

VOICE

Spring 2021



Yasir B Zarooa

Meet the Team

Editor in Chief:

Childhood, the formative years of your life is what sets up your perceptions of the world concretely- it's when you learn to trust, to love, and to find the nuance in mundanity of day-to-day life. I remember studying patterns in marble tiles, the grains of wood- and even the clouds, finding faces and shapes where others could not see them. I later grew to understand this is nothing more than the phenomenon of pareidolia - but from a child's perspective, it was uncovering a hidden world, something that you lose as you grow up.

-Abdulwahab Al Othman

Co-editor:

My childhood memories have revolved around the appetizing dishes in my second home, Kuwait. My favorite confectionaries were 'Pufak,' 'Sour Punk,' 'Fruita,' 'KDD juice,' and the list is never-ending. It is not only relegated to my childhood but also plays a central part in my guilty pleasures to this day. However, my prime memory would be dishes like Khubz, Majboos, Tabbouleh being assimilated into my household, and I never thought to question it. After all, Kuwait is a melting pot for different cuisines.

- Lavena Jacob

Graphic Designer:

My childhood in Kuwait was full of love. I used to meet a lot of kids who were my age and they used to teach me the Kuwaiti traditions. Especially in Ramadan, we used to do the qirqiaan and wear the traditional Kuwaiti suit for Ramadan. It's interesting how people were and still connected and love each other, and also it's fascinating seeing Kuwaitis are still very into their traditions.

-Iman T Chebli

Reporter:

I remember running after the ice cream man when we heard his voice echoing between the neighborhood houses "Bareeeeeed!". I remember going to Kuwait Towers and feeling like the king of the world. My first memory of February is blurred with foam and loud music, laughing until our eyes would tear up. What is your first memory of February in Kuwait?

-Abdolwahab B Alqarooni

Reporter:

My childhood in Kuwait consisted of unreasonable visits to Alshaab park and Marina seaside. I went to a private school where all my classmates lived within the same area, so going out over the weekend as a child felt like an extra school day minus studying.

-Sara F Zayed

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Goodbyes aren't Easy



Professor Farewell Letters

Saying goodbyes are always so arduous and words can never do justice towards our profound educators. Our AUK professors have always facilitated a milieu for growth and inspired us to excel academically and as individuals. It is with grievance we are bidding farewell to our dear professors John D Russell, Gholamreza Vatandoust, Mohamed H Cader, George E Irani, Rosalind J Buckton-Tucker, Ahmed O Kholeif, Ahmad Rabaai and Ahmed A Hassanein. Here are a few parting letters from them.

It is time to say goodbye. A decision I was reluctant to take, and it was not easy to accept. However, COVID-19 has permanently changed our lives and our priorities. I will never forget the kindness and friendship throughout my short life at AUK. Special thanks to President Dr. Rawda Awwad and Dean Dr. Ralph Palliam for their unforgettable support during my time at AUK. My message to my AUK students is that I will always be available to support you throughout your career. The online teaching during COVID-19 proved that distance is no longer a barrier, and we can keep our communication and relationships. One of the most heartwarming comments that I received from one of my ACCT 201 students in his/her teaching evaluations for Fall 2020 is: 'Professor Ahmed Kholeif is one of the rarest professors I took classes with, especially the way he cares of his students. He cares about his students' grades 100%. It is really rare to find professors like him, and he is more than a good professor. I am glad that I took this course with him. I wish all the professors were like him. He made this course easy for me and made me love to attend. Although there were many exams and work to do, I still feel that it is for my benefit and practice for the final. THANKS, professor Ahmed for everything you did for the other students and me. I will never forget how you care about your students!'. My brothers (Dr. Mohsen Bagnied, Dr. Aly Mansour, and Dr. Ali Aljamal), I'll miss you and our daily prayers. My accounting friends (Dr. Ayman Haddad, Dr. John Russell, Dr. Fatima Shibly) were very supportive, and I really enjoyed our work together. My football teammates (Dr. Iyad Doush, Dr. Ashraf Zaher, and the other team members) made my life at AUK very special and enjoyable. I would like to thank all my colleagues at CBE and the whole AUK community. I wish you all the best, and I am sure we will meet again in the future. I want to ask you to forgive me and pray for me.



**Regards,
Ahmed Kholeif**

Farewells are the dawn of new beginnings.

I leave AUK having fulfilled the institution's motto that is to help my students.

LEARN. THINK. BECOME

I leave AUK with a legacy that includes classes I taught, students I advised and helped with their career options, and seminars and guest speakers I invited from here and far.

Most of all, keeping the reputation of AUK high on my list of priorities. A heartfelt THANK YOU goes to those faculty and staff who cared for me and blessed me with their honesty and care.

I will miss you all and can be reached at
georgeirani@hotmail.com.

George Emile Irani, Ph.D.

My past thirteen years at AUK were a swift breeze, like a soundbite in a script. I have many fond memories, far too many to share. I was blessed with wonderful friends, colleagues, students, even grade bullies. Closest to my heart were members of AUKMUN, with whom I worked for over five years. It transcended and transformed to win nearly fifty regional and international trophies for AUK. Working with these remarkable members made me realize and appreciate the potential capabilities of our devoted and committed students.

As I leave AUK, I remind our patrons to discover themselves, learn, be patient and humble, prepare for the future, and be positive and productive. If you stay on course, you have then realized the mission of a liberal arts education. I have no doubt that our paths will cross again. To quote T.S. Eliot, "to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from." In the meantime, au revoir AUK.



**Sincerely,
Gholam R. Vatandoust, Ph.D.**

A Farewell for Our Dear Danah

Danah K AlBader's entralling spirit and cheerful smile was the driving force of the Clubs and Orgs in university, since she graduated from AUK in 2017. It is with a heavy heart we bid adieu to our gleaming pearl who is embarking upon her new journey. The VOICE team alongside her close colleagues and friends would like to wish her all the best in her future endeavors.



Dear Danah,

It has been a pleasure working with you for the last three and a half years as a Student Affairs staff, and prior to that as a club member and a constant support for us in Student Affairs in general, and in my office specifically. Your efficiency, diplomacy, attention to detail and knowledge of events, programs, organizations in Kuwait and internationally, have been great assets to your role as club coordinator. Your enthusiasm was catching, and this is seen in how you managed to push our clubs and organizations to go above and beyond. Under your leadership, our clubs and organizations have indeed moved to an advanced level of activities and events, one that highlights our students' awareness of world events, their interest in doing good, and their awareness of the importance of their voice as students at AUK, and as members of society in general. You have also brought with you new standards of collaborations and involvement among clubs and organizations, and between clubs and orgs and other departments at AUK. As you move to the next journey of your career, I wish you all the best, and I am certain that you will excel in what you will do. I am certain that this is not a goodbye, as our Alumni always come back, and most specifically, I know that your connection to the team and to AUK is deep and strong. I have no doubt that you will continue supporting our clubs and organizations even as you move to new pastures.

All the best Danah.

Hanan

Dear Danah,

I have known you as a student and watched you grow into this wonderful person that you are. As you already know, you will be terribly missed, not only for the amazing work you did in clubs and orgs, but for all the meals and laughter we have shared over the years. You are the one who introduced me to my true love – Arabica! And not forgetting Blaze Pizza and all the calories in between! Thanks for being you and wishing you nothing but success wherever you go! Your new organization is very lucky to have you. Keep shining Danah, the world needs your light.

Regards,
Shirley

Dear Danah,

Whenever I needed help figuring out what form to fill, what person to contact, or what part of an event could be improved, Danah would always be there. I would sometimes hesitate to ask for help in fear that I might be creating a nuisance, but I would always be greeted by a friendly face and a welcoming smile. Moving on is always hard to do, but it is also a brave thing to do. As Robert Foster says, “Two roads diverged in a wood, and I, I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.” We will all miss you, Danah, but you are taking the road less traveled by.

All the best,
Anas Hasan.

الزميلة دانه البدر
ونحن نودعك نذكر لحظاتٍ من التميز كنت
سيدتها ..

أنت من أوائل الذين ألقوا على السلام
بصدق السلام ..
أضفت للمكان بهجةً .. وللزمان اختلافاً ..

إذا ذُكر النشاطُ فأنت في رأس القائمة ..
و إذا ذُكر الإلتزامُ فأنت سيدته ..
و رغم ذلك تتصرّفين بروح الطفولة .. حيث
البراءةُ و الطيبةُ و الفرح ..
لا شك أنك ستترکين فراغاً

فكيف يصبح من بعدي الكهف الذي

ضوئته

فكيف يصبح من بعدي المنزل الذي
ملأته

فكيف يصبح من بعدي الروح الذي
سكنته

كم يحزننا و يؤلمنا رحيلك
لكننا فرحون لك .. فخورون بك
سعداء لأجلك
ندعوا الله أن يحميك ... يحفظك ... و
يرعاك

نرجو سعادتك و نبغض بعدي ... نرجو
علوك و نبغض فراقك ... نرجو نجاحك و
نبغض بعدي ..

لكنك نور والنور في العين و القلب
يضيء

Anas Abdullah

Dear Danah,

Where do I begin? I know I haven't known you for a long time, but it has been a pleasure to work with such an amazing person with a beautiful soul. You will be my forever favorite IR graduate and office neighbor. I will miss our morning breakfast/coffee rituals and talks at the office. So I am expecting constant new food/coffee recommendations and loads of Whatsapp gifs, just saying. I wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors, and please do keep in touch! May you shine in all you do and fulfill your dreams.

Regards,

Fay

Dear Danah,

My first year at AUK was also your first year in Student Life, and I saw ourselves grow and learn together. Thank you for your endless support and for giving students opportunities to develop themselves. You have been a great part of my time at AUK. I wish you all the best in what's to come, Danah! You are a bright and hardworking individual, and I am excited for your future career.

All the best,

Rafah Al-Shohaty

I am very excited for your new venture! I can't imagine how hard and challenging it is to leave something you've been a part of for a long time. I have learned a lot from you throughout the years, I wish you nothing but success in the future. Thank you and farewell.

Regards,
Malak Hussein



Dear Danah,

Apart from clubs and orgs, I had the privilege to work with you and for you at Student life. It will be one of the best memories I will have of us. It was always fun when you were at the office. I will cut it short and say thank you for your immense support throughout.

To say that you will be missed would be an understatement. Wishing you all the very best!! May you flourish and bloom wherever you go just like you do.

Yours sincerely,
Haider

To my dearest friend, colleague, and little sister

I can't express how grateful I am to have you in my little world. You are such an inspirational, ambitious, and beautiful person inside out. I'll miss you every single day more and more. But every time an IR student will talk about his/ her major with a passion, I'll remember you. Every time I want to prepare my morning coffee, I'll remember you. Every time I'll go crazy about work and shout for help, I'll remember you. And of course, every time I want to order food and I run out of options; I'll remember you, my dearest friend.

I wish you a great journey Dandoon. You are a pearl by all means. Stay the way you are, and I'm sure you will reach your dream.

