gender roles performed in martyr posters of the *Wars*. I further claim that findings on hypermasculine commercials can be applied to martyr posters, as they are also circulated to persuade.

I will then focus on depictions of the Holiday Inn and Murr Tower in the posters of *Nancy* and connect these two ruins of the *Wars* to the poster of the martyr. I also discuss the rumours and potential histories that often surround shuhada. Aided by secondary literature and an essay by Walid Sadek, I will argue that the Holiday Inn and Murr Tower, like the posters of the martyrs, render unfinished business past instead of acknowledging the *Wars*' present protraction.

Finally, considering Jacques Derrida's concept of hauntology, I discuss the spectral qualities of shuhada. The martyrs in the posters are neither fully dead and invisible nor entirely alive and visible, and they point to both the past, where they died, and the future, where the dream they died for should be realised. However, *Nancy*, in my reading, only partially embodies Derrida's ghosts. This is why I focus in this last part on the artwork *Faces* (2009), by Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, which, in my reading, illustrates the spectral qualities of the martyr. By resorting to other theories of present-absent images, I will also clarify that the martyrs do not embody a latent absence and are not images that have withdrawn past a surpassing disaster but can be grasped best when thought with Derrida.

The concluding aim is to make clear that *Nancy* thoroughly investigates the construction of the sectarian martyr and the fabrication of its image, which is used not only for commemoration, but also as a means of visual politics.

4.1 The Sectarian Use of Logos, Symbols, and Slogans

Nancy reveals that the parties that took part in the conflicts equally used martyrdom-related symbols, slogans, and party logos in their posters during the *Wars*. The play therefore demonstrates that the anatomy of the martyr poster, which I envision as a 'body', was very similar among the groups.

My thinking of the poster as a body is inspired by Guffey's understanding of the medium as an anthropomorph, which I mentioned in 2.1. It also links with the work of visual semiotician Sandra Moriarty, who claims that an image consists of codes that must be decoded in order for meaning to be extracted, in a process that is similar to that of a doctor looking for a patient's symptoms before making a diagnosis.[278]

278 Sandra Moriarty, 'The Symbiotics of Semiotics and Visual Communication', *Journal of Visual Literacy* 22, no. 1 (2002): 20–25.

Furthermore, my reading of the pictures is informed by Roland Barthes's essay 'Rhetoric of the Image', where he argues that all images are polysemic, in the sense that their meaning is not fixed and there are multiple ways in which they could be interpreted. Barthes identifies three possible modes of analysing pictures.[279] First, there is the 'literal' denotative reading, which describes what is seen. Taking a Hezbollah poster (*Fig. 3.71*) as an example, we see photographs of three men, a building, a flower, a moon, and birds.

Second, there is Barthes's connotative reading, which attempts to understand more than what is literally seen. Here, the learning of certain cultural and political knowledge is necessary. This knowledge is crucial to understanding that the building in the poster is not just any building but is the Dome of the Rock, that the men are martyrs, and that the other symbols mentioned are linked to Muslim martyrdom. Knowing all this, we understand that we see an image commemorating three shuhada who died for a party with an Islamic ideology.

At the same time, symbols are culturally specific, as highlighted by Rowena and Rupert Shepherd, who write that a symbol is 'something that a particular culture considers to mean something else'. They further explain that the meaning of the symbol is 'often capable of more than one interpretation, and beyond really precise definition'. Thus 'the world of symbols is a world of inference and suggestion, rather than of concrete facts and definite statements'.[280] For the following discussion, it is important to consider what the 'coded iconic message' of the discussed symbols means in the Lebanese cultural context, however, the same symbol might have different connotations elsewhere.

According to Barthes, the third layer of reading an image is the linguistic message—namely, the text that is written in the image—which anchors the meaning of the connoted message. In the Hezbollah poster, the slogan 'Martyrs on the Path to Jerusalem' confirms what we suspected after the connotative reading—namely, that the poster commemorates martyrs of a Muslim party—because, as I will elaborate below, liberating Jerusalem as a place of desire is, in the context of the *Wars*, restricted to parties that ground their ideology in Islam.

Using Barthes's framework, I will read the posters on the connotative and linguistic levels. Precisely, I will shed light on the party logos and other symbols that are frequently employed in martyr posters of the *Wars* and in their appropriated versions in *Nancy*. Finally, I will discuss the slogans.

279 Roland Barthes, 'Rhetoric of the Image', in *Roland Barthes: Image, Music, Text*, ed. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977).

280 Rowena Shepherd and Rupert Shepherd, *1000 Symbols: What Shapes Mean in Arts and Myth* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2002), 10–11.

4.1.1 The Party Logos and Their Appropriation in *Nancy*

The party logo is a visual identity that is brandished by the poster, making clear which group has issued it.[281] By appropriating logos that can be found in posters distributed during the *Wars*, *Nancy* reflects how the parties employed their logos in their martyr images.

Five deaths of Rabih (*Figs. 3.7–3.11*) are marked by the logo of Ahrar. As I noted in 3.5.1, at the beginning of *Nancy*, Rabih was a fighter for this party. Ahrar's logo consists of a golden cedar in a black circular outline, whose upper half is filled with white and lower half with red.[282] Red and white are the colours of the Lebanese flag, which also includes a green cedar.[283]

The cedar is a Christian-connoted symbol that is repeatedly mentioned in the Bible. The tree is related to Lebanon's political heritage. While there are—mostly but not only Muslim—ideologies that search for the roots of the country in an Arab past, right-wing Christians claim that the legacy of Lebanon is inherently Phoenician. The Phoenicians were an ancient Semitic civilisation, which means that the right-wing Christians locate Lebanon in a context that is not fully Arab but rather Mediterranean.[284] For example, by claiming that the Phoenicians traded the expensive cedar wood, the cedars in Lebanon are linked to the country's Phoenician and biblical past.[285] Also, in the Kataeb-run Musée de l'Indépendance, the cedar is mentioned in a wall text that cites Psalm 92:12: 'The Righteous Shall Flourish Like a Palm Tree, He Shall Grow Like a Cedar in Lebanon'.

The use of the cedar in Ahrar's logo is a reference to the party's Christian ideology. In the group's posters, the tree appears in different variations in the early years of the *Wars*, but it was usually not coloured but in black and white. In one example employing a serial format, the martyrs' faces are placed into the outline of the tree, and two logos are visible below (*Figs. 3.55–3.56*).[286] Apparently it was only after the 1990 assassination of the Ahrar leader, Dany Chamoun, that the coloured logo was

281 Hamdar, 'Hizbullah-land', 318–20 discusses Hezbollah as a brand.

282 It seems there is also a version of the logo with a green cedar; see Schmitt, *Advertised to Death*, 39.

283 Lebanese Army, 'alam al-lebnaniyeh abr al-tarkih', *YouTube*, 1:37 min, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SSFFJE9Wp8&t=2s.

284 For an analysis of the history of this invented or even fantasised Phoenician national legacy, see Salibi, *A House*, 167–81.

285 Hage, 'Religious Fundamentalism', 29.

286 However, there are also a few posters from the end of the 1970s that show the coloured logo. That the cedar is gold might be explained by the fact that the Kataeb, which was the first Christian party in Lebanon and was founded in 1936, also used the cedar in their logo. To distinguish the Ahrar cedar from the green one of the Kataeb, a change was made not only to the shape, but also to the colour. Gold is often associated with something precious, which might suggest that the Ahrar is also a precious party.

