

LA AYMTAN

(TILL WHEN)

SUMMARY

The Lebanese Dilemma, from A to Z...

In all Honesty...

Yet with All the Love...

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Summary

More than 10 years of hard work to dissect the Lebanese dilemma has yielded the following:

Lebanon is (currently) a country for the (current) Lebanese altogether, and it is also the historical name of the land (almost) on which the country was established; however, it is not a sole nation / homeland for the Lebanese altogether.

It yields a citizenship, not an identity. The Lebanese are an administrative People, not a sociological People / ethnicity / umma.* This is similar to the administratively Swiss People, comprised of four sociological Peoples / ethnicities / ummas; thus, Switzerland comprises four nations / homelands. Had the Republic of Lebanon been called the "Republic of the Cedar", we would be administratively "Cedarians", but would our identity have changed in itself and in its supposed label? Surely not. Thus to say that the term I.D. (Identity Document, in Lebanon "Hawwiyyeh", meaning, "identity") is a misnomer.

* N.B.: "Umma" literally means "a People".

Christianity is a religion ("deen" in Arabic); it does not include a culture / worldliness (dunya) / identity. So - called Christians are ethnically **Canaanites** (this was genetically and culturally proven lately); they are the Canaanite People / ethnicity / umma, and their culture / worldliness (dunya) / identity is Canaanism, neither Lebanonism nor Arabism nor Aramaism nor Syriacism nor Syrianism. This is similar to Egyptian Christians being ethnically Copts, not Egyptians, and Iraqi Christians being ethnically Assyrians and Chaldeans (details aside), not Iraqis, regardless of the Coptic, Assyrian and Chaldean Churches, actually themselves named after the ethnicities. And those Canaanites' current nation / homeland is the geographic area within which they are majoritarian, currently limited roughly to the northern half of Mount Lebanon (and not "of Lebanon"). So indeed, part of the Land of Lebanon is a nation / homeland to the Canaanites, currently known as "Lebanese Christians" or "Christian Lebanese" and which are erroneously considered as "Arab Christians" or "Christian Arabs".

As for "**Phoenician**", it is the Greek exonym (external naming) for Canaanites.

And as for **Maronites** and "**Rums**" (the latter as in the Greek rites), they are not Peoples / ethnicities / ummas, but sects / confessions / denominations (the latter terms intertwine); however, they are not confessional communities,* because they generally admix, at least nowadays.

* We reserve the politically vague term "confessional community" ("Ta'ifa" in Arabic) for sects ("Mathahib" in Arabic) that do not admix in everyday life.

Now for **Islam**, it is a religion ("deen" in Arabic) as well as a culture / worldliness (dunya) / identity. All "dunyas" worldwide are compilations of social laws ("sharias") which are mostly not written. Yet it happens that the Muslim "dunya" relies mostly on a written sharia, and it happens that the latter is founded on a religion. Thus, so - called Muslims, in Lebanon and elsewhere, are really a worldwide **Muslim** People / ethnicity / umma, and their culture / worldliness (dunya) / identity is Islam. This is similar to the Jews / Hebrews / Israelis, who are as well a People / ethnicity / umma. Both are specifically ethno - religions, that is, religions that lay foundations for an ethnicity. Like Jews, Muslims logically ought to have one state, with one

citizenship. They had it before 1923, often fragmented due to internal strife. And the Muslims' nation / homeland is the whole Islamic world, including the remaining part of Lebanon which is not the nation / homeland to the Canaanites.

* "Sharia" literally means "law", that is, the social code and laws that define a culture / worldliness (dunya) / identity. It may be partly written like for Jews and Muslims, but, for other Peoples, is usually implied through evolved general consensus.

However, Muslims often clash based on pre - Islamic ethnicities, e.g. Arab v/s Kurdish v/s Turkish v/s Persian Muslims, but they remain fused ("munsahirin") as one body as to their fundamental objectives. Islam rejects an additional label to identity, rejects terms such as "Canaanite / Arab / Lebanese / Persian Muslim" or "Muslim Canaanite / Arab / Lebanese / Persian", and only accepts "Muslims in Canaan (if ever applies someday) / Arabia / Lebanon / Persia". Indeed, all Muslims have retained elements from their ethnicities previous to Islam, but these are sociologically superficial relative to core elements that direct a Muslim's daily life, which are the Islamic teachings, common to the whole Muslim "umma" and Muslim homeland, with superficial exceptions. All that explains for example previous Lebanese Muslim and Palestinian Muslim alignment in 1975. They are part of one "umma" that was administratively fragmented by boundaries in 1920.

