival of Phoenicia

Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad reflects the foreign origins of the Phoenician revival, and the local population's reaction towards it in the first stages of the revival process. Marun Abbud uses Phoenician images, as he did with other traditions, to enrich his descriptions. Michel Shibli uses the achievements of the Phoenicians as references, yet does not link them directly to Lebanon, but reflects beliefs that start rooting firmly in the society. Salah Labaki represents the success of the revival process, finally linked strongly to Lebanon, not only through the land but also through its religious Christian symbols. Not surprisingly, this sequence of approaches corresponds to the temporal sequence in which the works were written: Awwad's text being the earliest and Labaki's the latest.

5.3. Concepts of Homeland, Country, and State

The terms homeland, country, and state are used in the texts referring to very different geographical areas and concepts. This is probably where the writers disagree the most in what the terms apply to. The source of the disagreement lies first on the ambiguity of the terms themselves, which may apply to very diverse entities. For example, *balad* may

123

refer to a country, a state, a nation, or a land. It is defined simply as "a limited territory in which specific groups of people live."[166] *Watan* adds to *balad* the sense of home, referring to homeland, home country, or native land, among others. When using *watan* the individual links himself in one way or another to his ancestors, or to his origins, either real or desired, with the term having certain nostalgic associations. *Dawla* is the clearest of the three terms. It can be translated as country, state or nation, using the same terms used above for *balad*, but it carries the sense of certain political or governmental organizations.[167] It is used sometimes as synonymous of government.[168]

This section will show that there is no direct and exclusive correlation between any of these terms – *dawla, watan, balad/bilad*, and Lebanon, and that the terms apply to very different territorial surfaces.

5.3. 1. Homeland (*Watan*)

The clearest idea associated with the word *watan* comes from the point of view of the émigré. In this case, seeing it from an outside perspective, *watan* would carry the meaning of the birthplace, or the forefathers' birthplace. The homeland area would not be as relevant in this example as the feeling of exclusion and belonging. What is important is the opposition between homeland and what lays outside it, even if it is the place of residence.

---

[166] *Al-Munjid* defines it as: (مكان محدود من الأرض تقيم فيه جماعات معينة من الناس). *Al-Munjid fi al-Lugha al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira*, (Beirut: Dar al-Mashreq, 2000).
[167] *Al-Munjid*: (بلد يتمتع بنظام حكوميّ واستقلال سياسي ونظام اقتصادي خاصّ).
[168] This does not mean, of course, that both terms are synonymous. When referring to Lebanese nationalism, Kamal Yusuf al-Hajj made in 1970 the distinction between these two terms an essential part of his argument about Lebanese nationalism. He linked the success of a certain form of nationalism to the existence of a state in which this nationalism is represented. He said that "the disappearance of the government does not mean the disappearance of the state," meaning that the state of Lebanon existed even in times where there was no government, and therefore it was the only nationalism truly present in Lebanon. However, this does not avoid the fact that some people tend to use them as synonymous. See Kamal Yusuf al-Hajj, "Qawmiyyat Iza' al-qawmiyya al-lubnaniyya," in Qāzzān et al., *Ab'ād al-qawmiyya al-lubāniyya* (Kaslik: Jāmi'at al-Rūḥ al-Qudus, 1970)*,* 51.

a. *Watan* with Possessive: outside perspective and temporal distance.

The two following passages are taken from two of Awwad's stories. The idea expressed in both passages is similar, but the author chooses to use *watan* in one case and *bilad* in the other:

<div dir="rtl">

ولكنّه مهاجر عاد إلى وطنه

</div>

But he was an émigré who returned to his homeland (T.A. p. 150)

<div dir="rtl">

اختلفت آراء أهل القرية في المهاجر العائد إلى بلاده اختلافا كبيرًا.

</div>

The people in the village differed a lot about the émigré that has just returned to his country. (T.A. p. 104)

In the first case, the narrator presents the event at the beginning of the story, describing a man who has just died. According to the narrator, he had done nothing significant for the village during his life. He was just an émigré who returned to his home village with a large amount of money, building a big house there short afterwards. In the second example, it is also the narrator who describes the scene. In this case, the émigré has returned to his village with an unclear objective, acting as if he were a different person from the one he was before. Even if the two characters' actions are identical – two émigrés who go back to their village – the way the narrator describes them gives the reader a completely different feeling. The first one carries an emotional meaning, while the second is only descriptive. It is important to notice the use of the possessive instead of the article in both cases, taking away the sense of generalization in order to apply the concepts to the characters themselves. In both cases, the meaning of the sentences are enclosed in the characters' world and do not go beyond that, leaving even the narrator outside their stories.

The use of the possessive does not come only as a result of the outside perspective.

It may transmit also the sense of temporal distance more than spatial exclusion. The

following examples are taken from Lahad Khater's biography of his mother:

وكانت ذات فطنة وجودة عقل تدرك بالإشارة ما يريد محدثها وتعلم بالقياس
والاستنتاج ما تؤدي إليه الحوادث، وقد عرف لها أبناء وطنها هذه المزية

She had astuteness and excellence of intellect, knowing just with a sign what her speaker wanted, and knowing by analogy and deduction what the events led to. And the children of her homeland knew this quality of hers. (L.Kh. p.17)

... لذلك كان يدعوها أبناء وطنها إلى التدخل في حل

And for that, the children of her homeland called her to intervene in solving problems. (L.Kh. p.17)

Here *watan* refers to the woman's birthplace, which would cover probably her

village and its surroundings.

b. Adjective *Watani*: Local

In the same above text, *watan* is used in its adjectival form:

وعلى ذلك كان وضع التراجم لأولئك المتفوقات ونشرها في الصحف السيارة مما
يهيب ببنات اليوم إلى اقتباس تلك التقاليد الأخلاقية والاحتفاظ بها كميراث وطني وتجميلها
بما يضفن إليها من مكتسبات العلوم والفنون الحديثة ومن محاسن المدنية الغربية الآخذة
بالانتشار بيننا في هذا العصر.

Based on that, came the compiling of the biographies of those outstanding women and publishing them in the circulating newspapers, something that encourages the girls of today to learn from those moral traditions, and to preserve them as a national heritage, and embellishing them with what they add from among the games of modern sciences and arts, and from the good aspects of western civilization, which is spreading among us in this age. (L.Kh. p.4)

... حاملة إلى منزله طباق الأطعمة على العادة الوطنية ملحة عليه وعلى أهل بيته
بتناول شيء منها

... Carrying to his house dishes of food, following the national custom, and urging him and the people of his house to take something from them. (L.Kh. p. 19)

126

The adjective *watani* would act here as synonymous with the adjective *local*, adding historical perspective. It gives the sense of a broader reality that goes beyond the woman's word.

c. *Watan* with Definite Article: the country or the state with emotional sense

Even if the adjective *watani* gives the sense of broader reality, it does not reach the area embraced by the absolute term "*al-watan*", understood as nation, as in the following example, taken from Abbud's stories:

<div dir="rtl">

وإذا لم نكن نحن للوطن فمن له؟

</div>

And if we are not for the homeland, who is for it? (M.A. p. 160)

Here the concept is synonymous with state or country, but includes an emotional sense. The main character, a deputy in the parliament, places himself at a level that goes above the bureaucratic duties of a politician. The use of *watan* instead of *dawla* or *balad* gives the sense of moral obligation, expressing the duty of the politician as a public servant and not as someone seeking personal interests. Here, the point of view is that of the character himself but, using the article, the idea of *watan* is set outside the character's personal world.

Marun Ghosen also uses *watan* with the definite article, in this case, with the Syrian Revolt of 1925 in the background:

<div dir="rtl">

وفي تلك الأيام، هجم ثوار الدروز على حاصبيا وراشيا بقيادة حمزة الدرويش، فقتلوا ونهبوا وأحرقوا وفظّعوا... فأرسلت الحكومة المنتدبة عساكرها إلى القضاء، ومعهم بعض التطوعة من اللبنانيين.
وكان العيش قد ضاق بسليم، فتطوّع مع من تطوّع، ومضى للدفاع عن أبناء الوطن

</div>

On those days, Druze rebels attacked Hesbayya and Rashayya under the leadership of Hamza al-Darwish, and they committed killings, looted, burned and brutalised. As a

result, the government of the Mandate sent his armies to the region, and with them, some Lebanese volunteers.

And life had become very tight with Selim, so he joined the other volunteers, and he set out to defend the people of the homeland (M.G. I p. 16)

This is probably the passage in which *watan* is used referring to a wider surface, in this case extending to the South of Lebanon. It carries the meaning of a defined territorial surface, far away from the abstract entity of the state expressed in the previous example. There is also a strong political association with the term and no personal involvement of the character. Through the passage, it seems that the character's enrollment is caused only by financial problems and not by a sincere desire to fight for his country.

d. Sequence: Possessive – Adjective – Definite Article

We have reached then the following sequence: possessive (singular) – adjective – definite article. This sequence gives a feeling of enlargement of the term *watan*, corresponding either to a bigger area or to rapprochement in the narrator or character's perspective, both physically and emotionally. In the texts, there is not a single example in which *watan* is applied to the whole surface of Lebanon when referring to an individual outside political events.

e. *Watan* Referring to a City: Ghosen

Marun Ghosen uses the term *watan* just to define the place of birth or belonging, and he is the only one who applies it to a city. In the following two passages, *watan* is used to refer to the village of Mirouba in the first example and to an unspecified city in the second. The general phenomenon of homesickness caused the use of the definite article in the first example, even when *watan* refers to a village only.

128

من ذلك اليوم استولى على صاحبنا سليم مرض الصبابة إلى الوطن، واشتدّ به الشوق إلى رؤية ميروبا

And, from that day, the illness of nostalgia for the homeland won over our friend Selim, and the yearning to see Mayruba intensified (M.G. I p. 17)

كان وديع صديقا لمدير محطة السكة الحديدية في تلك القرية، وهو رجل ذو أخلاق فاضلة، ومن المدينة ... وطن وديع، واسمه حبيب السيّار.

Wadi' was a friend of the director of the train station in that village, and he was a man with high morals, from the city of ……. homeland of Wadi', and his name was Habib al-Sayyar. (M.G. II p. 14)

This is the first time that *watan* is used referring just to a city. We must remember now that Marun Ghosen is the only writer who was born in a city in Greater Lebanon. He was born in Beirut in 1881, when the city was not part yet of a political, independent state, and it was not even linked to Lebanon. The character defined himself in the same story with the following words:

"ولدتُ في المدينة ... فقدتُ والدي (...)"

"I was born in the city of …… and I lost my father" (M.G. II p. 42)

The fact of being born in the city is a defining characteristic for this character, and it is the departing point for this autobiography. The *watan* would then be restricted to the city, both for the main character and the writer himself.

f. *Al-Watan* Referring to the Afterlife: Khater.

Lahad Khater also uses the term *watan* with the first-person plural possessive referring to the afterlife:

... أما هذه الدنيا فدار غربة لا يحسن استخدامها إلا في ما يساعد على البلوغ إلى وطننا السماوي

As for this world, it is a home of exile that can be only best used in what helps us attain our celestial homeland. (L.Kh. p. 22)

In this case, *watan* will take the meaning of the place of belonging and not the place of origin.

vii. *Al-Awtān*: Abbud

Marun Abbud provides another example that proves the fact that *watan* was not applied yet to the whole area of Lebanon outside the political world. In "The Emigrant", a woman is leaving her homeland in a boat, and she asks herself:

هل يا ترى نرجع إلى الأوطان، ونرى سنديانة الكنيسة وندبك حولها ليلة العيد؟

I wonder, will we return to the homeland and see the oak next to the church, and dance dabkeh around it at the eve of our holy feasts? (M.A. p. 188)

The author chose the plural of *watan*, *awtan*, instead of the singular. This could signal the author's intention to go beyond the particular story, to reflect the general feeling of the émigré when leaving the homeland. However, what follows restricts the reference to a specific émigré. It is important also to notice the thoughts associated with the homeland in this moment of separation. The image that comes to the woman's mind is the oak next to the church[169] and how the villagers gather around it the eve before the holiday to dance

---

[169] Even if the cedar is the tree that is first associated with Lebanon, the oak is probably the most quoted tree in Abbud's stories and even in Awwad's. Nevertheless, it was the cedar tree that was chosen to represent Lebanon, even placed in the national flag. The reason for this choice may have been the fact that this kind of cedar is only found in the Lebanese mountains, giving the sense of exclusion from other territories. Also, the numerous mentions of the cedars of Lebanon in the Bible give this tree an almost sacred nature (twenty-four mentions in the Old Testament: Judges 9:15; 1 Kings 4:33, 5:6, 7:2; 2 Kings 14:9, 19:23; 2 Chronicles 2:8, 25:18; Ezra 3:7; Psalm 29:5, 92:12, 104:16; Song of Solomon 5:15; Isaiah 2:13, 14:8, 37:24; Jeremiah 22:23; Ezekiel 17:3, 27:5, 31:1; Hosea 14:5,6; Zechariah 11:1). Nevertheless, the number of cedars in Lebanon is much smaller than it used to be, and the cedar role in daily life is almost nonexistent. Other trees have much more importance than the cedar in the daily life of the mountains, and the oak is definitely one of these examples. In fact, it is present in almost all villages in Mount Lebanon, and it is often mentioned in literature. Its shadow has shaped the perfect "school ground floor" in the villages, and Marun Abbud reached the point of its sanctification in his work *Ruwwad al-Nahda al-Arabiyya*, in the chapter entitled "The oak." In this chapter, the author uses the prayer "The Hail Mary," "al-Salam," to describe the oak, substituting the name and attributes of the Virgin Mary by the name and characteristics of the Oak. Lebanon could be represented

dabkeh. This corresponds exclusively to village life, and *watan* will not go beyond the immediate world of the character.

5.3.2. Country (*balad* / *bilad*)

As it happens with *watan*, the terms *balad* or *bilad* are applied to very different ideas. They may refer to Lebanon as a country, to a smaller region or area, to a common Arab country, and even associated only with foreign countries.

a. *Balad* Referring to Lebanon: Shibli, Awwad

In the following example, the word *balad* is used to refer to Lebanon, whatever the extension of Lebanon may be in the characters' minds. The example corresponds to Awwad's story "The Poet:"

كان قد كتب على الصورة الأولى الحرف الأول من اسمه، وعلى الخامسة الثاني،
وعلى العاشرة الثالث، وعلى الخامس عشر الرابع. وهكذا دواليك: ن.ع.ي.م. ثمّ حروف
اسم العائلة. ثمّ الحروف: ل – ب – ن – ا – ن. ثمّ الأرقام 5 – 2 – 9 – 1.
ـ كلما قلّبت صور هذه المجموعة في بلادك تقرئين اسمي واسم بلادي والسنة التي
عرفتك فيها.

He had written the first letter of his name on the first picture, and the second on the fifth page, and the third on the tenth, and the fourth on the fifteenth, and so on: N.'.I.M. And then, the family name. And after that, the letters L – B – N – A – N, and the numbers 1 – 9 – 2 – 5.
- Each time you turn over the picture of this collection in your country, you will read my name, my country's name, and the year in which I knew you. (T.A. p. 26-7)

The local character describes "Lebanon" as "the name of my country," and he contrasts it with *biladiki* referring to the country of origin of the woman, that is, Italy. Lebanon then carries the meaning of a defined, independent country, even if it is just through opposition. A similar description occurs in the following example, taken from Shibli's novel:

---

then by the oak more than by the cedar, and the passage in the story "The Emigrant" is a perfect example to illustrate this fact.

<div dir="rtl">

والآن لقد عدت إلى لبنان بلادي لأجل كل ما هو مقدس تحت سمائه.

</div>

Now I have returned to Lebanon, my country, for the sake of all that is sacred under its sky. (M.S. p. 38)

In this case, even if the opposition is not explicit, the character employs *biladi* after his return from Brazil, a country in which he has spent more than ten years. The opposition exists as it happened in the Awwad example. To place Lebanon together with a foreign country – whether Italy or Brazil – seems to be for the purpose of defining it as "my country." It is interesting to notice that, in both examples, the author presents the perspective of the main characters, and in both cases, he includes the possessive.

However, these are the only examples in which the association between *balad* and a perfectly defined Lebanon occurs. In the following two passages, taken from Awwad's "Omar Effendi," the link between Lebanon and the word *balad* could be deduced by opposition, but it is not too obvious:

<div dir="rtl">

أتراه سيبيعهم دكّانه ويسافر إلى بلد غير هذا البلد؟

</div>

Do you see him selling them his shop and traveingl to a country different than this country? (T.A. p. 61)

<div dir="rtl">

إنّ أبناء هذه المدينة جبناء، جبناء! زرت فلسطين وإستانبول ومصر والدنيا، فلم أجد بلداً كهذا البلد مكهرباً جوّه بالخوف

</div>

The people in this city are cowards, cowards! I visited Palestine, Istanbul, Egypt and the whole world, and I never found a country like this one, whose air is electrified with fear. (T.A. p. 62)

The character mixes names of cities, regions, and countries all together, and he links them to the population and a type of government, more than to a defined portion of land. The character, Omar Efendi, complains in the examples because some of his friends are scared of the government, not wanting to participate in illegal businesses. Even if in the first example *balad* is in a sense related clearly to the land, in the second example, it seems

132

that the *balad* relates to the city, its inhabitants, and the government. The mercantile view of the ideologies of the city[170] would have in this passage a clear example of its preponderance since the beginning of the twentieth century.

A similar example is found in Shibli's novel, "The Oak's Hill:"

<div dir="rtl">

فقد كان لجميل رفيق في المدرسة هو سلوم ابن الشيخ فدعوس الصـافي فهذا ولئن كانت تجمعه بجميل وحدة الموطن والصف فقد كان يفصل بينهما فوارق هي الحسب والنسب من جهة ووالد سلوم من كبار موظفي حكومة بعبدا وخاله المطران قزحيا الذي سافر كاهنا إلى البرازيل فعاد مطرانا له الكلمة النافذة في البلاد

</div>

Jamil had a friend at school, whose name was Salum, son of the Shaykh Fadʿus al-Safi, and this man, even if he was tied with Jamil by the unity of homeland and class, was separated from them by the differences of family and social class on one hand, and added to this, Salum's father was from among the government senior officials in Baabda, and his maternal uncle was the Bishop Quzhaya, who traveled to Brazil as priest and returned as a bishop, holding a dominant word in the country. (M.S. p. 10)

It is clear that this example refers to the period before the establishment of Greater Lebanon. The word *al-bilad* is used as an absolute term, easily translated as "the country," referring to the surface controlled by an existing government, in this case, the Government of Baabda, capital of Mount Lebanon. In this case, as it happened before, the term is used to refer not only to a defined physical piece of land but also to its people and government.

b. *Balad* as Region or Area: Ghosen, Khater, Awwad, Karam

In some examples, taken from Marun Ghosen's texts, *balad* could easily mean country, although the word seems to have the meaning of "region" or "area" more than that of "country."

<div dir="rtl">

انقبض وديع لهذا الخبر، وحزن لأنّ عفيفة ستتزوج وتغادر هذه البلاد.

</div>

---

[170] Hourani, A: "Ideologies of the Mountain and the City," in Roger Owen ed., *Essays in the Crisis in Lebanon*, (London: Ithaca, 1976), 33-41. Albert Hourani republished the same text, with slight changes at its end, in his work *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press,1981), chapter 11, 170-9.

Wadi' got depressed because of the news, and became sad because Afifa would get married and depart from this country (M.G. II p. 16)

The word *bilad* could well mean country, because it seems that the girl is not going to visit her home village often after the wedding. The passage could easily describe a case of emigration, which was extremely common at that time. In the following examples, even if the meaning "country" could also be possible, it seems that the embraced surface is probably smaller:

فجزموا بأنه ترك تلك النواحي، خيفة الوقوع في يد العدالة، وأنه رحل إلى بلادٍ أخرى.

And they asserted that he had left that area, scared to be brought to justice, and that he fled to other lands (M.G. I p. 84)

ـ هو – ولا ريب – مخطىء. إن كلامه هذا عن أسرة أخرى.
ـ لا، ليس في بلادنا أسرة أخرى بهذا الأسم.

- He is wrong, without any doubt. These words of his refer to another family.
- No, there is no other family with that name in our country (M.G. II p. 34)

... السيد وديع صـار من أسعد أهل البلاد

... Mr. Wadi' became from among the happiest people in the country (M.G. II p. 70)
... ولثم يدي من يزورهم من رجال الدين عملا بعادات البلاد

...he kissed the hands of those who he visited from among the clergy, in compliance with the customs of the country (L.Kh. p. 13)

As noted above, *bilad* may be referring to a country, but it is improbable. Many of the stories analysed here are set in the time before the creation of Greater Lebanon, so a precise identification of the word would be more difficult. What follows is taken from one of Awwad's stories. It is referring to the period of the First World War, and it describes the consequences of the famine:

<div dir="rtl">

لاقت بيروت في خريف 1917 ضيقا عظيما. جاءها ذلك من جماهير الجائعين الملتجئين إليها من أنحاء البلاد.

</div>

In Autumn 1917, Beirut encountered a great economic recession. This was caused by the hungry crowds who came from parts all over the country to take refuge in the city. (T.A. p. 49)

Bilad here relates to all the areas that suffered from the famine, mainly the area of the Mutasarrifiyya. In one of Awwad's texts, *The Loaf*, the word *bilad* refers to a much bigger area, even if it is not expressed explicitly:

<div dir="rtl">

اليوم وُلدت القومية العربية الصحيحة. إنّ أمّها هي هذه الثورة التي أمشي فيها أنا المسيحي العربي إلى جنبكم أنتم المسلمين العرب، لنحارب عدوًّا مشتركًا لبلادنا هو التركي، سواء اتّبع محمّدا أو المسيح أو الشيطان

</div>

The real Arab nationalism was born today, and its mother is this revolution in which I, an Arab Christian, walk next to you, Arab Muslims, fighting against a common enemy of our countries, the Turks, whether he follows Muhammad, Christ or the Devil. (T.A. p. 309)

Sami, the main character in *The Loaf*, speaks in this passage. He is an Arab Christian who fought against the Turks in the army that entered Damascus from the Arabian Peninsula under the command of Faysal b. Husayn. Sami was in the Arabian Peninsula when he makes the previous comment, so *bilad* is referring to an undefined Arab "country" or Arab countries included in all Arab lands under Ottoman rule. Even if the novel is set during the period of the First World War, it is significant that the author chooses a Maronite Christian from Lebanon to utter the expression "*our* country/ies."

In many cases, the narrator defines the area to which the word *bilad* refers. Karam Melhem Karam presents an example of this phenomenon. The narrator in the following example is obviously referring to the North of Lebanon when he uses "the cedar country/ nation," an expression that has become a cliché today:

<div dir="rtl">

امرأة من بلاد الأرز

</div>

A woman from the Cedar country (K.K. p. 56)

c. *Bilad* Referring to Foreign Countries: Abbud

The strangest meaning or association given to *bilad* appears in two of Abbud's

stories. In these two cases, the word *bilad* is used to refer only to foreign countries. All

examples appear in villagers' speech:

<div dir="rtl">

وثيابه جوخ وحرير شغل البلاد – تعني أوروبا.

</div>

His cloths are from broadcloth and silk, made in the countries – she means Europe.
(M.A. p. 150) [in "Umm Nakhkhul"]

In this case, *Bilad* refers to Europe. In the next example, it refers to America.

<div dir="rtl">

وبعد سنتين شاع، على أثر وصول البريد، خبر مآله: إن هدلا ستعود من "البلاد" في أول أيلول.

</div>

After two years, when the mail arrived, a piece of news spread saying that Hudla
would return from "the country" at the beginning of September. (M.A. p. 193) (in "The
Emigrant")

It is noticeable here how, in both cases, the author makes a special remark when he

uses *bilad* to refer to a foreign country. In the first case, it is the narrator of the story who

introduces a personal remark in the speech of the villager. In the second case, the narrator

does not interfere directly in the story, but the author uses the quotation marks to isolate the

word from the rest of the speech. An explanation for this behavior may be that this special

use was common among villagers but not around educated people. The use of the quotation

marks or the narrator's comments in the text may be one of Abbud's winks to those sharing

his background, as he commonly does with all kinds of references.

5.3.3. State – (*Dawla*)

The references to *dawla* are not numerous through the texts. The only case in which

dawla is used referring to Lebanon is in Karam's *Father Antun*. In the other texts, many of

them set before 1920, the authors apply it exclusively to *al-dawla al-uthmaniyya*, as a unique reference of governmental organization at a large scale. It is during the French Mandate that the State of Greater Lebanon started having its own centralized government, with its center in Beirut. This linked Lebanon for the first time with the concept of state. It is not surprising, then, that the only mention of Lebanon as a *state* appears in a novel set in the city of Beirut.

زوج نائلة رحمه يحتلّ في الدولة اللبنانية مقاماً ليس بالرفيع ولا الوضيع. فهو من العاملين في ديوان الصحة. يتولى تدوين الأسماء المرضى الفقراء في مستشفيات الدولة.

Nayla Rahmeh's husband occupies in the Lebanese State a position neither high nor low; he is one of the workers in the Diwan of Health in charge of writing down the names of the poor people with illnesses in the state hospitals. (K.K. p. 115)

زوجها يشغل منصباً في دولة لبنان.

Her husband occupies a post in the State of Lebanon (p. 56)

In both cases, the term *dawla* could be easily substituted by the term government, without changing the meaning.

5.3.4. Conclusion

As seen in these three sections, there is no exclusive correlation between Lebanon and the concepts of *watan*, *balad* / *bilad* and *dawla*. Lebanon is linked directly to *bilad* and to *dawla* in a few occasions, but not to *watan*, with one single exception: in the speech of a politician. The political borders of the new state were by then well-known, and it seems that they had begun to root into the individual. However, the concept of *watan*, which involves internal emotional acceptance more than rational knowledge, relates to reduced local areas, and is not linked yet to the new state.

137

5.4. Lebanon: Mountain and City

The establishment of the State of Greater Lebanon brought together for the first time the Lebanese mountains with the coastal cities of Beirut, Tripoli, Tyre, and Sidon. Until that moment, what was understood as Lebanon did not include those cities in its territorial area.[171] After the establishment of the new state, the attention to Lebanon moved from the mountain and its traditional ideologies to the city and its commercial interests. It was around this time when ideologies born in the city started to become strong, the revival of Phoenicia being the best example for this phenomenon. More traditional views of Lebanon, what Albert Hourani refers as "Ideologies of the Mountain,"[172] were left aside.

All authors reflect this phenomenon in their works in one way or another. Possibly, the reason is that most of them were born in the mountain area, or their families were originally from that milieu. Before continuing, it is important to notice that the conflict between cities and mountains or countryside is not exclusive to Lebanon, and it occurred in all Mediterranean societies.[173] Villagers associate the rural areas with nature, purity, and God; the city, on the other hand, is related to artificiality and corruption. Because the conflict between city and mountain is not exclusive or special to Lebanon, the goal of this section is not to prove that it exists. After showing how the writers reflect this phenomenon in their works, the objective is to deduce if it is described as an internal conflict within a country, or a clash of two independent entities. In summary, the purpose is to find out if there was a feeling of national unity from the territorial perspective, or if the costal cities were not presented yet as part of true Lebanon.

---

[171] Hourani, A: "Ideologies of the Mountain and the City," 38.
[172] For a whole description, see Ibid., 33-41
[173] Ibid. 37

5.4.1. Marun Abbud as Example of the Clash between Mountain and City

Marun Abbud's life clearly illustrates this conflict between the mountain and the city, and how it could affect the life and perspective of an individual. Marun Abbud was born in the village of Ain Kifa', and it was there and in similar villages where he spent the first years of his life. Even if his culture went far beyond the local culture, he writes from the perspective of a villager, albeit a highly-educated villager. His stories have been described as "nostalgic,"[174] and as an attack against tradition and superstition.[175] However, the approach to the mountain characters is tender, and mockery is never malicious, but reflects the consequences of superstition and traditions on villagers. Marun Abbud's villagers appear to be good in nature but victims of their own ignorance. In his stories, the city is seen as a place where the villagers' innocence disappears, or is misused by others. The city is always associated with corruption, either physically or psychologically. The villager transforms the moment he has contact with the city. He rarely continues to be the same person, or maintains a transparent relationship with his fellow-villagers as he did before. In a sense, this transformation took place in Abbud himself. His stories reflect different stages of his own personal growth, depending on the place in which the stories are set and how the characters are treated, and independently of the time in which the author wrote them. If he sets his stories in villages, inspired by people whom he met in his childhood, we can rarely find malice in his words. However, if he refers to people that he met in the city or later in his adulthood, his criticism towards them is sometimes strong and unsympathetic. The village stories reflect a stage in his life where he was still innocent and

---

[174] See Elise Salem: *Constructing Lebanon: A Century of Literary Narratives* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003).
[175] See the introduction to his book *Wujuh wa Hikayat*.

not corrupted; his city stories reflect the opposite: experience and a clear loss of innocence. Marun Abbud's life can be taken as a model of city-mountain conflict in all its stages.

5.4.2. Mountain Associated with the Divine

There are numerous references to the city–mountain conflict in all the texts. The account of the differences between both milieus starts with the qualities associated to both the mountain and the city. As said above, the purity of the mountain environment gives villagers the feeling of closeness to God. Marun Ghosen praises the good qualities of the inhabitants of the mountains, calling for the presence of God over them:

الله على ميروبا! وحقولها! وسكّان تلك الجبال العالية، ذوي القلوب الذهبية، رغم ما هم عليه من الخشونة

How beautiful Mayrouba is, its field, and the inhabitants of these high mountains, who have golden hearts, even if they have a rough life! (M.G. I p. 15)

He also identifies the view of the village and its surrounding nature as an "earthly paradise:"

... وحوّل وجهه إلى القرية ووقف هكذا وقف آدم ينظر من بعيد إلى ذلك الفردوس الأرضي.

And he turned his face towards the village, and he looked as if he was Adam standing at distance and gazing at that earthly paradise. (M.G. I p. 5)

وكانا قد وصلا إلى "الناقورة" .... وبدا له ذلك المنظر كمنظر فردوس أرضيّ
They had both arrived to al-Naqura, and that view seemed to them the view of an earthly paradise. (M.G. I p .23)

آه! كيف استطعتُ الابتعاد عن هذه المشاهد الساحرة!
Oh! How could I have gone far from these enchanting views! (M.G. I p. 30)

Salah Labaki also links the mountains with a divine inspiration. In his story "Malkrut," faith emerges when looking at the mountains:

... واسمع الصلاة الصامتة التي تصاعد من أعماقي في خشوع وإيمان ورهبة كلما نظرت إلى هذا الجبل، أو كلما لمست ترابه وعببت من ينابيعه...

...I listen to the silent prayer that rises from my depth in contemplation, faith, and veneration, whenever I look at this mountain, whenever I touch its soil and I quench my thirst from its springs... (S.L. p. 57)

5.4.3. Mountain associated with Nature, Health and Good Qualities

These paradisiacal descriptions are always associated with nature. The writers constantly mention the beauty of nature in their stories, and mountains and trees are the main elements of their descriptions. Marun Ghosen provides good examples of this:

<div dir="rtl">

وعند مدخل القرية، في الطريق الآتية من فيطرون، المارّة بمصيف المرسلين اللبنانيين، مشاهد جبّارة، انتصبت فيها جبالٌ من صخور رمادية اللون، جلس بعضها على البعض، ونبت في شقوقها العفص والسنديان.

</div>

At the entrance of the village, on the road coming from Faitroun, passing by the summer residence of the Lebanese missionaries, there are magnificent views of grey stone mountains standing up, entwined together, and with oaks and ilex growing from its holes. (M.G. I p. 3-4)

Ghosen considers the mountain a source of health, both mental and physical. This is the first description of Selim, the main character of one of his novels:

<div dir="rtl">

هذا الرجل شابّ' لا يجاوز الثلاثين من عمره، ذو قامة مديدة وعافية جبلية. (...) وكان لابسا على الزي الإفرنجي ثيابا زرقاء رثّة (...) وكان على كتفه قضيب سنديان اقتطعه حديثًا

</div>

This man is young, he does not exceed 30 years of age, tall height, and a mountaineer health. (...) He was wearing a ragged, blue outfit, "Franky" style (...), holding on his holder an oak stick, recently cut. (M.G. I p. 4)

Even if the character wears a *Franji*-style suit, his physical appearance identifies him as having a mountain origin. In the description, the author prioritizes his *jabali* health, a detail with a certain degree of subjectivity, over other more objective details, such as his cloths or the fact that he is carrying a stick. Later in the story, the author describes how Selim has been sick for some time, appearing in front of his father not looking well. We can deduce then that the *jabali* health described in the passage is more an internal perception of

141

the narrator who knows the character's origin, rather than a real fact. The origin of the

characters influence the way they are described, placing over them a filter of subjectivity.

In Karam's *Father Antun*, the subjective approach to the characters is evident, especially

when the narrator is describing a woman coming from the northern mountains. *Father*

Antun is set in Beirut, mostly in areas in which the majority of the population is Christian.

The main characters of the story, though, are from outside Beirut, mostly from the North.

The narrator introduces Nayla Rahmeh, one of the main characters, in this way:

ليست نائلة رحمه ابنة بيروت بل ابنة الجبل، ابنة شمالي لبنان. نشأت في تلك البقعة
من الأرض التي انبتت يوسف كرم وجبران خليل جبران. وفتحت عينيها على الأرز الدائم
الحياة، وعلى نبع قاديشا ومعقل الديمان. وعرفت شموخ الجبال ورهبة الأودية وزهد
الصوامع وخشوع النسّاك.

    Nayla Rahmeh is not a daughter of Beirut, but of the mountain, of Northern
Lebanon. She grew up in that spot of earth that cultivated Yusuf Karam and Jibran Khalil
Jibran. She opened her eyes to see the ever alive and eternal cedar, and to see the spring of
Kadisha, and the fort of Diman. She knew the proud heights of the mountains, the awe of
the valleys, the ascetics of the hermitages, and the humility of the hermits. (K.K. p. 50)

In the novel, the author clearly marks the opposition between the mountain and the

city, even if he only describes and presents the mountains in this paragraph. This passage is

the introductory paragraph of the second chapter of the book, and it comes after a first

chapter in which the author presented the story exclusively from the perspective of Father

Antun, a priest in Beirut. The initial Beiruti atmosphere, full of movement, plots and

blurred feelings, is contrasted here with the pure, strong nature of the North. Even though

the story is at a very early stage, the first chapter gave a glimpse of Father Antun inside,

more worried about worldly matters than spiritual ones. The author uses religious figures to

contrast the purity of nature in the northern mountains with the corruption of the city: the

purity of the hermits and their cells opposing the spiritual impurity of Father Antun in his city parish.

Apart from the hermits, the author uses nature in the description, through the images of the mountains and the valleys; he also uses the literary and historic figures of Jibran and Yusuf Karam, and the historical site of the fort of Diman, Diman being the summer see of the Maronite Patriarch. The cedar is used also as a symbol of the region. All these symbols belong to the ideologies of the mountain, predominant until the creation of Greater Lebanon, and they are mostly associated with Christian symbols.

Karam constantly refers to the northern origin of Nayla and other characters when mentioning them in the narration:

<div dir="rtl">

ابنة الشمال الحسناء

حسناء الشمال

ابناء الشمال

ابناء شمالي لبنان

</div>

The beautiful daughter of the North (K.K. p. 53)

The beautiful one of the North (K.K. p. 88)

Sons of the North (K.K. pp. 76, 98, 159, 223)

Sons of the North of Lebanon (K.K. p. 190)

In addition, there are other references in which the North is not mentioned but in which it is alluded to through one of its features, the cedar:

<div dir="rtl">

امرأة من بلاد الأرز

</div>

A woman from the Cedar country (K.K. p. 56)

Those natives of the North are seen as sharing a common cultural and social tradition inside the country, and almost as being part of a brotherhood:

<div dir="rtl">

فهو من بني قومها

</div>

143

He is a son of her people (K.K. p. 101)

تهوى شاباً من بني قومها

She loves a young man from the sons of her people (K.K. p. 192)

من إخواني أبناء الشمال

... from my brothers, sons of the North (K.K. p. 191)

أنا أعرف الكثيرين من إخوانك، كلهم لطيف كريم

I know lots of people from among your bothers, they are all kind and generous (K.K. p. 190)

Karam Melhem Karam himself was born in Dair al-Qamar, in the Northeast of the Shuf Mountains. However, he seems to give a special status to the northern region, associating that area with all of the good qualities that Lebanon wants to be famous for: the mountains, the eternal cedars, the valleys, and the nobility of the people. The previous association with Jibran Khalil Jibran also brings to mind the revival of Arabic literature and gives it an international scope, as Jibran is the most famous Lebanese writer in the Arab world and in the western world in general. The same happens when Karam mentions the cedar, "the eternal cedar," which alludes to the name and the fame of the tree instead of the presence or role of the tree itself. The adjective "eternal" brings the reader back in time, to the origin of the world, in which the cedar already seemed to be present. Here, the Biblical references to the cedar have more weight than the actual existence of the tree at the time the story was written, in which the cedar has lost its real function and whose wood is used almost exclusively for valuable goods.

5.4.4. The City as Loss of Freedom and Lack of Solidarity

The references to the Mountain are almost exclusively positive, but the references made to the city present both a positive and a negative side. The village characters often mention explicitly the negative characteristics of city life, as exemplified in the following paragraph by one of the characters in one of Marun Ghosen's stories. He describes to his son how life in the city can become:

ويمكنك أيضًا أن تكون "خواجا"، وتلبس "ريدنكوت"، وتحمل عصا، وتبهر أهل القرية متى رجعت إليها. ولكن قد تموت أيضًا في بيروت جوعًا، فإن امرأتك تفرغ جيبك، وأولادك تلتزم بأن تخرّجهم في المدارس، حيث لا تستطيع أن تجعلهم حرّاثًا مزارعين

You can be a "Khawaja", wearing Western attire and a walking stick , dazzling the villagers whenever you return to the village. But you may also die in Beirut by starvation, having your wife emptying your pockets, and you have to spend money for your children education because there you cannot make them ploughers and farmers. (M.G. I p. 11)

Abandoning the village, the land, is a sin from the perspective of an old villager. The character of the father, after presenting the negative side of the city, contrasts it with the life in the village:

لكن هجر أرض كهذه، إثم لا يُغتفر.
هنا، إذا نزلت البلية بأحد الناس، تسابق الجميع إلى مساعدته؛ أما في المدن، فهيهات أن يرى البائس يدا تُعينه. وإذا مات في المستشفى، فلا يكاد يمشي في جنازة ذلك المجهول أحد؛ فيُدفن في أرض غريبة وفي قبر الغرباء...

