

**Ethnocratic Regimes:  
Identity and Territory in the Lebanese Context**

BY

NABIL NAZHA  
B.S. Politecnico di Milano, 2010  
M.S. University of Illinois at Chicago, 2012

THESIS

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Defense Committee:

David Perry, Chair and Advisor  
Brenda Parker  
John Betancur  
Norma Moruzzi, Department of Political Science  
Asef Bayat, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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*"Come tutti, mi chiedo se non sia ancora possibile scrivere qualcosa che non sia già stato scritto. Certo non sarà possibile a me. Sogno un libro in cui la mia parola scompaia, nascosta e appena baluginante dietro le parole altrui. Un libro che sia solo un centone di citazioni, che conduca il lettore per mano, silenziosamente, da un libro all'altro, da un pensiero all'altro (più saggi di noi, gli antichi non erano divorati dalla smania dell'originalità)"*

Giovanni Ferraro, 2001, *Il libro dei luoghi*, p. 13.

...

*"Like everyone else, I wonder whether it is possible to write something that has not already been written. Certainly it will not be possible to me. I dream of a book in which my word would disappear, hidden and slightly perceivable behind the words of others. A book that is only a cento of quotations, taking the reader by the hand, silently, from one book to the other, from one thought to the other (wiser than us, the ancients were not devoured by the eagerness for originality)"*

Giovanni Ferraro, *The Book of Places*, 2001, p. 13.

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<sup>1</sup> A version of this case study has been sent for publication under the title: "*Dahiye, Beirut: An Active Space for Social Justice and Resistance. Reimagining Urban Informality in the Light of Growing Urban Marginality*". Expected publication by the end of 2016 as a chapter within the following handbook: R. Rocco, J.V. Ballegooijen (eds.), 2016, *The Political Meaning of Informal Urbanisation*, Routledge, London, UK.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**CAS:** Central Administration of Statistics

**CIAM:** Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne

**IAURIF:** Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la Région Ile de France

**IFES:** International Foundation for Electoral Systems

**IRFED:** Institut International de Recherche et de Formation, Éducation Cultures Développement

**L-CDR:** Lebanese Council for Development and Reconstruction

**SOLIDERE:** Société libanaise pour le développement et la reconstruction de Beyrouth

**UN-LCRP:** United Nations Lebanon Crisis Response Plan

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## SUMMARY

Starting from Oren Yiftachel's intellectual stimulus to move towards "*South-Eastern perspectives*" to urban planning theory, the current research aims to contribute to the existing literature by analyzing the Lebanese political, social, urban, and regional context, while proposing for the first time to look at Lebanon as an "ethnocracy": a political system in which power and resources are distributed along ethno-religious lines (O. Yiftachel, 2000, 2002, 2006; L.M. Howard, 2012).

The work utilizes a mixed-methods approach and a case-study analysis in order to address the following three research questions: 1) what are the effects of an ethnocratic regime on the development of urban policies?; 2) what is the material legacy that an ethnocratic regime leaves on the ground on the urban environment?; and 3) what are the effects of this regime on the civil society?

The preliminary findings showed that the elite leading the *nation-building* process was not only characterized by common political and economic values, but also by common ethno-religious characteristics. Hence, the creation of the State reinforced and institutionalized a sectarian divide between the dominant Maronite elite and the newly co-opted Sunni bourgeoisie of Beirut and the coast, on one side, and the remaining ethno-religious groups, on the other. This structure of power produced a hierarchy of social groups and a hierarchy of spatial formations strongly contraposing the core of the country to the periphery.

In addition, the case study conducted on the southern suburbs of Beirut shows that this structure of power influenced the production of space also around the capital, which initially mirrored the core-periphery relation existing at a national level. If it is true that "*every society [...] produces [...] its own space*" (Lefebvre 1974: 31), in the case of the southern suburbs of Beirut, the formal-informal divide promoted in official planning documents separated

## SUMMARY (continued)

*“formal”* core groups from *“informal”* peripheral groups and, hence, the use of *“informality”* was an instrument for the determination of the legitimacy of the presence of certain groups in the capital, and determined the creation of the suburbs as an informal physical space and the categorization of its population as a social formation beyond the formal identity of the nation.

Further analysis of the findings also shows that, in the absence of State-driven planning policies, the periphery was left behind because it did not have the necessary social capital and know-how to elaborate its demands and present funding applications to the central government. However, this situation changed in the second half of the twentieth century, when political organizations were able to reimagine themselves as local planners and create development. This situation produced the emergence of a semi-periphery, represented today by Beirut’s southern suburbs, the south, and the Beqaa valley; while the north of the country, that did not experience the same process of political development, represents today the new periphery, deprived of political actors that can act as local planners in the absence of State planning initiatives.

In conclusion, the work indicates a possible moment of synthesis, between the spirit of the ethnocratic regime and the counter-hegemonic spirit emerged from the periphery, by developing the concept of *unity in alterity*, which proposes, on one side, to enact a process aimed at what Porter calls *“decolonizing planning”* (Porter, 2010), and, on the other, to encourage the acknowledgement of the *Other* as an integral, inextricable, unavoidable, and equal component of the system, in order to develop what Levinas calls ethical relations.

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

*"It is not the superficial stratum, the rapid time of events, which is most important, but rather the deeper level of the realities which change slowly (geography, material culture, mentalities; generally speaking, the 'structures')"*  
Jacques Le Goff, 1977 (1992 ed.), *History and Memory*, pp. xxi-xxii.

Exactly one hundred years ago, in May 1916, the Sykes-Picot agreement was finally signed between the UK and France. A hundred years from that moment the Middle East is still affected by those decisions. Turmoil, armed conflicts and external influences still characterize the geopolitical development of the region. However, even if European colonialism left its footprints as far as the creation of states, the drafting of their constitutions and the definition of their rules of political participation, part of the Middle East remained for a long period under a different form of colonialism that was Ottoman colonialism. This way, the rearrangement of political boundaries, the emergence and disappearance of new political entities and the consequential effects on the lives of the people of the area are phenomena that persisted for a long period of time.

This accumulation of history produced a chain of effects that are intertwined with each other and that continue from the period of Ottoman colonialism to the years of European colonialism, all the way into the post-independence period of various States of the Middle East. This process of rearrangement of a vast territory into different political administrative entities, made it possible the creation of different centres of power, more exposed to culture and economic colonial influence, and *Other* regions, that remained more isolated and less exposed to foreign influence.

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<sup>1</sup> Note to the reader: the editing of the dissertation is most likely not as refined as the editing of a peer-reviewed article or book. For this reason, I apologize in advance for any possible repetition of the same concepts and ideas in multiple parts of the work.

This hierarchy of spaces helped produce also a hierarchy of social formations that played each a different role with the colonial power and that, first, played each a different role in the development of nationalistic ideas or participation in existing ones; and, second, with the industrialization process, found each a different position in the capitalist hierarchy of social classes.

In a country like Lebanon, the transmission of economic capital has been channelled within a political system rooted into the concept of ethnicity; thus, the State, its apparatuses, and its economic system are the official and institutional channel for the transmission of economic capital and, hence, they have been key for the production and reproduction of the existing social structure.

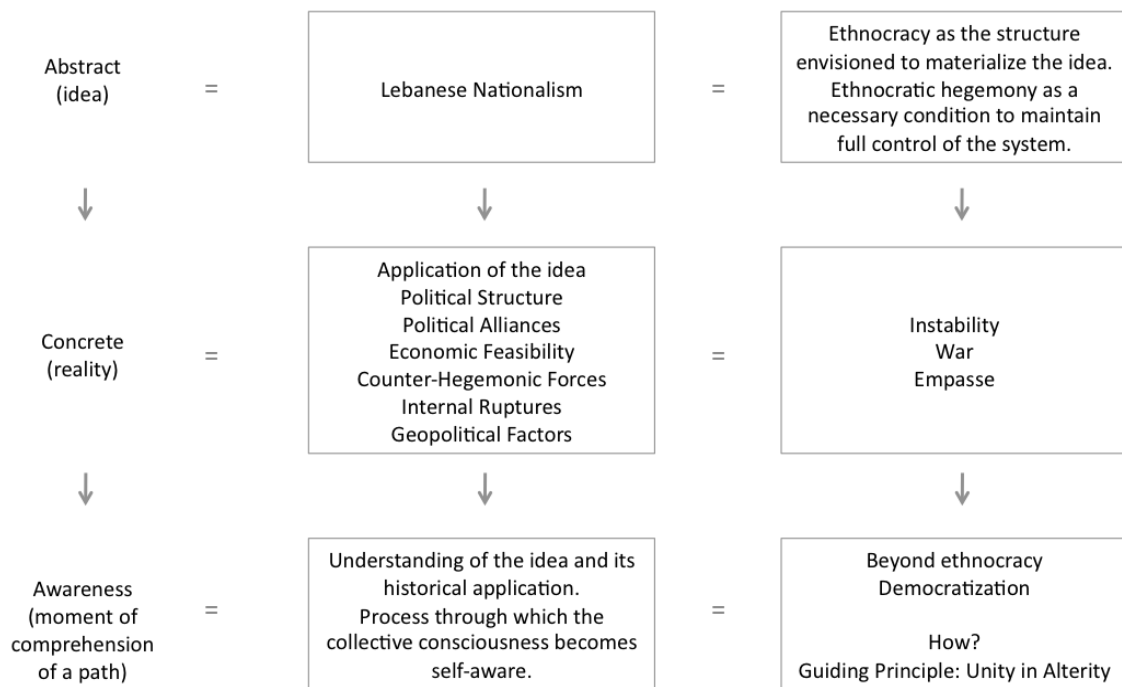
As far as *place*, we know that the urban phenomenon is a global phenomenon<sup>2</sup>, and that it should be studied as such in order to be fully understood; however, in addition to this structure, that is the *urban*, there are also more regional phenomena that act as super-structures at a local level. In the Middle East, rules of ethno-religious affiliation act as an overarching super-structure on top of political, economic, and urban phenomena, and they strongly influence, or even become the main determinant, of decision-making processes. This is not due to a particular inclination of the population of the region, but it is derived directly from the political structures and laws that have been over-imposed on the region and that influence people's relation with their own ethno-religious affiliation and with the affiliation of the *Other/s*. In a way, these political structures purposefully bring the ethno-religious affiliation of the individual to the forefront of his imagination and it becomes the driving force in the creation of the subjectivity of each group and community.

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<sup>2</sup> See H. Lefebvre, 1970 (2003ed.), *The Urban Revolution*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis and London.

In this context, different communities formulated different perceptions of self and the region in which they lived and projected themselves into different nationalist projects, based on their specific "*imagined community*".

Not all of these abstract ideas became political realities; however, those that were translated from an abstract to a concrete reality, faced several difficulties. Today, we are far enough from those historical moments in order to understand both the abstract idea and its historical application and, ultimately, become aware of a path.



**Figure 1:** Dialectical process, in three moments (abstract, concrete and awareness), explaining the object of analysis and the underlying structure of the whole research.

The work aims to offer a structural perspective on the historical development that led from the conception of the idea of the State to its concretization and, ultimately, hopes to be a means of the process through which the collective consciousness becomes self-aware.



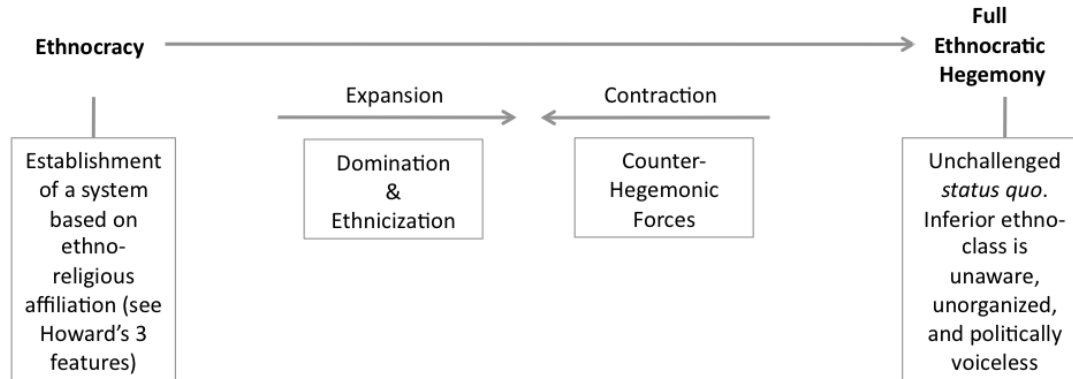
This way, the research tries to present existing history and development from a different perspective, an ethnocratic perspective, that can help in the moment of comprehension of a path, more than any other perspective existing nowadays in the literature on Lebanon. So the core of the work, what represents its modest research contribution, is mostly the result of critical reflection on the existing literature and on the transformative dimension that the development of the concept of *unity in alterity* could play as a guiding principle in the democratization process beyond ethnocracy.