Fig. 4.1: Ahrar, 'A Dream Stolen', Poster, NLP 12, signsofconflict.com.

frequently used (*Fig. 4.1*).[287] This latest version of the logo is also visible in the posters in *Nancy* for the deaths of Rabih. As mentioned in the play, these deaths happened in the early years of the *Wars*, when Ahrar still predominately used its black-and-white logo.

The cedar also appears in the logo of the Christian LF, the party for which Rabih and Lina die in *Nancy* (*Figs. 3.12–3.13*, *Figs. 3.48–3.49*). In this case, the green tree is depicted in front of a white circle that is outlined in red; hence, analogies to the Lebanese flag are evident. Not only the cedar, but the whole flag is primarily linked to Christianity. During the French mandate, which started in 1920 and privileged Christians over Muslims, the flag consisted of a tricolour with a cedar. After Lebanon's independence in 1943, the flag was redesigned by the Christian Henri Pharaon, who decided to change the tricolour to the red-white-red Spanish fess but kept the cedar. Most flags of Arab countries include the colours red, white, and green and also—unlike the Lebanese flag—black. These colours, as Bahia Shehab and Haytham Nawar argue, are symbols for previous dynasties. Contemporary interpretations of the colours, such as white standing for snow, a symbol of peace and purity, and red for the blood shed by martyrs for the country, only later became connotations.[288] However, it can be assumed that the current popular symbolic meanings of the colour red and the flag's tree were adapted by Ahrar and the LF into their logos. Today, also non-Christian parties use the flag in their visuals. In particular, Hariri's Future Movement often includes the Lebanese flag in its visual politics. This is reflected in *Nancy*, as the Lebanese flag is visible behind Hariri when he appears on all four screens (*Fig. 3.53*).

287 In this poster, Dany Chamoun wears a T-shirt with the logo of the Ahrar Tigers, the party's military wing. Their logo, like the Ahrar logo, has a cedar in a circle, but a tiger is added into the cedar. By wearing this T-shirt, Chamoun brandishes himself as belonging to Ahrar, and to the Ahrar Tigers in particular.

288 Shehab and Nawar, *Arab Design*, 113. For contemporary popular interpretations of the colours, see Hussein Yassine, 'How the Lebanese Flag Was Created', *The 961*, 4 May 2020, https://www.the961.com/how-the-lebanese-flag-was-created.

The LF used their logo in posters at latest in 1980, when they were still the Kataeb's military wing. A poster shows the LF's leader Bachir giving a speech, standing below a cross. The LF logo is—notably in colour in the black-and-white image—visible in front of him, and the Kataeb's logo on a flag can be seen on the left-hand side of the image. It is a cedar consisting of three bold green stripes and a brown stem (*Fig. 4.2*). Apparently, both cedars, that of the LF and that of the Kataeb, coexisted in the same image until the LF split from the Kataeb in 1985. It was only then that each party usually used its own tree emblem. However, both cedars can still be seen next to each other to this day. For example, in a poster for Bachir in Sassine Square, which is the heart of the Christian district of Ashrafieh, the Kataeb cedar (left), the Lebanese flag (middle), and the LF cedar (right) are all visible (*Fig. 4.3*).

Fig. 4.2: LF, 'Tel al Mir – Tel al Zaatar 13 April 1980', 1980, Poster, 88 x 58 cm, WJA 19, signsofconflict.com.

The usage of the LF cedar in *Nancy* reflects its actual usage but is slightly exaggerated, as the LF applied its logo usually one time in its posters, but not three times as is done in *Nancy* (*Fig. 3.13*). The LF cedar also appears once on the screen on its own, accompanying a speech by Lina (*Fig. 3.50*). A cedar in a Lebanese context, when depicted elsewhere than in the national flag, usually points to Christian ideology and is employed in *Nancy* as such, as the tree only appears in posters of Rabih and Lina when they die for Christian parties.

Fig. 4.3: Poster of Bachir Gemayel (Building on Left), 'You Raise… Lebanon Remains', Poster of Samir Geagea (Centre), 'I Am with You, Boy from Ashrafieh', Advertisement Poster (Building on Right), Beirut – Sassine Square, October 2021, Photograph AR.

Of course, the meaning of symbols, when appropriated, can potentially be hijacked. An example is the logo of the Jammoul, or Lebanese National Resistance Front (LNRF), an umbrella organisation that consisted of Lebanese left-wing and pro-Arab parties that engaged in activities aimed at expelling the Israeli Army from Lebanon, and that stood in clear opposition to Christian groups, such as the Kataeb

and the LF.[289] The logo of the Jammoul comprises a cedar in a white circle that is outlined in black. The tree's branches are made of red letters that read 'Lebanese National Resistance Front', while the black trunk forms the words 'The South' and the red words below the cedar read 'Until Victory and Liberation'.[290] Like the Kataeb cedar, the Jammoul logo does not appear in *Nancy*, although it was often depicted in posters issued jointly by the Jammoul and the SSNP (*Fig. 3.77*).

The SSNP logo, which has remained unchanged since the start of the *Wars*, consists of a red 'zawbaa', which translates as whirlwind, on a white circle outlined in black (*Figs. 3.59, 3.77*). Following Solomon's reading, the black represents colonialism, sectarianism, and feudalism, while the white disc stands for daylight, which can destroy the negatively connoted elements. The four-armed red whirlwind symbolises the pillars of the party ideology—namely, power, freedom, organisation, and duty. According to the SSNP, the zawbaa stems from ancient Syrian artefacts, on which it has been frequently engraved as a symbol of matter and spirit.[291] It has been repeatedly mentioned that the shape of the zawbaa is similar to that of a swastika, or 'Hakenkreuz'; these claims have been just as repeatedly denied by the SSNP.[292] The zawbaa appears in *Nancy* only in posters that accompany the deaths of Lina for the SSNP (*Figs. 3.44, 3.46*). The use of the SSNP logo in the play is a direct reflection of the logo's use during the *Wars*, as the SSNP employed it in almost all the posters they distributed.

In contrast to the SSNP, the LCP rarely used its logo, a red dove inside a cedar, in its posters.[293] Instead, the sickle and the red star are employed in *Nancy* for the deaths of Ziad for the LCP (*Figs. 3.33–3.34*). These symbols are taken from posters of the Communist Action Organisation, a small party that was founded in 1970 (*Fig. 4.4*), and seem to point to the ideology of Communism rather than to the LCP in particular.

The Morabitoun logo consists of a red-outlined white octagon with black text inside that reads: 'Independent Nasserite Movement al-Morabitoun. What Is Taken by Force Cannot Be Regained Without Force' (*Fig. 4.5*). In *Nancy*, the logo is

289 Traboulsi, *History*, 221–22; Maasri, *Off the Wall*, 26.

290 For the logo, ibid., 93.

291 For details about the zawbaa, see Solomon, *In Search*, 40–42. Maasri claims that the four pillars of the SSNP are freedom, duty, order, and force (Maasri, *Off the Wall*, 73).