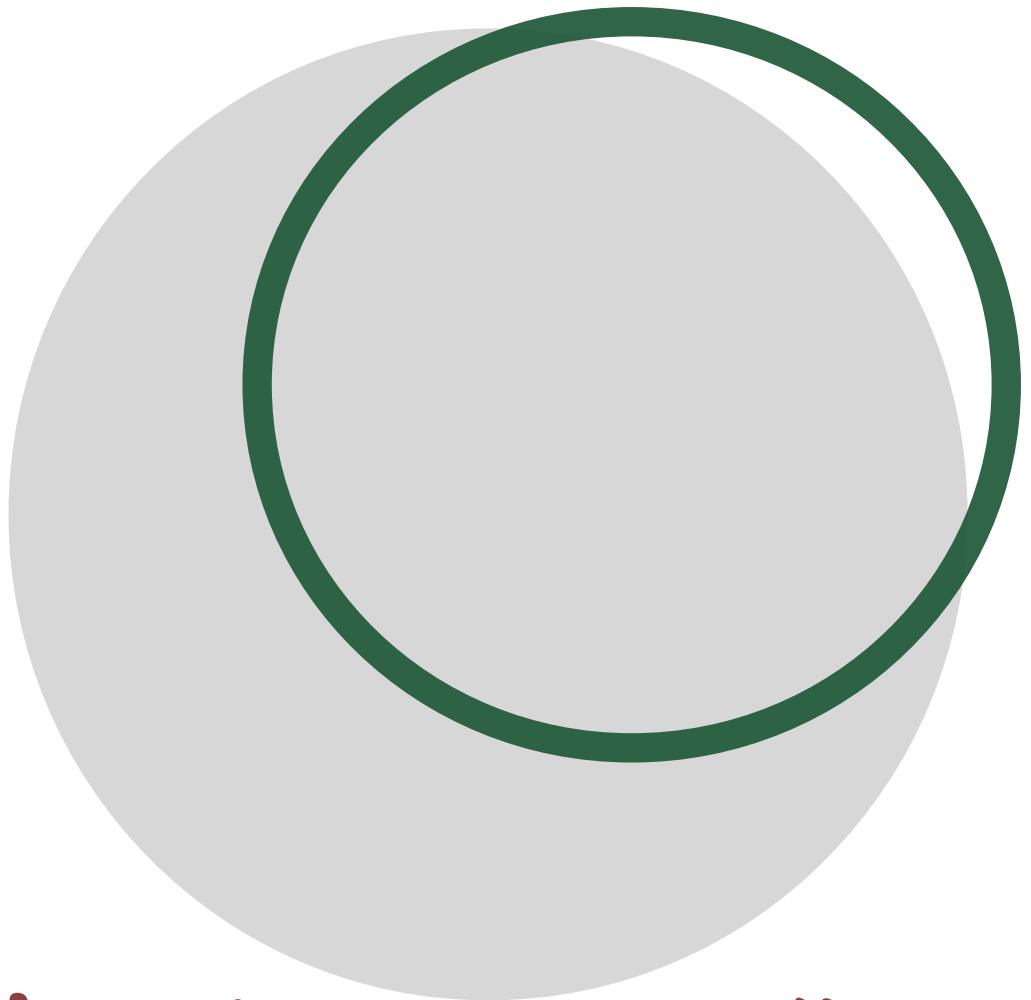
Love you,
Lama



Dear Ms. AlBader,

I'm not usually the one who likes goodbyes because I tend to not to know how to control my emotions. I don't know if this is the last time I would be calling you Ms. AlBader through emails Haha. Thank you, Danah for all the opportunities for all the chances you gave us. Thank you so much for being a mentor, a sister, and a really caring person. I would never forget the jokes, the laughter during events, and all of it. Thank you for everything you have done for us, and I really hope your future plans, future strategies are all blessed and are all bright lights in our path. Whether it's other opportunities, other success stories, and other great value you would add to. Finally, thank you for being patient through everything, and thank you for always being there for us.

Best Regards,
Elie Yazigi



What's New at AUK



AUK Student Council: Meet the Team

Sarah Zayed

@aukstudentaffairs



As part of AUK's effort to build an interactive and engaging experience for its student, AUK has its own student council body. The student council is part of the American education curriculum for students to voice their concerns and provide them with the space to discuss communal matters. AUK student council was on hold for two years due to the low number of candidates, but they are back in action for the academic year AY 2020-2021. Our student council body looks into graduation, virtual works loads,

and any other student complaints. It is also a practice of democracy and demolishing hierachal barriers between the administration and the students for a better experience for both parties. Meet our student council members for this year:

**Public relations and marketing committee chair:
Taibah Al-Eissa**

Al-Eissa works closely with SC Media Affairs Committee to inform students of events inside and outside the campus.

**President:
Abdullah Bousakher**

Bousakher serves as the official and primary contact and spokesperson for the SC and the university student body.

**Vice President:
Abdulwahab Al-Mutawa**
Mutawa's role is the same as the president, and he is in charge when the president is not present.

**Treasurer:
Omar Hedaya**

Hedaya is in charge of all the student council's financial matters, including the university budget, the account, and sponsorships.

**Judicial committee chair:
Abdulmohsen Al-Mutairi**

Al-Mutairi serves as the student code of conduct policy.

**Secretary:
Shogh Farhanian**

Farhanian has many tasks to do like scheduling meetings, informing the members about the time, and recording meeting minutes to send out to the members and take attendance.

Why did the members join the Student Council?

Secretary: I was not planning on it in the beginning. I was very hesitant, but it got to a point where I got tired of complaining and not seeing results or changes. As cheesy as this will sound, I thought I might as well be the change I want to see.

Treasurer: why not?

President: I joined the student council to help make life for AUK easier the best way I can and help students with any problems they might be facing as students of AUK.

Vice President: I decided to run for the position of Vice President to maintain the functionality of the council in case the president was not able to at any point of time. Also, to help the president with his responsibilities if need be.

Public relations and marketing committee chair: Why wouldn't I join the student council? I was given the opportunity to help AUK rise and reach its full potential! Instead of complaining about all that is wrong with AUK, why not do something to fix it?

Judicial committee chair: I have joined the student council to connect with the student demands regarding administration and make the university a better place to study.



What is the Student Council, and why is it important to the curriculum for the university?

Bousakher states: "The student council are the official representatives of students for the university. They help make the students lives easier and gives a voice to the students and a platform to share their interest and concerns."

Al-Mutawa states: "It is the official representative of the student body. It serves the function of bridging the gap between the students, university faculty and the administration, if there is any.

Any unionized body whether it is a student or labor body is crucial to unifying their voices and needs. Students have the opportunity to manifest what they wish or hope for to happen and/or exist within the confinement of the academic institution and that is indispensable."

What are the processes to be part of the Student Council?

To join, an individual must have:

- completed at least 30 credits,
- registered for a minimum of 12 credits,
- maintain a GPA of at least 2.5,

-must not be on probation for violating the Code of Conduct at the time of elections.

Student Life usually sends out an email when elections are coming up so that interested applicants can contact them. They ask for the student's basic details and a transcript, and the position the student is running for. The next step would be the election period for applicants to promote themselves for the position they're running for. Farhanian said, "For us, there were not enough applicants to have a public election, so we had an internal election, as per the Student Council constitution."

What traits should an SC candidate possess?

Bousakher states: “Candidates should have leadership skills, teamwork skills, and have a calm understanding. They should have traits that are concurrent with a willingness to go through any potential misunderstandings in their careers within the Student Council.”

Al-Mutawa states: “Flexibility and pragmatism are the two most essential traits a candidate should have.”

What are the current projects or concerns SC is working on?

When asked about their agenda for this semester, the SC president announced that their agenda is yet to be confirmed. But once it does, the updates will be sent out via email to students. Their main concern is summer registration and finding the proper solution for students. In addition to that, problems like the lack of variety of courses, unavailability of courses, the lack of trust in the SET system, and many more. They are also hopeful that we can do something for the graduating seniors. Since the SC is operating virtually, they are using different methods of communication. They have a group chat for simple day-to-day messages. They use Teams for messaging staff members, emails for official communication with staff and faculty, and Zoom for their meetings. SC body concluded their talk by addressing that students lost trust or belief that things can change, but they strongly advise students to communicate with them.

Treasurer of SC adds, “Let us know what you’re going through and what you hope to see change. Rant to us! It is why we’re here in the end. Our goal is to help improve your experience; we can’t do that if we don’t know what’s lacking for it.”

You can email them, message them on teams, DM them, or talk to the members personally!”

For further information, contact SC via:

Student council Teams: studentcouncil@auk.edu.kw (<https://teams.microsoft.com/l/chat/0/0?users=studentcouncil>)

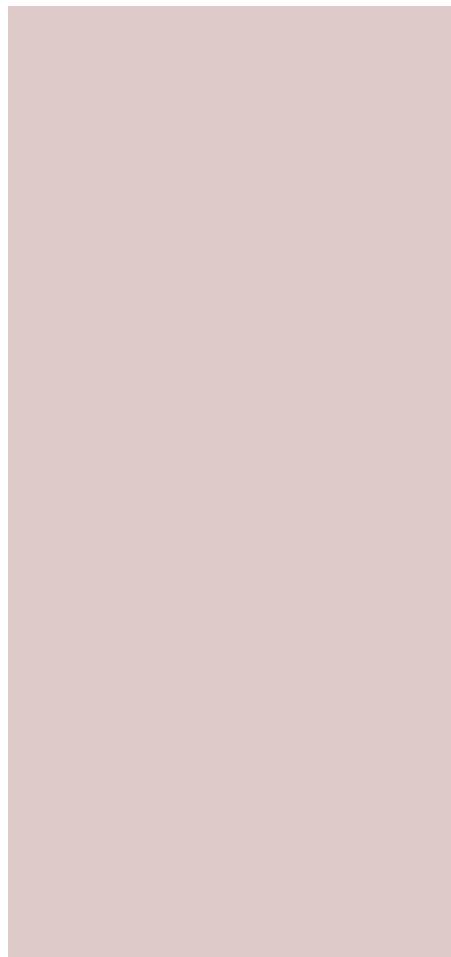
Instagram: @SC_AUK

University Updates

Sarah Zayed

As we start our fourth semester online, we are almost entirely disassociated from our campus. We cannot put a timeline on when university goes back to onsite education, but we have compiled everything you need to know about AUK's newest updates.

AUK has put its complete effort into recreating the campus environment within virtual portals. All AUK departments are now operating online, along with the writing and tutoring centers both use Zoom for academic sessions with students. Student life is active on their Instagram: @aukstudentaffairs. They also send out emails for interactive competitions and raffles that are happening around the virtual campus. Access to the campus is still restricted; hence if you are finishing paperwork, you will need to wait outside the gate for the staff to assist you.



Involvement fair:

The virtual involvement fair started in Fall 2020 via Zoom, and the invitation is open to all AUK students. Usually, the involvement fair is set in the main hallway with a booth for every club. Virtually, the event takes place on Zoom, with the executive members introducing the club, its mission, and upcoming events. The virtual event includes a Q&A as well for students who are interested in joining the clubs.

