
*The Lebanese System:
A Critical Reassessment*

A Two-day Conference

May 18-19, 2001
AUB College Hall Auditorium B1

Sponsored by
Center for Behavioral Research (AUB)
The Chiha Foundation (Beirut, Lebanon)



IX^e SOMMET DE LA
FRANCOPHONIE
Beyrouth 2001

*"Under the patronage of His Excellency Professor Ghassan Salamé
Minister of Culture*

Friday May 18, 2001

Opening Session

9:00-9:30

Welcoming Remarks

Professor Samir Khalaf
President John Waterbury

Opening Address

H.E. Professor Ghassan Salamé

Session I : Introduction

9:30-11:00

The session will examine the particularities of the Lebanese system and its evolution since independence. It will also introduce the contribution of Michel Chiha and his circle to the formulation of the system.

Chair: Fouad Boutros

Nadim Shehadi (Centre for Lebanese Studies, Oxford)

"Michel Chiha and the Lebanese Political System."

Ahmad Baydoun (Lebanese University)

"Michel Chiha and Confessionalism."

Fares Sassine (Lebanese University)

"The Evolution of the Lebanese Idea."

Fawaz Trabulsi (Lebanese American University)

"The Lebanese System Revisited."

Coffee Break 11:00-11:30

Session II: The Institutional Framework

11:30-13:00

The session will examine the Constitution, the National pact, and the Ta'if Agreement in an attempt to determine whether the institutional framework was a cause of stability or instability.

Chair: Joe Issa El Khoury

Chibli Mallat (Saint Joseph University)

"The Constitutions, The National Pact and the Ta'if Agreement: Continuities and Discrepancies."

Samir Franjeh (Politician & Journalist)

"The Ta'if Agreement: A Provisional Compromise or a New National Pact?"

Elizabeth Picard (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris)
"Is Consociational Democracy Reformable?"

Lunch Break 13:00-15:00

Session III: Politics, Society and Confessionalism

15:00-16:30

The session will examine the interplay between the power sharing communal system, society and politics. It will look at the social and political underpinnings of the communal system, as well as the impact of power sharing on Lebanese political life and social relations.

Chair: Camille Aboussouan

Nawaf Salam (American University of Beirut)

"Overcoming Confessionalism: Towards a Lebanese Citizenship."

Farid El Khazen (American University of Beirut)

"Political Parties in Post-war Lebanon."

Melhem Chaoul (Lebanese University)

"Ambivalence and Atypicality: Lebanese Society and Politics."

Coffee Break 16:30-17:00

Session IV: Morals, Ethics and Abuse of Authority

17:00-18:30

The session will examine the fault lines of the socio-political system that have undermined the development of the concept of citizenship among the Lebanese and favoured a distorted practice of politics.

Chair: Samir Khulaf

Reinoud Leenders (SOAS)

"Public Means for Private Ends: Power and State-building in Post-war Lebanon"

Antoine Khair (Conseil D'Etat and Saint Joseph University)

"Judicial Power and Political Power."

Adnan el-Amine (Lebanese University)

"Education and Civic Awareness in Lebanon."

Saturday May 19, 2001

Session V: Lebanon's Economic System

9:00 – 10:30

The session will examine the liberal Lebanese economic system and its performance. An attempt is made to address two sets of questions: First, was the adopted economic system the only possible alternative? Second, how well did it serve Lebanon and how can it be improved in view of facing future challenges?

Chair: Michel El-Khoury

Toufic Gaspard (Economist)

"Decline and Fall of Laissez-faire: Lebanon's Economic Performance Since Independence."

Makram Sader (Association of Banks in Lebanon)

"The Lebanese Banking Sector and the Lebanese Economy."

Kamal Hamdan (Economist)

"Lebanon's Post-war Economic Experience: Constraints and Opportunities."

Coffee Break 10:30-11:00

Session VI: Foreign and Regional Policy

11:00-12:30

Lebanon has always had a foreign policy that balanced national, regional and international concerns. In the light of recent internal and regional developments, the session will attempt to determine what type of foreign policy can be envisaged for Lebanon.

Chair: Marwan Hamadé

Samir Kassir (Saint Joseph University)

"Lebanon and the Peace Process: From No-war to No-peace."

Fawaz Gerges (Sarah Lawrence College, New York)

"Lebanon Between East and West and in Arab Politics."

Volker Perthes (Stiftung Wissenschaft and Politik, Berlin)

"Lebanon in its Arab and Mediterranean Environment."

Lunch Break 12:30-15:00

Session VII: Roundtable Discussion:
Perspectives and Prospects for Lebanon

15:00-17:00

This session will evaluate the system, from independence to the present. It will also examine its prospects, and attempt to formulate solutions for the future.

Chair: Ghassan Tueni