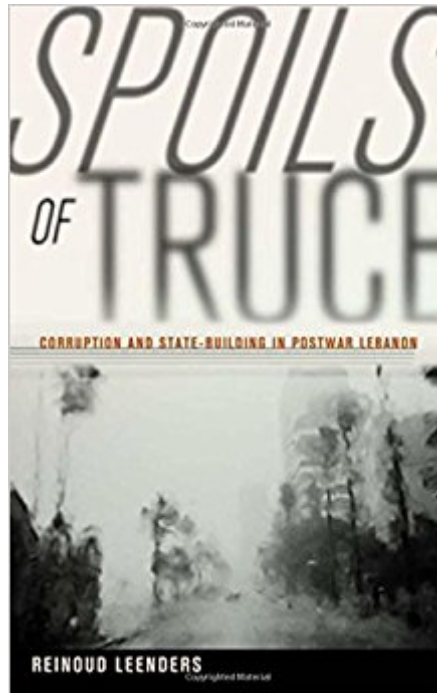


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# Spoils Of Truce: Corruption And State-Building In Postwar Lebanon



## Synopsis

In *Spoils of Truce*, Reinoud Leenders documents the extensive corruption that accompanied the reconstruction of Lebanon after the end of a decade and a half of civil war. With the signing of the Ta'if peace accord in 1989, the rebuilding of the country's shattered physical infrastructure and the establishment of a functioning state apparatus became critical demands. Despite the urgent needs of its citizens, however, graft was rampant. Leenders describes the extent and nature of this corruption in key sectors of the Lebanese economy and government, including transportation, health care, energy, natural resources, construction, and social assistance programs. Exploring in detail how corruption implicated senior policymakers and high-ranking public servants, Leenders offers a clear-eyed perspective on state institutions in the developing world. He also addresses the overriding role of the Syrian leadership's interests in Lebanon and in particular its manipulation of the country's internal differences. His qualitative and disaggregated approach to dissecting the politics of creating and reshaping state institutions complements the more typical quantitative methods used in the study of corruption. More broadly, *Spoils of Truce* will be uncomfortable reading for those who insist that power-sharing strategies in conflict management and resolution provide some sort of panacea for divided societies hoping to recover from armed conflict.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 312 pages

Publisher: Cornell University Press; 1 edition (October 9, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0801451000

ISBN-13: 978-0801451003

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Best Sellers Rank: #1,087,342 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #72 in [Books > History > Middle East > Lebanon](#) #987 in [Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Middle East](#) #1894 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Political Economy](#)

## Customer Reviews

"One of the most disturbing legacies of the post-civil war experience in Lebanon has been the

persistence of corruption in the country's sociopolitical institutions. In this well-researched book, Leenders . . . examines the myriad causes of corruption in the country . . . [and] convincingly demonstrates how Lebanon's archaic political system perpetuates corruption. . . . Although the book's focus is on Lebanon, the author's theoretical arguments can be applied to the study of corruption in many other Arab countries. Summing Up: Highly recommended."

(June 2013) Here is the most remarkable study day on the Lebanese political system and its operation since the end of the Civil War and the Taif Agreement. . . . This reads like a fascinating detective story except that it is real people who find themselves without care and without electricity, millions of dollars disappear into private pockets and a country that participated in sixes and sevens."

Elizabeth Picard, *Journal of the Worlds Muslims and Mediterranean* (April 2014) "Through rich descriptions of select postwar institutions, *Spoils of Truce* advances our knowledge of corruption beyond existing aggregate survey indicators and anecdotal evidence. The result is a more complete understanding not just of the magnitude and dynamics of corruption, but also of how crucial institutions evolved between 1989 and 2005. . . . The demand for an alternative theoretical framework originates in the intriguing possibilities offered by the book's careful investigation of corruption cases and how they interact with these struggles. It is above all a testament to Leenders's success in arguing that public institutions deserve a central place even in contexts where they are especially vulnerable to political manipulation."

Julia Choucair-Vizoso, *Political Science Quarterly* (April 2014) "...Reinoud Leenders' '*Spoils of Truce: Corruption and State-Building in Postwar Lebanon*' not only offers an interesting read for the general reader, but would also provide excellent material for students in international and political sciences at bachelor and master level, as well as for researchers, experts, consultants and politicians."

JIRS Editorial Board, *Journal of Intercultural and Religious Studies* (December 2013) "At last we have a thorough, insightful study of corruption in an Arab country that is theoretically grounded, empirically rich, and convincing in its fundamental premise that corruption is the inherent by-product of a defective political system. Sadly, Reinoud Leenders's book is also highly relevant to Arab politics more generally for, like Lebanon, more than 50 percent of the Arab countries rank in the bottom half of the Corruption Perception Index. His insights are eminently transportable."

Robert Springborg, Naval Postgraduate School, coauthor of *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East* "In using the issue of corruption to address questions about the development and effects of state institutions, Reinoud Leenders usefully highlights the often overlooked role of the Lebanese state in shaping economic behavior. He offers a compelling and richly theoretical argument about the centrality of the Lebanese state in explaining

the prominence of corruption in Lebanon and its effects on patterns of economic and political governance. In the process, Leenders has produced the most important work on Lebanon's political economy in a generation." — Steven Heydemann, Senior Advisor, United States Institute of Peace "Spoils of Truce is based on a wealth of information about corruption in postwar Lebanon. Reinoud Leenders convincingly links corruption to the nature of state institutions, thus rehabilitating the study of the state and its role in shaping Lebanese politics." — Marie-Joëlle Zahar, Université de Montréal

Reinoud Leenders is Reader in International Relations with a focus on Middle East Studies in the Department of War Studies at King's College, London. He is coeditor of Middle East Authoritarianisms: Governance, Contestation, and Regime Resilience in Syria and Iran.

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