... but abandoning a land like this one, is a sin that cannot be forgiven.
Here, if misfortune happens to someone, everybody runs to help him. As for the cities, it is far from reach that the unfortunate can see a hand helping him. And if he dies in the hospital, no one may march in the funeral of that unknown, so he is buried in a strange land and in the tomb of strangers (M.G. I p. 57)

The following paragraph reflects the belief that the villager is his own master, and this makes him free:

نعم إن شغل الفلاح شاقّ؛ لكنه إذا شاء أن يشرح صدره يومًا، ويستريح من عناء العمل، فلا يضطر إلى استئذان أحد: فهو حرّ وربّ أعماله، ولا يعرف سيّدًا غير الله. ولا يحتاج في كل صباح أن يمضي إلى السوق ليبتاع قوته

Yes, the farmer's job is arduous; but if he wants to relax one day and take a rest from the tiredness of hard work, he is not obliged to ask anyone for permission: he is free and the master of his work, and he does not know a lord other than God. And he does not need to go every morning to the market to purchase his food. (M.G. I p. 10)

Later in the story, experience finally proved to the young man that his father was right:

من ذلك الحين بدأ يرى نفسه وحيدا بين قوم لا يجد فيهم من يهتم له

From that moment, he started seeing himself alone surrounded by people among whom he cannot find someone who cares about him (M.G. I p. 14)

5.4.5. The City as Escape and Hope

Nevertheless, the young villager's initial attitude has its reasons, and many villagers share his desire of leaving the village. In the beginning, the villager sees the city as a way to escape. It gives the villager the possibility to improve his quality-of-life level by means of education and opportunities even if, at the same time, it may become the refuge from ignominy together with a source of immorality and loss of traditions.

From the positive perspective, Beirut allows the villagers' sons to have a future. Education in the village is very limited and only the city allows the villager to break with a written future. In Awwad's "The Fall," a father explains why he sent his son Jaber to Beirut:

إنّ جابر يتعلم في بيروت مع أولاد عمّه في المدارس العالية، ويصير في المستقبل طبيبا أو محاميا أو موظّفا في الحكومة.

Jaber learns in Beirut with his cousins in high schools, so he becomes a doctor, a lawyer, or a government employee in the future. (T.A. p. 30)

The father can never forget the importance of knowledge and how it raises the level of an individual:

العلم! العلم! ما نفع الحياة بلا علم؟ يا حسرتاه على أيّام خليل! لا علم ولا من يحزنون! ويا للفرحة بجابر عندما سمعه أبوه يقرأ له لأول مرّة في الجريدة! بل يا عزّة عندما وقف في الكنيسة يتلو "الرسائل"، بعد أن كان ابن المختار وحده يتلوها. وقد قرأها أحسن منه!

Education, education! What is the use of life without education? Oh, what a waste those days of Khalil! There was no education and nothing to worry about. And what a joy when Jaber's father when he listened to him reading the newspaper for him for the first tim! And what an honour when he stood up in the church to read the Epistles after the mayor's son had been the only one who had read them. And he read it better than him! (T.A. p. 32)

At the same time, and seeing it from a perspective born from experience, the father regrets having sent him to the city after all the problems that it gave him and his family after he left:

ليتني أبقيت جابر في سهامه، يعيش مثلما نعيش ومثلما عاش آباؤنا و أجدادنا.

I wish I kept Jaber in Shame, living the way we live, living the way our fathers and grandfathers lived. (T.A. p. 30)

5.4.6. Duality of the City: Positive - Negative Timeline

Hence, there is an internal fight in the individual. On one side, he knows that the city is the only way of social improvement and of getting knowledge, something that a good father would always desire for his children. On the other, this desire for improvement carries a moral degeneration, and the risk of loss: loss of traditions and, in the above-mentioned story, loss of properties caused by unpaid debts. The material loss also has spiritual consequences: the loss of the land means a loss of their own history. It is critical to emphasize the importance of the timeline of events. The positive view of the city, in a sense associated with ignorance and hope, always comes before the negative side, associated with

147

experience. The initial success of a person, obtained after his arrival to the city, later becomes a trap from which the character cannot escape.

5.4.7. Mountain as Place to Escape from Corruption

The physical movement runs parallel to temporal progress, so there is no way to go back to the original point, no matter if the character goes back physically to his point of departure. In Karam's *Father Antun*, the main character of the priest sees himself having sinned through his thoughts, and he knows that he will probably sin soon through his acts as well. In that moment, he wishes to escape from Beirut as the only way to avoid sinning:

<div dir="rtl">

فالحب داء يرمي صاحبه بالوسواس والهواجس... والبونا وقد أحب لم يسلم من فتكات الدواء . فتقاذفته باحة الكنيسة إلى الأمام وإلى الوراء وهو يودّ الفرار من بيروت بكاملها لو تسنى له الفرار

</div>

Love is a sickness that throws its holder into doubt and compulsion… and Father Antun had loved, and he did not escape from the agony of the sickness. So the church court pushed him backwards and forwards, while wishing if it were possible for him to run away from Beirut completely. (K.K. p. 80)

Even if the place of escape is not mentioned, it can be understood that it is a place in Lebanon different from the city, probably the mountain area. The only way to avoid sin is escaping from Beirut. However, the timeline cannot be reversed, and the character cannot escape from his internal corruption.

Escape is possible for Salah Labaki, though. His stories are based on legends, and they break the sequential chains imposed by time as in the most realistic stories by other authors. Labaki describes an example in which a dog escapes to the mountains running way from the coast. In his story "The Winged Dog," a magical being that appears once a year with a dog from the deepness of a lake, explains why the dog is with him:

<div dir="rtl">

أتاني هاربا من الناس القاطنين على ساحل البحر

</div>

He came to me running away from the people living on the coast (p. 69)

His stories are set in legendary times, with the background of the Phoenician city-states of the coast. The dog escapes from the people living on the coast (i.e. the cities) to the mountain, so this image is just a variant of the ideas presented in the most realistic stories.

5.4.8. The City as Escape for the Corrupted

Contact with the city always carries a certain transformation, and the most evident transformation is the change of appearance. In the city, the villagers can have access to fashionable clothes and accessories that are not available in their village. In Abbud's story "Jean Effendi," a young man, unhappy with his life in the village, "emigrates" to "the city," Beirut, changing his outside appearance and substituting the villager clothes with the more fashionable European look:

... ولم تعد تطيب له الحياة القروية الهادئة فغير زيه واستبدل الشروال بالغنباز لباس علماء عصره. ثم ارتقى بعد حين فلبس الطقم الفرنجي حين هاجر إلى المدينة.

And the quiet village life did not please him anymore, so he changed his clothes, substituting the buggy trousers with the ghombaz,[176] the dress of the learned people of his time. Then, he went a step higher by wearing the European suit when he emigrated to the city. (M.A. p. 95)

From a linguistic perspective, it is interesting to notice how the author applies the verb "to emigrate" to the act of leaving the village to travel to a city that is less than a hundred kilometers away. In this case, the story is set during the time of the Mutasarrifiyya, a period in which the mountain and the city were still separated and considered to belong to different territories. The moral and psychological distance is much bigger than the physical distance, and going to the city marks an important change in the life of the person.

---

[176] The *ghombaz* is a tunic open in the front and tightened at the waist by a sarong.

In the preceding example, the city is not a place where the individual gets corrupted, but the refuge for someone who is somehow already corrupted. The change started before going to the city, and only by leaving the village can the character develop his repressed nature and his ambitions. However, the changes are not always caused by internal instincts, and they can be produced by outside negative circumstances. The story of Salma in Awwad's "The Desecrated Graveyard" is an example of this case. She goes to Beirut escaping from the ignominy of a pregnancy outside marriage, and she ends up as a prostitute.

سلمى التي تركت فوران قبل عشر سنوات غير روزيت – اسمها صار روزيت – التي كانت قبل أربع وعشرين ساعة تستقبل شبّان بيروت في حضنها، ويملأ اسمها "السوق".

Salma, the one who left Fouran ten years ago was different from Rosette – her name became Rosette – who, twenty four hours ago, was receiving Beirut's young men in her arms and whose name filled "the market." (T.A. p. 11)

The shame of a member of the family affects other family members, who also find the only way of escape in the city:

...والد سلمى. كان رجلا طيبا، سكوتا، مات بعد سنة من فضيحة ابنته. مات قهرا عليها. أما ابنه فقد نزل وراء شقيقته إلى بيروت هربا من العار الذي لحقه في فوران.

… Salma's father, who was a calm, good man, died a year after his daughter's scandal. He died out of his grief for her. As for his son, he went to Beirut escaping from the shame that stained him in Fouran. (T.A. p. 14)

In all these examples, the city is more a place of refuge than a place of moral degeneration, but the latter is probably the most frequent in the stories. In Awwad's "The Fall," a woman describes the wife of her brother-in-law, living in Beirut, as someone spending money in unnecessary, artificial objects:

150

وامرأة أخيك في بيروت تشتري بمالنا فساطين وحمرة وبودرة وتذهب إلى السينما وتركب السيارات.

In Beirut, your brother's wife buys dresses, lipstick, and makeup powder with our money, and she goes to the cinema and uses cars. (T.A. p. 31)

She does not obtain the words she wants from her husband, so she blames him:

ـ أريد أن أعرف هل أنا زوجتك أم روزا؟ انزل إلى بيروت واتركني!

- I want to know if I am your wife or Rosa is? Go to Beirut and abandon me! (T.A. p. 32)

5.4.9. The City as Place of Corruption

Travelling to Beirut represents here a clear break between honest life and corruption. Beirut becomes the place where immoral behaviour becomes possible and even accepted. Village women see Beirut women as a menace, as a source of corruption into which their men can easily fall. In "The Wooden Shirt", a mother expresses her dissatisfaction with her daughter-in-law, a woman from Beirut:

كانت الأم على حقّ في خوفها من بيروت، المدينة المملوءة بشيطانات النساء.

The mother was right being scared of Beirut, the city full of devilish women. (T.A. p. 76)

Abbud also reflects many times the city as a place for corruption. In "Umm Nakhkhoul," a neighbor who has left the village to live in the city acts as instigator of the corruption of a family:

انتهت الحرب وتغير كل شيء، أولادنا كانوا طوع والدهم فصاروا يردّون الكلمة كلمتين. أعجبتهم عيشة المدن. كان ابن جارنا يقف على بابنا حتى نطعِمه لقمة، فترك الضيعة بعد الحرب ورجع إليها كأنّه خواجا، لا يحكي إلا عن المغنيات والرقاصات، حاشا قدرك فأفسد واحدًا من أولادي وأخذه معه.

When the war finished and everything changed, our children who were obedient to their father, they started answering his word with two. They started liking the city life. The son of our neighbors used to stand at our door until we fed him. After the war, he left the village and later came back as if he were a khawaja, talking only about singers and dancers. Far be it from you, he corrupted one of my children and took him with him. (M.A. p. 150)

151

The city "lights" attracted the woman's children, who gradually lose their traditional values and the respect that they had for their parents. There is another passage in the same story that reflects the loss of traditional values:

فصــار بيتنا جهنم الحمرا. حديثهم الدائم: فلان ما عنده رزق وعيشته أحسن من عيشتنا، وفلان أفقر أهل الضيعة وثيابه جوخ وحرير شغل البلاد – تعني أوروبا – ونحن نلبس من حياكتك.

Our home became like hell. All their talking was: "Someone doesn't have any wealth and his life is better than ours. Someone else is from the poorest family in the village and yet all his clothes are broadcloth and silk, made all in the country – and she means Europe – and we are dressed in clothes you make for us. (M.A. p. 150)

This passage describes a common phenomenon among the youth. Another author, Marun Ghosen, also uses one of the main characters from one of his novels to mirror this experience. Selim, who could be considered the stereotype of this phenomenon, shows the reader the contrast between the city and the mountain, and how many young men from the mountains leave their hometowns to live in the city:

اسم هذا الشاب سليم؛ وتاريخ حياته بسيط. قد غرّه حب السكن في بيروت – شأن كثير من شبان الجبل – فقصد إليها. لكنه ما أقام بها طويلا، حتى أدرك أنه كان في وهم، وأن ليس بالسكن فيها سعادة.

This young man's name is Selim, and the story of his life is simple. The love of living in Beirut had seduced him, like many of the young men of the mountain, and there he went. But soon after he settled down there, he realized that he was living in illusion, and that there was no happiness in living there. (M.G. I p. 6)

وحدث أن أرسله أبوه مرّة إلى بيروت، لشراء بعض حاجات، فجذبته المدينة بحركة أسواقها وكثرة ملاهيها وحسن ملابس سكّانها، إلى غير ما هنالك من المظاهر التي تبهر عيون الأغرار وتخدع أمثال من رأوا المدن أول مرّة؛ فحسب أن العيش في المدن ألذّ، والعمل فيها أيسر.

It happened that his father sent him once to Beirut to buy some things they needed, and the city charmed him with the activities of its markets, the huge number of attractions, how well its inhabitants dress, not to mention all the manifestations that dazzle the eyes of

152

the inexperienced young people and deceive those who visit the cities for the first time. So he thought that living in the cities is more pleasurable and the work is easier. (M.G. I p. 6)

There are many reasons for the youth's preference to live in the city, and one main reason is the different work done in both milieus. Most authors reflect favoritism for the mountain life in their works, so they begin presenting the villagers' work by its negative qualities but finish by praising its positive qualities. The following passage shows the reaction of Selim's father to his son's behaviour after his return from the city:

"... مرّت عليك أيام، منذ عودتك من بيروت، وأنت على غيرما كنت عليه: فإني أراك تشتغل مكرها؛ وهذا لا يُرضيني، لأن ما نعمله بضجر، لا ينفع شيئا. قل لي هل تأنف من مهنتنا؟
"سكوتك يدلّني على ما في باطنك! ويلك، أيها الشاب العاقّ! أنت ترغب في الاقتداء ببعض الشبان الجهّال' وتحبّ الذهاب إلى بيروت وتريد ترك معاونة أبيك وأمك اللذين كابدا الأتعاب في تربيتك!

"...some days have passed since your return from Beirut, and you are different from how you were. I see you working as if you were forced to work, and that doesn't satisfy me because, what we do in burden is of no use at all. Tell me, do you disdain our occupation?"
"Your silence revels to me what is in your inside. Oh, disobedient youth! You wish to take a model of some ignorant young men, and you want to go to Beirut, and to stop helping your father and your mother who suffered troubles to bring you up. (M.G. I p. 9)

Later on in the story, this idea is repeated several times. Even the narrator intervenes directly into the speech to denounce this behaviour:

قد صار الشبّان في عصرنا يستنكفون من الأرض، ولا يريدون أن ينحنوا ليحرثوها؛ وإنهم يجدون ذلك حقيرا شاقا. فيا للأسف!

The young men of our time have started to disdain the land, and they do not want to lean to plough it because they find this to be low and arduous. Oh what a pity! (M.G. I p. 22)

Leaving the land is not always chosen by the villager, resulting from desire or disdain. Selim's father mentions other causes for the emigration, such as the historical circumstances of the First World War:

153

إن كثيرين من شبّان هذه النواحي هجروها بعد الحرب الكبرى ورحلوا؛ وكثيرون غيرهم يفكرون في المهاجرة أو في الانتقال إلى بيروت.

Many young men of these areas abandoned it after the Great War and they travelled, and many others think of emigration or of moving to Beirut. (M.G. I p. 35)

From the linguistic perspective, it is important to notice the distinction made by the narrator between "emigration" and "moving to Beirut." Abbud used the verb "to emigrate" above applied also to the "moving to Beirut." In this case, however, the distinction is clear. Marun Ghosen is the only author who was born in the city of Beirut, and his perspective is clearly different from Abbud's, who was born in the village. Both authors were born around the same time (1880s), living the historical events at a similar age. Therefore, the comparison is very significant: what Abbud describes as emigrating, for Ghosen is just moving.

The changes derived from contact with the city are rooted deeply in the individual. The internal transformation affects his outside behavior and, as indicated above, his physical appearance. Abbud takes the outside changes to the extreme in his story "Jean Effendi," in which a young man reaches the point of changing his own name, implying a significant break with his previous identity. In this story, Abu Hanna, father of the young man who moved to the city, receives a letter from his son signed as "Jean" instead of "Hanna." The man does not understand the meaning and he asks the priest about the name in the signature on the letter:

فضحك الخوري وقال: اسمع يا عمي، حنّا ويوحنّا ويحيى ويونّس وجان وأوهانس، هذه الكلمات كلّها معناها حنّا.
فقال الرجل: ولماذا نقّى ابني جان وما نقّى يحيى مثلا؟
فأجاب الخوري: "موضة. يحيى بطلت، وجان اسم عصري جديد. فأنت صرت بحسب ناموس الارتقاء بو جان.

154

The priest laughs and said: "Listen, 'ammi. Hanna, Bu Hanna, Yahia, Yunnes, Jean and Ohaness are words that have all the same meaning: Hanna."

The man said: "And why did he pick Jean and not, let's say, Yahia?"

The priest answered: "Fashion. Yahia became obsolete and Jean is a new name of our time. In this way you have become, by the means of the promotion law, Abu Jean."

(M.A. p. 96)

The story is set before the First World War. It was in that period around the war when new "occidental" names were introduced in the area. They appear as a consequence of massive emigration to Western countries, and people associate them with progress, well-being, and rise in the social scale. Even if the names started to become popular in the cities, they were still uncommon or unknown in the villages, especially to older people.[177]

5.4.10. The City Seen as Choices and Freedom

City women also have certain privileges over village women, in the sense that they have access to more beauty instruments, whether clothes or cosmetics. We have seen in previous examples that village women fear city women and despise them. However, there is a hidden feeling of envy rarely expressed openly. In "Umm Lattuf," a woman feels jealous because of the natural beauty and youth of her daughter-in-law. She feels the need to compete with the young woman, and she does not hesitate to go to Beirut as a last resort:

---

[177] This is not the only case in which the writers mention this trend in their stories. Awwad, thirty years younger than Abbud, reflects in "Palm Sunday" the moment when foreign names started arriving to the villages:

بكتور! قالت الخورية ذلك بصوت عالٍ، ثمّ ظهرت على وجهها نصف ضحكة استهزاء بهذه الأسماء التي ظهرت بعد الحرب في القرية، وليس أحد من القدّيسين يحمل اسماً منها. بكتور أصبح في الخامسة من عمره، وهو يلبس طقها إفرنجيًا مقلمًا بالأحمر، والآخرون يلبسون كلّهم القنابيز. [...] هو ابن أغنى أغنياء القرية. أبوه مارون سافر إلى أميركا وجمع ثروة طائلة وعاد إلى القرية.

Victor! The khuriyya said that in loud voice, and her face showed half a mocking laugh to those names that appeared in the village after the war and Saints did not carry any of them. Victor was now five, and he was wearing a Franky striped in red, when all the others were wearing the traditional trousers. [...] He was the son of the richest person in the village. His father Marun travelled to America, made a huge wealth, and went back to the village. (T.A. p.47)

Foreign names start appearing in the village after the end of the First World War, mainly as a result of the émigrés coming back to their villages after the creation of Greater Lebanon. In this case, it is the richest person in the village who names his son with a foreign name. Foreign-given names, together with the use of foreign clothes, could then imply a sort of prestige and wealth.

... كانت ترتاع كلما رأت ذلك الحسن يندحر ويجدّ في الهرب، فعزمت بغتة على زيارة بيروت.

ما درى أحد بما تنويه حتى عادت بعد جمعة وقد بدلت بثيابها الهرقلية أزياء جديدة، ولم تنس الجزدان والشمسية، باعت شكتها وضفائرها واشترت أطرف الأنسجة وأغلاها، وعادت إلى الضيعة كأنها عروس...

She panicked every time she felt that her beauty was fading, and escaping from her so fast, so she suddenly decided to visit Beirut.

Nobody knew what her intention was until she went back after a week, having changed his Herculean clothes by new outfits, without forgetting the purse and the parasol. She sold her old necklace and her tresses and bought the most exquisite and expensive fabrics. She went back to the village as if she were a bride... (M.A. p. 104-5)

Traveling to Beirut means here to have access to fashion. In this case, as in the previous example, the city does not corrupt, but instead acts as a means to reach someone's objective. The reaction of the villagers to the woman's changes, instead of being admiration or envy as she expected, is of mockery.

Certain ways of expression that would have been unthinkable in the village, are used in the city without any remorse, fear, or superstition. Religious terminology is used for example in the story "Bahiyya," in which the main character, Mikhail, uses sacred and profane words to define himself in front of a prostitute:

‏- وأنت بماذا يجب أن أناديك؟
‏- أنا؟ ناديني بما شئت! شيطان! ملاك! حمار! بل حمار حمار!

- *And you, how should I call you?*
- *Me? Call me whatever you want, demon, angel, donkey! Donkey, donkey!* (T.A. p. 94)

The city gives people more freedom, both to act and to express themselves.

5.4.11. Ghosen: A Point of View from the City

The stories rarely present the point of view of a person born in the city. The point of view is mainly set as that of the villagers, so the stories are far from showing an objective view. We have also seen that even the narrator sometimes takes part in this obvious

subjectivity. Marun Ghosen, being originally from the city, is the only one who breaks the homogeneity of the other writers. He presents the negative side of the mountain life, at least as seen by someone coming from the city. The following passage describes the memories of Wadi', a man born in the city who, in his childhood, spent some time in a village in the mountain.

تذكّر العلاقات القليلة، التي كانت له مع صبيان القرية، وكيف كانوا يضحكون من سذاجة قلبه، ويستضعفونه ويضربونه...

He remembered the few ties that he had with the boys of the village, and how they used to laugh at him for his naiveté, to deem him weak, and hit him. (M.G. II p. 12)

This perspective is new in relation to all the other analyzed stories. The cruelty of the villagers' children is well known[178] but, until now, the cruelty had not been applied to humans. We must remember that the author was born in Beirut, so he may have experienced this cruelty himself, when he was a child spending time or visiting a village. There is another passage in which the view of the inhabitants of the city is positive. It corresponds to the same novel mentioned above in which the main character is from the city:

ـ هو من المدينة ....؛ وأنت تعلم، كما أنا أعلم، أنّ أهل هذه المدينة جدراء بإتيان المعجزات.

He is from the city of ...., and you know, as I know, that the people from this city are capable of making miracles. (M.G. II p.54)

Ghosen makes the distinction between people of the city and the conditions of the city itself, while other authors tend to unify both ideas.

---

[178] See for example Awwad's "Lust for Blood", in *The Lame Boy*, where the story revolves around a group of village children torturing a dog until it dies.

157

5.4.12. Karam: The City Ideology and Its Influence on Terminology

The mercantilist economy that dominated Lebanon after 1920 had its focus mainly in a Beiruti atmosphere. Karam presents both of his novels in city settings, and his *Father Antun* reflects this phenomenon through the mercantilist terminology used to deal with certain issues. This usage is exclusive to this writer:

كاهناً يتاجر بالدين

... *a priest who trades with religion* (K.K. p. 41)

قالت ربة المنزل: كيف ترى في هذه الأيام سوق الزواج؟ أتبدو لك كاسدة؟

The housewife said: How do you see the wedding market these days? Does it seem to you paralyzed? (K.K. p. 44)

... كيف أعيش إذا لم أتاجر؟ ... هل من عار في التجارة؟ أما حدثنا الإنجيل عمن تاجر بوزنات سيده الخمس

How can I live if I don't trade? Is there shame in trading? Don't the Gospels tell us about he who traded the fifth with his master's scale units? (K.K. p. 58)

أيها الدين، أيها الدين، كم يتاجر حارسوك باسمك وأنت غافل نائم. كم يبيعونك ويتوكأون في مقاصدهم عليك وأنت جامد ساكن.

Oh, Religion, religion, how much your custodians trade in your name, and you are asleep and unaware of what is going on. How much they sell you and rest their intentions on you and you stay quiet, frozen. (K.K. p. 114)

5.4.13. Conclusion

The conflict between mountain and the city is present in almost all texts, and there seems to be a clear distinction between the two milieus, as if they were two completely different universes. The authors express the differences through both external and internal characteristics, including outside appearance, values, and morals. When talking about the city, both the narrator and the characters use expressions similar to the ones they use when referring to foreign countries. The way they speak about city women, for example, is

almost identical to the way they speak about occidental women. In an extreme case, Marun Abbud even uses the verb "to emigrate" to refer to moving to the city.

The objective of this section was to deduce if the city-mountain subject was described as an internal conflict within a country, or a clash of two independent entities. Based on the clash between mountain and city, it is risky to declare the non-existence of national unity from the territorial perspective. However, a feeling of national unity from the moral perspective is totally absent. The writers present the coastal cities and the mountain areas as belonging to different regions, with different history and heritage.[179]

5.5. Comparative Perspectives and Conclusions

5.5.1. Lebanon

The State of Greater Lebanon was established in 1920. As with any newborn state, adapting to the new reality that surrounded it was neither immediate, nor easily accepted by all. The new state had to struggle to prove its existence to itself and to others. Moreover, the process of transforming old values and realities into the new national character was not an easy task. One of the main issues revealed through the analysis was not the existence of certain terms or concepts, but how those concepts applied to very different realities at diverse times in history. What is often taken as a "given" today, is no more than the consequence of certain historical conditions at a certain time of history.

The existence of Lebanon, for example, was never an issue throughout the texts, but the analysis has shown that, during the Mandate period, it continued to be associated mostly

---

[179] We must remember now how the organizers named the two conferences that, during the Mandate period, discussed and presented Lebanon as part of a bigger entity, whether Syrian or Arab, being against the existence of Lebanon as a complete independent state: "The Coastal Conferences" or "The Conference of the Coast." Most participants belonged to the coastal cities, and their political views diverged from most politicians coming from the mountain areas.

with nature and with the geographical region of the *Mutasarrifiyya* or Smaller Lebanon. Some authors included the idea of Greater Lebanon in their texts, but it was mainly associated with the government and the state. Despite the idea of Lebanon as refuge for Christians, as stated by some thinkers before the establishment of Greater Lebanon, this connection was reduced to a couple of indirect references throughout all the texts.

a. Lebanon outside the Target Group: Khalil Taqi al-Din

This idea was shared by other Lebanese writers, living both inside and outside Lebanon, but with slight dissimilarities. Khalil Taqi al-Din's *'Ashar Qisas min Samim al-Haya* was one of the literary works mentioned among the most significant of the twentieth century, according to *LIBAN. Le Siècle en images. 1900-2000*.[180] Khalil Taqi al-Din shares with the authors of this study the fact that he was born and raised inside Lebanese borders and, despite becoming a diplomat later in his life, he had not lived outside Lebanon when he wrote these stories.[181] He is also from the mountain, from a territory that belonged to the *Mutasarrifiyya* of Mount Lebanon, and many of his stories are also set in the countryside, with villagers as main characters. The only difference is his religion: Taqi al-Din was Druze while all the authors of this study were Maronite Christians. Despite their religious differences, there is not much dissimilarity in the way in which they all treat the topics presented in this analysis. *'Ashar Qisas min Samin al-Haya* is a collection of short stories that, as the title points out, are inspired by real life. They have a very strong realistic character, with the exception of the last two stories. This coincides with Awwad and Abbud's collections, in which the last stories also had a more fantastic, unreal character,

---

[180] *LIBAN. Le Siècle en images. 1900-2000*. Sous la direction de Nawaf Salam et Farès Sassine. Les Editions Dar An-Nahar. Arab Printing Press S.A.L. November 2001. Beirut. See Background section.
[181] Khalil Taqi al-Din was born in 1906, in Baaqline, in the Shuf district. For more information about Taqi al-Din and his work, see Jamil Jabr, *Khalil Taqi al-Din*, (Beirut: Dar Naufal, 2006).

focused more on an inside subjective perspective than on an objective view of reality. Six out of the ten stories are set in a rural environment, two in an urban environment, and the last two stories, due to their more abstract character, are set in an indeterminate environment. The stories set in a rural environment revolve around social conventions and traditions, which often turn out to be devastating for the individual.

Despite the parallels with the stories analyzed in this study, in Taqi al-Din's stories there seems to be better acceptance of the idea of the extended Lebanon as state, with Beirut as its capital. In one of the stories, the narrator notes a parallel between the Shuf and Baaqline, and Lebanon and Beirut.[182] Baaqline is part of the Shuf, and Beirut, therefore, is part of Lebanon. Even with the inclusion of Beirut in Lebanon, Lebanon does not lose its traditional character in Taqi al-Din's stories, and it is still associated with high mountains, valleys, and small villages. In the stories there are many examples in which the term *Lebanon* is linked to nature and a rural environment.[183] We will see below that Taqi al-Din, like all the analyzed authors, clearly reflects the separation between rural and urban environments but, in this case, Lebanon does not seem to be limited to the rural environment, as in some of our authors' views, or at least it is not stated as such in this collection of short stories. The events in the stories are set at a time that could be identified as contemporary to the author's life. This is probably one of the main reasons why the State of Lebanon has a stronger presence in comparison with the stories analyzed in the study that went back in time to the period of the *Mutasarrifiya* or, at least, before the establishment of the State of Greater Lebanon.

---

[182] In the eighth story of the collection, "Baʿda al-ʿArs", the narrator indicates the importance of Baaqline for people living in the Shuf:

وأبناء الشوف ينظرون إلى بعقلين كما ينظر أبناء لبنان إلى بيروت.

People from the Shuf look at Baaqlin in the same way people from Lebanon look at Beirut (Kh.T. 125)

[183] See for example, pp. 74, 76, and 147.

b. Lebanon outside the Target Group: The Mahjar

For those Lebanese authors who lived part of their life in the *Mahjar*, most of them left before the establishment of Greater Lebanon, so it is natural that Lebanon did not have a strong association with a state, especially in their literary works based on memories of their homeland. According to Jean Fointaine,[184] some Lebanese editors substituted the name *Syria* with that of *Lebanon* after the establishment of Greater Lebanon in the texts of some *Mahjar* writers, such as the texts of Amin al-Rihani. This reveals that the strong Lebanese identity associated with those writers during most of the twentieth century was not as strong for them, and that being born in Mount Lebanon did not always imply any exclusion from the neighboring territories. This does not mean that Lebanon was not mentioned in their works, of course, or that there was not a feeling of belonging to Lebanon. Many of them wrote about Lebanon, and their works illustrate the images associated with what they understood by Lebanon. In some of the poems written by Lebanese émigrés in American lands, the term Lebanon is used when longing for the place of origin.[185] Also, because many émigrés were originally from Mount Lebanon, obviously Lebanon was mostly associated with nature, with the high mountains and the small villages scattered on their slopes. One of these *Mahjar* writers, Amin al-Rihani, went back to his home country and travelled around the area, writing about his trips. He died in 1940, but his *Qalb Lubnan. Siyahat qasira fi jibalina wa tarikhina* was published post-mortem in 1946. Al-Rihani dedicated his book to his friend Charles Corm, and from his definition of Lebanon in the first page of the texts and from some of the chapters' titles containing the names of Marjaayoun, Jezzine, or simply "the South," it is evident that Lebanon here refers

---

[184] Fontaine, *La crise religieuse*, 36.
[185] ʿIsā al-Nāʿūrī, *Adab al-Mahjar* (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1977), 82-7.

to the State of Greater Lebanon. Nonetheless, those chapters covering Mount Lebanon's territories are much longer, and they present more details than those dealing with the southern territories.[186] The existence of Greater Lebanon is accepted then, but the emphasis keeps being placed upon the territories of Smaller Lebanon.

c. Lebanon outside the Target Group: Taha Husayn

As revealed in the historical introduction, the establishment of the new state was not equally accepted among all citizens living inside the borders of Greater Lebanon. The opposition to the state was well-known among those living in the main coastal cities, which mostly preferred the union with Syria. Among the writers analyzed in this study, as we have seen, the issue was not the acceptance of Lebanon or not, because it was generally recognized, but how far its surface extended. However, what was a fact for them, the existence of the Lebanese State, was not seen as clearly from the outside, not because of rejection but rather because of unawareness.

In 1926, Taha Husayn visited Beirut with his wife on the occasion of the *Mu'tamar al-Athaar*, and the press syndicate organized a small gathering, a *tea party*, to honor him while he was in the city. What follows is part of Taha Husayn's speech to those present in the gathering:[187]

"أشكركم على حفاوتكم وأقول لكم بكل إخلاص إنني لا أتواضع الكبرياء الكاذبة بل أعترف أمامكم أني لست نابغة كما لقبني بعض إخوانكم وإنما أنا أديب يعمل في دولة

---

[186] In fact, the chapters covering Marjaayoun, Jezzine, and the South - trips 13, 14, 15 - have a huge question mark as the only content of the chapter, at least in the third edition of the work published in1965. It may be because al-Rihani died before being able to complete the chapters, but it is curious that it is just the south, the territories outside Smaller Lebanon, that appear blank.

[187] *Al-Ahrar al-Mussawara*, 15, April 21, 1926, p.5.

الأدب. لقد شعرت ببيروت وطرابلس وحلب وحمص وبعلبك أني كنت بين إخواني وأهلي فقد التف حولي كرام أفاضل ذكّروني أني في بلدي بين عشيرتي وقومي. قال أحد الخطباء أني أول عربي نال شهادة عربية من أول جامعة عربية. وهذا صحيح. ولكنني مدين بهذه الشهادة لكم فأنا لم أحصل عليها إلا بفضل أبي علاء المعري وهو سوري من هذا البلد الكريم فأنا مدين بحياتي الأدبية العربية لسوريا ونابغتها الأكبر.

"ثم إن هذه النهضة الأدبية العربية التي تنظرون فيها إلى مصر، كما قال أحد خطبائكم، إنما هي نهضتكم يا أبناء الشام. بدأت في بلدكم ومنها نقلتموها إلى وادي النيل حيث لم يزل أدباؤكم عاملين فيها بكل نشاط. وأنا شخصيا أعتمد عليكم في نشر الجديد من هذه النهضة لأنكم أكثر شجاعة وأشدّ إقداما من المصريين وأوفر استعدادا منهم لقبول المبادئ والأفكار الجديدة"

I thank you for welcoming me so warmly, and I tell you with all honesty that I am not pretending modesty from a bogus glory, but I confess in front of you that I am not a genius, as some of your colleagues named me. I am only a writer working in the country of Literature. In Beirut, Tripoli, Aleppo, Homs and Ba'albak, I felt that I was among my brothers and family, as gracious, generous people surrounded me and made me feel that I am in my country among my folks and my own people. One of the speakers said that I was the first Arab who obtained an Arabic degree from the first Arab University, and this is true. But I am indebted to you for getting this degree, because I got it thanks to Abu Ala' al-Ma'rri, and he is Syrian form this generous country. So I am indebted in my Arabic literary life to Syria and to its greatest genius.

Furthermore, this Arabic literary renaissance that you give its credit to Egypt, as one of the speakers said, is in fact your renaissance, you, sons of Syria. It started in your country, and from there you took it to the Nile Valley, where you writers are still working with vigor. Myself, personally, I depend on you to publish the innovations from this renaissance, because you are more courageous and you have more initiative than the Egyptians, and you are more prepared than them to accept new principles and thoughts.

Taha Husayn made these comments six years after the establishment of Greater Lebanon, in 1926, the year in which the Constitution was drafted. He was born in 1889, and therefore he was 30 years old by 1920. It is manifest from this passage that Taha Husayn still saw Beirut as belonging to Syria in 1926, and Lebanese People as being part of Syrian people. In his speech, he refers to five cities, three of them in Lebanon and two in Syria, but he never mentions the noun Lebanon or the adjective Lebanese. He defines Abu Ala' al-Ma'ri as Syrian from *this country*, and he places all the cities mentioned in the same geographical area. This speech, together with the feeling of brotherhood that it transmits,

164

can be viewed as an ideological seed of the future United Arab Republic, which Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir would establish more than thirty years later, in 1958. Nevertheless, the clearest conclusion at the time in which Taha Husayn gave the speech is that, from an outside perspective, the new states were not fully accepted or assimilated by many Arabs, independently of their educational level, and Lebanon continued to be seen as part of Syria.

5.5.2. B*alad/bilad*, *Watan*, and *Dawla*

Continuing with the ambiguity that characterizes this period, the analysis has shown that the authors used repeatedly the terms *balad/bilad*, *watan*, and *dawla*, but without being exclusively associated with a specific region or place. Even if Lebanon was associated with *bilad* and *dawla* on a few occasions, it was solely associated to *watan* in the speech of a politician. In all other cases, *watan* was limited more to the characters' immediate world, the village and its surroundings.

A curious case appears in two of Marun Abbud's stories, "Umm Nakhul" and "The Emigrant," in which the term *bilad* was associated only with foreign countries. In both stories, it was a villager who used the term applied to a foreign country. Curiously, in some of Khalil Taqi al-Din's stories mentioned above, *bilad* is also tied directly with foreign countries on a few occasions. For example, in "Faris al-Shami" the narrator points to a fact present in the Lebanese society of the time, a fact visibly reflected in all stories of all authors:

تلك البلاد البعيدة التي يدعوها العلماء البرازيل والأرجنتين وأوستراليا والولايات المتحدة، ولا يعرف لها أهل لبنان إلا اسماً واحداً: أميركا.

