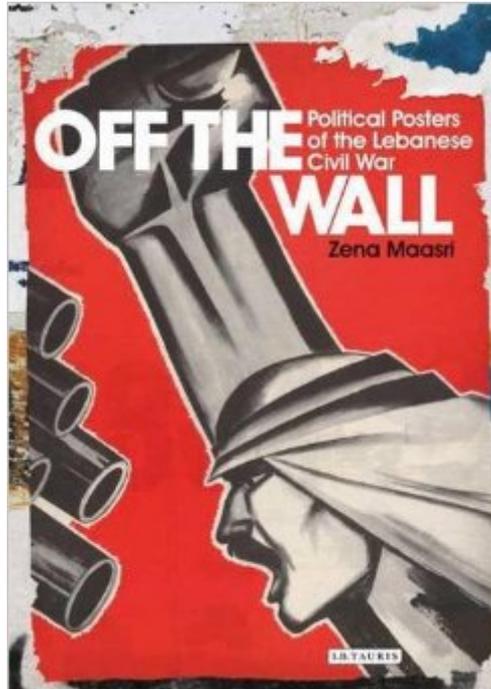


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Off The Wall: Political Posters Of The Lebanese Civil War



Synopsis

In this lavishly illustrated work, Zeina Maasri tells the tumultuous story of the struggle for Lebanon through the poster wars which raged on its streets. From 1975 to 1990, different factions in Lebanon's civil conflict flooded the streets with posters to mobilize their constituencies, undermine their enemies, and create public sympathy for their cause. Showcased here for the first time, the posters display a dramatic clash of cultures, ideologies and meanings. Maasri shows how the iconography of the posters changed throughout the war, and links this to changing political identities and imagined communities. She explores the factions' different aesthetic influences; from modern Arab visual culture to Latin America and revolutionary Iran. Combining in-depth knowledge of the local context with fascinating insights into the semiotics of visual media, *Off the Wall* is a highly original contribution to our understanding of visual culture, civil conflict, and the politics of the Middle East.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a very interesting book that everyone, especially Lebanese people, need to read. For the Lebanese, it serves as a good reminder of the not so distant past. This past, unfortunately, might also be the future. The same militias that were part of this war are now political parties in the parliament. It is interesting to see what slogans these parties used when they were militias and how their ideas have changed. To the general reader, this is a good book because it clearly explains how a poster can be used to convey a message, and how we can decode this message by taking

note of the details. The book also explains how ideas of a party help shape its posters. It was really interesting to see how the posters of the socialist progressive party shifted from a pan-Arab perspective to a small and tiny sectarian perspective. It was also interesting to see how the posters of right wing militias contained racist material against Arabs, while today the political parties that have emerged from these same militias proclaim themselves to be protectors of Arab nationalism in Lebanon. Some of the most important posters were those that were created by Hezbollah since it is the only group to still hold its weapons (publicly). It is interesting to see how the center of the resistance's posters has shifted from Palestine to Lebanese nationalism. It is also important to note how during the civil war the main figure in these posters was the martyr while today the main figure is that of the leader of the party. Now to the question: why four stars? Well, I just have one tiny problem with this book and it's the introduction. Although it is well written and it raises very important points, I felt that it was not suitable for this book. In short it was too academic and hence should have been part of a journal, and not of a book of this sort.

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