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Sayyid Musa al-Sadr, the Lebanese State, and the Left

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ABSTRACT: Several scholars have studied various aspects of the life and thought of Sayyid Musa al-Sadr (1928-78), the distinguished Iranian Shi'i cleric who won much popularity in Lebanon during the 1960s and the 1970s. Rarely has Sayyid Musa's engagement with the state as a legal and juridical apparatus been investigated nor his conflict with the Shi'i left. My paper considers these two dimensions as part and parcel of the context of the Movement of the Dispossessed (*harakat al-mahrumin*) and its full implications for Lebanese Shi'is. My paper revisits Sayyid Musa's engagement with the Lebanese state, and his approach to the Left and its secularist programmes. It examines the interface of religion and secularism through the formation of the Supreme Islamic Shi'i Council in 1969, and the launching of the Movement of the Dispossessed in 1974. It also illuminates the challenge which the *mahrumin* movement posed to the Left in general, and the Communists in particular. During the 1960s and the 1970s, leftist journalists, thinkers, unionists, and artists brought to the public sphere a powerful discourse against the state and capital. They strove through their parties and civil spheres to organize the Lebanese around class issues and secular political demands. The *mahrumin* movement emerged out of this environment but took on a life of its own. It marked the first public forum for the co-optation of the Shi'i Left and the entry of the cleric to the centre of political life. It inspired new connections between religion, the public sphere, and the state.

KEYWORDS: Sayyid Musa al-Sadr, religion and the state, the public sphere, secularism, the Shi'i Left

Several scholars have studied various aspects of the life and thought of Sayyid Musa al-Sadr (1928-78), the distinguished Iranian Shi'i cleric who won much popularity in Lebanon during the 1960s and the 1970s. Rarely has Sayyid Musa's engagement with the state as a legal and jurid-ical apparatus been investigated nor his conflict with the Shi'i left. My paper considers these two dimensions as part and parcel of the context of the Movement of the Dispossessed (*harakat al-mahrumin*) and its full implications for Lebanese Shi'is.[1] My paper revisits Sayyid Musa's engagement with the Lebanese state, and his approach to the Left and its secularist programmes. It examines the interface of religion and sec-ularism through the formation of the Supreme Islamic Shi'i Council in 1969, and the launching of the Movement of the Dispossessed in 1974. It also illuminates the challenge which the *mahrumin* movement posed to the Left in general, and the Communists in particular. During the 1960s and the 1970s, leftist journalists, thinkers, unionists, and artists brought to the public sphere a powerful discourse against the state and capital. They strove through their parties and civil spheres to organize the Leb-anese around class issues and secular political demands. The *mahrumin* movement emerged out of this environment but took on a life of its own. It marked the first public forum for the co-optation of the Shi'i Left and the entry of the cleric to the centre of political life. It inspired new connections between religion, the public sphere, and the state.

War and dislocation

Around 100,000 Palestinians settled in Lebanese camps in the South, the North, Beirut, and the Biqa' after 1967.[2] In the South, an armed resistance against Israel, organized by the PLO, started to form roots after 1969. The Israeli army boosted its military operations, launching air raids and gradually moving into southern civilian locales and border villages.[3] Meanwhile, two events ignited the rage of lower social sectors against the Lebanese state between 1966 and 1969 and encouraged support for the Palestinians: the bankruptcy of Intra Bank, which had launched major investments in Lebanese commerce, and Israel's defeat of the Arab armies in 1967.[4] In a short time, the Intra Bank had garnered the trust of Lebanese and Arab capital, attracting no less than 18,000 clients whose total deposits came to 9 million lira (around 6.8 million dollars). Its

unexpected bankruptcy was a serious setback for the private economic sector as well as for the workers in the twenty-five companies and financial institutions that Intra Bank helped sustain. Lebanese capitalists were thrown into a fierce confrontation with radicalized workers who lost their jobs or faced an uncertain future. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of students protested against tuition increases, the outcome of the Arab-Israeli wars, and American intervention in Arab regional politics.[5] The economic and political challenges facing this generation of southerners popularized not only communism, but also Pan-Arabism of the Baʿthist and Nasserite types.

Without the army's backing, many southern Shiʿis turned to Palestinian organizations for defence against Israel. Many Maronite leaders and some Muslim Shiʿis and Sunnis, however, blamed the crisis in the South on the PLO and its supporter, the Lebanese National Movement (LNM), a coalition formed at the brink of the Civil War and made up of secular national and leftist parties.[6] Indeed, Christian Phalange leaders accused the PLO and the LNM of giving Israel a reason to transform the South into a war zone. These two groups feared, however, that Israel would seize more Arab land and uproot its people if the resistance in the South ended. Around 250,000 southern Shiʿis had already left for Beirut's suburbs by 1974, when agricultural work was paralyzed in the South, businesses slowed, and schools closed following incessant Israeli attacks.[7]

Israel took advantage of the Lebanese Civil War to launch a large-scale military operation in the South in 1978. This new assault proved taxing to workers in industrial occupations such as carpentry, machine repair, printing, construction, and shoemaking. A number of firms and tourist businesses started to lay off workers, at least three thousand, within a few days after the attack. Factory owners did the same to maintain their high profits. They asked the government's permission to dispense with half of their workforce or to decrease workers' salaries by half.[8]

Communist activism against the state

Early Communist Shiʿis advocated scientific socialism against capitalism and expected techno-economic advancement to improve peasants' and workers' lives. They also hoped a socialist democracy would secularize

fully a political system based originally on sectarian divisions.[9] In theory, Marxism was attractive in providing 'rational' proofs for freeing the lower classes and destroying privilege.[10] Soviet communism soon prevailed among the members of the Lebanese Communist Party as a programme for social and economic development.[11] It offered an alternative model of modern development to that of capitalist Europe, which the southerners associated with colonialism. The state's economic policies contributed to the deterioration of rural life in the South and the Biqaʿ (Baʿalbak and al-Hirmil) and the rapid growth of Beirut at the expense of the countryside. Meanwhile, the Communists' role in mobilizing the unions against capital, their confrontations with the state, and their re-evaluation of Arab nationalism had important implications for southern Shiʿis.

The Communists demanded, among other things, state reform through the elimination of sectarianism, the rationalization of state bureaucracy, and the amelioration of electoral laws. After the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975, the Communists' commitment to secularism overshadowed other demands as Sune Haugbolle suggests.[12]

To counteract sectarianism and weaken clerical control of family law, they advocated civil marriage across sects and called for the replacement of religious courts with civil courts.[13] They formed civil and political organizations that agitated against the bourgeoisie and the powerful landed elites, and offered alternatives to sect-based organizations. They also aimed to replace the multiple electoral districts with one, and to elect to Parliament candidates who obtained a proportional representation.[14] Shiʿi Communists expressed varied engagements with religious belief and practice. They were a mix of observant and non-observant Muslims, and only a few were avowed atheists who insisted that 'religion' impeded modern 'progress' and class solidarity.[15] To be sure, most of them aimed to privatize religion, separating decisions about the economy, judicial system, education, national defence and the like from the domain of the shariʿah and the activity of its experts, the jurists. In other words, they demanded separation of state and church. The personal-status laws through which various religious communities and their clerical leaders attempted to preserve their 'traditions' and 'power' were in fact constructed and legitimized by the Lebanese modern state itself. This was done through a process of extracting the shariʿah and rearranging certain Islamic judicial structures and procedures to fit the secular demands of the state.

