

# LAND OF RESISTANCE



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**Solidarity Screenings Glasgow**





**BILAD AL-SHAM**





UP CLOSE



# HISTORICAL & POLITICAL CONTEXT

# THE FORMATION OF LEBANON

*“During the fighting, a Druze got hold of a Christian. They battled and resisted each other and went on fighting until they reached the waterfront from which they fell into the water still exchanging punches and blows. A huge wave unfurled and dragged them into the open sea where they were swallowed up by the tide. The next morning, their corpses were recovered on the beach scrunched up in a tight embrace and gripping each other’s hands.”*

1523-1842  
**Emirate of  
Mount Lebanon**

1820-21  
**The Commoner’s  
Revolt**

1861  
**Mount Lebanon  
Mutasarrifate**

cca. 1850-1900s  
**Al Nahda  
(Arab Awakening)**

1913  
**First Arab  
Congress**

1915-1918  
**Conscription  
and Famine**

1916  
**Skyes-Picot  
Agreement**

1936  
**Revolts Accross  
the Arab World**

1943  
**Election Win for  
Constitutionalists**

1943  
**The Franco-  
Lebanese Dispute**



“FORGET ST TROPEZ — IN THE 1960S, LEBANON WAS THE REAL PLACE TO SEE AND BE SEEN”  
- THE GENTLEMAN’S JOURNAL

Debunking the idea of...

# ‘THE PARIS OF THE MIDDLE EAST’





# THE INEVITABLE DESCENT INTO CIVIL WAR

1967-1975

- The cost of living doubles, Beirut classified as more expensive than Washington!
- Rent was 40% of a familys income
- 79% of Lebanese received less than minimum income

1969

- 40% of bank deposits in Lebanon were controlled by non-Arab banks
- 5 families controlled half of the country’s import/export trade

1973

- 75.5% Christians to 24.5% Muslims in commercial firms
- Industrial working class, 75% were Muslim, Shi’a in particular, 25% Christian

1975

- Unidentified assassination attempt of the head of the Katiab party results in militia opening fire on a bus of Palestinians returning from a political festival (27 deaths)

## FACTORS

Economic and political inequality

Demographic shift

Sectarianism

Israeli aggression

Extreme dependency on foreign capital  
(a place to recycle oil money)

High emigration



### LEBANESE NATIONAL MOVEMENT

- Coalition of the Progressive Socialist Party, the Lebanese Communist Party, and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (Lebanon)
- Left-wing, anti-sectarian
- Working with the PLO
- Headed by Kamal Jumblatt



### PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANISATION

- Fighting for Palestinian national liberation
- Based in Jordan until the Black September
- Led by Fatah and the PFLP
- Lead by Yasser Arafat and George Habash



### LEBANESE NATIONAL RESISTANCE FRONT

- Formed when the Israeli army entered Beirut
- Successor to the LNM
- Opposed Israel and its proxies
- Allied to PLO, supported by Syria
- Headed by same parties as LNM



### HIZBU'LLAH

- Formed late in the war - 1985
- Unification of various Shi'a organisations
- Only goal: Resisting Israel
- Headed by Subhi al-Tufayli, Abbas al-Musawi

# KEY PARTIES AND FIGURES





### KATAEB PARTY + LEBANESE FRONT

- Maronite supremacy
- Phalangist (fascist), anti-communist
- Aligned with Syria originally, later on Israel
- Backed by the US and France
- Bachir + Amin Jumayil
- Kataeb by far the largest Christian party



### SOUTH LEBANON ARMY

- Proxy army set up by the Zionists
- Christian army, served Christian interests
- Headed by Sa'ad Hadad



### ISRAEL

- Officially joins the civil war to destroy the PLO in the south of Lebanon
- Attempting to carve up Lebanon by creating the so-called "State of Free Lebanon"
- Support of the Maronites
- Prime Minister Menachem Begin