Now to **Sunnis, Shiites, Druzes and Alawites**, which are not Peoples / ethnicities / ummas but sects / confessions / denominations (the latter terms intertwine); yet more, they are confessional communities,* because they generally do not admix. Hence they are not integrated (not "mundamijin") one within the other. This is because they are clashing over specific matters pertaining to their "umma", be it religious or worldly, of which political. But they remain generally fused as one body as to their fundamental objectives.**

* Refer to previous asterisk.

** Druzes and Alawites are closed confessional communities. We have discussed in another article (Worlds of the World) the potential possibility of considering Druzes, and less so but still, Alawites, a separate ethnicity within an "Islamicate" world, rather than their current consideration as a confessional community of the Muslim umma which is by itself the Islamic world. Said potential possibility is of no importance if partition is applied as solution; Druzes and Alawites would have to get independent states each. The issue would matter should they fall within federal states, due to the question that would arise as to distribution of political power within the federal government (proportionality v/s equality).

As for **Arabism**, it is a concept that was elaborated in its nationalistic aspect starting the 1860's based on a common literary language (and later official for the later appearing "Arab countries"), Arabic, and still it failed to unite Muslims of the later coined "Arab world" due to as well internal strife. It was elaborated by Christians to at least partially extract Muslims from their culture / worldliness (dunya) / identity so that the formers could pursue a minimally acceptable co-existence with the latter, and to combat Turkification that arose during the same period. As Michel Aflak, founder of Baath party which later split into Syrian and Iraqi factions (Assad and Saddam Hussein), put it, "Arabism is a body, its soul being Islam", and he died a Muslim. Eventually, all Arab political causes turned out to be Islamic causes, starting with the Palestinian cause that ruined Lebanon because of the clash with the strong Canaanite / Christian presence. Thus to say that

scientifically speaking, Arabs and their Arabism went extinct after all Arabs Islamized, roughly by the year 700.

So Muslims are Muslims, and Muslims of Lebanon are not Arabs, and certainly not Canaanites, though they retain elements of their previous pre - Islamic Arabism and Canaanism (since some settled during the conquest, coming from Arabia, and some are local converts), just as other Muslims retain Persian, Turkish, Berber or Kurdish... pre - Islamic elements, but are practically Muslims. Yet Muslims who insist on considering themselves as Arabs whether they are originally Arabian or of any other Levantine faction, facing Muslims who insist on considering themselves as being of other ethnicities (Persians, Berbers, Kurdish, Turkish...), ought to be respected as to their consideration.

So these two Peoples in Lebanon, the Canaanite and the Muslim, have not fused into one People and not even integrated one into the other: there is pluralism in Lebanon. Furthermore, the Muslims do not generally admix among confessions, which is clear in their social organization into confessional communities, the sects not having integrated among themselves. And keeping the expression "Lebanese Christians and Muslims" in use in politics gives the impression of dealing with one (sociologically Lebanese) People but the latter following two religions, hence a misdiagnosis for the Lebanese dilemma.

Yet these two Peoples (and the Muslim confessional communities) mingle ("yakhtalitoun"), though relatively mildly considering the whole geographical potential, in daily life, especially in Greater Beirut, or in the rare (10%) mixed villages in Lebanon (and, for the record, almost subtly demarcated), through shy neighborliness, educational, healthcare, and recreational activities, as well as at work, among others, which is a shy triumph for the Humanitarian aspect of Humanity amidst the horrific clashes. Yet any overt neighborliness ends up with a new demarcation. We will get back to that.

So diversity in Lebanon is cultural - civilizational, and not merely religious. This implies that the Lebanese dilemma's solution lies not in passing from sectarianism to secularism. The latter is anyway already being partially applied since 1926, and is currently considered to be the letting go of sectarian laws that were deliberately included as exception since 1926 in order to protect the specificities of the cultural / confessional groups, such as representativeness quotas in the parliament. And the solution lies not in rooting within sectarianism. It lies in organizing the co - existence in a politically scientific manner, that which has not been efficiently carried out.

What was the outcome of that inefficiency?

A unitary political system through a centralized Constitution set up in 1926, rendering diversity - protecting laws competing with the main generalized laws.