292 Straub never mentions the words zawbaa or whirlwind in her book, and simply terms the SSNP's logo a Hakenkreuz (Straub, *Das Selbstmordattentat*, 106). The Hakenkreuz was the logo of the German National Socialist German Workers Party. The SSNP is a different party with a different logo. Whether there was an ideological connection between the SSNP and the National Socialist German Workers Party is not as clear as Straub claims. In contrast to Straub, who refers only to one source of secondary literature, Solomon, by considering numerous historical sources, explains in depth that the origins of the zawbaa are complex and difficult to answer clearly.

293 Maasri, *Off the Wall*, 93.

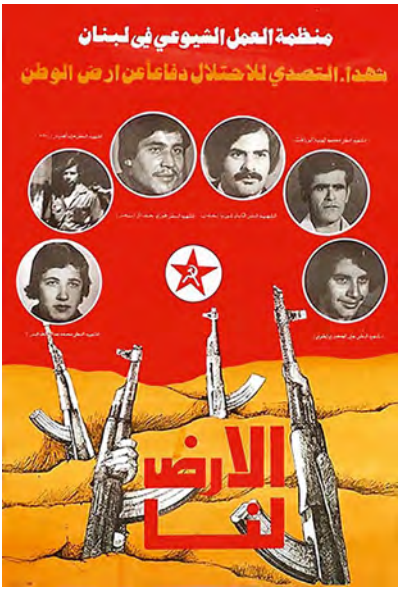

Fig. 4.4: The Communist Action Organization in Lebanon, 'The Martyrs of Confronting the Occupation in Defence of the Homeland. The Land Is Ours. The Martyr Mahmoud Ayoub, Martyr Qassim Shaw Rabba, Martyr Fawzi Hamdash, Martyr Ali Al-Khalil, Martyr Ali Al-Hujairi, Martyr Mohammed Saleh', Poster, 55 x 81 cm, 146-PCD2081-01, American University of Beirut/Library Archives.

Fig. 4.5: Morabitoun, 'Independent Nasserite Movement al-Morabitoun', Poster, 60 x 44 cm, 157c-PCD2081-18, American University of Beirut/Library Archives.

Fig. 4.6: Logo of the Islamic Unification Movement (al-Tawheed), 'There is No God Except God and Mohammad Is the Messenger of God. God Is Great. The Islamic Unification Movement'.

Fig. 4.7: Logo of the Revolutionary Guards (Sepah-e Pasdaran) of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

applied to all posters accompanying the deaths of Hatem that clearly happened for the Morabitoun (*Figs. 3.19–3.21, 3.24*). In reality, the group usually claimed ownership of posters not by using their logo but by writing their name (*Figs. 3.63–3.64*). I encountered only one poster that depicts the group's logo; in that instance, the logo was the only content, appearing on a black background (*Fig. 4.5*). This mode of depiction is comparable to the LF logo that accompanies a speech by Lina (*Fig. 3.50*).

The posters in *Nancy* that commemorate Hatem's later deaths for the IUM do not bear the movement's black-and-white logo (*Fig. 4.6*), but instead include elements used in the IUM logo, such as the Dome of the Rock, which I will discuss below. However, whether this non-application of the logo in the posters of Hatem corresponds to the use of the IUM's posters during the *Wars* cannot be said with certainty, because no posters of the IUM remain in the archives I have visited. Rabih's death for the SLA (*Fig. 3.15*) also appears without a logo; and, as was the case for the IUM, I could not find a single poster by the SLA in the archives.

In contrast, the frequent use of the logos of Amal and Hezbollah for the posters for Ziad (*Figs. 3.35–3.39*) reflects the branding of both parties' posters during the *Wars*. Amal's logo (*Fig. 3.67*) consists of stylised white letters forming the word Amal, which translates as hope, on a green circle outlined in red. According to Maasri and Bonsen, red stands for blood and sacrifice, green for Islam, and white for martyrdom.[294]

Hezbollah's logo consists of a stylised rendering of the party's name topped by a Kalashnikov, which is held by a fist above the first letter aleph. The logo also encompasses: a quote from Sura 5:56, 'The Party of God Is Victorious'; a globe; a Quran; and a seven-leaved olive branch, a plant that, according to the Quran, is holy (*Figs. 3.68–3.69*). All these elements combined are supposed to symbolise Islamic universalism. This is also suggested by the slogan of the initial posters, 'The Islamic Revolution in Lebanon', which in the 1990s was changed to the more realistic 'The Islamic Resistance in Lebanon'.[295] Much of Hezbollah's imagery is appropriated from the iconography of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and this is also true for the group's logo, which is almost identical to the logo of the Pasdaran, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards (*Fig. 4.7*).[296]

In Hezbollah's early days, the logo was black-and-white, but a wish to colour it quickly emerged.[297] Posters from 1986 (*Figs. 3.68–3.69*) demonstrate that the militia experimented with different colours before settling on yellow as the primary

294 Ibid., 65. For an earlier version of Amal's logo, see Bonsen, *Martyr Cults*, 176.

295 For the Hezbollah logo, see Adham Saouli, *Hezbollah: Socialisation and Its Tragic Ironies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 63–64.

296 Schmitt, *Advertised to Death*, 70; Chaib, 'Hezbollah Seen', 12; Maasri, 'Aesthetics', 169.

297 According to Aurélie Daher, Hezbollah's first logo was published in September 1984 (Daher, *Hezbollah: Mobilization and Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 53).

and green as the secondary colour. Hezbollah's colour choice of green on a dazzling yellow background for their logo is noteworthy. Dazzling yellow is—unlike green, which is associated with Islam—not a colour typically employed by Muslim parties, although some Palestinian factions, such as Fatah, also use yellow in their party brandishing. Hezbollah's choice of yellow is probably due to the fact that green was already taken by Amal. Hezbollah's yellow is eye-catching and makes it easy to immediately differentiate their posters and flags from those of Amal, which are often visible in the same neighbourhood. Both Shiite parties had and have the same clientele and are therefore in a certain amicable competition. Another reason for choosing yellow might have been that the Pasdaran flag also has dazzling yellow. According to Hezbollah designers, yellow represents strength, revolution, rebellion, intuition, and warning.[298] In *Nancy*, Hezbollah's uncertainties about which colour to use are not reflected in the 1980s posters of Ziad; apart from one exception that shows Hezbollah's early logo in black and white (*Fig. 3.38*),[299] only the yellow-green logo (*Figs. 3.37, 3.39*) is applied.

Finally, the logo of the PFLP appears on the upper-left corner of a poster for Ziad (*Fig. 3.33*). It consists of the stylised red Arabic letter jeem with a dot that stands for 'jabha', which means front and is the first word of the group's Arabic name. Also visible is an arrow targeting an outline that forms the map of Palestine.[300] The PFLP logo was indeed employed in this form in posters from the party (*Fig. 2.2*).

The logos in the posters of *Nancy* are a reflection of their use in the posters of the *Wars*, but they are visible more often in the play than in actual posters. Sometimes logos of groups that appear in *Nancy* are not depicted. For instance, there is no logo of the IUM, even though this group did have a logo. It is notable that *Nancy* tends to show only the latest version of a party's logo. I would argue that this is done for the sake of simplicity, as many different logos could create confusion, particularly for spectators not familiar with the emblems of the Lebanese parties. Alternatively, by opting for a selected set of logos, the visuals in *Nancy* help to locate the current party affiliation of the actor, which is also easier when the variety of logos is limited. This is relevant because, besides the Hezbollah logo with its dazzling yellow, the dominant colours of all the other logos are similar: usually red, white, black, and green.

