Vision and Motivation

Though the Lebanese Civil War ended in 1989 with the signing of the Taif Accords, Syria’s role in Lebanese politics only escalated when al-Mukhabarat, Syria’s intelligence services, were tasked with preventing popular dissent, banning anti-Syrian media, political parties and gatherings while harassing and arresting opposition leaders throughout the 1990’s and early 2000’s.

Rafik Hariri, the popular Sunni businessman turned politician and Lebanese prime minister credited with rebuilding Beirut after the Civil War, was often at odds with the regime in Damascus. When Syria pressured Hariri to renew the term of pro-Syrian President Emile Lahoud in late 2004, Hariri decided to step down as
prime minister. Less than four months later, on February 14, 2005, Hariri and 20 others were killed in a car bomb targeting Hariri’s motorcade, a political event known as the earthquake for its massive galvanization of public dissent. This galvanization came to be called the Cedar Revolution.

Goals and Objectives

According to Cedar Revolution activist Asma Andraos, who saw Hariri’s death as the principal catalyst for change, “I just thought, who do these people think they are? I mean, you can’t just come here in the middle of the day, in the middle of our city, blow up a man of this importance, killing I don't know how many other people in your way, and get away with it.”

Despite Lebanon’s bloody political history, the Cedar Revolution chose a path of nonviolent civic engagement to achieve their four main objectives: 1. resignation of the ruling Lebanese government, 2. military withdrawal of the Syrians, 3. an international UN tribunal to investigate Hariri’s death, and 4. resignation of the heads of the intelligence services.

On February 15, just two days after Hariri’s assassination, 150,000 of his supporters accompanied his funeral procession, with chants of “Syria out! Syria out!” On February 21, in what would become the largest nonviolent movement in the history of Lebanon, 20,000 activists marched from the St. Georges Hotel, where Hariri died, to Martyrs’ Square in central Beirut. Demonstrations calling for Syria’s withdrawal continued every week through

2004 تمدید کنید، حریری تصمیم به کناره گیری از اقدامات ملی را گرفت. کمتر از 4 ماه بعد دو فوریه سال 2005 حریری و 20 نفر دیگر که همراه او بودند در اثر بمبی که در آن بمب تیزی کار گذاشته شده بود کشته شدند. یا این واقعه سیاسی شبیه زمین لرزه‌ای برای فرانک کردن گسترده مخالفت عمومی بود و از آن پس، انتقال سرو به آن پس، می‌شود.

اهداف و مقاصد

کشیدن انقلاب سرو، اسم آندروس‌وس، که مرگ حریری را عامل اصلی تغییر می‌داند، می‌گوید: “اینها فکر می‌کنند که هستند؟ منظور این است که شما نمی‌توانید وسط روز یا شب در نقطه مرکزی شهر و چین شخصیت مهم و دیگر افرادی که در سر راه‌ها هستند را بکشید و به راحتی فرار کنید.”

على الرغم تاريخ سياسي خویندن لبنان، انقلاب سرو مسير بدون خشونت مبارزه مدنی را برای رسیدن به هدف برگزید: 1. استعفای دولت حاکم لبنان، 2. عقب‌نشینی نظامی سوریه، 3. تشکیل دادگاه بین المللی سازمان ملل متحد برای تحقيق درباره مرگ حریری، 4. استعفاء سران سرویسی های اطلاعاتی.

در روز 15 فوریه، تنها 2 روز پس از ترور حریری صد و پنجاه هزار نفر از طرفدارانش در مراکز تجمع جانش را مشاهده کردند در حاشیه که این شعار را سر می‌داند: سوریه بايد بیرون برود. در روز 21 فوریه، تنها 24 ساعت پس از مرگ حریری بدون خشونت در تاریخ لبنان، بسته‌های گسترده کشیدن در راه‌پیمایی عظیمی از هنرمندی در جورجس، جایی که حریری کشته شده بود، با میدان شهر در مرکز بروت، شرکت کردن. پس از آنکه تظاهرات
late March. Once the demonstrations became regular, a group of approximately 500 youth activists slept at Martyrs’ Square for over two months and established a tent city that became known as the ‘Freedom Camp.’

With daily protests numbering up to 25,000, the government declared a crackdown on public demonstrations on February 27, but in a true sign of their nonviolent approach to activism, protestors placed flowers in the barrels of the guns of Lebanese soldiers who had been sent to shut down the Freedom Camp at Martyrs’ Square. The next day, when pro-Syrian Prime Minister Omar Karami resigned, protestors in Martyrs’ Square rejoiced and chanted “Karami has fallen, your turn will come Lahoud, and yours, Bashar!”

Only days later, on March 2, Syrian leader Bashar Al-Assad announced that Syrian forces would withdraw completely from Lebanese territory, ending more than 30 years of occupation. In response to Assad’s move, Hezbollah organized a demonstration on March 8 that attracted half a million supporters in an effort to show its support for the Syrian regime.

Five days later on March 14, the opposition rebutted with a gathering of one million Lebanese to Martyrs’ Square. They used SMS, the internet and television, to create the mass mobilization.

