

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEBANON



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Politics and Society in the Middle East

CONSEQUENCES OF WW1

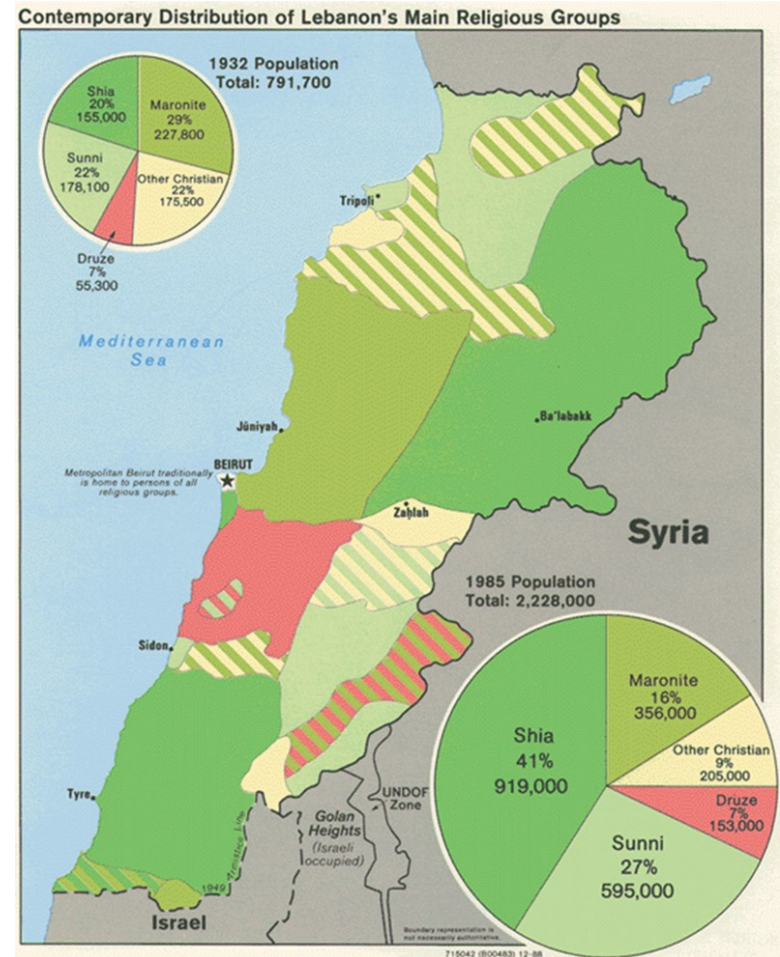
- After WW1 both Lebanon and Syria got under the mandate of France.
- The borders of modern states were set up → origins of the contemporary problems.
- The decision to separate Lebanon as the independent territorial unit (“stolen Syrian province”).
- Two basic options of the borders:
 - Small Lebanon – the only Christian state in the Middle East.
 - Bigger Lebanon – including the Shia Muslims.