The Communists' approach to the Lebanese nation-state is reflected in the works of Mahdi ʿAmil (d. 1987), a Shiʿi ideologue of the Lebanese Communist Party. The Lebanese state, ʿAmil argued, had contradictory facets in that it was both secular and sectarian. In order to achieve capitalist growth, the state would theoretically benefit from breaking its alliance with the landed provincial leaders who were enforcing sectarianism, but the state, ʿAmil noted, was unable to break this alliance because the provincial leaders and the bourgeoisie were interdependent. In a postcolonial sectarian state such as Lebanon, a purely bourgeois-based reform was unachievable, ʿAmil reflected. The economic reforms launched by President Fouad Chehab, Communists argued, simply failed to absorb the mounting pressure from the lower classes.[16] This assessment formed the general basis of the Communists' resistance to the state's economic and political foundations.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the trade unions loyal to the Communists were active among the workforce of the textile, tobacco, steel, and oil refineries as well as some food industries.[17] Communists were present chiefly in the unions of Lebanese teachers, press and printing press workers, steel workers, writers, students, taxi drivers, fishery workers, and farmers, and in art and popular culture associations. The unions demanded from state officials improvement in workers' salaries and working conditions and the protection of Lebanese farmers and consumers. They asked the government to provide funding for small industries, to support cooperatives, and to fight inflation and monopolies by pharmaceutical, oil, and flour companies.[18] They demanded that tenants be shielded from erratic and quick increases in rent and struggled to reform public education at the primary, secondary, and university levels. They urged the government to extend financial aid and stipends for students and unify the curricula at public and private schools. Communists struggled persistently to force the government to subsidize bread, gas, school textbooks, and medical benefits.[19] During the 1960s and the 1970s, Communists – students and professionals such as teachers and lawyers as well as industrial workers – in various social arenas and in women's associations devoted a great deal of energy in support of civil marriage, which put them in a direct clash with clerical leadership and state officials.[20] Communist programmes, however, were not just focused on urban workers but also remotely targeted rural workers such as those in the North and the Biqaʿ, who formed the largest

productive pool in Lebanon.

Shi'i activists appeared in a host of leftist organizations, most importantly the Lebanese Communist Party, the Party of Socialist Lebanon, and the Organization of Communist Action.[21] Numerous Shi'i unionists and leftists partook in civil and militant struggles against the state to reform the political system and to improve labour conditions. For instance, they played a prominent role in the 1963 and 1965 strikes by the tobacco workingwomen and men at the Régie in Beirut as Malek Abisaab points out.[22] More than three hundred thousand Lebanese relied on the Régie for their livelihood, including forty-five thousand tobacco farmers.[23] The most obvious reason for the strikes was that from 1955 to 1965 the annual sale of tobacco increased almost twofold, but workers' wages and benefits remained the same.[24]

When the Régie workers started a major strike in 1965, the company's union, the Union of the Régie Workers and Employees (URWE, *ittihad 'ummal wa muwadhdhafi al-riji*), tried to diffuse it.[25] Communist involvement in this strike was repeatedly stressed in police and government reports.[26] The strikers also coordinated their acts with the leftist association of the labour movement, the Federation of Workers' Liberation Front (*jabhat al-taharrur al-'ummali*), which attacked the government fiercely. *Al-Anba'*, the party's newspaper, as Malek Abisaab states, presented the Régie crisis as a symptom of the fundamental struggle between the Right and the Left in Lebanese society.[27] Overall, the 1965 Régie strike underscores the growth of labour unionism and Communist activism against the state, which drew a significant part of Shi'i industrial workers, students, teachers, and intellectuals.

Poverty and dissent in Beirut's suburbs

As rural settings disintegrated in the South and the Biqa', Shi'is fled to the capital city for survival, shelter, and jobs.[28] Earlier, in the 1950s, people from the Biqa' had settled in the eastern suburb, and those who came from the South settled in the southern suburb. During the 1970s, the neighbourhoods of Burj Hammud and al-Nab'ah received families from Ba'albak and al-Hirmil as well as from al-'Arqub, al-Khiyam, al-Taybi, Bint Jubayl, al-Zahrani, and al-Nabatiyyah in the South.[29] Population increase and dramatic urbanization, compounded

by government incompetence, brought further disappointment to the working classes. Leftist parties such as the Lebanese Communist Party and United Democratic Youth (*ittihad al-shabab al-dimuqrati*) had a vivid presence in the South, as did the Syrian Nationalist Party.[30] Most of Bint Jubayl's residents in al-Nab'ah were cobblers organized into a syndicate and affiliated with the Lebanese Communist Party and the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party (*hizb al-ba'th al-'arabi al-ishtiraki*), which split off from the Ba'th Party in 1970.[31]

When assessing the social divisions in Lebanese society in the late 1960s and early 1970s, only a handful of scholars have discussed the role of class antagonisms in shaping political action.[32] Fuad Khuri, writing in 1969, insisted that the basis of political conflicts in Lebanon was not class interests, but 'sect interests.'[33] He treated 'sect' and 'class' as two mutually exclusive entities, ignoring the complex ways in which they interacted outside the rubric of the state. The Shi'is lent their numbers in large part to secular ideological parties emphasizing class and political interests, but they in equal numbers were members of sect-based and communal-based associations.[34] Majed Halawi accurately notes that the urban Shi'i poor 'became conscious of belonging to a wider social class seeking to restructure an unjust order that systematically marginalized them.'[35] Other workers perceived socialism to be a solution to their problems.[36] Emile F. Sahliyeh speaks persuasively of the sizable 'Shi'i membership in the revisionist, radical and revolutionary parties (and their militias),' noting that far more Shi'is were to fall 'during the civil war of 1975-1976 than members of any other group in Lebanon.'[37] The Shi'is were equally present in civil arenas that sustained a critique of the state, led protests against economic discrimination, and launched social programmes to protect marginalized groups.[38]

By 1971, almost half of the Lebanese Shi'is became concentrated in Beirut's suburbs.[39] Three years later the number of Shi'i migrants in West Beirut and its suburbs reached 260,000 (76 per cent) out of a population 304,000 in that area.[40] With the deepening of the Lebanese Civil War and the domination of right-wing Christian militias over East Beirut, all Muslims of the eastern suburb were forced to take refuge in the southern suburb, where they eventually settled.[41] The expansion of the domestic industry and development of urban centres formed the new social and economic landscape for the migrants. The transition from rural to suburban life was marked by contradictory pulls: the emergence of new

labour patterns as well as the reinforcement of village-based residential patterns. Industrialization was gradually shaping the outlook of Shi'i workingwomen and men.[42] Wage labour became increasingly feminized; Shi'i women composed 42 per cent of the Régie female workforce in 1969. They became the largest group of workingwomen, followed by their Maronite counterparts.[43] Challenge to, and reinforcement of, preindustrial values (filial piety and patriarchal restraint) occurred simultaneously.

The absence of national welfare institutions forced the Shi'is to turn to family ties, provincial associations, and political parties to improve their life conditions.[44] At the same time, the forces of urbanization and public education shaped new sensibilities among migrant Shi'is, who disputed state sectarianism and its economic configurations. The aspiration for change among the lower and middle classes, however, was hardly fulfilled through provincial and parliamentary representation. The electoral system prevented rural migrants from becoming fully integrated in the political life of Beirut because these migrants were required to cast their vote in their town or city of origin, no matter how long they had lived in Beirut. They therefore could not elect their own political representatives in Beirut who could defend the migrants' interests and promote their views. Many agitated against the government, turning to Arab nationalist and leftist parties for solutions to their political and socioeconomic grievances.

In an atmosphere rife with conflict and restlessness, Arab nationalists and leftists in the southern suburb faced a new contender in the political and social struggles: the religious leader Sayyid Musa al-Sadr. A mix of religiously observant and secular Shi'is from the lower and middle classes rallied around him. Sayyid Musa also gained the support of a few *talabah* (seminary students) and clerics who identified with Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakim's anti-Communist movement in Najaf. They hoped that 'the man of religion' would counteract secularism, partake in the socio-political affairs of modern society, and mediate between the Shi'is and the state.