### SYRIA/ ARAB DETERRENT FORCE

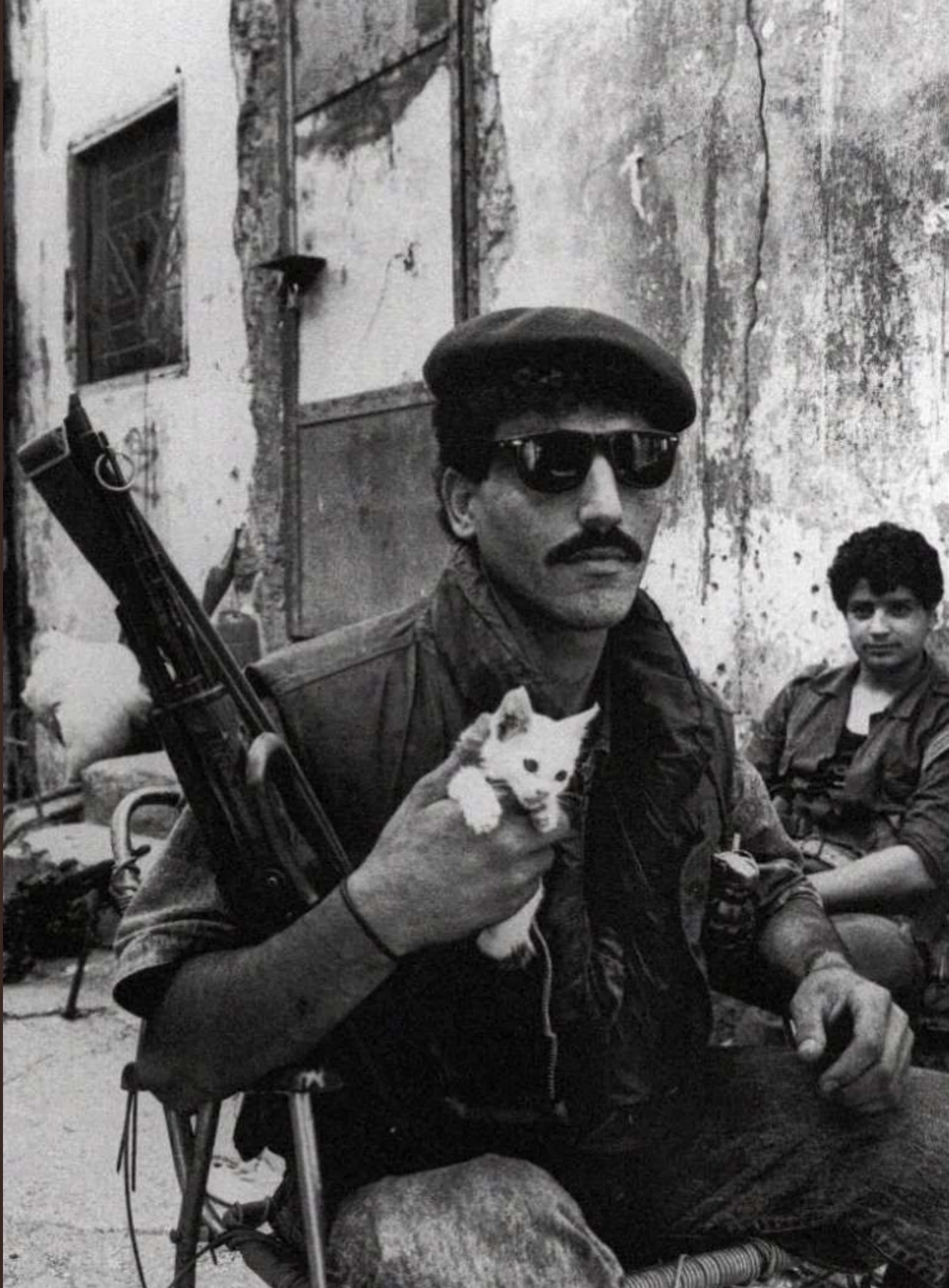
- Originally in support of the Maronites, later change to a 'peacekeeping force'
- Joined the war by LF request
- Formed the Arab Deterrent Force
- President Hafez al-Assad

# KEY PARTIES AND FIGURES



# THE FOUR PHASES

	DATE	KEY PARTIES INVOLVED
PHASE 1	1975-1977	LNM, PLO Syria, Kataeb/LF
PHASE 2	1977-1982	LNM, PLO Syria (short bit), Israel, SLA, Kataeb/LF the UN
PHASE 3	1982-1984	Full Israeli invasion, Syria LNRF, PLO, Hizbu'llah, SLA
PHASE 4	1984-1990	Hizbu'llah, SLA, PLO, LNRF Israel, Syria,