Graduation:

2020 was the first year where AUK had no graduation or senior pictures held. However, this was a global dilemma as almost no graduates last year had a typical graduation. As for this year, the situation is no different! We contacted the Alumni Affairs office, and they informed us that nothing was decided for this year's graduation. Though I am a graduate, I can assume that no in-person graduation will occur unless the population gets vaccinated. We can speculate that it is either a virtual graduation, a drive-through graduation or a postponed graduation. As for the senior launch, it took place on March 31st as a virtual event. It was planned to be a drive-through senior launch, but due to the 5 pm curfew, that was not doable.

President and Deans Honor Roll:

President and Deans Honor Roll for Spring 2019 students was a reel video on Instagram. The President's opening remarks were filmed around campus, followed by the list of student names. The reel is still available to view on [@aukstudentaffairs](https://www.instagram.com/aukstudentaffairs).

Alumni reunion:

The last alumni reunion was held in Spring 2019, and due to COVID-19, last year's reunion was canceled. The Reunion 2021 was held on March 15th via Zoom with the guest speaker as Shaikha Al-Khaldi. Though this may not be ideal, but this is as close as it can get to an actual reunion amongst the pandemic.

To see more pictures: Instagram:
[@AlumniAUK](https://www.instagram.com/@AlumniAUK)

Orientation:

It was also exceptional this academic year as almost the whole registration process for Freshmen was virtual and so was their first day. Orientation was also held on Zoom for Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. Unlike the normal orientation, which took one day for all students, the orientation was held in three consecutive days before add and drop week. Virtual orientation is more accommodated to virtual school as Freshmen will still need to discover campus on their own once life goes back to normal.

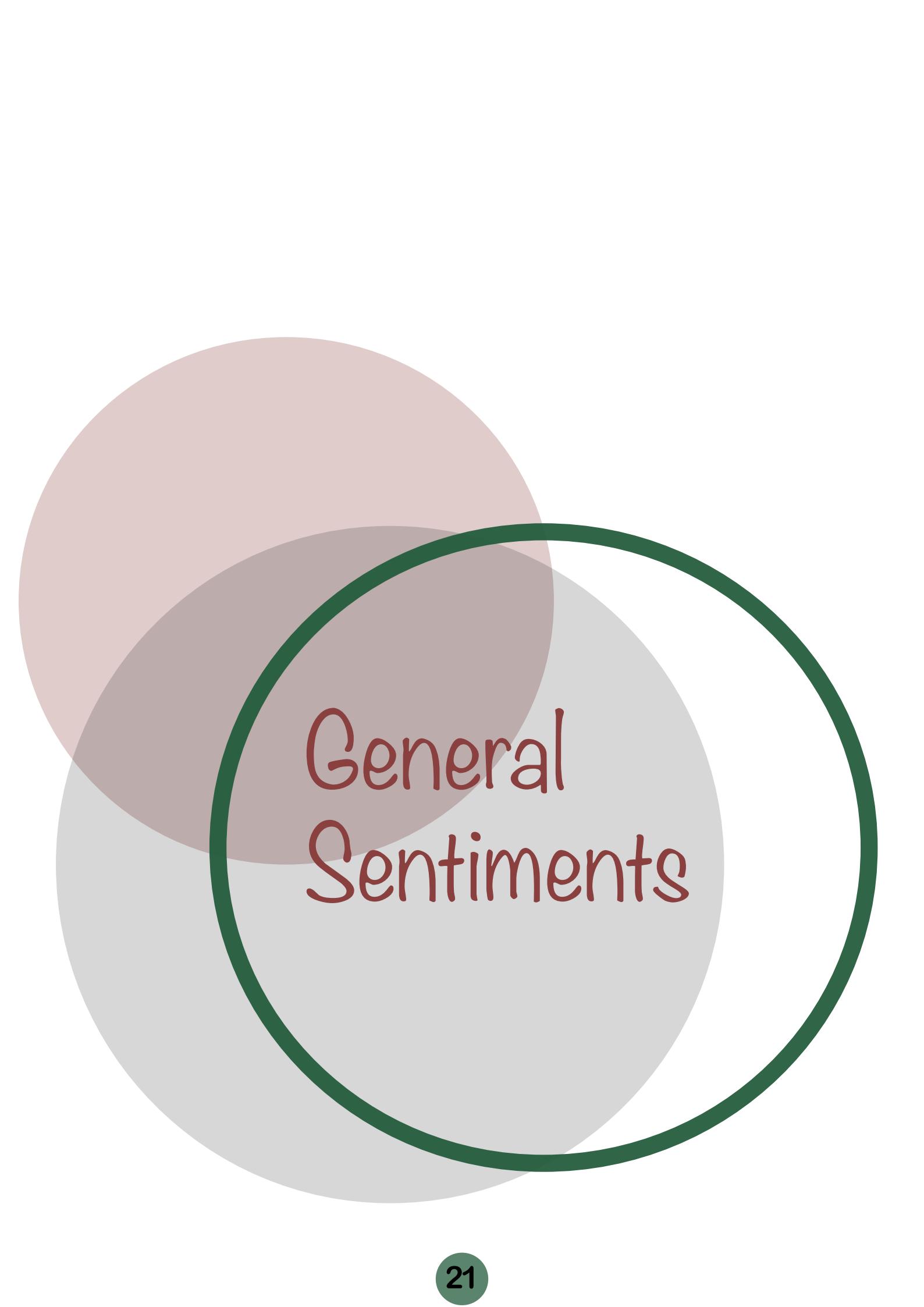
Events

Clubs are functioning virtually to the best of their abilities, but some plans like movie night are not as appealing as they are in person. Though one upside of virtual events is diminishing the borders and saving the hassle of travel for speakers. After all, people are willing to video call from the comfort of their own homes. Upcoming events will be sent out via email by CLUBSORGS. So, look out for them!

Truth be said, nobody can guarantee we will back on campus for the Fall 2021 semester, but what we know so far is that once over 50% of the population gets vaccinated, academic institutions can operate onsite again. Though this is the initial plan, nobody knows the accurate time-frame for the plan to be executed; but until then, keep on the lookout for official sources like the AUK official account and the MOE account as well.



 sc_auk
@aukstudentaffairs



General
Sentiments

The Lowest Point

Anonymous

I had reached my lowest point
I couldn't laugh from the heart
My smile was broken
and my eyes were red
The happy heart was gone
Stress and hate ate it out
It climbed through my eyes
And into my pools of tears
It was shallow
And clear
But apparently
Just to me
I could not look
Anyone in their eyes
I could not handle another fake remorse
Or a hopeful hello
It was the lowest I had gotten to
I hate it here
Maybe it is where I belong
Or maybe I must find my way out
And until then
I will be hopeful
And I will smile even if it is not from the heart
But it is for the people
They are the ones who should stay truly hopeful
So, until then
I will lie and say
I am okay

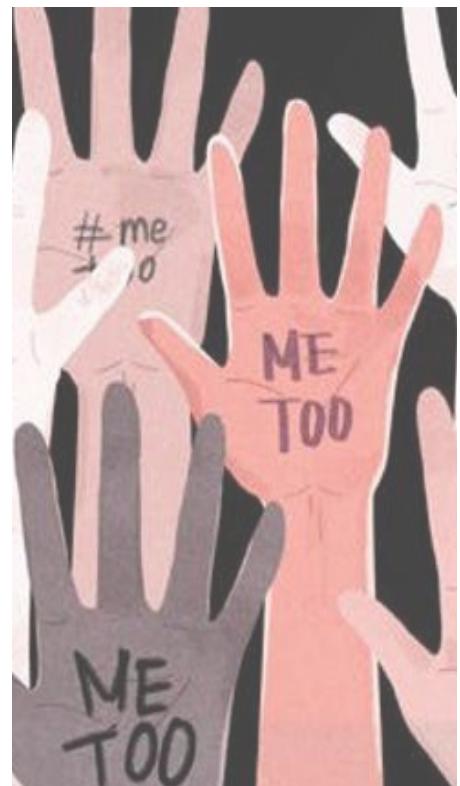
Dr. Shayma & “Lan Asket”, لن اسكت

For this issue of the Voice, the team had the privilege of having a conversation with Dr. Shayma Shamo a 27 year old doctor, who pioneered in starting the “Lan Asket” awareness campaign and Instagram account to bring attention to the unfortunate societal phenomenon of harassment in Kuwait. As many cultural issues go- there is a great deal of contention and nuance that begets the symptomatic patterns leading to it becoming a phenomenon- making it a fair assessment to say- that they are far from one-dimensional; and moreover, understanding the characteristics of a societal problem- and confronting it- is the first step in solving it.

Dr. Shayma has so far worked with the concerned activists on this matter to spread awareness and foster potential for resolutions- some of whom, are even alumni of AUK- such as Ascia Al Faraj. The Lan Asket Instagram account which was launched in January, presented the opportunity for victims of harassment to share their stories anonymously, acting as a platform for emotional release, and awareness. Dr. Shayma’s drive for positive change is in line with the spirit of the university, and in that regard, in line with the spirit of the VOICE- and as such, our conversation went as follows:

-What is “Lan Asket”?

“Lan Asket’s main aim is to act as a virtual safe space for people who are victims of harassment. However, we are now in the process of expanding to all forms of gender based violence and the idea behind it was- the fact that there are no safe spaces for any person who is a victim; to be able to go and to open up and feel like they can talk except maybe like some mental health services which are insanely expensive. It’s primarily a safe space for people to speak- however, later joining the team of “Amana” which is a group that were more focused on making concrete changes to fight harassment. So I’m not doing it via the page of Lan Asket and that’s because I really want it to remain as a safe space. However, through Amana, we began to work on more solid changes, meeting with members of parliament.





Don't harass her

-Where would Lan Asket fall in the timeline for activist groups in Kuwait?

"You have to remember that women were only given the right to vote in the early 2000's; I think it's just now that with the new generation of women who believe and trust in the fact that we have a voice and we have a voice that needs to be listened to in our community- which is leading to change. We cannot forget all of the work that other NGOs have done to pave the way, such as abolish 153- which has allowed for many to break the silence and speak about the issues that matter."

-Why did you choose the name of 'Lan Asket' for this campaign?

"The main idea behind it was based on the fact that I felt like a lot of the roots of this issue, among many, but one of the roots of this issue when it comes to gender based violence in Kuwait is the deafening silence. That comes from both the victims and then the community around the victims. And I felt like if we want to fight any form of gender based violence, we need to remove that silence and we need to allow victims of space to speak."

-The Google forum linked on the Lan Asket Instagram account, has an option for 'type of harassment', what is that about?

“It’s really important to remind ourselves that harassment is not only sexual; however, sexual harassment gets a lot of attention due to the vulgar nature of it, but harassment can present itself in different ways. It can be racial, directed at certain ethnicities, it can be ethnocentric, wherein it can be directed at people of different nationalities. Harassment can be physical without the sexual aspect, harassment can be online- through blackmail, and it could be through stalking, which is very common in Kuwait. And I think it’s really important to recognize these different types of harassment, because if we’re going to sit and talk about the different actions harassment can encompass, which is huge- ranging from verbal and non-verbal, physical gestures, etc. However, if we break it down, and categorize the malicious intents- and categorize them, It makes it a lot easier to slowly create the policies and try to think of different solutions for each type of harassment to really eradicate it. The intentions of someone who is harassing you sexually is going to be different than someone who is harassing you racially, physically, etc.”