Sayyid Musa al-Sadr among the Lebanese

Sayyid Musa came from a clerical Lebanese family originally from the South that had left to Iraq and Iran a century earlier. Sayyid Musa was

born and raised in Iran. Despite his degree in law from Tehran University, he entered clerical service, stating succinctly that modern society needs the guidance of the *ʿalim*, the religious scholar. He spoke of the moral void or 'gaping hole' that had opened up in modern society and that had to be filled up by the religious scholar. Without the intervention of the cleric, the 'hole' would be filled up by secular politicians.[45] In 1959, Sayyid Musa received an invitation from Sayyid ʿAbd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din to come to Lebanon and manage the Shiʿis' religious affairs.[46] It was the *marjaʿ* Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakim, however, who chose Sayyid Musa formally to be his representative in Lebanon.[47] Some *ʿulama* were perplexed by the news, including perhaps Shaykh Muhammad Jawad Mughniyyah, a distinguished *mujtahid* with superior credentials. Sayyid Musa's political manoeuvres and ambitions may have also become a source of controversy in Lebanon. Prior to his collaboration with an anti-shah opposition group in Iran, he seemed to have defended the shah's international image and distinguished it from his domestic one, where 'he was seen as a tyrant.'[48]

During his tenure as cleric, Sayyid Musa oversaw the integrity of the legal procedures at the Jaʿfari courts, launched charitable projects, and spent much energy resolving communal conflicts. Many parliamentary deputies in the South and the Biqaʿ resented his increasing popularity among the middle and lower classes.[49] Facing significant adversity from the Shiʿi elite and leading scholars, he sought alliances with Sunni leaders in order to build his power base. Shiʿi deputies were traditionally allied to their Sunni counterparts in the South, exhibiting intra-marital ties, as was the case between the al-Asʿad (Shiʿi) and al-Sulh (Sunni) families as well as between the al-Zayn (Shiʿi) and Salam (Sunni) families.[50] Sayyid Musa appreciated the socio-political import of such ties. He also participated in forums dedicated to 'reducing inter-Muslim differences' and communicating Shiʿis' and Sunnis' shared intellectual experiences. Juristic unity between the Shiʿi and Sunni schools of law, he suggested, is essential for achieving national and social unity. Juridical differences seemed less contentious than doctrinal ones, but Sayyid Musa joined a number of scholars in Iran and the Arab world in maintaining that doctrinal differences do not justify acts of hostility. Ali Shariʿati, a leading Iranian intellectual, praises *marajiʿ* (highest legal authorities) such as Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakim, Sayyid Jaʿfar Sharaf al-Din, and Jawad Mughniyyah for drawing vital links with reformist Sunni scholars. In

his view, the strength of their public exposition of Imami Shiʿism did not undermine their 'enlightened' demeanour toward Sunnism.[51]

Turning the Shiʿis into modern citizens

Sayyid Musa's discourse on Shiʿi modernism and national identity formed an integral part of his outlook and clerical leadership in Lebanon. The ideas and line of reasoning that inform his discourse can be best illustrated through his mediatory role in a major communal conflict. Several families in Baʿalbak and al-Hirmil came to loggerheads in 1970, and the fight escalated into a vicious fight. Sayyid Musa decried the 'primitiveness' of their revengeful acts and their 'tribalism' at a time when the Shiʿis were plagued by the enemy – that is, Israel – and economic hardship. He inquired irately: 'What is the meaning of escalating the wave of revenge and turning to primitive animosities in the face of grave problems such as the [Israeli] occupation and poverty?'[52] Without despairing, however, he appealed to their communal virtues, their 'valiant' and 'noble' spirit, which would guide them to seek reconciliation.[53] Chivalry and courage must be spent in protecting Lebanon's borders, he urged. At the same time, however, he held the Lebanese state responsible for the Biqaʿis' undisciplined conduct, their 'tribalism': 'We are here in Beirut, in the North, in the threatened South, in the destroyed villages, among the dispersed....Even if the state had left you, due to fear, or collapsed due to ethical hypocrisy and bankruptcy in vision, how could you desert yourselves, your happiness, your honour, your humanity, and your citizenry?'[54]

All Shiʿis must make personal sacrifices in times of great emergency and national misfortune, he said. The feuding parties must make God their arbiter, seeking reconciliation and embracing the 'path of Jerusalem' and the cause of the needy.[55] It is unlikely that Sayyid Musa considered the liberation of Jerusalem or Palestinian land a vital concern for the Lebanese Shiʿis. Rather, Jerusalem formed the rallying symbol, evoking historical injustices committed by Israel against Islam. Sayyid Musa was no stranger to the connections that the Shiʿis made between their political marginality and Palestinian statelessness. He was concerned, however, with the national duty of protecting the southerners from Israeli aggression and occupation of their land.

The points Sayyid Musa raised in this speech resonated with his broad view that the Shi'is would become 'modern' when moulded into national subjects. The Biqa'i Shi'is' 'unruliness' appeared to him as an impediment to modernism, self-governance, and civic responsibility. Becoming modern leads to happiness (*sa'adah*), he stressed, the happiness promised in a national society. One's humanity is fulfilled through citizenship, he reflected, rather than through the pull of 'primordial' affiliations. Happiness is a function of proper citizenry, of becoming amenable to state laws. In a remarkable way, Sayyid Musa was caught in a contradiction as he urged the Shi'is to be loyal citizens of a disloyal state, one he blamed for failing to fulfil its duties toward them. He encouraged the Shi'is to embrace a 'reformed' Libanism, or Lebanese nationalism, one that rejected Maronite domination but accepted sectarianism as a means to bargain for a fair Shi'i share in state posts, civil service, and employment. This political vision was justified by the growth of the Shi'i émigré bourgeoisie who had a vested interest in reconfiguring their relationship to the Lebanese state, and hoped to shape state policies and enhance its access to economic resources.[56]

The pursuit of national happiness – that is, turning Shi'is into citizens of the Lebanese nation-state – was wrought with difficulties. Thus, Sayyid Musa's 1970 speech suggests that in the state's 'absence' the Shi'is must rely on civil regulation to govern themselves. Shi'i self-discipline and self-governance were necessary in the face of precarious security rights, economic rights, and political rights owing to state discrimination. From another angle, Sayyid Musa's national happiness involved the assimilation of certain Libanist elements that underpinned the state. The Shi'is were not part of the foundational myth of Grand Liban, but Sayyid Musa had to argue that they could be part of it.[57] Solving the Shi'is' economic crisis seemed to Sayyid Musa a necessary condition for nurturing 'Libanist' loyalties and hence for entering a 'modern' world. He probably felt that the Shi'is' identification with the Palestinians stymied efforts at developing their national loyalties. The Shi'is were not stateless like the Palestinians, he possibly reasoned, and as such they had to position themselves inside, not outside, the state, replacing rejection with compromise.[58] A few years later this approach did not seem tenable. Sayyid Musa realized soon enough that not everyone would receive the 'benefits' of Lebanese citizenship He then openly challenged the state and considered the liberation of southern

land from Israel key to political normalcy. This normalcy would in turn shape a distinct national identity.