Those distant countries which the learned people call Brazil, Argentina, Australia, and the United States, and that the Lebanese people only know by a single name: America (Kh.T. p. 63-4)

As we can see, the term *bilad* is linked here to the countries of emigration. This passage includes also important data: it mentions the most popular countries for Lebanese émigrés, and that includes Australia, named America also by the "People of Lebanon." This reflects very little knowledge of geography, something quite common almost everywhere among less-educated people. This and the fact that the story is set in a rural environment makes this "Lebanese people" closer to the mountain people than to the city residents, who supposedly have received better education and were able to be more specific.[188] There are other cases in Taqi al-Din's stories in which the world *bilad* is associated with foreign countries. Also in the story "Faris al-Shami," America is described as *bilad al-ghara'ib* and *bilad al-hurriyya wa al-nur*; and in the story "Ba'da al-'Ars," the narrator mentions *bilad al-gharb* to refer to the country of emigration. Facing these three cases, *bilad* is used to refer to Lebanese lands only on one occasion, and it is defined by the personal pronoun, not the article or another noun.[189] This is not a general trend, though, and many other writers used *bilad* to refer to Lebanon or any part of the Lebanese lands. An example for this is the poem *Biladi*, by Iliya Abu Madi. All the images offered by Abu Madi bring to the readers the views of nature in Mount Lebanon, far away from his place of residence in the emigration lands. The main conclusion in all this would be then the high degree of diversity

---

[188] Remember for example the young man in Awwad's "The Poet," who particularized when referring to the country of origin of a European visitor saying "Italy," and he was the child of a hotel owner.

[189] In the story "Faris al-Shami," an émigré who returned to Lebanon decided to go back to America after an unsuccessful stay in his home country, in which tradition managed to make his stay unhappy and frustrating. In the final paragraphs, the narrator describes how the main character moves away from Lebanon in a boat:

بعد أسبوع، كان فارس الشامي يلقي نظرة أخيرة على سلسلة جبال لبنان وقراه المنتشرة في سفوحه وعلى قممه، وهو متكئ إلى حاجز الباخرة الخشبيّ وهي تتهادى خارجة من مرفأ بيروت، ويجيل في بلاده التي يتركها من جديد، ولكن إلى الأبد، عينين مغروقتين بالدموع.

After a week, Faris al-Shami was looking for the last time at the mountain chain of Lebanon, at his villages scattered on their slopes, and at its summits, leaning on the boat's wooden handrail, while it was moving away from Beirut port, observing his country that he was leaving again, but this time forever, with his eyes full of tears. (Kh.T. 74)

when using the words *balad/bilad*, and *watan*, that does not coincide between the writers, independently of their religion or their place of residence.

5.5.3. Urban and Rural Areas

In connection with the topic relating the mountain and the city, the analysis has sufficiently proved that there is a moral clash between both environments, which did not necessarily indicate an absence of national unity, but which demonstrated the clear separation between both environments. The section dedicated to this issue also pointed to the fact that the clash is not restricted to Lebanon, but is a general phenomenon present in all societies where there are rural and urban environments inside the same country or geographical area.

a. Urban and Rural Areas: Khalil Taqi al-Din

Other Lebanese writers also demonstrated this phenomenon. In Taqi al-Din's stories, the author presents a clear line dividing rural and urban environments. As mentioned earlier, six out of the ten stories of his work *'Ashar Qisas* are set in a rural environment, and two have an urban setting. As happened in the texts of this study, the life in the village differs from the life in the city at most levels: daily life is different, people dress differently, and there is more personal freedom. However, in Taqi al-Din's stories, there is not the clear association between rural life and positivity, and between urban life and negativity, present in our authors. On the contrary, there are many negative attributes associated with village life and its traditions. In Taqi al-Din's stories, traditions and social conventions are responsible for the destruction of the individual, who is often sacrificed to social rules and who finishes in abandonment and despair. Leaving aside the plots of the story, life inside the village is presented almost as claustrophobic, while the city allows the

individual to move more freely and to act according to his personal desires. In fact, the same action presented as positive by Taqi al-Din – as the man-woman relations outside marriage – is presented as negative in most of the stories analyzed in this research. The same action, then, has two different approaches whether is seen by the traditional perspective of the villagers or is lived from the internal perspective of the characters as individuals living in the city.

b. Urban and Rural Areas: Egypt

The mountain-city issue is not restricted to Lebanon, as mentioned above, and it has its parallels in many other Arab lands and in most other cultures. In Egypt, for example, there is a clear opposition between the main urban centers, especially Cairo and Alexandria, and the countryside, the *Rif*.[190] As happens in Lebanon with the people born in the mountain, the inhabitant of the countryside, the *fallah*, represents the quintessence of the Egyptian identity,[191] especially in the first half of the century in novels such as *Zaynab* (1913), by Muhammad Husayn Haykal, or *'Awda-t al-Ruh* (1933), by Tawfiq al-Hakim.[192] However, the perspective used in Lebanese texts differs diametrically from those texts written in other areas. Lebanese writers, both inside and outside Lebanon, are mostly from

---

[190] This is just one of the possible divisions for Egyptian nationals, chosen here for its similarities with the Lebanese milieu. Other divisions could be between Bedouins and peasants, and between Southern people and Northern people. See Muhammad Siddiq, *Arab Culture and the Novel. Genre, identity, and agency in Egyptian fictio,* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 78.

[191] Ibid. pp. 36, 80, and Samah Selim, *The Novel and the Rural Imaginary in Egypt, 1880-1985* (London; New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004). Selim traces the different stages of the representation of the *fallah* as the emblem of national identity, since the last years of the nineteenth century through most of the twentieth century.

[192] For an analysis of these two works, see the references in Selim, Siddiq and Jeff Shalan, "Writing the Nation: The Emergence of Egypt in the Modern Arabic Novel," in Suleiman and Muhawi, *Literature and Nation in the Middle East* (Edinburg: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 128-161.

the mountains or their families are originally from there, maintaining strong links with the village of origin. They view and live this national identity from the inside, whereas the majority of Egyptian writers, for example, present the countryside from the perspective of an outsider.[193] Most Egyptian writers who wrote stories with peasants as characters were born in urban centers or, in the case in which they were born in villages, they abandoned their birthplaces and moved to the city, which became their permanent residence, both physically and emotionally. In the first category, we could include Haykal, who wrote the already mentioned *Zaynab* (1913), or Tawfiq al-Hakim, who wrote *'Awda-t al-Ruh* (1933), and *Yawmiyyat Na'ib fi l-Aryaf* (1937). A good example for the second category – the writers born in rural areas – would be Taha Husayn, who reflected the life in his home village in his autobiography *al-Ayyam*.[194] The views of the countryside in all these works may be at first glance romantic, with peasants carrying the Egyptian spirit inherited from past generations in their work, going back to the Pharaonic times, keeping the tradition of their forefathers. However, a closer look quickly reveals the miserable life in which the characters find themselves due to ignorance, poverty, and unquestioned traditions.[195] On the Lebanese side, however, mountain citizens, even if they are presented sometimes as living in ignorance or superstition, are placed above the urban citizens in the final analysis. The

---

[193] Referring to the authors of the first Egyptian novels, Samah Selim defines them as "an alienated, frustrated subject, incapable of connecting with the reality which it is his national and artistic duty to picture;" "the rural hinterlands in which he was born represents both the hereditary domains of his power and the border of his own marginality." Selim, *The Novel and the Rural Imaginary in Egypt*, 15.

[194] Taha Husayn was born in a village in Minya province in 1889. He moved to Cairo to study in al-Azhar and later to Paris to study in La Sorbonne, but left his village to study in al-Azhar and later in Paris, and he never came back to life in a village. Back in Egypt, he settled down in Cairo and never returned to live in the countryside.

[195] Famous examples, as reflected in fictional works, include Taha Husayn's loss of sight because of a bad treatment of his illness, and Zeynab's forced marriage that moved her real love away from her, and that finally provoked her death by tuberculosis.

internal description of the peasant's life in Lebanese writings is also more detailed, and the subjective insights presented enrich the building of the characters more than in most stories written outside Lebanon.[196] As mentioned above, the main reason is probably the standpoint of the writer, who places himself inside the milieu of the mountain instead of seeing it from the outside. Another possible reason is the closer proximity and communication between both milieus, mountain and city, that continue even when the citizens move from one place to the other. Someone living in the city may easily spend time on the mountain. Even when the writers are from the city or have settled down in the city, the chances of travelling to a mountain village to visit or for short stays are very high.[197] This does not happen in other places like Cairo or Alexandria, or even Damascus, in which the inhabitant of the metropolis may easily remain in the city for long periods of time and may rarely leave it or spend any time of their life in a rural setting.[198]

Summarizing, the Lebanese literature of the twenties and the thirties portrays the differences between the urban milieu and the rural-mountain environment, as other literatures did in other countries at the same time in history. However, a high percentage of the Lebanese writers were originally from a village, and show pride in this fact. This pride is reflected in the superior attributes assigned to villagers and their rural environment in all

---

[196] This excludes some main characters of the stories, whose psychology is described with detail. What I am referring to here is the whole of the mountain citizens in comparison with the whole of the peasants. The external approach used in most of the descriptions in novels outside Lebanon tend to homogenize the individuals, whereas in the stories written in Lebanon, even secondary characters tend to be portrayed with very defined individual characteristics.

[197] This applies especially for those communities who have a strong historical presence outside the city and have originally lived in villages instead of big cities, such as Beirut or Tripoli, as the Maronites, the Druze, and the Shia. Other communities, such as the Sunna and the Greek Orthodox, have strong ties with those big cities, and they are less related to Mount Lebanon or other rural areas and, therefore, less exposed to them. However, we have seen in one of Awwad's stories, "The Woolen Shirt," that this communication was sometimes infrequent despite the family ties and the closeness between Beirut and many villages in Mount Lebanon.

[198] The case of Najib Mahfud is the perfect example of this attitude. Najib Mahfud left Cairo on very few occasions, and he travelled to the Egyptian countryside very few times too during his life.

texts. The point of view is placed with the villager in most texts, contrary to what happens in other national literatures, as we have seen above in the case of the literature of Egypt.

Chapter 6: Ethnic and Linguistic Identity

The adjective "ethnic" comes from the Greek έθνος *ethnos*, which means 'people' or 'nation.' The Oxford American Dictionary defined it simply as "1 Having a common national or cultural tradition. 2 Denoting origin by birth or descent rather than nationality. 3 Related to race or culture." The conjunction *or* present in all three definitions, together with the diverse nature of the terms employed – national, cultural, birth, descent, race, culture – denotes the high degree of ambiguity of the term. Anthony D. Smith listed the attributes of the ethnic community in his works The *Ethnic Origins of Nations* and *National Identity*. The six attributes, as quoted in Smith's *National Identity*, are:[199]

1. A collective proper name,

2. a myth of common ancestry,

3. shared historical memories,

4. one or more differentiating elements of common culture,

5. an association with a specific 'homeland,'

6. and a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population.

All these attributes have also a high degree of subjectivity, the attribute mentioned in point number 4 being probably the least subjective of all.[200] Smith does not explicitly mention the elements of common culture in the list, but he mentions some of them throughout his work, stating that they may vary from one ethnic group to another. Nevertheless, the most common elements included in this group are: language, religion, and

---

[199] Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 21.
[200] Ibid., 22.

customs.[201] However, the existence of any of these elements inside a group, despite their high objective nature, does not necessary imply being considered an attribute of that ethnic group. For example, the fact of mentioning language among the most common of these elements does not mean that all theories agree about the degree of importance that language has inside an ethnic group. In fact, the relation between language and ethnicity is a complex issue and, until now, there has not been general agreement on the way they are related. Some theories link ethnicity and language strongly, considering language a defining element inside an ethnic group.[202] Others, however, put emphasis on the way an ethnic group may vary its language or may have different languages, maintaining in both cases its ethnic identity.[203] Language becomes, for instance, more linked to the nation than to the ethnic group for some theoreticians of nationalism. We already mentioned in the previous chapter the views of Ernest Renan, for example, which did not include language as a necessary component of national identity. However, there are others, like Elie Kedourie, to whom language is an essential component in forming a nation.[204]

---

[201] Ibid. p.23. See also Eirlys E. Davies, "Ethnicity and Language," in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2006), vol.2, 58-65.

[202] Among this group, we can mention Joshua Fishman, who considers language as "the recorder of paternity, the expresser of patrimony and the carrier of phenomenology;" and Stanley Lieberson, to whom difference in language often implies a difference of ethnic group (mentioned in Davies, Eirlys "Ethnicity and Language, 58-9).

[203] The political scientist Paul R. Brass, when referring to language groups in North India, notes that some groups change their language to have an additional common element with another group. On the other hand, a community can also deliberately change its language to differentiate itself from another group. See Paul R. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (London; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1974); and *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison* (New Delhi; Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1991). Also, speaking the language of the majority of the members of an ethnic group is not a necessary condition to be part of the group. This is the case, for example, of some Arab Americans who consider themselves Arabs even if they cannot speak the Arabic language.

[204] "In nationalist doctrine, language, race, culture and sometimes even religion, constitute different aspect of the same primordial entity, the nation." Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (London, 1961). (Quoted in Huthchinson and Smith: *Nationalism*, 49)

This introductory paragraph suffices to realize all the controversy that surrounds the association between language, ethnicity, and nation, and even the definition of the terms themselves. The fact that a certain nation may be composed mainly of individuals belonging to a defined ethnic group, speaking all of them a common language, does not imply that the three components are always directly linked to one another.[205] There are many cases in which language does not imply direct association with a certain ethnic community. Inside what is called the Arab world, Morocco is a perfect example of the way in which identities overlap and mixed around language and ethnicity. Even if the Berber identity of the country has been openly recognized by the Moroccan authorities in the last two decades, some Berbers would still define themselves as Arabs today, even if they are not of Arab descent, and even if they may speak some local Berber dialect.[206] In the case of the establishment of Greater Lebanon, we saw how language was strategically not included among the elements that define a nation, because that would have meant considering Lebanon as part of a bigger nation. However, the relation between language and ethnicity during the Mandate period is still unclear in the Lebanese case, and defining both the linguistic identity and the ethnic identity as reflected in our texts will help to clarify this point.

The establishment of the State of Greater Lebanon represented a victory for Lebanese nationalists over Arab and Syrian nationalists. When they had to choose between

---

[205] The case of an ideal Israel may provide a good example for this model. The initial idea of Israel as a nation whose citizens belong exclusively to the Jewish community and all speak Hebrew will represent the ideal of nation with a single ethnic community and a single language. However, time has proven the fallibility of this ideal.

[206] The percentage of Berber speakings considering themselves as Arabs would be 15 percent, according to a survey published in 1989 by Davis and Bentahila. Eirlys E. Davis and Abdelâli Bentahila, "On mother and other tongues: The notion of possession of a language." *Lingua* 78 (1989), 267-293. For a broader and more succinct description of the relation between ethnicity and language in Morroco, see Davis "Ethnicity and Language," 58-65.

the establishment of a Lebanese State, a Syrian State, or a more idealistic Arab union, both the French authorities and the most influential Lebanese groups supported the idea of a Lebanese State. This fact may lead one to believe that the adjectives Arab, Syrian, and Lebanese were mutually exclusive, and that being pure Lebanese nationalist opposed any feeling of belonging to a broader community, whether Arab or Syrian, whether from the ethnic perspective or the linguistic one.

The analysis will show that, from the ethnic perspective, most authors present the Lebanese people's identity as *Arabs* only by opposition; when inside Lebanon, however, the Arab ethnic identity is clearly excluded from them and they define themselves as Lebanese.[207] From the linguistic perspective, though, the authors present their characters as belonging to the Arabic literary tradition, Arabic, in any of its variants, being their mother tongue. When considering foreign languages, the texts will present two clear divisions in the society: those living in an urban environment, with more contact and appreciation for foreign languages; and those living in villages in the mountain areas, whose knowledge of foreign languages is very limited and whose attitude towards Lebanese people speaking foreign language is of clear mockery. The division would be made then from the territorial angle, and it would have little to do with belonging to a specific religious group. These findings contradict the general assumptions made by some Lebanese francophones, like Selim Abbou, which claim that most Lebanese Christians are bilingual. For Abbou, knowledge of French language goes beyond the fact of knowing a foreign language, and it carries an additional value, representing a spiritual connection that links the Lebanese

---

[207] The political scientist John A. Armstrong mentions in his work *Nations before Nationalism* the way in which groups "tends to define themselves not by reference to their own characteristics but by exclusion, that is, by comparison to 'strangers'." See John Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982). Quoted also in Huthchinson and Smith: *Nationalism*, 141.

Christians to some European Christian communities. This may be the case for subsequent generations, following the education policies applied by the French authorities, but it is not the case of our writers during the Mandate period. We also mentioned in Chapter II that other Lebanese Christians throughout the twentieth century gave Arabic a privileged position in the identity of Lebanese people, such as Antun Saadeh (1904-49), 'Abdallah Lahhud (b.1899) and Kamal Yusuf al-Hajj (1917-76). Their theories disagreed on the way language was linked to national identity but, for the purpose of this chapter, all of them considered Arabic the language of Lebanon, independent of their religion. This chapter will prove through the texts not only that Arabic was considered the language of the Christian community in Lebanon, but that the French-Arabic bilingualism was not as wide spread or strong as many Francophone Lebanese people like to believe.

The chapter will be divided in two main sections. The first section will examine the references to the adjective *'Arabi*, both applied to ethnic and linguistic connotations. The second section will focus on the attitude present in the texts towards different languages, mainly Arabic and some European languages.

6.1. *'Arabi*: Arabic – Arab

The Arabic word *'arabi* can be translated into English as both Arabic and Arab. Arabic is related to the language and it carries a linguistic sense, as in Arabic language or Arabic literature. Arab is more related to the ethnicity, as in Arab man, Arab world, or Arab politics. This diversity does not change the fact that both words correspond to the same word in Arabic,[208] and because this study focuses on the original texts and not on their translations, both Arab and Arabic will be addressed in the same section. However, the

---

[208] This is true not only in Arabic but also in other languages, such as Spanish or French, in which the translation of *'arabi* has only one word. Other languages, such as Russian and German, have though two terms like English, at least when acting as nouns.

distinction would be made clear through the section depending on the objects that the adjectives modify.[209]

Most writers refer to the adjective *'arabi* in their works, although the frequency and the approach do not always coincide. The authors who mention it the most are Marun Abbud and Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad. Both of them use it as a clear mark of identity, both ethnic and linguistic. Others, like Lahad Khater, differ from them on how it relates to identity, and they tend to use it from the perspective of the outsider.

6.1.1. Arab by Opposition: Awwad and Abbud.

Among all the texts analyzed, the one in which the word *'arabi* is used most clearly to refer to Arab identity is undoubtedly *The Loaf*, by Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad. *The Loaf* is set during the period of the First World War, after the Ottoman Empire had abolished the privileges given to the Mutasarrifiyya of Mount Lebanon, a region that also suffered a terrible famine. The novel presents a story of resistance and struggle to gain independence from the Ottoman authorities. Since it is set before the establishment of Greater Lebanon and the main theme is the liberation of the Arab lands from the Ottoman rule, the regional peculiarities of the Arab lands are lost at the expense of the constant opposition between Arabs and Turks. The first two examples of this section reflect this opposition, always present in the novel. Both are taken from dialogues between two of the main characters of the novel, Zinah and her grandfather Abu Said, when they talk about an Arab soldier who serves in the Ottoman armies, Kamal Efendi. When the dialogues take place, there is no indication of the soldier's origin even if, later in the plot, the reader discovers that he is

---

[209] The fact that there is just one term in Arabic to cover both English translations does not mean a simplified use of the word. The term *'arabi* in Arabic has evolved, having had different meaning depending on the period in which it was used and where it was used. For information about the different meanings and how it has evolved over time, see Amikan Marbash: "The Meaning of the Term 'Arab according to the Dictionaries, the Qur'an, Sibawayhi's *Kitab* and Ibn Khaldun's *Muqqadima*," *al-Karmil*, Volume 13, 1992, 145-178. Even today, there is no agreement to what *'arabi* means and to whom it may be applied.

from Damascus. However, this detail seems irrelevant at the time because they all are fighting against a common enemy:

- كامل أفندي رجل طيب يا جدّي.
- أجل طيّب. وهو عربي. ولكنني أخاف ثوبه. أما هو عسكريّ؟ العسكريّ لا يُؤتمن يا بنتي.
- هل سمعته يسبّ الأتراك؟ يسبّهم ويسبّ راسم بك والدولة.

- *Kamal Efendi is a good man, grandfather.*
- *Of course he is. And he is an Arab, but his uniform scares me. Isn't he a soldier? A soldier cannot be trusted, my girl.*
- *Did you hear him cursing the Turks? He curses them, and he curses Rasim Bek and the (Ottoman) State as well.* (T.A. p. 223)

ألا يبيع رفاقه بنادقهم كل يوم ببضعة أرغفة من الخبز؟ وإذا كان عربياً ويكره الأتراك فلن يكون لديه أشهى من طلبي.

Don't his comrades sell their rifles every day for some loaves of bread? If he is an Arab and he hates the Turks, there won't be anything more tempting than my request. (T.A. p. 232)

Even if *The Loaf* was written in 1939, Awwad easily captures the time of the First World War, setting his characters in opposition to the Turks as parts of the Arab nation. This idea is expressed again during the novel when Sami, one of the main characters, describes the efforts of the Arab people in their struggle against the Turks for independence and sovereignty. The following excerpt is part of a dialogue between Sami and his friend Kamel, mentioned above, both fighters in the Arab armies that, from the Arabian Peninsula, defeated the Turks and entered Damascus in October 1918. The dialogue between the two characters becomes at this point a monologue that goes beyond the characters themselves and seems to represent a general statement or message:

كلاّ ليس بين العرب والأتراك جهاد دينيّ. الأتراك في أكثريتهم مسلمون كذلك، ولكن القضية ليست قضية مسلمين وغير مسلمين. بل قضية عرب يقاتلون أتراكا لاسترداد

حريتهم، وأتراك يقاتلون عربا لاستبقاء سلطانهم عليهم. اليوم وُلدت القومية العربية الصحيحة. إنّ أمّها هي هذه الثورة التي أمشي فيها أنا المسيحي العربي إلى جنبكم أنتم المسلمين العرب، لنحارب عدوّا مشتركًا لبلادنا هو التركي، سواء اتّبع محمّدا أو المسيح أو الشيطان. وإن أباها هو ذلك الاستشهاد الذي لقيه شبّان العرب وأبطالهم السابقون، أخذهم إليه الأتراك على أنهم عرب فلم يسألوا المسلم عن قرآنه ولا المسيحي عن إنجيله. أكبر الظنّ أنك يا كامل تستوحي تاريخنا القديم، وهذا التاريخ قائم معظمه على الإسلام، وليس يعيبه أنّه كان كذلك فلم يكن يستطع أن يكون إلا كذلك. وقد طالما كانت الأديان، عند مختلف الأمم، الحافز الأول للمِّ شعثها وتوحيد كلمتها وتكوين شخصيتها. أما نحن في هذا العصر فعيب علينا أن نبني دولتنا الجديدة على أساس الدين. إنّ قوميتنا العربية التي وُلدت اليوم، أقول وُلدت اليوم، لا يهمّها من الخلافة إلا بمقدار الإيطاليّين من البابويّة. الذين يقاتلون الأتراك اليوم يقاتلون معهم الألمان وهم لا ينازعونهم على خلافة، وقد يقاتلون الإنكليز غدًا والفرنسيّين إذا طمعوا ببلادهم وحاولوا إذلالهم...

No, there is no religious struggle between Arabs and Turks. Most of the Turks are Muslim too. The issue is not an issue between Muslims and not Muslims, but the issue of Arabs fighting against Turks to get their freedom back, and Turks fighting against Arabs to keep their authority over them. The real Arab nationalism was born today, and its mother is this revolution in which I, an Arab Christian, walk next to you, Arab Muslims, fighting against a common enemy of our countries, the Turks, whether he follows Muhammad, Jesus or the Devil. And its father is this martyrdom made by the young Arabs and their previous heroes, which the Turks took them there just because they were Arabs, without asking the Muslim about his Qur'an and the Christian about his Gospels.

Most probably you, Kamel, revive our ancient history, and that history is mostly based on Islam, and there is no shame of the fact that has been like this; it could have not been otherwise. And as long as religions were, for all communities, the first incentive to bring together disconnected parts, to unify their word and form their character. As for us, in this era, we are ashamed to build our new state on a religious basis. Our Arab nationalism, born today – I say "born today" – only cares about the caliphate as much as Italians care about the Papacy. Those who fight today against the Turks, fight against the Germans too, and they are not in dispute with them about the caliphate; and they may fight against the English and the French tomorrow if they have the greed to take their countries or to humiliate them. (T.A. p. 309)

This passage is very rich in references, and it can be used for many purposes, such as to discuss Arab nationalism, religion differences, or ethnicity. What makes it attractive from the global perspective is that all references to these different topics appear together, and the emphasis or strength given to one over the other can also be an important indication for the analysis.

179

First of all, the author contrasts the attributes Arab and Turk, something that he does during the whole novel, as we have mentioned above in the first two examples. There is no doubt that, in the novel, Awwad places his country as part of the Arab community, especially when positioning it in front of the Ottoman authorities. However, the emphasis of this passage is the lack of importance of the religious factor when fighting against a common enemy. The call to *yihad* was used by the Turks during the First World War as a way to try to get supporters among the Muslim Arabs.[210] One of the main objectives in Awwad's first novel is to remove religion from the fighting between Arabs and Turks. For this reason, he made Sami – a Maronite Christian from Mount Lebanon – become one of the leaders of the Arab revolt that, coming from the Arabian Peninsula, defeated the Turks and entered Damascus victoriously. Even if the character admits that most of Arab history is linked with Islam, this fact does not mean that it was all Islam. His religious community also participated and suffered in the struggles against the Turks for independence. However, even if the author unites all Arab religious communities against the Turks, he never forgets his religious identity. What is more important, it seems that he places his religious identity in front of his ethnic identity, whether consciously or unconsciously. He says "I, the Arab Christian" and "You, the Arab Muslims" instead of "Christian Arab" or "Muslim Arabs." The attribute "Arab" acts here as an adjective, and "Christian" and "Muslim" act as nouns. Through these expressions, it seems that the essence of the individual is based on belonging to a certain religious community, and that essence is complemented by ethnic aspects. It also seems that religion may be more important than ethnicity on a daily basis – it affects the life of an individual more than ethnicity – but in some extraordinary circumstances in which the people/nations are above the individual

---

[210] See chapter seven of Antonius, *Arab Awakening*, "The War and the Holy War."

alone, belonging to a certain ethnic community has more importance that the individual identity.

In Marun Abbud's stories, the adjective *'arabi* is used to refer to language, as will be explained below, and it also appears many times to refer to people, clothes and physical appearance, all attributes used to refer to an ethnic community. In the story "Jabbur Bek," an émigré returned to his homeland remembers the first time he left his land to travel to America:

... فتذكّر "الكمر" العتيق الذي أعطاه إياه أبو خليل حلوانا فشدّ وسطه به سنين وألقاه عنه في فندق أنطون فارس بمرسيليا حيث كان يُحتفل بإلباس أولاد العرب الثياب الفرنجيه.

And he remembered the old belt that Abu Khalil gave him as a present, so he tied his mid-body with it for years and he gave it away in Antun Faris Hotel, in Marseille, where it was celebrated that the Arab boys were being dressed in Franky clothes. (M.A. p. 59)

After their arrival in France, the emigrants changed their clothes to Occidental clothes.[211] The narrator describes them as "The Arabs' children," so he considers them Arabs. The hotel name is *Antun*, a name used mainly by Christian Arabs, and this group was probably the majority among the hotel guests. In the same way that Awwad applied the adjective Arab in opposition to the Turks, here the author presents the perspective of an emigrant remembering past circumstances when he was outside his homeland. The opposition would now have a spatial character (Europe vs. Arab lands) instead of an ethnic nature (Arab people vs. Turkish people). One could say that this is the reason why the localism is lost and the adjective "Arab" appears in opposition to the foreign environment,

---

[211] This image is similar to a scene described by Amin al-Rihani in *The Book of Khalid*, in which two emigrants arrive to the Port of Marseilles from Beirut: "From the steamer, the emigrant is lead to a dealer in frippery, where he is required to doff his baggy trousers and crimson cap, and put on a suit of linsey-woolsey and a hat of hispid felt: end of the First Act; open the purse." Ameen Rihani, *The Book of Khalid* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1911), 28.

an identity born only by opposition. Nevertheless, we have to remember that Abbud never traveled to Europe or America, or even Egypt, so he had not experienced the perspective of the outsider.

In addition to this story, Abbud shows in "The Emigrant" part of the life of an émigré, a woman who travels from her home village in Mount Lebanon to North America. She leaves her husband and children with the objective of trying to earn enough money to pay the family debts. The author describes the appearance of the woman after a short period in America as the typical "Arab beauty:"

<div dir="rtl">

...وبعد لبثت أشهر فيها ذهبت عنها سيماء القرية: جمال عربي، شعر كالفحم، وعين سوداء مكحلة تذبح ذبحًا.

</div>

And after a stay of some months in which she lost the signs of a village girl: Arab beauty, hair like coal, black eyes with kohl, which could deadly charm men. (M.A. p. 190)

When living in America, the woman is described as having an "Arab beauty," and it is considered in this way as an Arab by the narrator, at least from her appearance.

6.1.2. Arab as "the Other"

When Abbud's stories are set inside the Lebanese borders, the connotations for the adjective *'arabi* are very different. In the story "A Strange Face", the main character is the narrator himself, who can be identified as the author during the time he worked as a school teacher in Beirut. The following passage describes the appearance of a man who visits the narrator in his office:

<div dir="rtl">

عربي الزي من قمّة رأسه إلى نعله

</div>

Dressed with Arabic clothes from the top of his head to his shoes (M.A. p. 111)

The man turns out to be the father of one of his students, and the narrator identifies his Palestinian origin from his dialect (M.A. p. 112). There is then a stereotype of what we

may call the typical "Arabic outfit," which does not correspond with the outfit worn in Beirut and even in the villages of Mount Lebanon.[212] From this perspective, the people around the narrator would not have this "Arab" appearance and they would distinguish themselves from other neighboring regions through their clothes. In the first example mentioned above, taken from Abbud's stories, the action was described as Arab people changing their clothes to Occidental clothes, and not as Arab people substituting their Arab clothes for Occidental ones. The only reference to clothes is the *kamar*, a traditional wide belt made of tissue used not only in the Lebanese area but also in many Arab countries. The clothes that Abbud describes as "Arab" are different from the ones worn in Lebanon, even by peasants or poor people.

6.1.3. Arabic Literary Tradition

Even if in the previous example the adjective *'arabi* seems to be applied to "others" when comparing individuals of different Arabic speaking countries, there are some references in other of Abbud's stories that challenge this conclusion. In "A Vigilant Face", the main character of the story is a man who considers himself a man of letters. The next

---

[212] In Lahad Khater's *Mukhtasir Tarikh Lubnan li-Talaba-t al-Madaris 'ala Uslub Jadid*, written in 1914, (see "Lebanon" section), there is a paragraph in which the author describes "Lebanese clothing:"

عادات اللبنانيين
(57) ما هي عاداتهم في اللباس
أكثر اللبنانيين من رجال ونساء اتبعوا الزي الأفرنجي في اللباس ولاسيما أهل اليسار ورجال العلم والذين هاجروا إلى البلاد الأجنبية لكن هناك عددا غير قليل من الفقراء وممن يتعاطون حراثة الأرض والصنائع اليدوية لا يزالون يلبسون الطربوش المغربي والعمامات الملونة والقنباز والسراويل الواسعة والصرامي الحمراء المداسات بدون جرابات وكان المتقدمين في السنّ يتركون الحاهم.

Customs of the Lebanese People
(57) What are their clothing customs?
Most of Lebanese people, both men and women, follow the franky outfit in dressing, especially those who are wealthy or cultured, and those who have emigrated to foreign countries However, there is a number, not small, of poor people, land workers, and handcrafters who still dress in the Maghrebi tarbush, *the colored turban, the* qanbaz, *the buggy trousers, the red shoes and slippers without socks. Old people grew beards.*
(Khater, *Mukhtasir Tarikh Lubnan*, 25)
(The *qanbaz* is a long gown worn by men).

183

three passages describe him in different ways, both using the perspective of the man – in the first two examples – and that of the narrator in the last example:

مؤمن بأنه من عباقرة الشرق العربي

He believes that he was one of the geniuses of the Arab East. (M.A. p. 171)

وأخذ ينزع من كنابته الحجّاجية سهمًا أثر سهم ويصوبها إليّ، زاعما أنها فتح جديد في الأدب العربي...

He started taking arrow after arrow out of his argumental quiver, directing them to me, claiming that it was a new conquest in Arabic Literature... (M.A. p. 174)

The narrator describes his friend ironically as:

ملاك البلاغة العربية

Angel of Arabic eloquence (M.A. p. 176)

The man then is described using the adjective *'arabi* from three different angles: the geographical (Arab Orient), the literary (Arabic Literature) and the linguistic (Arabic eloquence). Therefore, the territory in which the man stands is considered by himself part of the Arab lands; his literary tradition is part of Arabic Literature; and, finally, his language is Arabic. However, these three angles can be considered as the three angles of the same triangle: the Arabic literary tradition. From this standpoint, Abbud is clear: from the linguistic perspective, his people belong to the Arabic tradition. This belief is made clear in his story "Teacher" that, even if it is the only one in which Abbud mentions explicitly the Arabic language, its references are clear enough to elucidate his opinion. In "Teacher," Marun Abbud links the Arabic language to the homeland, as an intrinsic part of its identity. The story relates the story of a teacher who travels to Palestine and later to

America. Instead of working in trade or business for a living, as most of his co-citizens, he opens a school to teach the émigrés' sons "their language:"

فإذا بتلك الرسالة الحبلى تلد قصاصات من صحف المهجر... كلّها تثني على المعلم ثناء عاطرًا وتعظم إقدامه على إنشاء مدرسة لأبناء الجالية بعدما كادوا أن يتأمركوا فعلّمهم لغتهم التي تربطهم بوطنهم.

... And the pregnant letter gave birth to cuts from the Mahjar press. They were all in beautiful praise of the teacher, and in glorification of his initiative to establish a school for the children of the community, after they had almost been Americanized, and he taught them their language, which tied them with their homeland. (M.A. p. 55)

The author comes back to the same idea at the end of the story:

مات كأبيه ميتة كريم مضطر، فأجمعت صحف المهجر على تقديس جهاده القومي في تعليم مواطنيه لغتهم فما نسوا أمتهم.

He died as his father had died, needy, but noble. And all the newspapers in the Mahjar *agreed to sanctify his nationalistic effort on teaching his co-citizens their language, so they do not forget their community.* (M.A. p. 57)

There are many important ideas present in these two excerpts. The first one is related to the linguistic identity of the émigrés, through the mention in both paragraphs of what the author refers to as "their language." Even if the language is not mentioned explicitly, we can assume that it is Arabic; not only Arabic in its spoken form, but also in its formal written variety, because it is taught at a school. We must remember the high number of newspapers founded by Lebanese émigrés in the *Mahjar*, many of them written in Arabic, although there were some others written in the language of the host country, especially after second generations were born.[213] "Their language" is therefore Arabic and this language is then considered part of their identity. There is no doubt about this

---

[213] For a detailed description of the press founded by Lebanese people, not only in Lebanon but also in the Mahjar or in other Arab countries, see *Qamus al-Sahafa al-Lubnaniyya 1858-1974*, by Yusuf As'ad Daghir, (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-Sharqiyya, 1978).

statement, according to the author's description of the language as an instrument that ties students with their homeland. Consequently, one of the characteristics of the homeland is the Arabic language in all its varieties. In the second excerpt, the author repeats the same expression "their language," and adds two important concepts, the one of *jihad qawmi* and that of *Umma*. In the same way that "their language" can be easily identified as the Arabic language, it is not that obvious what the narrator refers to as the National/nationalistic effort, or the *Umma* (nation, community, people). As mentioned in the introduction of the *Wujuh wa Hikayat*,[214] the story "Teacher" is inspired by a real person, Tanius Hanna Ilyas, who was Marun Abbud's teacher when he was a child. The story starts then with events that happened before the First World War, and it finishes with the death of the teacher after the First World War. It was in this moment when different nationalistic movements lived together in the region.[215] There was Arabic nationalism, Syrian nationalism, and Lebanese nationalism. These three types of nationalism were then associated with different nations or people: the Arab, the Syrian and the Lebanese. Even if the story does not mention explicitly to which of those nations or peoples the narrator was referring to, knowing that those words were written in *Mahjar* newspapers around the time period of the First World War. Referring to these two concepts together with the Arabic language, it seems that the concept "nation" should be broader than Lebanon (both applying to Smaller and Greater Lebanon). However, including the whole Arab nation from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf is also risky. We must remember now a work mentioned in the Historical Background section, *Le réveil de la nation arabe*, written by Négib Azoury and published in 1905. Azoury, a Syrian Christian with French education, was in favour of an Arab nation

---

[214] Abbud, M: *Wujuh wa hikayat*, 12.
[215] These movements have already been discussed in the historical introduction.

with no religious distinctions, and his Arab nation comprised all Arabic speaking countries of the area, excluding Egypt and North Africa. This definition of the Arab nation could be close to the nation referred to by the narrator in the story.