In addition to critical reflection on existing theory and critical thinking to develop a transformative concept, the work is informed also by six months of fieldwork in Lebanon, in which a mixed-methods approach was used to combine existing quantitative data with a series of 29 semi-structured in-depth interviews with politicians, planners, scholars, and inhabitants of all regions of Lebanon.

Overall, the present work does not use a grounded-theory approach, which means that it does not go from the particular to the general (inductive approach). Instead, the work was developed to go from the general to the particular (deductive approach). The decision to utilize this approach was based on the fact that the existing literature already presents middle-range research on various topics of planning practice, all of them focused exclusively on Beirut, while none looks at the structure in a direct way, focusing on Lebanon in its entirety. Furthermore, this approach was meant to see if an existing theory, ethnocratic theory, could help to explain a particular case, Lebanon, from a different perspective.

The findings of the work show that, indeed, the theory on ethnocratic regimes developed by Yiftachel is valid to explain the relationship between identity and territory also in the Lebanese case. However, the work indicates that a distinction between ethnocracy (form) and ethnocratic hegemony (contents) is necessary in order to understand the process of *expansion* and *contraction* of the control of the ethnocratic regime over a specific territory. This

distinction, I believe, can help analyze ethnocratic regimes in the region throughout their historical development in a more dynamic way.



**Figure 2:** Conflictual drives intrinsic to an ethnocratic structure, opposing a process of *expansion* aimed at gaining ethnocratic hegemony in order to have full control of the system and a process of *contraction* resulting from the actions of counter-hegemonic forces that challenge the system in order to create room for political participation and services for marginalized communities. The result is a system that is affected either by a full ethnocratic hegemony with a very pronounced uneven distribution of power and resources, or a system that is unstable, characterized by waves of conflicts or political impasse. This scheme is meant to elaborate on Yiftachel's representation of historical, regime, and counter forces (See Yiftachel, 2006, pp. 35 and 46).

Lastly, the work has been organized into four different sections. A first part looks at the overall organization of the work: from the definition of the hypothesis, research problem and research questions, to the explanation of the theoretical framework, literature review and methodological approach used and, lastly, the data organization and analysis.

A second part, which represents the core of the whole dissertation, in which I tried to analyze from an historical perspective the formation, structure and evolution of the ethnocratic regime from the early formation of the State until our days. In particular, I tried to unravel how the ethnocratic regime was initially formed, how the system was challenged in several occasions, but, ultimately, succeeded in maintaining enough hold on power so to preserve the status quo. In parallel to the analysis of the political structure, this section of the work also tries

to identify the main characteristics of the production of space of each historical period, from the years of the Mandate to the post-independence era, and from the heyday of Harirism to the post-liberation years and the current political impasse.

The third part of the work presents a case-study analysis focused on the urbanization process of Dahiye, the southern suburbs of Beirut. The reason for choosing this particular urban setting was given by the fact that this case, I believe, represents a good example of how ethnocratic control rules have affected people over time and how people have been able to cope with these restraints in the long term.

The fourth and last part, then, is divided in two sections. The first one presents the various ways in which ethnocracy manifests itself in relation to the three research questions. The second one attempts to explain how this research could possibly be significant and contribute to the existing theory; but also, this is the place where I tried to delineate a possible path that can lead to the overcome of the ethnocratic moment.

## **PART 1**

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### **RESEARCH FOCUS AND DESIGN**

### **1.1. Research Interest: The Lebanese Ethnocratic Regime**

The very first reason that brought me in the direction of developing this work was a personal research interest aimed at understanding the relationship between urban planning theory and urban practice. One topic that is often debated, even beyond the realm of urban planning, is the importance and potential contribution that theory can provide to practice.

With this in mind, I believe that the study of the relationship between theory and practice can be very productive if we look at a complex historical, social, economic, and geopolitical environment such as the Middle East.

Based on this broad research interest, I started to look more in depth at the literature on urban planning theory and I found that numerous authors agree on the existence of several gaps and limitations within it. First of all, we see several authors arguing that we work within a system of production of knowledge that is unbalanced and far too rooted into a Western-centric approach to planning theory (Roy, 2005; Connell, 2007; Edensor, Jayne, 2011; Yiftachel, 2012; Gaffikin, Perry, 2012). Furthermore, if we take into account the progressive demographic and urban growth that is characterizing the so-called “*Global South*” (UN Population Division, 2007), we can easily argue that theoretical concepts developed on the analysis of Western urban, social, economic, cultural, and political contexts can lead us only to a partial understanding of new emerging international phenomena and, thus, reveal a severe discrepancy between planning theory and the urban question. A second limitation that some authors, like Yiftachel, highlight is the lack of a multidisciplinary approach that seems to distinguish urban planning theory. In particular, Yiftachel argues that urban planning theory looks more at the structure and functioning of institutional frameworks in which planners work (Public Administration), or at the mechanisms that characterize decision-making processes (Urban Policy), but it does not pay

adequate attention to the effects that these processes and practices produce on the urban environment (Yiftachel, 2012).

From these premises, I started to develop a clearer image of my potential research problem. In particular, I wanted to develop an analysis of the urban and geopolitical context of Lebanon, by putting into relationship concepts of ethnicity (people), homeland (place), and ethics of the Other (politics). The best existing theoretical framework able to connect at least ethnicity and homeland is represented by Oren Yiftachel's work and, as I explained later, it is starting from the analysis of his research that I began to foresee the possibility to adopt his theory for the analysis of the Lebanese ethnocratic regime.

### **1.2. Research Problem: Characteristics and Effects of the Ethnocratic Regime**

As I just mentioned, the theory that most of all influenced my research approach is the result of the work done by Oren Yiftachel. In his work on Israel/Palestine, Yiftachel developed the concept of "*ethnocracy*" or "*ethnocratic regime*", used interchangeably by the author, as an analytic category able to uncover the existing connections between a political system and identity politics, between structural elements and its contents. With all the necessary distinctions between the case of Israel/Palestine and the case of Lebanon, however, my research hypothesis is that Lebanon is very much characterized by a political system that we can call *ethnocratic regime*.

Here, even if the goal of my research is not to develop a comparative analysis between Israel/Palestine and Lebanon, we can point out some important similarities that lie at the basis of the possibility to adopt a theoretical construct emerged from the study of the former also in the analysis of the latter. First of all, we need to highlight that the entire area that goes from

Aqaba to Iskenderun saw in the first half of the twentieth century the re-drawing of its institutional boundaries. The important fact that unites the history of both Lebanon and Palestine is the fact that the act of re-drawing the institutional boundaries did not happen through a process of self-determination of the majority of its people but, instead, such process was put in place with the combined efforts and actions of a minority of the population, which constituted the elite, the upper-class, with the foreign colonizing power. In both cases the question that arises is a question of legitimation of this initial rupture of a pre-existing condition, because these processes of re-drawing of the state boundaries advantaged some groups to the detriment of others.

The Slovenian philosopher, Slavoj Zizek, said that *"political thinkers, from Blaise Pascal to Immanuel Kant and Joseph de Maistre, elaborated the notion of the illegitimate origins of power, of the 'founding crime' on which states are based, which is why one should offer 'noble lies' to people in the guise of heroic narratives of origin"*<sup>3</sup>. If the idea of the *"founding crime"* of the creation of a State is applicable at a broader scale to any State, as Zizek seems to suggest, what can we say in the case of Lebanon and Palestine in which such a process was led by a minoritarian elite allied with a foreign nation? What is the immediate result on the structure of its society and what could be done to overcome the intrinsic conflictual structure of such States? Always Zizek argues that an important dimension is *"oblivion"*. As he says, the risk lies in a *"state that hasn't yet obliterated the 'founding crime' of its 'illegitimate' origins, repressed them into a timeless past"*<sup>4</sup>. This idea, however, is not new. In 1882 Ernest Renan wrote that *"L'essence d'une nation est que tous les individus aient beaucoup de choses en commun et aussi que tous aient oublié bien des choses"*<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> S. Zizek, 2008, *Violence*, Picador, New York, NY, p. 116.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>5</sup> [The essence of a nation is that all the individuals have many things in common and that they have as well forgotten many things]. Source: E. Renan, 1882, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*, Chapter 1, cit. in B. Anderson, 1983, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London and New York, p. 199.

So, what does this tell us about Lebanon and Israel/Palestine then? Are the "*founding crimes*" and the "*illegitimate*" origins of the State forgotten in the past or are still vivid features of political life? In the case of Israel/Palestine, the "*founding crimes*" of the State of Israel are far from being forgotten, and this is due to the fact that what the Palestinians call the "*Nakba*" (or "*Catastrophe*") has not yet been acknowledged by Israel. Beside minoritarian groups, such as Zochrot, that have done precious work in this direction, the majority of Israeli political parties are still far from admitting any "*founding crime*". In the case of Lebanon the situation is different, of course, because the "*founding crime*" did not include the massive displacement of the population and their replacement by newcomers. However, the creation of a State with such borders and such institutional structure represented in and of itself the establishment of a system aimed to serve the interests of one elite over the rest of the population.

For this reason, my research problem is to historically understand how the Lebanese ethnocracy was initially formed, to explain the reasons why this regime have been challenged, such as during the first civil war of 1958 and the longer civil war of 1975-1990, to look at how even after such crises the ethnocratic regime succeeded in recapturing enough hold on power so to maintain and re-establish itself until our days, and finally what are the prospects for a future development that can avoid the recurrence of another wave of national conflict.

In order to address this research problem, I defined three main research questions that can provide a wide variety of explanations and narratives on different aspects of the Lebanese ethnocratic regime. The three main research questions are:

- 1) what are the effects of an ethnocratic regime on the development of urban policies?
- 2) What is the material legacy that an ethnocratic regime leaves on the ground on the urban environment?; and
- 3) What are the effects of this regime on the civil society?



### 1.3. Theoretical Framework

The research problem presented above touches several disciplines and requires to take into consideration a very wide spectrum of theories and analytic models. Throughout the work, I mainly focused on three sets of theories that I believe are the most relevant ones for the scope of this research.

In particular, I used a specific theoretical framework, looking at: 1) the concept of ethnocracy; 2) the formal/informal divide used to ascribe a differential position to various groups on a power scale; and, lastly, 3) to keep in mind how nationalism and neoliberalism relate and affect the process of nation-state formation.

In order to understand the structure of the ethnocratic regime of Lebanon and its repercussions on the development of public policies, the urban environment and civil society, I could have used a wider set of theories, but I believe that the three sets of theories mentioned above are the most appropriate to investigate the research problem and they have the strongest explanatory power of critical dimensions of the Lebanese society.

#### 1.3.1. Ethnocratic Regimes: a New Perspective to Urban Planning Theory

Two initial concepts that need to be analyzed are *identity* and *ethnicity*. As far as identity, we could look at a vast literature that goes beyond the scope of this work. In extreme synthesis, we can try to explain it this way. Identity is the result of the union of two main dimensions: *personal heritage*, on one side; and *lived experience*, on the other. *Personal heritage* is a dimension clearly defined by an internal bequest (*blood*) and by a family/community set of practices (*tradition*); *lived experience* is a more complex ensemble of ideas, opinions, reflections that derive from the daily interaction with the outer world. Identity is the mental construction that combines the two.

As we are going to see later on, it is easier to find refuge within a safe haven of certainties given by a *personal heritage*; while *lived experience* entails an unavoidable interaction with the *Other* that can result in the progressive alteration, if not weakening, of those certainties. From this perspective, we can look at the concept of *ethnicity* as a construct that bounds identity within the dimension of *personal heritage*, and exponentially increases for the individual the importance of *personal heritage*, precluding, this way, any chance of cultural syncretism resulting from the encounter with the *Other* (*lived experience*).

This psychological and sociological process has deep impact on the ways in which urban policies are created within political systems clearly structured around *ethnicity* and, furthermore, it interests us for its ability to characterize the interactions between *people*, *place*, and *politics*.

The connection between *ethnicity*, urban policies, and the physical transformation of the city is particularly visible in the case of the Middle East.

Oren Yiftachel points out the need to work on, what he calls, "*South-Eastern perspectives*" to planning theory. He argues that planning theory developed in Anglo-American countries, referred to as the "*gatekeepers*" of planning knowledge, focuses on decision-making processes that are ingrained in a logic that differs from the ways in which urban policies are developed and implemented in a geopolitical context strongly defined by the concept of "*ethnicity*" (Yiftachel, 2012, pp. 542-544).