At the same time, the choice to depict only the most recent logo seems to be a comment on the present day, as most of these logos are still used in today's Leb-

298 Sarah Hamdar, 'Hizbullah's 'Ashura Posters (2007–2020): The Visualization of Religion, Politics and Nationalism', *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* 14 (2021): 316.

299 This poster is also discussed by Gade. However, she does not call the Hezbollah logo by its name but identifies it as 'a raised fist and a Kalashnikov, [a] symbol that [was] frequently deployed in the visual language of Islamic Resistance posters' (Gade, 'Learning to Live', 337).

300 Shehab and Nawar, *Arab Design*, 162.

anon. For example, during the election campaign of 2022, I witnessed the LF cedar and the Kataeb cedar on flags and posters that were put up next to each other amicably (*Fig. 4.8*), while the Amal, Hezbollah, and SSNP logos are still visible in martyr posters to this day (*Figs. 2.10–2.13*). Therefore, showing the updated versions of the logos in *Nancy* could be read as a comment on the sectarian strife that has not ended with the official end of the *Wars* but stretches into the present.

Fig. 4.8: Flags with LF and Kataeb Cedars and Dagger Cross on T-Shirt, Beirut – Ashrafieh, May 2022, Photograph AR.

4.1.2 Sectarian and Pan-Sectarian Symbols and Their Appropriation in *Nancy*

The posters of the *Wars* and of *Nancy* include not only party logos but other symbols as well. Here I will limit my discussion to symbols that appear repeatedly in *Nancy's* posters. Some of these symbols are linked to specific sectarian identities, others are employed equally by groups with different ideologies. I will first address sectarian-connoted symbols—namely, the cross, the headband, the Dome of the Rock, and the destroyed Star of David—and then continue with pan-sectarian symbols—namely, birds, flowers, and blood.

Sectarian Symbols: The Cross, Headband, Dome of the Rock, and Broken Star of David

Some symbols in the posters of the *Wars* were used only by certain groups. In the following I will discuss four of them.

In *Nancy*, the inclusion of the cross and headband, a Christian- and a Shia-connoted symbol respectively, addresses the fact that symbols can activate religious myths of archetypal martyrs. Various posters accompanying the deaths of Lina and Rabih (*Figs. 3.13, 3.47–3.49*) for Christian parties include a cross. For example,

Fig. 4.9: LF (Designer Morr), 'The Blood of 350 Martyrs Was Shed in the Bekaa for It to Remain a Free Lebanese Land. Commemoration of 2 April 1981', 1981, Poster, 40 x 60 cm, WJA 065, signsofconflict.com.

one poster of Lina shows a black cross on her forehead (*Fig. 3.47*), and a poster of Rabih depicts him with a huge golden cross-necklace dangling from his chest (*Fig. 3.13*). The cross, which is a symbol that is deeply tied to the crucifixion of Christ, can also be encountered in posters from the *Wars*, such as a poster issued by the LF (*Fig. 4.9*) that shows numerous crosses erected in the ground. The image commemorates the martyrs of the Siege of Zahlé, which happened from 1980 to 1981, when the Syrian Army and their allies encircled the Christian town in the Bekaa valley. Zahlé was then successfully defended by the LF and the city's residents, which resulted in a few hundred deaths, which are remembered as martyrdoms in the poster.[301]

While crosses such as those depicted in *Figures 3.47* and *4.9* are used among Christian communities globally, there is also a specific Lebanese cross visible in posters for Lina and Rabih (*Figs. 3.13, 3.48–3.49*). Known as the dagger cross or, in the terminology of the LF, the 'salib al-muqawama'—that is, the resistance cross—it consists of two broad red lines that form a cross-shape that terminates obliquely at the bottom edge of the vertical beam.[302] While the diagonal cut stands for the will and determination of the Lebanese Christians to keep their cross planted in Lebanon, its red colour points to the hardships, suffering, and finally martyrdom of both Jesus and the Christians in that country.[303] Right-wing Lebanese Christians created a narrative that Christians in Lebanon are threatened by Palestinians and Shias who seek to extinguish Christian culture. The aim of the LF and the Kataeb is, therefore, to resist this perceived threat. Of course, this narrative ignores the privileges that Christians (and in particular the Maronites) have enjoyed, especially during the time of the Otto-

301 For the Siege of Zahlé, see Traboulsi, *History*, 210–11.

302 Jabre, *Lebanese Resistance Posters*, 20.

303 Ibid.; LICCANADA, 'The Meaning of the Lebanese Forces Cross', *YouTube*, 1:10 min, 2009, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuAUq9glymM.

Fig. 4.10: 'We Have Not Forgotten and We Will Not Forget the Hero Ralf Mallahi', Poster Next to Dagger Cross, Beirut – Ashrafieh, August 2021, Photograph AR.

Fig. 4.11: Hezbollah, 'And Do Not Consider as Dead Those Who Have Died for God, for They Are Truly Alive. Shahid al-Mujahed Said Muwasi', mid 1980s, Poster, 33 x 40 cm, HZB 2, signsofconflict.com.

man Empire and the French mandate. The dagger cross was launched in 1984 but gained popularity only after the official end of the *Wars*.[304] Today, it is part of the LF's symbolism and is very common in Ashrafieh (*Fig. 4.10*).

While the repeated use of the dagger cross in the posters of *Nancy* does not reflect the realities of its use in the posters of the *Wars*, where it was very rarely employed,[305] its inclusion in the play updates the posters to the symbolism of 2007. The dagger cross, like the choice to use the latest version of the party logos, might therefore point to the ongoing sectarian strife that has not ceased with the official ending of the *Wars*. The cross, like the cedar discussed above, is a Christian-connoted symbol and carries, through its reference to the death of Jesus, an additional association that is undoubtedly linked to martyrdom.

Not only Christian, but also Shia martyr imagery appears in *Nancy*; in particular, in Ziad's posters when he dies for Amal and Hezbollah. I will limit my discussion here to the symbol of the headband, which Ziad is wearing in two posters that accompany his deaths for Hezbollah (*Figs. 3.37, 3.39*). In the first image, he is sitting

304 Jabre, *Lebanese Resistance Posters*, 20; Schmitt, *Advertised to Death*, 29–30. Schmitt photographed the dagger cross repeatedly in 2007. She explains that at the time of writing her book, the LF could not fully agree on whether the use of the cross as a party symbol should be continued.