Before continuing with the references made to the adjective *'arabi* in the texts, we need to address briefly the linguistic education at schools, as reflected in the texts. Apart from Abbud's mention, there is another reference to this issue in one of Awwad's stories. In some *Mahjar* schools, as expressed by Abbud, it is clear that there was a certain emphasis on the Arabic language, especially because of the fact that the students were in a foreign country. However, in some Arabic speaking regions, it seems to be a contradiction between the classical culture inherited orally and what is taught at schools. In Awwad's story "The Burned Letters," set in Damascus in the Christian area of Bab Touma, one of the characters, Basim, is in love with Layla, the main character in the story:

وكان بسيم يبثّها غرامه برسائل يومية، ويرفق هذه الرسائل بأبيات من الشعر
ينظمها على قدر معرفته بالأوزان والقوافي – وهي قليلة – و على قدر ما يجيش في
صدره من عواطف – وهي كثيرة جداً وصادقة جدًّا

Basim used to send her his love in daily letters, accompanying these letters with poetry verses composed with as much as he knew of rhyme and metres – and he knew little – and as much as his chest could flood with passion – and these passions were plentiful and truthful.(T.A. p. 41)

Even if it is not mentioned, we can assume that the verses were written in Arabic, especially when the story is set in Damascus. The natural impulse of the young man is to write verses to his beloved, a traditional way to express love in many traditions, including the Arabic tradition. Unfortunately and according to the excerpt, he lacks the necessary knowledge to do it. Also in the case in which the verses had been in French, his knowledge of this language would have been superficial as well. In both cases, there is a contradiction

187

between the way he chooses to express his feelings, and the linguistic education he has received: both do not coincide, resulting in poor-quality verses caused by a deficient education in the language chosen to express himself. If he wanted to write in Arabic, we can assume that his education was in French, and this left him "handicapped" for the task of writing verses. If he wanted to write in French, his knowledge would have been superficial and the result was also very deficient. In both cases, there is a clash between his education in a certain language and the way he chooses to express himself. This story is set in Damascus, hence the characters could easily be Syrian instead of Lebanese, using the modern sense of these words. However, Awwad met his wife in this city, and she was not Syrian, but the daughter of a Lebanese merchant settled in Damascus, and he probably knew many people like her and her family. The story could have then been inspired by this environment, more than by a "pure" Damascene environment. Also, the story is set in Bab Touma, a Christian area in Damascus, and we can assume that the education the characters received there was similar to the education of other Christians in Beirut.

Until now, there has been certain proximity to or affinity between the way Abbud and Awwad use the term *'arabi*. *'Arabi* was considered to be part of the self, as being born from the inside, even if it was only by opposition. Another writer, Michel Shibli, also mentions the Arabic language once in his novel, and it appears to be the one used by émigrés in the *Mahjar*:

وما كاد جميل يهم بالانصراف وقد ازفت الساعة التي اعتاد فيها أن يذهب كل مساء إلى منزل أبي فارس الحسون في شارع البوليستا حتى ابتدره باللغة العربية صوت يألفه هو صوت فريد فانوس يطلب إليه كأسا من الكاسكا وهو نوع من الكحول الضارة فأجلسه قائلا...

And as soon as Jamil was about to leave at the time he was used to go every evening to Abu Fares' house in Paulista Street,[216] a voice in the Arabic language came to him, Farid Fanus' voice asking a glass of Cashaça for him, a kind of harmful alcohol, so he sat him down saying…. (M.S. p. 24)

Shibli does not mention a single time the adjective *'arabi* to refer to the émigrés, and he refers to them always as "Lebanese,"[217] but their mother language is called "Arabic." Shibli then shares the standpoint of Awwad and Abbud from the linguistic perspective.

6.1.4. Lahad Khater: Arab as the Outsider and Arabic as Imposed Language

The above sections have shown how Awwad, Abbud, and Shibli have similar views about Arabic as being their mother tongue, and about having an Arab identity by opposition. However, this is not the standard viewpoint of all writers. Lahad Khater approaches in a completely different way what is referred to as *'arabi* in his text. Throughout the text, he tries to move anything that may be related to Arabic away from himself and from his land. He does it through the double strategy of moving it away from the origin, and moving it away from his present time. He uses it as a symbol of modernity,

---

[216] Even if Paulista Avenue is one of the most famous streets in the city of São Paulo, I have chosen to translate *Paulista Street* instead of *Paulista Avenue*. Other streets mentioned in the book – as Angelica Street, mentioned in the following footnote – point to the city of Osasco, instead of the city of São Paulo. Osasco is a municipality and city in Greater São Paulo, so it could still belong to the São Paulo referred to in the text. The author did not travel to Brazil himself, so he probably took the information from a relative or a friend. Also, it is not unusual that some people refer to a country with the name of its capital, saying London instead of England, or Paris instead of France.

[217] See for example the following examples, taken from *The Oak's Hill*:

اللبناني في المهجر كثيرٌ ببني قومه من المهاجرين

The Lebanese in the emigration is big being among his fellow emigrants. (M.S. p. 15)

وكان أبو فارس الحسون رجل خير وصلاح. هاجر منذ صغره وتزوج بامرأة برازيلية (...) وقدر له النجاح في أعماله فكان محله الكبير في شارع انجليكا قبلة كل لبناني ومقعد كل محتاج يؤمونه فيجدون لديه المساعدات والنصائح.

Abu Fares al-Hassun was a generous and rightful man. He emigrated in his childhood and he married a Brazilian woman [...] and he succeeded in his business. He had a big shop in Angelica Street, to which every Lebanese frequented, and which was a seat for every needy person to find his help and advice. (M.S. p. 15-6)

189

taking it from the national past and, at the same time, he talks about it as belonging to a past period.

The sign of modernity has a linguistic character, and it is deduced from the following passage:

(رويسة النعمان أو الرويسة، والأصح روسية نعمان، قرية من الشوف تتبع في النظام الإداري الجديد قضاء عاليه من محافظة جبل لبنان) ويستدل من اسم هذه القرية العربي ومن مظاهر أبنيتها وآثارها أنها غير قديمة العهد وأن نشأتها لا تعود إلى ما وراء عهد الأمير فخر الدين المعني الكبير

(Rouaisset en Naaman, or al-Rouaisset, or more correct, Rouaisset Naaman, is a village in the Shuf that, according to the new administrative structure, belongs to the county of Aley in the governorate of Mount Lebanon). We deduce from the Arabic name of this village, from the external appearance of their buildings and from its archaeological ruins that it is not an old village, and that its origin does not go beyond the time of the Great Fakhr al-Din al-Maani. (L.Kh. p. 5)

He uses the fact that the village has an Arabic name as a sign of modernity, as proof that the village was built in recent times, and it did not go back in time many centuries. The modernity would represent then an estrangement between the Arab element and what Kahter would consider his ancestors, one of the attributes of the ethnic community being the myth of common ancestry. We must remember now what was mentioned in the historical background about the importance of the science of toponymy in the creation of nations. The following passage, on the other hand, moved the Arabic tradition away from the present times:

...إلى جهة القرية الشرقية محلة تدعى سبعل فيها آثار يونانية ورومانية وعربية.

... towards the east of the village, there is a place is called Sabaal that has Greek, Roman, and Arabic ruins (L.Kh. p. 6)

Lahad Khater places the Arabic ruins at the same level as the Roman and the Greek ruins. Even if the Roman and the Greek times can easily be identified with a defined time period in the past, the reference to "Arabic ruins" is uncertain and vague. What is evident is that Khater wants to categorize it as part of the past, as a civilization that has passed in the same way that the Roman and Greek civilizations passed before it. These two passages reveal that, for Lahad Kahter, the Arabic civilization was neither at the base of the foundation of his homeland nor was part of his present time. Even if Khater does not have any direct references to Arabic language in *Habuba Khater*, he had alluded to the topic in early years in his *Mukhtaṣir Tārīkh Lubnān li-Ṭalaba al-Madāris ʻalā Uslūb Jadīd*, when addressing the issue of languages in Lebanon:

(67) كيف قضت العربية على السريانية ومتى كان انتشارها؟
لما استولى العرب سواحل الشام سنة 635 أخذت العربية تنتشر شيئا فشيئا في جهات لبنان وساعد على ذلك دخول المتاولة والنصيريين والدروز من بعدهم إلا أنّ السريانية دافعت عن حقوقها دفاعا مجيدا فظلت منتشرة بين اللبنانيين إلى أواخر القرن السابع عشر ولاسيما في شمالي لبنان وما برحت لغة العرب في نمو وانتشار حتى قضت على السريانية القضاء المبرم وأصبحت الآن لغة الجميع في البلاد²¹⁸.

(67) How did Arabic dominated over Syriac and when did it spread?
When the Arabs controlled the coast of al-Sham in the year 635, Arabic began to spread gradually in the different parts of Lebanon, with the help of the coming of the Shia, the ʻAlawis, and the Druze after them. Nonetheless, Syriac defended its right to exist gloriously, and it remained spread among Lebanese people until the end of the sixteenth century, especially in the north of Lebanon. The language of the Arabs continued its growth and expansion until it completely wiped out Syriac, and it became then the language of all people in the country.

Lahad Khater's description of how Arabic language arrived and spread in Lebanon is portrayed almost as a battle between Arabic and Syriac. Arabic is treated as an invader that, with the help of foreign elements, the Druze, the ʻAlawis and the Shia, defeats the language of local people after a long fight in which Syriac defends its rights fiercely, dying

---

²¹⁸ Khātir, *Mukhtasir Tārīkh Lubnān*, 29-30.

191

almost as "martyr." The author does not identify Arabic as part of the Lebanese self, and right before saying that it is the language spoken by all, he defines it as "the language of the Arabs," drawing a clear line between Arabs and Lebanese people. Therefore, Khater's position towards the Arab element in the country has three fronts: taking it away from the origin and from the present time whenever possible and, if its present existence is undeniable, pointing out and insisting upon its foreign origin.[219]

6.1.5. Marun Ghosen: Arabic Dialect over Classical Arabic

There are no references to Arabic language in Marun Ghosen's novels. Nonetheless, he published a book in 1925 entitled *Life and Death of Languages: the Dialect*.[220] In this work, Ghosen states his thesis of how Arabic dialects will take the place of Classical Arabic and will become literary languages. He treats Classical Arabic and dialectal Arabic not as two varieties of the same language but as two different languages, and at the end of the book, he even proposes a writing system for the dialect. The whole text is worth reading, and its systematic description of the dialect writing system precedes by decades other, more well-known descriptions by Yusuf al-Khal or Sa'id Aql.[221] At the end of the text, many religious authorities congratulate Ghosen for his project, including the Maronite Patriarch Eliyas al-Huwayik, the bishop of Beirut, Ignatius Mubarak, and the patriarchal vicar,

---

[219] Ernest Renan defined a nation in his *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* as an *âme*, a spiritual soul, with two elements constituting this soul: the past, and the present. As he said: "One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of remembrances; the other is the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to value the heritage which all hold in common." *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*, trans. Ida Mae Snyder, (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1882), p.26. For Renan, a common race or a language were not necessary constituents for the nation. Renan published these words in Paris, in 1882, and knowing the influence of his work in Lebanon, it would not be surprising that this view of the nation was known and shared among some Lebanese educated people. Khater's treatment of the Arabic element in the country matches Renan's definition of the nation, in the sense that it excludes it from any of the necessary constituents of the nation. It is not past, neither present, and the linguistic component is irrelevant.

[220] Marun Ghusn, *Hayā al-lughāt wa mawtuhā: al-lugha al-'āmiyya* (Beirut: Catholic Press, 1925).

[221] However, Ghosen does not claim to be the first writing the dialect, and he mentions some poets who had already used written dialect for their compositions, as Rashid Bek Nakhleh (Ibid., 17).

Bishop Abd Allah al-Khury.[222] There are many interesting passages but, for the purpose of

this analysis and as a hint of Marun Ghosen's opinion about Arabic language or dialect, the

few following passages can be significant enough. In this first passage, the author replies to

those stating that there is no significant difference between Classical Arabic and the dialect:

ننكر كل الإنكار أن الفرق مما لا يلتفت إليه؛ والبرهان واضح كالصبح الصابح.
أولا: إنّ الفلاح اللبناني الأمي لا يستطيع أن يقرأ ويفهم كتابا عربيا، من مثل كتاب
"مجاني الأدب"؛ بلى، هو يفهم منه الألفاظ المشتركة بين العربية الفصحى واللهجة
السورية، ليس غير. وهو، إن كتب سطرا عربيا واحدا، حشاه بالأغاليط.[223]

We deny categorically that the difference is negligible. And the evidence for that is
clear as the clear early morning.

Firstly: the illiterate Lebanese peasant cannot read or understand an Arabic book,
of the kind of "The Domain of Literature." No!, he understands the linguistic features that
both Classical Arabic and Syrian dialect share, nothing else. And if he wrote a single line
in Arabic, it would be full of errors.

Leaving aside the truthfulness or falseness of the passage, it is interesting to notice

that, despite the use of the adjective "Lebanese" to describe the person, Ghosen used

"Syrian" to describe the dialect that the Lebanese peasant speaks. From the linguistic

perspective, it is undeniable that, at the time, "Lebanese" people saw themselves as part of

something bigger than themselves, calling it Arabic or Syrian, but never Lebanese.

Marun Ghosen is conscious about the importance that Classical Arabic has for

Muslim people. In this second passage, he answers to those claiming that his project of a

written literary dialect will fail as long as Muslims exist:

الاعتراض الخامس
هذا المشروع حلم نائم، لا يصحّ، ولا يتحقق، ما دام على سطح الغبراء مسلمون!
الجواب
كلا! كلا! فليس في يد إخواننا المسلمين أن يغيروا سُنن حياة اللغات والشعوب،
ويقلبوها ظهرًا البطن. وهذه السنن، كما رأينا، مؤيدة لقضيتنا؛ وهل يمكن أُمّا أن تعيد ابنها
الكهل إلى ربيع الحياة؟ نعم إنّ العربية يُحتَمَل، بل يُرجَّح بقاؤها في القرآن إلى منتهي

---

[222] Ibid., 7-8 in section *mulhiq*.
[223] Ibid., 13.

الأزمان، ولكن لا ينتج عن ذلك ضرورة بقائها في البلاد العربية، كما هي الآن، أي اللغة العربية الأدبية الوحيدة. وكفى شاهدا على ذلك أن المسلمين من الترك والفرس والصينيين لا ينطقون بالعربية ولا يتكلمون بها مع أن كثيرا منهم محافظون على القرآن العربي.[224]

Fifth objection
This project is a sleeping dream, not true and not attainable as long as there are Muslims over the face of the Earth!
Answer:
No! No! It is not in the hands of our Muslim brothers that they change the laws of language and people's life, and turn them upside down. These laws, as we have seen, support our cause. Can a mother send her adult son back to the spring of life? Yes, Arabic can stay even if it is most probable that it will remain in the Qur'an until the end of time. However, this does not necessarily result in the survival of Classical Arabic as the only literary language, as it is now in Arab countries. It is enough to take one piece of evidence for that. This evidence is that Muslims from among the Turks, the Persian and the Chinese do not speak Arabic even though many of them memorize the Arabic Qur'an.

Again, forgetting the truthfulness or falsity of the passage, Ghosen links the future of Classical Arabic to the Quran, and knowing it becomes a need restricted to Muslim people. He believes that the dialect will develop into a literary language, being part of the "Arabic literary languages," in which we will find Classical Arabic together with the dialects. Summarizing, Ghosen did not consider Classical Arabic as part of the linguistic identity of Lebanon, but neither did he consider it "Lebanese." He considered his people as speaking a "Syrian" dialect as their mother tongue.

6.1.6. Conclusion

After having examined all the text, we see that most authors present the Lebanese people's identity as "Arabs" only by opposition; when inside Lebanon, however, the Arab ethnical identity is clearly excluded from them. From the linguistic perspective, though, the authors present their characters as belonging to the Arabic literary tradition; Arabic, in any of its variants, is their mother tongue.

---

[224] Ibid., 17-8.

6.2. Foreign Languages

It is a fact that many Lebanese writers received their education in French, and that they chose to write in this language.[225] We mentioned in the cultural background some of these writers, such as Bulus Nujaym, Charles Corm, and Hector Klat. Even today, Amin Maaluf is probably the best known Lebanese writer around the world, and he writes in French. It is a fact also that most of these writers are Christian, something that may lead to the conclusion that Lebanese Christians are less tied to the Arabic language than Lebanese Muslims, and that they easily accept writing in a language different from Arabic.[226]

This section will analyze how the texts present languages other than Arabic. After having identified the different languages mentioned, the analysis will focus on how extensive their knowledge was, how they were accepted by different social strata, and how the authors present them.

As happened with the references to Arabic language, there are relatively few references to foreign languages in the texts. Most of the references appear in the texts of two authors: Marun Abbud and Tawfiq Yusuf Awwad. The languages mentioned in all the texts are: Syriac, restricted to religious references; Turkish, limited to a governmental circumstance in the pre-war period; Spanish, as a logical consequence of emigration; and French, as a marker of high education or urban atmosphere.

---

[225] For information about Lebanese authors who write and wrote in French, see: Ramy Zein, *Dictionnaire de la littérature libanaise d'expression française* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998); and Najwa Aoun-Anhoury, *Panorama de la poésie libanaise d'expression française* (Dar al-Majani, 1996).

[226] This phenomenon is not exclusive to Lebanon. For example, most of the Israeli Arab authors who write in Hebrew are also Christian and Druze. Just to mention a couple of them, Na'im 'Araydi (b.1948) and Anton Shammas (b.1950) are among the most popular of these writers. Even if it is very risky and controversial to relate or compare the situation of the French language in Lebanon during the Mandate period with that of the Hebrew in Israel today, it is a fact that the non-Muslim Arab population seems to have accepted better the language of the "other." For more details about the use of Arabic by Israeli Jews, and the use of Hebrew by Israeli Arabs, see Ami Elad-Bouskila, "Arabic and/or Hebrew: the language of the Arab Writers in Israel," in *Israeli and Palestinian Identities in History and Literature*, edited by Kamal Abdel-Malek and David C. Jacobson, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999)

6.2.1. Syriac

Syriac is the liturgical language of the Maronite Church.[227] All references to this language appear related to a religious element and, more specifically, to the clergy. This is why priests are the only characters in the texts who are presented using this language and, in all cases, there is a link with the celebration of the mass. Priest knew both Arabic and Syrian, but the specific function given to each language are clear in the texts, as expressed in this example taken from Awwad's "Palm Sunday:"

...صوت بونا غسطين يلحّن بالسريانية، وينتهر بالعربية – المخلوطة بشيء من
الصلاة عند غضبه – الولد حامل المبخرة لأنه تأخّر في تقديمها إليه.

Father Augustine's voice singing in Syriac and reprimanding in Arabic – mixed with prayer and anger - the boy carrying the censer because he was late when presenting it to him (T.A. p. 44)

The liturgical language is then Syriac, but when the priest needs to reprimand one of his altar boys, he starts inserting Arabic words in his prayer. However, even if Syriac is normally solely associated with the celebration of the mass, it also appears as a spontaneous exclamation said by a priest in another of Abbud's stories. The following excerpt describes the reaction of a priest, one day when he is in the church, when he suddenly sees a young man and, he believes that he is Jesus:

فاستوى قدامه شاب غريب رأى فيه ملامح من يسوع. فصاح الخوري بالسريانية
"بارحايو داكاس بت ميته"* فمدّ الشاب يديه نحو الخوري مفتوحتين. فزاد إيمانه بأنه
المسيح، فخرّ أمامه ساجداً، وأغمي عليه.
* جملة سريانية معناها: ابن الحي الذي مكث بين الأموات

A strange young man stood in front of him, and he (the priest) saw Jesus' features on him. The priest shouted in Syriac: "Bār Hāyū dā kās bit miteh." The young man*

---

[227] According to Kamal Salibi, Syriac "appears never to have been anything more than a language of liturgy" for the Maronites. Its literature, unlike that of other Syrian Christians, was always written in Arabic, but used the Syriac script until the 9th century. *Salibi: A House of Many Mansions*, 85. This contradicts, however, the popular beliefs, as mentioned in the previous section by Lahad Khater.

extended his open hands towards the priest, so his belief that he was Christ increased, and he prostrated himself in front of him, and fainted.
*   * Sentence in Syriac whose meaning is "The son of the alive who remained among the dead"* (M.A. p. 44)

The priest's spontaneous exclamation is a sentence probably taken from a prayer. The fact that it was said when the priest believes that he is in front of Jesus, sets the scene in a heavily religious atmosphere. Actually, the situation is similar to a mass in which, according to doctrine, Christ is made present through the Eucharist. In both cases, in the Eucharist and here, the priest expresses himself in Syriac. The only missing item in this excerpt is that, unfortunately, Marun Abbud does not describe the features that make the priest believe that the young man is Jesus.

6.2.2. Turkish

Marun Abbud is the author who most clearly sets many of his stories in the time of the Mutasarrifiya. It is not surprising then that Turkish language, together with other Ottoman references such as currency, for example, are still present in his stories. The use of Turkish language goes beyond isolated words, and it also appears in complete expressions. In the story of "Jabbur Bek," an émigré reaches a high position in the government because of his newly acquired wealth. He is addressed in this way by the officers of the police:

... حتى هتفت الضابطية: "بادشاهم جوق ياشا"* فتزعزعت أركان جبّور ولاسيما حين ردّ الجميع "الله ينصره".
* تحية بالتركية كان السامعون يرددونها كلما تلي عليهم اسم السلطان معناها أطال الله عمر السلطان.

...until the police yielded: "Padişahım Çok Yaşa." And all Jabbur's insides shook, especially when everybody answered: "May God give him victory."*
*   * Greeting in Turkish that the listeners used to reply each time they heard the Sultan's name, and whose meaning is "May God lengthen the Sultan's life"*[228] (M.A. p. 71)

---

[228] The author himself gave the footnote.

It is not clear through the excerpt to which extent the different groups in the society knew or understood the Turkish language. It is even doubtful that the officers who utter the expression in Turkish knew its meaning. As mentioned in the introduction, the knowledge of this language was necessary for those who wished to work in a bureaucratic post during the time in which Lebanon was part of the Ottoman Empire. The knowledge of Turkish was then probably reduced and limited to very educated people. However, it seems that certain expressions may have been know broadly by certain groups, as happens in this case with the members of the police, even if they did not know the exact meaning.

6.2.3. Spanish and French: Criticism and Mockery

Apart from Syriac and Turkish, the texts mention other languages such as French and Spanish. The mention of Spanish is sometimes confusing because it is referred in relation to Brazil, where the official language is Portuguese. In the same story mentioned above, "Jabbur Bek," the émigré talks about his new political activities with the man responsible for his promotion, who is going to offer him the *mudiriyya* (directorate) of Byblos. After hearing the émigré speaking Spanish, he proposes to him that he could even get the Qaʿim-maqamiyya of Keserouane because of his knowledge of foreign languages.

... وتذكّر هجرته ورفع رأسه بأبهة الموظف الكبير وقال. "سي سي سنيور".
فضحك الرجل غصباً عنه وقال: "هذا قليل عليك، أنت تستحقّ قائمقامية. نسيت أنك
تحكي باللسان الإسبانيولي"

And he remembered his emigration days, and he rose his head with the pride of the big employee and said: "Sí, sí, señor." So the man laughed uncontrollably and said: "This is not enough for you; you deserve a qa'immaqamiyya. I forgot that you can speak Spanish." (M.A. p. 64)

The main point expressed here is that knowledge of foreign languages increases the value given to a person. The circumstances of how the person acquired the language seem

to be irrelevant, and the fact of being an émigré seems to give the person a special status, superior to someone who remained in the country.

Lebanese people acquired knowledge of Spanish as a result of emigration. It was not a language commonly taught at school, as was French, and normally only those who had been in Spanish-speaking countries could master the language. None of the writers had emigrated and therefore the use of Spanish in their stories, even if it occurs in more than one occasion, tends to be limited to very few words. French words or expressions, on the contrary, are more numerous. Some expressions in French, like "au revoir," "bon jour," or "merci," were used by some people whether they had been in France or not. On the other hand, the use of Spanish is limited to those who have emigrated, even if expressions like "sí, señor," "sí, señorita," or "adiós" were probably widely understood. We can see this phenomenon in the next excerpt, taken from the same story, "Jabbur Bek:"

فقال الرجل: طيب، أوريفوار. فارتبك جبور ولكنه تماسك وتذاكر ما يقال فصاح: آديوس.

The man said: "Fine, Au-revoir." Jabbur got confused but then he held himself together and, remembering what was said, he exclaimed: "Adiós." (M.A. p. 65)

Abbud even uses the French language directly in one of his stories, something that never happens in any other writer's text, and even in any other of Abbud's stories, who normally transliterates foreign words or expressions using Arabic script. In the story "People," the author complains about the influence of people in daily life:

Aprés- وماذا يقول عنا الناس إذا لم نشتر كذا وكذا و لم نأكل كذا وكذا ولم نعمل
Soirée؟midiو

And what would people say about us if we don't buy this and that, we don't eat this and that, and we don't organize Soirées *and* Aprés-midi? (M.A. p. 89)

The use of *na'mal* gives this sentence a clear dialectal approach, so the author intends to reflect a spoken use of the language and not a written one. The frequent use of foreign words is a characteristic of the Lebanese dialect of the cities, and of the city dialects in general. Abbud reflects this peculiarity in this sentence, and he does it not only transcribing the foreign words but using the original Latin characters. This makes these French words sound closer to their original pronunciation. In this way, Abbud transmits the approach that some speakers have to foreign languages: instead of arabizing their sound, they try to get closer to the foreign pronunciation. They do not try to make the expression part of their language, but try to get closer themselves to the foreign language. Knowing Abbud, this may easily represent a criticism or a certain mockery of the people having this attitude.

Awwad also reflects in some of his stories some mockery and criticism of those who use foreign languages in Lebanese villages, even if they are surrounded only by villagers who had never been abroad and whose knowledge of foreign languages is almost nonexistent. In one of his stories, "Carajo," Awwad presents the linguistic behaviour of Darwish, an émigré who goes back to his village after having been in Colombia for ten years. The author gives Darwish a comical nature, partly because of his behavior and partly because of his use of Spanish, which he introduces into his speech constantly in a ridiculous manner. During the whole story, he acts with superiority over the villagers, using a second language that no one can speak. However, because it would be senseless to say whole sentences or paragraphs in Spanish, he limits himself to a few words that, without being an impediment for communication, are enough to prove that he knows the language. However, instead of getting the image of superiority that he wishes, his behavior causes mockery

among the villagers, which constantly make fun of his repetitive use of words such as

Señorita, *Señor*, or *Carajo*.

<div dir="rtl">

ودرويش، أيّ شيء يشكو؟ اسم الله! ألم تسمعه يحدّثنا طول الوقت بالإسبانيولي؟ سي سنيور... سي سنيوريتا!

- وهل نسيت كاراخو! كرّ... ر.. اخو!

وقلّد الرجل لهجة درويش في التشديد على الراء، فضحك الجميع. ثمّ أردف:

- عائلة درويش فلاحون بفلاحين، قضوا عمرهم في المراح ينامون مع البقر. تصوّرو درويش يفلح وينخز البقرة بمسّاسه وهو يصرخ فيها: سنيوريتا كاراخو! كاراخو سنيورتا! كان عليه أن يأخذها معه لتتعلّم إسبانيولي.

</div>

- And Darwish, what is he complaining about? My Goodness! Didn't you hear him speaking to us all the time in Spanish? Sí, señor… sí, señorita.
- And have you forgotten "Carajo"! Carrrr…r….ajo!?
And the man imitated Darwish's accent strengthening the "r," so everybody laughed. Then he added:
- Darwish's family is full of peasants. They spent their whole life in the stable, sleeping with the cows. Imagine Darwish cultivating (the land) and driving the cows with his stick, shouting at them: "Señorita, carajo!," "Carajo, señorita!" He should have taken them to learn Spanish with him! (T.A. p. 104)

6.2.4. Knowledge of Foreign Languages

Emigration, together with the situation of Lebanon after the First World War and the strong occidental presence in the area, made the local population familiar with the existence and sounds of many foreign languages, mainly in the cities or big villages. The following example is taken from Awwad's story "Hannun," inspired by the tragedy of the First World War. A curious character, Hannun, is well-known in the cafés of al-Zaytuna suburb, in Beirut:

<div dir="rtl">

أمّا لسانه فمتعدّد اللغات: اللفرنسية والإنكليزية والإيطالية. كل لغة يعرف منها كلمة وكلمتين، ويخلط بعضها ببعضها

</div>

As for his tongue, it produces numerous languages: French, English, and Italian. From each language he knows only one or two words, and he mixes them (T.A. p. 49)

The knowledge of these three languages is probably the result of all the armies that passed through Lebanese territory during the First World War, and of the religious missionaries. As the narrator describes, the knowledge is reduced to a few words of each language, and they are not even used independently, but mixed.

Going back to the French language, the knowledge of this language is often associated with the Christian communities in Lebanon, especially those who are Catholic, because of the influences of some religious orders coming from France and the educational institutions led by them. However, there are very few references to the French language in the stories. We have seen above how it was treated in one of Abbud's stories. In Awwad's, the only place where the French language is mentioned alone is in the story "The Desecrated Graveyard." The story revolves around the death of a prostitute, buried in her village after having been working in Beirut for years. One of her girlfriends goes to the village with her brother, and she places a funeral wreath over the tomb. Later on, the curious villagers go to the cemetery to see the tomb and one asks another about the wreath. The answer of one of the villagers is as follows:

رائحة زهر تشقّ القلب. والكتابة بالفرنجي لم أفهم منها شيئًا.

Smell of flowers pierces the heart. But I don't understand anything of the words in Franky. (T.A. p. 14)

The villagers did not understand anything of the language used to write the phrase over the wreath. They did not even use the adjective *French* (فرنسي / فرنساوي) but *Franky* (فرنجي). In this case it is not the narrator who uses the adjective, as in the previous example, but the villager himself. This implies an almost absolute ignorance about the foreign

202

language, meaning that the villager does not even have a small knowledge from school.[229]

It seems from this example that, at the time, French was mainly linked to the city and it had little presence in the villages, regardless of whether they were Christian or Muslim. In the cities, the knowledge of French would have been stronger, and the presence of French literary works would not have been unusual. In Karam's *Father Antun*, the narrator mentions on two occasions the existence of French novels in circulation, hand-in-hand with the novels written in Arabic. Describing the priest's bedroom, the narrator relates:

إلا أن من يتعمق في خوف المكتبة يقع على روايات فرنسية يجب أن لا يقرأها
كاهن ولا أن يحفل فيها بيت.

But he who looks into the sides of the library, will come across French novels that a priest should not read, nor should a home have in its collection (K.K. p. 13)

In another example, the narrator describes the material read by a prostitute living in Beirut:

وقد حملت بين يديها رواية فرنسية من أسخف ما جادت به مطابع باريس. وكل
قيمتها أن الحب العاري المفضوح يتمثل فيها

And she was carrying a French novel from among the most mediocre that Paris publishers had produced. And all its value was in the naked, scandalous love that it contained. (K.K. p. 107)

As we can see here, the author presents these novels as hidden at the bottom of the priest's library and also in the hands of a prostitute. Consequently, the reputation of these novels was not very high, and their reading was considered indecent by the most

---

[229] According to Niqula Ziadeh's "al-madrasa al-lubnaniyya wa al-shakhsiyya al-lubnaniyya," belonging to a series of conferences dedicated to Lebanese nationalism, the total number of schools in 1882 in the area of what would be Greater Lebanon was 93, both for boys and for girls. The number of students that same year was 11,792. The curriculum of most schools included other languages different than Arabic. For example, al-Hikma School included Arabic, French, English, and Latin. Thalaath Aqmaar (Three Moons) School included Arabic, French, Russian, and English. Therefore, the teaching and learning of numerous foreign languages was not unusual in the schools, but obviously it affected a small percentage of the total population (even if it may be considered high when comparing to other Arab countries), and it was concentrated in the elites and/or those living in cities. See Niqūla Ziyāda, "al-Madrasa al-Lubnāniyya wa al-Shakhṣiyya al-Lubnāniyya," in *Abʿād al-qawmiyya al-lubāniyya* (Kaslik: Jāmiʿat al-Rūḥ al-Qudus, 1970), 72-82.

conservative and traditional members of the society. The narrator even makes a personal comment about their literary value, inserting a sentence that has no relation to the plot of the story as an active part in the narration. According to him, the quality of the French stories read at the time was very poor, and they were mostly known for their love stories and not for their literary quality. Leaving aside the quality of the novels, these two excerpts indicate that there were people able to read these novels in French, and people belonging to very different social strata. This means that the knowledge of the French language of many members of the urban society was good enough to read a whole novel, something that stands in opposition to the villagers' knowledge mentioned above. The clash between city and village has further evidence here. Another text set in the city, Marun Ghosen's *The Son's Defense of his Father's Honor*, also refers to a certain genre of novels. The narrator uses the novels as a reference for something else, implying then a certain popularity of this kind of novels:

فهو أشبه بلصوص الروايات الموضوعة.

He looked like the thieves in the fictional novels (M.G. II p. 47)

The author expected that those reading his novel would understand this comment. There were not many detective stories written in Arabic at the time, so the reference is probably made with the detective novels written in French in mind.[230] The author, then, could read French, as could most of his readers.

---

[230] In the beginning of the twentieth century, there were certain authors of detective novels who became very popular in France. The most famous of them was Maurice Leblanc (1864-1941), creator of the fictional gentleman thief and detective Arsène Lupin, whose novels became very popular in the 1920s. From the same period, other famous authors were: Gaston Leroux (1868-1927), creator of the amateur detective Joseph Rouletabille; Pierre Souvestre (1874-1914) and Marcel Allain (1885-1969), creators of the master criminal Fantômas.

6.2.5. Conclusion

The conclusion then is that, again, Lebanese society was divided into two main groups, this time from the linguistic perspective: those living in the villages on one side, and people from the city and/or émigrés on the other side. Those living in the city would have more access to foreign languages, and could even master one of them. Those who emigrated to foreign countries would also easily master another language. However, those living in the villages would have very little knowledge of foreign languages, even if they probably understood some words in some of the most popular languages. What is interesting is the way the division is presented: the feeling of superiority of those knowing foreign languages is treated with mockery by villagers, or even associated with certain moral degeneration (French is presented as the language used by prostitutes by two different authors). None of the texts present the villagers as having any desire to learn foreign languages or even to admire those who know them. Based on the texts, the linguistic division then would not be based on religion but rather on geography and origin. The only language linked exclusively to the Christian community would be Syriac, something that is not surprising since this language is the liturgical language of some of the Christian communities in Lebanon.

6.3. Comparisons and Conclusions

The analysis has shown how some writers present the characters born in Mount Lebanon as having an Arab identity from the ethnic perspective. This Arab identity, however, was applied to the individual only in opposition – either opposing the Turks or the Europeans – but, when comparing them with people of neighboring countries, the Arabs were presented as the "others." There was no consensus among the writers on this issue,

and some of them seemed to be more favorable to the Arab identity, such as Awwad and Abbud, and others rejected categorically any relation to the Arabs, such as Lahad Khater.

The views of linguistic identity were more homogeneous than the views about ethnic identity. All writers presented their characters as belonging to the Arabic literary tradition in any of its varieties, whether Classical Arabic (Abbud, Awwad) or any type of Arabic dialect (Ghosen), whether voluntarily or by imposition (Khater) (fig.6). This view has often been strongly rejected in some later non-fictional texts,[231] which presented Christian Lebanese people as having a bilingual linguistic identity. It is important to emphasize then that the texts oppose this bilingualism, and the fact of knowing a second language does not imply a bilingual linguistic identity. The presentation of foreign languages in the texts also supports this argument.

---

[231] See for example Abou, Selim: *Le Bilinguisme Arabe - Française au Liban. Essai d'anthropologie culturelle* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1962).
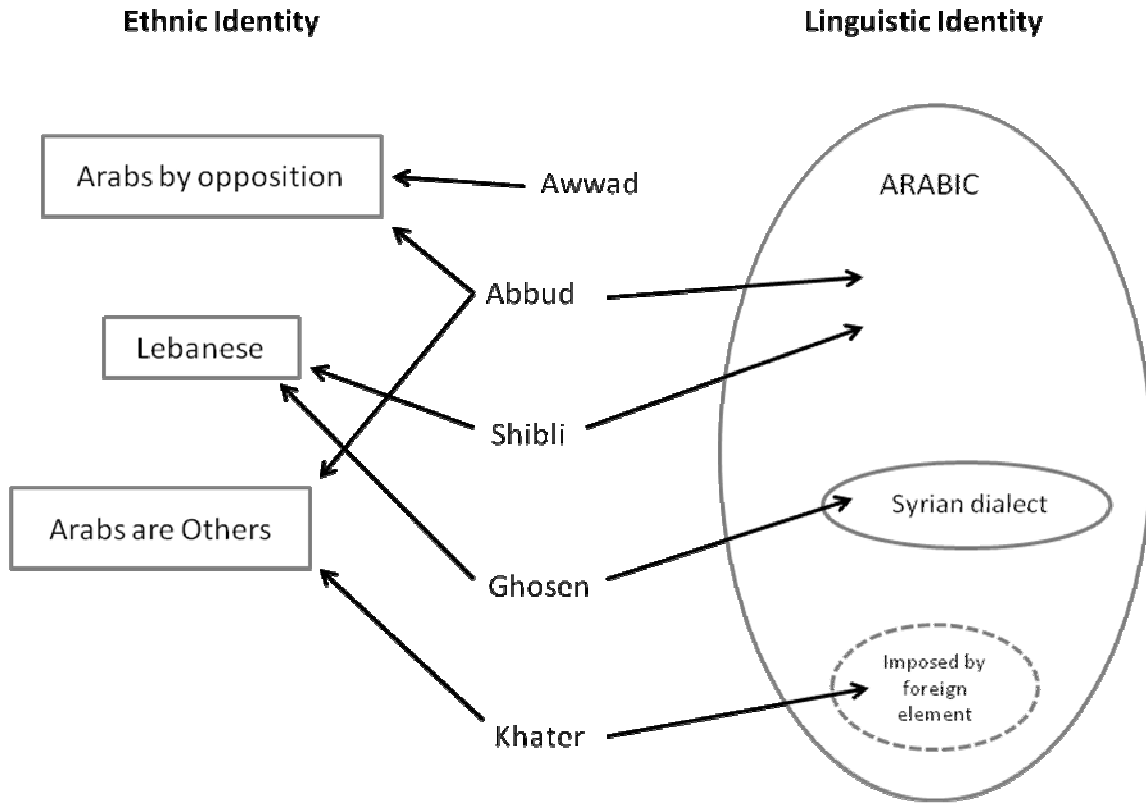
Fig.6. Ethnic and Linguistic Identities

The issue of the identity of Lebanon and its proximity to other Arab countries or to Occidental countries was - and still is - an issue that was present in the Lebanese public debate of the time. The 1926 cartoon below demonstrates this fact, in a time when the state was drafting the constitution and the identity of the country was one of the most sensitive issues to reflect in text. The text above the picture reads: "Governmental Chair in Lebanon: in the expected constitution," and the text below reads "The representatives ask each other and disparage: is it for the (European) hat or for the Tarbush?"