-What role does social media have to play in spreading awareness?

“People really recognize the power of social media, it’s open to the public and is a great way for ideas to gain traction, so even with the lan-asket account, I’ve decided to take an unorthodox approach, when it comes to running it. We really need to start utilizing social media a lot more effectively and a lot better when it comes to campaigning for these sort of causes. I saw how NGO’s running refugee based social media accounts could help in aiding them with asylum applications, and connecting them with services they needed, so in that regard we really need to start utilizing it for different issues in Kuwait’s like harassment and gender based violence. When it comes to social media, it broke a barrier, different women from different countries with different backgrounds are given an equal voice and can be heard by all.”



-What's the end goal for Lan-Asket?

“Really the end goal is to simply exist as a safe space. We have nothing to promote. We have nothing to sell; it’s really just to give people a safe space to talk about their experiences. We hope that in the future that once we grow a bit more as a campaign we can start to work providing support services for victims of harassment through Amana. Really our mission statement is to end harassment in Kuwait. In terms of the future, we are planning a lot of different projects, which are still in the works so I’m going to keep them secret- but, we have met with a lot of interesting people from companies such as city-bus, to members of parliament, different lawyers- the results of which will be seen soon.”

The VOICE has a vested interest in promoting great causes like these, if you want to learn more about Lan-Asket, their Instagram account is @lan.asket – to contact Dr. Shayma, you can reach her via email at Shayma@lanasket.org – all in all, and to reiterate, it was our pleasure to have Dr. Shayma speak for the VOICE, and hopefully Lan Askets reach could extent to our readers.



How are You Doing?

Farida Mohamed

The question we all ask and get asked all the time yet never actually take a minute to think about it or ask ourselves how we actually feel. We have become robotized to answering this question with 'I'm good, what about you?' or 'I'm fine, how's everything?'

The question itself has lost its value. During times like these, we all share similar emotions.

It's been a year, and things still haven't gone back to normal. We feel like the train has stopped, and we have no idea when it'll leave the station again. We feel like so much time has been stolen from us and that everything has paused. We feel like we're drowning in our own emotions, and with so much free time between the four walls of our rooms, overthinking has become our greatest enemy. It has been exhausting, overwhelming, and demotivating. Something that makes us feel better is to know that we're not alone and the feelings we're all having are united.

We see people on social media all the time talking about all the things they have accomplished during all their free time at home. On the other hand, we're afraid that the only thing we're accomplishing is binge-watching the newly aired Netflix show. In between all this, we're jumping between one zoom meeting to the other, just hoping the internet won't act up again. We fantasize about the next time we will get on a plane, and the next time we'll actually see a movie at the cinema theatre. We find that we never appreciated the little things because we thought they would never be taken away from us, but here we all are learning the lessons of our lives.

Some days we get a great urge to start that new book that's been on our bedside table for a while now. Some days we enjoy starting a new show, and some days we try to nap our way through the days, hoping it'll all be over soon.

Other days we try a new recipe, become a little bit more productive, or get that task we've wanted to get off our to-do list ticked off. Every day is different and challenging, but every day is a day that we've grown and become more aware that another day of life is an underrated blessing. It's not all bad; I'm sure some of us can still see the glass half full. Think about the technology that has allowed us all to stay connected, continue our education, and remain entertained. Think about how much this experience has changed your perspective and made you more grateful for the little things in life. Every day find hope in your morning coffee, the water running down your tap and the food on your table.

Take some time to let your feelings sink in, don't ignore them. Make sure you take the time to think about how you are really doing. So, the next time someone asks how you are doing, speak about your emotions and push others to do the same. Being vulnerable is a good thing sometimes. It hasn't been easy, but as they said In High School Musical, "We are all in this together!"

Environmentally Cautious Steps to Take During the Pandemic

Lea Calingasan

I have spent the lockdowns reading posts and arguments online about the climate crisis and the required climate action needed. Yet, only one question formed in my mind. Why are there refutations?

While we were under implemented lockdowns back in early 2020, we noticed the difference in our atmosphere, as carbon emissions surprisingly fell by %.17 But of course, lives slowly resumed again. Traffic returns; aircraft fly. Pollutants are back. We are in denial of the irreversible damages we do to our planet but ironically find ourselves complaining about its weather and polluted air. We need continuous climate action to fight this climate crisis. I believe that small acts make a difference and good deeds are contagious. An individual cannot do it alone; we need your help.

So, let me share just three simple ways we can contribute to our environment during the pandemic.

1. Believe it or not; we just have to stay at home. The fact that staying in the comfort of our homes can save lives and the environment is awesome!

Our situation requires us to wear face masks to limit the transmission of the virus. According to studies, billions of masks are disposed every day, taking up to 450 years to decompose. Along with these, there are disposable PPEs, gloves, face shields, and bottles of sanitizers that add up to the list. If the pandemic continues, we may not be able to handle the waste that it will leave behind.

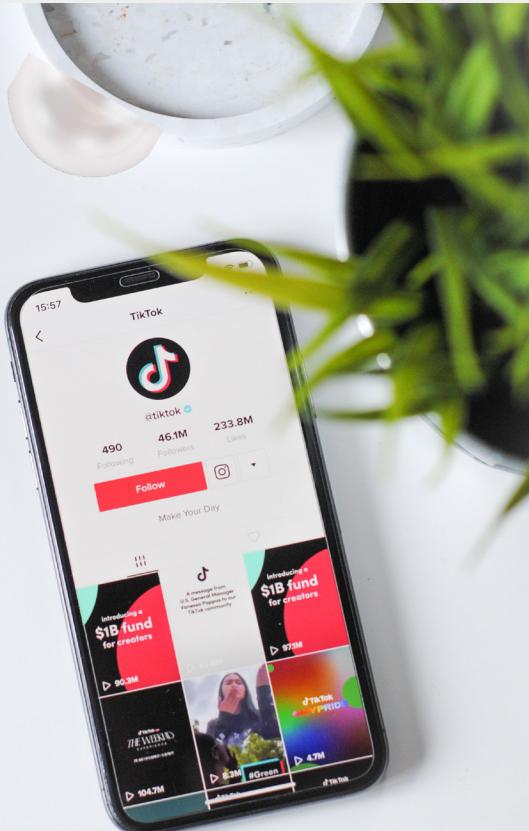
2. While we are in the comfort of our homes, we should reduce our home energy usage. It does not only mean turning most of the lights off when not needed or buying new energy-efficient appliances. Reducing energy usage can be as simple as enjoying a Netflix movie on one screen with your whole family or taking a selfie under the sun instead of using a ring light. Limiting screen-time can be very helpful, too.

3. And of course, let us avoid online shopping. I get it. We are isolated and bored. We open our phones only to find daily news about the rising cases of COVID19- and repetitive TikTok dances. Then, we give in. We click on a shopping application, and days later, here they come; boxes of deliveries one after another. While this is a coping mechanism to many, our planet cannot manage this activity cumulatively. We fill our homes with packaging wastes and contribute to the greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation of our goods from one country or city to another.



So, what should we do? Aside from the obvious answer of avoiding online shopping, we should be mindful of what and how we purchase if we need to. Since we cannot try things on virtually, we should refrain from buying clothes and shoes online. This avoids the tendency of returning and shipping products back and forth. We can also opt to shop locally as this requires less transportation.

COVID19- on its own is already stressful. But ignoring our climates condition, especially during these times, can bring prolonged effects than the pandemic without us noticing. The action we take today, big or small, will give us a glimpse of our future. We can cure a disease, but we cannot bring back a dead planet. We need urgent action!





This Land Is Mine

Seyed Zeinolabedin Raeisi

It's early in the morning. No horns, no waves of laughter, and no conversations can be heard. Only the breathing rhythm of the wind, the singing of birds, and even the buzzing of bees can be heard a few meters away. As I turn my gaze upwards, I see a vast gleaming blue sky, that's the sky of Kuwait. A brave ancient land inhabited by different peoples throughout the ages.

From the early Ubaids to the modern Arabs, this land has a unique story of mankind. If you visit its islands, you see remnants of an ancient Hellenistic civilization; it sprawled when Alexander rallied the Greeks to cross the Dardanelles strait and conquer the Achaemenids in one shocking campaign.

When you return to Kuwait's shores, you remember the small Kuwaiti vessels which intelligently defeated the ships of Banu Kaab. Once your vessel is anchored, you hear.

Job Hunting Amidst COVID-19

Sara Zayed

COVID-19 does not seem to be leaving us anytime soon, though most working-class people are in survival mode. We need to think of what comes ahead for us, students. The future seems uncertain more than ever for fresh graduates, and the job market has never been this demanding. One thing that works in our favor as new graduates are that some companies are willing to take you up and grow within the organization. Still, the problem is COVID-19 is colliding with this plan as most companies only need their essential employees to abide by the health precautions. As a graduating senior, I have yet to find a worthy position amidst this pandemic. It is already a new territory for us fresh graduates to explore. Though I am no job-hunting expert, I realized a few things as I reached graduation.

We do not have as much time as we think we do, meaning that we do not wait till we have our degree to set out a plan. Think of the senior year as a transitional year; you do not want to be dealing with your sophomore year classes that you postponed; keep your last virtual year light and easy.

Though I am not the biggest fan of online learning, I must admit it helped me get a more flexible schedule to intern. Company employers are surprisingly understanding of online learning, which could be due to its mobility in terms of place. Plus, some virtual internships are becoming more common due to the current situation, minimizing health risks and saving you driving time. What is great about interning amidst a pandemic is you get a real-life experience of working in a crisis mode. Luckily, as an intern, you have the space for mistakes even during that time, which other full-time employees cannot afford to do.

