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Together all the way? Abeyance and co-optation of Sunni networks in Lebanon

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ABSTRACT

This article assesses how social movement continuity may vary in non-democratic and

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opted movements may easily turn against the authorities once again. Moreover, local legacies of protests may be used as resources by new protest leaders.

KEYWORDS: Contentious politics abeyance processes high-risk contexts Islamism social networks Lebanon

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes

1. In this article, I distinguish between formal social movement organizations (SMOs) and more informal protest networks. The latter are more common in the Middle East today. Another category is represented by networks of everyday interaction, based in local communities, which may become politicized and transformed into a social movement community (Hassan & Staggenborg, [2015](#)).

2. 'Politicization' will here signify a process whereby existing networks of everyday interaction are taken over by political activists, and used for political and strategic purposes as a means of organizing individuals and making demands on the authorities.

3. I adopt a perspective that views the relationship between the conflictive and the everyday as a process of mutual transformation.

4. As Olivier Roy (2004) argues, 'the only those who gave up' (Fillard, 2004).

5. The Farouk Karami was a prominent figure in the 1990s; after his death, his popularity was significantly reduced.



6. It is more precise to limit the term 'co-optation' to the granting of some sort of official functions to former members of dissident movements (violent or non-violent), in exchange for their ending the protest campaign. A quite different case is the granting by the regimes in power of privileges to conservative Islamist movements which never engaged in dissidence.
7. Likewise, some protest networks may also have undefined relations to state power (Dobry, [2009, 1986](#), p. 11).
8. Interview, Erik Fosse, Oslo, March 2014.
9. Under the 1969 Cairo Agreement, the Lebanese Army did not have access to the Palestinian refugee camps.
10. Informal discussions, politicians and inhabitants in Tripoli, 2008–2016.
11. Interview, Fatima Akkawi, Tripoli, June 2012.
12. Interview, Nahla Chahal, Beirut, June 2012.
13. Discussions, residents in Bab al-Tebbaneh and Abi Samra, Tripoli, 2008–2016.
14. Interview, former member of Jund Allah in Bab al-Tebbaneh, Tripoli, August 2011.
15. Interview, former member of Jund Allah in Abi Samra, Tripoli, February 2009.
16. Interview, Kanaan Naji, Tripoli, October 2016 and August 2017.
17. Interview, [redacted]
18. Email, [redacted]
19. Interview, [redacted]
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21. Shei [redacted]
22. Interview, [redacted]
23. Interview, [redacted] anonymous
former Tawhid member, August 2009.



24. Discussions with anonymous former Tawhid members, August 2009–August 2017.
25. Personal observations, Tripoli, 2008–2016.
26. As Minqara is a well-known figure, he is not anonymized here.
27. Interview, Hashim Minqara, Tripoli, April 2008.
28. As al-Hassan is a well-known figure, he is not anonymized here.
29. Salafis are distinguished by their common creed ('aqida), which centred on the strict adherence to the principle of Tawhid (the oneness of Allah) and their rejection of human reasoning and logics. Wiktorowicz, [2006](#), p. 60.
30. A total of around 200 Lebanese, including some Salafi sheikhs in north Lebanon, participated in the Afghan jihad. (al-Atrache, [2007](#)).
31. Interview, Salim Alloush, Tripoli, April 2008.
32. 'Hisham' is a pseudonym. Some personal details have been omitted for reasons of anonymity.
33. Interview, former Jund Allah member, Bab al-Tebbaneh, Tripoli, June 2009.
34. Interview, former Jund Allah member, Bab al-Tebbaneh, Tripoli, June 2009.
35. Interview, Fawaz Zakaria, lawyer defending youths on terrorism charges Tripoli, May 2010.
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43. Interviews, anonymous Islamist figure in Tripoli, October 2016.



44. Observation of the site al-Jond.com, Spring of 2012.
45. 'Dialogue with a leader' (in Arabic), interview aired on al-Fajr radio, September 2007, reposted on al-Jond.com (accessed February 2009).
46. Interview, anonymous Islamist figure in Tripoli, October 2016.
47. Observations of political posters, Bab al-Tebbaneh and Abi Samra, May 2009, August 2009 and June 2010.
48. Interviews, Mustafa Alloush, Tripoli, 2010-2012.
49. Interview, Mustafa Alloush, Tripoli, June 2012.
50. Interview, anonymous Islamist figure in Tripoli, April 2016.

Additional information

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Notes



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