

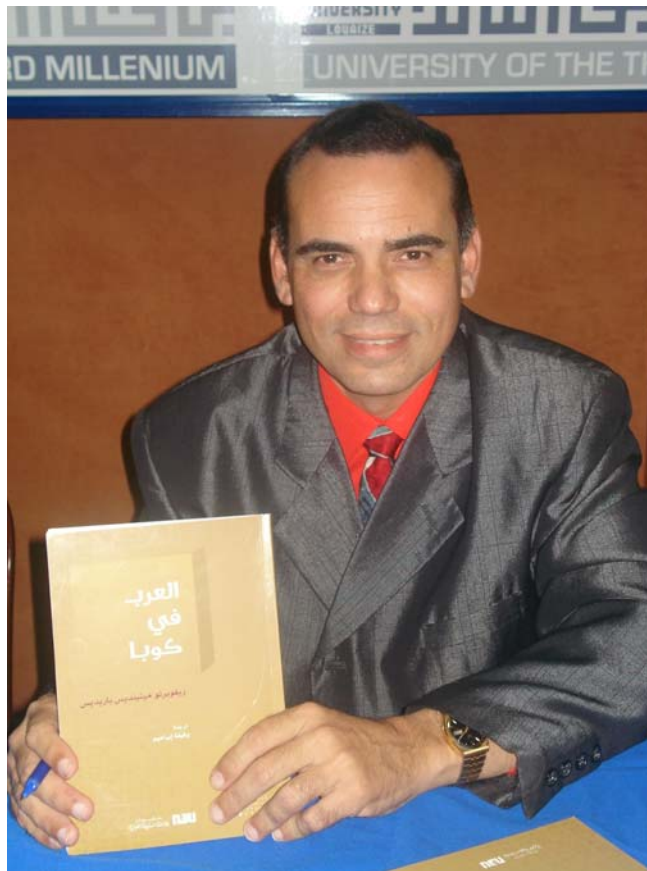
***LERC launches book on Arabs in Cuba with book-signing by author Rigoberto Menendez Paredes***

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2010, Book Fair, Antelias

Reported by Elie Nabhan

The Lebanese Emigration Research Center at Notre Dame University launched the book *Arabs in Cuba* by Cuban author Mr. Rigoberto Menendez Paredes at the NDU Press stand at the Book Fair held in St. Elie's Church, Antelias.

Mr. Paredes was in Lebanon to participate with other Latin American authors in the Beirut World Book Capital, *Foire de Littérature Ibéro-Américaine* which was held at St. Joseph's University in Beirut from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> of March, 2010.



Author Rigoberto Menendez Paredes poses with a copy of his book *Arabs in Cuba* (Mar 2010)

The author was also in Lebanon to sign the Arabic edition of his book *Arabs in Cuba* published by NDU Press and in agreement between LERC and the Cuban Embassy in Beirut.

Mr. Paredes is a renowned writer and historian and a Director at the House of Arabs in Havana, Cuba.

Those attending the launch included H.E. the Ambassador of Cuba Mr. Jose Manuel Serrano; H.E. the Ambassador of Colombia, Mrs. Rida Mariette Kuri Salame; H.E. the Ambassador of Venezuela, Mrs. Zoed Dueihi Karam; Abbot Boutros Neaman and NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa.



LERC stands with Abbot Boutros Neaman: (from left to right), Ms. B. Abdel Khalek, Mrs. L. Haddad, Mr. E. Nabhan and Mr. E. Sfeir (Mar 2010).



At NDU's stand: (from left to right) Mr. E. Nabhan, Dr. S. Karam, H.E. Kuri Salame, Ms. B. Abdel Khalek and Mrs. L. Haddad (Mar 2010).



LERC's team at the event: (from left to right) Mr. E. Sfeir, Mrs. L. Haddad, Ms. B. Abdel Khalek and Mr. E. Nabhan (Mar 2010).

LERC was represented at the book-signing by Ms. Basma Abdel Khalek, LERC Project Manager, Mrs. Liliane Haddad, LERC Indexer, Mr. Elie Nabhan, LERC Indexer and Website Editor, Mr. Elias Sfeir LERC IT Specialist and Dr. Salwa Karam, Visiting Researcher at LERC.