If we look at John Friedmann's work<sup>6</sup>, we can find the basis for Yiftachel's argument. Friedmann identifies four traditions of planning theory, such as "*policy analysis*", "*social learning*", "*social reform*", and "*social mobilization*" (Friedmann, 1996, p. 17). Friedmann shows how planning theory is rooted into systems analysis, policy science, public administration and

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<sup>6</sup> J. Friedman, 1996, *Two Centuries of Planning Theory: An Overview*, in S. Mandelbaum, L. Mazza, R. Burchell, 1996, *Explorations in Planning Theory*, Centre for Urban Policy Research, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 10-29.

social theories. These are the different cores that make planning theory and that influence its scope and scale.

It is for this reason that planning theories focused, according to the author, on the understanding of the role and importance of the State in shaping social programs (*social reform*); the "*behavior*" of public institutions and organizations and the ways in which they reach and take decisions (*policy analysis*); on a more pragmatic approach intended to inform theory on the analysis of empirical needs and cases (*social learning*); and, finally, on the proposal of "*bottom-up*" approaches to decision-making processes (*social mobilization*) (Friedmann, 1996, pp. 20-29).

Table 27.1 Mapping the gatekeepers of planning knowledge: Editorial Board members of international planning journals

Journal	Anglo-Americans	Other "North-West"	"South-East"
EPS	7	15	—
JPER	42	1	—
Planning Theory	20	5	4 (2 Israel)
JAPA	46	1	1 (Israel)
Plan. Theor & Prac.	22	13	3 (1 Israel)
TPR	31	6	1 (Israel)
Total	168	41	9

**Figure 3:** Here Yiftachel shows what he calls the "*gatekeepers*" of planning knowledge in order to highlight the strong Anglo-American drive in comparison to other non-Anglo-American regions. Source: O. Yiftachel, 2012, p. 544.

This is why Oren Yiftachel, while showing the location of the "*gatekeepers of planning knowledge*" (see image), explains the need for new perspectives in planning theory. In particular, he takes into consideration the issues of "*Planning Theory*" journal from 2002 and 2004 and finds that "*only three of 47 articles were devoted to issues emerging from the South-East, while 40 articles dealt with various aspects of decision-making and communicative processes*" (Yiftachel, 2012, p. 542).

The main issue is related to the fact that such Western-centric approaches, derived from Friedmann's four traditions of planning theory, are too specifically based on the understanding of aspects related to decision-making processes and their implications in Anglo-American contexts and, furthermore, in relation to South-East cities and political systems, they represent a *"mismatch [with] the actual, material consequences of planning"* (Yiftachel, 2012, p. 540).

Following this perspective, we can discuss here the meaning of concepts such as *ethnicity*, *ethnocracy*, and *ethnocratic hegemony*.

The definition of *ethnicity* itself requires a brief clarification. In fact, the value attributed to the term assumed an unlike connotation in different geographic contexts. On this, Walker Connor, in his book entitled *"Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding"*, explains that sociologists in the United States broadly used the term *"ethnic group"* in relation to groups that share a specific identity within a larger society (Connor, 1994, p. 101). The problem related to this use of the term *ethnicity* is that it reduces the applicability of the concept. In Connor's words, American sociologists' use of the term *"makes ethnic group synonymous with minority"* (Connor, 1994, p. 101). Indeed, also a majority within a determined society has its own specific *ethnicity*. It is for this reason that, in the present research, anytime I am going to refer to it, I will use the definition of *ethnicity*, provided by Hutchinson and Smith<sup>7</sup>, as the result of the articulation of the following six main features:

- "1. a common 'proper name', to identify and express the 'essence' of the community;*
- 2. a myth of 'common ancestry', a myth rather than a fact, a myth that includes the idea of a common origin in time and place and that gives an 'ethnie' a sense of fictive kinship;*
- 3. shared 'historical memories', or better, shared memories of a common past or pasts, including heroes, events, and their*

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<sup>7</sup> J. Hutchinson, A.D. Smith, 1996, *Introduction*, in J. Hutchinson, A.D. Smith (ed.), 1996, *Ethnicity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, pp. 1-14.

*commemoration;*

4. *one or more 'elements of common culture', which need not be specified but normally include religion, customs, or language;*

5. *a 'link' with a 'homeland', not necessarily its physical occupation by the 'ethnie', only its symbolic attachment to the ancestral land, as with diaspora peoples;*

6. *a 'sense of solidarity' on the part of at least some sections of the ethnie's population"* (Hutchinson, Smith, 1996, p. 6-7)<sup>8</sup>.

If we look at *ethnicity* from this perspective, we can better understand it as a more dynamic concept within a society, that might refer either to a majority or a minority, and that connects also to the concept of *nation*. It is for this reason that Connor explains that *ethnicity*, as a concept, "*is derived from 'Ethnos', the Greek word for 'nation' in the latter's pristine sense of a group characterized by common descent*" (Connor, 1994, p. 100). The identification of *ethnicity* with the concept of *nation* introduces a political connotation.

It is based on this idea of *nation* that various processes of nation-making started to emerge in the eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe and, later on, in the twentieth century Middle East, Lebanon included.

The first step forward, or better, the connection between *ethnicity* and a political system in which *ethnicity* is the main determinant, is given by the concept of *ethnocracy*. In practice, we can say that when a *nation* actualizes its sovereignty with the establishment of a State that is thought, rooted, created, and structured on the concept of *ethnicity*, we have an *ethnocracy*.

The analysis of Yiftachel's work<sup>9</sup> is important to understand this concept. The author

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<sup>8</sup> While presenting these six features, Hutchinson and Smith quote other authors such as Horowitz and previous works by Smith himself. I decided to facilitate the fluency of the discussion by focusing only on the six features presented by the authors. In order to see which other authors and studies contributed to the identification of those six features, see J. Hutchinson, A.D. Smith, 1996, pp. 6-7.

<sup>9</sup> Among the extensive discussion of the topic developed by the author, I decided to mainly take into consideration the following three sources: 1) O. Yiftachel, 2000, '*Ethnocracy*' and Its Discontents: Minorities, Protests, and the Israeli Polity, Critical Inquiry, Vol. 26, Issue 4, pp. 725-756. 2) O. Yiftachel, H. Yacobi, 2002, *Urban Ethnocracy: Ethnicization and the Production of Space in an Israeli 'Mixed City'*, Environmental and Planning D: Society and Space, 2003, vol. 21, pp. 673-693. 3) O. Yiftachel, 2006, *Ethnocracy. Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine*, University of Pennsylvania

describes *ethnocracy* in different ways and provides different definitions and explanations for it. A first definition that we can use is the following: "*ethnocracy is a distinct regime type established to enhance the expansion and control of a dominant ethnonation in multiethnic territories*" (Yiftachel, Yacobi, 2002, p. 689).

In previous research we can also find another definition of the same concept: "*ethnocracy is a specific expression of nationalism that exists in contested territories where a dominant ethnos gains political control and uses the state apparatus to ethnicize the territory and society in question*" (Yiftachel, 2000, p. 730).

Both of these definitions, in my opinion, go beyond the simple identification of the political structure that characterizes an *ethnocracy*. What does not fully convince me is the aspect of "*domination*" automatically assigned to the concept of *ethnocracy*, and its primary goal to "*ethnicize*" the whole country. I think a clear distinction needs to be made here between the institutional structure and policies, between hardware and software. In fact, the ways in which Yiftachel theorizes the concept of *ethnocracy* is too rooted in a single case study: the analysis of the geopolitical situation of Israel/Palestine. With this I do not mean that his theory cannot be applied to the case of Lebanon. Indeed, concept such as *ethnicity* and *homeland* are key to understand the history of Lebanon, the ways in which public policies are developed and the physical structure of its main cities and larger territory. It is only in relation to the concept of *ethnocracy* that, I believe, we can make a distinction that will help Yiftachel's theory to be applied and used in broader comparative studies on the Middle East and beyond. From this perspective, if we look at political science theory, we can see that there is the possibility to reinforce the theory developed by Yiftachel by making the appropriate distinctions and clarifications.

Lise Morjé Howard<sup>10</sup> explores from a different point of view the concept of *ethnocracy* and, as a political scientist, she identifies three basic features that "*make an ethnocracy*":

- "1. *political parties that are based foremost on ethnic interests;*
2. *ethnic quotas to determine the allocation of key posts; and*
3. *state institutions, especially in education and the security sector, that are segmented by ethnic group*" (Howard, 2012, p. 155).

Howard goes on to argue that there is a relation between *state-building* theory and *ethnocracy*. She argues that Western powers repeatedly promoted the establishment of States based on *ethnicity*. For example, she mentions the recent post-Assad plans developed by Western powers; another example as well as is represented by the reorganization of the Iraq post-Saddam. As we are going to explore later on, also the formation of Lebanon under the French mandate represents a similar story of nation-making based on the principle of *ethnicity*. More broadly, we can say that nation-making is a process that bounds a territory to a specific institutional framework.

While in some cases this process can be the result of the aspiration of a whole population that already has control or inhabits a territory, in the Middle East we often assisted to the emergence of States created on behalf of a specific ethnic group with a strong support of a foreign power. What is critical about nation-making is that when the State created represents only one of the many ethnicities that inhabit a specific territory, or when that State emerges from the aspirations of a single ethnic group, we see the emergence of issues of representation, questions related to different perceptions of the historicity of the country, and different and diverging concepts of *nation*. From this point of view, the repartition of a specific number of seats in the respective governments and parliaments to several ethnic communities is a political

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<sup>10</sup> L.M. Howard, 2012, *The Ethnocracy Trap*, Journal of Democracy, Vol. 23, Number 4, Oct. 2012, pp. 155-169.

tool to reduce contestation through a wide representation of all different local groups and, at the same time, to provide the international community with an idea of democratic representation.

However, a political system based on *ethnic* representation triggers a cycle that leads to a progressively more accentuated segregation of each *ethnic* group and, indeed, once such a political system rooted into *ethnicity* is created, it becomes difficult to go beyond it, and both the State and its people remain constrained within what Howard calls an "*ethnocratic trap*" (Howard, 2012, p. 157).

Furthermore, we can briefly mention the research developed by Arend Lijphart<sup>11</sup> who compares the political features of federal and consociative States and argues that "*both of these concepts entail a rejection of majoritarian democracy*" (Lijphart, 1985, p. 4). Generally, from the description of both authors, we can understand some key points that define the structure of a State as an *ethnocracy* and why it can be distinguished from other forms of States.

To a certain extent, we can say that Howard describes the *form* that makes an ethnocracy, while Yiftachel talks specifically about the direction given to public policy, where "*ethnicization*" itself is a form of public policy.

It is for this reason that I want to distinguish between *ethnocracy* and *ethnocratic hegemony*. Indeed, I believe that the concept of *ethnocracy* refers to a specific political system defined through the establishment of generally accepted *ethnic* categorizations. However, the establishment of such a system can be either voluntary, boosted by a foreign country, or imposed by an *ethnic* majority, but, in any case, it does not necessarily mean that an unbalanced redistribution of powers and resources are allocated in favor of a specific *ethnic* majority. It depends from case to case. On the other side, I would like to call *ethnocratic hegemony* the

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<sup>11</sup> A. Lijphart, 1985, *Non-Majoritarian Democracy: A Comparison of Federal and Consociational Theories*, Publius, Vol. 15, No. 2, spring 1985, pp. 3-15.



situation in which an *ethnocracy* evolves into a system that precisely presents the cultural, economic, political or military hegemony of the *ethnic* majority on the rest of the population. Forthwith a question could be raised in this regard: what is the boundary that delimits an *ethnocracy*, intended as a non-majoritarian form of consociationalism, and *ethnocratic hegemony*?

The direction given to public policy in a specific geopolitical context is the key dimension that defines and distinguishes an *ethnocratic hegemony* from an *ethnocracy*. Scott Bollens' work<sup>12</sup> is useful in this regard because he explores the relation between "*governing ideology*" and "*urban policy*" and identifies different possible combinations of the two. While referring to ideology as a "*comprehensive political belief system*", the author explains that "*the governing ideology in a polarized city constitutes an intake or gatekeeper function, either allowing or barring a single ethnic group's claim to penetrate and frame public policy*" (Bollens, 1998, pp. 190-191).