The mahrumin *movement and the left*

The famed *mahrumin* movement was a popular peaceful movement led by Sayyid Musa against the government on 25 May 1974, calling for a greater representation of Shi'is in the state and an end to their economic deprivation. This movement was not as numerous scholars following Fouad Ajami presented it, namely, as a creation of Sayyid Musa or to that matter as a sudden change from Shi'i passiveness to radicalism and social protest. The movement drew upon long traditions of leftist struggles, and southern Shi'i anticolonial and anti-state protests.[59] The initiatives of Greek Catholic Archbishop Grègoire Haddad, a Marxist, in launching this movement reflected the increasing awareness of the grievances of lower class Shi'is. The *mahrumin* movement unfurled banners that denounced political marginality, economic deterioration, and the plight of the South.[60] Sayyid Musa's fiery oratory whipped up popular fervour, and the movement spread nationwide, becoming a defining moment in Lebanese history. The momentum for the *mahrumin* movement was naturally linked to larger developments taking place in Lebanon at the time. Despite Sayyid Musa's magnetism, he was hardly the cause for the Shi'is' 'awakening.' As the earlier sections clearly show, the Shi'is were already in the middle of a maelstrom, confronting the state and exhibiting tremendous dynamism in labour protests as well as leftist and nationalist movements.[61] Yet the *mahrumin* movement was more directly shaped by an episode of intensive Israeli attacks on the South that led to the displacement of almost fifty thousand southerners. The movement also overlapped with labour radicalism and political unrest in other parts of Lebanon. Noteworthy among these events were the pro-Palestinian street demonstration in April 1969, the popular uprising in May 1969 against the national entrepreneurial elites, and the 1970 'Akkar insurrection.[62] Then a few years later thousands of tobacco growers marched in protest from al-Nabatiyyah in the South to the Arab University in Beirut.[63] The mounting crisis brought the convening of the Congress for Tobacco Growers (*mu'tamar muzari'i al-tabgh*) in April 1974, which demanded, among other things, job security, health insurance, the formation of

a syndicate for tobacco growers, and governmental protection of the Lebanese cigarette industry.[64]

What Sayyid Musa brought to the scene with the *mahrumin* movement was a sectarian delineation of Shi'i rural and suburban traditions of protest and restlessness. He harnessed the lower classes' discontent and power and tied them to sectarian deprivation. Many Shi'is were expressing mixed notions of 'class' as an organizing principle of human society and partook in major confrontations with capital and the state against inflation, lack of health insurance wretched work conditions, and political marginality.[65] No movement or clerical leader could muster a wide-based following without co-opting features of this leftist Shi'i culture. Sayyid Musa was no exception, even if he intended to attenuate the transmission of the Left's political messages. Having argued that the Biqa'i Shi'is needed to be saved from civil lethargy, he felt the southerners needed to be dissociated from radical Communist and Arab nationalist activism. He brought Islam and Lebanese nationalism together as a counterforce to the Left. Unlike Marxism, religion, he stressed, was an 'authentic' cultural feature of Islamic society.[66] Shaykh Hani Fahs, a contemporary cleric and admirer of Sayyid Musa, noted that the latter aimed to 'remove the Left's exclusive custody of Shi'i activism, prevent it from investing in a project that destroys the state, and preserve the Left only in the framework of a labour-social opposition that leaves the [Shi'is'] national roots intact and remedies the branches through a realistic and rational method that makes violence unlikely.'[67]

The pressure on Sayyid Musa to find tangible solutions to the lower classes' grievances was mounting. The example of the Shi'i tobacco workers at the Ghaziyyah factory in the South helps illuminate this picture and shows the limitations that the state placed on Sayyid Musa's bargaining power. The temporary workers of the Ghaziyyah factory, mostly Shi'i women, started their strike on 23 June 1970, demanding that the Régie improve their work conditions and, most important, grant them permanent status so that they could obtain health benefits.[68] The workingwomen sought the assistance of Sayyid Musa, asking him to petition the government on their behalf to fulfil their long-standing demands.[69] By turning to a popular religious leader, especially one who espoused the cause of 'the dispossessed,' the workingwomen hoped to find a sympathetic ear. They waited for hours in front of the building where the Supreme Islamic Shi'i Council met because Sayyid Musa declined

to speak with them at first, supposedly because they were not wearing head covers. When the women persisted, the council's staff handed them head covers, after which Sayyid Musa met with them, promising to mediate their concerns to government officials. He was nonetheless suspicious of attempts to alter the economic system or challenge the state through labour unionism or militancy as these women were attempting to do. He hoped to alleviate the pains of the Shiʿi lower classes without altering these classes' fundamental conditions or severing his relation with the state. Sayyid Musa's lukewarm support of the workingwomen was compounded by his wariness about their roles in the public sphere as well as his lack of leverage in bargaining with the state. He came back empty-handed from a meeting with government officials. The council's staff afterward asked the women strikers to move their protest to the headquarters of the General Federation of Workers (GFW, *al-ittihad al-ʿam lil-ʿummal*).[70] After several months of campaigning, the Lebanese government and the Régie proposed a modest solution to the crisis, which the strikers accepted.[71]

In spite of Sayyid Musa's discourse on 'the dispossessed,' he was also amenable to the interests of the Shiʿi bourgeoisie, who in his view needed to adopt 'Libanist' loyalties in order to increase their bargaining power with respect to the state.[72] The Shiʿi bourgeoisie had limited access to power in comparison with their Maronite and Sunni counterparts, and, as such, they did not benefit fully from the state's liberal economy. As Shaykh Fahs explained, the émigré Shiʿis returning from African and Latin American countries who invested their capital in Lebanese business ventures needed the state to be 'their guarantor.'[73] He candidly remarked that Sayyid Musa wanted to ensure that the state become such a 'guarantor' and hence permit the Shiʿi bourgeoisie to achieve higher status in the administrative bureaus and ministries.[74] Sayyid Musa ultimately did not challenge the national status quo but rather the 'misapplication' of the sectarian principle in the hope of offering the Shiʿi elites a greater role in the country's politics. The *mahrumin* movement voiced the lower classes' grievances, co-opting some demands that the local Communists had made for decades. Focusing on the plight of Shiʿi agricultural and industrial labourers (including construction workers), the movement called for the curtailment of feudal and capitalist entrepreneurial exploitation. Economic stability and security for the southerners were not realized, the movement's leader declared. He also stressed the Shiʿis'

rights in adequate political and administrative representation. In a short time, the movement attracted diverse groups such as leftists from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (*al-jabhah al-sha'biyyah li-tahrir filastin*), Leninist and Maoist activists, and, later, Khomeinists, as Waddah Sharara notes.[75] Sayyid Musa made sketchy remarks in praise of the Left as 'a force of change' and tried to acknowledge the leftists' involvement in struggles for socioeconomic reform. His movement, however, was the earliest serious encroachment on the Shi'i leftists. He presented the leftists (in particular Shi'i Marxists) as lacking faith in God: 'I am not harsh against the Left as some might think. Rather, if we define the Left as a force for change, then I consider myself one of its pillars. However, I do not trust him who does not believe in God, for faith in my opinion is not an abstraction.'[76] Sayyid Musa implied that he, a man of faith, should be trusted more than the Communists. The latter, however, describe a different scene, in which the discourse on atheism aimed to discredit the Communists and facilitate the cleric's political functions.[77] Sayyid Musa assumed that by weakening the Left he could negotiate new sectarian rights for the Shi'is with the Lebanese state. The Communists, for their part, denounced sectarian politics, Sayyid Musa's ambiguity on anti-Israeli resistance, and his instrumental use of leftist slogans to co-opt the Shi'i Left. They also accused him of mystifying the conflict between Shi'i labour and the state.[78] Within a decade, however, the alleged followers of Sayyid Musa were found writing on Tyre's walls, 'He who kills a Communist enters Paradise,' and making physical threats and forays against the Communists.[79]

Without any impetus from Sayyid Musa, the *mahrumin* movement took on a life of its own, becoming a vehicle for political Islam and state de-legitimation even if it aimed in principle to bargain with the state. Despite his silence on the subject of Islamic governance, Sayyid Musa was concerned with bolstering religious authority and muffling secular sensibilities in the public sphere. He also disseminated Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr's anti-Communist ideas and arguments in the *husayniyyah*s and scholarly circles.[80] Curiously, the early Islamists had criticized Sayyid Musa for his initial rapprochement with the Christian Right and feared it would sabotage the resistance to Israel in the South.[81] It was only after the unfolding of the *mahrumin* movement that many Islamists lent their support to Sayyid Musa.[82] They seemed to welcome his attacks on secularism.

In his enthusiasm, Shaykh Hani Fahs applauded the *mahrumin* movement for achieving its aim 'in entering forcefully in the state structure.'[83] Yet Fahs's assertions run against clear evidence that no change in the political or economic configurations relevant to the Shi'is occurred at the time.