305 Only at the end of the *Wars*, very few posters show dagger crosses attached to tanks.

with clasped arms in front of an oversized party logo, wearing a headband in the same dazzling Hezbollah yellow discussed above. In the second image, Ziad wears a green headband, the party's secondary colour, and is seen from below. Martyrs wearing headbands that are, in most but not all cases, red, are depicted in numerous posters that Hezbollah issued during the *Wars* (*Figs. 2.6, 4.11*). The headband stems from the iconography of the Islamic Republic (*Fig. 2.5*) and gained popularity in the 1980s.[306] Although it is primarily located in a Shiite context, it is sometimes worn by allies of the Shia groups, such as by Hatem when he dies for the Morabitoun (see *Fig. 3.24*).[307]

Among Shia Muslims, it is believed that the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, Hossein, wore such a headband in the Battle of Kerbala, which is why the headbands are also worn during Ashura celebrations.[308] As mentioned in 2.1, Hossein represents the role model of martyrdom in Shia Islam and is the protagonist of Michael Fischer's concept of the Kerbala paradigm, living in a situation of injustice and willing to die for the community's redemption.[309] This corresponds to the narrative of the Lebanese Shia, at least until the liberation of the South in 2000. Hezbollah in particular claimed that there was a need to resist the Israeli occupation that had unjustly entered the soil of the Lebanese. Resistance involved all means, including the willingness to die as a martyr.

Nancy reflects the actual use of headbands in posters of the *Wars*. Ziad, when wearing a headband in posters that accompany his deaths for Hezbollah, turns into a 'little Hossein', and Kerbala, now metaphorically in the South of Lebanon, becomes reactivated in posters, as has been discussed by Hamdar. Hezbollah, more than Amal did, referred to the myth of Kerbala and created parallels between the past and the present.[310]

Similarly, during the *Wars*, Lebanese Christians reactivated the myth of Jesus's crucifixion through Bachir after his death. A poster that was issued by the Kataeb shows a drawing (*Fig. 4.12*) that depicts a black cross with white drapery and red blood drops, which in combination create letters that read 'Bachir'. Bonsen interprets this mode of representation as a 'Christian martyrdom death and at the same time as a sacrificial death for the soil of Lebanon'.[311] The poster's message is almost incontestable and is graspable with just a brief glimpse. By depicting

306 Myrttinen, 'Death Becomes Him', 132.

307 Also, during the *Wars*, Morabitoun and Palestinian fighters were wearing red headbands, as historical photographs from the Battle of the Hotels confirm; an example can be found in Buchakjian, 'Habitats Abandonnés', 709.

308 Maasri, *Off the Wall*, 99.

309 Dorraj, 'Symbolic and Utilitarian', 495.

310 Hamdar, 'Hizbullah's Ashura Posters', 308; Maasri, 'Aesthetics', 166.

311 Bonsen, *Martyr Cults*, 105.

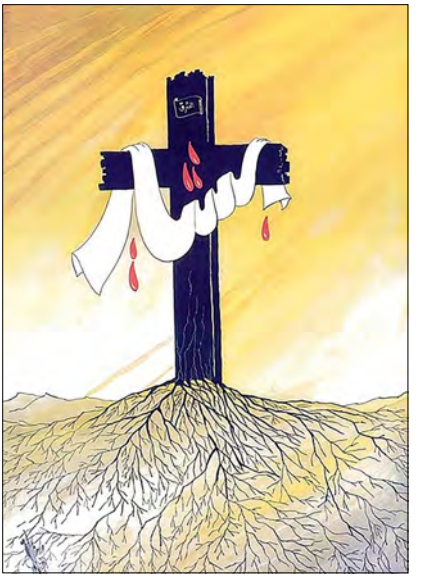

Fig. 4.12: Kataeb (Designer Pierre Sadek), 'Lebanon', 1982, Poster, 33 x 47 cm, WJA 041, signsofconflict.com.

Bachir's name on the cross, he visually becomes Jesus's incarnation, or the 'Christ of Lebanon'[312] who has sacrificed himself for Christianity in that country.[313] The death of Bachir, according to Hage, perfected his image as a saviour among the Phalangists.[314] Even decades after Bachir's passing, his death was equated with that of Jesus. In 2009, for example, the newspaper *al-Balad* titled an article about Bachir 'Le Saveur Assasiné'.[315]

Nancy comments on how archemartyrological Christian and Shiite myths were re-enacted and activated during the *Wars*. By using the cross—specifically the dagger cross—in depictions of Rabih, the play turns him into a 'little Bachir' and, through Bachir, into a 'little Jesus'. The headbands in posters of Ziad, on the other hand, turn him into a 'little Hossein'. The groups involved in the *Wars* that based their identity on religion mingled the secular and the profane. Hezbollah posters are embedded in the Lebanese poster-landscape,[316] it is not the religious rhetoric that makes them unique, as Christian parties also played on religious elements.

The second set of sectarian-connoted symbols that *Nancy* appropriates— specifically, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and the destroyed Star of David—do not evoke myths of archetypal martyrdoms but are still peculiar to certain sectarian groups. The former symbol appears in two posters in *Nancy*; one accompanies a death of Ziad for Amal and another accompanies a death of Hatem for the IUM (*Figs. 3.25*, *3.36*). Amal, like Hezbollah, employed the Dome of the Rock in their

312 Hage, 'Religious Fundamentalism', 37.

313 Haugbolle, 'Secular Saint', 204.

314 Hage, 'Religious Fundamentalism', 37.

315 Haugbolle, 'Secular Saint', 204. Additionally, Phalangist narratives emphasise the fact that Bachir was killed when he was thirty-four, which means he was only one year older than Jesus at the time of his death. Moreover, Bachir died on 14 September, which correlates with the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, an important festivity of the Eastern Churches. This feast honours the cross on which Christ was crucified. See Hage, 'Religious Fundamentalism', 37.

316 Maasri, *Off the Wall*, 50.

Fig. 4.13: Amal (Designer Nabil Kdouh), 'Jerusalem Day', Poster, 42 x 60 cm, BYR 008, signsofconflict.com.

imagery during the *Wars* (*Figs. 2.6, 4.13*). The absence of any IUM posters in the archives I visited prevents me assessing whether it also employed such imagery, although it should be noted that the Dome of the Rock is part of the group's logo (*Fig. 4.6*).

As Maasri has demonstrated, the symbol of the Dome of the Rock migrated from Palestinian posters to Iranian and then to Lebanese Shiite posters, in which the struggle for liberation and solidarity with Palestine is presented as a pan-Islamic cause.[317] Although I was unable to locate the Dome of the Rock in posters issued by Lebanese Sunni parties, the point of depicting this building in posters issued by Shia and Sunni groups in *Nancy* appears to be that the Dome of the Rock is a pan-Muslim symbol. It is used by militias that based their ideology on Islam and were pro-Palestinian, but of course not by Christian militias, and also not by secular groups that support the Palestinians, such as the LCP and the SSNP. The LCP and the SSNP view Jerusalem as the heart of Palestine. The city itself has no specific importance to them, while the Islamic parties see Jerusalem as the heart of the umma, the community of all Muslims, which is stronger than national boundaries. Therefore, the Muslim parties perceive the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem as affecting them, and they have an inherent reason to support the Palestinians in the liberation of their land, which includes the Dome of the Rock.[318] In short, in *Nancy*, the Dome of the Rock appears only in posters of deaths for Islamic factions, implying that its depiction was limited to different Islamic parties during the *Wars*.