<i>Prescription</i>	Ideology >>> Policy	Correspondence between fundamental and operative ideology
<i>Coexistence</i>	Ideology   Policy	Operative ideology will seek to prove that no conflict exists. Planning likely presented as a technical enterprise
<i>Conflict</i>	Ideology >< Policy	Operative ideology recognizes gap. Argue that it is unavoidable and temporary. Distract attention to spheres where there is greater accord

FIGURE 2. *Ideology and Urban Policy*.  
(Adapted from Bilski et al., 1980; and Seliger, 1970)

**Figure 4:** Here Bollens summarizes as "*prescription*", "*coexistence*", and "*conflict*", three ways in which ideology can relate to policy, and also identifies the possible role of planning within this picture. Source: S. Bollens, 1998, p. 191.

<sup>12</sup> S. A. Bollens, 1998, *Urban Policy in Ethnically Polarized Societies*, International Political Review, Vol. 1, No. 2, Apr. 1998, pp. 187-215.

Furthermore, the author defines four strategies that an administration can put in place in order to connect "*ideology*" and "*urban policy*". 1) A "*neutral*" strategy focused on technical needs and criteria; 2) a "*partisan*" strategy that develops monopolies and preferential access to urban resources and services in favor of the dominant group; 3) an "*equity*" strategy that redistributes and allocates resources following equity-based criteria; and, finally, 4) a "*resolver*" strategy aimed at solving the causes of conflict instead of managing them (Bollens, 1998, p. 192).

Indeed, the ways in which the "*governing ideology*" is implemented through "*urban policy*" defines the existence of an *ethnocratic hegemony*. From my perspective, an *ethnocratic hegemony* exists when the "*governing ideology*" is implemented through a "*partisan*" urban policy strategy.

Lastly, the connection between "*ideology*" and "*political strategies*" finds in the city the space for its manifestation. Always Bollens explains that "*cities are the focal point for unresolved nationalistic ethnic conflict*" and become, then, "*prisms*" through which conflict can either be magnified or the first place for coexistence (Bollens, 1998, p. 189; and Bollens, 2007, p. 248<sup>13</sup>). We see here the importance of *space* to understand how *politics* affects *people*, to understand how history affects its protagonists. In this regard, the fundamental shift triggered by Michel Foucault from *history* to *space* helps us even more to understand the flow that leads from *ideology* to *politics*, and then to its effects on *space*<sup>14</sup>. A shift that Soja described as "*a practical theoretical consciousness that sees the lifeworld of being creatively located not only in the making of history but also in the construction of human geographies*" (E. Soja, 1989, p. 11)<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> S. A. Bollens, 2007, *Urban Governance at the Nationalist Divide: Coping with Group-Based Claims*, Journal of Urban Affairs, Vol. 29, Issue 3, pp. 229-253.

<sup>14</sup> As Foucault would say: "*The great obsession of the nineteenth century was, as we know, history [...] The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space*", in M. Foucault, J. Miskowiec, 1986, *Of Other Spaces*, Diacritics, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 22-27.

<sup>15</sup> E. Soja, 1989, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, Verso, London and New York.

By going closer to the people that live a space, we should mention that this strong connection we are focusing on, between *ideology* and *politics*, causes also a redefinition of the concept of identity oriented towards a specific political goal. It is for this reason that Manuel Castells<sup>16</sup> distinguishes between the following three forms of "identity":

*"1) 'Legitimizing identity': introduced by the dominant institutions of society to extend and rationalize their domination vis à vis social actors, a theme that is at the heart of Sennett's theory of authority and domination, but also fits with various theories of nationalism.*

*2) 'Resistance identity': generated by those actors who are in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society, as Calhoun proposes when explaining the emergence of identity politics.*

*3) 'Project identity': when social actors, on the basis of whatever cultural materials are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, by so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure. This is the case, for instance, when feminism moves out of the trenches of resistance of women's identity and women's rights, to challenge patriarchy, thus the patriarchal family, and thus the entire structure of production, reproduction, sexuality, and personality on which societies have been historically based".*

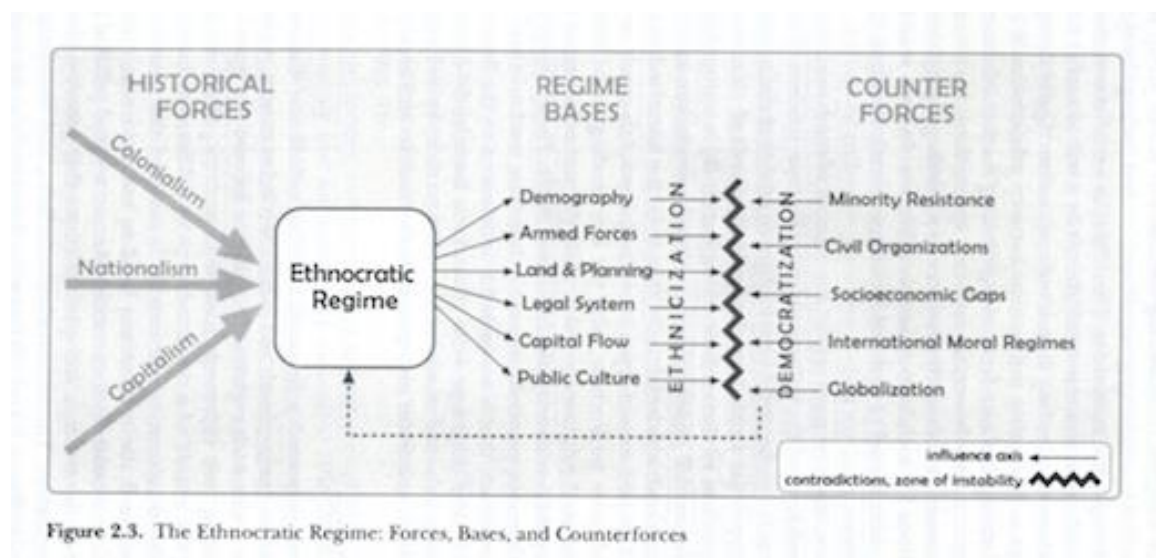
In our case of analysis, we will see how the strong core-periphery relation existing in Lebanon, created a "*legitimizing identity*" at the core, spread through ideological State apparatuses, and a form of "*resistance identity*" at the periphery of the country. This resistance identity, then, moved over the decades closer to Beirut, through the process of urbanization of Beirut's southern suburbs, and today the much needed moment of awareness, of comprehension of a path, can possibly lead to the emergence of a more inclusive "*project identity*" able to rethink the *raison d'être* of the State.

In conclusion, this first set of theories helps us to understand the delicate

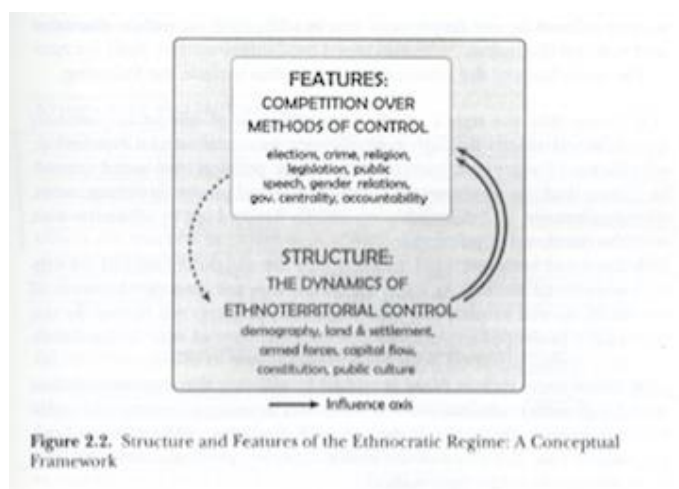
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<sup>16</sup> M. Castells, 1997, *Communal Heavens: Identity and Meaning in the Network Society*, in M. Castells, 1997, *The Power of Identity*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden, MA, p. 8.

relationship between *identity* and *politics* and how this relationship shapes the possible emergence of the concept of *ethnicity*. Based on the analysis of key authors such as Yiftachel, Bollens, and Lijphart, we can say that an *ethnocracy* is an institutional framework that can be viewed as a specific political form of a non-majoritarian consociationalism system, in which the dominance of a specific group is not a given but the result of specific "*partisan*" strategies that are aimed to connect *ideology* to *politics*. In the case in which these "*partisan*" strategies are created, developed and successfully implemented, we assist to the emergence of an *ethnocratic hegemony*, that reorients and redefines the meaning of *identity* in a strictly politicized fashion.



**Figures 5 and 6:** In the two schemes above, Yiftachel summarizes the role that historical forces, such as colonialism, nationalism, and capitalism have in the definition of an ethnocratic regime and with the identification of regime bases and counter forces he shows how these forces act in an opposite direction in a process of ethnicization versus democratization. Source: O. Yiftachel, 2006, pp. 35 and 46.



### 1.3.2. Informality: Theoretical Meaning and Use of the Concept

The theme of *informality* started to emerge in the planning literature in the 1960s and it has been constantly present in the academic debate from that moment until today. However, throughout the decades, the notions and meanings associated to the theme of informality changed considerably.

From a first notion of marginal and extra-ordinary urban condition opposed to the regularly planned urban areas, informality progressively moved to be considered today as a more permeating phenomenon both in developed and developing countries, to the point that some authors propose to look at informality as a "*valid mode of urbanism*"<sup>17</sup>.

Informal growth itself developed as a result of a variety of spontaneous activities put in place by low income urban populations to face the lack of housing units. This process of self-organization substituted or, better, filled the deficiencies of State intervention. With the progressive internationalization of neoliberal policies in the 1980s and 1990s, several important questions started to rise in relation to the effects of neoliberal policies on informal growth; the effects of such policies on issues of inequalities in the distribution of resources; and to the instrumental use that can be done in the realm of politics of the theme of informality.

In this section, I tried to highlight, first, the various notions and uses of the term *informality* (a); and, second, to analyze how different classifications of *informality* used in politics and policy may be useful in the process of theory-making (b).

The emergence of the term *informality* came into being to describe a duality between what was, and still is, considered legal or extra-legal in reference to the housing market. In order to distinguish that part of the city developed in relation to a general and structured system of codes, norms, and regulations from those areas of the city or, at a wider scale, of the urban

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<sup>17</sup> F. Gaffikin, D. Perry, 2012, *The Contemporary Urban Condition: Understanding the Globalizing City as Informal, Contested, and Anchored*, Urban Affairs Review, Vol. 48, Issue 5, pp. 702.

conurbation, that grew in an autonomous, spontaneous, unplanned and unsystematic fashion. In this sense, the category of *informality* emerged to describe phenomena that were considered to be external to the *normal* state of things.

In this regard, McFarlane and Waibel say that *"informality occupies a contradictory and epistemologically external space, in that is often viewed as a product of urban modernity and liberalization - assumed to be domains of the 'formal' - but at the same time often visibly appears to lack the products of those projects"*<sup>18</sup>. From this perspective, the authors identify four ways in which the *formal-informal* divide has been discussed in the literature so far: 1) as a *"spatial categorization"*; 2) as an *"organizational form"*; 3) as a *"governmental tool"*; or 4) as a *"negotiable value"*.

The first conceptualization of the term refers to the production of space. *Informality* has been utilized as a category to describe the spontaneous growth of parts of the city that, with the passage of time, became also known as the *informal city*. This phenomenon happened in various parts of the world at a different time, and it was directly related to the industrialization process.

Following a wave of investments in the industrial sector, cities worldwide experienced a rapid urbanization and demographic growth caused by the large migration of population from rural to urban areas. In some cases like Brazil, this process dates back to the nineteenth century.

As the contemporary Brazilian historian, Solange Araujo de Carvalho, wrote: *"las 'favelas' surgen en Río de Janeiro a partir de la década de 1890, ocupando inicialmente los cerros ubicados junto a las áreas centrales de la ciudad"*<sup>19</sup>. From the 1890s, the *favelas* continued to grow decade after decade, and it is only in 1937 that the first official document issued by the

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<sup>18</sup> C. McFarlane, M. Waibel, 2012, *Urban Informalities: Reflections on the Formal and Informal*, Ashgate Publishing Group, Abingdon, UK, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> [the 'favelas' arise in Rio de Janeiro in the 1890s, and they initially occupied those neighborhoods located in proximity to the central areas of the city]. Source: S. Araujo de Carvalho, *Interferencias del proceso de urbanismo informal en la vivienda*, in S.P. Galicia (ed.), 2009, *Urbanismo Informal*, Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana-Azcapotzalco, Azcapotzalco, Mexico, p. 225.

municipality acknowledged their existence as "*favelas*". The approach decided by the municipality was to endorse a zero-tolerance policy towards informal settlements. This policy approach included the strict prohibition to expand the existing settlements, to add or modify the structure of existing buildings and infrastructures and the absolute interdiction to realize new constructions. The use of a clearance approach is something typical that we can find in various countries worldwide and it is somehow the first and classical approach to counter-act the emergence of forms of urbanization that are not perceived as integral parts of the rest of the city, but that, however, are a common feature of what Lefebvre calls "*the urban phenomenon*" (See Lefebvre, 1970). We will see later that also in the case of Lebanon clearance policies have been implemented to counter-act processes of urbanization that emerged beyond the reach of central authorities. In our case, though, clearance policies were accompanied to infrastructural projects, aimed at fragmenting and limiting further *informal* urban expansion, or, in some cases, also by "*cleansing campaigns*" enacted by right-wing armed militias that were not controlled by the State.