The Supreme Islamic Shi'i Council and secularism

A new chapter in the relationship of the Shi'i clerics to secular leftists unfolded with the entrance of Sayyid Musa, who sought to renew Islamic faith in modern society. His interface with secularism was multifaceted, as evidenced by the politics of the Supreme Islamic Shi'i Council and his view of sectarianism. By and large, clerics such as Sayyid Musa feared that secularism would render religious guidance ephemeral and marginalize the clerics as transmitters of God's law. His recapitulation of the Libanist notion of sectarian 'coexistence' encouraged 'public performance of piety, and therefore, simultaneously the performance of religious difference,' as Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr suggests.[84] In other words, Sayyid Musa found sectarianism useful for protecting Shi'i observances and hence the cleric's authority. He concurrently recognized the limits on public religion placed by a modern nation-state like that of Lebanon, whose constitutional laws were inspired by the French Civil Code rather than by sacred laws. Under this state, sectarianism was organized around secular laws and inscribed into the Lebanese Constitution. Therein rested the secular-sectarian nature of the Lebanese state and one of its contradictions. This contradiction proved useful to Sayyid Musa in stressing religious difference and sectarian-based interests. Sayyid Musa embraced the notion of sectarian 'balance,' striving to negotiate greater rights for the Shi'is on its basis as well as to 'transform' them into 'modern' national citizens.

Under modern states, jurists were requested to fit areas of the shari'ah with the states' legal apparatuses instead of placing it in competition with them.[85] The state used secular procedures to organize the economy, education (to some extent because religious schools remained intact in Lebanon), health, dispensation of justice, bureaucracy, and the army. It wrested away many of the socio-legal functions of clerics, in particular Muslim ones, who saw the shari'ah trimmed down to the Code of

Personal Status. The latter formed a small body of laws pertaining to marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance.[86] In 1969, Sayyid Musa succeeded in pressuring the Lebanese government to found the Supreme Islamic Shi'i Council, extending further legitimacy to his clerical leadership. It is misleading to view the council as a vehicle for the application of the shari'ah in its two major dimensions, namely, worship (*'ibadat*) and social contracts (*mu'amalat*). This application marked the various aspects of the life of Muslims up until the rise of modern nation-states. Rather, the council had to restrict the application of the shari'ah to the personal-status laws (*qanun al-ahwal al-shakhsiyyah)*, which was in turn necessary for the secular organization of the state.[87] Acts of worship became privately negotiated while the state took over all but a few legal areas related to social contracts such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. In the personal-status laws, the family (*al-'a'ilah*) and the sect (*al-ta'ifah*) received vivid legal articulation in this rubric. This articulation allowed a cleric such as Sayyid Musa to speak for both family and sect. The state also expected the Shi'is to be more properly supervised through the council. The birth of the Supreme Islamic Shi'i Council, as such, was not a small event. For many, it embodied the necessary bridge to the state and hopes of social betterment through sectarian bargaining and sustained institutional pressure. In this respect, the council's emergence suppressed other forms in which the Shi'is had already represented themselves. Its presence made it seem as if they were making their first legitimate entry into official Lebanese history.

Although Sayyid Musa conformed to the secular framework of the Lebanese state, he recoiled from leftist secular proposals, especially the elimination of state sectarianism, the founding of civil courts, and the promotion of civil marriages across religious lines. To a Shi'i audience with varied secular sensibilities, his declaration that there is 'no difference between those who call for secularization [such as the LNM] and Israel' seemed overpitched. Secularism, Sayyid Musa cleverly argued, would threaten the integrity of the resistance against Israel: 'When we cease to fight Israel [because of such secularization], we will be defeated and destitute.'[88] State sectarianism appeared to guarantee the continuation of religious-legal guidance and the clerics' political power. The destruction that could be unleashed in Lebanon by secularization, particularly among the Muslims, was comparable, Sayyid Musa cautioned, to the destruction caused by Israel's creation and its occupation of Arab lands.

Notwithstanding this view, the programme of secular political reform proposed by the LNM in 1975 received many Shi'is' support.[89] The LNM demanded that resources and power sharing be based not on one's religious identity, but rather on principles of equity and merit. AMAL, the party formed by Sayyid Musa, rejected the LNM's reform programme and upheld instead the Constitutional Document proposed by right-wing president Suleiman Frangieh in 1976 and approved by the Syrian regime of Hafiz Asad.[90] The proposed Constitutional Document paid lip service to state reform and reiterated the need for equal representation between Christians and Muslims in government. It reinforced and defended political sectarianism in Lebanon.

After Sayyid Musa's disappearance in 1978, the Supreme Islamic Shi'i Council conformed itself to being a state organ despite occasional disagreements between its leadership and the state. Sayyid Musa's discourse on national identity and modernism found resonance in the writings of Shaykh Hani Fahs.[91] Fahs opposed Communist, unionist protests as well as armed and civil movements that tampered with the state's legitimacy. The original Shi'i rejection of temporal authority in the absence of the Mahdi, according to Shaykh Fahs, can be reformulated to produce a sustained critique of the state to achieve reform.[92] Critique, he insisted, is effective if directed internally not externally – that is, not from outside the state, but from within it. His assertions ran against both Communist and early Islamist views that 'reforming' the state from within is pointless and would reproduce the same practices.[93] According to these views, these practices were responsible for protracted civil crises and wars in the first place. One might argue that Shaykh Fahs overlooked Sayyid Musa's actual practices. Having stressed Shi'i national integration and loyalty to the state, Sayyid Musa found himself in the paradoxical situation of creating an armed militia at the brink of the Civil War in 1975.[94]

After Sayyid Musa: AMAL and the Communists

AMAL, or the Lebanese Resistance Detachments (*afwaj al-muqawamah al-lubnaniyyah*), a militia group originally associated with the *mahrumin* movement, became a major force in the life of the Shi'is during the Civil War. It built on the legacy of Sayyid Musa and invested in an image of

itself as the protector of the Shi'i sect and the defender against Israeli assaults as well as Palestinian control. AMAL originally did not entertain a particular ideology and lacked coherence, which supports Richard Augustus Norton's view that AMAL's activities varied in nature from one southern town to another.[95] It did, however, distinguish itself as a sect-driven party, posing a fierce challenge to the LNM's proposed reforms and to the Left at large. It refused to see the South overtaken by leftist organizations that buttressed the joint Lebanese-Palestinian resistance movement. It decided during the 1980s to align itself with Syria, which controlled much of Lebanon's internal politics from the mid-1970s onward. With the full backing of Syria, AMAL fought both the PLO and the LNM and helped impair leftist activism in the South.[96] Meanwhile, Syria gained enough power to crush the Palestinian organizations in Lebanon, thus weakening their leftist supporters in the South and Beirut.[97] AMAL went so far as to participate in the National Salvation Front (*jabhat al-inqadh*), which Lebanese president Ilyas Sarkis established during the 1982 Israeli invasion and which sought to fulfil American and Israeli demands to end the war with Israel.[98]

AMAL and the Supreme Islamic Shi'i Council drifted apart, developing distinct courses of action, despite cordial relations. Yet the two stood united when they feared a growth in the Islamists' power and a possible subversion of the council by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's supporters.[99] Islamist leanings appeared within AMAL itself when around 1982 Husayn al-Musawi, inspired by the Islamic Iranian Revolution, formed an Islamic wing of AMAL, which maintained close ties to Iran.[100] Following Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the departure of the PLO, the Communists launched a national movement to liberate Lebanon from Israeli occupation.[101] They soon found in AMAL's leaders their most dangerous foes. They or Islamic AMAL and other clandestine Islamist groups became involved in the campaign, which led to the death of several Communist teachers, journalists, and workers. Two prominent Shi'i Communist thinkers, Husayn Muroeh and Hasan Hamdan (known as 'Mahdi 'Amil'), were assassinated in 1986 and 1987, respectively. Meanwhile, the crisis of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union in the late 1980s tied to the restructuring of its economy (perestroika) forced Lebanese Communists to reassess their programmes, political commitments, and options.