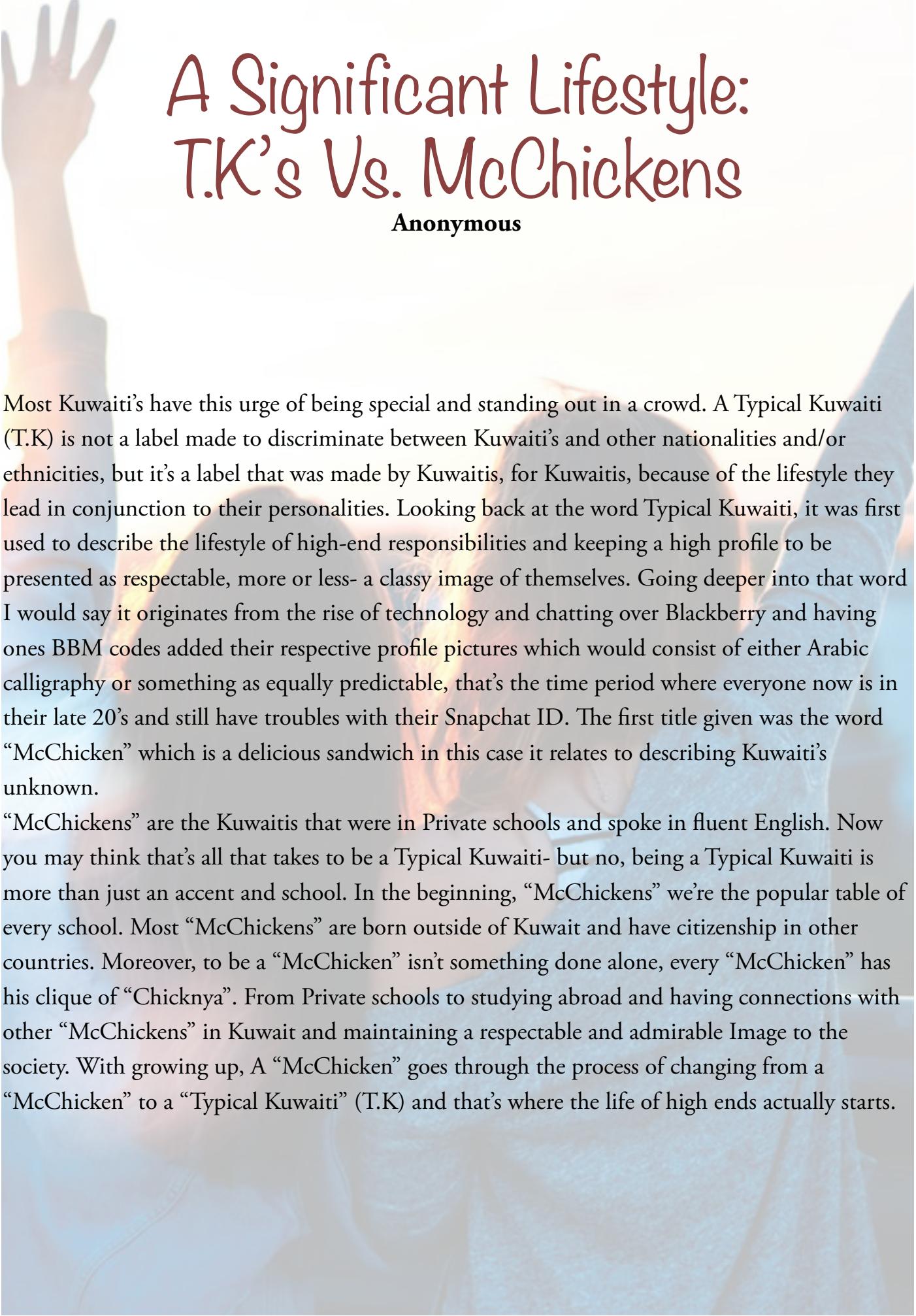
Internships are not always guaranteed, but AUK students are lucky enough to have their resume-building workshops and student job opportunities for both current students and alumni.

Alumni Affairs and Career Development moved their resume writing workshops virtually, so if you want to tweak your resume or even are clueless about where to start, here is your first step. Look out for their upcoming workshops in the Spring semester. University is a rich resource for alumni students.

Email, LinkedIn, and the career section in AUK's official page offer jobs that work in alumni interest and favor.



What is the worst-case scenario for a fresh graduate, and how does one go from there? Sometimes the odds do not work in our favor, and we find ourselves jobless five months after graduation; this is pretty common. However, one has to reflect on their situation to decide how urgent a job is. We all can agree that developing a skill in the meantime will give us a productive push. One effective solution is trying freelance work for a short period to test communication outside your safe social circle. This will also help you build connections within your field before even entering the workplace. But what if you are not skilled enough to start freelance work? Practice makes perfect. We are slowly going back to phase two in the government's COVID-19 plan, which means more time at home to practice any skills you do not usually have the time. We say we will never go back to school once we get our Master's degree. Some of us have a change of heart once we face the real world. Attaining a master's degree is a safety net for fresh graduates. It is also a time killer and gives you higher chances of getting employed with higher wages. With the current health situation, you do not need to travel, and it buys you time for a year to think and try to plan for the future. Before we leave you off with speculations about your future, remember that you can direct your future in whichever path you feel is apt for you. Getting a job immediately or late does not define success as much as it represents your skills for hunting opportunities and your wide connection circle. Until then, keep the LinkedIn job alert notification turned on.



A Significant Lifestyle: T.K's Vs. McChickens

Anonymous

Most Kuwaiti's have this urge of being special and standing out in a crowd. A Typical Kuwaiti (T.K) is not a label made to discriminate between Kuwaiti's and other nationalities and/or ethnicities, but it's a label that was made by Kuwaitis, for Kuwaitis, because of the lifestyle they lead in conjunction to their personalities. Looking back at the word Typical Kuwaiti, it was first used to describe the lifestyle of high-end responsibilities and keeping a high profile to be presented as respectable, more or less- a classy image of themselves. Going deeper into that word I would say it originates from the rise of technology and chatting over Blackberry and having ones BBM codes added their respective profile pictures which would consist of either Arabic calligraphy or something as equally predictable, that's the time period where everyone now is in their late 20's and still have troubles with their Snapchat ID. The first title given was the word "McChicken" which is a delicious sandwich in this case it relates to describing Kuwaiti's unknown.

"McChickens" are the Kuwaitis that were in Private schools and spoke in fluent English. Now you may think that's all that takes to be a Typical Kuwaiti- but no, being a Typical Kuwaiti is more than just an accent and school. In the beginning, "McChickens" we're the popular table of every school. Most "McChickens" are born outside of Kuwait and have citizenship in other countries. Moreover, to be a "McChicken" isn't something done alone, every "McChicken" has his clique of "Chicknya". From Private schools to studying abroad and having connections with other "McChickens" in Kuwait and maintaining a respectable and admirable Image to the society. With growing up, A "McChicken" goes through the process of changing from a "McChicken" to a "Typical Kuwaiti" (T.K) and that's where the life of high ends actually starts.

From owning small businesses to practicing hobbies and going viral, the image that they portrayed of themselves as “McChickens” helps with drawing a long line of future possibilities and endless opportunities. It is all about self-worth to make it as a (T.K) and that is not a bad thing, having your own self-worth would get you places because everyone is special in their own ways, Kuwaitis know how to take advantage of the specialty. From waking up in the morning to going back home at night, everything is planned even when they don’t do the planning; there is an outline, for example, “if I wear a certain outfit today, that means that there are certain places I won’t go to” and also taking pictures and aesthetics is something only (T.Ks) know how to master, not everything that they take a picture of is posted on social media. T.Ks are also considered very liberal and entitled to their own opinion of something, nothing would ever change their minds if they already distinguish something as “6af”, and their English accent also has a touch of Kuwaiti that adds that sense of being a T.K to their profile. The “T.K” or “McChicken” way is a lifestyle, achieved if you live a lavish life with your reputation being the most important thing in your vocabulary, living your life to the fullest and knowing your limits.



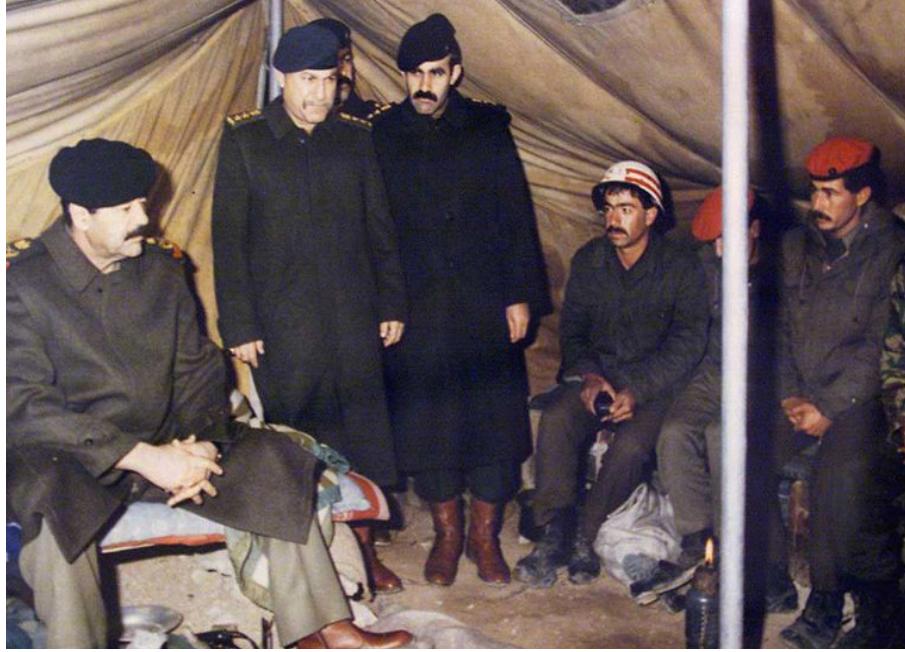
My Kuwait

Kuwait in 1990-1991---: Visual storytelling

Sara Zayed

In February, we commemorate the invasion of Kuwait in 1990 but one thing words cannot do is convey real life events. With the help of Getty pictures, a universal photo resource and other news agencies, we collected a photo archive for 1990-1991. This photo archive does not just show a visual sequence of the invasion, but it also depicts the struggles and the stories that are embedded within every photo.

Before we jump in to the photo story, let me introduce photojournalism to you. Though you have probably encountered photojournalism at least once in your life if you consumed any sort of academic media. Photojournalism focuses on interesting angles to match the captured scene that tells a story. Most photojournalists use war zones as a ground base for their work, which has its own ethical consideration. While looking at the photo archive, I came across blood scenes and explicit violence between 1990 and 1991 which I will not include for the sake of keeping this visual exploration light and informative. To add on that, one thing that did not have a strong presence prior to Kuwait's invasion is news coverage. Television channels like CNN started multimedia coverage from alternative and international coverage and photojournalism during 1990 and that is when people started following the news. This war was one of the first few televised wars, and its visuals commemorate the mixed of emotions that occurred within that time frame.



Let us have a look at pre-war tension: though the invasion of Kuwait was a two-day operation done by the Iraqi military which later lasted for seven months on 2 August 1990. The execution started that day but Saddam Hussein's plan to invade Kuwait was planned months prior. The intention is forcefully control Kuwait's resources, mainly oil.

With that being said, the following picture shows dictator Saddam Hussein (left) with Iraqi troops in occupied Kuwait in 1990-1991. Followed by a picture of Iraqi soldiers on their way to Kuwait on 3 of August. Three days later, as a reaction to the invasion, Kuwaiti people peacefully protested as a mark of resistance and solidarity, and within the same day, the UN Security Council imposed a worldwide trade ban on Iraq.





Though the UN gave the Iraq a deadline to pull their troops from Kuwait, the warning did not work, and the refugees were flooding across neighbouring countries like the image we see for the Kuwaiti man waiting on the border with whatever he can bring with him from his home on top of his car.

Looking at another stop for refugees due to the invasion is the Jordanian border; in this picture we see a flood of cars waiting to cross the border; the heat of August radiates off the picture as the direct sunlight accompanies the long queue of cars, and a crowd of people over buses stuck at the border as well.



After months have passed, looking at Human Rights Watch report for 400,000 ,1990 Kuwaitis turned to refugees due to the Iraqi invasion. Fast-forward to November, the U.N. security council authorised the use of force against Iraq if the troops do not withdraw by the 15th of January, 1990. Prior to this decision, we see US troops, Cavalry Division crossing the Saudi dessert as standby for the U.N.'s decision on November 1990 4. The U.S had a clear part in the liberation of Kuwait and pursued justice for the two nations. Here we see a picture of U.S. Pres. George H.W. Bush showing a political stance in congress for Kuwait and discussing the U.S. intentions to assist Kuwait to restore its peace and stability.