A different case is represented by the French *banlieues*, which represent an example of institutionalized urban marginalization through formal processes. This case is, indeed, different because the State played a fundamental role in the conceptualization, design, and implementation of the *banlieues*. As an urban phenomenon these constructions emerged after the end of the Second World War. Starting from 1944-1945, France experienced a period of rapid economic growth, industrial development, and demographic increase (the baby-boom era), that became known also as "*les trente glorieuses*" (1944-1973), and the *banlieues* are the physical product of this era.

In the midst of these "*thirty glorious years*", on January 22nd, 1954, the "*Ministère de la Reconstruction et du Logement*" launched an emergency building programme to foster rapid

mass housing developments falling under the name of "*cités d'urgence*"<sup>20</sup>. The areas for constructions were called "*zones à urbaniser en priorité*" (ZUP), and from 1959 to 1976 France developed nearly 300 ZUPs, hosting one million of new dwelling units all over the country, but mainly in the surroundings of Paris. Such surroundings were rapidly inhabited by low income households and by immigrants natives of ex-French colonies in northern Africa. These areas were not developed with an adequate level of services and connections with the city center, and they rapidly became marginalized and negatively stigmatized parts of the city.

With the example of Paris, we can see that the conceptualization of *informality*, as describing something external to the *normal* state of things, suffers from a first shortcoming. Indeed, the suburbs of Paris were highly planned by *formal* planning agencies, but the relationship set from the outset between the physical structure of those areas and central Paris, and between the inhabitants of the *banlieues* and the city, was a "*relation of exception*"<sup>21</sup>: the space and people of the *banlieues* were included only through their exclusion and position at the margin of both the city and society.

A third example is represented by the development of informal settlements in Lebanon. I explained more in depth the overall process of urban growth that characterized Beirut while explaining the case study of Beirut southern suburbs; however, here we can mention that in the 1940s Lebanon endorsed *laissez-faire* policies in order to boost economic growth and industrialization. The result is that in the 1950s and 1960s a huge amount of rural population moved from the periphery of the country to the city of Beirut. The demand for housing was so high that developers did not wait for regular building permits and started to

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<sup>20</sup> M. Taunton, 2009, *Fictions of the City. Class, Culture and Mass Housing in London and Paris*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke, UK, p. 106.

<sup>21</sup> For a further explanation of the concept see: G. Agamben, D. Heller-Roazen, 1995, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, Chapter 1, *The Logic of Sovereignty*, pp. 15-70.



build without permissions. This way, neighborhoods such as Hay es-Sellom<sup>22</sup> and Sahra Choueifat<sup>23</sup> developed with an aura of poverty and illegality. This aura, then, was extended to the whole Beirut southern suburb of Dahiye.

We briefly mentioned here three examples in which the interpretation of *informality* as a "*spatial categorization*" directly refers to the production of space. A second categorization, instead, looks at *informality* as an "*organizational form*". This second categorization mainly refers to the *informality* of labor market of the populations that live at the fringes of society. The process is inspired by the same rationale that lies behind the production of informal settlements. In the first case, people with low chances to access the regular housing market, organize in order to provide a roof for themselves and their families by building with no building permits, cheap construction materials, and in residual and interstitial areas of the urban fabric.

In this second case, either because of the lack of necessary educational attainment required for a desired position or because of the overall difficulty in entering the *formal* labor market, these populations find a chance to cope with their daily needs through *informal networks* and the *informal* economy. In the case of Lebanon the *informal* economy represents the thirty percent of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP)<sup>24</sup>, while in the US, for instance, it oscillates between five and ten percent of the annual GDP<sup>25</sup>.

While *informality* read through the lens of the production of space defines a relation of legitimacy or illegitimacy; the "*organizational form*" of *informality* returns an idea of ethicality and unethicity. The legitimacy of a physical space refers to its conformity with zoning codes, planning laws, and building regulations. The ethicality of one's activities, instead, is derived from

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<sup>22</sup> M. Fawaz, 2008, *An unusual clique of city-makers: social networks in the production of a neighborhood in Beirut (1950-1975)*, International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, Vol. 32, Issue 3, pp. 565-585.

<sup>23</sup> H.B. Akar, 2012, *Contesting Beirut's Frontiers*, City and Society, Vol. 24, Issue 2, pp. 150-172.

<sup>24</sup> Source: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Business/Lebanon/2011/Nov-02/152829-imf-lebanons-informal-economy-30-percent-of-gdp.ashx#axzz31FgvZYqA> [Last viewed: June, 2016].

<sup>25</sup> Source: <http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/412372-informal-nonstandard-employment-in-us.pdf> [Last viewed: June, 2016].

its compliance with the tax system and the overall economic system.

A third categorization presents *informality* as a "government tool". From this perspective *informality* is perceived as a phenomenon that needs to be integrated in the *formal* system through government actions. In particular, McFarlane and Waibel say that:

*"The categories of formal and informal are often deployed by states as an organizational device that allows particular domains and forms of intervention (e.g., around resource allocation, service provision, or statistical monitoring). It is through those routes that informal settlements and labor become developmental targets within local, national and international debates and rationalities - i.e. the formal is seen to governmentalise the informal. This governmental framing of the formal-informal divide contributes to the lingering representation of informality within urban studies debates as a 'developmental problem'"<sup>26</sup>.*

The process of formalization of informal settlements was a response to the impossibility to relocate slum dwellers in the first place. In the case of Brazil, after the 1937 decree mentioned above, the administration of Rio de Janeiro made clear that its goal was to uproot the phenomenon of informal settlements and to apply a so-called "*clearance and resettlement strategy*" in order to eliminate unplanned urban areas close to the city center and to relocate its inhabitants in housing projects at the outskirts of the city. However, as Abiko and other authors mention: "*this policy proved ineffective over time as relocated residents often left their new homes and moved back to new slums. Moreover slum areas have grown considerably, so generalized re-housing was no longer feasible*"<sup>27</sup>.

The difficulty of resettlement led the administration to rethink the scope of its initiative toward more localized actions of improvement of the existing constructions. Indeed, in the 1970s and 1980s the World Bank and the UN Habitat project started to propose a less

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<sup>26</sup> C. McFarlane, M. Waibel, 2012, *Urban Informalities: Reflections on the Formal and Informal*, Ashgate Publishing Group, Abingdon, UK, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> A. Abiko et al., 2007, *Basic costs of slum upgrading in Brazil*. p. 2.

Source: [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTURBANDEVELOPMENT/Resources/336387-1269364699096/6892630-1269364758309/abiko\\_english.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTURBANDEVELOPMENT/Resources/336387-1269364699096/6892630-1269364758309/abiko_english.pdf) [Last viewed: May, 2016].

invasive approach represented by the "*upgrading strategy*" to the "*clearance and resettlement strategy*".

This new approach is rooted in the idea of formalization of the informal through improvements of the existing settlements through projects aimed at enhancing building structures, widening roads, and providing electricity, running water, and a sewage system to informal settlements. The result in the case of Brazil is that - even through a different planning strategy - after some informal settlements were upgraded, the prices of rents increased and ultimately a vast portion of the population living there, especially those with lower incomes, were *indirectly* forced to move to other neighborhoods. We will see how in the case of the reconstruction of Dahiye local actors paid particular attention in order to prevent gentrification and to preserve the political meaning of the area.

Another example of attempted formalization of the *informal* is represented by the experience of the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, and in other Arab countries in the Middle East, such as Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. From the moment in which the British withdrew from the Mandate on Palestine in 1948, approximately 900,000 Palestinians were forced to leave their homes and towns.

During the past sixty-eight years, several international organizations tried to address the question in different ways and from different perspectives. In particular, the contemporary German architect, Philipp Misselwitz<sup>28</sup>, proposed to frame the history of the development of Palestinian refugee camps into four phases related to the physical features that characterized the camps in that specific period of time. This way we can talk about a first period of formation (1948-1955); followed by a stage of consolidation (1955-1967); a period of horizontal growth (1967-1987), and the most recent time characterized by vertical growth (1987-nowadays).

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<sup>28</sup> P. Misselwitz, 2009, *Palestine Camp Cities: Planners Face Urbanized Refugee Camps*, in S.P. Galicia (ed.), 2009, *Urbanismo Informal*, Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana-Azcapotzalco, Azcapotzalco, Mexico, 115-133.

The period of formation (1948-1955) was characterized by the massive exodus of Palestinians in neighboring countries, like Lebanon. In this first chaotic moment, there were no signs of an international management and plan to address the refugees issue. Basically, the International Red Cross intervened in assisting the population with basic services and tents in the areas where larger groups of people settled in a spontaneous way. This automatically attracted more and more refugees in need of immediate assistance. The idea of the first camps was totally transitory and temporary, there was no clue of the possible political and military evolution of the situation and, furthermore, no big plans were put in place. For Palestinians, uncertainty was one of the factors that characterized the most their first seven years as refugees. In the creation of these first refugee camps, international organizations took into consideration some fundamental factors such as the proximity to roads, availability of water, and other villages that could provide support to the refugees. However, there was no plan or long-term vision for the refugees. In the subsequent years, however, given the increasing number of refugees in need of assistance, the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which had the task to manage the situation, had to operate with host local governments to find the appropriate locations and to accommodate all newcomers refugees.

The approach of the international community changed in the years between 1955 and 1967 and started to be in contrast with the *informal* growth of the camps. The UNRWA tried to put in place formal planning activities, such as replacing the use of temporary tents and installing shelters. However, the camp's populations did not see this new attitude in their favor, not because of a fear to be relocated, as in the case of Brazilian informal settlements, but because the change from a temporary to a more permanent situation, as the one provided by the shelters, was perceived as something dangerous for their "*Right of Return*" to Palestine. The situation worsened in 1967 when the Six-Day War displaced between 5 to 30 percent of each camp's population within Palestine and these refugees were denied the possibility to re-enter in

their territory of origin. Many of these people were 1948 refugees that had to start over a second time from zero, mainly in areas located in Jordan. Within the camps, this new displacement of people caused a strong loss of population and, furthermore, the need to redistribute empty shelters. Later on, in the 1970s, the entire region experienced also a demographic growth that led to the need to build new units. Nevertheless, the fact that the UNRWA, at the time, prohibited the construction of second or third stories, produced a rapid horizontal growth that lasted until the late 1980s, when the saturation of the camps and the lack of new land to be developed forced the refugees to find a new direction for growth other than horizontal.

Misselwitz describes the most recent stage of the camps from 1987 until our days as *“Verticalization”*. In this period, the camps experienced a sharp demographic increase due to the birth and growth of third and fourth generations of refugees. In order to cope with the demographic increase and the lack of available land for new developments, the refugees camps saw an informal vertical growth made of occasional works and adjustments on each home that led to the formation of structures of 4-5 and also 6 stories. To address the dangers of this situation, in 2004 the UNRWA created a Department of Infrastructure and Camp Improvement and, in the same year, at the Geneva Conference, the UN distinguished between the *“Right of Return”* and the *“Right to live in appropriate living conditions”*.

This shift of perspective and different use of words was meant to overcome one of the strongest criticism that UN activities received from Palestinian refugees, which was the *“normalization”* of the situation of the camps, perceived as a risk for their *“Right of Return”*. This new approach proposed by the UNRWA tried to address both the *“software”* (social capacities) as well as the *“hardware”* (physical fabric) of the camps and it tried to foster a slow and

evolutionary planning attitude based on the upgrading of existing structures and functions<sup>29</sup>. The process is still ongoing so it is difficult to evaluate the success or failure of different upgrading projects, but the history of the different phases in the development of the refugees camps represents an interesting case of *informality* conceptualized as a “governmental tool” and it provides us with a possible scenario of how existing areas of Beirut could develop once they will reach a saturation point within the urban structure on an horizontal plane.