Until the late 1980s, AMAL remained the dominant political party

among the Shiʿis.[102] To AMAL, then, devolved the leadership of the resistance in the South against Israel after pushing the leftists out.[103] In AMAL's dictum, resistance to Israel conveyed its resolve to rebuild and reconstruct the Shiʿis' lives.[104] It did not, however, mean perpetual struggle against Israel to achieve victory. AMAL's success in the South is contrasted, as Norton notes, to its failures in Beirut, where it strengthened the power of the mercantile bourgeoisie, leaving the problems of the rural and urban poor unattended.[105] AMAL's alliance with Syria helped it provide the Shiʿi bourgeoisie with a number of political gains. Without challenging the national status quo, it secured new positions in public administration and a greater representation in the government. It also provided new funds through the Council of the South (*majlis al-janub*), and bank loans for rebuilding the infrastructure of the South. Despite these changes, the poor in the South and Beirut received only sporadic assistance, and those in the Biqaʿ were in dire conditions.

The Shiʿis remained outside the imagined constitution of a modern bourgeois metropolis such as Beirut. The fair number of bourgeois Shiʿi families that moved to prosperous areas of the city barely altered the prevalent Lebanese discourse of Shiʿi 'provinciality.' The Shiʿi middle class had expanded through immigration to Africa and South America, public education, and urbanization, creating civil arenas that contested the political dominance of the traditional landed elites and denounced the state's apathy toward the crisis in the South. Meanwhile, the growth of a Palestinian-Lebanese civil and armed resistance against Israel had particular implications for southerners. Palestinian statelessness spoke intimately to common Shiʿis, who experienced their own political marginality as a form of statelessness. These conditions and the events surrounding them shaped the Shiʿis' formation as national subjects. Common Shiʿis decried government indifference toward their safety and welfare, frequently challenging the Libanist principles upon which the state had been founded. Lebanon's 'exceptional' sectarian equilibrium and economic 'liberalism' came under attack, as did its disentanglement from regional Arab conflicts. As the Shiʿis emerged into a major Lebanese constituency during the 1970s, they remained underrepresented in the cabinet, the Parliament, and public administration. New strata of Shiʿi émigré businessmen and the petit bourgeoisie pushed to reverse this situation. These social groups saw in the AMAL Party a suitable medium for attaining a greater role in the government.

Summary and conclusions

A serious encroachment on the Shi'i Left appeared through the clerical leadership of Sayyid Musa al-Sadr and his *mahrumin* movement. Sayyid Musa embellished the discourse of Communist 'atheism' and denounced leftist demands for political and legal secularism. At the same time, he validated the principle of sectarian 'balance,' hoping to negotiate greater rights for the Shi'is on its basis as well as to turn them into 'modern' national citizens. By accepting a different version of Libanism, Sayyid Musa surmised, the Shi'is could become loyal citizens. He himself had conformed to the secular requirements of the state's legal apparatus, which organized the economy, labour, education, public justice, public administration, and the army.[106] This apparatus confined the shari'ah to a body of personal-status laws that curbed religion and privatized it in the public realm. It was within this sectarian-secular arrangement that Sayyid Musa negotiated an active political role for the cleric. His rejection of secularist doctrines and practices beyond this point arguably disclosed the ambiguity of his modernist initiatives, however. This ambiguity had plagued the Muslim clerics as administrators of the shari'ah from the time when modern legal codes appeared with the nation-state.

Sayyid Musa strove to weaken the Communists in Shi'i society, suppress leftist opposition to the state, and enhance the cleric's political functions. His advocacy of national modernism was coupled with a practical accommodation of the Lebanese state, a state that implements sectarianism but possesses secular legal procedures and rules of function and administration. By accepting the foundations of this state, Sayyid Musa hoped to institutionalize clerical guidance and to empower the Shi'is as a sect. As Islamist clerics in Iraq and Iran were advocating public Islam – that is, the view that Islam must shape the public activities and political life of modern citizens – Sayyid Musa in contrast was calling for the privatization of Islam. The initiatives he took in 1969 to create the Supreme Islamic Shi'i Council acknowledged state restrictions on the shari'ah, which was confined to personal-status laws. At the same time, the council allowed the cleric to play a vital role in mediating between the Shi'is and the state.

The *mahrumin* movement signalled a temporary breakdown in relations with the state and a co-optation of local Communist demands. Through the movement, Sayyid Musa presented all Shi'is as one

subaltern group, the 'deprived' or 'dispossessed,' thus channelling class conflicts by guiding them into institutional forms offered originally by the state. As a consequence, more Shi'is started to view their political marginalization rather than economic inequities as the chief basis of their 'deprivation.' To some extent, the *mahrumin* movement overshadowed the way Shi'is had presented themselves earlier as unionists, feminists, civil rights groups, and anti-Libanist reformists. But inasmuch as the *mahrumin* movement co-opted some Communist demands, disputed leftist secularism, and revitalized the cleric's place in modern society, it can be considered a precursor to the Islamist movements of Hezbollah and Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah.

Notes

[1]   For a representative body of scholarship on Sayyid Musa, see Fouad Ajami, *The Vanished Imam: Musa al-Sadr and the Shi'a of Lebanon* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986); *Majed Halawi, A Lebanon Defied: Musa al-Sadr and the Shi'a Community* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992); Richard Augustus Norton, *Amal and the Shi'a: Struggle for the Soul of Lebanon* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987); 'Sayyid Musa', in *Pioneers of Islamic Revival*, ed. Ali Rahnama (London & New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd, 1994), 184-204; *Hezbollah: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 14-21; Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah* (Syracuse University Press, 2004), 13-16; Houchang Chehabi and Majid Tafreshi, 'Musa Sadr and Iran', in *Distant Relations: Iran and Lebanon in the Last 500 Years*, ed. Houchang Chehabi (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 137-161; Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shi'i Lebanon: Transnational Religion and the Making of National Identities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 24-34, 128-130; Seyyed Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 111-113.

[2]   Wm. Roger Louis & Avi Shlaim, *The 1967 Arab-Israeli War: Origins and Consequences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 13, 132-133, 146-148. Marie-Louissse Weighill, 'Palestinians in Exile: Legal, Geographical and Statistical Aspects', in *The Palestinian Exodus* ed. Ghada Karmi & Eugene Cortran (UK: Garnet & Ithaca Press, 1999), 18-20.

[3]   *al-'Irfan* LXXXV, nos. 3-4 (July-Aug. 1970), 259.

[4]   See Ilyas al-Buwari, *Tarikh al-Harakah al-'Ummaliyyah wa al-Naqabiyyah fi Lubnan: 1947-1970*, part 2 (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi, 1986), 273-74.

[5]   See Samih Farsoun, 'Student Protests and the Coming Crisis in Lebanon', in *MERIP Reports*, no. 19 (1973), 11-12.

[6]   One should add to this coalition the presence of leftist Iranian groups with the Palestinians in Beirut. See Houchang Chehabi, 'The Anti-Shah Opposition and Lebanon', in *Distant Relations*, 189-90. The Israeli military activities and aims in South

Lebanon were examined by Augustus R. Norton in his 'Making Enemies in South Lebanon: Harakat Amal, the IDF, and South Lebanon', in *Middle East Insight* III, no. 3 (1984), 13-20.

[7]   Sulayman Taqi al-Din, 'al-Janub al-Lubnani bi-Ri'ayat al-Istiqlal', in *Safahat min Tarikh Jabal 'Amil*, ed. al-Majlis al-Thaqafi li-Lubnan al-Janubi (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi, 1979), 152. See Salim Nasr & Diane James, 'Roots of the Shi'i Movement', in *MERIP Reports*, no. 133 (June 1985), 10-16.

[8]   al-Buwari, *Tarikh al-Harakah al-'Ummaliyyah*, 297-98.