Hence,

- Each law, whether concerning a major or minor or even trivial issue, having to be applicable on all Lebanese soil,
- A 1943 Pact stating Lebanon to be "of Arab face", considered by Christians a victory since not [strictly] stating "Arab", and considered by Muslims a victory because [at least] stating "Arab",
- A 1944 consideration by the Arab League that Lebanon is an Arab State,

- A 1958 truce stating "no winner, no loser",
- A 1989 call for binary equality, yet never fundamentally respected. Of note, Lebanon "suddenly becomes" "of Arab identity and belonging" as per the Constitutional amendment,
- Almost all cultural, sociological and political events being antagonistically interpreted by Christians and Muslims, and, on a secondary level, by Sunnis and Shiites, as well as by Druzes and Alawites,
- Thus said factions fighting for seizing power, as the sole means for each to preserve itself within said unitary system,
- Other factions calling upon external "sponsors" to rescue them and help them seize power (and nothing is for free),
- Here the feudal / confessional lords step - up on stage: each presents himself as the savior of his own community, with "my corruption is a must for the good of our community": "If I am strong, so are you" (plural form), which implies: "If you (singular form) call upon holding me accountable, you will be hurting our whole community": self - flogging of the citizen by his own feeling of guilt. Despotism is the law, nepotism on the go.

The lord thus replaces the state as to social services. He has (or has had) his militia. And in the back stage, there is always a deal among the lords to perpetuate the issue into an endless loop, and this has been successfully achieved. Kings may fall, but not them. As has been said, each country has a mafia but only one mafia has a country: welcome to Lebanon. Here are the Lebanese, retained as hostages: no community can hold its leaders accountable, nor can it hold other communities' leaders accountable.

History has been concealed in the name of internal peace, hence no data, thus no diagnosis, and eventually no plan for true peace: and why a plan when a change could jeopardize said lords?

No revolution will take place. The proof: being buried under tons of garbage, the Beirut 2020 blast, a government having robbed its citizens through the central bank, and failed manifestations in 2019... what other explanation for the so - called "Lebanese people's inertia"? The main answer: two intertwined Peoples cannot undertake one sole revolution, because they already know they will not be convinced with the ultimate down-the-road proposed ending of one another.

This is why the "Pact" was needed; this is why binary equality was needed: to try to counter absurdity. And we know that a unitary state cannot simultaneously respect more than one identity. Diversity / pluralism needs a federal system so that two or more Peoples be able to run their administrative affairs through one country; or it simply needs partition.

Thus, a federation of present - day Lebanon would not be a division, but a union of its two components in such a way that would manage pluralism. Lebanon had been split into these two components since the Muslim Conquest in 634, and that until 1920, when they were administratively united though a (centralized) unitary political system instead of being united through a (decentralized) federal system. This is the correction that at least should have been carried out, in light of one country having been the vision.

But still... we know that ethnicities around the world are organized into civilizational worldwide currents, such as the "Western world" (including Russia and eastern Europe in its large definition),

the "Far - Eastern / Confucian world", the "sub - Saharan world" and the "Indian sub - continent / Dharmic world"..., and Islam defined in its sole People / ethnicity / umma an "Islamic world", through a proper social normative authority. A social normative authority is a matrix offering the deep primary grammar code, symbolic language of legitimacy and existential meaning for a community, such as foundational sacred references, core vocabulary of moral legitimacy, historical reference horizon, authority archetypes, symbolic cosmology (the deep metaphysical assumptions) and a moral grammar. Ethnicities worldwide are regrouped, based on existing social normative authorities, into civilizational currents called "worlds". This means that the diversity / pluralism rift in Lebanon is the deepest that can be among its ethnicities: even at the Human Rights level, Canaanites / Christians follow with conviction the UN Charter for Human Rights, while Muslims follow it reluctantly, and they even have the "Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam" since 1990, that they follow wherever and whenever possible.

It is interesting, in that perspective, to note that the "Western world" at the dawn of Islam was actually a "Western - Eastern world" that spread from Scotland to Pakistan. Islam seized the part that is now the Islamic world, adding some sub - Saharan and south - east Asian parcels, while Europe added the Americas and Oceania. However, Christian minorities of the Islamic world (Copts, Assyrians, Canaanites, Syriacs, Chaldeans, Aramaics...) remain part of what is now known as the Western world, that they themselves actually founded since Sumerians, Copts and Canaanites starting 3500 BC, with specifically Canaanites having carried the concepts to the West through Greece, then through Rome via Carthage, Rome of course having taken from the Greeks as well.

Still more, the only People that remained throughout 14 centuries, and persists to be, politically free to exercise their culture within the Islamic world are the Canaanites in their homeland on part of the Land of Lebanon, which, now we can understand, comprises not only two mere ethnicities, but two ethnicities of different worlds, of different, albeit more, antagonistic, worldwide civilizational currents.

So it is even clearer now that even any relatively mild concession that both Peoples must accept, in order to maintain the Republic of Lebanon as an administrative entity even though through a federal order, is unbearable to any of the two factions: any concession for Muslims means they are defying Islam, and any concession for Canaanites means they are accepting some "Sharia law". So it is better they go for peaceful partition, as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Indonesia / East Timor, Sudan / South Sudan, Greek / Turkish Cyprus and India / Pakistan did. New states can then go for some confederation. That said despite each choice (federalism v/s partition) having its advantages and its inconveniences that we have detailed in our work.

