

The praxis of islamism and syrian suzerainty essay sample

[Experience](#), [Peace](#)



In 1992 there Parliamentary elections marked the end of the civil war and the beginning of Lebanon's second republic. All militias were dismantled except Hezbollah (Lebanese Resistance). Hariri, Lebanese, was in charge of forming a cabinet, he had the support of Syria and he was seen as the one that was going to bring peace to Syria and Lebanon. His plan was to rebuild the city, bring business and tourism. His cabinet was large, but there were neither Christians nor Hezbollah's representations (p. 6).

Hezbollah was worried that Hariri would restrict the movement of the resistance or bring it under the control of the state. They were worried that they would not be able to continue with the Jihad against Israel (p. 7).

The Israelites killed the secretary general of Hezbollah and his family. These responded by attacking back on to DF and SLA, launching rockets on northern Israel. Israel replied as well with a military operation against southern Lebanon.

Israel intention was to pressure the Lebanese Government to disarm Hezbollah (p. 7), but the operation caused many human and material losses, and threatened the regional stability and peace process. Immediately after, the Resistance declared an open war (p. 8).

USA and France intervened through an agreement: the Resistance would continue to confront Israeli occupied buffer zone but would stop launching rockets into Israel for the safety of civilians (p. 8).

This new move meant that the direction was heading into the USA indirectly approving Hezbollah as a resistance movement, and keeping the buffer zone open to maintain the military and political pressure on Israel. Once all the parties agreed, hostility stopped in 1993 (p. 8).

There were a series of agreements between Washington, President Hrawi and Prime Minister Hariri that were unknown to Syria, such as the redeployment of the Lebanese Army to southern Lebanon, including the area under control of the United Nations. The aim was to secure peace with the border with Israel (p. 8).

The Lebanese authorities started to support the Resistance, coordinating with Syria and President Asad. This was the beginning of a strong relationship and cooperation between the Resistance and the Lebanese authorities which in turn confirmed Hezbollah suspicious and concerns (p. 9).

The Lebanese government soon after receiving a call complaining about the disregarding demands on their side of dismantling the Resistance, and indeed from that moment they started to support the Resistance (p. 9).

The Legitimization of Hezbollah as a Resistance Movement

Hezbollah continued its operations in southern Lebanon, supported by president Asad who boycotts all peace negotiations with Israel (p. 10).

The first confrontation between the Lebanese Army and Hezbollah was in 1993 due to a demonstration in Beirut organized by Hezbollah despite the government's ban on demonstrations.

The government took measure against it and there was a confrontation. Since then there was a chilly relationship between them until 1995 when Hariri issued a statement expressing his regret (p. 10).

Hezbollah increased its operations in Southern Lebanon, and at the same time Israel's response was accordingly (p. 11).

In 1996 USA issued a summit trying to restore peace. But again president

Asad boycotted it. Israel ordered in 1996 another military operation into Lebanon with the intention of putting pressure to disarm Hezbollah, but the effects were negative as many civilians died (p. 11).

France helped to bring a written agreement called the "April Understanding" which consisted in Lebanon not attacking Israel, and Israel and Lebanon not attacking civilians (p. 11). This agreement meant for Lebanon and Syria that Hezbollah and President Asad won because Hezbollah as a resistance movement was legitimized (p. 12).

Political Parties, Political Battles and Syrian Arbitration

The Taif Accord gave equal parliamentary representation to Muslims and Christians. The Islamic Association and Hezbollah ran the 1993 parliamentary elections by reaching out to dozens of rural villages. Hezbollah won and became one of the biggest blocs with 12 seats (p. 13).

The 1996 parliamentary elections tried to cut down Hezbollah to size; however, Hezbollah won (p. 14). In the 2000 elections, Hezbollah won 12 seats (p. 15).

As soon as the elections ended, Hezbollah did not support Harir's reconstructions projects and ballooning national debt. Hezbollah's power grew, but at the same other powers started to support Hariri such as PSP and AMAL (p. 15).

In 1996 Hezbollah was the target of Harir and his allies (p. 15).

Al-Ahbash and Postwar Beirut

The Syrian regime had a strong relationship with Al-Ahbash who was a multi-pluralist and did not encourage violence (p. 16). Instead, he focused on

proselytizing and recruitment. He gained support, offering a moderate alternative to extremist Islam; however it was not as strong enough.

In 1996, Hariri's plan of reconstruction of the capital and his contributions to Sunni Muslim institutions brought him support from Sunni community. The Islamic Association, however, saw Hariri's government as using religion as an instrument of its policies (p. 17).

The Islamic Association complained about al-Ahbash for being outside the whole Islamic spectrum (p. 17).

Islamists, Christians, and the Ramifications of Israel's Withdrawal

Hezbollah managed to have a national consensus that Israel was an enemy, but the Phalange party was ambivalent. The Hezbollah did not like that (p. 18). In 2000 Hezbollah assassinated a high ranking member of the SLA and the Maronites sent a patriarch to celebrate the funeral. The Hezbollah took this as infidelity to the country (p. 19).

In 2000, the Council of Maronite Bishops released a statement addressing the situation in Lebanon with no reservations. The statement dealt with the corrupt parliamentary elections, the poor economic conditions, the political conditions and the questions of Syrian withdrawal (p. 20).

This statement split Lebanon into two against each other, the Muslim and the Christian. Immediately after, the Lebanese Republic issued another statement with its intention to improve brotherly relations. Soon after, Hezbollah, AMAL, Syrian Social Nationalist Party and Al-Ahbash joined a rally in Beirut in a show of solidarity with Damascus.

Two months later, in 2001, the Christian dignitaries signed a document that

basically stated their intentions of reconciliation and of working towards a peace project that would protect Arab rights and establish a modern Arab regional order (p. 20).

Conclusion

The chapter ends by insinuating that the Christians agreed to protect Arab rights. However, throughout the chapter the most evident point was the constant zeal of using violence by Hezbollah. It is not clear whether the agreement of the Christians was due to no other choice because of the violence of Hezbollah, or because it was indeed the politically correct thing to do under those circumstances and it will arise again sometime in the future, as indeed it did.

The other important point throughout the chapter is the war between Islam and Israelites; however the end of the chapter only addresses the Christians as the ones suggesting a project for peace without addressing the Israelites position on it. Also, the author of the chapter was quite emphatic in that Asad was the one boycotting all intentions of peace and this one were supporting Hezbollah who was using violence.

Cited Work

Rabil, " The Praxis of Islamism and Syrian Suzerainty," Ibid: 83-98.