A fourth way in which the literature conceptualized *informality* is as a “negotiable value”. This fourth category emerges mainly from the work of Ananya Roy and Nezar AlSayyad<sup>30</sup> and Asef Bayat<sup>31</sup>. This approach tends to see the *formal-informal* divide as a less antagonistic relation in which the end of the formal and the beginning of the informal is difficult to discern. The “negotiable value” is something that reflects more closer the multitude of everyday practices of the city. McFarlane and Waibel described the interpretation of *informality* through the lens of everyday practices and a different conception of time in the following passage:

*“In the domain of lived experience, everyday struggle, routine, and organization, the informal does not exist in isolation from the formal city: they are blurred, for instance, through formal regulations over informal economic activity such as production or sales, or in the subcontracting of labor, or in the broader impact of national economic conditions on informal activities, as well as policies on land use or infrastructure provision. There is also an important temporal aspect that further complicates these relations, as people move between formal and informal activities or arrangements over the course not just of their lives, but even over a day [...] In this context, we might see informality and formality as modes of everyday sociality through which different urban constituencies (residents, planners, business people, activists, etc.) sift and sort through their hopes and desires”<sup>32</sup>.*

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 125-129.

<sup>30</sup> A. Roy, N. AlSayyad (Eds.), 2004, *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*, Lexington Books, Lanham, MD.

<sup>31</sup> A. Bayat, 2013, 2nd ed., *Life as Politics: How ordinary People Change the Middle East*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.

<sup>32</sup> C. McFarlane, M. Waibel, 2012, *Urban Informalities: Reflections on the Formal and Informal*, Ashgate Publishing Group, Abingdon, UK, pp. 5-6.

This last conceptualization of *informality* is critical of the dualism that opposes modern-backward, legal-extralegal, developed-underdeveloped, and it raises for us the question of what is *normal* and, most importantly, who decides what is *normal*.

On this we can find that there are contrasting views in the literature. For instance, if we take into consideration David Harvey we can try to see some elements of his thought on the matter. In *"The Urban Experience"*<sup>33</sup>, he developed a theory that describes the process of urbanization of capital and explained the effects on society and on the territory that this process produces. He developed his idea of theory starting from the image presented by Michel De Certeau in his work on *"spatial practices"*<sup>34</sup>, which suggests that the elevation *"transforms the bewitching world by which one was 'possessed' into a text that lies before one's eyes. It allows one to read it"*. The ability to be detached and look over the observed phenomena from a vantage point is what Harvey considers necessary in order to interpret an historical development and for the process of theory-making, where for theory Harvey means something that can help us *"grasp who, what, where and (sometimes) why we are in the world. Theories provide cognitive maps for finding out way in a complex and changeable environment"*<sup>35</sup>.

David Harvey looks at the production of space as a result of the growth of the capitalist system. The process of accumulation of capital, necessary for the functioning of the system, leads inevitably to the creation of surplus, and the need to absorb this surplus in the market. When such surplus fails to be reabsorbed, economic crises emerge with all the consequences that follow. In Harvey's words:

*"the necessary expansion ("accumulation for accumulation's sake, production for production's sake") often conflicted with the impulsion to revolutionize the productive forces under such a system of class relations. The system is therefore unstable, degenerating into periodic crises of overaccumulation, a condition*

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<sup>33</sup> D. Harvey, 1996, *The Urban Experience*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD.

<sup>34</sup> M. De Certeau, 1984, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles.

<sup>35</sup> D. Harvey, 1996, pp. 1-2.

*in which surpluses of capital and labor power exist unused side by side. Overaccumulation leads to devaluation and destruction of both capital and labor power unless some way can be found profitably to absorb them*<sup>36</sup>.

The result is that, in order to avoid a cycle of economic crisis and to utilize the surplus in the market, urbanization is produced through a process of capital accumulation. This is why Harvey says that *"capital accumulation and the production of urbanization go hand in hand"*<sup>37</sup>. This process characterizes cities and countries worldwide in their process of industrialization and it suffered a crisis in the 1970s due to the collapse of the Keynesian city and the internationalization of capital. In the case of Lebanon, especially in the post-civil war era, the process through which capital accumulation creates space is clearly represented by the reconstruction projects for the center of Beirut.

I explained more the concept of the *"revolutionary turning point"* represented by the contemporary ascent to power of Deng Xiaoping in China, Margaret Thatcher in the UK, and Ronald Reagan in the US later, in section 1.3.3., centered on the role of nationalism and neoliberalism in the process of Nation-State formation. However, those years (1978-1980) signed the beginning of the internationalization of neoliberal policies and the creation of global competition between countries to attract foreign investments. At the local level, also cities are forced to compete to attract new investments, large businesses, and headquarters of multinational companies. This process of competition at an international scale is what causes, according to Harvey, the polarization between developing countries and the Global South, and at the national level this creates interurban competition and uneven geographical development. This process creates inequalities in the distribution of resources but also sets a structure that reproduces itself. Harvey says that:

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 22.



*"the uneven geographical development of capitalism can at best be slowly modified and the maintenance of existing spatial configurations means the continued structuration and replication of spaces of domination and subservience, of advantage and disadvantage. How to break out of that without destroying social life is the quintessential question"<sup>38</sup>.*

This way, through Harvey's work, we understand that it is the structure that defines what is developed or underdeveloped, formal or informal. There is a structural process that creates both an economic and urban system able to distinguish between the two spheres<sup>39</sup>. Starting from a similar analysis of the structure of the neoliberal system, the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, called neoliberalism a *"pensée unique"*, that is, a system that presents itself as the only valuable and correct structure of society<sup>40</sup>. Hence, it is the structure that defines itself as *normal* and what does or cannot fit within it becomes the *informal*.

The process of urbanization of capital brings people of different ethno-religious and national background to live in the same urban context. Zygmunt Bauman<sup>41</sup>, in particular, builds on Claude Lévi-Strauss' work, and describes two different strategies that have been deployed *"to cope with the otherness of the others"*: an anthropoemic and anthropophagic strategy. The first one results from the perception of the impossibility of an integration with the Other, the idea that the Other is *"incurably strange and alien"*. Hence, by *"barring physical contact, dialogue, social intercourse and all varieties of 'commercium', commensability or 'connubium'"* cities experience the creation of specific spaces which are *"emic places"*. Bauman mentions that *"the extreme variants of the 'emic' strategy are now, as always, incarceration, deportation and*

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp. 56-57.

<sup>39</sup> Ira Katznelson criticizes Harvey's position and argues that from his analysis what is missing are the positive qualities of liberalism. Source: I. Katznelson, 1997, *Social Justice, Liberalism and the City: Considerations on David Harvey, John Rawls and Karl Polanyi*, in A. Merrifield, E. Swyngedouw, 1997, *The Urbanization of Injustice*, New York University Press, New York, pp. 45-64.

<sup>40</sup> P. Bourdieu, 1999, *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market*, New Press, New York, NY.

<sup>41</sup> Z. Bauman, 2000, *Liquid Modernity*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK.

*murder. The upgraded, 'refined' (modernized) forms of the 'emic' strategy are spatial separation, urban ghettos, selective access to spaces and selective barring from using them*"<sup>42</sup>.

Different from emic places are the phagic places resulting from an anthropophagic strategy. In this case the Other is incorporated to the point that he becomes identical to the dominant group. The Other is forced to assimilate to the point that he is not distinguishable anymore from the rest of the population. In Bauman's terms, the anthropophagic strategy:

*"consists in a soi-disant 'disalienation' of alien substances: 'ingesting', 'devouring' foreign bodies and spirits so that they be made, through metabolism, identical with, and no longer distinguishable from, the 'ingesting' body. This strategy took an equally wide range of forms: from cannibalism to enforced assimilation - cultural crusades, wars of attrition declared on local customs, calendars, cults, dialects and other 'prejudices' and 'superstitions'. If the first strategy was aimed at the exile or annihilation of 'the others', the second was aimed at the suspension or annihilation of their 'otherness'"*<sup>43</sup>.

In addition to these two strategies that produce, respectively, emic places and phagic places, Bauman talks also about the construction of "non-places", intended as places devoid of identity and symbols, and "empty spaces", represented by physical constructions empty of meaning. In this panorama of "places" and "strategies", what is really affected at a social level is the possible creation of a common civility. This idea is somehow related also to the notion of "civic governmentality" developed by Ananya Roy<sup>44</sup>, however, civility is intended by Bauman as:

*"the ability to interact with strangers without holding their strangeness against them and without pressing them to surrender it or to renounce some or all the traits that have made them strangers in the first place. The ability to live with differences, let alone to enjoy such living and to benefit from it, does not come*

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>44</sup> A. Roy, 2009, *Civic Governmentality: the Politics of Inclusion in Beirut and Mumbai*, Antipode, Vol. 41, Issue 1, pp. 159-179.

*easily and certainly not under its own impetus. This ability is an art which, like all arts, requires study and exercise*<sup>45</sup>.

The difference with David Harvey's approach is that, in the case of Bauman, we can see the identification of a responsibility that is political and social. While with Harvey the structure of the system is the reason behind the duality *formal-informal*, and developed-underdeveloped, in the case of Bauman we see how the perception of the Other and the creation of policies of "tolerance" or of "exclusion" can be read through the lens of the anthropoemic and anthropophagic strategies. An Other that is "tolerated" as far as he remains confined in an "emic place" characterized by domination and subordination. This is what Giorgio Agamben calls "homo sacer", the "human life [that] is included in the juridical order solely in the form of its exclusion"<sup>46</sup>. The idea of "tolerance" itself contains the idea of subordination. Something that we *tolerate* is something that we consider Other and inferior at the same time, but that we choose to *tolerate* or *include* as long as the relation with the Other is not altered by the process of inclusion, that is, as long as the Other remains in a down-graded position of alterity.

Overall, we see that if for Harvey the origin of the *formal-informal* divide is structural, for Bauman it is a matter of political and social responsibility, and for Agamben the definition of what is *normal* is derived from a relation of power, for him it is a matter of sovereignty. He mentions that the paradox of sovereignty is that "the sovereign is, at the same time, outside and inside the juridical order [but] he has the monopoly over the final decision"<sup>47</sup>. Automatically we can understand that the conceptualization of *informality* is the result of a process of social construction of meaning. In the case of Lebanon, we will see how the *formal-informal* divide can be understood at the intersection of the work of Harvey, Bauman and Agamben.

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<sup>45</sup> Z. Bauman, 2000, p. 106.

<sup>46</sup> G. Agamben, D. Heller-Roazen, 1995, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, p. 8.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., pp. 15-16.

In conclusion, we can pose also the question of the role of ethical universality in the definition of exclusive classifications of *Otherness*, which is valid for the dichotomy *formal-informal*, but also for a more refined distinction "*I-Thou*". Slavoj Žižek tries to draw a line between ethical universality and the creation of relations of exclusion. In the specific, he poses the question: "*what if such an exclusion of some form of otherness from the scope of our ethical concerns is consubstantial with the very founding gesture of ethical universality, so that the more universal our explicit ethics is, the more brutal the underlying exclusion is?*"<sup>48</sup>.

The idea of universality of concepts such as democracy and freedom transmitted by the neoliberal system can be viewed in this perspective. However, other key examples of forms of ethical universality are broader philosophical frameworks. Looking at Levinas<sup>49</sup>, we find a criticism directed at ontology within European philosophical tradition from the work of Aristotle to our days; an ontology that, according to Levinas, is guilty of having fostered a logic of "*Sameness*" at the detriment of the Other and his wealth of traditions and identities that result, then, muted and subdued<sup>50</sup>. This leads to the impossibility to develop ethical relations with the Other because, through ethical universality, the Other is perceived as an anomaly. Žižek adds to this by saying that:

*"Christians usually praise themselves for overcoming the Jewish exclusivist notion of the Chosen People and encompassing the entirety of humanity. The catch is that, in their very insistence that they are the Chosen People with a privileged direct link to God, Jews accept the humanity of the other people who celebrate their false gods, while Christian universalism tendentially excludes non-believers from the very universality of humankind. So what about the opposite gesture - such as that made by the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas - of abandoning the claim to sameness that underlies universality, and replacing it by a respect for otherness?"*<sup>51</sup>.

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<sup>48</sup> S. Žižek, 2008, *Violence*, Picador, New York, NY, p. 54.

<sup>49</sup> S. Hand (Ed.), 1989, *The Levinas Reader*, Blackwell Publishers, Malden, MA.