Unlike the Dome of the Rock, the destroyed Star of David does not exclusively connote a religion but is used only by certain groups. The symbol appears in *Nancy* once—namely, in an image that accompanies a death of Ziad for Hezbollah (*Fig. 3.38*). Gade, who discusses this poster, does not mention the two blue Stars of David that are broken and in flames and are placed in the lower third of the image,

317 Ibid., 81–83; Maasri, 'Aesthetics', 161.

318 Ibid.; Hamdar, 'Hizbullah's 'Ashura Posters', 308.

Fig. 4.14: Hezbollah (Designer Meri), 'The Blood of the Martyrs of Islam in Ansar Detention Illuminates the Path of Jihad Against the Oppressors', Poster, 49 x 68 cm, HZB 25, signsofconflict.com.

Fig. 4.15: LNRF/SSNP, 'The Martyr Fuad Mahmoud Saleh', 1984, Poster, 32 x 47 cm, AAJ1, signsofconflict.com.

left and right of a black-and-white Hezbollah logo.[319] The destroyed or torn Star of David was depicted by Hezbollah in their imagery during the *Wars* (*Fig. 4.14*), but also by other parties, both religious and secular, that were active in the liberation of the South, such as the Jammoul (*Fig. 4.15*).

As mentioned above, the meanings of symbols vary in different parts of the world. While a destroyed Star of David would, particularly in Germany, be undoubtedly antisemitic and its display not acceptable for any reason, the same symbol depicted in Lebanon is a critique of the violence the Israeli Army has conducted in Lebanon and is not used to attack Judaism as a religion in general. The Israeli Army occupied parts of Lebanon between 1978 and 2000, conducted mass killings in the country, such as the two Qana massacres, waged a war against Lebanon in 2006, and, during the time of writing, violated Lebanese airspace on a regular basis with its fighter-jets and drones, which is a mode of psychological warfare.[320] It is within this context from the Lebanese perspective—decades of suffering caused by

319 Gade, 'Learning to Live', 337–38.

320 For the Qana massacres and the 2006 War, see Bonsen, *Martyr Cults*, 115–21. For violations of the Lebanese airspace, see Lawrence Abu Hamdan's artwork *Airpressure: A Diary in the Sky*, 2021.

Israeli aggression on Lebanese soil—that, when depicted in a Lebanese environment, the broken Star of David has metamorphosed into a symbol of resistance to the Israeli occupation.[321]

The Christian parties that were mainly pro-Israel during the *Wars* and, of course, not involved in the liberation of the South, did not use this symbol. It was predominantly Hezbollah that employed it in their posters. As a result, *Nancy*, by including a broken Star of David in a poster commemorating Ziad's death for Hezbollah, reflects the realities of the depiction of this symbol during the *Wars*, but does not tackle the fact that it was employed also by parties other than Hezbollah.

To summarise, *Nancy* can be said to reflect the actual use of the cross, the headband, the Dome of the Rock, and the broken Star of David, because these symbols appear in the play only in posters of parties or allies of parties that used them in their imagery during the *Wars*.

Pan-Sectarian Symbols: Birds, Flowers, Blood

Fig. 4.16: Kataeb (Designer Pierre Sadek), '46 Years in Service of Lebanon Until Martyrdom', 1983, Poster, 50 x 70 cm, WJA 21, signsofconflict.com.

Certain symbols used in the posters of the *Wars* are not linked to a sectarian ideology. These symbols are also appropriated in *Nancy*, as I will show with the examples of birds, flowers, and blood.

The first of these are shown in two posters in the play (*Figs. 3.25, 3.36*), which I have already discussed above and which depict, like their underlying image (*Fig. 3.71*), not only the Dome of the Rock but also birds, probably doves, a symbol of peace.[322] Additionally, in Islamic belief, the souls of martyrs turn into birds, which have a special place in paradise next to God.[323] However, birds are not limited to Islamic imagery, as they also can be found in posters of the Kataeb (*Fig. 4.16*) and appear in *Nancy* in images for Rabih when he dies for Ahrar (*Figs. 3.10–3.11*).

321 For the Star of David in a Lebanese context, see also Maasri, *Off the Wall*, 106–07.

322 Ibid., 99; Bonsen, *Martyr Cults*, 314.

323 Jane Idleman Smith and Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 49.

Fig. 4.17: Hezbollah, 'The Oppressed Martyrs of Islam in the Massacre of Bir-al-Abed Committed by the Devilish United States-Israel-Phalange Coalition', 1985, Poster, 30 x 40 cm, ASH 144, signsofconflict.com.

Fig. 4.18: LF (Designer Pierre Sadek), 'Zahlé 2 April 1983', 1983, Poster, 45 x 66 cm, HOV 11, signsofconflict.com.

Therefore, in the play, the depiction of birds in posters issued by Christian and Islamic parties points to the pan-sectarian use of this symbol in the posters of the *Wars*.

Also, flowers were applied in martyr posters issued by many parties involved in the *Wars* and can be seen in visuals of the LCP (*Fig. 3.62*), Hezbollah (*Fig. 4.17*), and the LF (*Fig. 4.18*), to name just a few. Although the red tulips seen on Hezbollah posters (*Fig. 4.17*) are an appropriation of an Iranian tradition,[324] flowers in general have been used as a symbol of martyrdom across time and place and are rendered as an allegory or personification of martyrdom.[325] Its pan-sectarian use is reflected in *Nancy*, as flowers can be encountered in posters of various parties that appear in the play, such as those of the SSNP (*Fig. 3.43*), the LCP (*Fig. 3.32*), Amal (*Fig. 3.36*), the IUM (*Fig. 3.25*), and Hezbollah (*Fig. 3.38*).

324 Chaib ('Hezbollah Seen', 122) mentions that tulips are not a part of Lebanese vegetation.

325 Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs*, 70; Chaib, 'Hezbollah Seen', 121; Bonsen (*Martyr Cults*, 295) states that flowers are equally used on the graves of Muslims and Christians.

Finally, blood also cannot be restricted to one faction and, quite self-explanatorily, refers to martyrdom and self-sacrifice.[326] In *Nancy*, blood appears in posters issued by the Morabitoun (*Fig. 3.24*), Amal (*Fig. 3.35*), and the IUM (*Figs. 3.26–3.27*). This reflects the depiction of blood in posters issued during the *Wars*, where it could be seen in posters from almost all factions (*Figs. 3.67, 3.76, 4.12, 4.16*). The depiction of blood is more widespread in posters of the *Wars* than in *Nancy*. In the play, blood is not depicted, for example, in posters issued by the LF, although it was present in their poster imagery during the *Wars*.

Pan-sectarian elements, unlike symbols such as the cross, the cedar, the Dome of the Rock, or the headband, do not mark and immediately identify the ideology of the publisher of a poster. Rather, these elements are more generally connected to martyrdom. In *Nancy*, the use of pan-sectarian symbolism in the posters of the *Wars* is reflected by the application of these elements in posters of parties with different ideologies.

4.1.3 Slogans in Martyr Posters and Their Appropriation in *Nancy*: Dying for a Place and as a Hero

Slogans underline the symbols in the posters.[327] In martyr posters, the slogans convey a linguistic message by undoubtedly clarifying that the visual is a poster of a shahid who has died for a certain party. The only knowledge required to decipher them is the ability to read the language, which, in the case of posters of the *Wars* and of *Nancy*, is usually Arabic. *Nancy* reflects that the wordings of the slogans written on the posters are partly restricted to one group and are partly used by many factions involved in the *Wars*. Here, I will discuss phrases that are mentioned repeatedly in the play, which are also phrases that were frequently used in the posters of the *Wars*.

