

# **Lebanese Problematic Misconceptions concerning Lebanon**

circulating today on social media through the text below:

“The culture of Lebanon reflects the legacy of various civilizations spanning thousands of years.

Originally home to the Canaanite-Phoenicians, and then subsequently conquered and occupied by the Assyrians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Arabs, the Crusaders, the Ottoman Turks and most recently the French, Lebanese culture has over the millennia evolved by borrowing from all of these groups.

Lebanon's diverse population, composed of different ethnic and religious groups, has further contributed to the country's festivals, musical styles and literature as well as cuisine. Despite the ethnic, linguistic, religious and denominational diversity of the Lebanese, they "share an almost common culture". Lebanese Arabic is universally spoken while food, music, and literature are deep-rooted "in wider Mediterranean and Levantine norms".”

REPLY:

1. The term “Culture of Lebanon”:

if it truly existed, the Lebanese would be one social entity, one People; but we know they are not. Please refer to next point.

2. “Lebanese culture has over the millennia evolved by borrowing from all of these groups (Assyrians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Arabs, the Crusaders, the Ottoman Turks and most recently the French)”:

if by “Lebanese culture” we mean the two cultures of the two major social entities, sure enough they have evolved by borrowing, like for all cultures worldwide,

not to mention how many cultures have evolved by borrowing from Canaanites (also called Phoenicians), e g: Greeks and Romans then northern Europe and now the whole Western world.

But to imply that the borrowing of the “Lebanese” was significant, it was not much for the Christians, and even less for the Muslims.

PS: it is not the “Arabs,” it’s the “Muslims”. The Muslims attacked the Arabs and Islamized them (meaning culturally, as well as religiously). The common factor was the use of the Arab language, and the first Muslims being previously Arabs.

3. "Lebanon's diverse population, composed of different ethnic and religious groups, has further contributed to the country's festivals, musical styles and literature as well as cuisine":

the population is not culturally "diverse" as in "several" ethnic groups: diversity is Lebanon is diverse as in "binary": we have so-called Christians, who are ethnically Canaanites, and Muslims, who are ethnically Muslims (yes, Islam is an ethnicity, an "umma"), and who think of themselves as Arabs since the 1880s.

Of note, local literature is not diverse, it is only Arabic, imposed by Muslims — there is no Canaanite literature / besides few like Maurice Aouad and Said Akl, and which we call Lebanese; and there is Western literature, imported by Christians to escape Arabic. As well, local music is generally in Arabic for the same reason, alongside imported western music.

Similarly, the cuisine is not diverse as in "culturally": it is a local evolution of Canaanite cuisine, the oldest example being the 5000-year-old Hommos, to which Christians and Muslims, the latter previously Canaanites or Levantines, have added dishes borrowed from other peoples.

As for the "various" religious groups, the issue comes down to Christianity and Islam:

The major Christian denominations do not differ as to culture, they are all Canaanites; also, the major Muslim denominations do not differ as to culture, they are all Muslims, with the Arab background.

4. They (Lebanese) "share an almost common culture": refer to point 1.

5. "Lebanese Arabic": even a superficial analysis reveals that it is Canaanite, sure enough an evolved form of the ancient version. A review of the various Muslim sub-groups in Lebanon explains why they also speak this same Canaanite.

6. "in wider Mediterranean and Levantine norms": if one means the Levantine and the north African coasts, these norms are actually simply Canaanite, including what is called "Punic/Carthaginian".

This text in the image below is A MAIN REASON why Lebanon is a failed state.

Good data —> correct diagnosis —> correct treatment.

Try to erase identities —> war, emigration, pain and suffering.