<sup>50</sup> See: I. Levinas, 1961 (1969 ed.), *Totality and Infinity*, Dusquesne University Press, Pittsburgh, PA; and B. Treanor, 2006, *Aspects of Alterity*, Fordham University Press, New York, NY.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

To the Jewish and Christian analysis presented by Žižek and Levinas, we could try to build the concept of *unity in alterity*, in which different parts of a whole recognize each other as *equally* complementary to one another. The contemporary Iranian philosopher, Sayyed Hossein Nasr, said that "*real peace or salvation lies in Unity 'through' this divinely ordained diversity and not in its rejection*"<sup>52</sup>. He refers to the specific Islamic concept of the "*Family of the Book*" to which Jews, Christians, and Muslims belong as different *but* equal parts of the same whole. By extending this idea of *unity in alterity* to the various classifications of formal and informal, we can understand that the distinction between the two is a social construction that either hides the unity of reality or includes difference only through its exclusion. We can ultimately conclude by saying that it is neither the inclusion/exclusion from the system, nor the "*tolerance*" within the system, or the rejection of the "*Otherness*" with the idea of "*Sameness*" that can lead to the overcoming of such dichotomies. It is, instead, only through the acknowledgement of the *Other* as an integral, inextricable, unavoidable, and equal characteristic of the system that we can develop what Levinas calls ethical relations and this is the direction towards which this work tries to take us.

### 1.3.3. Nationalism and Neoliberalism in Relation to Nation-State Formation

Both nationalism and neoliberalism are two driving forces of our time. The idea of a *nation-state* was initially developed in the eighteenth century and was able to reshape the boundaries of Europe and, then, progressively spread as an hegemonic model of governmental organization of politics and populations also in north and south America, Africa, and Asia. In parallel with the development of the idea of nationalism, Europe introduced also a new mode of

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<sup>52</sup> A.S.M.H. Tabatabai, *Shi'ite Islam*, SUNY Press, Albany, NY, p. 6. Preface by S.H. Nasr.

production through the industrial revolution, namely, the capitalist system, which from the 1930s onward started to take the shape of what we nowadays call neoliberalism. Together with the internationalization of the idea of *nation-state*, also neoliberalism was able to reach every corner of the globe and to incorporate already existing *nation-states* within its political and economic system. Lebanon is not an exception. However, to use the definition of the Lebanese historian Kamal Salibi, Lebanon is "*a house of many mansions*"<sup>53</sup> in which different forms of nationalism and ideas of neoliberalism were reinterpreted by its numerous ethno-religious groups and constantly evolved over time, sometimes in contradiction with each other, sometimes finding precarious points of equilibrium.

I believe that, in order to understand how theories of nationalism and neoliberalism help inform our understanding of the realities of modern Lebanon, we can organize our discourse here, on one side, on the analysis of three major groups of theories on neoliberalism: 1) theories of class formation; 2) theories on the role of the State; and 3) theories that present neoliberalism either as TINA<sup>54</sup> or as "*pensée unique*"; and on the side of nationalism, we can look at: 1) theories on *nation* and *homeland*; 2) theories on the politics of citizenship; and 3) theories on the particular case of *ethnonationalism*. Altogether, these theories can help us analyze the development of Lebanon as a nation-state and to understand the major sources in the formation of different kinds of subjectivities and civil societies within the same State.

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If we want to understand theories of class formation, both from a Marxist and Neo-Marxist perspective, we need a point of departure for our analysis, and the French sociologist, Henri Lefebvre helps us in this sense. As he said, "*to present and give an account of the 'urban*

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<sup>53</sup> K. Salibi, 1988, *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, CA.

<sup>54</sup> Acronym that stands for 'There Is No Alternative', extensively used by the former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher (1925-2013).

*problematic', the point of departure must be the process of industrialization"*<sup>55</sup>. This is particularly true in the case of the development of different theories of neoliberalism. Indeed, with the advent of the industrial revolution in England, in the second half of the eighteenth century, major cities like London and Manchester experienced a rapid change of their structure, both in terms of physical and social structure. In the following decades, numerous authors tried to explain these transformations. Seminal works in this regard are *"The Condition of the Working Class in England"*, published in 1844 by German sociologist, Friedrich Engels; *"The Communist Manifesto"*, published in 1848 and written by Engels with another German philosopher, Karl Marx; and also *"The Capital"* written by Marx and published in 1867<sup>56</sup>. In particular, Marx emerged as a leading figure beyond the realm of sociology or political science because his analyses not only unraveled the intrinsic mechanisms of a capitalist society, but also provided a political and economic alternative that influenced generations of scholars, intellectuals, and politicians throughout the entire twentieth century and still nowadays.

In these works Marx presents some key concepts of his thought. We can say that he proposes his perspective on the dynamics that regulate the working process, what he calls *"the mode of production"*; he explains the effects that a capitalist mode of production has on the individual, on his social class, and on society as a whole (i.e. *"alienation"*, *"income inequality"*, and *"objectification"* of man's life); and, finally, he proposes a *solution*, a political way to overcome and solve the extant situation.

Overall, even if class struggle always existed, what is specific to a capitalist system, according to the author, is that the dominant class, the bourgeoisie, simplified the system into two polarized classes: the Proletariat and the Bourgeoisie. And, in addition to this, the *"ruling class"*, the bourgeoisie, has the power, not only to control the means of production, but also to

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<sup>55</sup> H. Lefebvre, 1996, *Writings on cities*, Blackwell, Oxford, UK, p. 65.

<sup>56</sup> The first volume of *"The Capital"* was published in 1867; the other three volumes were then published posthumously: Volume II (1885) and Volume III (1894) by Engels; and later, Volume IV (1905-1910) by Kautsky.

shape the ideology that governs a given country. In doing so, the “*ruling class*” creates a “*ruling ideology*” that is portrayed as rational and universally valid in order to be accepted within its own system and to potential new markets.

In Lebanon, the overlap between social class and ethno-religious affiliation created a situation in which the polarization of classes constantly tended to resemble ethno-religious groups, creating then a hierarchy of social formations throughout the country and the idea that, somehow, affiliation to a group has a relation to its social class, while this result is due, on one side, to the different position that each group had as *broker* with the colonial power and, on the other side, to the different prevalent mode of production that characterized the territory of each community throughout Lebanon in the time of the formation of the State and afterwards.

In this situation, the *solution* proposed by Marx - which is the union of all workers into a common struggle, given by a common interest and by the indignation for their condition in society, aimed towards the elimination of all social classes (basically, to avoid class struggle: remove the class) - becomes intrinsically unfeasible within an ethnocratic regime. This is so because the system sets ethno-religious affiliation as the major rule of political participation. Thus, people that want to propose a socialist path in politics would have to succeed in creating a common denominator able to overcome each individual ethno-religious sub-identity. This common denominator was difficult to achieve in the early decades after the creation of the State, and when the civil war ended, also socialism as a political way of government already passed its heyday and, with the collapse of Soviet Union, the socialist cause lost also its main potential supporter, both from a political and economic perspective.

Overall, theories of class formation give us a fundamental understanding of the structural elements that characterize a capitalist system. The idea of “*alienation*”, of “*inequality*” in the distribution of income, and of the overall process that goes from the acknowledgment of one's position within society to the “*indignation*” and the “*will*” to overcome the situation are all



dimensions that formed the Lebanese State and society. However, even if the activation of counter-hegemonic forces addressing such topics was not directly around issues of class, but it was complementary to ethno-religious affiliation and other more contingent factors, also in the case of Lebanon, the process of class formation developed following the characteristics intrinsic to a capitalist mode of production.

A second perspective is, then, provided by different theories on the role of the State. From the time of the industrial revolution in England, the capitalist system evolved and expanded his boundaries to other countries in Europe and beyond. As we mentioned before, the system needs to constantly expand to find new markets where it can sell its *surplus* and buy raw materials and resources at a low price. This is the main reason behind the expansionist projects that European powers undertook in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. However, at home, capitalism faced major crises that undermined its credibility in the face of the scholars of the time and made them reflect on the different role that the State could play in the market economy. In particular, on October 29th, 1929 - what then became known as Black Tuesday - the Stock Market Crash in Wall Street, New York, gave birth to a protracted crisis that affected both the US and Europe. This crisis, identified with the name of *Great Depression*, forced economists of the time to rethink capitalism in a new way in order to avoid, on one side, the recurrence of a new similar crisis<sup>57</sup>; and, on the other, also to avoid the possible threat of the possible spread of Communist ideology in the United States. An important intellectual contribution was represented by the work of the British economist, John Maynard Keynes who wrote in 1933 a book entitled "*The Means to Prosperity*"<sup>58</sup>, in which he re-imagined the role of the State. In particular, he identified the solution to the crisis in what he called "*a blend of*

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<sup>57</sup> The crisis was so widespread that in the 1930s, in the US, unemployment reached peaks of 25-33%; if we look at the last economic crisis of 2007-2008, unemployment reached a maximum of 10.1%.

<sup>58</sup> J.M. Keynes, 1933, *The Means to Prosperity*, MacMillan, London, UK.

*economic theory with the art of statesmanship*<sup>59</sup>. This basically means that he did not see State's action as an intrusion into the realm of the *free market*, but he suggested that the State could and should intervene in period of crises by creating debt useful for new investments in key sectors of the economy - such as the industrial sector - in order to boost the economy and facilitate the re-emergence outside of the crisis. This approach, that later became known as Keynesianism, was meant to be temporary and exceptional, this means that the State needed to intervene on a temporary basis and only in exceptional situations of economic crisis.

Supporters of a capitalist system with a strict division between the role of the State and the right of the *free market* viewed themselves under threat from various perspectives: the Great Depression that undermined their credibility; Keynesianism which proposed a new role of the State in the economy; and, lastly, the possible spread of the Communist ideology. It is based on these impulses that the *neoliberal thought* started to take shape.

Two contemporary American historians, Philip Mirowski and Dieter Plehwe, worked extensively on the ideas, concepts, and developments that characterized the early emergence of a neoliberal thought from the ashes of the *laissez-faire*. In their book entitled "*The Road from Mont Pèlerin. The Making of the Neoliberal Thought Collective*", the authors point out what we mentioned above, that during the years of the crisis, the 1930s, "*concerned liberals felt an increasingly urgent need to confront the perceived evils of planning and the failures generated by the laissez-faire attitudes of fellow liberals*"<sup>60</sup>.

It is interesting to see also how terminology is important for the development of new concepts or for the representation of the same concepts under a different guise. In particular, the authors mention that the term, neoliberalism, first appeared in "*Trends of Economic Ideas*", a book published in 1925 by the Swiss economist Hans Honegger, who

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>60</sup> P. Mirowski, D. Plehwe, 2009, *The Road from Mont Pèlerin. The Making of the Neoliberal Thought Collective*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, p. 10.

described as *"theoretical liberalism"* the work derived from the research of various economists such as Alfred Marshall, Eugen von Bohm-Bawerk, Friedrich von Wieser, and Karl Gustav Cassel. However, it is only later with the publication in 1937 of the book entitled *"An inquiry into the principles of the good society"* by the American writer, Walter Lippmann, that the term became of common use. In his work, Lippmann fostered ideas that are now considered part of the conventional wisdom on neoliberalism. As he said in his work: *"in a free society the state does not administer the affairs of men. It administers justice among men who conduct their own affairs"*; and also: *"Statesmanship is the ability to elucidate the confused and clamorous interests which converge upon the seat of government. It consists in giving the people not what they want but what they will learn to want"*<sup>61</sup>. Mirowski and Plehwe mention that after the publication of Lippmann's book, the French philosopher, Louis Rougier, remained particularly fascinated to the point of organizing a conference in Paris in 1938 in Lippmann's honor. At that conference, the attendees discussed various terms that could possibly identify this new political and economic ideology, and ultimately the term *"neoliberalism"* triumphed over other possible denominations such as *"néo-capitalisme"*, *"libéralisme positif"*, *"libéralisme social"*, and *"libéralisme de gauche"*<sup>62</sup>. Furthermore, at the same conference, beside the appellative, the concept itself of neoliberalism took form around four main principles: 1) the priority of the price mechanism; 2) the free enterprise; 3) the system of competition; and 4) a strong and impartial State.

In the following years, the work of various *neoliberal* scholars intensified and, guided by the leadership of the Austrian economist Friedrich August von Hayek, these scholars organized a first conference in April 1947 in Mont Pèlerin, Switzerland, after which their organization took the name of *Mont Pèlerin Society*. In that occasion, Friedrich August von Hayek himself explained the urgent need for their work because of the *"risk of isolation"*, on one

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<sup>61</sup> Citations in P. Mirowski, D. Plehwe, 2009, p. 13.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

side, the risk then that their ideas would remain confined to a niche of intellectuals without having a solid influence on policy-makers; and on the other, the acknowledged existence of “*crippling conceptual flaws*” in the propositions of classical liberalism. The ultimate goal of the organization was to diagnose and rectify the flaws of the previous paradigm and to mobilize at an international level to spread liberalist ideology in his new, revised, and corrected form.