Often, martyrs were labelled as having died for a place, mostly Lebanon, but sometimes also for a more specific locality. Rabih and Lina repeatedly die 'for an Infinite Lebanon' (*Figs. 3.12–3.13, 3.48*), while the slogan in one poster for Rabih reads: 'He Died for Lebanon to Live' (*Fig. 3.7*). These phrases are appropriated from Christian posters from the *Wars*. For example, the Chamoun family, who were assassinated in 1990, are labelled as 'Martyrs of Lebanon' in an Ahrar poster (*Fig. 4.19*) and a Phalange poster announces 'He Died So That We May Live and So Lebanon May Live. […] We Will Not Forget Your Memory Oh Bahzad Karam' (*Fig. 3.57*).[328]

326 Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs*, 126; Maasri, *Off the Wall*, 98–99; Straub, *Das Selbstmordattentat*, 62. For a discussion of blood in Hezbollah posters, see Maasri, 'Aesthetics', 166; Straub, *Das Selbstmordattentat*, 62.

327 Haugbolle, *War and Memory*, 170.

328 For the slogans used by Christian parties, see also Jabre, *Lebanese Resistance Posters*, 10.

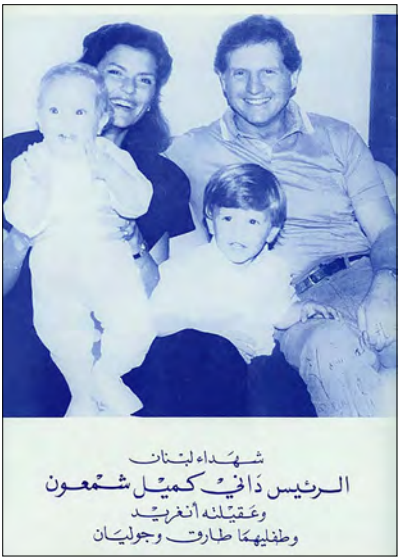

Fig. 4.19: Ahrar, 'The Martyrs of Lebanon. President Dany Kamil Chamoun and His Wife Ingrid and Their Children Tarek and Julian', 1990, Poster, 21 x 30 cm, NLP 1, signsofconflict.com.

Fig. 4.20: Amal (Designer Nabil Kdouh), 'They Were Martyred in Defence of the South and the Unity and Arabism of Lebanon', Poster, 30 x 42 cm, BYR 003, signsofconflict.com.

Such phrases were also used in posters commemorating Bachir's death. The slogan 'Bachir Lives in Us So That Lebanon Remains' appeared especially frequently.[329] Haugbolle explains that, for Bachir's followers, these words express that Bachir is a spirit who lives on in them and that this should encourage them to continue following his path.[330] These phrases announcing that the martyr died for Lebanon in order for the country to live, or proclaiming that a martyr continues to live in 'us', meaning the community, are Christian party slogans and are reflected as such in *Nancy*, where they are used only in posters commemorating the deaths of Rabih and Lina for Christian parties.

When non-Christian parties mentioned dying for Lebanon in their slogans, they usually framed it within pan-Arabism. An example can be found in an Amal poster: 'They Were Martyred in Defence of the South and the Unity and Arabism of Lebanon' (*Fig. 4.20*). This phrase is almost directly appropriated in a poster commemorating a death of Hatem for the Morabitoun: 'Died Defending Lebanon, Its Unity, Its Arabism, and the Lebanese Resistance' (*Fig. 3.21*). The South that is

329 Maasri, *Off the Wall*, 112.

330 Haugbolle, 'Secular Saint', 206.

referenced in the slogan in the poster in *Fig. 4.20* is, according to Maasri, an icon of national resistance against the Israeli Army[331] and also appears in *Nancy*. A poster that accompanies a death of Ziad for the PFLP and the LCP reads: 'The Land Is Ours: Ziad Antar. He Was Martyred on the Southern Soil While Confronting Israeli Agents' (*Fig. 3.34*).

There are also other martyrdoms in the play that are locally confined. Hatem and Ziad, for example, are labelled as 'Martyr of Beirut' (*Figs. 3.24, 3.35*) when they die fighting for the Morabitoun and Amal, respectively. Also, these are appropriations of slogans from posters of the *Wars*, where specific locations are mentioned by different parties—for instance, the Bekaa in an LF poster (*Fig. 4.9*). Dying for a specific locality, as reflected by *Nancy's* use of this slogan for martyrs of different factions, was announced by many parties involved in the *Wars*.

Hezbollah frequently used the terms 'The Martyr of Islam' or 'Shahid al-Mujahed'.[332] Examples are one poster (*Fig. 4.14*) whose slogan reads: 'The Blood of the Martyrs of Islam in Ansar Detention Illuminates the Path of Jihad Against the Oppressors'; and another poster (*Fig. 4.11*) in which the dead man is labelled as 'Shahid al-Mujahed'. Similarly, in *Nancy*, when dying for Hezbollah, Ziad is labelled as a 'Martyr of the Islamic Resistance' (*Fig. 3.39*) and as 'Shahid al-Mujahed' (*Fig. 3.37*).

Furthermore, quotes from the Quran or more generally from an Islamic context are used in the posters of Hezbollah, which also appear in *Nancy*, where one slogan reads: 'And Do Not Consider as Dead Those Who Have Died for God, for They Are Truly Alive' (*Fig. 3.36*). The same text appears in a poster of Hatem that accompanies his death for the IUM (*Fig. 3.25*) as well as in a Hezbollah poster of the *Wars* that I have introduced above (*Fig. 4.11*). This Quranic quote from Sura 3:169–171 was frequently used in martyr posters issued by Islamic parties.[333]

There are more images in the play that directly quote slogans used during the *Wars*. In posters commemorating two deaths of Hatem for the IUM (*Figs. 3.26–3.27*), we read: 'The Blood of the Martyrs Is the Truest Expression of the Victory of Blood Over the Sword'. This quote from Ruhollah Khomeini, the first supreme leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, can be found in a Hezbollah poster of the *Wars*.[334] It seems, then, that by applying Islamic quotes only to posters of militias with an Islamic ideology—thus echoing its approach to the symbol of the Dome of the Rock—*Nancy* points to the shared Islamic beliefs of these parties and the exchangeability of slogans in this framework.

331 Maasri, *Off the Wall*, 110–11.

332 Ibid., 96–99.

333 The dark green poster with a rectangle in its middle showing the martyrs face in *Fig. 4.11* serves also as one underlying image for *Figs. 3.25* and *3.36*.

334 Maasri, *Off the Wall*, 99.

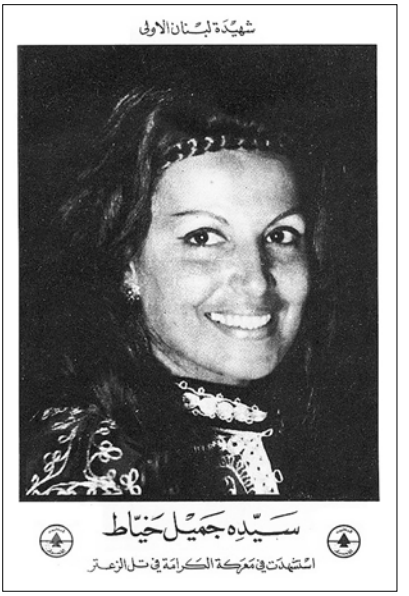

Fig. 4.21: Ahrar, 'The First Female Martyr of Lebanon. Saydeh Jamil Khayatt. Martyred in the Battle of Dignity in Tel al Zaatar', 1976, Poster, 21 x 30 cm, NLP 13, signsofconflict.com.