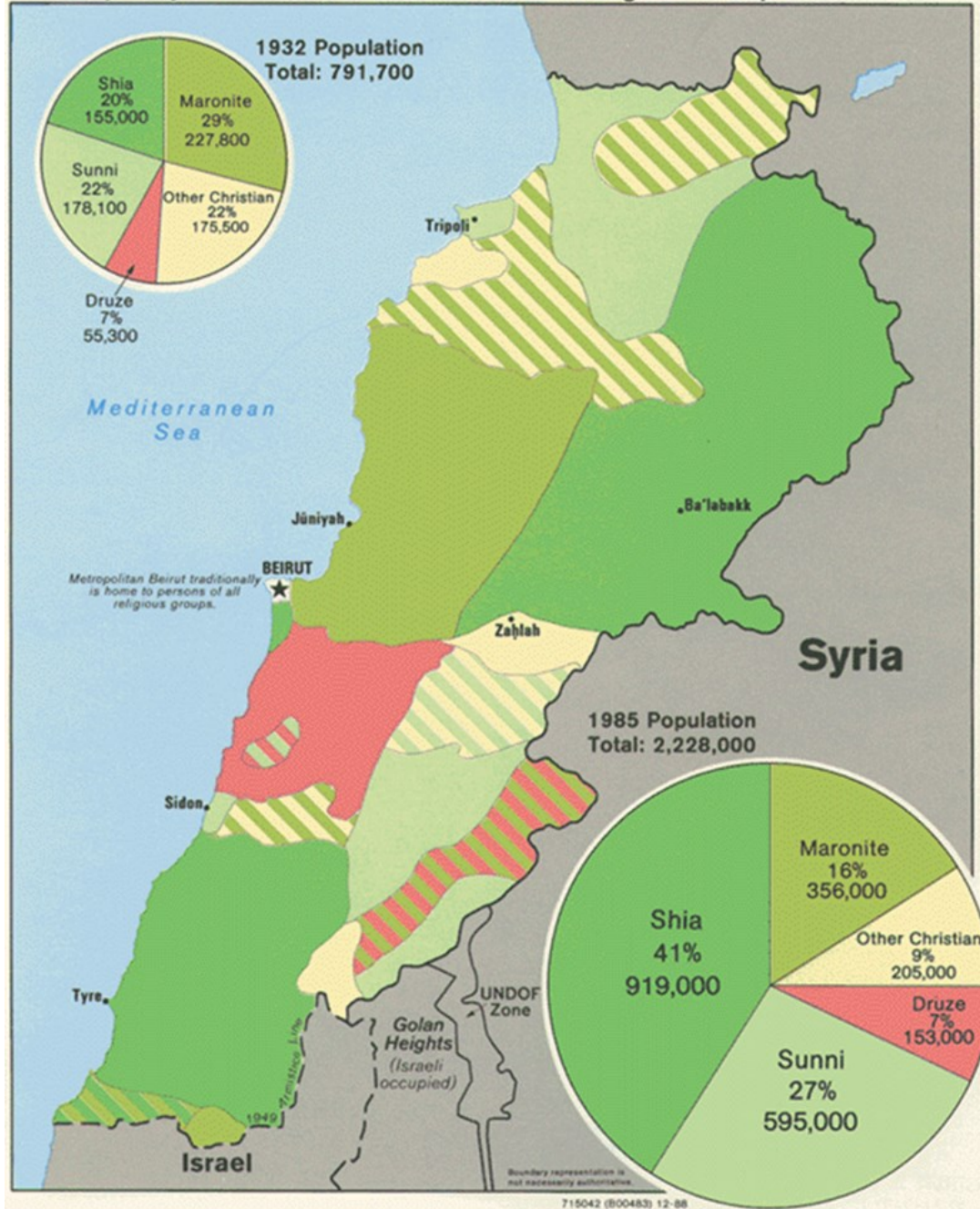
- Formellement déconseillé
- Une vigilance normale doit être observée dans la zone
- Déconseillé sauf raison impérative

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY OF LEBANON

- Maronites – about 900,000 people in Lebanon.
- Shia Muslims – came to Lebanon in 16th century from Persia.
- Sunni Muslims.
- Druzes.



Contemporary Distribution of Lebanon's Main Religious Groups



INDEPENDENCE

- September 1941: independence of Syria.
- Lebanon declared independence in 1943 → after the defeat of France WW2, Lebanon refused to support the collaborative Vichy regime.
- Lebanese leaders made so called *National Pact* (1943):
 - Verbal arrangement that define the representation of all religious and ethnic group in Lebanese parliament.
 - Christians vs. Muslims 6:5.
 - President shall be always Maronite, prime-minister always Sunni Muslim, Speaker of the Parliament Shia Muslim, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces always Druze.

INDEPENDENT LEBANON

- Economically developed country: “Switzerland of the Middle East”.
- “Beirut = Paris of the Middle East”
- Confessional system has been very frail since the beginning.
- During the time, the attempts of the Muslims for emancipation vs. Christian resistance to change the existing system.

ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT AND THE IMPACTS ON LEBANON AND SYRIA

- Since the beginning, Lebanon and Syria disapproved the establishment of the Jewish state → till today officially in war with Israel, just the armistice.
- Main problem the immigration of Palestine refugees after 1948 and 1967 → refugee camps in southern Lebanon and Syria.
- Syria found out very humiliating especially the loss of Golan Height in 1967.

REFUGEES NEIGHBORHOOD IN BEIRUT



CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON 1975-1990

- Radicalization of the Palestinians especially after PLO leaders moved from Jordan to Lebanon (southern Lebanon = Fatah land).
- 1975 escalation of the sectarian violence.
- Breaking point: assassination of Bachir Gemayel in 1982.
- The others states such Israel and Syria intervened in the conflict as well.



Bachir Gemayel

SABRA AND SHATILA MASSACRES

- 16-18 September 1982
massacres in refugees camps
Sabra and Shatila in Beirut
suburbs.
- About 400 – 2000
Palestinians murdered by the
members of Phalangist Party.
- Responsibility of Israeli army
– Ariel Sharon.



CIVIL WAR

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUYxKbMDUaw>

BIRTH OF HEZBOLLAH

- “Party of God“ established in 1985.
- Anti-Israeli and anti-USA shia movement supported by Iran and Assad’s regime in Syria.
- 2013: the military wing of Hezbollah (*Jihad Council*) was listed as a terrorist organization by EU.



Hassan Nasrallah

END OF CIVIL WAR

- Taif Agreement 1989:
 - Compromise negotiated by Saudi Arabia
 - Formal ending of the civil war even though limited violent clashes still appeared time to time.
 - The attempts to reduce the inequality between Christians and Muslims → changes in National Pact – mandates in parliament between Christians and Muslims 1:1.
 - Limitation of presidential power.
- General amnesty on crimes that were committed during the civil war.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN LEBANON AFTER CIVIL WAR

- Slow post-conflict reconstruction of the country (various social, economic, environmental problems) - Corruption and ill-governance
- Religious radicals in the society – Hezbollah (nowadays the political party that is represented in the parliament).
- Refugees from Syria → risk of the civil war in Lebanon – 25 % of refugees in Lebanese society.



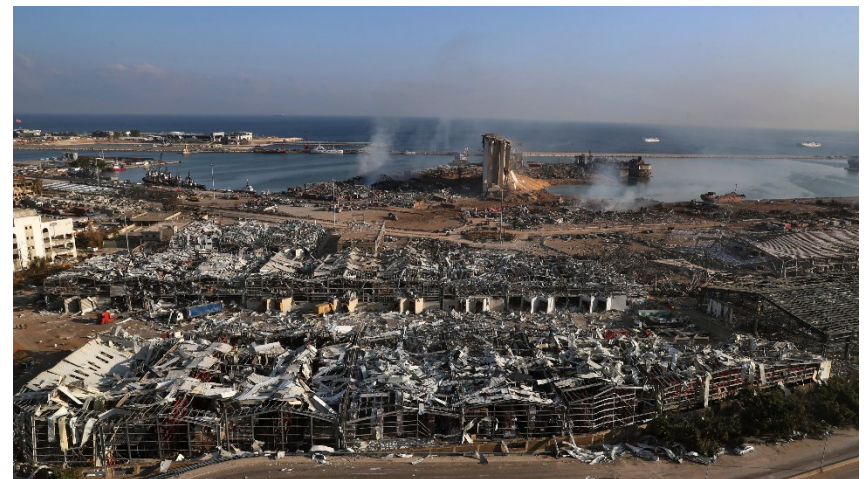
Saad Hariri

ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS 2019



EXPLOSION IN BEIRUT 2020

- On 4 August 2020, a large amount of ammonium nitrate stored at the port of the city of Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, exploded.
- 204 deaths, 6,500 injuries, and US\$15 billion in property damage, 300,000 people homeless.
- The ammonium nitrate was stored in the port since 2013 (ship MV Rhosus).



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION