



**AMERICAN
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OF BEIRUT**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUB Hosts Conversation With Novelist Najwa Barakat on “Memory in the Face of Time”

The American University of Beirut (AUB) hosted a public event titled “Memory in the Face of Time”, featuring renowned Lebanese novelist Najwa Barakat in conversation with researcher and writer Rana Roukoz. The session, organized in collaboration with AUB’s University for Seniors and the Sheikh Zayed Chair for Arabic and Islamic Studies, took place on campus and was simultaneously broadcast via Zoom.

In a literary and philosophical tone, the discussion drew on Barakat’s fiction to explore memory and aging, including the tension between the self and an aging body. Barakat discussed how memory and forgetting shape the experience of growing older, questioning whether forgetting is an inevitable part of age or a deliberate escape from painful pasts. She also pondered whether the fear of forgetting stems from losing one’s identity or from the dread of being erased from others’ memories.

The conversation also tackled themes of family and relationships—from motherhood and emotional distance to narcissistic relationships and the victim–perpetrator dynamic. Barakat drew parallels between personal struggles and national crises, reflecting on Lebanon’s ongoing economic collapse. She noted that, much like the characters in her novels persevere through adversity, Beirut’s people continue to show resilience amid hardship—a poignant commentary on survival and hope.

Moderator Rana Roukoz guided the session with incisive questions, and audience members in the auditorium and online engaged in a lively question-and-answer session that further enriched the dialogue.

ENDS

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 790 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 9000 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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