# PHASE 1

## THE SPARK THAT LIT THE PRAIRIE FIRE

1975-1977

1975

- 07/01: President Assad visits Lebanon and states that Syria is ready to militarily support Lebanon in case of Israeli aggression
- 13/04: Beirut bus massacre/Black Sunday
- 06/12: Black Saturday

1976

- June: Israel opens 'Good Frontier' in south, Sa'ad Hadad defects and forms Army of Free Lebanon
- October: Declaration of a ceasefire, formation of Arab Deterrence Force (4/5ths Syrians)



## THE FOUR PHASES

# PHASE 2

## INTENSIFICATION

1977-1982

1977

- 16/03: Assassination of Kamal Jumblatt

1978

- 14/03: Operation Litani-Israel invades South Lebanon to deal with the PLO and form the SLA with Haddad
- Summer-September: Camp David Accord; 100 day battle between Syria and Kateab

1979

- January: Islamic revolution in Iran





## THE FOUR PHASES



# PHASE 3

## LEBANON ABLAZE

1982-1984

1982:

- 4-6/06: Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Beirut besieged
- 23/08-14/09: Bashir Jumayil (LF) elected president & assassinated
- 15/09: Israeli troops enter Beirut
- 15-17/09: Sabra and Shatilla massacres
- 16/09: Left forces launch FLNR

1983:

- 18/04: Bombing of US embassy, deadliest attack on CIA



## THE FOUR PHASES

# PHASE 4

## UNEASY PEACE

1984-1990

1984:

- Formation of Hizb'ullah

1985

- Tripartite agreement between PSP, Amal and LF
- 'War of the camps' launched by Amal against Palestinian camps

1987

- Syrian troops return to Beirut due to Amal and PSP fighting

1988:

- Michel `Awn becomes prime minister; opposed by Salim al-Huss

1989:

- March: `Awn bombards West Beirut and declares "liberation war" against Syria
- 05/11: Approval of Ta'if accords

1990:

- October: `Awn exiled to France

1991:

- Syrian troops disarm Lebanese militias





# UNIFICATION IN ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLE



- Hizb'ullah has widespread support from a variety of the population
- Lebanese Resistance Brigades, non-secterian militia aligned to Hizb'ullah
- Focus is now resistance to Israel
- Ta'if agreement keeps the secterian system but has space to move past it

Currently...

- Hizb'ullah has been striking Israel in the North, destroyed military outposts
- Large number of Israeli army is focused on the North





# LES FEMMES PALESTINIENNES

المرأة الفلسطينية  
Palestinian Women

JOCELYNE SAAB (1974)





# LES FEMMES PALESTINIENNES



“

*“I wanted to present images, of which there were very few then, of these women, Palestinian fighters in Syria. [...] While I was editing the film in the offices of Antenne 2, Paul Nahon, then head of the foreign editorial department, grabbed me by the collar and threw me out of the editing room. Palestinian Women was put in the freezer and has never been shown on television.”*

– JOCELYN SAAB



MAROUN BAGDADI  
(1979)

كلنا للوطن

WE ARE ALL FOR THE HOMELAND

**"Ya ali**

**We are the people of the south**

**We will travel through all the cities to tell your story**

**To the purest ponds and the valleys**

**Oh the destroyed remains and weapons of our children cover the mountainside**

**And we witness all this silent.. silent... silent.**

**As the sun rises another day, another weapon falls on the mountain**

**But one day we will drive the ends of our farming hoe into cruel hearts and flesh**

**The tears of this country's mothers brought you to fight and die before your time**

**My grief will kill me**

**Ya ali"**

**كلنا للوطن**

**WE ARE ALL FOR THE HOMELAND**



# SOURCES

## Books:

A History of Modern Lebanon - Fawwaz Traboulsi

Hizbu'llah: Politics and Religion - Amal Saad-Ghorayeb

## Videos and Podcasts:

Anticipatory Self-defence: Hizbullah and the Northern Front w/ Amal Saad - The East is a Podcast

How Lebanon Descended Into Civil War - Hikma History

How The Lebanese Got so Good At Smoking American Soldiers - GDF

## Articles:

For Jocelyne - Etel Adnan

The Cinema of Jocelyne Saab: Putting History into Images to Resist a State of the World - Mathilde Rouxel

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