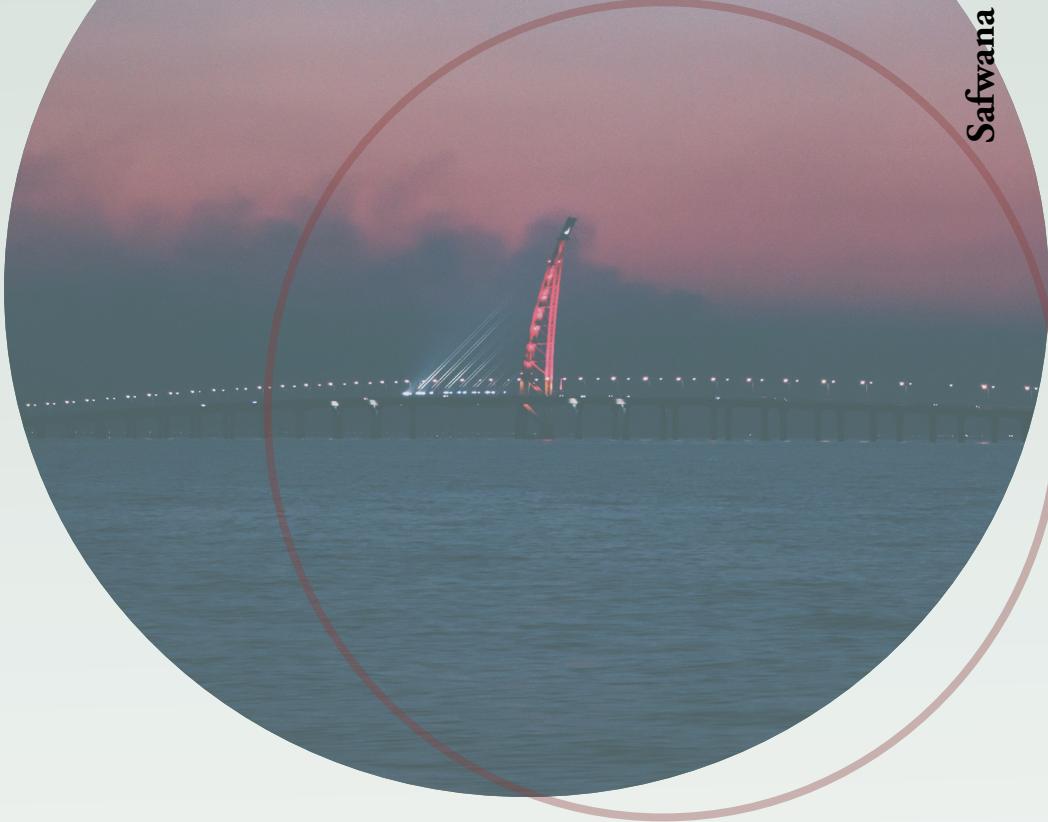
(Courtesy of the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum). Though the US previously sent its troops to Kuwait, there was no execution of the plan till the beginning of 1991 after the refusal of Iraqi troops to cooperate with the UN security council. One aspect we need to look at is the damage this invasion has done to the architectural landscape. A prime example is schools like The New English School some of destruction still remain present to this day like.

On the liberation day, 26 of February 1991, we see a major shift in our theme of pictures, this documenting the first liberation march and celebration. 30 years after the invasion, we see visuals that commemorate the war in museum around Kuwait like Therka museum, located at Alshaheed park. Thekra museum includes a collage of small pictures of martyrs placed within the walls of the park with their names below. They say the pen is mightier than the sword, but nothing will ever replicate the real-life events like photos do.



A New Version of Kuwait

Moustafa K Hassan



Safwana Basheer

We are tired of hearing the same thing every year; we need to learn from our mistakes. Kuwait in the past wasn't a border; Kuwait was its people. Kuwaitis were very simple, very loyal, and very optimistic about the future. I love to see Kuwait shine as it did in the past; everything was simple and old fashion, making them less demanding. I heard from my grandmother that Kuwait was literally a small neighborhood; everyone knew everyone. If you have a wedding, everyone will help with any means and has a job to do. Also, if you have a funeral, no one would miss it. She says we were connected without any sort of technology. When you hear a mother on T.V. series saying, "my heart is telling me something happened," this was the hearts of the Kuwaitis. It was like a sixth sense, and they were supportive and helpful; we need this today.

I believe the younger generation knows exactly what happened in 1990, but we don't know what our ancestors used to be like and their less demanding lifestyle. We need to take the chance to get to know how people lived in the past; we need the morals that they had that made Kuwait a lovable country from the rest of the world. People worldwide know Kuwait as a humanitarian country that helps other countries. Our late Amir envisioned Kuwait as an economic center that provides any country help when needed. Kuwait nowadays has a very active role between the Gulf countries, and is known for its mediator role. This role made Kuwait a beloved country throughout the years. We need to strengthen this picture and elevate Kuwait again to what it was before: the Gulf's Pearl.

Dear Kuwait

Anonymous

Dear Kuwait,

Thank you for being my fate

I was born on your land

You raised me and never let go of my hand

Had to get used to your summer heat

And learn how to walk on your hot streets

Learned how to swim in your salty sea

That gave me countless tans that were free

Oh, and do not get me started on the memories that relieve pain

How I wish I could taste Pufak for the first time again

How you taught me different things in school

How the canteen made everyone drool

Taught me how to make friends over football

And occupied my Thursdays with the mall

Friday is a family designated day

Will never forget my first family trip to the chalet

Will never forget Aquapark or Shaab park

Forever fueling my childhood's spark

You taught me how to respect my elderly

How to eat my falafel properly

You give us the whole month of February to celebrate

Yes, you deserve a whole month because simply,

You are that great

Finally, you taught me how to stick to my traditions like glue

For that, I thank you

February

Mohamed Ahmed

The month of February
Is when you are happy involuntary
Where winter is at its downfall
And all you want to do is play football
Where it is still nice to drive with the windows down
Chill vibes all around
February starts
And the decorations warm everybody's hearts
Where all the big companies give us the best campaigns
And we sing them passionately in the rain
Where we all rush to the gulf street
And nobody wants to sit still in his car seat
The streets are packed
And it is the only time where it is peaceful to make eye contact
Better roll your windows up
Or the water will get piled up
Some people sprint to their shaliah
And the whole month becomes flag day
We missed the celebrations this year
But we did not miss the opportunity to cheer
In order to survive
We need to strive
And keep the memories alive
Remember the days where there was soap
And we had to learn to cope?

Comic Strip

Zinab K Hassan



Throwback February

Abdolwahab B Alqarooni

The Kuwaiti holiday season is upon us and everyone is confused about how we are going to commemorate this day without throwing garbage and wasting water and inflicting damage on other people and..... You know my point, so I wanted to take this time to commemorate the national and liberation day by remembering how it all was and how did we get here and remembering all those who shared the history of 25th and 26th of February. Before 1991, February was the month of Kuwait's National day on the 25th and it was to celebrate our independence from the British. On the 25th of February, the military would make a parade each year and the whole

country would be outside to watch and celebrate with their families. Such a peaceful way of celebrating our national day. And then the Iraqi invasion took all Kuwaitis by surprise from the 2nd of August 1990 till the 24th of February, 1991. From the 24th till the 28th of February 1991 was the day the US military decided to help free Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion, and the 26th was declared Kuwait's liberation day since. Now celebrating two events back to back every February sounds like a really good national holiday. Sometimes, the holiday even extends till 1st of March, like this year. The entire population of Kuwait celebrates these two days by making a parade of civilians in their cars now or standing on the pavement by the gulf road with music on and enjoying their time either with friends or with family. In the beginning of February, Kuwait's youth navigate their way to Shuwaikh for the purpose of decorating their car to celebrate the whole month and for the 25th and 26th parade. You'd see everyone sticking Kuwaiti flags on their cars and pictures of the reigning family and sometimes you'd see G.C.C countries drive to Kuwait with their cars to also celebrate our national and liberation day, with flags of the G.C.C countries and pictures on their cars. After protocol "Shuwaikh" we get to the second step of celebrating which is getting ready for the parade by getting patriotic clothes, buying water guns, or filling up water balloons with hopefully just water.

Safwana Basheer

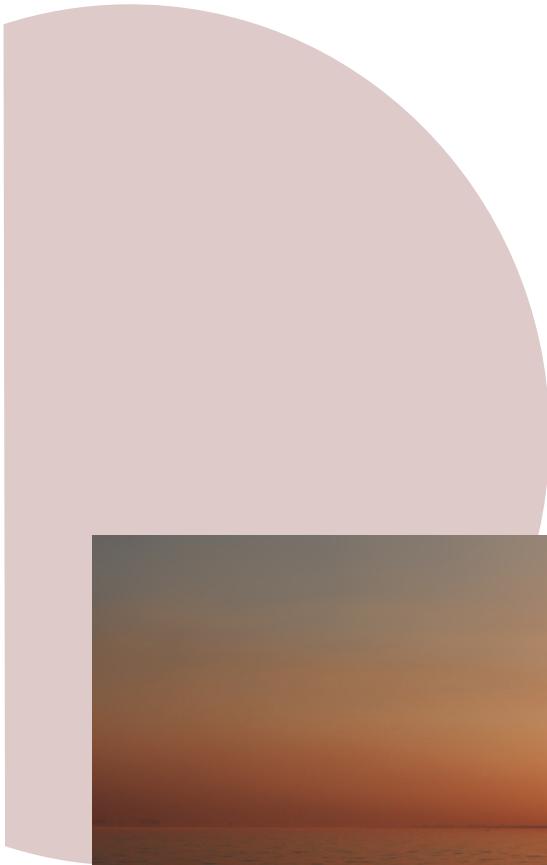
Before 2012, people use to get foam cans and string spray cans for the parade but that was banned after multiple health injuries that occurred during the parade in the past years, now, people can only make a mess by wasting water which is a really bad replacement for foam if you are an environmentalist. Water splashing became the safer form of having fun and people from all over the gulf region come to Kuwait each year to celebrate Kuwait's liberation and national day by throwing water balloons at people and cars and making a mess through the Gulf road from Salwa to Kuwait towers, the whole street is just filled with plastic and rubber and other substances that ruin our environment. The water splashing era also come with its own problems like filling the water guns or water balloons with any other liquid than water..... ew right? And, apparently, some people think it's funny to open car doors and splash the people inside even if they aren't participating in the water wars and they just want to spend a good family time together.