Another slogan of the posters of the *Wars*, namely, the PSP leader (and martyr) Kamal Jumblatt's quote 'To Die or Not to Die, What Care I. For This Life Is but a Figment of the Imagination' that can be read in the PSP poster in *Fig. 3.74*, is also appropriated in *Nancy*. However, it appears in a poster that accompanies a death of Ziad for the PFLP and the LCP (*Fig. 3.33*) and is therefore decontextualised.

The PSP martyr who is depicted in the poster in *Fig.3.74* is labelled as a hero, which is a 'stock-phrase' of martyr posters.[335] In *Nancy*, examples are 'The Martyr Hero Rabih Mroue' (*Figs. 3.8–3.9*), when he dies for Ahrar; 'The Hero of Sannine: Ziad Antar' (*Fig. 3.32*), when he dies for the LCP; or 'The Martyr Heroine Lina Saneh' (*Fig. 3.44*), when she dies for the SSNP. The hero label was used in posters of the *Wars* across different parties, such as the SSNP, 'The Martyr Hero Nazem Ayyash' (*Fig. 3.59*); and Ahrar, 'The Martyr Hero Adel Jamil Tartturi' (*Fig. 3.55*). *Nancy's* use of the hero-phrase for martyrs of different militias thus corresponds to its use in posters of the *Wars*.

Other labels were also used for martyrs in *Nancy*, for example: 'Died for Truth: Martyr Rabih Mroué' when he dies for Ahrar (*Fig. 3.10*), or 'Martyr of Duty' when Hatem dies for the Morabitoun (*Fig. 3.21*). Similar phrases can be found in the posters of the *Wars*. An Ahrar visual, for example, labels a shahid as 'Martyr of Love and Freedom' (*Fig. 3.56*), and posters by the Arab Socialist Union designate the dead as a 'Martyr of Duty' (*Figs. 3.65–3.66*). Also, being the first was, as Fadi Toufiq has mentioned, often a source of pride.[336] Ahrar, for example, labels a militiawoman as 'The First Female Martyr of Lebanon'. (*Fig. 4.21*).

By applying slogans across parties, *Nancy* seems to hint at their exchangeability. The label of the martyr as a hero or as someone with a certain attribute, such as being a martyr of duty or being the martyr of a specific place, can be found in posters of several parties that do not share an ideological framework. On the other

335 Elias, *Posthumous Images*, 78.

336 Toufiq, Zoom, 6 May 2021.

hand, and in keeping with its use of symbols, *Nancy* reflects the actual use of slogans by applying only Islamic or Quranic verses to parties that employ an Islamic ideology. It does the same for Christian parties: the phrase 'for Lebanon to Live' is restricted to Christian parties in the posters of the play and of the *Wars*. Only the above-mentioned Jumblatt quote is transferred into a context in which it was not used. *Nancy* comments not only on the likeness of poster designs and their symbolic elements, but also on the similarities between the parties' linguistic messages during the *Wars*.

4.1.4 The Anatomy of the Martyr Poster and the Exchangeability of Logos, Symbols, and Slogans

Finally, I would like to mention a point made by Tony Chakar in his work *4 Cotton Underwear for Tony* (2001–02; *Fig*. 4.22). The artist asked an official Hezbollah painter to make a painting of Chakar's deceased Christian father. The painter agreed, and Chakar provided him with a photograph of his father. Transforming the photograph of the dead into a painting is a practice often employed by the Shia parties, as I will elaborate on further in 4.2. After turning the photograph of Chakar's father into a painting, the painter apparently did not feel comfortable adding Shiite imagery, such as the Dome of the Rock, into Chakar's portrait. He therefore decided to add Christian-connoted cedars but kept the birds, which, as I have discussed above, are a pan-sectarian symbol.[337] In short, this work, like *Nancy*, shows that the anatomy of the picture of the shahid is built the same way among all parties and that certain symbols, such as birds, are pan-sectarian and can migrate without change to posters by other parties. Simply by exchanging one symbol, a Shiite picture is valid in a Christian context without any further changes to the overall design.

Fig. 4.22: Tony Chakar, *4 Cotton Underwear for Tony*, 2001–02, Postcard, 12 x 16 cm, Courtesy of Tony Chakar.

337 For *4 Cotton Underwear for Tony*, see Naeff, *Precarious Imaginaries*, 213–14. *4 Cotton Underwear for Tony* was exhibited in Ashkal Alwan's group exhibition *Intimate Garden Scene (in Beirut)*, which took place in Sursock Museum from 30 November 2023 and was supposed to run through 15 November 2024.

My theoretical framework in this part was informed by Barthes's essay 'Rhetoric of the Image', and the focus of the discussion was on the connotative level. I have reflected on the meanings and appropriations of party logos, other symbols, and slogans in the martyr posters of *Nancy*. The play uses these elements in a more simplistic manner than was employed in the posters of the *Wars* but suggests a pattern in how the elements were and are used in sectarian visuals. For example, in *Nancy*, crosses can be encountered only in posters that accompany Christian deaths, whereas the Dome of the Rock only appears in posters that were issued for Muslim martyrdoms. In a similar vein, Christian-connoted slogans are used only in Christian images and Quranic slogans only in posters issued by Islamic parties.

In general, *Nancy* shows us that the anatomy of the posters was very similar among all parties during the *Wars*, as all consisted of the same elements, including a party logo, other symbols, and a slogan. However, a fourth component was also common in the posters, namely, that of the photographic image. This element will be the subject of the next part.

4.2 The Martyr and the Photographic Image: Indexicality, Iconicity, and Truth Claims

Nancy reflects the photographic image in the martyr poster and opens different perspectives on the relationship between the photograph and the shahid.

I will first argue that photography is the preferred medium for the depiction of martyrs due to its indexicality (the depicted has left a trace) and iconicity (the depicted resembles the thing it represents). Both, in combination, produce emotions among the spectators.

Second, aided by a close reading of *Nancy* that is linked to *Inhabitants*, *Three Posters*, and a movie that Maroun Baghdadi shot during the *Wars*, I show that these works demonstrate that indexicality and iconicity do not correspond to a truth claim (the depicted scene is put into a context of what it represents, what it refers to, and how the depicted scene should be interpreted) and that truth claims in martyr posters, which are supported by photographic evidence, should always be questioned.

Next, by relating *Nancy* to *Inhabitants*, *...A Faraway Souvenir*, an artwork by Hadjithomas/Joreige, and posters of the *Wars*, I demonstrate that contemporary artists reflect on different modes of turning the photographic image of the martyr into a currency. In such a process, each poster acts as a proof of the human price a party is willing to pay for their cause.

I then discuss how *Nancy* shows us the fact that the photograph is usually a recycled image that was not taken on the occasion of martyrdom but instead migrated from an ID photograph to a poster. In the context of this discussion, I will also