**Leadership**

Asma Andraos, who until Hariri’s murder was an event planner wholly

beh صورت متظمٌ ادامه يبدا كرد، حدودً، بانتصد
كلنگنه جوان در میدان شهدا برای بیشتر از 7 ماه
فی از داده و استقامت یافته به طوری که آن منطقه
تحت عنوان "کمپ آزادی" شناخته شد. بَا توجه به گسترگی اعتراضات که به
پیست و پیش هزار سیده به یک دانل اعلام کرد
که تظاهرات در روز 27 فوریه بايد سرکوب
گردد. اما به نشانه روبروی صلح طلبانه اعتراضات،
معترضین بر سر اسلاجه سربازان لبنانی که برای
انهدام کمپ آزادی در میدان شهدا اعزالشهری
بودند، گل‌گذاشتن. روز بعد، نخستوزیر حامی
سوریه، عمر کرامی، استعفا داد. پس از اعلام این
خبر، تظاهرات گان در میدان شهدا به پایکوبی
پرداخته و این شعار را سر می‌دادند که کرامی ساقط
شده، نوبت شما هم خواهد رسید، لوحود و پیارا!آنها
جند روز بعد، 4 مارس، بشار اسد، رهبر
سوریه، اعلام کرد که پس از 30 سال اشغال،
نیروهای سوریه از خاک لبنان به طور کامل
عقبنشینی خواهند کرد. در پاسخ به این حرکت،
حروب الله، تظاهرات یا در روز 8 مارس با حضور
نیم میلیون نفر برای حمایت از رژیم سوریه
سازماندهی کرد.

بنچ روز بعد، در روز 14 مارس، گروه مخالف
با حضور یک میلیون لبنانی در میدان شهدا پاسخ
متفاوت دادند. آنها برای این حرکت وسیع مردمی،
از پیامک، اینترنت و تلویزیون استفاده کردند.

**راهبری**

اسما آندروس که تا زمان مرجع خیری
تنه رئیس دفتر (برنامه‌ریزی فعالیت‌های) او و از
جراحات سیاسی به دور بود، به طور ناگهانی وارد
عمل شد و اعتراضی را مبین بر عقاب‌نشینی سوریه
از کمپ آزادی، تدارک دید. او برای سازمان‌دهی
unconnected to politics, sprang to action and drafted a petition demanding Syrian withdrawal at the Freedom Camp. She helped organize La Chambre Noire or “the darkroom”, an ad hoc group that included political leaders, strategists, and public relations specialists who planned and propelled the Cedar Revolution. One member of the group, Saleh Farouk, Director General of the Beirut Association for Social Development described the group’s role in the protests, “We were there to think: what to do? Who to support? How to make this work? How to support the youths in the tents? We needed to ensure that there were enough printed signs and slogans. This room was the political-logistical ‘kitchen’... We discussed how to ensure the continuity of this intifada to reach the objective of getting Syria out.”

Civic Environment

Since the 1975 Civil War, Lebanon has been marred by violent political sectarianism between the Maronite Christians, the Sunnis and the Shi’a. Though the 1989 Taif Accords were supposed to reconcile disproportionate allotments of power, the proposed power-sharing model of allotting high-level positions and proportions of parliament to different religious groups failed to ameliorate sectarianism and disunity. At the same time, Syria’s installation of intelligence forces throughout the country strengthened its ability to manipulate Lebanese confessional politics and
improve its own patronage via the various sects and political groups hungry for power. Arbitrary arrest and detention by Lebanese security forces and Syrian-backed paramilitary groups were commonplace for political dissidents and independent journalists who worked within a fiercely repressive media environment. For nearly 30 years, the Syrian regime starved the Lebanese people of their human rights, but it wasn’t until Hariri’s murder that public outrage outweighed fear of the Syrian intelligence apparatus.¹³

**Message and Audience**

In order to convey a unified national message, the opposition’s demands and use of symbols and slogans had to reflect a cohesive front. Nora Jumblatt, the wife of Druze Leader Walid Jumblatt and a member of La Chambre Noire, ordered thousands of Lebanese flags and red and white striped scarves for protestors to wear, urging them to embrace their Lebanese identity with the national flag.¹⁴ Using this theme, the PR firm Quantum Communications and its President, Eli Khoury, chose to “brand” the revolution with signs and posters in white and red which read “Independence ’05”. Khoury described how including the “’05” implied a deadline for Syrian military withdrawal.¹⁵ These signs became a keepsake of the movement, demanding Syrian withdrawal while promoting Lebanese unity and nationalism. The Lebanese also coined their own term for the movement - Samir Frangieh, a spokesman
for members of the political opposition, declared the protests an “Intifada for Independence” four days after Hariri’s death.\textsuperscript{16}

**Outreach Activities**

The overwhelmingly unified message of the opposition movement represented a new effort to bridge the divide between traditionally feuding elements of society, which was duly noted by the international community when UN Security Council members called for the full implementation of Resolution 1559, which called for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and the disarming of Hezbollah. In addition to statements by President Bush and President Chirac, Germany, Russia and Egypt also called for Syria’s withdrawal. Within the region, too, the movement garnered support and it was Saudi Prince Abdullah who appealed to Syrian President Assad to withdraw his troops from Lebanon.

Knowing full well the role international pressure can play in civic disputes of such magnitude, the demonstrators made sure to play to both local and international audiences by making signs in both English and Arabic, giving them a more accessible brand image.\textsuperscript{17} At the height of the protests in Beirut, similar demonstrations were being led by Lebanese expatriates all over the world, in cities such as Paris, London and Sydney, where over 10,000 people came out in support of the Cedar Revolution.\textsuperscript{18}

Keeping its word, Syria began its
withdrawal in late March and finished removing its 14,000 troops by the end of April 2005. While Lebanon still teeters on the cusp of democracy today, the Cedar Revolution proved that a non-violent civic movement in the Middle East can generate enough domestic momentum and international support to counter power politics at the highest levels of even the most corrupt regimes.

Footnotes
2. “Asma Andraos Interview.” Online Activism Institute.
3. Ibid.
12. Ibid. 14.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid. 13.

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Deeb, Maurius. “Statement of Maurius Deeb before the House Committee on International Relations’


Books


Videos


“Asma Andraos Interview.” Online Activism Institute.