



The Lebanese Army: A National Institution in a Divided Society

Oren Barak

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Comprehensive study of the Lebanese Army from Lebanon's independence to the present.

Oren Barak sheds new light on the major political and social developments in Lebanon since its independence by focusing on the emergence of the Lebanese Army, its paralysis during the civil war from 1975 to 1990, and its reconstruction after the war. He discusses the remarkable transformation of a military dominated by one sector of society—the Christian communities, and particularly the Maronites—into one that is characterized by power sharing among Lebanon's various communities, large families, and regions. The book develops a new approach to the study of the role of the military in divided societies by examining military institutions from three intertwined angles: first, as major arenas for social coexistence and conflict; second, as actors that are involved in politics but are also affected by political processes; and third, as actors that promote the process of state formation. This comprehensive look at Lebanon will inform the discussion of other divided societies, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, that face the dual challenge of restoring the political system and the security sector after state failure and intrastate conflict.

“...a definitive history and analysis of the LAF [Lebanese Armed Forces].” — Review of Middle East Studies

“...Barak's work is a valuable reference for both policy analysts and historians of modern Lebanese history.” — Digest of Middle East Studies

“This is one of the few major efforts devoted to not only the structure of the Lebanese military, but also its social and ethnic composition and its role within the country's polity ... the book is meticulously researched ... The manner in which Barak weaves the contribution of the Lebanese military into the complexities of civil war and intersectoral relations is worthy of praise.” — CHOICE

Oren Barak is Senior Lecturer of Political Science and International Relations at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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