كرسي حاكمية لبنان

— في الدستور المنتظر —

النواب يتساءلون ويتغامزون أللبرنيطة أم للطربوش ؟

This cartoon appeared in the first publication of *al-Ahrar al-Musawwara*, January 11, 1926. The cartoon probably reflects a worry about the coming political alliances of the country more than a direct question related to its ethnic identity. However, the cartoon reflects the tension between belonging to the Arab world and the connections with the West, also present in our stories. Curiously enough, eighty-one years after the appearance of this cartoon, the Lebanese newspaper Al-Nahar, belonging also to the Tueini family, published this cartoon in November 2007, with a text that reads: "The presidential suit."

البدلة الرئاسية

We can see that both cartoons are almost the same, despite the eighty years' difference. The political alliances and the feelings of ideological closeness either to other Arab countries or to the main powers in the West continue to be a problematic issue in the country. In 1926, as today, the proximity to a certain ideological trend may cause the rejection of all cultural associations related to opposing political trends. We have seen this clearly in the example of Lahad Khater, who was ideologically close to the teachings of the French Jesuits of the time and who clearly rejected anything that had to do with Arab people. Other writers, though, did not show this animosity against Arabs, as Awwad and Abbud, and it just happens that these two writers were the ones who portrayed the Occidental element with less pride and admiration.

With respect to foreign languages, the authors present them as having a double face in the texts. No one denies that knowledge of a foreign language adds to the expertise of an individual, but at the same time, none of the writers show any of the characters in the stories, mainly those living in a rural environment, wishing to learn another language, or

admiring those who can speak a different language. More than that, the analysis has shown that the feeling of superiority of those knowing foreign languages is treated with mockery by villagers, or even associated with certain moral degeneration.[232]

There are slight differences in how foreign languages are treated by writers outside the target group. With regard to languages other than Arabic, Taqi al-Din mentions English and French in his stories. French appears in written form, in a bilingual French-Arabic visiting card that a woman hands to the director of a company (Kh.T. 95). English language appears connected to the American missionaries and their school:

ثمّ دفعته (الكتاب) إلى المعلم ملحم ، معلم مدرسة الإرسالية الأميركية، ليقرأه.
وكان المعلم يعرف اللغة الإنكليزية فضلا عن العربية.

Then, she gave (the letter) to the teacher Milhim, a teacher in the American Missionary School, and he knew the English language in addition to the Arabic language. (Kh.T. 65-6)

The Protestant schools were accepted more easily among non-Catholic communities, which could profit from high-quality education without conflicting with their religious beliefs. Catholic communities already had their missionary schools, belonging to different Catholic religious orders, and offering high-quality education for two centuries. While many Catholic schools were ruled by religious orders coming from France, French therefore being the main language of instruction, English obviously was the main language in the American Protestant schools. This is well known through their major representative example: the American Protestant School, later known as the American University of

---

[232] According to Selim Abou, those religious communities - other than the Christians - living in Lebanese villages, learn French because of functional reasons. When referring to Christian villages though, his opinion is quite different: "Il n'en va pas de même dans les villages chrétiens, en particulier dans les villages maronites, où la langue française jouit aux yeux du peuple d'un prestige apparemment inaliénable parce que lié moins à des considérations d'ordre politique qu'à des traditions séculaires de fidélité spirituelle et sentimentale." Abou, *Le Bilinguisme Arabe - Française au Liban*. The results obtained in the analysis, based on texts written around thirty years before Abou's work, differ completely from this statement.

Beirut, that even if it started using Arabic as the language of instruction, this language was changed to English in the second half of the nineteenth century.

It also seems through the excerpt above that the teacher does not know French, and is only proficient in Arabic and English. Curiously too, this is the only time in which Taqi al-Din mentions Arabic language in all the stories, and the only time too in which the adjective '*arabi* is used. Most of the stories have local residents as main characters, and only the story in which the term Arabic is mentioned, "Faris al-Shami," has an émigré as the main character. As we have seen in the stories analyzed in this study, the Arab-Arabic quality mostly occurred when describing a sense of identity by opposition – such as in Arab vs. Turks in Awwad's novel, or Arabs vs. Europeans in one of Abbud's stories. In Taqi al-Din's stories, with an overwhelming majority of local characters and almost no interaction with outside elements, the need for standing in front of the other and describing oneself in opposition rarely exists. This is in relation to Arabic; with regard to other languages, French clearly comes out in all authors' stories as having a social status that English has not reached yet, as a direct result of the decades of French education in Catholic missionary schools and, of course, the existence of a French Mandate in Lebanon. Good knowledge of English is generally limited to those having access to Protestant schools, mainly American schools, and the English language has not reached the status that the French language has at that point in history.

Lebanese writers living in the *Mahjar*, not including Arabic-speaking countries, had a broader vision of languages. The mockery towards foreign languages present in some of the "local texts" has no place in theirs. Some of them wrote both in Arabic and in other languages, such as English in the case of Amin al-Rihani and Jibran Khalil Jibran. However, this does not automatically imply the existence of a bilingual personal linguistic

211

identity. And this brings back the different layers of identity mentioned in the methodology section, and how identity may be classified into personal, enacted, relational and communal. The authors chosen for this analysis shared the characteristic of writing mainly in Arabic, something that was not a general characteristic among all Lebanese writers of the same period. In our writers, all layers of linguistic identity were related to the Arabic language: Arabic was their mother tongue, they use Arabic to describe themselves and to relate to others, and Arabic was the language of their small community, mainly their home village. This cannot be taken as a model of Lebanese writers as a whole, though, because those authors writing in French within Lebanon, or in English, or any other language in their place of emigration, could have easily had a more complex linguistic situation. This issue needs more analysis before general conclusions are made, and that is why the conclusion in this part should be limited to the authors whose works were analyzed here. Their linguistic identity, at all levels, belonged to the Arabic tradition, and no pride or admiration arose towards people knowing or speaking any other language. On the contrary, mockery was a recurrent characteristic when dealing with those speaking another language in a Lebanese, rural environment.

Chapter 7: Religious Identity

Among all different aspects of identity discussed in this analysis, the religious identity is probably the one in which the individual has less choice. In a society like Lebanon, an individual may choose to write in French, English, Arabic or any other language, to be Arab nationalist or Lebanese nationalist, but he will rarely have the option to decide about his religious community. Religion is a social given, and it does not have the character of individual choice that it may have in Western societies today. The individual is identified with a specific religious community by birth, and this has nothing to do with his own beliefs or preferences. Whether or not he believes in God, he belongs to a religious community and the personal law of his community will accompany him throughout his life, and it will govern over many personal events: births, marriages, and deaths.

All the authors of this study belong to the Maronite community, so the purpose of this chapter is not to find out to which religious community they belong, but to analyze the way in which they view this given identity, the way they express it, and how they deal with factors related directly to it, such as their relationship with religious authorities or their contact with other religious groups.

This chapter will show that the authors rarely prioritize their religious identity over other aspects of identity. Despite the fact of the often over-emphasized sectarian character of the Lebanese society, the term Maronite as a descriptive and identifying term appears only twice throughout the texts. There is also an almost complete lack of references to other religious communities, and the conflict between different sects is absent in the texts, with only one exception: Khater's mention of the struggles between the Druze and the Maronites between 1840 and 1860.

The analysis will also show that the authors enjoy total freedom to criticize openly their religion and its religious authorities. This contradicts one of the main distinctions made between the *Mahjar* writers and the writers living in Lebanon, which deals with the degree of religious freedom that they enjoy in their lives. According to al-Naʿuri, the *Mahjar* writers are characterized, among other factors, by a religious freedom that is reflected both in their ideas and in their expression,[233] assuming with this statement a difference with those authors living in their home countries. This religious freedom of the *Mahjar* is associated to the lack of restrictions imposed by religious authorities. However, the texts will show that tradition and society play a stronger role than religion in the freedom of the individual, and that the oppression under which some characters seem to live is the result of the traditional environment where they live, more than the result of religion or religious authorities.

The chapter is divided into several sections. The first section is dedicated to the clergy, and how its members are portrayed in the texts. The analysis will try to find, among other topics, the degree of anticlericalism as reflected in the texts. The second section focuses on lay people, their faith, how they express it, and on what they base it. The third section is centered on the adjective Maronite, and how the authors' religious community is reflected in the texts. The fourth section examines the references to other religious communities or other religions. The chapter ends with two sections covering other religious aspects that are perhaps less crucial than the others but that present interesting perspectives on other topics that complement this chapter. This includes the way prayers are used in the stories, and how one of the authors defamiliarizes the religious terminology of his novel, creating ambiguity and confusion in the reader.

---

[233] Al-Naʿuri, *Adab al-Mahjar*, 115.

7.1. Religious References in the Texts

The references to religious topics are probably the most numerous among all the references in the stories. Five out of the seven writers were born in small Christian villages, and they lived in that milieu at least until the end of their primary education. Life in the village is then one of the main settings for all of the works, and the villager perspective dominates the flow of the narrations. All of the villages mentioned in the stories are Christian and the majority of the characters are also Christians, so the preponderance of the Christian references throughout the texts is expected. Marun Abbud, for example, spent his childhood in the village of Ain al-Kifaʿ, and the first time that he had lasting contact with people of other religions was when he traveled to Beirut to spend two years in al-Hikma School.[234] Before that, his everyday relations were with Christians and, more precisely, with members of his own sect. For this reason, the totality of his village stories are set in Maronite villages, and only the stories that take place outside the village have characters whose religion is not defined, and who could be Muslims or Druze. Tawfiq Y. Awwad's background is somehow similar to Abbud's, and that also affects the settings and characters of the stories. The stories set in the mountain are always located in Christian villages, and in the stories set in the city, even if there are characters of all religious factions, most of the main characters are also Christian. Therefore, the references to Christian religion and its institutions are abundant, and the references to other religions are almost nonexistent.

---

[234] Marun Abbud relates his experiences in Al-Hikma School in "Two Years in al-Hikma School. 1905-1906," in *Ahadith al-Qarya. Aqasis wa Dhikrayat* (Beirut: Dār Marūn Abbūd), 109-20. About the Druze, he wrote: "After believing that the Druze were monsters that ate children, most of my friends became from among the Druze. And here it is Shaykh Selim Hamadeh from Gharife, short, walking between me and Marun Natin al-Darʿuni, so you see us as the image of the Holy Family walking over the grounds of Al-Hikmeh School, and Selim yelling in that playground: 'How is a Druze between two Maruns?'" (pp. 114-5)

بعد ما كنت أحسب الدروز غولا يأكل الأولاد أصبح أكثر أصحابي دروزا. فهذا الشيخ سليم حماده من غريفه، القصير القامة، يمشي بيني وبين مارون نطين الدرعوني، فتخالنا صورة العائلة المقدسة تمشي على أرض مدرسة الحكمة، وسليم يصرخ في ذلك الملعب: ما حال درزي بين مارونين

Religious values are linked to the mountain and its villages, and the city and foreign countries are often associated with the loss of religiosity and values. The clash between the culture of the city and the culture of the mountain has one of its most outstanding examples in this section.

7.2. Clergy

Some members of the Catholic communities may be chosen to be ordained for service and leadership of the community. These members are the ones who constitute the clergy, which include deacons, priests and bishops. Many of the analyzed stories take place at an intra-sectarian level, mainly in villages whose residents are all Maronite. In this setting, the presence of the clergy, mostly deacons and priests, is a constant in the stories. In Christian villages of Mount Lebanon, most festivities and personal events such as baptisms, weddings or funerals, take place in the church or its nearby areas. Moreover, before the spreading of local schools, the village priest was also responsible for the basic education of the children in the village. The "school under the oak" in the church square became a typical image of the time. For all these reasons, the church and the residence for the priest, normally sharing location, were and still are central to the village life.

In the nineteenth century, ordaining married men was still common in the Oriental Churches. Abbud clearly reflects this fact in his stories set in the time of the *Mutasarrifiya*, in which the presence of the *khuriya* is frequent. However, this became less common in the twentieth century, as Karam suggests in his *Father Antun*. All authors, with only the exception of Salah Labaki, make members of the clergy characters in their stories. The large number of references allows the reconstruction of an elaborate profile of the clergy, both at the spiritual and human levels.

The way an individual lives his religious identity is sometimes shaped by the relation he has with specific members of the clergy, and there is always the risk of "applied synecdoche," or associating the clerics with the divine institution by which they exists and, ultimately, with God. However, in the texts, there is a big difference between personal faith and the individuals' relationship with the clergy. Faith tends to be strong and deeply-rooted in the individual, but there is a tendency to strongly criticize the clergy and the way in which they practice their authority, or to exalt their human side to the detriment of their religious role.

7.2.1. Power of the clergy

The power of the clergy is evident in many of the stories. It sometimes becomes so strong that it substitutes the idea of God itself. This will be a perfect example of the synecdoche explained above. In Awwad's "The Desecrated Graveyard," for example, a village girl gets pregnant before getting married, and she begs her lover to marry her:

<div dir="rtl">

أما قلت لي إنك تنقذني من كل شيء؟ بطني كبير، وثيابي ضاقت عليّ. يا ذلّي بين الناس وأمام بونا طانيوس!

</div>

Didn't you tell me that you would save me from everything? My belly is growing and my clothess are getting tight. How humiliated I am among the people and in front of Father Tanius! (T.A. p. 16)

For the girl, the mention of "Father Tanius" refers obviously not only to the man himself but to the religious authority he represents, and the divine instituted state to which he belongs. Even more, the girl could have easily said here "in front of the people and in front of God."

7.2.2. Weaknesses of the Clergy: Dependency on Worldly Powers

The clergy is often presented as having as many weaknesses as any lay person might have. However, these weaknesses are magnified in the stories because of the apparent contradiction between them and the obligations associated with the clergy. For example, civil and religious authorities are supposed to be independent, but sometimes they are not, and influence of one over the other is constant. The line that divides worldly interests and spiritual obligations is somehow blurred, and priests themselves become slaves of their own interests, just as dependent on the leaders of the village as anyone else. In the same story mentioned above, "The Desecrated Graveyard," both the *shaykh* and the priest are the only people in the village who know the actual reason why a local girl left the village to become a prostitute. She became pregnant after a relation with the *shaykh*, and he promised to marry her but, in the end, he never did. The priest knows the truth through confession and he fails to do anything, partly because of confessional secret and partly because he owes his position to the *shaykh*:

وكان يطيع الشيخ سليمان طاعة عمياء. وكيف لا يطيعه وهو الذي عيّنه خوري الرعية وهو الذي يعزله متى شاء؟

And he (the priest) used to obey Shaykh Sulayman blindly. And how couldn't he obey him when he was the one who appointed him priest of the congregation, and who can fire him whenever he wanted. (T.A. p. 14)

7.2.3. Weaknesses of the Clergy: Abuse of Authority

Another negative side of the religious clergy is the way they use their spiritual authority to impose themselves and to obtain information that, otherwise, they would not get. In the following example, the priests' reprehensive attitude is caused not by a "vassalage" relation but by their own initiative. In the story "The Poet," the director of a

school, a priest, is trying to get the truth about a picture that one of the students owns. The student claims that the picture is from his aunt, when the truth is that an Italian woman gave it to him:

ولكن العاشق الصغير أنكر كل شيء وأصرّ على القول إنها صورة لخالته المهاجرة إلى أميركا. فأبى المدير أن يصدق شيئا من ذلك وأمر أن يُساق الخاطئ إلى كرسي الاعتراف.

But the young lover denied everything and insisted saying that it was a picture of his aunt who emigrated to America. The director refused to believe any of this and he ordered the sinner to go to confession. (T.A. p. 27)

The director of the school himself is in charge of confession, obtaining the truth only by taking advantage of his religious authority. Awwad presents an abuse of power in the story, transmitting a very negative view of the priest. This is not the only case in his stories, and other religious figures outside the clergy also abuse their religious state for worldly purposes. Awwad points at this behaviour when describing some nuns in religious schools.

Not all members of Catholic religious orders belong to the clergy and, in the case of female religious orders, this is always the case. Religious orders were born with the purpose of organizing groups of individuals who intended to have a mystical life, and who wished to live with certain degree of seclusion. Lately, they also embraced some missionary activities, education being among the most important of all. It is from this view of education as a missionary activity where all the schools of different religious orders were founded. We saw in Chapter IV the strong influence of these schools in Lebanon, mainly since the nineteenth century, not only at the religious level but also in other cultural aspects of the society. The presence of these schools in Lebanon is clearly reflected in the texts, and there are some stories that revolve around them. An example of this presence, linked to the

fear caused by the clergy in young people and their abuse of power, appears in "The

Burned Letters." In this story, the schoolgirl's fear of the nuns of at her school is evident:

ـ لا تنتظرني أمام المدرسة، لأن أم كاترين لها عينان تطلان دائما من فوق سطح
المدرسة وتراقبان البنات.
.... وكان لها سبّابة طويلة تضرب بها التلميذات على أيديهن

*- Don't wait for me in front of the school. Mother Catherine has eyes that observes
you from the roof terrace of the school, observing the girls.*
... And she had a long stick which she used to hit the palms of the girls. (T.A. p. 40)

Even if hitting was a common practice in schools, and it was often used by

educators to teach discipline, the danger here lies in its association to the religious

authorities. The educator and the religious figure coincide in the same person, and the roles

get confused, not only by the students, but also by the priest or nun as we have seen above.

Through Awwad's stories, clergy and members of religious orders are then presented from

a very negative perspective, both by the narrator and by the characters.[235]

7.2.4. Weaknesses of the Clergy: Hypocrisy

The behaviour reflected in the stories contradicts one of the main obligations of the

clergy, whose code demands that they "live both interiorly and exteriorly a holier life than

lay people and that they must excel them in giving the example of virtue and good

---

[235] Awwad is considered among the most important Lebanese writers of the twentieth century, and it is not strange to find research work about his stories among university students. Description of the clergy that appears in his stories is also a common topic and, as example, we can mention a research paper by a student in the Lebanese University, Muhammad Farshukh, entitled *al-Mujtama' al-Lubnani min khilal qisas Tawfiq Yusuf 'Awwad hatta al-Thalathinat*. In this work, the author claims that Awwad, as other writers in their negative portrait of the clergy, did not act as vengeance against a group, but reflected a side of the society that many people were scared to describe and that had been treated as a shared secret by all (*al-Mujtama' al-Lubnani min khilal qisas Tawfiq Yusuf 'Awwad hatta al-Thalathinat*, by Muhammad Amin Farshukh under the direction of Dr. Michel Jiha, Lebanese University, Beirut, Feb. 1973, 48).

deeds."[236] The stories constantly play with this contradiction, and a behaviour that would be also reprehensible in a lay person becomes magnified because its agent is a member of the clergy.

Awwad is, together with Karam, the author who most clearly reflects the faults of the clergy. The clearest example of the negative view towards the clergy appears in the story entitled "The Medal." In this case, the director of a home for the blind, a priest, Father Rafail, presents an extremely hypocritical attitude: he sees himself as an angel, but he acts with cruelty towards the blind. At the beginning of the story, he defines himself to a new member of the community, saying:

ـ أنا ملاك الرحمة، يا ابني، أرسلني الله إليك لأخلصك من شقائك

- *I am the angel of mercy, my son, God sent me to you to free you from misery.* (T.A. p. 79)

In other parts of the story, he is defined as a "saint" (قديس) (T.A. p. 80) or "man of God" (رجل الله) (T.A. p. 79) but the blind people who suffer him called him "a damned beard" (أبو الذقن المعلونة). The author does not only insinuate this "double" personality but presents it clearly. The hypocrisy of the priest becomes one of the main topics of the story. The priest insults his flock directly:

ـ هؤلاء الخنازير لا يقدّرون التضحية

- *Those pigs don't appreciate sacrifice* (T.A. p. 82)

وسمع المدير يشتمه وأمّه

And he heard the director insulting him and his mother (T.A. p. 81)

---

[236] CIC (1917), c.124.

However, at the same time, he thinks he fulfills his function as a religious leader by forcing the blind to practice the religious duties:

ـ تشبهوا ببركات، وصلّوا وناموا!

- *Be like Barakat, pray and sleep!* (T.A. p. 80)

ـ سيقودك أبو عمشه إلى الكنيسة لتسمع القدّاس. وإياك أن تفوه بكلمة! لا أنت حاولت الهرب ولا أنا وضعتك هنا. وإلا كان جزاؤك أسبوعا كاملا في هذا القبو، مع كأس ماء في اليوم لا أكثر ولا أقلّ.

- *Abu 'Amshe would take you to church to attend the mass. And beware not to utter one word. You didn't try to escape and I didn't put you here. Otherwise, if you speak, your punishment will be a whole week in this basement, and you will be provided with just a glass of water per day, no more and no less.* (T.A. p. 81)

The hypocrisy of the priest is clear: on the one hand, he obliges his flock to go to mass, thinking that with this he fulfills his religious duties as guide of the community; on the other, his behavior does not correspond to the values he represents. Therefore, his pious words lose their original meaning with his behavior, and he becomes cynical. Awwad is not the only author that presents the practice of religious ceremonies as imposed by force. Lahad Khater also presents a similar view, but in this case, it is presented as something positive by the narrator. The following excerpt describes the behavior of a mother when educating her children:

... جمعتهم في غرفة نومهم أمام مذبح صغير عليه صورة العيلة المقدسة أمرتهم بإقامة الصلاة وتلاوة طلبة السيدة الزياح...

And she gathered them in their bedroom in front of a small altar that had a picture of the Holy Family, and she ordered them to say the prayers and to recite the Litany of the Virgin... (L.Kh. p. 13).

The situation described is not unusual in a religious family, but using the verb *'amarat* conveys imposition and not free will.

7.2.5. Weaknesses of the Clergy: "Extra Functions"

Going back to the discrepancy between the values and functions that a priest should represent and his real behavior, this is not reflected in the stories only by these hypocritical images. Until now, we have seen scenes in which a priest pretends to be something that he is not, or he hides something that affects his impartiality. We also find direct references to "extra functions" that the priest does not hide and it seems that his community accepts them without criticizing. For example, in "The Burnt Letters," the priest acts as matchmaker, and it seems to be with the consent of the community.

كانت تقول لها ذلك كلّما جاءها عريس وعلى أثر كل زيارة كان يقوم بها بونا جبرايل. كان هذا الكاهن لا يخدم النفوس فقط بل يرى من واجبه أيضاً، ومن ملذاته الخاصة، أنِ يدلّ العريس على العرائس والعروس على العرسان، مسمسراً بين الفريقين؛ وحسبه أجراً أن يتفرج على القلوب المتحابّة، وأن يبارك الإكليل بيد، ويتسلم باليد الأخرى رسومه.

And she used to tell her that each time a suitor came to her, and right after each visit of Father Gibrail. This priest did not only serve the souls, but one of his duties also, as well as one of his personal joys, was to lead grooms to brides, and brides to grooms, tying both sides; and that was enough for him as a reward to watch the loving hearts and to bless the crown with one hand and take his fees with the other. (T.A. p. 39).

The priest's behaviour, even if it may benefit the community and even if the community accepts it and welcomes it, contradicts the life and conduct that members of the clergy must have. Clerics are forbidden to conduct any kind of business or trade,[237] and the way Awwad presents the priest's action is just that, trade, especially through the image of the priest taking money after his action.

---

[237] See Kelliher: "Clerical State (Canon Law)." *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol.3, 950.

7.2.6. Weaknesses of the Clergy: Internal Trade

There is also a middle situation between the complete hypocrisy and the opened and accepted "extra functions." There is the case of the priest who, even if he offers a good service to the community, has reasons for being part of the clergy that are far from a true spiritual vocation. In Awwad's "Palm Sunday," the narrator explains the reasons why Father Augustine – before Yusef – became a priest after having been working in building construction and having gotten married:

أما لماذا ترك يوسف صناعة البناء ولبس ثوب الكهنوت فللأمرين اثنين: أوّلهما طبعا أنه مدعوّ من الله إلى الانقطاع عن الدنيا، وإلى التكفير عن خطاياه. ولم تكن خطاياه كثيرة في الواقع؛ ولكن، ألم يقل القديسين أنفسهم إنّهم، بالرغم من قداستهم، يخطئون سبع مرات في اليوم الواحد؟ وثانيهما أنه كان يرجو من الله أن يمنّ عليه بولد وهو خادم في بيته، بعد أن أبى أن يرزقه ولدا وهو بنّاء يعالج الحجارة ويسبّ الدين...

And about why Yusef left working in construction, and dressed in the priesthood robes, there were two reasons: the first, of course, because he was called by God to cut his ties with the material world, and to make up for his sins. And, as a matter of fact, his sins were not numerous – and, didn't the saints say that, despite their sanctity, they sinned seven times in a single day? And the second reason was that he was seeking from God that He would bless him with a boy while he was serving in the House of God after He denied him a boy when he was working in construction and he was cursing religion. (T.A. p. 43)

There is a high degree of irony in this passage in the expression *of course*, which gives the impression that the first reason is false. During the story, however, the author does not offer any reason to think that Father Augustine is a bad priest. At the same time, the theme of the story is the wish that both the priest and his wife have to give birth to a child. This makes interest the main reason why he became a priest. The desire of having a child is stronger in the wife who says when comparing herself to "Umm Ibrahim," a woman with many children whom she considers a bad person:

أهذا عدل من الله أن يُرزق هذه الفاجرة اثنى عشر ولدا، ولا يزرق الخورية ولدا واحدا يبلّ قلبها وقلب بو حسون ويملأ وحشة البيت؟

Is this justice from God that He gives this whore twelve children and He doesn't bless the khuriyya a single child, to comfort her heart and Abu Hassun's heart, and to fill the house with livelihood instead of loneliness? (T.A. p. 44)

Obviously, the terminology used in this sentence is almost mercantilist, as if they were talking about exchange of services. In this case, even if the community is not damaged, there is an internal hypocrisy that makes the image of the priest somehow negative, perhaps understandable and justified, but far from the real values that a priest should represent.

7.2.7. First Abbud: Clerics as victims of their own blind faith

All the examples mentioned until now, taken from Awwad's stories, present the clergy from an outside perspective. Abbud's approach is different, and his personal background helped him to present the human side of the clergy without prejudices, even if it is still very subjective.

In Abbud's stories, the priests' role and influence in the village life is stronger than the role and influence of any other villager. We must remember that both of Abbud's grandfathers were priests, so he knew from inside the life and work of the clergy. The author does not present a single view or opinion towards priests but, in general and with very few exceptions, priests are seen as honest people who can only be accused of believing too blindly, being victims sometimes of their excess of faith. This characteristic is present mainly in the stories related to his home village, Ain Kifa'. We will see that this approach changes when the stories leave his village, and priests become more and more human and corrupted. Leaving the village represents in Abbud the change of perspective from the child to the adult, when innocence and hope is substituted for knowledge and its consequences. This can be seen when analyzing all topics, and religion is no exception.

225

In "The Sunday of Resurrection Sermon," Abbud presents his grandfather's feelings during the day of Good Friday. Each year he suffers Jesus' death, and laments the solitude in which He died and how some of His disciples denied knowing Him. Hanna Abbud hopes, year after year, that he could have died with him:

تمنّى لو أنّه كان في ذلك الزمان فينصره ويموت معه شهيدًا فيرث الملكوت بأقرب وسيلة وأضمنها.

He hoped that he live at that time, so he could help Him and die with Him as a martyr, inheriting heaven by the nearest means and the strongest guaranty. (M.A. p. 115)

Here, the priest's goal of reaching Heaven should not be interpreted as ambition but more as a desire of reaching the highest purpose of life, that is, death and union with God.[238] Two other priests share the Easter celebrations, and both of them are described as having a pure, sincere faith.

وظلّ الخوري يوحنا يصلي عند القبر. يطيب له الرنين ويلذ له النواح الروحي المرسل من صدر عامر بالإيمان...

And the priest Yuhanna continued praying on the sepulcher. The wailing was good for him and the spiritual lamentation, sent from a chest full of faith, pleased him. (M.A. p. 117)

كان الخوري موسى رقيق القلب. تفيض دموعه بغزارة لأقلّ كلمة تلامس شعوره الديني.

The Priest Musa was very tender at heart. His tears used to flow in abundance for the slightest word that touched his religious feeling. (M.A. p. 117)

---

[238] The desire of dying among some very religious people is a common feeling. Compare for example the verses of St. Teresa de Jesús (Avila, 1515-1582):
Vivo sin vivir en mí,
y tan alta vida espero,
que muero porque no muero.
[Santa Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas. Edición manual* (Madrid: BAC, 1982), 502.]
I live without living in myself,
And in such a way I hope life,
I die because I don't die.
[*The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*, translated by Adrian J. Cooney, O.C.D. (Washington D.C.: ICS Publications, 1985), Volume Three, 375].

During the Sunday of Resurrection mass, the three priests share in the celebration:

واشترك الكهنة الثلاثة في الذبيحة الإلهية بوجوه تفيض بِشرًا كأنَّ هناك قيامة حقيقية وظفرًا واقعيًا.

And the three priests shared the divine sacrifice with faces flowing with joy, as if there were a real resurrection and a true gain. (M.A. p. 120)

However, faith does not exempt the priest from having weaknesses as everybody else, sharing human nature with all its virtues and defects. In the story, the three priests are presented in some occasions as three old men who enjoy gossiping about the village matters. Nonetheless, there is a strong feeling of self-criticism, coming especially from the author's grandfather.

فقال الخوري موسى بنبرة: أوف، أوف، ضيعة شيطانها كبير. فأجاب الخوري يوحنا صادق: يا معلمي خوري يوحنا، كل الحق علينا نحن الخوارنة. يا خوري موسى، شيطاننا نحن أكبر من شيطان الضيعة لو فينا روح الله طردناه باسم الصليب، وانطفأ خبره.

The priest Musa said with emphasis: 'Uf, uf, a village whose demon is big'. The Priest Yuhanna Sadiq answered: 'Priest Yuhanna, my master, it is all our fault, we, the priests. Priest Musa, our demon is bigger than that of the village. Had we had the spirit of God in us, we would have expelled him (the demon) in the name of the cross, and his preaching will be extinguished. (M.A. p. 118)

لو كنّا كما يجب ما عجز المرسل البطريركي عن مصالحة أولاد رعيتنا

If we were like we should be, the Patriarchal delegate would not be unable to conciliate the sons of our flock. (M.A. p. 119)

What is remarkable here is that the comments are presented as self-criticism by the clergy itself and not as criticism. Even if the self-criticism is finally written by Marun Abbud, an outsider, and this could turn it into another criticism, the fact that Abbud knew the priest life from the inside makes it self-awareness more than simple criticism. It is very possible that his grandfather himself said those words or similar ones at some point. In fact,

the last part of the story is the sermon that his grandfather supposedly gave during the mass of Resurrection Sunday. In the sermon, he criticizes hypocrisy, the religious attitude of the villagers who go to church but do not practice what they are supposed to believe in; the use of religion for personal purposes:

<div dir="rtl">

ولكن، من يؤكد لي أن نفوسكم تجددت بالمسيح وتقوّتت بنعمته؟

</div>

But, who can assure me that your souls have been renewed with Christ and have been nourished by His blessing. (M.A. p. 122)

<div dir="rtl">

فهل غفرتم أنتم لمن أساء إليكم من أقرباءكم؟ ألستم كما كنتم حزبين؟ فأين مسيحيتكم يا أولادي؟

</div>

Have you forgiven those among your relatives who trespassed against you? Aren't you – as you were – two parties? So, where is your Christian faith, my sons? (M.A. p. 122)

<div dir="rtl">

لا تصدقوا الذين يتفلسفون على ربّهم ليحللوا الربا والتجارة لأنفسهم، فهؤلاء عبيد المال وربّنا قال: لا يمكنكم أن تعبدوا ربين الله والمال.

</div>

Don't trust those who philosophize about their Lord to justify usury and trade for their own sake, since those are slaves of the money and, as our Lord said, you cannot worship two lords: God and money. (M.A. p. 123-4)

<div dir="rtl">

فليس كل من يقول: يا رب، يا رب، يدخل ملكوت السماوات، بل من يعمل إرادة أبي الذي في السماوات.

</div>

Not everybody who says: "Lord, Lord" enters the Kingdom of Heaven, but those who act according to the will of my Father who is in Heaven. (M.A. p. 124)

7.2.8. Second Abbud: Clerics as reflection of the disenchantment of adulthood.

As stated above, the priest outside Abbud's home village is treated with less respect than the one inside his village. The reasons for this can be numerous. It could be the fact that the priest in the village was his grandfather and that he saw him from the perspective of

228

a child. It could be also, as expressed above, the change of perspective from the child to the adult, with the logical consequences. Abbud meets priests other than his grandfathers later in his life, after he had lost part of his innocence, having left his village. The "new priests" are the same age than him and he has a completely different perspective on life than the one he had before. The positive view of the "old times" contrasts with the negative view of the present time. We have seen that this contrast can be perceived through the stories, and it is materialized in an expression used by the author to refer to the time of the Mutasarrifiyya as "that happy period" (See Lebanon section). In "A Sermon and a Chicken," the author describes one of his friends from the time he spent in al-Hikma school, who became a priest in a big village close to Beirut. He says the following about him:

كان صاحبي متمسكًا بدينه لا يقبل فيه الجدل

My friend was adhering to his religion, and he did not accept any discussion. (M.A. p. 162)

This apparently innocent sentence carries a strong criticism against the priest's intolerance and fanaticism, who does not accept "any discussion." It is interesting to mention that, even if both are Christians belonging to the same sect, the author uses *his* to refer to the friend's religion. In the same story, referring to the same priest when he is giving the midnight mass on Christmas Eve, the author expresses his happiness when the mass goes quicker than expected:

وأسرع في تلاوة قدّاسه فبلغ الإنجيل ببرقة عين. فقلت في نفسي: عافاك يا خوري إبراهيم، هذا قدّاس

And he hurried in the recitation of the mass, reaching the Gospel in the blink of an eye. I told to myself: "Well done, Father Ibrahim, this is a real mass" (M.A. p. 165)

The spiritual authority of this priest is treated with mockery during the whole story. Its title "A Sermon and a Chicken" reflects the hypocrisy in the priest's life, who lectures certain behavior and then he acts somehow in contradiction with what he had lectured: he preaches about material poverty and then he eats a huge dinner during the holiday.

7.2.9. Karam: The corrupted priest used as basis for criticism

As said before, almost all authors include priests as main characters. The main character of Karam Melhem Karam's *Father Antun* is a priest, Father Antun, who falls in love with a married woman. After having been rejected, he takes revenge by falsely accusing her of adultery and making a prostitute win the love of her husband, so he abandons her. With this plot, we cannot take the example of this priest as a model, and it would be unwise and too risky to assume that the priest's behaviour reflects in any way the author's general view towards priests.[239] However, there are many sections in the story in which the narrator, starting with a specific event in the plot, takes a broad view about priests and religion in general. In the following passage, a man reflects on some priests' attitude, who preach certain behavior and then act themselves doing the opposite of what they preach. This is the same approach adopted before by both Abbud and Awwad.

فلم يجب كأنه الأصم. فانصرف عنه الرجل بنزق وهو يشتم ويلعن ويتعجب من
هؤلاء الكهنة الذين يدعون تقويم النفوس ورد الخطاة إلى الله ويتهاونون في القيام بما
فرضوا على أنفسهم من تضحيات، هؤلاء الذين سيعرضهم ربهم في اليوم الأخير منددا
بهم: "رأيتموني جائعا وما أطعمتموني، وعاريا وما كسوتموني، ومريضا وما عدتموني،
وسجينا وما أسرعتم إلى تخفيف بلواي..."

---

[239] This is not the only case in which Karam presents priests in a very negative way. In "Razzuq came back from America," one of his stories written outside the target period, there are two priests acting as secondary characters, one a city priest and another one a village priest. In both cases, Karam presents them as hypocrites, more interested on money than on fulfilling their duties. Karam Melhem Karam, "'Ada Razzuq min Amirika" in *Ashbah al-Qarya* (Beirut: Dar al-Dad, 1979), 71, 76, 84-5. Even if it is risky to assume that the priests' behaviour reflects the author's general view towards priests, one can presume through all these examples that the author did not have many sympathies towards the clergy.

He did not answer as if he were mute. So the man left him quickly, insulting and cursing him, shocked at those priests who call for the reformation of souls and correct the sinners' path to God's path, and then they do not live up to what they are supposed to do themselves, in term of sacrifices; those whom the Lord will arraign on the day of judgment, shouting at them in criticism: "You saw me hungry and you did not feed me, naked and you did not dress me, ill and you did not attend to me, prisoner and you did not hurry to lighten my misfortune…" (K.K. p. 33)[240]

The hypocrisy is evident and not unusual, as we have seen in other examples above. The following dialogue takes place between a young woman and Father Antun. She offers to read the priest's cup and tell him his future. His positive answer does not really matter, and what is important is the fact of the offer itself. The scene happens naturally and no one seems to find foretelling the future to a priest inappropriate. Superstition is, then, accepted and generalized among most of the population, including among the supposedly educated priests.

أأقرأ لك في بختك؟

وقال البونا: وماذا في بختي غير النحس؟

May I read your future?
Father Antun said: And what is my fortune except bad luck? (K.K. p. 47)

Examples of generalization about moral topics are numerous throughout the story. The following two excerpts criticize the celibacy of the priests, using as a starting point the priest's repressed desires towards one of the main characters, Nayla. The first excerpt is the response that he obtains from her after having declared to her his feelings. In the second one, the priest remembers the words that Nayla said to him in the past. The two excerpts are identical with the exception of the last part:

أيها المحترم، أخطأ كل الخطأ من فرض عليكم أن لا تتزوجوا كسائر الناس، أن لا يشملكم سر الزواج كما يشمل رعيتكم. لو تزوجتم لخمدت في نفوسكم الشهوات' ولا

---

[240] The man's words refer to Jesus' words in Matthew 25, 34-46.

ابتعدتم عن التفكير في إغراء النساء وخداعهن. أجل، عليكم بالزواج، فما أنتم غير البشر، غير مخلوقات ضعيفة كسائر المخلوقات يبهر عيونها الحسن وتستميلها رغبات الجسد. الزواج أفضل لكم من التظاهر بالعفة ومعظمكم لا يقوى عليها. فتزوجوا ولا تخدعوا الله ولا عباد الله. كونوا صريحين وانبذوا كل رياء!

Reverend, he who imposed on you not to get married was all wrong; not to marry as anybody else, not to fulfill the secret of marriage as your flock does. If you got married, your passions would calm down and you would move away from the thoughts of seducing women and deceiving them. Yes, you should get married because you are no other than human beings, you are no other than all weak creatures as the rest of the creatures who are fascinated by beauty and swayed by bodily desires. Marriage is better for you than pretending to be chaste, when most of you don't have the strength for that. So, get married and don't deceive God or God's servants. Be honest and reject all hypocrisy. (K.K. p. 74)

استعاد في ذهنه أقوال نائلة رحمه. قالت نائلة تخاطبه: أخطأ كل الخطأ من [...] ومعظمكم لا تقوى عليها. وإذا أبيتم إلا أن تنذروها فافعلوا وقد بلغتم الخمسين والستين وشبعتم من ملذات الدنيا. عندذاك تقوون على مغالبة شهواتكم والقيام بفروضكم واحترام وصايا الله.

And he went back in his mind to what Nayla Rahme told him. She said: "he who imposed on you not to get married was all wrong [...] when most of you do not have the strength to overpower desire. If you insist to give yourself to God, do this when you are fifty or sixty, and when you have fulfilled your needs from the joys of life. At that time, you will have the strength to overpower lust, and then undertake your duties and respect the commands of God. (K.K. pp. 92-3)

The repetition of the same idea with almost identical words puts emphasis on the idea of the wrongness of celibacy, according to the characters but probably reaching the author himself.[241] The issue is in fact at the base of the whole story, and it explains by itself the incorrect behavior of the priest.

The description of the priests' character, then, is rich and complex, and generalization would be a mistake. The abundant references allow the construction of a

---

[241] We must remember that *Father Antun* was not published all at once but it gradually appeared in consecutive issues of Karam's magazine *Alf Layla wa Layla*. This may be also the reason why some ideas, and even full fragments, are repeated at different parts of the novel.

reasonable, complex picture that reflects two main facts: the huge importance of clergy in society, and the writers' possibility to criticize them openly in their works.

7.2.10. The Maronite Patriarch

Before the clergy section is finished, the Maronite Patriarch deserves a special mention, being the head of the Maronite Church. It is not unusual to find references to him or to the Patriarchate in the works and, contrary to what happened when referring to priests, the Patriarch is always treated with respect. There is even one work, Michel Shibli's *The Oak's Hill*, in which the Patriarch himself is a character in the story. The coming two passages reflect some comments made by the character Patriarch Eliyas al-Huwayek to a village priest, Father Musa. Father Musa is defending one of his parishioners from false accusations made by an influent, corrupted local leader, supported by the leader's uncle Bishop Quzhaya. Both passages reflect the Patriarch's criticism towards his own hierarchy, particularized in the character of Bishop Quzhaya in the story:

طالما نصحنا هؤلاء في أيام الحرب أن يتئدوا بأعمالهم وحركاتهم فاكتب الآن إلى المطران قزحيا بأن يقرأ الإنجيل!

How often have we given advice to those during the war to resort to their work and their activities, so write to Bishop Quzhaya now and tell him to read the Gospel! (M.S. p. 93)

The Patriarch is portrayed as being conscious of the weak morals of some members of his own hierarchy. The criticism towards the high clergy's corruption is constant during the story, but both the village priest and the Patriarch are exempted from this criticism. The Patriarch is at a different level, and there is not a single story among the ones analyzed here in which a writer breaks the line of respect towards him. As happenes in one of Abbud's stories, it is remarkable how the criticism towards religious authorities is presented also as born from the inside. The clergy, including the high hierarchy, would not be treated then as

a closed homogeneous reality, but as a heterogeneous group in which the first ones to denounce its faults are from among the members of the group themselves.

The second passage in which the Patriarch speaks, together with the next excerpts in which he is quoted, has a marked political character. This passage is useful to elucidate the way in which the Patriarch's attitude towards France is presented.

اكتب له أن هناك شهداء أبرارًا سفكوا دمهم في سبيل قضية لبنان وفرنسا فهم لم يموتوا لأجلها لكي تعتاش منها شرارًا الدسّاسين من محترفي السياسة وطلاب الوظائف النفعيين...

Write to him saying that there are loyal martyrs who shed their own blood for Lebanon and France's cause, and they did not die for the cause in order to live .... The traitors from among the professional politicians and the opportunists who seek jobs. (M.S. p. 94)

The three following excerpts correspond to Father Musa's visit to the French Governor, Monsieur Breton, after having seen the Patriarch. In the first one, the priest uses the fact of having a special recommendation from the Maronite Patriarch to gain access to the Governor:

سأنتظر نهاية هذه المفاوضات ولكني لا أذهب قبل مقابلة دولته فقل له ذلك، إنّ جدي كان يدخل توًّا على أميرنا البشير في قاعة الغامود لعرض حاجته فهل يكون هذا الحاكم أكبر من الأمير؟
ثم إنّ بيدي تحريرًا خصوصيًا من غبطة البطريرك الماروني

I will wait until the end of these negotiations, but I won't go until I meet his highness. So tell him that. My grandfather used to enter directly to see our Price Bashir in his Chamber, to present his requests. Can this ruler be more prominent than a prince? Moreover, I have a special letter in my hand from his Eminence the Maronite Patriarch. (M.S. p. 97)

Naming the Maronite Patriarch is supposed to "open doors" among French authorities. The Patriarch is of great influence among them, and the coming excerpt reflects this fact. It reflects a dialog between Father Musa and Monsieur Breton:

234

ـ هذا الكتاب من غبطة البطريرك. هناك ظلامة جئت أرجو رفعها وحيف أسعى
لازالته.
فأجاب الحاكم بعد تلاوة الكتاب:
ـ لست على إطلاع كافٍ بالأمر ولكني سأعيره طبعًا الأهمية اللازمة فإرادة
البطريرك محترمة لدينا

- This letter is from His Eminence the Patriarch. There is a complaint I came hoping to present it and to get it solved.
After reading the recommendation, the ruler answered:
- I don't have enough information about the matter but, of course, I will pay it the necessary attention, as we respect the request of the Patriarch. (M.S. p. 98)

After dealing with Father Musa's complains, Monsieur Breton asks him about the

Patriarch, about how he is after his return from Sulh Conference مؤتمر الصلح. He quotes

some words that, according to him, were said by the Patriarch in the Maronite Cathedral in

Beirut after his return, and he makes a comment about it:

إنّ فرنسا جاءت لمساعدتنا وهي مقابل ذلك لا تطلب منا إلا كلمة "مرسي" – وهذا
صحيح.

France came to help us and it did not ask anything in return apart from the word "Merci"- and this is true. (M.S. p. 98)

There is no irony in the way the author presents this fragment, and in this work, the

French authorities are presented as rightful, honest, and with good intentions. The

truthfulness of these words is irrelevant for the purpose of the analysis, and what matters

here is the way that the author presents the Patriarch's feelings towards France. In the

previous passage, Lebanon's cause was united to France's cause, and the deaths of

Lebanese and French martyrs were considered to have a common raison d'être. In this

passage, according to the French Governor, the Patriarch preaches to his flock the

disinterested help of France to Lebanese people, claiming that the only thing they expect is

Lebanese people to be thankful to them. Therefore, at this time, the agreement between the

French authorities and the Patriarch was clear to everybody, his influence among the French was assumed and, in this case, this attitude is positively presented by the author.[242]

7.2.11. Conclusion

All the previous sections have shown a high degree of anticlericalism, and a total freedom to criticize the clergy both directly and indirectly. The only member of the clergy whom the writers do not criticize is the Maronite Patriarch, who seems to have a different and respected status among all the community.

The author who criticizes the clergy more strongly is Awwad, followed by Karam, Abbud, and Michel Shibli. Salah Labaki presents a neutral attitude, and is the only one who does not mention the existing ecclesiastical hierarchy in his stories. Marun Ghosen and Lahad Khater are on the other side of the spectrum, and they both present the clergy and the Church in general as a positive constituent of society.

7.3. Lay People

Despite the large number of references to the clergy, the majority of the characters of the stories belongs to the laity. The laity embraces all baptized people who are not in the clerical state, and who do not enjoy any degree of participation in the hierarchy of the Church.[243]

---

[242] Even if the truthfulness of the Patriarch's attitude should be left aside, there is a famous saying by the Patriarch Elyas al-Huwayik at the end of his life: "France is like the Sun, it illuminates when it is far, and it burns when it gets close" (فرنسا كالشمس، تنير من بعيد وتحرق من قريب). (Antun 'Arida,: *Lubnan wa Faransa. Watha'iq Tarikhiyya Asasiyya tabruz Dawr Bkirki fi Muwajaha al-Intidab al-Faransi wa al-Ihtikarat al-Faransiyya*, ed. by Dr. Mas'ud Dari, Beirut, 1987, 34)

[243] See D. Adams, "Laity. Canon Law", *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol.8, pp: 327-8. As said when defining the clerical state in the previous section, this article describes the laity according to the Canon Law of 1917. In the 1917 Code, laity is mentioned only in two canons, one stating the right of laity to receive from the clergy the spiritual goods of the church (CIC, c.682), and the second prohibiting laymen from wearing clerical garbs

7.3.1. Strong Faith Despite Criticism

The criticism associated with the clergy contrasts heavily with the strong faith shown by most of the characters. There is a big difference between the faith associated with the characters or their religious belief, and the relation they may have with members of the clergy. This attitude differs from some other Christian communities, in which a bad relation with the clergy affects the lay person's faith.[244]

We have seen above how many religious educators used religion mixed with cruelty in the education of young people. This cruelty seems not to affect the faith of the believer, even at young age. In Awwad's "The Poet," after the director sends the student to confession to get what he could not get using worldly methods, the student enters the church looking for relief:

التقت عيناه المصلوب المعلق عن يمينه فردهما إلى الأرض وغمره خشوع حقيقي.

His eyes met with the crucified (Christ) hanging at his right, so he looked down and a true calm overwhelmed him. (T.A. p.27)

Therefore, the fear and oppression represented by the director, a priest, contrast with the spiritual peace that the boy experiences looking at the crucified Christ. This distinction between the sacred and the clerics, and the negative feelings towards the clergy, do not imply a lack of religiosity.

(CIC, c. 683). The 1983 Code, though, reflects a complete different approach of laity, enlarging their rights and obligations. For a detailed description of the 1983 Code, see Rinere, E.: "Laity. Canon Law," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed, vol.8, 288-9.

[244] This is the case of the Spanish society of the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, in which many novels of the time reflect a bad image of the clergy hand in hand with the lay people's loss of religious belief. As example of this phenomenon, see for example Benito Pérez Galdós' *Doña Perfecta* (1876), Leopoldo Alas Clarín's *La Regenta* (1884-5), or Pío Baroja's *El cura de Monleón* (*The Priest of Monleón*, 1936). Of course, there are many differences between the two societies, and any comparison needs to be treated very carefully. The multisectarian character of the Lebanese society contrasts strongly with the homogeneous religious character of the Spanish society of the time, which was largely Catholic. The lack of faith on certain religious principles for each society has a very different meaning, and may have also diverse consequences for the community as a whole.

Karam's *Father Antun* is set in the city of Beirut. Many people living in Beirut at that time were not originally from the city but were from the mountain. Their situation, even if it could have been considered stable, did not have deep roots in the city, and many of them still considered the village as their home. Priests of city churches have also more mobility than the ones of the villages, and their flock is not as stable as the one in the villages. Therefore, the link between priest and believer is not as strong in the city as it was in the small village. This phenomenon is reflected in Nayla Rahme's attitude, the woman with whom the priest fell in love. She comes from a village in the north and, even if she goes to church every Sunday, she is not concerned about the priest's identity. For her, the priest is just a person who can administrate the various religious sacraments, and for her what matters is the rite and not the specific person who administrates it.

وقد يكون هذا الراعي "بونا" أنطون أو "بونا" لوقا، أو "بونا" سمعان العمودي...
فلا شأن لديها للأسماء!

And it could have been this pastor Father Antun, Father Luke of Father Simeon the Stylite. Names do not matter for her! (K.K. p. 52)

In this case, the lack of a deep relationship with the priest makes the distinction between religion and members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy clear. This is patent in the story when Nayla and her husband laugh at the priest in a very subtle way, praising him and not believing a word they say to him. The following fragment comes after Nayla's praising words about the priest, to which no one present can oppose:

والقوم كانوا يصغون. وما اعترضوا. وماذا يتسنى لهم أن يقولوا بعدما سمعوا من نائلة رحمه هذا التقريظ العالي للأب النبيل. فأيدوا وانحنوا. على أن نائلة وزوجها ضحكا وتظاهرا بأنهما يضحكان إعجاباً بالكاهن الطاهر الاردان.

People were listening and no one opposed. And what could they have said after having listened from Nayla Rahmeh great praise for the noble father. They complied and

bowed. However, Nayla and her husband laughed and pretended that they were laughing in admiration of the pure priest. (K.K. p. 62)

This is the first example and probably the only one in which two people are presented laughing at a priest to his face. This is obviously motivated by the priest's character, but it also reflects a lack of respect towards him that may be taken as going beyond his own person. The priest may be blamed as the person he is but, at the same time, respected as the institution he represents.

7.3.2. Popular Religiosity: Religion as Trade

The following segment reflects Nayla's attitude when she starts realizing that her husband has changed for worse. She knows that he has been spending time with a prostitute, saying when he comes back home that he was with his friends drinking. In a situation like this, she immediately turns to religion to ask for a solution:

فعاهدت مار جرجس ساحة الشهداء على أن تأتيه برطل من البخور إن هو صان لها زوجها من الأفاعى. وأعلنت أنها تهدي إلى مار إلياس رأس بيروت ثلاثة أرطال من الاشمع تحملها بنفسها إليه حافية إذا أبعد عن أديب رفاق الشر. ونذرت لسيدة النورية تاجاً من الفضة ترصع به رسم السيدة إذا انقطع أديب عن الخمرة وارتياد الحانات

She promised Saint George at Martyrs' Square that she would bring him a pound of incense if he protected her husband from the vipers. And she also announced that she will offer Saint Elias in Ras Beirut three pounds of candles that she would carry herself to him barefoot if he separated Adib from his evil friends. And she vowed to Our Lady of the Light a silver crown embellished with the Lady's name if Adib quits drinking wine and frequenting bars. (K.K. p. 144)

This paragraph is two-folded. It reflects faith and belief in the religious sacred figures and, at the same time, it cannot avoid reflecting a certain criticism or even mockery for certain manifestations of popular religiosity. As it is well mirrored here, divine mediation is seen as trade, "I give you, you give me," as if material objects could substitute for faith or prayers. Even if offerings are accepted by the church, the way it is presented

here causes mockery and shows a certain lack of respect on the narrator's side for these kinds of practices.[245]

7.3.3. Popular Religiosity: Superstition and Ignorance

Superstition and a high degree of ignorance are constantly associated with lay people, mainly villagers, or those whose origin is the village. In the first story of Abbud's collection, "Daym Daym," the *khuriyya* observes the prolonged silence of her husband the priest, and she starts thinking that it may have a religious meaning. She, a barren woman, starts imagining his husband as a modern Zachariah who, as the "old Zachariah" is gifted with a son from God, even if he is old and his wife barren.[246] Gabriel, who transmitted to Zachariah the good news, commanded him to stay mute until his wife gave birth because of his disbelief the moment he received the glad tidings. The *khuriyya*, knowing well this story and seeing that her husband does not speak a word, starts feeling a new John the Baptist in her womb.

<div dir="rtl">

...لأنها اعتقدت أن الله ربط لسانه كما عقد لسان زكريا في الهيكل [...] فراع الخورية منظره وأيقنت أنها سترزق ولدًا في الستين وقد يكون عند الله يوحنا آخر.

... فرّ الخوري إلى الباب بغتة فماج الجمهور متعجبا من فرّته الغريبة. وتبعه بعضهم ثم عادوا معه يسألونه عما رأى، ولكنه لم يتكلم، فتحرك الجنين في بطن الخورية.

</div>

... because she thought that God had tied his tongue, as He did with Zachariah's tongue in the temple. His appearance scared the khuriyya and she was sure that she will give birth to a boy at sixty, another John (the Baptist) in God's world. (M.A. p. 41)

---

[245] Moreover, this is not the only time in which Karam reflects in his works this kind of religiosity, accompanied by a feeling of mockery. In his short story *Razzūq ʿāda min Amīrika*, one of the main characters in the story, a young woman who is waiting for his fiancée to come back from America, also resorts to offerings to Jesus, the Virgin, and the saints to make him came back safely. (See "Razzūq ʿāda min Amīrika," in *Ashbāḥ al-Qarya*, 71). We see then that Karam recurs to the same topics in his stories, mainly related with religious issues.
[246] Luke 1:5-25.

The priest ran off to the door suddenly, and the attendants got excited, amazed from his strange run. Some of them followed him and then they came back with him asking what he saw. But he said nothing and the fetus moved in the Khuriyya's womb. (M.A. p.42)

The situation described here is extremely comical, but there is no malice at all in the description. The priest's wife's faith is pure and, even if it reflects a high degree of ignorance, Abbud does not put the blame on the individual himself but more in the environment in which he lives, and the education he has received. Another example of ignorance and superstition is found in the story "The Village's Goatherder:"

وجئنا ليلةً على ذكرى الجنّ فتبسّم وقال: "سمعت عنهم وما ظهر لي شيء منهم. قالوا إنهم اختفوا لما كثرت الأجراس في البلاد. ومع ذلك أنا أصلّب كثيرًا"

One night, we mentioned the jinn; he smiled and told me: "I've heard of them, but they never appeared to me. They said that they disappeared when the number of bells increased in the country. Nevertheless, I made the sign of the cross a lot." (M.A. p. 79)

Here, apart from the evident superstition of the goatherder who keeps making the sign of the cross even if he had never seen a jinn, it is important to notice the relationship between Christianity – here associated with bells – and the jinn. As the goatherder says, it is believed that the jinn disappeared when Christianity extended. The jinn would then be associated with other religions. A similar image appears in Salah Labaki's story "The Poet and the Devil." The story is set in modern times, and even if the characters are not real, the poet is an idealized vision of poetry in its fight against evil, the idea presented is similar to that mentioned in Abbud's story:

وإن قبائل الجن هذه ترحلت بعد أن شيد الكنيسة وراح صوت الجرس يدوي صباحا ومساء في الوادي غير أن نساء القرية مازلن حتى اليوم يشدّدن على أولادهن ألا يتوغلوا في البربيصة إذا ما ذهبوا للنزهة أو للعب، ويضرعن إلى شبابهن ورجالهن أن يجتنبوا المرور ليلا في تلك البقعة الملعونة.

These tribes of jinns went away after the church was built, and the sound of the bells started echoing in the valley in the morning and in the evening. But until now, the women

from the village are press their children not to go far into al-Berbisa when they go for a walk or to play, and they beg their young and old men to avoid crossing at night this damned spot. (S.L. p. 38-9)

أليس أن الأب يعقوب شاهد من زمن غير بعيد في محل من هنالك جنية ملتهبة الرأس تقيم في جب من السنديان فهزأت منه، وكادت تخرجه عن رصانته لولا أنه استعان عليها بالصليب؟

Didn't Father Yaqub see not long ago in one of those places, a female jinni with a blazing head in an enclave of oaks. She mocked him and she almost pushed him out of his calm except that he protected himself from her with the cross. (S.L. p. 39)

The people believe then that the presence of the church made the *jinns* go away. The author uses the image of the bells and their sound as an amulet against the *jinn*, as Abbud does. In both cases, what is known by the characters as fact contradicts the real feelings and beliefs of the people, who still believe in the existence of *jinns*. Even priests are said to have seen *jinns*, something that reinforces people's superstition.

7.3.4. Education as Parameter for Religious Attitude

In Karam's *Father Antun*, even if there is almost a unique view of the clergy through the main character, Father Antun, there is a broader variety when analysing the different attitude of lay people towards religion and faith. The various characters present a very different approach, depending mainly on their degree of education or natural intelligence. Women are the ones who seem to believe more truthfully in what the priest represents. The blind belief is associated in certain ways with ignorance, and the first indication for this is Father Antun's fear of educated people, the only people he really fears:

ولم يكن "بونا" أنطون يخشى غير المتعلمين. هؤلاء كانوا يزعجونه. فيتحدث إلى صاحب العلم والذكاء بعينين شرستين.

Father Antun only feared the educated. These kind of people bothered him, and he used to talk to anyone with knowledge and intelligence with fierce eyes. (K.K. p. 8)

We have already seen above the attitude of Nayla Rahmeh and her husband, two or the main characters of the novel, towards the priest's vanity. Their attitude opposes his daily flock's attitude, which is almost exclusively formed by women who believe in him almost blindly. As happened with Awwad, the distinction between the priest as man and the priest as member of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is not clear in this case, and this confusion sometimes generates abuse on the side of the priest. As said above, Father Antun should not be taken as a model, so the abuse should not be generalized. What matters here is the blind trust of the less-educated people in the priest no matter what, and this is well-presented in the story. Father Antun asked a woman from his flock to spy on her neighbor Nayla Rahmeh. He needs to control her for personal reasons so he uses Nathira to obtain the information he needs. The woman takes it as a religious obligation and engages in the action as if the fact of not doing it was almost a sin.

وأبت نظيرة إلا العمل بمشيئته. أتخرج على مشيئة "البونا"؟ معاذ الله. خالق الكون نفسه لا يرضى. فجلست إلى نافذة حجرتها تتجسس على نائلة رحمه وهي على يقين تام أنها تخدم الدين والورع.

Nathira denied doing any other work different from his will. Would she disobey Father Antun's will? God forbids. The creator of the world Himself would not be satisfied. So she sat next to the window of her room, spying on Nayla Rahmeh, being completely convinced that she was being devoted to her religion and piety. (K.K. p. 29)

Some other members of his flock, less innocent and smarter, make clear the distinction between the priest as a man and the priest as member of the clergy. They respect him, but they also use him for their own interest. As happened with Awwad, one of the extra functions of priests was that of matchmaker.

ولم تكن ربة المنزل من النساء اللواتي تجوز فيهن الحيلة. فهي من الدهاة. وكانت
ترحب بـ "البونا" لا حبّا له بل طمعا في أن يأتي بناتها العزبات بمن يتزوجهن

The lady of the house was not of the type that can be fooled. She was cunning. She was always courteous to the Priest, not out of love for him but because she was hoping that he would bring men to marry her single daughters. (K.K. p. 43)

The line that separates worldly and spiritual matters is blurred, not only to the priests but also to the lay people. Faith is clearly applied not only to religious beliefs, but it also reaches worldly issues.

7.3.5. Religion as Law

Another side of the religious topic for lay people, aside from beliefs, is the legal status of the member of a certain religious community because they belong to that community. In the absence of a secular law for personal matters, religious laws fill the gap, and being born in a certain community defines the laws that will be applied to the individual during his life.[247] People living next door may have different laws if they belong to different communities. In Karam's *Father Antun*, Adib Rahmeh complains about religious law because he has fallen in love with a woman different than his wife, and he cannot divorce her because he is a Maronite. After having expressed his desire to marry her, the woman answers him more objectively:

أنك مقيد بشريعة الدين الذي تدين به. وهذه الشريعة تلحق بك إلى القبر.

You are tied to the law of the religion you profess. And this law sticks to you until your grave. (K.K. p. 184)

---

[247] This is normally referred as "dual legal system." For information about how this dual legal system developed in the first decades of the twentieth century, and its relation to the different political authorities, whether Ottoman or French, see Thomson, *Colonial Citizens*, 113-6.

Then, what brings the feeling of injustice is not the law itself, but the fact that different laws are applied to the same matter, in the same territory, to people belonging to different communities. The character of Adib Rahmeh knows this fact and he has no doubt about expressing his desire to change his religion in order to have access to a law that agrees with what he thinks is right or, simply, is more suitable to him in a specific matter at a certain time.

<div dir="rtl">

ألا أستطيع الاقتران بك إذا دنت بدين آخر

</div>

Cannot I marry you if I profess another religion? (K.K. p. 184)

<div dir="rtl">

وما علينا إذا ملت إلى دين آخر

</div>

And what is against if we lean towards another religion? (K.K. p. 185)

In these two examples, belief stays aside and has little influence in the individual's desires. Changing religions is not an uncommon behavior for those cases in which the law of the community does not match the needs of the individual. That which in secular societies would stay out of the law, in these societies can be solved by a change in religion. The change does not normally reflect any internal change but it is just an act of convenience for specific purposes. Things are not as easy as the Adib's character thinks, though, and in cases like marriage in which only one of the sides is willing to change religion, the procedure is complex and almost impossible. Adib's lover expresses this fact clearly to him, and Adib complains, almost in a claustrophobic way.

<div dir="rtl">

أنتحدث أبداً بلغة الشريعة والدين؟ [...] كالقيد الأبدي

</div>

Do we have to talk always using the language of religion and its law? [...] as if they were eternal fetters. (K.K. p. 185)

<div dir="rtl">

وهذه الشرائع قائمة كالرواسي لا تزال. فقد نشأت في عصور الهمجية وتأبى إلا أن ترافق الحضارة لا تتطور ولا تتعدل

</div>

And these laws are standing as fixed mountains that do not move. They arose during the savage times and they insist on accompanying civilization without any evolution or modification. (K.K. p. 185)

These excerpts are set in a very specific situation, but they go far beyond the circumstances to which they apply. After all the examples related to religion discussed until now, it is more than possible that the author speaks though the character of Adib Rahmeh in this case. He criticizes the immobility of the religious laws that were stated in a certain time under a given set of conditions and, despite the evolution of civilization, they remain as they were the moment they were created. All matters related to the individual in his private and social life are always linked to religion and law – religious law – in one way or another. Religion becomes then a burden that has nothing to do with his spiritual life and that restricts the individual's natural evolution. It is important to emphasize that it is not a matter of what is lawful or unlawful; in this case, it is a matter of a specific behavior being unlawful for an individual, and allowed and lawful for his neighbor.

7.3.6. Conclusion

This section has proven that the laity has a strong faith despite all their criticisms of the clergy. The manifestations of this faith vary depending on the degree of education and the environment in which the believer lives.

7.4. Maronite

The large number of different religious communities is one of the main characteristics of the Lebanese society, and this characteristic is often mentioned when discussing any issue related to Lebanon and when trying to explain its conflicts.[248] Since

---

[248] This does not mean that there is no religious diversity in other neighboring countries, such as Syria or Jordan. However, the percentage of Christians in the country, even today, is higher than in other Arab states. The Sunni community is also a minority in the country, contrary to what happens in most Arab countries,

the nineteenth century to today's Lebanon, there is a tendency to use community clashes as the base of national conflicts: the massacres of 1860 are presented as clashes between Maronites and Druze; the first groups mentioned when explaining the 1936 struggles are the Christian Phalanges and the Muslim Najjada; the 1975 Civil War is often simplified as a war between Christians and Muslims. The Lebanese history of the last century and a half seems to be based, then, on clashes between religious communities, and any outsider to the Lebanese society would expect a strong self-identification of each member of the society to his religious community. Nonetheless, this is not the case in any of the analyzed texts. All the authors of this study belong to the Maronite sect, and most of the main characters of all the texts are Maronite Christians. However, the term *Maronite*, used as a noun or adjective, rarely appears in the texts, and it is never used directly to express self-definition. Among all works studied, the adjective Maronite appears only five times, and only two texts use it to specify the religious community of a character. In these two cases, the adjective is not used as self-definition but to define someone else and, in one of these two cases, it is a non-Lebanese person who uses it to characterize a Lebanese person and to separate him from other Lebanese people. The other three cases in which the adjective Maronite appears are related to Maronite liturgy.

7.4.1. *Maronite* Applied to Liturgical Concepts

In Marun Abbud's stories, the adjective Maronite appears only twice, and in both cases it is directly related to a religious, liturgical concept. The first time, in the story "The Sunday of Resurrection Sermon," describing the ceremonial dress of the Maronite priest:

---

where the Sunna represents the overwhelming majority of the populations. Lebanon also has a big Shia minority, who nowadays is the fastest growing Lebanese community. All these characteristics together with the existence of a visible Druze community make Lebanon unique in its environment.

...وعلى رأسه قاووق الخوري الماروني العتيق الذي لم يرضَ به بديلا طول العمر.

And over his head, the old "qawūq"[249] of the Maronite priest who has not accepted any substitute for it all his life. (M.A. p. 114)

The second time occurs in the same story, when the author describes the rites that are performed in the church of his village on the Sunday of the Resurrection:

وأقام الكهنة مخلّصهم من قبره بحسب المراسم البيعية المارونية...

And the priests raised the Savior from His grave according to Maronite liturgical rites. (M.A. p. 121)

7.4.2. *Maronite* Used by an Outsider

In Awwad's stories, the only specific mention of the religion of a main character appears in his novel *The Loaf*. Interestingly, the mention is done by a foreigner, a member of the Turkish authorities, when questioning Sami, one of the main characters:

- من أين سلاحكم لإعلان الثورة؟ أنت مارونيّ... ألست مارونيّا؟
- ما يهمّك من مذهبي؟
- الموارنة أصدقاء فرنسا.
- وأصدقاء كل عدوّ للظالمين.
- مَن تعني بالظالمين؟
- .....
- تعود إلى الضحك؟ اِضحك ما طاب لك. ستبكي بعد هذا الضحك [...] يجب أن تعترف لي بكل مخابراتكم مع القنصلية الإفرنسية في بيروت. لا تحسب أنّك ستزيدني علمًا بما ستقوله فأنا مطّلع على كلّ شيء. كانت عيوننا ترافق خطواتكم وتحصي عليكم أنفاسكم، وأنتم لا تشعرون.

- *Where do you take your weapon from to announce the revolt? You are Maronite, aren't you?*
- *What do you care about my religious sect?*
- *Maronites are friends of France.*

---

[249] Following the definition given in *The Hans Wehr dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, the *qawūq* is a kind of high headgear made of felt.

248

- *And friends of all enemies of oppressors.*
- *Whom do you mean by oppressors?*
- *...*
- *Are you laughing again? Laugh as much as you wish. You will cry after this laugh. You have to confess to me about all your contacts with the French Consulate in Beirut. Don't think that you will add to my knowledge with what you say because I know everything. Our eyes have been following your steps and listening to your breath while you were not even aware of it.* (T.A. p. 255)

This scene takes place during the First World War, and it mirrors the interrogations made by the Turkish Authorities to the suspicious Arab population. In the section dealing with the adjective *'arabi*, it was clear that Awwad's objective in this novel was to unite the Arab populations against the Turks, independent of their religion or sect. What stands out here is the opposition between an internal desire for unity and a foreign attitude to divide the population by religious sects. Awwad, a Maronite himself, presented in this novel another Maronite as the main character. The character's attitude and behavior throughout the novel may be understood also as an answer to the claims made generally from the outside that Maronites are friends of France and that they deny any common legacy with their Arab neighbors. This character moved away from sectarian divisions to get closer to Arab unity. He denies that his behavior comes as a result of his belonging to a certain sect, but it is caused by the injustice and oppression that affect not only himself or his sect buy also other Arab members of other religious sects.

7.4.3. *Maronite* Used by a Member of the Community

Lahad Khater differs in the attitude shown until now, which avoids mentioning the term *Maronite* to refer to a member of the community. The autobiographical character of his work probably obliges him to give information that, in other novels, would have been considered unnecessary. Talking about his mother's birth, he writes:

ولدت المترجمة في 5 أيار سنة 1853 من والدين مارونيين

The biographed was born on May 5th, 1853, from Maronite parents. (L.Kh. p. 7)

However, when describing his father, the man who would get married to Habuba

Khater, he does not mention his sect but only his religion:

تزوجت المترجمة في 6 تشرين الأول من السنة 1870 بالمرحوم صعب من عائلة خاطر المتصل نسبها بعائلة حاتم المعروفة في حمانا وحوران وكان هذا الشاب قد تربى تربية مسيحية صادقة من صغره وزرع في قلبه خوف الله وحب الواجب

The biographed got married on October 6ᵗʰ, 1870, to the late Sa'b from Khater family, related in parentage to the Hatim family, well known in Hmana and Houran. This young man had received a truth Christian education since his childhood, and his heart was planted with fear of God and love for duty. (L.Kh. p. 11)

The different approach may be caused by the fact that, Lahad Khater being a

Maronite himself, his father was undoubtedly Maronite, but his mother could have

belonged to another sect. This was probably the reason why the author particularized by

using the adjective *Maronite*, instead of the more general *Christian*, that is used broadly

throughout the text. The adjective *Maronite* is not used again.

7.4.4. *Maronite* as Emphatic

Michel Shibli limits the use of the adjective *Maronite* to refer to the Maronite

Patriarch. A village priest is trying to see the French governor to prevent an injustice

against one of the villagers in his flock:

سأنتظر نهاية هذه المفاوضات ولكني لا أذهب قبل مقابلة دولته فقل له ذلك، إنّ جدي كان يدخل توًّا على أميرنا البشير في قاعة الغامود لعرض حاجته فهل يكون هذا الحاكم أكبر من الأمير؟
ثم إنّ بيدي تحريرًا خصوصيًا من غبطة البطريرك الماروني

I will wait until the end of these negotiations, but I won't go until I meet his highness. So tell him that. My grandfather used to enter directly to see our Price Bashir in his Chamber, to present his requests. Can this ruler be more prominent than a price? Moreover, I have a special letter in my hand from his Eminence the Maronite Patriarch. (M.S. p. 97)

250

Here, the adjective *Maronite* accompanying the name *Patriarch* gives strength to the expression and emphasizes the authority and influence of the Maronite Patriarch. In a sense, both *Maronite* and *Ghubta* are unnecessary to understanding the meaning, and what they do is adding solemnity to the priest's words. Therefore, the function is not descriptive, as in Abbud's examples, but emphatic.

7.4.5. Indirect References to the Maronite Community

There are no more direct mentions of *Maronite* in the texts, either in the form of a noun or of an adjective. There are some indirect references, though, which mainly just say *the sect*. The first example comes in Marun Abbud's stories:

وبعد شهر جاء عيد مار مارون [...]
ودرى أهل القرية بسرقة الكأس المخصص بها عيد أبي الطائفة...

A month later, Saint Marun's day arrived [...]
And the people of the village knew about the stealing of the cup used especially for the Father of the sect's holiday. (M.A. p. 47)

In these two exerts, it is evident that the *sect* to which the narrator alludes is the Maronites. However, in other examples, it is less evident, and it can be only assumed, taking into consideration the author's background because it could be another Christian sect with the same ecclesiastical hierarchy. The following passage corresponds to Karam's *Father Antun*. He refers to the sect at the end of it, and it seems that it may allude to the Maronites. It is clear through the novel that most of the main characters, with the exception of the prostitute, Salma al-Turk, are Christians, although the narrator never specifies to which sect they belong. This example appears at the beginning of the story, when the priest's room is described.

... أنه لم يكن يخفي رسائل البطريرك والأساقفة إليه، بل يبقيها عمدا تحت مرمى الأنظار ليدرك الناس أنه ذو شأن في الطائفة ...

He did not conceal the letters he received from the Patriarch and the bishops, but he purposely exposed them for people to see, so they became aware that he has a prominent status in the Sect. (K.K. p. 13)

The second example appears when the members of Father Antun's flock are talking about him:

من حق الطائفة أن تفاخر بأمثال هذا الكاهن المتفوق

The sect has every right to feel proud of people like *this excellent priest* (K.K. p. 61)

As we can see, the name of the sect is never mentioned, even if it may be understood by the context together with the author's background. There is not a single time in the whole story in which the name or the adjective *Maronite* is used by the author, and only the generic *the sect* is employed. What is evident during the story is the clear link between the members of the same religious community. Despite the fact that all the characters live in Beirut, a city in with different communities coexist, most of their personal relations tend to be restricted to members of their own sect. Even if the following sentence is out of context, it exemplifies this fact that is present during the whole story:

علينا أن نجاهد في سبيل أخواننا في الدين

We have to struggle for the sake of our brothers of religion. (K.K. p. 91)

Therefore, there is a feeling of brotherhood among the members of the same religion, especially in a place in which different communities live together sharing the same space. The idea was not present in the village stories written by other authors, due to the fact that all the members of the village belonged to the same community. The feeling of brotherhood in a village may exist, for example, among the members of the same family. In

the city, however, because not everybody belongs to the same community and the roots of the individuals do not extend very far back in time, the relations built on the base of religion are the ones that can be established the fastest.

Michel Shibli also alludes in some occasions to *the sect*, referring clearly to the Maronite sect, linked to the Lebanese sectarian distribution in governmental positions. In the following example, he mentions the percentage assigned to the different sects:

وعندما حلّ الأتراك المجلس الإداري في لبنان عيّنوه عضوًا في المجلس الجديد عن طائفته لأن الوظائف في لبنان تعطي باسم الطوائف في حين أنه لم يكن لفدعوس من الدين إلا الاسم والظاهر ومصاهرته للمطران قزحيا.

And when the Turks dissolved the administrative council in Lebanon, they appointed him member of the new council for his religious sect, because posts in Lebanon are given according to religious sects, when Fadʿus had nothing to do with religion except his name, the appearance and his relationship by marriage with Bishop Quzhaya (M.S. p. 55)

The criticism of the sectarian distribution system in Lebanon is clear. The author breaks the narration of the story and introduces a personal comment in which he criticizes the hypocrisy of sectarianism and its use to satisfy political ambitions. The criticism of the *Taʾifiyya* political system is not unusual,[250] even in the first decade of the Mandate period, but this is the only occasion in which it appears in a fictional work. The criticism in this case has certain degree of irony.

---

[250] The sectarian system was an important issue in the writing of the constitution of 1926. There were supporters and detractors of the insertion of the idea in the text. See for example the comments made in the weekly publication *al-Ahrar al-Musawwira*, 13, p.3, corresponding to April 1926. This magazine, founded by Gibran Tueini, opposed the sectarian system and considered it a plague rooted deeply in the individual:
الطائفية داء عضال يجب أن نعالجه – قبل معالجته في اللجنة – في المدرسة وفي المنزل والسوق. ومتى تمكنت الفكرة من الصدور كان تحقيقها سهلا.
Sectarianism is an incurable plague that we must treat – before its treatment by the committee – at school, at home, and in the market. And when the idea controls the hearts, it is easy to prevail.
This proves that it was an issue that, even if it does not appear in most of the texts, was present in the society at the time.

The second example in which *the sect* is mentioned in Shibli's novel is when he refers to a Lebanese religious man in Brazil, who takes advantage of his religious sect to get money from other individuals of his same sect:

<div dir="rtl">

لم يكن جميل فاضل يعرفه شخصيًا ولكنه سمع في البرازيل الشيء الكثير عن الخوري قزحيا الذي جمع المال هناك باسم طائفته لأجل أعمال البر والإحسان لأجل المؤسسات الخيرية والتعليم.

</div>

Jamil Fadil did not know him in person, but he had heard a lot about the priest Quzhaya in Brazil, where he had raised funds in the name of his sect for charity and piety, for charitable organization and for education. (M.S. p. 57)

The good intentions that the priest might have do not invalidate the fact that he is taking advantage of his sect. Belonging to a religious community has little to do with religion, neither it is necessarily associated with certain pious behavior. It is presented almost as a nationality, as an identification with which someone is born with. Marun Ghosen does not mention any particular sect in his stories, even if he was a Maronite priest. Both his works have a strong moral message. In fact, that is the main purpose of the novels. Their author is a priest, and all events in the novels have the objective of teaching and transmitting Christian values. For this reason, most of the details surrounding the main events that carry the moral messages are put on a secondary level by the narrator. There is an intention of universality and permanent validity of the message, so there are not many mentions of contemporary events or elements that could divert the reader from the main purpose of the texts. Even the characters' names in *The Son's Defense of his Father's Honor* are chosen according to their characteristics, and they try to move away from sectarian identification.[251] The main character, for example, is called Wadiʿ, that

---

[251] For the importance of personal names in the ethnic and religious identity of the individual, see Joseph, *Language and identity*, 176-81.

means *quiet*, *peaceful*, with good character and morals; his suffering mother Maryam, like the suffering Virgin Mary; his honest father Amin al-Hakim, the *wise faithful*, *reliable*; his good-hearted beloved 'Afifa, *righteous*, *virtuous*; 'Afifa's father, a successful business man, owner of a factory, As'ad Qahir, *the powerful, triumphant happier, luckier*; Wadi''s godfather, a generous and knowledgeable man, Shafiq al-Mu'allim, *compassionate, kind master*. It seems even that the names were different in an earlier stage and that they were probably changed later for the purpose of universality. This conclusion comes from the fact that, at one point in the novel, the main character of the novel is called *Butrus* instead of Wadi' (M.G. II p.62), apparently by mistake. Wadi' would avoid the sectarian nature that could have easily been attributed to a character named Butrus, a name only given to Christian men. Despite the author's efforts, there is an excerpt in the same work that identifies the characters as Christians:

لمّا كان الغد، دفع العرّاب إلى الأرملة جميع المبلغ اللازم لفتح مخزن صغير، في شارع ...، تباع فيها صورٌ وتماثيل وأوانٍ كنسية.

   The following day, the godfather paid to the widow all the needed money in order to open a small warehouse in …… Street, in which pictures, statues and ecclesiastical recipients are sold. (M.G. II p. 9)

   Even if Christianity is not mentioned explicitly, it is assumed by the adjective *ecclesiastical*, used to describe the objects sold by the widow.

   7.4.6. Conclusion

   What should be emphasized in this section is the efforts to avoid sectarian references, not only in Ghosen's work but in most of the works analyzed here. The adjective *Maronite* was used only in two cases to refer directly to the religious identity of the characters, and one of those references was made by a foreigner. This should not be taken as a proof of denial in any case. It can be interpreted as keeping the sectarian identity

255

for the personal matters, which had no place in works written for the general public. Also, it can be seen as a firmly established fact that did not need any emphasis as did, for example, the existence of the new state.

7.5. Foreign References

There are very few references to foreign places or institutions that act as religious references. The few references are related to the two main holy places for Catholicism: the Holy Land and the Holy See and, by extension, Italy.

7.5.1. Mentions of the Holy Land

Marun Abbud does not mention Italy but he mentions Jerusalem twice. The first time is in the story "Teacher," in which the main character gives religious objects to the children of his village after his return from Palestine:

<div dir="rtl">

وفزنا علاوةً بتحف مقدسية، مسابح وصلبان وصور وإيقونات من أورشليم المقدسة.

</div>

And in addition, we acquired sacred gifts: rosaries, crosses, images, and icons from Sacred Jerusalem. (M.A. p. 54)

The second reference is related to the Phoenician city Byblos, which is referred to as "the Jerusalem of the old world" (أورشيليم العالم القديم) (M.A. p. 68).

7.5.2. Mention of the Holy See

The other references to religious foreign places appear in Karam's *Father Antun*, and they are related to Italy as mentioned above:

وأهدى إليها سبحة من اللؤلؤ مكافأة لها على جهادها قائلا: هذه سبحة باركها الحبر الأعظم فكوني حريصة عليها!

He gave her a rosary of pearls to support her in her effort, saying: "This is a rosary blessed by the Supreme Pontiff, so watch it well!" (K.K. p. 39)

This first example conveys the idea of the importance of the Church of Rome and the blessing of the Pope to Catholic Christians in the East. Regardless of the existence of the Patriarchate, whose power and influence in daily life is far more important than the Pope, the head of the church in Rome is still respected and venerated by Catholic locals. We have then seen the importance of the Holy Land and of Rome as points of reference.

7.5.3. Cyclical Travel of Religious Images

A second example taken from *Father Antun* also alludes to the Holy See by association, and it refers to the authorship of a painting:

وظهر قبالته رسم العذراء مريم من ريشة رسّام إيطالي رفيع المقام. وكان "البونا" يفاخر بأن الرسم غالي البدل.

And in front of it, it appeared a painting of the Virgin Mary by a prominent Italian painter. And Father Antun was proud because the painting was too expensive to exchange. (K.K. p. 13)

In this example, the priest is proud of his painting of the Virgin made by an Italian painter. Its foreign origin, independent of the value of the object itself, increases the value of the object and the admiration in the eyes of local people. The mention of the foreign origin of the religious image reinforces the idea of the "cyclical" travel of the religious images from the East to the West and then back to the East completely transformed and more accepted and admired than the local, original images. We have evidence of the same

phenomenon in Awwad's story "Palm Sunday." The *khuriyya* compares one of the girls of

the village with the angels in a picture of the Virgin Mary:

و هذه هلانة ابنة جرجس الكلاس. يا لها من طفلة كالملاك! كهذه الملائكة الصغيرة،
الشقراء، السمينة، التي تنزل من السماء بين الغيوم في صورة مريم العذراء – عليها
السلام – المعلقة على جدار الكنيسة الشرقيّ. مثل الملاك في فستانها الأبيض الناصع،
وفي عينيها الزرقاوين، وفي عنقها العاجيّ، وفي ذراعيها العاريتين

.

*And this is Hilana, the daughter of Georges al-Kallas. Oh, how much she looks like
an angel! Like those small angels, blond, plump, that descend from heaven in the midst of
clouds in the picture of the Virgin Mary – Peace be upon her – hanging on the eastern wall
of the church. Like an angel in her clear white dress, her blue eyes, her ivory neck and her
naked arms.* (T.A. p. 46)

Obviously, the picture of the Virgin Mary is not a local picture but is brought or

influenced by the European representations of the religious figures, especially from the

Baroque period. During the Counter-Reformation, in the Baroque period and later with the

Rococo period, the models of these figures were fixed and were exported to all Catholic

communities, including the ones in the East. In these images, the static central figures are

surrounded by moving cherubs twisting around them, all blond, fatty and with white skin.

The image of the "Inmaculada Concepción" by Murillo (circa 1678) became a classic, and

all official images of the Virgin Mary made after this picture have been heavily influenced

by it. Since the middle of the seventeenth century, a text by Francisco Pacheco entitled *Arte

de la Pintura*[252] recommended painting the Virgin following certain directions. Among

them: she should not appear with the child Jesus in her arms, she should be crowned with

stars and with the moon at her feet, she should be embellished with angels or cherubs and

dressed with a white robe, a symbol of purity, and a blue cloak, a symbol of eternity. The

Catholic Church in the West took this religious statuary to the East, and substituted many

---

[252] Francisco Pacheco, *Arte de la Pintvra, sv antigvedad y gradezas* (Sevilla, 1649).

local, original images in churches belonging to the Uniate churches with these European-inspired images. Therefore, the religious statuary travelled in a loop, whose origin was the East, and went back to the original point completely transformed after eighteen centuries, imposing itself over the existing, local images. Because the faith did not change, the new images took their place in the minds of the believers, substituting the dark virgins with white images. A clear example is the statue of the Virgin in Harissa (called "Our Lady of Lebanon"), made at the end of the nineteenth century and inaugurated in 1908, which looks very similar to the statue of the Virgin in Lourdes in France. In fact, the statue was a present from the French Government; now it has become the prototype of the Virgin in modern Lebanon. This phenomenon is clearly present in the above passage, in which a woman thinks of an angel as a white, blond creature, far from the local appearance of the children of her village.[253] This deeply affects the religious identity of the local individuals who have substituted their original, local religious pictorial referents with Western images far from their heritage. The divine, then, is associated to foreign models.

7.5.4. Preponderance of Foreign Saints

Foreign influence is not reduced only to images, but it also includes sacred people. The French Jesuits introduced French saints in Lebanon who even today, compete in popularity with local saints. The following excerpts correspond to Lahad Khater's work. In

---

[253] In 1947, the Cuban singer Antonio Machín (1903-1977), released one of his most famous songs *Angelitos Negros* (Black Angels) inspired by a poem of the Venezuelan poet and politician Andrés Eloy Blanco. The song, as well as the poem, denounced the monopoly of stereotyped white angels that accompany the religious images. Part of the lyrics is: "Pintor nacido en mi tierra / con el pincel extranjero / pintor que sigues el rumbo / de tantos pintores viejos. / Aunque la Virgen sea blanca / píntame angelitos negros / que también se van al cielo / todos los negritos buenos.
Siempre que pintas iglesias / pintas angelitos bellos / pero nunca te acordaste / de pintar un ángel negro."
[Painter born in my homeland, with a foreign paintbrush; you that follow the course of many old painters. Even if the Virgin is white, please paint black angels; because all good black children also go to heaven. Always, when you paint churches, you paint beautiful angels; but you never remembered painting a single black angel].

the first excerpt, a Jesuit father gives a picture of Saint Terese of the Infant Jesus to Habuba Khater, close to Habuba's death. In the second, the woman mentions this saint together with the Holy Family on her deathbed:

وفي بيروت أهدى إليها الفاضل الأب لويس معلوف اليسوعي صورة القديسة ترزيا الطفل يسوع ووُصفت لها فضائلها ومعجزاتها ...

In Beirut, the erudite Father Louis Maaluf s.j. gave her a picture of Saint Terese of the Infant Jesus, and he explained to her her virtues and miracles... (L.Kh. p. 22)

فتناولته بخشوع ثم ظهرت عليها علامات الاحتضار فسجد الحاضرون حول فراشها وأخذوا مع الكاهن يرتلون طلبة السيدة وهي ترددها معهم بصوت خافت ثم هتفت بكل صعوبة: "يا مريم يا يسوع يا مار يوسف يا قديسة تريزيا!"

She took communion with humility and, after that, signs of death throes showed. Those present prostrated around her bed and started, together with the priest, reciting the Litany of the Virgin, and she replied with them with weak voice. Then, she cried with difficulty: "Mary, Jesus, Saint Joseph, Saint Terese!" (L.Kh. p. 24)

What it is interesting to point out is that Saint Terese of the Infant Jesus was born in 1873, died in 1897, and was canonized in 1925. Saint Sharbel, probably the most popular local saint, was born in 1828, died in 1898, and was proposed for canonization in 1925. Among all saints, the woman chose to implore Saint Terese in her deathbed, after the Virgin Mary, Jesus, and Saint Joseph. Obviously, the French Jesuits' influence over the local Jesuits was very strong, and some French saints were introduced to the local population by them. Lahad Khater, son of Habuba, was clearly under this influence. He uses Jean d'Arc as a reference in another description:

ولسنا نعني بالمرأة المتفوقة تلك التي جاءت بعظائم الأمور ومدهشاتها كجان دارك مثلا.

And we do not mean by outstanding woman that who came with great deeds and wonders, as Jeanne d'Arc, for example. (L.Kh. p. 4)

7.5.5. Conclusion

Foreign religious references have a very important role in the local religiosity of the Maronite community. In fact, local religious references are almost absent from the stories, and the only positive references are probably to the Maronite Patriarch and Bkerke, his winter residence. Even though Christianity was born in the Middle East, and even when the Oriental Churches have a long history and are full of traditions, the Occidental Church exerts heavy influence in the local religious imagery. Even if the authors do mention the basis of this heavy influence over the Maronite Church, the fact that they belong to the Uniate Churches is probably the main reason.

7.6. Other Religions

Despite the multi-sectarian character of the Lebanese society, there are very few references to other religions or other religious communities in all the texts. The references are limited to Abbud, who makes some references to Islam, and Lahad Khater, who mentions the religious community of the Druze. Other Christian communities are completely absent from the texts, and all other authors do not reflect the multi-sectarian character of the society.

7.6.1. Islamic References

The direct references to other religions' images are limited to Abbud's stories, in which the author makes some references to Islamic images. The first reference appears in the story "People." The narrator, who can be identified with the author, describes the women who surrounded him and his mother at the moment of his birth:

ما أرسلتُ أوّل صرخة حتى وقعت عليَّ عيونهنّ وامتدّت إليّ أيديهنّ: كل واحدة تحاول أن تستلم الحجر الأسود...

261

I just sent the first scream when their eyes fell over me, and their hands extended towards me: each of them trying to hold the black stone. (M.A. p. 85)

Clearly, he uses the image of the Muslim pilgrims in Mecca around the Ka'ba, all trying to touch the "Black Stone."

The second reference appears in "A Vigilant Face." The author, acting as main character, tries to get rid of a "friend" who is always looking for him to make him read his literary works, something that the author does not enjoy much:

"الأدب ذوق يا صاحبي، فلو كنت شيخ أدباء العالم، وهذا ذوقك، فإنّك أفتك من طير أبابيل الرامية بحجارة من سجيل.

"Literature is taste, my friend. So, if you were the shaykh of the world literates, and that's your taste, so you would be more destructive than the Ababil birds throwing stones of baked clay" (M.A. p. 174)

In the fragment, Abbud compares his friend's literary works with the destructive Ababil birds.[254] In this case, the author employs the same technique that he will use in the following section with the Christian prayers: he inserts religious references into the narrative to give strength to the text but without mentioning the source. These literary images are winks to those readers sharing those references.

---

[254] Qur'an 105:3: "Seest thou not how thy Lord dealt with the Companions of the Elephant? (1) Did He not make their treacherous plan go astray? (2) And He sent against them Flights of Birds, (3)Striking them with stones of baked clay. (4) Then did He make them like an empty field of stalks and straw, (of which the corn) has been eaten up (5)"

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ ٱلْفِيلِ (1) أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِى تَضْلِيلٍ (2) وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ (3) تَرْمِيهِم بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ (4) فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ (5)

262

7.6.2. References to the Druze Community

Lahad Khater and Marun Ghosen also mention other religious sects, but they do not allude to any of their religious peculiarities. In both case, the references are direct mentions to the Druze community.

Lahad Khater does not associate the Druze with their religious traditions, and he links them directly and indirectly with the sectarian strife that took place in the Shuf area between 1840 and 1860.

أما الوالدة يمامة فقد اشتهرت بحرصها على عفافها وطاعة زوجها وحب أولادها ومحافظتها على واجبات دينها وكانت كزوجها مقربة من سيدات آل عبد الملك الدرزيات وكثيرا ما توسطتهن لدى المشايخ أزواجهن في الإحسان إلى الكنائس والأديار وإنصاف النصارى المظلومين ومعاملتهم بالرزق والدفاع عن حياتهم ومصالحهم.

As for the mother Yamama, she was known for her determination to be chaste, obedience to her husband, loving her children, and observant to her religion. And, as her husband, she was close to the Druze women of Abd al-Malik family, and she appealed many times to their husbands, the Shaykhs, to give charity for churches and monasteries, and to achieve justice for the oppressed Christians, and to provide them with opportunities to earn their living and to defend their lives and their best interest. (L.Kh. p. 8)

... فمرّ بها جماعة من دروز بتاتر وهم عائدون من مذبحة دير القمر

A group of Druze from Btater passed by her when they were coming back from the massacre of Dayr al-Qamar (L.Kh. p. 18)

Both references to the Druze carry strong negative connotations. In the first example, the Christians are referred as *oppressed*, obviously by the Druze. In the second excerpt, the Druze go back after 'having massacred' Dayr al-Qamar. What is a little shocking is the apparent coldness of the account, which describes the action as if the Druze were coming from the harvest.

Marun Ghosen alludes to the Druze when he mentions the Syrian Revolt of 1925:

وفي تلك الأيام، هجم ثوار الدروز على حاصبيا وراشيا بقيادة حمزة الدرويش،
فقتلوا ونهبوا وأحرقوا وظلّعوا... فأرسلت الحكومة المنتدبة عساكرها إلى القضاء، ومعهم
بعض التطوعة من اللبنانيين.

*On those days, Druze rebels attacked Hesbayya and Rashayya under the leadership
of Hamza al-Darwish, and they committed killings, looted, burned and brutalised. As a
result, the government of the Mandate sent his armies to the region, and with them, some
Lebanese volunteers.* (M.G. I p. 16)

The Druze are also associated here with violence and their mention carries negative
connotations, as it was the case in Khater's reference. There is a sentiment of hostility
against the Druze in both authors, probably caused by the memories of the massacres of
1960. It is important to notice, though, that there are no direct mentions to any of the
religious particularities of the Druze, and the hostility comes in both cases as a result of
certain historical circumstances.

7.6.3. Conclusion

There is an almost complete lack of references to other religious traditions in the
texts. The only three exceptions are Abbud, who uses Islamic images to enrich his literary
descriptions, Khater, who mentions the Druze community to refer to the struggles of 1860,
and Ghosen, who also mentions the Druzed but in this case referring to the Syrian revolt of
1925. As said above, almost all characters in the stories are Christians, and almost all
references to religions are related to Christianity, both in the stories set in villages and in
the city. Therefore, there seems to have been very little contacts on a daily basis among
people of different religions, at least in the daily activities of the average person.

7.7. Prayers

The last two sections in this chapter cover other religious aspects that are perhaps less crucial than the topics covered in previous sections, but which present interesting perspectives on other topics that complement the chapter. In this section, the analysis will show the way some authors use prayers as instruments to enrich their descriptions and their texts in general.

Prayers are memorized and repeated by individuals of all religions since their childhood. They become almost stuck to them and, when some of these individuals become writers, it is normal that prayers or parts of them also become references in their stories. For example, in the story "Umm Nakhkhul," the narrator describes the strength of how the name of Umm Nakhkhul has been part of his memory because of how much villagers repeat it, equating this name with the "Our Father" and the "Hail Mary:"

<div dir="rtl">

وهكذا انطبع هذا الاسم في ذهني كالأبانا والسلام

</div>

And in this way, this name was stamped in my mind as the "Our Father" and the "Hail Mary." (M.A. p. 135)

7.7.1. Prayers as Winks Inside a Shared Tradition

Abbud often uses structures of the prayers and their implicit meaning as a tool for his narrative. He introduces fragments of prayers into paragraphs, maintaining their strength but making them part of the text. They sometimes have the effect of a wink to those sharing the same heritage. In "Teacher," the parents of the main character are described in the following way:

<div dir="rtl">

... كانت خبّازة عبقرية تسهر على الرغيف سهر أكثر نساء اليوم على وجوههنّ وأناملهنّ... يهمّها أن يخرج الخبز من عندها بدون لو. أما زوجها أبو طنوس فكان جمّالا ولكن جمال أبي أمين. دستوره أعطنا خبزنا كفاف يومنا. جعل وكد تعليم ولده ليعتزّ ويستريح، فشبع فخرًا ولم يأكل خبزًا.

</div>

She was a brilliant baker, who took care of baking loaf of bread longer as much as most other women take care of their faces and nails… what was important for her was that the bread came from her without flows. Her husband Abu Tanius was a carrier, and a proud and honest one. His rule was that of the "give us this day our daily bread." He worked hard and he gave his son education in order for him to be proud and to feel at rest, and so he had a lot of pride but he did not have enough bread to eat. (M.A. p. 54)

Here, the gifted quality of the mother as baker is used by the author to introduce a fragment of the *Our Father*[255] as the constitution of the father, Abu Tanius. The *Our Father* is considered "the summary of the whole Gospel" by the Catechism of the Catholic Church[256] and carries implicitly the saying of "ask and you will receive" present in the four gospels.[257] The wink comes when the petition normally addressed to God to provide us with daily bread in the metaphorical sense, is directed here to a human person that happens to be an excellent baker. The same prayer is also used as structure in another one of Abbud's stories, "The deputy prayer." In this case, instead of inserting an excerpt of the prayer into the narrative, the author presents the structure of the prayer, but changes the words to fit the interest of the deputy:

"ارحمنا اللهم، ووقّنا عثرات السياسة يوم انتخابات الرئاسة.
"اللهم لا تدخل عبيدك النواب في التجارب... ونجِّهم من حل المجلس وخلّصهم من ألسنة الجرائد. آمين!"

---

[255] The *Our Father* prayer is:

أبانا الذي في السماوات
ليتَقَدّس اسمَك. ليأتي ملكوتَك. لتَكن مشيئتَك كما في السماء كذلك على الأرض.
أعطنا خبزنا كفاف يومنا واغفر لنا ذنوبنا وخطايانا كما نحن نغفر لمن أخطأ وأساً إلينا
ولا تدخلنا في التجارب لكن نجِّنا من الشرير. آمين

Our Father, Who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. *Give us this day our daily bread.* And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

[256] "The Lord's Prayer "is truly the summary of the whole gospel." "Since the Lord . . . after handing over the practice of prayer, said elsewhere, 'Ask and you will receive,' and since everyone has petitions which are peculiar to his circumstances, the regular and appropriate prayer [the Lord's Prayer] is said first, as the foundation of further desires." *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Section Two, Article 1.

[257] For example, in John 16:24: "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." It is also present in Luke 11:10, Mark 11:24, and Matthew 21:22.

God be merciful with us and protect us from the stumbling the day of the presidential elections.
God, your servants the deputies, lead them not into temptation, but deliver them from the parliament dissolution and redeem them from the newspaper's tongue. Amen. (M.A. p. 161)

The parallel between the last part of the *Our Father* and this "prayer" is evident, and it has a funny effect on the reader.

These examples, together with other similar ones referring to the oak,[258] were probably not well-received by some conservative Christians, who could have seen it more as blasphemy than as a "wink." This use of prayers and the description of some priests' behaviors, as well as some comments made by the author in relation to religious topics, may have annoyed some religious authorities. It is not surprising then why Abbud was accused of being a danger to the Maronite sect.

7.7.2. Prayer as Mere Reflection of Daily Life and Tradition

As happened in Abbud's short stories, Karam's *Father Antun* contains various examples of the use of prayers in the narration. However, in this case, the prayers are normally between quotation marks and they only express that someone is praying.

<div dir="rtl">

وتناولت سبحتها تصلي لله كي يطرد عن نائلة رحمه الشيطان. وكانت تردد بشدة وهي تتلو "السلام عليك يا مريم...": يا قديسة مريم، يا والدة الله، صلّي لأجلنا نحن الخطاة، الآن وفي ساعة موتنا، آمين!

</div>

She took her rosary, praying to God to expel the devil out of Nayla Rahmeh. And she was repeating with vigor "Peace on you Mary:" Saint Mary, mother of God, pray for us we the sinners, now and the day of our death, amen. (K.K. p. 31)

---

[258] Marun Abbud used also the structure of the *Hail Mary* for his description of the Oak in a chapter entitled 'The Village's Oak,' in *Ruwwad al-Nahda al-Haditha*:

<div dir="rtl">

السلام عليك أيتها الأم، الممتلئة نعم، مباركة أنت بين الشجر، ومبارك ثمرة بطنك العقل اللبناني.

</div>

Peace upon thee, oh Mother, full of grace; blessed art thou among trees, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, the Lebanese Intellect.
Abbud, M: *Muʼallafāt Mārūn ʻAbbūd: al-majmūʻah al-kāmilah*, 12 vols. (Beirut: Dar Marun Abbud, 1980), 2:14.

ألا يخاطب ربه في كل يوم بقوله: "اعطنا خبزنا كفاف يومنا..."؟

Doesn't he appeal to his Lord everyday saying: "Give us this day our daily bread"? (K.K. p. 59)

Prayers are also used out of context to describe someone's personality. In the following excerpt, the author describes Adib Rahmeh using also a segment of *Our Father* inserted in the narration:

وطوى السنين في خدمة منصبه يكتفي بمرتبه. فما طمع في عمل حرّ يزيد في وفره ويدنيه من الثروة وكان ممن يرضون بخبزهم كفاف يومهم على اعتقاد منهم أن القناعة غنى.

And he spent years serving his post, content with his salary. And he did not aspire to have free business to increase his income and to bring him close to health. He was one of those who became satisfied with getting their daily bread every day, and that contentment is in itself a wealth. (K.K. p. 115)

There are also other examples in which prayers are used in what we may call an "irreverent way." When Father Antun needs a woman to spy on her neighbor Nayla Rahmeh, he presents his request to her as a religious deed. When the woman agrees, the priest thanks her using part of the *Heal Mary* but, instead of applied to the Virgin, applied to the woman.

قال الكاهن المحترم: مباركة أنت بين النساء يا نظيرة... [...] أنت ركن من أركان الله على الأرض

The reverent priest said: "Blessed you are among all women, Nathira… […] You are one of God's pillars on Earth." (K.K. p. 38)

This happens in the text twice. The second time the comment is also given to a woman as a "prize" for having given the expected answer to the priest:

وضغط ذراع الأرملة بشدة وقال والابتسامة العريضة تضيء لحيته وشاربيه: مباركة أنت بين النساء. ليس من يدرك مثلك قدر "البونا" أنطون!

268

He pressed the widow's arm strongly, with a broad smile illuminating his beard and his moustache: Blessed you are among women, there is no one who understands Father Antun's value like you do! (K.K. p. 201)

Apart from the prayers, there is also a reference to the Gospel. The author uses one of his metaphors when presenting the priest's thoughts:

<div dir="rtl">

فتمتم الخوري أنطون قول سيده: لا تطرحوا مواعظكم بين الخنازير

</div>

The Priest Antun mumbled his Master's words: Don't throw your sermons to the pigs. (K.K. p. 107)

7.7.3. Conclusion

What all these direct and indirect references indicate is that prayers are used as constant references to daily events in their life. More important than being present in the daily life of the individual, is the fact of using them in a way than could be considered irreverent. This is another proof of the freedom of the writers, that not only allows them to write what they want, but also to publish it.

7.8. Estrangement of Religious Terminology[259]

There is a curious phenomenon in Karam's *Father Antun* in which many vocabulary items that are normally associated with Islam are used in the novel to refer to Christianity. Throughout the pages of his work, Karam defamiliarizes religious terms, breaking the socially established codes that associated them with specific objects. We have seen in previous sections that Karam clearly criticizes the way religion negatively affects the life of certain people, forcing them to live against what he considers their human nature, as in the case of unmarried priests; or imposing undesired relationships, as reflected in the

---

[259] Estrangement or defamiliarization is a term first used in literary criticism by the Russian Formalist at the beginning of the twentieth century. It refers to the use of literary devices to make ordinary language sound strange and unfamiliar. See Eagleton, *Literary Theory*, 2-5.

indissolubility of marriage. The criticism of previous sections can be seen as part of a broader attitude, not confined to the events or images he described, but also shown in his rebellious terminology. Applying Islamic terminology to Christian objects, Karam confronts an imposed reality, and he manages to *de-Christianize* the Christian.

As a first example of the above, in the first page of the novel, the author describes the atmosphere the day of a holiday. He uses religious terminology associated with different religions that has the effect of confusing the reader:

انفردت الأجراس في الدعوة إلى تسبيح الخالق، فالمؤذن شاطرها جهادها. وها هو في أعلى المأذنة يصيح بصوته الرخيم: حيّ على الصلاة

The bells were alone to call for the glorification of the creator, and the muezzin shared in that effort. And here he is in the summit of the minaret yielding in his melodious voice: Make haste towards prayer. (K.K. p. 6)

In this fragment, bells are mixed with the minaret and the muezzin, all calling to the prayer. In addition to this, a part of the Islamic call for prayer is used. All together and read in the first paragraph of the story make the reader think that it may be a sort of joined celebration, a day of holiday for both Christians and Muslims. In the same first page, we find also the following excerpt:

واستيقظت المدينة رويدا رويدا. وفُتحت أبواب كنائسها لمن اسبغ الله عليهم نعمة التعبد والتقوى. فتهادوا أفواجا أفواجا إلى مساجد الله يجثون أمام الهيكل ويقرعون الصدور ويتلون الصلوات بحرارة الإيمان وخشوع القديسين.

The city woke up little by little. The doors of the churches were opened to those whom God bestow on them the grace of worship and devotion. And they rolled in groups to God's places of prostration, in front of the temple, tapping on their chests and reciting prayers with the warmth of the faith and the piety of the Saints. (K.K. p. 6)

In this excerpt, the author refers to churches with three different names *kana'is*, used normally to refer to Christian churches; *masajid Allah* that would be normally associated with mosques but that it takes here the literal meaning of "places to prostrate in front of God;" and *haykal*, which is a temple, and which can be associated with monotheistic religions but also with any other kind of religion. This is not the only example in which Christian churches are designated with names that are not normally used for that purpose. Throughout the whole text, the author uses all the following terms to refer to churches, all related to religious places of worship but not specifically Christian:

(K.K. p. 6)	معبد القديس بولس
(K.K. p. 7)	معبد الله
(K.K. p. 23)	دار العبادة
(K.K. p. 23)	بيت الله
(K.K. pp. 28,32)	مسجد الله

Bayt Allah is a term sometimes used to the Meccan sanctuary[260] and, in most cases, *masjid Allah* is used today to refer to an Islamic mosque. The way modern and classical dictionaries define *masjid* does not include any sectarian identification, indicating simply that it is "a place in which people pray together."[261] The author then uses *masjid* in its literary meaning. Moreover, he does not limit himself to the name of the place but uses also the verb "to prostrate" in many occasions during the text to refer to the adoration of Christians to God, mostly inside a church:

وسجد البونا أمام المصلوب

---

[260] See the article Masdjid in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* (Pedersen, J.; Hillenbrand, R.; Burton-Page, J.; Andrews, P.A.; Pijper, G.F.; Christie, A.H.; Forbes, A.D.W.; Freeman-Greenville, G.S.P.; Samb, A. " Masd̲j̲id." *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman , Th. Bianquis , C.E. Bosworth , E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs. Brill, 2008. Brill Online. GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY. 12 December 2008 <http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_COM-0694>)

[261] According to *Al-Munjid*, *masjid* is simply defined as: (مكان يصلّي النــاس فيـــه جماعةً) and in *Lisan al-'Arab* is defined as (الذي يسجد فيه ... وقال الزجاج : كل موضع يتعبد فيه فهو مسجد)

And the Father prostrated in front of the Crucified… (K.K. p. 38)

"نظيرة، لنسجد أمام المصلوب ولنصلّي" [...] سجد الإثنان [...] وتنحني إلى الأرض محدودبة كالقوس.

"Nazhira, let's prostrate in front of the Crucified and pray" […] Both of them prostrated […] and she bowed to the earth like an arch" (K.K. p. 38)

أنا الخاطئ الذليل أسجد أمامك...

I am the sinner, the humble, I prostrate in front of you… (K.K. p. 54)

وانحدر إلى الكنيسة يسجد أمام المذبح ويصلي بشدّة وضراعة...

And he descended to church to prostrate in front of the altar and pray with intensity and submission. (K.K. p. 80)

من حقك بل من واجبك أن تسجد أمام ربك ولا أمام البشر

It is your right, even more, it is your duty to prostrate in front of your Lord and not in front of a human being (K.K. p. 80)

نحن نحب الله فنسجد أمامه

We love God so we prostrate in front of Him (K.K. p. 85)

Karam is not the only one who uses this root as a verb. Both Lahad Khater and

Marun Abbud use it to imply adoration or respect.

صار ذلك العش الأدونيسي هيكل عشتروت لبنان يتركه صباحًا ليأوي إليه مساء حيث يتهجّد ويسجد لدميته.

So that Adonisian nest became Ashtrut of Lebanon's temple, leaving it in the morning to refuge in it in the evening, where he stayed awake to adore his doll. (M.A. p. 191)

فتناولته بخشوع ثم ظهرت عليها علامات الاحتضار فسجد الحاضرون حول فراشها وأجذوا مع الكاهن يرتلون طلبة السيدة...

272

She took communion with humility and, after that, signs of death throes showed. Those present prostrated around her bed and started, together with the priest, reciting the Litany of the Virgin. (L.Kh. p. 24)

The verb is also use in the Quran to refer to monks or friars, in the Sura "The family of Imran" (3:113):

$$\text{لَيْسُواْ سَوَاءً مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَآئِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللّهِ آناءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ}$$

Yet all of them are not alike. Among the people of the Book is a section upright, who recite the scriptures in the hours of the night and bow in adoration and pray,

The root *s-j-d* in the verbal form is not unusual then, and what may cause surprise is its use as a noun of place. Even if originally the term *masjid* has a broader meaning,[262] applying to any place where God is worshiped, and even if Ibn Khaldun still used it with that general meaning,[263] it is a fact that in modern times it is identified with an Islamic mosque.

Karam then purposely employs a term commonly associated with an Islamic mosque to designate a Christian church, basing his use on the literary meaning of the term. This is not the only case in Karam's *Father Antun* in which the author plays using the discrepancies between the literal meaning and its popular association. The story has numerous examples. For example, even if the Virgin Mary can also be referred to as *al-Batul Maryam*, the word by itself is normally associated to Fatima, Muhammad's daughter. In the text, the author uses *al-Batul* to refer to the Virgin Mary twice:

---

[262] In addition to the article in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* previously mentioned, see also the article "Mosque" by Jonathan M. Bloom in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, vol.3, 426-438.

[263] Pedersen, J.; Hillenbrand, R.; Burton-Page, J.; Andrews, P.A.; Pijper, G.F.; Christie, A.H.; Forbes, A.D.W.; Freeman-Greenville, G.S.P.; Samb, A. " Masdjid." Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. Edited by: P. Bearman , Th. Bianquis , C.E. Bosworth , E. van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs. Brill, 2008. Brill Online. GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY. 12 December 2008
<http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_COM-0694>

وتناولت سبحتها من محفظتها وعمدت إلى الصلاة تبتهل إلى البتول مريم.

She took her rosary from her wallet, and she proceeded to prayer, supplicating to the Virgin Mary. (K.K. p. 21)

وسجدت أمامه وقالت: يا ابن البتول، يا منقذ العالم...

And she prostrated in front of him saying: "Son of the Virgin, Savior of the world..." (K.K. p. 87)

Even if in the first example the name Mary accompanies *al-Batul*, in the second example, the use of both *sajada* and *al-Batul* so close breaks the natural flow of the text. Even if by meaning both terms are in the right place, the terms' association with Islam makes them become outstanding in the narration, and the terminology becomes stronger than its meaning in the story itself.

Other examples where the Islamic association is clear are:

محاربة الكافرين الضالين

Fighting against the infidels that go astray (K.K. p. 26)

لعنة الله على الشيطان الرجيم

God curse against the abominable Devil. (K.K. p. 8)

ماذا أبقيت من الشيطان الرجيم

What have you preserve from the abominable Devil. (K.K. p. 195)

فإن البونا جوهرة من جواهر الرحمن

The Father is a gem among The Most Gracious' gems (K.K. p. 66)

استنزلي عليها بركة الرحمن

Descend upon her the the Most Gracious' blessing (K.K. p. 120)

ربك رحيم

Your Lord is merciful (K.K. p. 240)

<div dir="rtl">عندما تعود إلى الصراط القويم</div>

When she goes back to the straight path (K.K. p. 159)

Other authors also use religious terminology outside its normal setting, as we saw in their references to the use of prayers, but in any case the results are as disturbing as in Karam's novel. Marun Ghosen, for example, uses the verb *Taafa yaTuuf* to enrich one of his descriptions. This is less shocking and does not stop the natural flow of the narration. Even if it is mainly used in an Islamic context, the verb has been applied more generally outside the pure Islamic context;[264] however, it maintains its image:

<div dir="rtl">أخبروه أن وديعا كان يأتي كل يوم يطوف حول القصر ويدخل إلى مخارف الحديقة.</div>

They informed him that Wadi' was coming every day, roaming around the mansion and entering the garden. (M.G. II p. 12)

Father Antun is then a peculiar case among all the texts. Karam's clear opposition to some Christian principles and regulations provoke a rebellious attitude that manifests itself in his direct criticisms and in the estrangement of the religious terminology used throughout his novel.

---

[264] The popular expression (في نهاية المطاف), for example, it is widely used nowadays at all levels, not only religious ones.

7.9. Conclusions and Comparison: Religious Identity, Hidden but Present

Throughout all the texts, the number of religious references exceeds the references to any other topic or issues. Religion is present in all stories, whether by the characters' references, certain characters in the stories, such as priests or nuns; or simply as part of the plot's physical setting, such as churches and their surroundings. Religion is a complex issue, with many manifestations at different levels in society and within the individual. This complexity is evident when analyzing the religious manifestations throughout the literary texts.   It is a fact that there are many different religious sects present in Lebanon, and that their members often have to share the same physical space, especially in the big cities and in public institutions. Furthermore, the religious diversity and the high percentage of the minority groups is one of the most distinguishing features of Lebanon, especially when compared to other Arab countries. The religious sectarian diversity of Lebanon and the conflicts between sects is constantly referred to when dealing with all kinds of issues related to Lebanon. However, we have seen that this sectarian division rarely shows in the texts analyzed in this study. There were just two exceptions, those in Khatir's *Habuba Khatir*, and 'Awwad's *The Loaf*. This unexpected absence of references to the religious sectarian nature of the country could be initially explained in two ways: as a result of the historical period in which the texts were produced, or as a distinctive feature of the text, which may reflect a specific manifestation of the society. In order to know which explanation is more valid, it is necessary to analyze other material from the same period, both inside and outside literary texts.

Starting with material outside literary works, newspapers of the time show that the sectarian struggles were strongly present during the Mandate period. The following

illustration shows the front cover of *al-Ahrar al-Musawwara* on April 12, 1926, the same weekly magazine from which Taha Husayn's above speech was taken.

الأحرار المصورة

آثارنا الطائفية في مؤتمر الآثار

It represents one session of the *Mu'tamar al-Athar,* and over the pictures it reads "Our sectarian relics in the Convention/ Conference of Antiquities," and below the picture it reads "Speaker: 'Those vestiges prove to us… that these are the real antiquities'."
The hat over each building points at the main religious group living in proximity of the building, and obviously all together reflect the fact that each religious group believes that it has certain rights over a certain building because of the fact that it stands on an area where its religious sect is the majority. Despite the existence of Greater Lebanon, there is no unity when dealing with archeological vestiges, linked directly to religious sects where the vestiges stand. And even though some non-Lebanese people were invited to the event, as

we have seen above with the presence of Taha Husayn, the Lebanese society was unable to present itself in front of the foreigner as united, but appeared divided by religious sects. Another indication of the sectarian tensions at the time was the constitution itself, and the controversy about including the sectarian character of the society in the text, as reflected in the local newspapers and magazines of the time.[265] Therefore, the sectarian struggles were not completely absent from the Lebanese society at that time, but they were clearly reflected by the media. The reasons why the sectarian issues are not clearly present in the texts need to be found, then, outside a temporal explanation, avoiding using the historical time period in which the texts were written as foundation for their absence.

When analyzing the stories of Taqi al-Din, it must be noted that religion is never mentioned in his stories either, even if the religious affiliation of many of the characters is visibly reflected in the text. As with the adjective *Maronite*, rarely mentioned in the texts written by Maronite authors, the adjective *Druze* is not mentioned a single time in Taqi al-Din's stories. The typical outfit of a Druze woman is described in detail in one of the stories,[266] but instead of saying that it is the typical outfit worn by Druze women, the narrator simply defines these women as "woman from this part of Lebanon."[267] There is also a strong Christian presence in the stories, through the mention of bells, churches, and characters who are clearly Christians,[268] but again, their religion is never mentioned, even if it is easily deduced. The author never identifies himself through the narrator as a member of a certain religious community, even if he was born in a Druze family from the Shuf. In this region, Christian and Druze people were living very close to each other, and certain

---

[265] See for example *Al-Ahrar al-Musawwara*, 13, April 1926, p.3.
[266] See Taqi al-Din "Ba'da al-'ars", 120-1.
[267] Ibid. 121.
[268] The Christian identity of the characters is deduced by their non-Arabic names and, more clearly, by the fact that some of them go to church.

information about the life in both communities - typical outfits, or the way of celebration of weddings, funerals, or other important events in the life of a person - could be easily known by any member of both communities because of their proximity. However, despite the absence of a clear statement about any religious identity, there are some details that indicate that the author of the stories does not belong to the Christian community, but to the Druze community. First of all, Taqi al-Din describes traditions that belong to the Druze community and that were completely absent in any other story read before, even in other authors from the Shuf as Lahad Khater or Karam Melhem Karam.[269] Secondly, there is a peculiar way of naming or mentioning certain Christian religious authorities, such as the priest or the bishop. Taqi al-Din uses the term *kahin* to name a priest (Kh.T. 91), something that rarely happens among our Christian writers,[270] and in addition to this, he feels the need to clarify the meaning of *kursi al-Mutran* with the phrase "i.e. his see," even putting the word *kursi* into quotation marks. This may have a touch of irony, or it may really mean that the author could have sensed the need to explain it, feeling that some of his readers would not understand the meaning of the expression. Therefore, also in these stories written by a non-Christian author, there is a tendency to try to avoid mentioning the religious group to which the characters belong. Religion is only mentioned when it is necessary, as in the biography of Lahad Khater's mother, in which her mother's religion could not be deduced and needed to be stated. This is a curious fact in a country that is well-known and often mentioned for its religious diversity, a fact that many analysts point to when explaining the reasons for the violent conflicts that have occurred in the country. However, this absence

---

[269] The typical Druze outfit is described in "Ba'ada al-'Ars," and a wedding celebration is described in the same story together with in "Nida' al-Ard."
[270] The only exception appeared in Karam's *Father Antun*, whose religious terminology, as we have seen, was confusing and misleading.

of "direct naming" does not prevent one from knowing the religious community in which the authors grew up, which tends to show up both in the stories main events and in the smallest details of the descriptions.

The reason why religion is not stated directly in the stories may be found then in the nature of the texts themselves, their characters, and settings. With the exception of 'Awwad's *The Loaf*, all the other stories have a relatively small number of characters, and the physical space where the characters interact with each other also tends to be very reduced. In fact, in the village stories, all the characters are members of the same religious sect, and all the events occur at an intra-sectarian level.[271] The same is almost true for the urban stories: even if the characters' sect is not always mentioned, and it cannot even be deduced on some occasions, the main plot events are intra-sectarian, and they do not normally reflect a clash between individuals of different religious sects because of personal matters.[272] As noted in the main analysis, *The Loaf* represents an exception to these general phenomena, and the reasons that make it an exception strengthen the validity of the general argument. The novel, as we have seen, is a call for unity of all Arab people against the Turks, independent of their religion. A Turkish man is in fact the only one who mentions the adjective Maronite as an attribute of the individual identity of one of the characters. Therefore, we can conclude by saying that, at least at this time in history, the sectarian differences arise only on two occasions: at a political level for interests that have little to do

---

[271] This phenomenon is also discussed by Akram Fouad Khater in his *Inventing Home*. When talking about how returned emigrants felt the sense of community when they went back to their hometowns, he states: "Household and village were the markers that most regularly and predominantly contoured a peasant's sense of belonging. Only on rare occasions did peasants have to refer to religious background to identify themselves." (Khater: *Inventing Home*, 90). Therefore, religion was rarely the first choice a villager would chose to define his identity, not only in literature but in daily life.
[272] The only exception is, again, Karam's *Father Antun*, in which the class of confessions was reflected in the legal differences of different religious communities relating to the issue of divorce.

with the religious life of the individuals, and coming from sources outside the Lebanese society.

Another issue that arises from all the sections in this chapter is the strong presence of the clergy in the stories, and therefore the existence of invaluable and abundant data for a rich description of clergy, which did not allow for generalization. The high amount of priests acting as characters of the stories reflects their strong presence and their significant role in the society of the time, and this is probably one of the main points that separate them from their co-citizens in the *Mahjar*. However, the high number of priests and their influence in daily life does not imply that the authors did not have the freedom to criticize them openly, and to express clearly their anticlerical views, as we have seen on many occasions throughout the texts. The oppression in which some characters seem to live appears to be a result of the traditional environment where they live, more than the result of religion or religious authorities. The urban settings of some of the stories freed the individuals from the tight atmosphere of their home villages, and religion had little to do with their lives, even if they were still living in Lebanon. Because of all this, it is necessary to clarify the distinction between religion as having a strong role in society, and religion as an oppressive element in the daily life of the individual. Through all the texts, the authors have proven to have enough freedom to express their opinions about the church and their clergy, and even many of their comical scenes or passages were based on religious elements. However, with the exception of Marun Abbud, who used Islamic symbols to enrich two of his descriptions, the comical character, mockery, or criticism of religion – at least as it is reflected in the texts – is limited to their own religion, with the significant exception of the Maronite patriarch, and it never extends beyond the limits of the own community to reach other religious confessions. This could be interpreted as a sort of

respect or simply, as in the previous paragraph, as absence of intersectarian relations and, therefore, ignorance of the peculiarities of other religious confessions. Whatever is the case, the main point made here is the option to free oneself relatively from religion, the possibility to criticize it and, most importantly, to publish these criticisms. This somehow contradicts the statement made by al-Na'uri that says that religious freedom was "the first pillar over which the *Mahjar* literature stood, whether in the intellectual, sectarian, and social doctrines, or in the expression and the art of eloquence."[273] This may be true at a general level, but authors such as Marun Abbud and Karam Melhem Karam have proven that they had enough freedom to think what they wished. In their writings, they show us images and ideas that were not in harmony with the general religious trend of the community in which they were born. The reaction of their community towards their ideas is another issue, but the multisectarian character of the society prevents a unique response from the society as a whole, giving the individual more freedom of expression.

Another important fact reflected in the analysis was the relative strong presence of occidental religious symbols in the local religious life of the people. The presence of most of these symbols is not unexpected, and it is not surprising to find mentions to Occidental saints – mainly French – or to the Papal See. However, what is not expected as much is that the Occidental religious symbols have overtaken the place of local symbols and that, for example, not a single story mentions a local saint. Even if the Middle East was the cradle of Christianity, most of the religious symbols and images seem to come from Europe. This affects directly the perception of the local population towards its origin, and the sources of Christianity seem to be transported from East to West. The extreme example of this was the association of an angel to a blond child, in detriment of the darker, local children. This does

---

[273] Al-Na'uri, *Adab al-Mahjar*, 115.

not mean the complete disappearance of local religious traditions, such as the *arbain*,

shared by most eastern religious communities, but it reflects a strong influence that goes

beyond the religious life of the person.

Chapter 8: Conclusions, Observations, and Final Remarks

This study started with three theses in mind, all revolving around common assumptions made about the establishment of an independent Lebanese state and its relation to the Maronite community:

1. The first thesis intended to show the divergence between the new state of Greater Lebanon and the image of the Lebanon reflected in texts written by Maronite writers during the Mandate period. Despite the common association between the establishment of the State of Greater Lebanon and the religious community of the Maronites as a whole, texts from this period show a completely different idea of Lebanon, with different borders and lack of unity. The study has sufficiently proven that the Lebanon described in the texts rarely reaches the borders of the new state, despite the fact that the texts were written years after the establishment of Greater Lebanon. Lebanon continues to be associated with Mount Lebanon and its nature, and other areas of the new state are hardly ever mentioned. The other topics inside the National Identity section corroborate and support this idea. There is no exclusive correlation between Lebanon and the concepts of *watan* (homeland), *balad* / *bilad* (country) and *dawla* (state). Lebanon is rarely linked to *bilad* or to *dawla*, and only once throughout the texts Lebanon appears directly linked to *watan*: in the speech of a politician. The idea of *Watan*, for example, is applied to surfaces smaller than Greater Lebanon, and even smaller than Smaller Lebanon.

Based on the clash between mountain and city, national unity from the moral perspective is completely absent. Even if the texts do not imply a lack of national unity from the territorial perspective, or lack of solidarity between the members of the two

284

milieus, the writers present the coastal cities and the mountain areas as belonging to two different regions, with different history and heritage.

Finally, the texts show that the revival of Phoenicia was not fully assimilated at the beginning of the Mandate period. The authors present in their texts different stages in the evolution of the Phoenician symbols as myths of common ancestor, and some writers still portray them as imposed by outside sources. This supports the idea of the use of Phoenician symbols to build the historical past of the state, but it clearly indicates that the Phoenician symbols were used as a tool for a very specific purpose: give unity to a land that had never been united as a whole and that had territories never completely isolated from their neighboring lands.

2. The second thesis was related to the ethnic and linguistic identity of the community. The Maronites are normally associated with the French language, and the Arabic- French bilingualism of this community and its openness towards European languages tend to be emphasized when comparing this community with other religious communities of the area.

The analysis has shown that, from the ethnic perspective, some authors present the Lebanese people's identity as *Arabs*, but only by opposition; inside Lebanon, they define themselves as Lebanese. From the linguistic perspective, however, the linguistic identity of the non-emigrated community was purely Arabic, Classical Arabic or an Arabic dialect being their mother tongue. In addition to this, the texts present two clear divisions in the society according to their relation to foreign languages: those living in an urban environment, with more contact and appreciation for foreign languages; and those living in villages in the mountain areas, whose knowledge of foreign languages is very limited and

whose attitude towards Lebanese people speaking foreign languages is of clear mockery. The division would be made then from the territorial angle, and it would have little to do with belonging to a specific religious group.

3. The third thesis is intended to prove also that the sectarian character of the society was not strongly manifested in the texts, despite the common insistence upon this characteristic in any study related to Lebanon. The analysis of the texts has shown that the individual's belonging to a religious sect is a fact, but a fact that is rarely mentioned and prioritized when defining personal identity.

Throughout the texts, the study has shown a high degree of anticlericalism, and also a complete freedom to openly criticize the negative aspects of religion, mainly those related with the clergy. The clergy is portrayed in many texts as hypocritical, authoritative, and dependent upon worldly powers. It is true that some issues lay outside the authors' criticism, such as the Maronite Patriarch or the existence of God, but the multi-confessional character of the Lebanese society afforded the freedom to criticize certain aspects of religion without the fear of finding a unique response from all the members of the society. This criticism is taken to its limit in Karam's *Father Antun*, in which the author applies Islamic terminology to Christian objects, confronting an imposed reality and *de-Christianizing* the Christian elements. However, this criticism, whether strong or moderate, did not have any apparent effect on the faith of the individual, which remains strong.

Another important finding in the religious section is the almost complete lack of references to other religious communities, and the absence of mentions to any conflict between different sects, with one single exception: Khater's mention of the struggles between the Druze and the Maronites between 1840 and 1860. This may imply very few

contacts on a daily basis among members of different religions, especially in mountain areas and in the daily activities of the average person.

The results obtained in this study diverge in many ways with the idea of the Lebanon that we have today. Nowadays, no one would think of a Lebanon without Beirut, and very few people in Lebanon would look at those speaking foreign languages with mockery, mainly because most members of the younger generations have knowledge of at least one foreign language. In the Lebanese literature of today, the intersectarian relations are not unusual, and the setting of most stories has moved from rural to urban locations. In more modern stories,[274] the religious identity of the characters often acts as a defining element of their identity in relation with the other, and the intersectarian relation vacuum present in the analyzed stories rarely exists today. It is evident then that there are many changes that a diachronic analysis would easily find, both at the level of territorial approach to the idea of Lebanon, or at the level of characterization of the different characters in the stories. One of the first conclusions, then, at a general level, would be the way the Lebanese setting is ideal to appreciate the concept of moving or changing identity. The data obtained in this study compared to contemporary data would offer a valuable way to show identity as the result of a historical process that depends on internal and external conditions, more than as an intrinsic characteristic of the individual. In a much shorter period of time, this phenomenon was clearly perceived in one of the sections of this study: the development in the use of Phoenician symbols in the texts, which went from reflecting their foreign origins in Awwad's writings, to end by considering them as an essential part of the history of Lebanon in Labaki's.

---

[274] See for example Tawfiq Y. Awwad's *Beirut's Mills*, or Rene Hayek's *Beirut 2002*.

Besides the immediate conclusions of the research, there are other issues that can be deduced from the texts. For example, the isolation of certain Christian communities living in mountain villages does not imply an automatic rejection to other surrounding communities and their peculiarities. Moreover, this isolation does not mean that those Christian communities reject *sharing* some of these peculiarities. At a linguistic level, for example, we have seen that most writers presented the Christian characters as belonging to the Arabic-speaking community, and at the ethnic level, when compared to Europeans and Turks, they also present the characters as Arabs. It is true that Arabness is never an attribute overemphasized in the writings, but this *unspoken sharing* with other Arab-speaking communities would explain, for example, the failure of all attempts to create a unified Lebanese written language during the twentieth century. We saw a good example with the lesser-known attempt by Marun Ghosen mentioned in the analysis, and there are other, more famous attempts by Sa'id Aql or Yusuf al-Khal. These attempts are often mentioned as evidence of the existence of an isolationist and excluding Lebanese nationalism. However, the important issue should be the failure of all these attempts in a society often accused of rejecting Arabic language as part of its identity, and not the fact that these attempts existed.

Directions for Future Research

This thesis can be used as base or starting point for many future studies. Our system coordinates, as defined in the background section, were limited to the time period of the French Mandate, the geographical surface of the State of Greater Lebanon, and the

religious community of the Maronite Christians. Future studies may arise just by changing some these coordinates, the more immediate changes being:

1. Increasing the temporal coordinates, leaving the spatial and sectarian coordinated unchanged. Instead of being a synchronic study, or at least a study limited to twenty years, the new study would be a diachronic analysis focused on how the different aspects of identity develop in time among Maronite Christian authors living inside Lebanese borders.

2. Leaving the temporal and spatial coordinates unchanged and increasing the sectarian variable. The study would then analyze the identity of Lebanese authors of different religious communities during the period of the French Mandate, finding out their differences and similarities.

3. Leaving the temporal coordinates unchanged and keeping the sectarian coordinates limited to a single religious community, but moving the spatial coordinates to other Arab states. The studies would then analyze the identity of religious groups inside a state, mainly minority groups, such as the Copts in Egypt, the Caldeans in Iraq, the Greek Orthodox in Jordan, or the Druze in Palestine or Syria.

4. Leaving the temporal and sectarian coordinates unchanged, but increasing the spatial coordinates outside Lebanon. *Mahjar* writers could then be included in the analysis, and one of the main focuses of the analysis would be the influence of emigration on identity.

Another obvious addition would be to include works written in languages other than Arabic, to provide a wider view of the identity of the community as a whole. It would not be very easy, though, to find authors who wrote in French and who never lived outside Lebanon, because many of them spent periods of time in Europe or in Egypt.

The works in this analysis have been approached as creatures born inside a system, the author also being a result of the same system. For that reason, the biography of the author has not played a central role in the analysis because, for the purpose of this study, the text owes itself to the cultural system in which it was born more than it owes itself to its creator. The intention was, then, finding similarities more than specificities, so the authors were not divided at any time by their social class, their political sympathies, or their family environment. This does not mean, though, that these divisions are not significant and worth being analyzed, so another approach to the texts could be based on any of these divisions. It would be interesting to find specificities of each writer or group of writers according to their social status or their political views.

The above paragraphs point to the fact that there are still many studies that could be done, and would be worth doing, to present a more adequate view of a situation and a time period that is over-simplified and explained mainly through basic politics and religion.

Bibliography

Abou, Selim: *Le Bilinguisme Arabe - Française au Liban. Essai d'anthropologie culturelle*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1962.

'Abbūd, Mārūn: *Aḥādīth al-Qarya. Aqāsīs wa Dhikrayāt*, rev. ed. (1945, repr., Beirut: Dār Marūn Abbūd)

--- . *Mu'allafāt Mārūn 'Abbūd: al-Majmu'a al-Kāmila*, Beirut: Dār Mārūn 'Abbūd, [1976?]-1980.

---. *Wujūh wa Ḥikāyāt*, Beirut: Dār Marūn Abbūd, 1962.

---. *Ruwwād al-Nahḍa al-Haditha*, (1952), in *Mu'allafāt Mārūn 'Abbūd: al-Majmu'a al-Kāmila*, vol.2.

Abdel-Malek, Kamal & Jacobson, David C. eds.: *Israeli and Palestinian Identities in History and Literature*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.

Ajami, Fouad: *The dream palace of the Arabs: a generation's odyssey,* New York: Pantheon Books, 1998.

Akarli, Engin: *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

Al-Qur'ān, A Contemporary translation by Ahmed Ali, Princeton University Press, 2001.

Ammoun, Denise: *Histoire du Liban contemporaine*, 1860-1943, Paris: Fayard, 1997.

Anderson, Benedict: *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, London; New York: Verso, 1991.

Antonius, Georges: *The Arab Awakening: the Story of the Arab National Movement*, London, H. Hamilton [1938] (repr. London : Kegan Paul, 2000)

Aoun-Anhoury, Najwa: *Panorama de la poésie libanaise d'expression française*, Beirut: Dar al-Majani, 1996.

'Arīḍa, Anṭūn: *Lubnān wa Faransa. Wathā'iq Tarīkhiyya Asāsiyya tabruzu Dawr Bkirkī fī Muwājaha al-Intidāb al-Faransī wa al-Iḥtikārāt al-Faransiyya*, translated from the French original *Le Liban et la France: Documents Publiés par le Patriarche Maronite Antoine Pierre Arida, 1936* by Dr. Mas'ud Dari, Beirut, 1987.

Armstrong, John: *Nations before Nationalism*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982.

'Awwād, Tawfīq Yūsuf: *al-Mu'allafāt al-Kāmila*, Beirut: Maktaba Lubnān, 1987.

Ayalon, Ami: *The Press in the Arab Middle East. A History*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Azoury, Négib: *Le réveil de la nation arabe dans l'Asie turque ... Partie asiatique de la question d'Orient et programme de la Ligue de la patrie arabe*, Paris, Plon-Nourrit et cie [1905].

Bearman, P. ; Bianquis, Th. ; Bosworth, C.E. ; van Donzel, E. ; Heinrichs, W.P. eds: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition.. Brill, 2008. Brill Online.

Brass, Paul R.: *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*, New Delhi; Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1991.

---. *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, London; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1974.

Al-Bustānī, S. et al.: *al-Adab al-Lubnānī al-Ḥayy*, Beirut: Dār al-Nahār, 1988

Chamie, Joseph: "Religious Groups in Lebanon: A Descriptive Investigation," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.11, No.2. (Apr., 1980), pp. 175-187.

Cheikho, Louis: *Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabiyya*, Beirut: Dar el-Machreq Editeurs, 1991.

Christopher, John B.: *Lebanon. Yesterday and Today*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966.

Corm, Charles ed.: *La Revue Phénicien*, magazine, four issues, July - December 1919.

Corm, Georges: *Liban: les guerres de l'Europe et de l'Orient 1840-1992*, Paris: Gallimard, 1992.

Ḍāghir, Yūsuf As'ad: *Qāmūs al-Ṣaḥafa al-Lubnāniyya 1858-1974: wa-huwa muʿjam yuʿarrif wa-yuʾarrikh lil-ṣuḥuf wa-al-dawrīyāt allatī aṣdarahā al-Lubnāniyūn fī Lubnān wa-al-khārij*, al-Jāmiʿah al-Lubnānīyah : al-Tawzīʿ, al- Maktaba al-Sharqīya, 1978.

---. *Maṣādir al-Dirāsāt al-Adabiyya*, Sayda: Maṭbaʿat Dayr al-Mukhalliṣ, 1950-1983 (4 volumes)

Davies, Eirlys E. "Ethnicity and Language." *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*. vol.2, pp. 58-65, 2006.

Davis, Eirlys E. and Abdelâli Bentahila: "On mother and other tongues: The notion of possession of a language." *Lingua* 78 (1989).

al-Dibs, Yūsuf: *Kitāb Tārīkh Sūriya*, Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-ʿUmūmīya, 1893.

Elad-Bouskila, Ami: "Arabic and/or Hebrew: the language of the Arab Writers in Israel," in *Israeli and Palestinian Identities in History and Literature*, edited

by Kamal Abdel-Malek and David C. Jacobson, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

Farshūkh, Muḥammad Amīn: *al-Mujtamaʿ al-Lubnānī min khilāl qiṣaṣ Tawfīq Yūsuf ʿAwwād ḥatta al-Thalāthīnāt*, under the direction of Dr. Mīshāl Jiḥā, Lebanese University, Beirut, Feb. 1973

Firro, Kais M.: *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the State under the Mandate*, London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003.

Fontaine, Jean: *La crise religieuse des écrivains syro-libanais chrétiens, de 1825 à 1940*, Tunis: Publications de l'Institute des Belles Lettres Arabes, 1996.

Franklin, Bruce ed.: *The Essential Stalin: Major Theoretical Writings 1905-1952*, London: Croom Helm, 1973.

"French Mandate for Syria and the Lebanon," *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol.17, No.3, Supplement: Official Documents. (Jul., 1923), pp.177-182.

Freyha. Anis: *A dictionary of non-classical vocables in the spoken Arabic of Lebanon*, Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1995.

Gerth and Wright-Mills: *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1948.

Ghuṣn, Mārūn: *al-Baraka baʿda al-Laʿna*, Beirut: Catholic Press, 1927.

---. *Difāʿ al-ibn ʿan Sharaf Abīhi*, Beirut: Catholic Press, 1927.

---. *Ḥayā al-lughāt wa mawtuhā: al-lugha al-ʿāmiyya*, Catholic Press, Beirut 1925.

Gordon, David C.: *The Republic of Lebanon. Nation in Jeopardy*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press; London : Croom Helm, 1983.

Haddad, Mouïne: *Le Liban. Milieu et Population*, Beirut [s.n.], 1981 (Okaybé, Kesrouan, Liban : Uni Print. Press)

al-Hajj, Kamal Yusuf : "Qawmiyyāt Izā' al-Qawmiyya al-Lubnāniyya", in Qāzzān et al., *Ab'ād al-qawmiyya al-lubāniyya* (Kaslik: Jāmi'at al-Rūḥ al-Qudus, 1970)*, pp.31-62.

Ḥammādī, Sa'dūn et al.: *Dawr al-Adab fī al-Wa'iy al-Qawmī al-'Arabī*, Beirut : al-Markaz, 1982.

Hashimoto, Kohei: "Lebanese Population Movement, 1920-1939: Towards a Study." In (ed.) *The Lebanese in the World. A Century of Emigration*, edited by Albert Hourany and Nadim Shehadi, London: Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I.B. Tauris, 1992, pp.65-108.

Hobsbawm, Eric: *Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Programme, Myth, Reality*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Hourani, Albert Habib: *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

---. *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East*, Berkeley: University of California Press,1981.

---. "Ideologies of the Mountain and the City," in *Essays in the Crisis in Lebanon*, edited by Roger Owen, 1976, pp.33-41.

---. and Nadim Shehadi (ed.) *The Lebanese in the World. A Century of Emigration*, London: Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I.B. Tauris, 1992.

---. *Syria and Lebanon. A Political Essay*, London, New York [etc.] Oxford University Press, 1946.

Hutchinson, J. and Smith, A.D. (ed.): *Nationalism*, Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

---. *Ethnicity*, Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Hutchinson Encyclopedia of Literature, Abingdon, Oxon: Helicon Publishing, 2006.

Ibn Manẓūr, Muḥammad ibn Mukarram: *Lisān al-'Arab*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1955-1956.

Jabr, Jamīl: Khalīl Taqī al-Dīn, Beirut: Dar Naufal, 2006.

Jankowski, James P. and Gershoni, Israel (ed.): *Rethinking nationalism in the Arab Middle East*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

Joseph, John E.: *Language and identity: national, ethnic, religious*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Karam, Georges Adib: *L'opinion publique libanaise et la question du Liban (1918-1920)*, Beirut: Lebanese University, 1981.

Karam, Karam Mulḥim: *Ṣarkha al-Alam*, Beirut: Dar al-Nahar, 2003.

---. *Būnā Anṭūn*, Beirut: Matabiʿ Alf Layla wa Layla, 1939.

---. *Ashbāḥ al-Qarya*, 3rd edition, Beirut: Dar al-Dad, 1979.

Kaufman, Asher: *Reviving Phoenicia: In Search of Identity in Lebanon,* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Kedourie, Elie: *Nationalism*, Oxford, UK; Cambridge, USA: Blackwell, 1993, 4th edition.

Khalifah, Bassem: *The Rise and Fall of Christian Lebanon*, Toronto: York Press, 2001.

Khater, Akram Fouad: *Inventing Home. Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

Khāṭir, Laḥad: *Ḥabūba Khāṭir*, Beirut: Catholic Press, 1933.

---. *Mukhtaṣir Tārīkh Lubnān li-Ṭalaba al-Madāris 'alā Uslūb Jadīd*, Beirut: Yusuf Sadir Scientific Press, 1914.

El-Khazen, Farid: *The Communal Pact of National Identities: The Making and Politics of the 1943 National Pact*, Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1991.

Al-Khāzin, Wīliām: *al-Shi'r wa al-Waṭaniyya fī Lubnān wa al-Bilād al-'arabiyya : min maṭla' al-nahḍa ilā 'ām 1939*, Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1979.

Khoury, Philip S.: *Syria and the French Mandate. The Politics of Arab Nationalism. 1920-1945*, Princeton, N.J.:Princeton University Press, 1987.

Labakī, Şalāḥ: *Min A'māq al-Jabal*, Beirut: Manshūrāt Dār al-Makshūf, 1945.

Lammens, Henri: *La Syrie: précis historique*, Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1921.

Lewis and Holt (eds.): *Historians of the Middle East,* London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Longrigg, Stephen Hemsley: *Syria and Lebanon under French Mandate*, New York: Octagon Books, 1972.

Maktabi, Rania: "The Lebanese Census of 1932 revisited: Who are the Lebanese?", *British Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 26, Issue 2, Nov 1999.

McAuliffe, J.D. general editor: *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, Brill, Leiden, 2001-

Marbash, Amikan: "The Meaning of the Term 'Arab according to the Dictionaries, the Qur'an, Sibawayhi's *Kitab* and Ibn Khaldun's *Muqqadima*," *al-Karmil*, Volume 13, 1992, pp.145-178.

Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature, Springfield, Mass: Merriam-Webster, c.1995.

Al-Munjid fi al-Lugha al-'Arabiyya al-Mu'asira, Beirut: Dar al-Mashreq, 2000.

Nāṣīf, Ilyās: *al-Ṣaḥāfī Karam Mulḥim Karam wa al-Ḥaya al-Siyāsiyya wa al-Ijtimā'iyya fī Lubnān min khilāl maqālātihi fī majallatihi al-'āsifa*, Beirut: s.n., 1993.

Al-Nā 'ūrī, 'Isā: *Adab al-Mahjar*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1977

New Catholic Encyclopedia, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.

---. Second Edition, Detroit : Thomson/Gale in association with the Catholic University of America, 2003.

Nujaym, Bulus (M Jouplain): *La question du Liban*, 1908 (repr. *al-Qaḍīya al-Lubnānīya*, Beirut: al-Ahlīyah li al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī', 1995).

Owen, Roger ed.: *Essays in the Crisis in Lebanon*, London: Ithaca, 1976.

Pacheco, Francisco: *Arte de la Pintvra, sv antigvedad y grandezas*, Sevilla, 1649. (repr.: *El Arte de la Pintura*, Madrid: Cátedra, 1990)

Provence, Michael: *The Great Syrian Revolt and the Rise of Arab Nationalism*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005.

Qāzzān, A. et al.: *Ab'ād al-qawmiyya al-lubāniyya*, Kaslik: Jāmi'at al-Rūḥ al-Qudus,, 1970.

Renan, Ernest: *Mission de Phénicie*, Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1864.

---. *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation*, Paris: Calmann-Levi, 1882

Reid, Donald M.: "Nationalizing the Pharaonic Past: Egyptology, Imperialism, and Egyptian Nationalism, 1922-1952", in *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East*, edited by J. Jankowski and I. Gershoni, New York, 1997.

Al-Rīḥānī, Amīn: *Qalb Lubnān. Siyāḥāt qaṣīra fī jibālina wa tarīkhina*, Beirut: Dār al-Rīḥānī lil-Ṭabaʿa wa al-Nashr, 1965.

---. *The Book of Khalid*, New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1911.

Saba, Paul: "The creation of the Lebanese Economy - Economic Growth in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *Essays on the Crisis in Lebanon*, edited by Roger Owen, London: Ithaca, 1976. pp.1-32.

Salam, N and Sassine, F : *LIBAN. Le Siècle en images. 1900-2000*. Beirut: Les Editions Dar An-Nahar, 2001.

Salem, Elise: *Constructing Lebanon: A Century of Literary Narratives*, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003.

Salibi, Kamal: *The Modern History of Lebanon*, New York: Praeger, 1965.

---. *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1988.

---. "Islam and Syria in the writings of Henri Lammens", in Lewis and Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East,* Oxford University Press, 1962

---. "The Lebanese Identity," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, Nationalism and Separatism. (1971), pp. 76-81+83-86.

Samne, George: *La Syrie, avec 30 photographies et 6 cartes hors texte*, Paris: Éditions Bossard, 1920.

Sayigh, Rosemary: "The Bilingualism Controversy in Lebanon", *The World Today*, 21: 120-30.

al-Sawda, Yūsuf: *Fī sabīl Lubnān*, 1919.

Selim, Samah: *The Novel and the Rural Imaginary in Egypt, 1880-1985***,** London; New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004

Shalan, Jeff: "Writing the Nation: The Emergence of Egypt in the Modern Arabic Novel," in Suleiman and Muhawi, *Literature and Nation in the Middle East*, Edinburg: Edinburgh University Press, 2006, pp.128-161.

Shiblī, Mīshāl: *Tall al-Sindiyāna*, Beirut: Sader Press, 1938.

Siddiq, Muhammad: *Arab Culture and the Novel. Genre, identity, and agency in Egyptian fiction*, London; New York: Routledge, 2007.

Smith, Anthony D.: *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, UK: New York, NY, USA: B. Blackwell, 1987.

---. *National Identity*, Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991.

Sneïfer-Perri, Régina: *Guerres Maronites*, Paris: Harmattan, 1995.

El-Solh, Raghid: *Lebanon and Arabism: National Identity and State Formation*, London; New York: I. B. Tauris; Oxford: in association with the Centre for Lebanese Studies, 2004.

Suleiman, Yasir: *The Arabic Language and National Identity. A Study in Ideology*, Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003.

--- and Muhawi, I. (eds): *Literature and Nation in the Middle East*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006

 Taqī al-Dīn, Khalīl: *'Ashar Qiṣaṣ min Ṣamīm al-Ḥaya*, Beirut: Naufal Group, 2005.

Tabet, Jacques: *La Syrie*, 1920

Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas. Edición manual*, Madrid: BAC, 1982.

--- *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*, Washington D.C: ICS Publications, 1985.

Thompson, Elizabeth: *Colonial Citizens. Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Tuwaynī, Jībrān ed.: *al-Aḥrār al-Muṣawwira, 1926**, weekly magazine,

Versteegh Kees, general editor: *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2006 ed.

Wehr, Hans: *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, Edited by J.M. Cowan, Urbana: Spoken Language Services Inc, 1994.

Zamir, Meir: *The Formation of Modern Lebanon*, London; Dover: Croom Helm, 1985.

---. *Lebanon's Quest: The Road to Statehood 1926-1939*, London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997.

---. "Emile Eddé and the Territorial Integrity of Lebanon", *Middle Easter Studies*, 14 (2) (1978), pp. 232-39.

Zein, Ramy: *Dictionnaire de la littérature libanaise d'expression française,* Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998.

Zeidan, Joseph T.: *Arab Women Novelists: The Formative Years and Beyond*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995.

Ziyāda, Niqūla: "al-Madrasa al-Lubnāniyya wa al-Shakhṣiyya al-Lubnāniyya," in *Abʿād al-qawmiyya al-lubāniyya* (Kaslik: Jāmiʿat al-Rūḥ al-Qudus, 1970)*,* pp. 72-82.

Bibliography (Methodology Section)

Barthes, Roland: *Critique et vérité*, Paris: Seuil, 1999.

---. *Image, Music, Text,* New York: Hill and Wang, 1977.

Chandler, Daniel: *Semiotics. The Basics*, London; New York: Routledge, 2002.

Chatman, Seymour: *Story and Discourse. Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980.

Cobley, Paul ed.: *The Routledge Companion to Semiotics and Linguistics*, London; New York: Routledge, 2001.

Culler, Jonathan: *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature*, London; New York: Routledge, 1975.

De George Richard T. ed.: *Semiotic Themes*, Lawrence: University of Kansas Publications, 1981.

Eagleton, Terry: *Literary Theory. An Introduction*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2nd ed., 2003.

Krysinski, Wladimir: *Encrucijada de signos: Ensayos sobre la novela moderna*, Madrid: Arco Libros, 1997.

Leary, Mark R. and Tangney, June Price ed.: *Handbook of Self and Identity*, New York: Guilford Press, 2003.

Lozano, Jorge; Peña-Marín, Cristina; y Abril, Gonzalo: *Análisis del discurso: hacia una semiótica de la interacción textual*, Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1982.

Mariani Ciampicacigli, Franca: *Semiotica della letteratura*, Milan: F. Angeli, 1980.

Peirce, Charles: *Collected Papers*, ed. Charles Hartshorne, Paul Weiss, and Arthur W. Burks, Cambridge, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1960.

Petrilli, Susan and Ponzio, Augusto: *Semiotics Unbounded: Interpretive Routes through the Open Network of Signs*, Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2005

 Riffaterre, Michael: "The Interpretant in Literary Semiotics", *The American Journal of Semiotics*, Kent: 1985. Vol.3, Iss.4; pp. 41-56.

Segre, Cesare: *Semiotica Filologica. Testo e modelli culturali*, Torino: Einaudi, 1979.

Sheriff, John K: "Charles S. Peirce and the Semiotics of Literature," in *Semiotic Themes*, edited by Richard T. De George (Lawrence: University of Kansas Publications, 1981).

Scholes, Robert: *Semiotics and Interpretation*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.

---. *Structuralism in Literature: and introduction*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975.