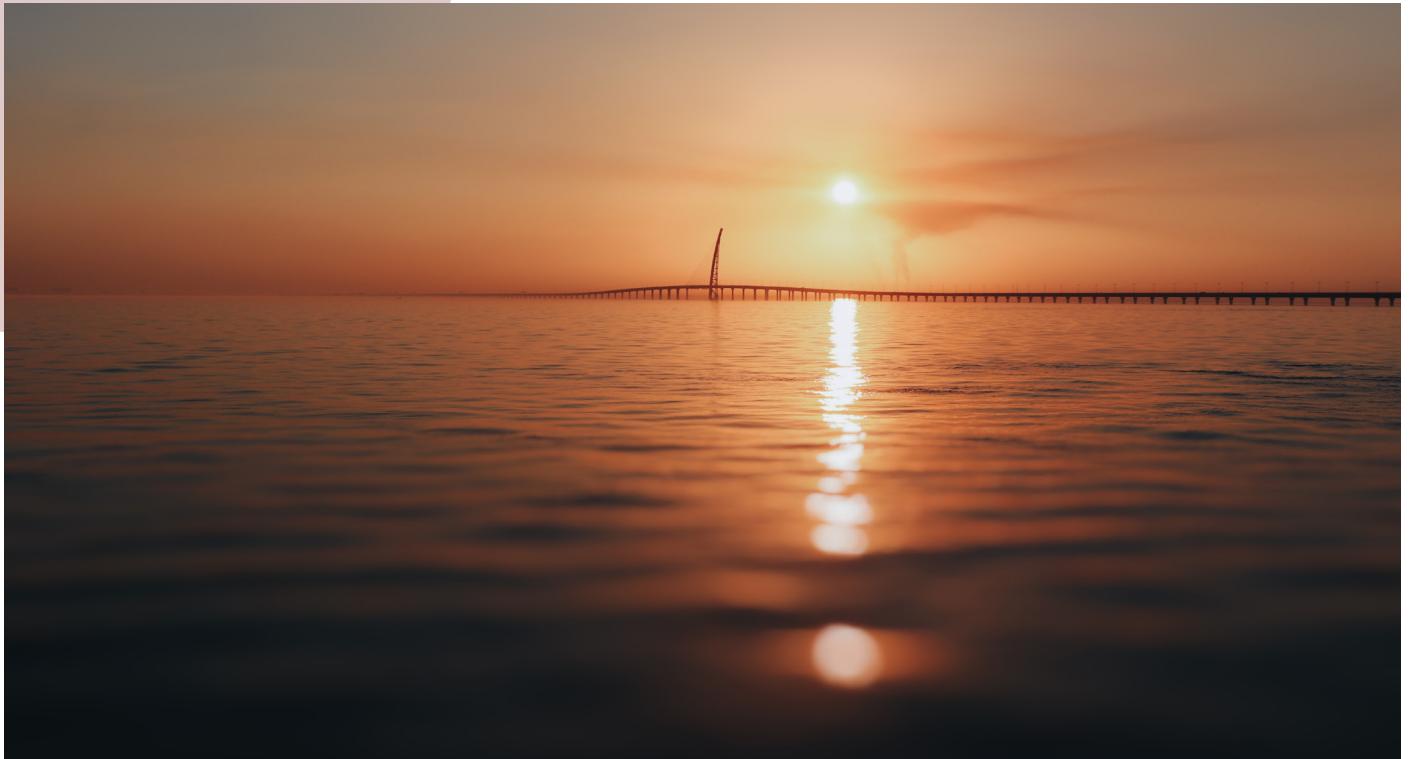
Safwana Basheer

The National and liberation day parade also involves harassment cases from teenagers and young adults who unfortunately should know better but they think that the only way to have fun is to annoy people and because it's a parade, everyone should be okay with it. The styles of celebrating the National and liberation days are a bit harsh and don't give us a healthy result, but it's still an extraordinary celebration and seeing all the people that live in Kuwait celebrate together on the streets has somewhat of a joyful feeling and a feeling of extreme happiness, thanks to the police that try to keep the streets safe for everyone to have fun.

Thinking about it, the last thing Kuwait celebrated last year was the national and liberation day before Kuwait announced that we are going into lockdowns and social distancing, I still remember telling my friends that I'll see them next week and next week never came and we are still going through the pandemic a year later. In 2021, we celebrate the national and liberation day in our homes and that is such a sad way to celebrate February in Kuwait, but we still do it for the sake of going back to our environmentally destructive ways of celebrating February



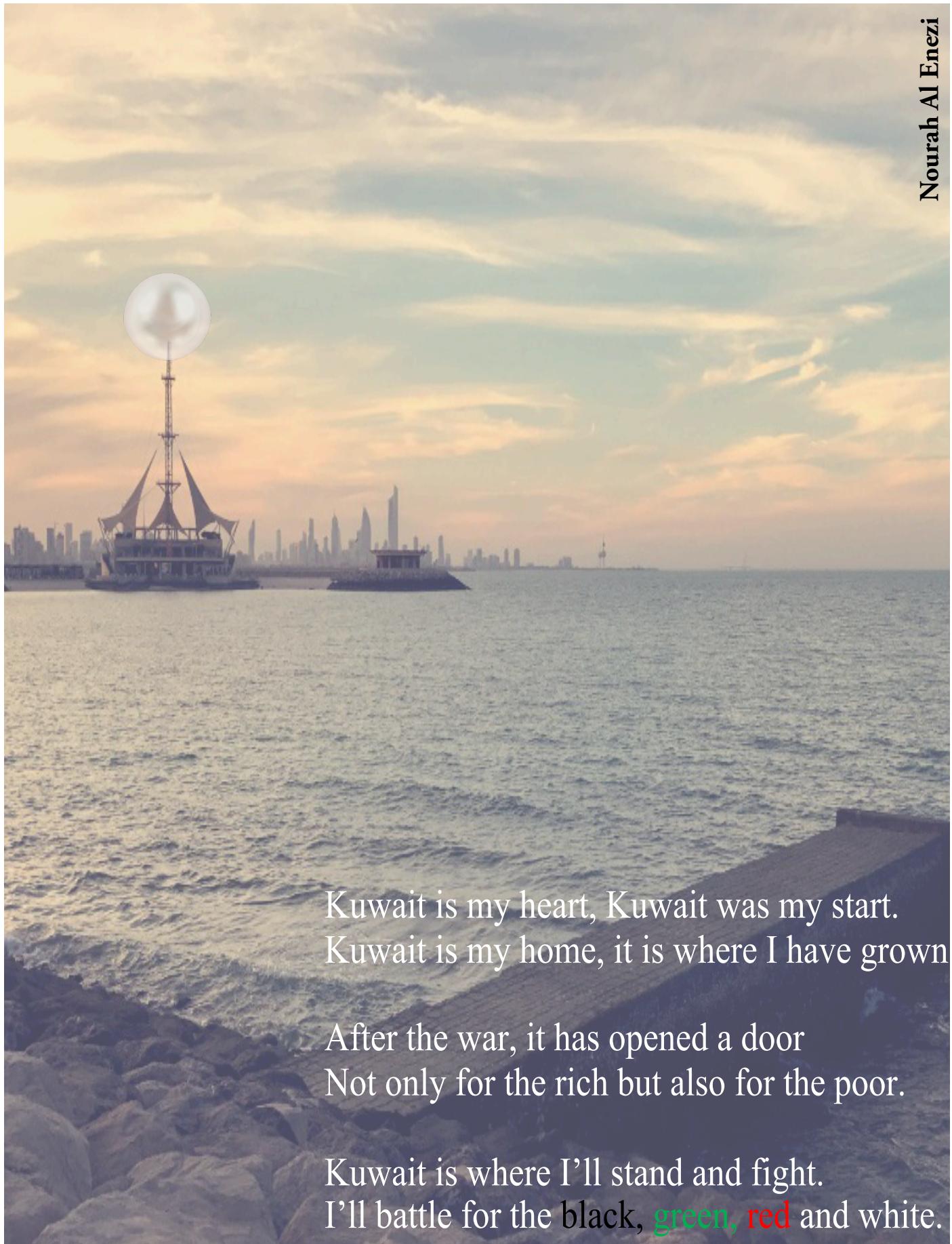
Safwana Basheer



Even when we are social distancing, some people get out of their way to make the month a bit more exciting; one of the Kuwaiti locals owns one of the Late sheikh Sa'ad Al-Sabah's car that he bought off an auction and he personally decorated the car with Kuwaiti flag colors and he was cruising on the Gulf road everyday of February with his family just to spread the joy of these national holidays around Kuwait. The volunteers that were helping in this month's celebrations by controlling crowds in neighborhoods so they don't parade in their blocks also did a flash mob performance with music for the national holidays to help lift peoples spirits up. We all went through a lot this past year and hopefully we can go back to celebrating with crowds if we stay safe and follow the health precautions from M.O.H; Let us social distance now so we can celebrate next year.

Rich and Poor

Yasmeen Al Harbi



Nourah Al Enezi

Kuwait is my heart, Kuwait was my start.
Kuwait is my home, it is where I have grown

After the war, it has opened a door
Not only for the rich but also for the poor.

Kuwait is where I'll stand and fight.
I'll battle for the black, **green**, **red** and white.

(“My Salute”)

Seif Shalaby

We may be different, but we're in
the same family tree
Watching the same glittering sea
Carrying this flag everywhere
around the world
Believe me when I say, for this
place my soul is sold

I'd fight for you, for every time you
fought for me
I'd raise your flag, for every time
you made me proud
You taught me what I needed to
learn, and if I die, for you I'll
return
You made me feel, that blind love
is real

Salute the soldiers, the deep sea
divers
Salute the workers, the survivors
Let this song ring in you, remind
you to be strong
This time is ours, hand in hand to
rise back up again

Raised in Kuwait

Abdullah M Bekheet

God bless this land
I was born in
God bless the hands
that built it
Feeling colorful winds, I love
Standing on the ground, I'm
proud of

Country welcomed me
With open arms
Surprising me
With miracles and charms
Created a family of brothers and
sisters
Wrote different stories every
winter

Through sickness & health
We stand as one
Carved our names
As daughters and sons
Wherever we go
It's always worth the wait
To come back to our beloved
place
Diamond in a rough, raised in
Kuwait