The State of Lebanon, the country, the Republic, has collapsed, not to say "was born dead": no president, no cabinet, and no elections for years at times, a same head - of - militia Speaker of the House of Representatives since 35 years, a collapsed judiciary system (judges resigning, or corrupt judges), armed militias controlling the politicians who control the Lebanese Army and the Security Forces, collapsed banking system, mass immigration and mass emigration... this is the prototype of a failed state.

Now what does partition bring?

- It resolves both Peoples' fears, as well as Muslim confessional communities' fears, in their believers and irreligious, in their seculars and theocrats,
- It is the way to slow the most any internal displacement, as well as emigration,
- It ends up clashes as to change of circumscription, inter - communitarian marriages and nationalization,
- It ends up clashes as to ownership, rent, residency, student and work permits, and prohibits demographic sweeping,
- It solves social clashes such as week - ends and holidays,
- It ends up clashes as to taxes and revenues,
- It ends up clashes as to Lebanon's identity as a Republic and all internal as well as foreign policies attached to that issue,
- It ends up clashes as to equality in representation,
- It can be coupled to adoption of the Ombudsman tribunal for Human Rights cases, for protection of minorities from any distinctive abuse of their rights, be it at the individual or at collective level (as well as for cases of administrative corruption),
- It can be coupled to adoption of an "escape friendly" secularism or of theocracy,
- It can be coupled to a general optional secular civil status law as per majorities wish,
- It achieves administrative decentralization,
- It thus promotes democracy while protecting regional minorities,
- Needless to say, it also allows each community to hold their "lords", as well as any later politician, accountable, ending the corruption loop,
- And it allows a reconciliation, which can lead to returning of detainees and deportees, as well as resolving the issue of "the disappeared" inside the country, and descendants of the diaspora regaining their citizenship(s) and the right to vote, and reducing the voting age to 18 should it be wished so, as well as women passing citizenship to their children should that be wished.

All what preceded being understood, these are the primary causes of the Lebanese dilemma and the optimal treatment proposed.

This remains a summary for a 600 - A4 page book. Many political, social, genetics, religious, linguistic, alphabetical, historical and geographical details are hereby overlooked. There is also a detailed proposal with maps pertaining to the application of a federal order in Lebanon if ever. The maps are based on a list of Lebanese towns approved by the Lebanese Army Directorate for Geographical Affairs, a map depicting the borders of the ~ 1450 Lebanese towns used by the United Nations and the electoral lists from the Ministry of Interior. These maps are also the basis of any partition proposal. And here it should be noted that, just like in federal countries, minorities are no major issues in partition: the same remedy that has been employed by several countries

worldwide such as Croatia, Azerbaijan, Angola, Oman and U.A.E., not to mention vast countries such as U.S.A. and Russia, archipelagos such as the Philippines, Japan and Indonesia, as well as several European countries such as Holland, Belgium, Spain and Italy relative to isolated towns, and minute sovereign states such as Monaco, San Marino and Andorra, can be applied.

In the absence of initiative by politicians, but also by the Maronite Patriarchate, whose integrity is much questioned since at least the 1990's if not the 1950's but all the more lately, we have lost faith in anyone in Lebanon as to the will (and not the ability) to reach out for the international community to help resolve the Lebanese crisis.

And while we firmly believe that we need a long term process to purify the Maronite Patriarchate (as well as others), that accompanied with proper cultural / ecclesiastic education to prevent any recurrence, we also firmly believe that an "immediate" action should be implemented through the Patriarchate (the only option left), with the Greek Orthodox and Catholic Bishops by its side, to move Lebanon from this status quo, or else, besides the heavy toll on our Muslims brothers, there will not be any Christian left for the Patriarchate to guide. Elsewise, may it be through any collectivity able to echo its voice to the international community.

Before we conclude, let us emphasize that partition, like federalism, is a solution to diversity and both are actually the two ways to coexist. Many countries in the world live so peacefully that crossing borders is just a sticker on a windshield and a sensor on the highway, to such a point that some people live in a country and work in another just across the border... Still, peace remains the essential element.

In conclusion, partition is the greatest act of love that the Lebanese can carry out for each other, in the interest of true positive pacific coexistence, so that Lebanon, though not as a country but as a land, and the land with the oldest name in History, remains "a message of freedom and pluralism for the East and the West", as declared by Saint John - Paul II, for an undisputable, clear triumph of Humanity!

We remain at your disposal for further clarification.

Regards,

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