[9]   See also Artin Madoyan, *Hayat 'ala al-Mitras* (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi, 1986), 106-7; Muhammad Dakrub, *Judhur al-Sindiyanah al-Hamra'*, 374, 375; Michael Suleiman, 'The Lebanese Communist Party', in *Middle Eastern Studies* III, no. 2 (January 1967), 115-16.

[10]   For more on the question of reason and Marxism in Europe and 'the nonwhite world', see Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), 262-66.

[11]   At the same time, French communism provided much inspiration to the Lebanese Communists in Grand Liban during the 1930s. See Ilyas Murqus, *Tarikh al-Ahzab al-Shuyu'iyyah fi al-Watan al-'Arabi* (Beirut: Dar al-Tali'ah, 1964), 30-31.

[12]   Sune Haugbolle, 'Social Boundaries and Secularism in the Lebanese Left', in *Mediterranean Politics* XVIII, no. 3 (2013), 427-443.

[13]   al-Hizb al-Shuyu'i al-Lubnani, *Sittun 'Aman min al-Nidal min Ajl-i Lubnan Afdal* (Beirut: Manshurat al-Hizb al-Shuyu'i al-Lubnani, 1988), 64-65.

[14]   In proportional representation, candidates who obtain the highest number of votes are elected irrespective of their sectarian affiliation or the province they come from. See al-Hizb al-Shuyu'i al-Lubnani, *al-Shuyu'iyyun al-Lubnaniyyun wa Muhimmat al-Marhalah al-Muqbilah* (Beirut: Matabi' al-Amal, n.d.), 86.

[15]   Interview with 'Imad Hashishu, 4 July 2005, 24 July 2007, Sidon, Lebanon; interview with Bashir Osmat, 29 June 2008, Beirut. Bashir Osmat served as the head of the Archive Office of the Lebanese Communist Party from 1977 to 1993. Hashishu is a civil activist in the South and a leading member of the Popular Democratic Party in Lebanon, a Communist organization.

[16]   Mahdi 'Amil, *al-Nazariyyah fi al-Mumarasah al-Siyasiyyah: Bahth fi Asbab al-Harb al-Ahliyyah fi Lubnan*, part 1 (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi, 1979), 309, 310, 233-34, 311. See also Muhammad Shuman, 'Qira'ah fi fikr Charles Malik wa al-Kaslik: al-'Unsuriyyah bayn Zuhurat al-Kiyan wa al-Intihar', in *al-Tariq* XLIV, no. 3 (July 1985), 104-5.

[17]   Ilyas al-Buwari, *Tarikh al-Harakah al-'Ummaliyyah*, 115, 118,169-78.

[18]   Ibid., 169-78. See 'Mustafa al-'Aris' Parliamentary Electoral Program', Beirut, 15 March 1951, in Ilyas al-Buwari, *Tarikh al-Harakah al-'Ummaliyyah*, document no. 8, 389-92.

[19]   Ibid., 183-90, 215-20, 288-91. See also 'A Memorandum by the Trade Unions to the Ministry of Labor Regarding the Reduction of Rents', in Ilyas al-Buwari, *Tarikh al-Harakah al-'Ummaliyyah*, document no. 14, 398-401.

[20]   Marwan Amin, 'al-Mas'alah al-Ta'ifiyyah fi Idiyulujiyyat al-Harakah al-Wataniyyah', in *al-Tariq* XXXVII, no. 6 (December 1978), 76-77.

[21]   A few among these activists were Mahdi 'Amil, Husayn Muroeh, Karim Muroeh, Husayn Hamdan, Muhsin Ibrahim, Ali al-'Abd, and Habib Sadiq.

[22]   Malek Abisaab states that subscriptions to the Communist daily *al-Nida'* among workingwomen and men at the Régie increased markedly in the 1960s. I thank Malek Abisaab for giving me access to his interview with Ahmad 'Abdallah, Jan. 1997, Wadi al-Zinni, Lebanon.

[23]   Régie Co-Intéressée Libanaise des Tabacs et Tombac, Personnel Department, 'Development in the Size of the Régie Working Force, 1959-1972', n.d., Régie archives, Beirut. This information and the source were made available to me through Malek Abisaab.

[24]   'Vente Annuelle de Produits Manufactures', Record Group 2, Private Collection of Jacques Dagher, Beirut. This information and the source were made available to me through Malek Abisaab.

[25]   *al-Nahar*, 11 July 1963.

[26]   See *al-Hayat*, 9 March 1965; 14 March 1965.

[27]   *al-Nahar*, 28 March 1965, and *al-Anba'*, 26 March 1965.

[28]   Salim Nasr, 'Backdrop to Civil War: The Crisis of Lebanese Capitalism', *MERIP Reports* 73 (December 1978), 6-13.

[29]   Waddah Shararah [Waddah Sharara], *Dawlat Hizbullah: Lubnan Mujtama'an Islamiyyan* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar, 1996), 74-75.

[30]   Waddah Shararah, *Dawlat Hizbullah*, 76.

[31]   Ibid.

[32]   Examples of studies that treat sectarianism as an independent category of analysis with little ties to economic and sociopolitical forces are Fuad I. Khuri, 'The Changing Class Structure in Lebanon', in *Middle East Journal* XIII, no. 1 (Winter 1969), 29-44; Samir Khalaf, *Lebanon's Predicament* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987).

[33]   Fuad Khuri, 'The Changing Class Structure in Lebanon', 29.

[34]   Ibid., 29-30, 38. See also Augustus Norton, *Hezbollah*, 14-16.

[35]   Majed Halawi, *A Lebanon Defied*, 71-72.

[36]   Ibid.

[37]   Emile F. Sahliyeh, *Religious Resurgence and Politics in the Contemporary World* (Albany, NY: State Univ. of New York Press, 1990), 233.

[38]   This picture hardly supports Fouad Ajami's view that southern Shi'is embraced 'a tradition of lament and submission.' See Fouad Ajami, *The Vanished Imam*, 51, 73.

[39]   Majed Halawi, *A Lebanon Defied*, 68.

[40]   Ibid., 52-55.

[41]   The population of the southern suburb, an area that did not exceed twenty-five square kilometers, had multiplied 166 times in forty-seven years (1928-75). See Ilyas 'Abbud, 'Dahiyat al-Muhajjarin', *al-Safir*, 4 and 5 August 1980.

[42]   Majed Halawi, *A Lebanon Defied*, 5-6, 9.

[43]   Malek Abisaab, *Militant Women of a Fragile Nation* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 2010), 95.

[44]   Taqi al-Din, 'al-Janub', 153. On the multifaceted uses of sectarianism, see Suad Joseph, 'The Politicization of Religious Sects in Borj Hammoud, Lebanon' [PhD dissertation] (Columbia University, 1975).

[45]   Majed Halawi, *A Lebanon Defied*, 178.

[46]   On marital and kinship ties between al-Sadr and Sharaf al-Din's families, see Sabrina Mervin, *Harakat al-Islah al-Shiʻi* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar, 2000), 533.

[47]   Seyyed Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival*, 110.

[48]   Houchang Chehabi and Majid Tafreshi, 'Musa Sadr and Iran', in *Distant Relations*, 156.

[49]   Nizar al-Zayn, 'Editorial', *al-ʻIrfan*, nos. 9-10 (January-February 1971), 999-1000.

[50]   Kais Firro, *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the State under the Mandate* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 89.

[51]   See ʻAli Shariati, *Tashayyuʻ-i Alavi va Tashayyuʻ-i Safavi* (Tehran: Intisharat-i Chapakhsh, 1998), 73-82. Mughniyyah supported Arab unity and the Palestinian cause. See Hadi Fadlallah, *Muhammad Jawad Mughniyyah: Fikr wa-Islah* (Beirut: Dar al-Hadi, 1993), 316, 323, 329. At the same time, though, he stressed Lebanon's 'cultural uniqueness'.