حكاية وطن

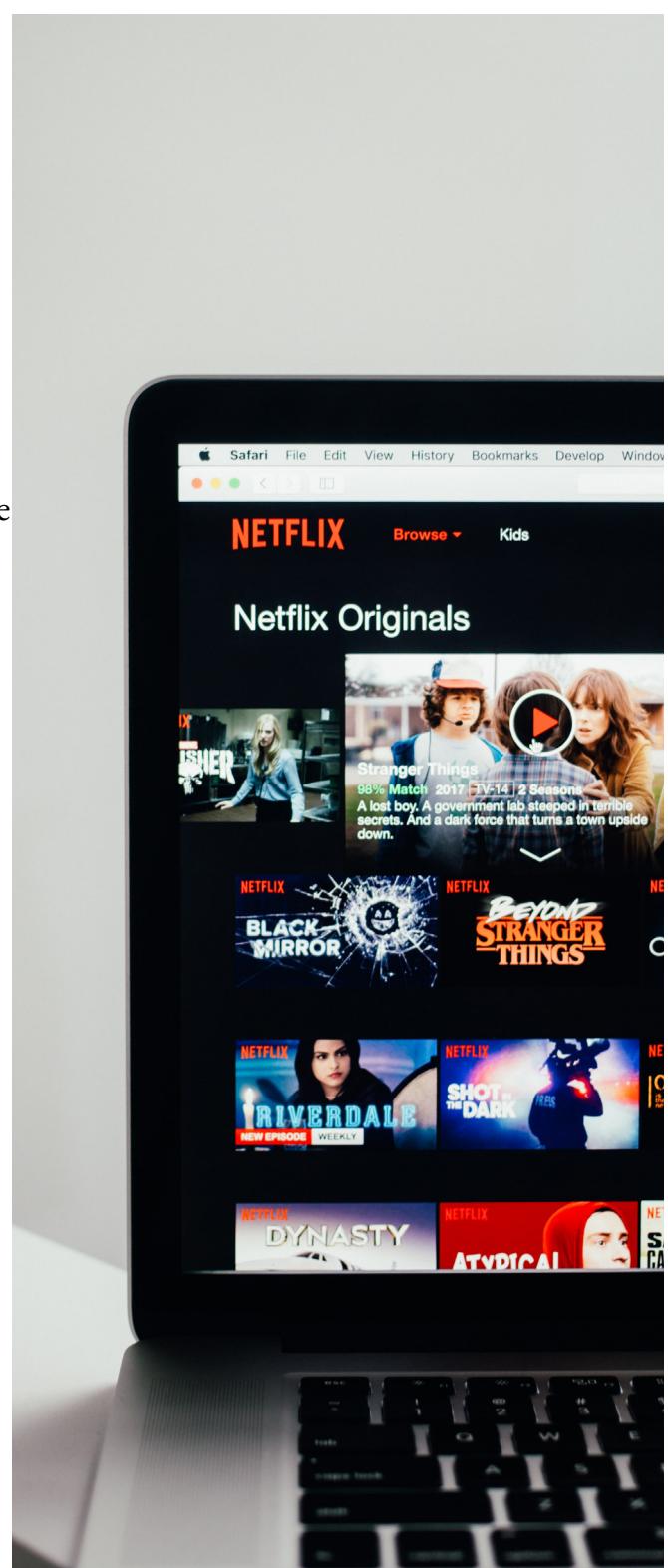
Abdolwahab B Alqarooni

حياة جميلة و وطن كريم، رفاهية، تفاهم بين حاكم و محكوم عبر الزمن حتى يوم الثاني من أغسطس. انقلبوا الموازين، فكان الغدر من الجار القريب الذي في اعتقادنا انه لن يخون، جاء بخنجر الغدر و غرسه في روح الوفاء. وطن النهار لم تشرق عليه شمس الثاني من أغسطس. زلزال هز كل ما كنا نعتقد به من موازين انتمائنا للعروبة. هل نحن في حلم أم في علم؟ عند لحظات الفجر الأولى، اخترقت طائرات الغدر حاجز الصوت. "شنو هذا" تساءلنا، أسرائيل دخلت حرب مع الوطن؟ ركضنا على الراديو لمعرفة "شسالفة". و نسمع في الأخبار ان هذه طائرات الجار، دخلت طائراتهم المجال الجوي، فكانت الصدمة، حيث كان الهجوم مباغت و مفاجئ. تحكمت فيما تساوألاتنا و طالبنا بتفسير لهذا الحدث. من كان على رأس عمله ذهب و رجع الا جيئنا على الرغم من قلة عدده و عتاده، ذهب لحماية الوطن. لم يكن هناك تكافؤ بين الجيшиين، بلد مسالم لم يدخل الحروب و اخر ارعن قضى اخر سنواته في الحروب. بعد يوم طويل، صعب، أتتنا الاخبار أن الحكومة قد خرجت من الكويت للأراضي دول مجلس التعاون المجاورة للحفاظ على الشرعية الحكومية. ذهروا لأرض الأخوة و النخوه، لأرض السعودية حيث قال الملك فهد رحمة الله " أو الموت سوا أو نبقى سوا" و قطعوا على نفسه عهد و في بعده و كانت السعودية نعم الوطن الشقيق الذي استضاف الحكومة و كثير من الشعب الكويتي النازح طوال فترة الشهور السبعة من الغزو العراقي الغاشم بالإضافة من المجلس التعاون و الدول العربية و الاسلامية. هنا بدأ التشريد، فالبعض لا يزال بالخارج بسبب العطلة الصيفية حيث اعتاد المواطنون السفر في هذه الفترة. "توزيعنا" هنا من كان صامدا في الوطن، و منا من خرج هربا من تنكيل الجيش للشعب و خوفا على نفسه و أسرته. بالرغم من ان الحكومة كانت خارج الوطن، كانت تشرف على كل من كان في الداخل و الخارج حيث نظمت الصدف و أتت بالإمدادات و هنا بدأ التغييب المدني. قاوم الناس العدوان بالذى يستطيعون به، من الخروج بتظاهرات، العصيان المدني، تشكيل مقاومات من الشعب الكويتي للجيش الغازي، النداء للأذان فوق بيوتنا. بدأت أول مظاهره نسائية بالخروج من إحدى ضواحي الكويت يحملون في أيديهم لافتات مكتوب عليها " لا للاحتلال" مع أعلام كويتية و صور لشيوخنا الشيخ جابر الأحمد آل صباح و الشيخ سعد العبدالله السالم آل صباح. حاول الجيش الغازي بث الخوف في نفوس الناس و شراء ذمم البعض إلا أن الشعب الكويتي لم و لن يتعاون معهم ولا مع إعلامهم المزيف. تغير الحال من قول إلى فعل حيث قاموا بقتل الناس و سجنهم في الكويت او اخذهم للعراق، لكن إيمانا بالله و بأرضنا جعلنا نتمسك و ندعوا الله كل يوم أن يرفع عنا هذا البلاء. بعد سبعة شهور، جاءت أخبار التحرير في يناير ٩١ و هنا بدأت الضربة الجوية على الجيش العراقي لتحرير الوطن، فما كان من العدو الا ان يحرق آبار النفط و سكبها في بحر الخليج و زرع الألغام بالبر و أخذ أسرى من الشعب من يراه في الشوارع او يأخذهم من بيوتهم للخروج بأكبر عدد من الأسرى. في مثل هذه الأيام، كانت أخبار تحرير الكويت بين الفرجان تتناقل بين الضواحي: "قادعين نذهب روحنا شنو نسوبي، محد سوا اللي توقعه". كان خبر التحرير بمثابة حلم من نوم عميق يتحول لحقيقة. كان نهبي أنفسنا لسماع خبر التحرير و دهر الجيش الغازي. أنا مثلا كنت أفك أرخر لزيارة الجيران و أجمعهم لنحتفل بالشارع، لكن لم يحصل ما كنا نتوقعه، فوضعت يدي على وجهي و بدأت أبكي و أقول "ربى لك الحمد و الشكر، رفعت عنا العذاب و رجعت لنا الأحباب" في يوم قلنا أن الوطن راح. و اليوم بعد ٣٠ سنه، ما زلنا نحتفل في هذا اليوم على عودة الشرعية لأرض الوطن حيث كان يوم ٤ من مارس ٩١، جاء الشيخ سعد و أسعد قلوبنا، نزل من الطائرة و صلّى ركعتين على أرض الوطن و هنا تحول الحلم لحقيقة ، أخذ الشيخ سعد رحمة الله عليه لإعداد لعودة الشيخ جابر رحمة الله عليه. و يا لها من عوده حيث نزل من الطائرة على أرض الوطن و سجد شاكرا لله على عودة الوطن، بعودة الشيخ جابر، جبر الله كسر قلوبنا برؤيته سالماً معافى و بدأ هنا رحلة الإعمار و نهضة الكويت مجدداً حفظ الله هذا الوطن من كل مكره.

The Middle Eastern Representation on Netflix

Abdolwahab B Alqarooni

What would quarantine feel like without all our movies and TV platforms? What would our quarantine be without Netflix, and TikTok? However, this is not what you think it is about. In the past couple of years, Netflix became the most subscribed to platform and the Netflix production team gave the spotlight to many new stars like Noah Schnapp from “The Perfect date” and Millie Bobby Brown from “Stranger Things”. Netflix also gave the spotlight to Latino stars like Jaima Lorente from “La Casa De Papel” and “Elite”. Netflix has been controlling our eyes and ears for the past 4-6 years. They have an audience that will give the platform more consistency that would keep them controlling our main source of entertainment for the next ten years or so. With the biggest excitement for the final season (hopefully) of “Cobra-Kai”, “Stranger Things” 4th season location reveal and waiting on the TV series “You” to find out will Joe Goldberg have limits or does the cycle of psychopathic lovers just continue. All that was just some of the Netflix originals that have their spotlight and there are a lot of other shows that display a lot of different characteristics in a person that can influence good and/or bad behavior, depending on what actions you involuntarily imitate. One can relate so much to that specific character on a TV show that he/she just binge watched.



Honestly, I love character diversity, so I change personalities each month; just to stay fresh. February was a Modern Family type of personalities for me because I recently finished the series (It was very touching) and hopefully March will be defined by the list of documentaries that I have ready to watch on Netflix. Nevertheless, Netflix is a big production company and that is a platform that can give recognition to cultures, ethics, and world studies to different types of people. Now Netflix have produced and bought multiple Arabic movies and TV shows with their rights to preview them on their platform. In addition, since February 2020, Netflix released on their platform “Saif el Arab” which is one of the many masterpieces that the late Abdelhussain Abdelredha starred in. Moreover, the Egyptian theater’s classic comedy productions like “Al Eyal kebret”.



Netflix did not only get Arabic Classics, but they also bought some of the recent Movies that are produced by companies other than Netflix like Al-Hmely’s “The End” and “The Blue Elephant 1 & 2” starring Kareem Abdelaziz. Netflix is showing interest towards the screens of the Middle East and are invested in acting and directing talents from the Middle East too. For example, director Mohamed Diab was given the opportunity to direct the new upcoming marvel series “Moon knight”, making him the first Arabian director to direct a superhero project. Having our culture get the recognition it deserves comes with big responsibilities as it is up to us (not entirely) to choose how we portray our culture. Netflix is interested in buying classic Middle Eastern TV rights as well as exploring the talents in the Middle East and producing TV shows that represent the Middle Easter culture and the Arabic culture more specifically.

“Paranormal” is an example of a first Egyptian series to be produced by Netflix. The show viewed the beautiful land of Egypt in the 1920-30's and 1950-60's. There is a diversity among the characters and a lot of bright solid colors that describes the land of the pharaohs in the 20th century. The show also highlights how sciences and medicine just recently started blooming with a touch of Egyptian folklore to give the show a better sense of belongingness to the Arabic Egyptian Culture. Another Middle Eastern TV show that was considered a very good start for Arabs on TV is “Jinn”; a story that revolve around teens that come face to face with an evil supernatural entity. The TV show captured Jordan's beauty and its capital, Amman. The show also displays one of the most magical and beautiful areas in the world where its history dates to 300 B.C, The Petra Desert. With all the exposure that the Arabian Peninsula is getting, the Middle East has gained better recognition everywhere. With all this happening, keep in mind that in the Middle East, not everyone is that open to westernization and having an open mind towards certain subjects that are talked about all around the world. That is the line that we are going to draw on TV screens all around the world so there would be a better understanding of Arabs, the Middle East, and Islam. With all the exposure the Middle East is getting, maybe one day the rise to World TV fame will not be that hard . Arabs and people with Arabic backgrounds are already winning awards on the big stages which is a big win for the Middle East.



VOICE 2021