Trends. Syria, Lebanon, and Israel: Is There a Psychological Difference Between The Abusive and the Abused?

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Recommended Citation

Available at: https://commons.erau.edu/ibpp/vol8/iss12/5

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There is extensive psychological literature addressing the seeming oddity of those who are abused remaining with those who abuse. Often the abused's beliefs about material contingencies are offered. For example, the abused may believe that they have nowhere else to live or no other sources of income. Or the abused's beliefs about beliefs are posited. For example, the abused may believe that they deserve to be abused, that they can't find a way out, or that they can't do any better.

A more controversial dynamic is that the abused control those who abuse through being abused and that loss of the abused status equates to a loss of control of the abuser. Such may be the case to explain the otherwise puzzling threats emanating from Syria and Lebanon after Israeli statements of an upcoming withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon. Why should the first two governments react in a hostile fashion to foreign military withdrawal from sovereign territory? Unlike the recent situation in East Timor in which a government-in-waiting feared an Indonesian withdrawal for legitimate reasons of collapsing law and order, the Syrian and Lebanese governments may fear a loss of control over Israeli political behavior.