[52]   Imam Musa al-Sadr, 'Ya Abna' Baʻalbak wa-al-Hirmil', in *al-ʻIrfan* LXXXV, nos. 3-4 (July-August 1970), 423-25.

[53]   Ibid., 425.

[54]   Ibid., 424-25.

[55]   Ibid., 425.

[56]   Salim Nasr & Diane James, 'Roots of the Shiʻi Movement', 13; Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shiʻi Lebanon*, xiv, 23, 30, 83-84. For more on the historical background to these developments see Rula Jurdi Abisaab & Malek Abisaab, The Shiʻis of Lebanon: *Modernism, Communism and Hizbullah's Islamists* (Syracuse University Press, forthcoming), chapters 2 & 3.

[57]   For a discussion of AMAL's sectarian politics as a negotiation of the 'nation', see Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shiʻi Lebanon*, 33-35, 81-86, 121.

[58]   Sayyid Musa noted that he wanted to free the Shiʻis from their inferiority complex toward Palestinians. See Karim Baqraduni, *al-Salam al-Mafqud: ʻAhd Ilyas Sarkis, 1976-1982* (Beirut: Dar ʻAbr al-Sharq lil-Manshurat, 1984), 118.

[59]   On this question see, Rula Jurdi Abisaab & Malek Abisaab, *The Shiʻis of Lebanon: Modernism, Communism and Hizbullah's Islamists* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, forthcoming), chapters 2 & 3.

[60]   Majed Halawi, *A Lebanon Defied*, 144.

[61]   Hani Fahs, *al-Shiʻah wa al-Dawlah fi Lubnan: Malamih fi al-Ruʼya wa al-Dhakirah* (Beirut: Dar al-Andalus, 1996), 36.

[62]   An Israeli attack on Beirut International Airport in December 1968 created nationwide condemnation. It was followed by a general strike in the major cities called for by workers' unions and student organizations, demanding military training for citizens to defend the country. For more on these labour and nationalist protests, see Ilyas al-Buwari, *Tarikh al-Harakah al-ʻUmmaliyyah*, 321-47.

63   Ibid., 89.

64   Ibid.

65   See Majed Halawi, *A Lebanon Defied*, 71-72.

66   Ibid., 149.

67   Hani Fahs, *al-Shiʿah wa al-Dawlah fi Lubnan*, 36.

68   Malek Abisaab, 'Contesting Space: Gendered Discourse and Labor among Lebanese Women', in *Geographies of Muslim Women*, ed. Ghazi Falah and Caroline Nagel (New York: Guilford Publications, 2005), 249.

69   Ibid., 259.

70   The GFW, however, did not accord the Ghaziyyah workingwomen serious consideration, after which the women mobilized civil activists and laborers at major national institutions such as the central branch of the Régie in al-Hadath and the nearby campus of the Lebanese University.

71   Malek Abisaab, 'Contesting Space', 267.

72   On Sayyid Musa and Lebanese Shiʿi identity, see Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shiʿi Lebanon*, 24-32. On Sayyid Musa and Iran, see Houchang Chehabi, 'The Anti-Shah Opposition and Lebanon', 182-85, and Houchang Chehabi, 'Iran and Lebanon in the Revolutionary Decade', in Distant Relations, 205-7.

73   Hani Fahs, *al-Shiʿah wa al-Dawlah fi Lubnan*, 35; Olivier Moos, 'Lebanon: Hizbullah, a Progressive Islamic Party? Interview with Joseph Alagha', in *Religioscope* (17 May 2007), 2-3 at <http://religion.info/english/interviews/article_317.shtml>.

74   Sayyid Musa's leadership was not fundamentally committed to the betterment of the Shiʿi poor, as Majed Halawi otherwise argues. See Majed Halawi, *A Lebanon Defied*, 132.

75   Waddah Shararah, *Dawlat Hizbullah*, 76.

76   Quoted in Majed Halawi, *A Lebanon Defied*, 149.

77   Author's interview with Fadi Hammoud, Montreal, 11 May 2009.

78   For more on Sayyid Musa and communism, see Augustus Norton, *Amal and the Shiʿa*, 42-43.

79   Author's interview with Bashir Osmat, Beirut, 29 June 2010.

80   Waddah Shararah , *Dawlat Hizbullah*, 91.

81   As a young Islamist, Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli had criticized Sayyid Musa and the Supreme Islamic Shiʿi Council for their reconciliatory position toward the Lebanese government and the Christian Right from 1969 until 1973. He welcomed, however, the *mahrumin* movement in 1974-75. Author's interview with Subhi al-Tufayli, ʿAyn Burday-Biqaʿ, Lebanon, 2007.

82   On the relationship of Sayyid Musa to Mostafa Chamran, see Houchang Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism: The Liberation Movement of Iran under the Shah and Khomeini* (London: I. B.Tauris, 1990), 190-202.

83   Hani Fahs, *al-Shiʿah wa al-Dawlah fi Lubnan*, 53.

84   Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shiʿi Lebanon*, 29.

85   For a close look at these processes following the formation of Grand Liban, one

can turn to the efforts of the *mujtahid* Yusuf al-Faqih (d. 1957) in producing his work on the personal-status law when he acted as counselor at the Ja'fari Court of Cassation in Beirut.

[86]   This runs counter to Ussama Makdisi's view that the Lebanese state is principally non-secular. See Ussama Makdisi, 'Reconstructing the Nation-State: The Modernity of Sectarianism in Lebanon.' On the question of the shari'ah and the modern state, see Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), chapters 5 & 6.

[87]   See Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 227-31.

[88]   Quoted in 'Adil Jamil Amin, *Ma'rakat al-Sanatayn fi al-Harb al-Lubnaniyyah* (Beirut: Maktabat al-Afwaj al-'Arabiyyah, 1976), 125.

[89]   Ibid.

[90]   Ibid.

[91]   See Hani Fahs, *al-Shi'ah wa al-Dawlah fi Lubnan*, 9.

[92]   Ibid., 20.

[93]   See Mahdi 'Amil, *Bahth fi Asbab al-Harb al-Ahliyyah fi Lubnan* (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi, 1979), 303-13.

[94]   See Augustus Richard Norton, 'Making Enemies in South Lebanon', in *Middle East Insight* III, no. 3 (1984), 13-20.

[95]   Augustus Norton, *Amal and the Shi'a*, 62-63. For more on the relationship of AMAL to the Palestinian armed movement and Syria, see pages 66-68.

[96]   On AMAL's position, see Augustus Richard Norton, 'The Shiites and the MNF', in *The Multinational Force in Beirut, 1982-1984*, ed. Anthony McDermott and Kill Skjelsbaek (Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 1991), 227-30; and Augustus Norton, Amal and the Shi'a, 68.

[97]   Augustus Norton, *Amal and the Shi'a*, 42, 43. In 1976, Syria sided with the Maronite right-wing militias against the Palestinian-leftist coalition. Sayyid Musa supported the Syrian position.

[98]   Augustus Norton, *Hezbollah*, 23; Waddah Shararah, *Dawlat Hizbullah fi Lubnan*, 119.

[99]   Augustus Norton, *Amal and the Shi'a*, 62-63.

[100]   Magnus Ranstorp, *Hizb'allah in Lebanon: The Politics of the Western Hostage Crisis* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), 31-33; Amal Saad-Ghorayeb, *Hizbu'llah: Politics and Religion* (London & VA: Pluto Press, 2002), 15, 45.

[101]   Husayn Muroeh, *al-Muqawamah* (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi, 1985), 22.

[102]   Augustus Richard Norton, 'Changing Actors and Leadership among the Shiites of Lebanon', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* CDLXXXII, no. 1 (Nov. 1985), 109-21.

[103]   See Husayn Muroeh, *al-Muqawamah*, 88-91.

[104]   Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shi'i Lebanon*, 38.

[105]   Augustus Norton, *Amal and the Shi'a*, 11.

[106]   See Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 191-92.