A view of NDU's busy stand at the Book Fair (Mar 2010).



His book tells of the Arab immigration into Cuba at the beginning of the sixteenth century. It details the influence of Arab culture on Cuban society and recounts the ways the Arab community in Cuba developed at the beginning of the twentieth century.

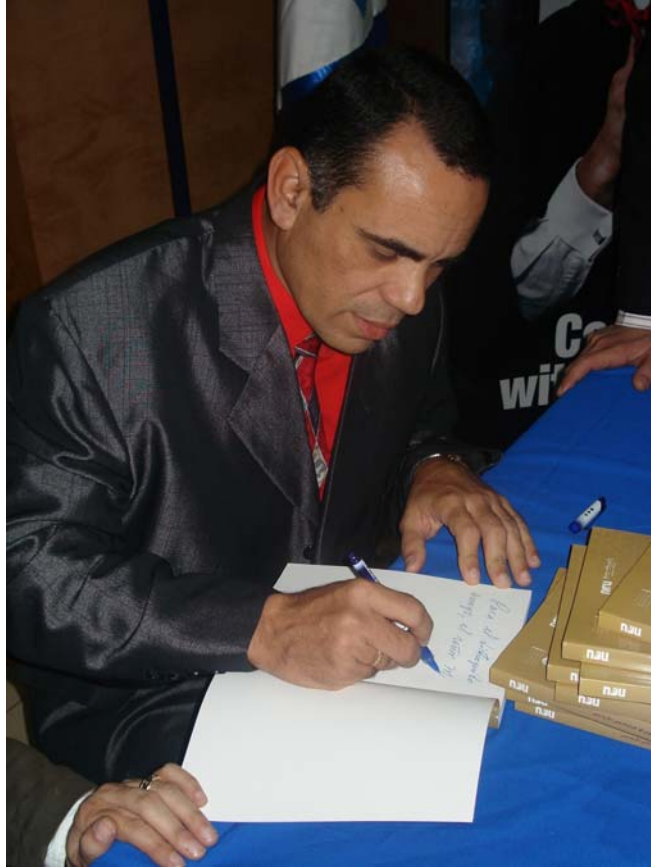
In his opening speech, the author explained that the book focuses on the family and social structure of Arab immigrants. He also said that the book explains the reasons behind the success of the Arabs and the important positions they attained be it in the fields of business, politics, and culture.



Just before the book signing: (from left to right) Mrs. W. Ibrahim, Mr. Paredes and Ms. B. Abdel Khalek (Mar 2010).

The book also lists the names of 1800 Arab families living in Cuba, the majority being of Lebanese origin. The integration of Arabs in Cuban society was another significant point he mentioned.

Mr. Paredes went on to thank the former Cuban Ambassador to Beirut, H.E. Dario de Urra Torriente and his wife H. E. Maria Isabelle Velasquez, the former Director of Cultural Affairs at the Cuban Embassy; the current Cuban Ambassador to Beirut, H.E. Mr. Jose Manuel Serrano; Mrs. Wafiqa Ibrahim, the translator at the Cuban Embassy in Beirut, who oversaw the translation of the book from Spanish into Arabic, and high level officials from the Cuban Embassy in Beirut.



Author Paredes busy signing copies of *Arabs in Cuba* (Mar 2010).

Mr. Paredes also thanked NDU's President, Father Walid Moussa for the efforts rendered by NDU, Ms. Guita Hourani, Director of LERC, who was instrumental in bringing about the publication of the book, and Ms. Basma Abdel Khalek, LERC's Project Manager and Mrs. Wafiqa Ibrahim for their hard work to have the book published within few weeks.



Author Paredes signs a copy of his book for NDU President Fr. W. Moussa (Mar 2010).



Souvenir photo with the author: (from left to right) Mr. E. Nabhan, Mr. E. Sfeir, Mrs. L. Haddad, Mr. Paredes, Ms. B. Abdel Khalek and Fr. W. Moussa (Mar 2010).