It is under such impetus that neoliberalism started to emerge as a force geared towards the circulation of its ideas and principles that involved a sphere of human life well beyond the boundaries of politics and economics but that widely contributed to the formation of the basic tenets of individualism.

In Lebanon, the role of the State has been designed, from its inception, to be minimal, as far as intervention in the economy and in the provision of public services. This was meant to provide the elite with the best possible channel to reproduce and expand its means of production and maintain an unchallenged status quo. Between the various theories regarding the role of the State, Lebanon for the vast majority of its history used a *laissez-faire* approach aimed at freeing the economy from any control of the State. This approach was temporarily changed with Chehab's social reforms (1958-1964), but it remained the same even after the civil war, with a strong neoliberal drive. Today a main point in the ideological language of the pro-ethnocratic regime propaganda is to present the Lebanese political and economic system as both a guarantor of diversity and, somehow, as a system “*democratic in its own way*”, in order to avoid any kind of discourse on structural reform.

Back to the theory, we can say that, ultimately, the different neoliberal theories on the role of the State combine, at the same time, politics and economics with culture and values, and create the basis for an *Us-Them* dichotomy in which a State is either within the neoliberal system and becomes part of the *Us* or it is outside; but that *being outside* is represented also as the result of different cultural values. In a world in which a State is either in or out, right or

wrong, friend or enemy, the race towards the "*clash of civilization*"<sup>63</sup> is made easier if not inevitable.

The *Us-Them* dichotomy leads us, then, to the theories that present neoliberalism either as TINA or as "*pensée unique*". Based on what we said before, we can see how neoliberalism is something that goes beyond an overall process of privatization of public resources and a reduced power in the hands of the central government. As Mirowski and Plehwe argued: "*neoliberalism is anything but a succinct, clearly defined political philosophy*"<sup>64</sup>. It is indeed something more than an economic theory, it is something that permeates the life of a society in all its aspects.

The work of the contemporary British geographer, David Harvey, is essential for the understanding of the development of neoliberalism from the 1970s onward. Indeed, in the 1970s the world experienced another major international crisis. This time the crisis was mainly an "*energy crisis*" due to the Arab Oil Embargo implemented by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1973. Following this crisis neoliberalism passed through years that truly signed the beginning of a new era. In particular, David Harvey refers to the period between 1978 and 1980 as a "*revolutionary turning-point in the world's social and economic history*"<sup>65</sup>. This is motivated by the simultaneous rise to power of four key political figures: Deng Xiaoping, who became Chairman of the Chinese National Committee in 1978 and who for the first time opened the doors to a new process of liberalization of the Chinese economy; Paul Volcker, who became head of the US Federal Reserve in 1979 and introduced a

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<sup>63</sup> The idea of "*clash of civilization*" was first introduced by the contemporary British-American Orientalist, Bernard Lewis, in his article "*The roots of Muslim rage*", published in September of 1990 on the Atlantic, and it was subsequently further developed by the American political scientist, Samuel Huntington (1927-2008) in his book entitled "*The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order*", published in 1997 by Touchstone, New York. This concept widely influenced American foreign policy in the Middle East, it was at the root of the Bush Doctrine and on this idea of incompatibility of the West and the East, either *Us* or *Them*, that the former Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice (2005-2009) developed the idea of the "*birth pangs of a new Middle East*" while talking about the 2006 war against Lebanon. The American political scientist, Norman Finkelstein, harshly criticized Rice's identification of a "*war*" with the "*birth pangs*" of something positive.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>65</sup> D. Harvey, 2005, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, p. 1.

new monetary policy; Margaret Thatcher, who was elected Prime Minister of Great Britain in the same year; and, lastly, Ronald Reagan, who became President of the United States in 1980. According to David Harvey, Paul Volcker and Margaret Thatcher were mainly the two leading figures that *"plucked a doctrine that went under the name of 'neoliberalism' and transformed it into the central guiding principle of economic thought and management"*<sup>66</sup>. What Harvey is trying to suggest us is that in those years neoliberalism changed from being a political approach that States in the Western Hemisphere would utilize at home to craft national policies to an approach that the same nations started to export on a global level. This moment is, then, a *"revolutionary turning-point"* because it signs the time in which the major powers of three continents, the US, Britain, and China, found themselves for the first time aligned on principles of political and economic matters and ready to activate a process of internationalization of neoliberal policies at a global level. The following step - based also on the idea of *"perpetual mobilization"* formulated at the first conference of the Mont Pèlerin Society - was to enter the daily practice of policy-makers at an international scale. In fact, Harvey says that for a *"thought to become dominant, a conceptual apparatus has to be advanced so to make it become so embedded in common sense as to be taken for granted and not open to question"*<sup>67</sup>. It is for this reason that several international organization started to emerge and to consolidate their position in a way that left states the only choice to join the new international system if they wanted to have access to foreign financial aid<sup>68</sup>. It is especially with the work of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) - which activated financial loans to countries in exchange of a radical change in the structure of their States - that we see a progressive diffusion of structural adjustment policies worldwide.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>68</sup> Margaret Thatcher coined the famous slogan "There Is No Alternative" or TINA to indicate the fact that states had no choice, they had to decide to be either incorporated within the international economic system - after the necessary structural adjustments - or remain financially and politically isolated.

The last step toward the internationalization of neoliberalism happened with the so-called “*Washington Consensus*” drafted in 1989 by John Williamson, Senior Fellow of the Institute of International Economics. As he explains, he “*made a list of ten policies that [he] thought more or less everyone in Washington would agree were needed more or less everywhere in Latin America*”<sup>69</sup>. The ten policies highlighted at that time by Williamson were: 1) fiscal discipline; 2) reordering public expenditure priorities; 3) tax reform; 4) liberalizing interest rates; 5) a competitive exchange rate; 6) trade liberalization; 7) liberalization of inward Foreign Direct Investment; 8) privatization; 9) deregulation; and 10) property rights<sup>70</sup>. Beside Latin America, these policies became the guiding principles for international planning policies anywhere in the so-called Global South. This way any Third World Country became a possible new market for the World Bank and the IMF. It is this process of expansion of the neoliberal system worldwide, particularly significant in the 1990s and 2000s, that is commonly called *globalization*.

The overall rationale at the basis of this process of internationalization of neoliberal policies is the argument of the beneficial effects or the *trickle-down* effects of structural adjustment policies. The idea is that if a State endorses policies able to enrich the upper classes of a specific society, this wealth will then automatically be distributed also the lower social classes. It is based on this overall process that David Harvey affirms that: “*we can [...] interpret neoliberalization either as a 'utopian' project to realize a theoretical design for the reorganization of international capitalism or as a 'political' project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites*”<sup>71</sup>.

In any way, this “*project*”, even if we look at it as “*utopian*” or “*political*”, changed the economic structure of both developed and developing countries, creating contrasting

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<sup>69</sup> J. Williamson, 2004, *A Short History of the Washington Consensus*, Paper commissioned by Fundació CIDOB for a conference “From the Washington Consensus towards a new Global Governance”, Barcelona, September 24-25, 2004, pp. 1-14.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-4.

<sup>71</sup> D. Harvey, 2005, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, p. 19.

effects: according to some<sup>72</sup> neoliberalization clearly showed “trickle-down” effects and reduced poverty worldwide; for others<sup>73</sup>, instead, the internationalization of neoliberal policies reproduced at a global level the radical polarization already existing in developed countries and ultimately increased poverty.

Lebanon was not immune to this process and, in the 1990s, under the leadership of former Prime Minister, Rafiq Hariri, Lebanon fully embraced neoliberalism and the result was a strong polarization of the population.

<div>Tableau 3</div> <div>Répartition des ménages au Liban par classes suivant leurs revenus, et la catégorie socio-professionnelle du chef de ménage entre 1974 et 1999.</div>						
Année	Classe des revenus bas		Classe des revenus moyens		Classe des revenus supérieurs	
	En % du total des ménages	Limite supérieure du revenu mensuel par ménage (L.L.)	En % du total des ménages	Revenu mensuel par ménage (L.L.)	En % du total des ménages	Revenu mensuel par ménage (L.L.)
1974	20,4	385	60,1	385 - 1.293	19,5	1.293 et +
1988	57,7	34.916	38,3	34.916 - 124.916	4,0	124.916 et +
1992	49,5	666.670	40,2	666.670 - 1.500.000	10,3	1.500.000 et +
1997	54,6	1.200.000	29,7	1.200.000 - 3.200.000	15,7	3.200.000 et +
1999	61,9	1.200.000	29,3	1.200.000 - 2.400.000	8,8	2.400.000 et +

Source: Les chiffres de ce tableau ont été calculés à partir des données fournies par:  
 -L'enquête réalisée dans le cadre de l'USJ et supervisée par Yves Schemel pour l'année 1974.  
 -Les enquêtes effectuées par MASS Institute (Reach - Mass) en 1988, 1992 et 1999 sur échantillons respectifs de 1417, 1495, et de 1201 ménages.  
 -L'enquête réalisée en 1997 par l'Administration Centrale de la Statistique (ACS) sur un échantillon de 16.330 ménages.

**Table 1:** If we look at the table above, we can clearly see the distribution of the population between lower, middle, and upper classes, and their change from 1974 (right before the civil war) to 1999. We see that the process of reduction of the middle classes began by the war, continued also in the 1990s when neoliberal policies were implemented. In those years, the lower classes increased from the 49.5% to the 61.9% of the total households; the middle class was reduced from 40.2% to 29.3%; and also the upper classes were not only reduced from 10.3 to 8.8%, but also their monthly stipend per household was considerably lower. Source: Maroun, 2000.

In conclusion, we can identify the main criticism of a neoliberal system in the fact that it does not foresee the possible coexistence of an alternative, it does not allow the

<sup>72</sup> For example, D. Dollar, A. Kraay, 2000, *Growth is Good for the Poor*, Development Research Group, The World Bank, Washington D.C., pp. 1-50.

<sup>73</sup> For example, K. Watkins, 2000, *Growth with Equity is Good for the Poor*, OXFAM GB, pp. 1-16.



contemporary presence of a different combination of ideas, principles, guidelines, and norms. We said that it is based on this idea that the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, called neoliberalism a "*pensée unique*", a system that presents itself as the only valuable and correct structure of society. It is, indeed, on this exclusionary aspect - the dichotomy *Us-Them*, the fact of being either inside or outside of the system - that neoliberalism resembles nationalism.

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Moving now to the analysis of the theories on nationalism, from Anderson (1983) to Hobsbawm (1990), from Gellner (1997) to Jusdanis (2001), I constantly felt that the authors taken into consideration were undertaking an arduous task. In many cases these authors lamented the lack of a thick and consistent description of the idea of *nationalism* in previous literature, but at the same time they highlighted the fundamental importance of nationalism for the understanding of our times. The British historian, Eric Hobsbawm, opens his "*Nations and Nationalism since 1780*" by imagining a situation in which - after a nuclear war that destroyed humanity but not property - an "*intergalactic historian*" arrives on our planet, enters a library, and tries to understand the history of the world, and Hobsbawm affirms that the term *nation* is something that our guest could not avoid from studying, and that is exactly the reason that prompted Hobsbawm to write his book<sup>74</sup>. This anecdote is meant to show the fundamental importance that ideas of *nation* had in shaping the world we live in today, but at the same time it shows the need to better understand the subject. The lack of meaningful work on the subject is attributed by Hobsbawm to the fact that *nationalism*, to a certain extent, characterized our time also in the second half of the twentieth century and left historians with the impossibility to describe, with the necessary detachment, the completeness of a phenomenon still in evolution. However, with the end of the twentieth century, Hobsbawm saw a change also in this regard:

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<sup>74</sup> E. Hobsbawm, 1990, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*", Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, p. 1.

"the very fact that historians are at least beginning to make some progress in the study and analysis of nations and nationalism suggests that, as so often, the phenomenon is past its peak"<sup>75</sup>. Despite the complexity of the subject, Hobsbawm and other authors have been able to trace the fundamental features of nationalism from its first conceptualization. The contemporary Irish political scientist, Benedict Anderson, for instance, paved the way for further studies on the matter with his book entitled "*Imagined Communities*", published in 1983. In this work, he identifies the "*roots of nationalism*" in the fact that in the same period in which religious thought was declining<sup>76</sup> under the attacks of the exponents of the enlightenment movement and the subsequent positivist ideology, neither Marxism nor Liberalism could provide the certainties derived from a religious thought and imaginings<sup>77</sup>. In addition to this phenomenon, Anderson considers also four main factors: 1) the improvements in the technology of communication, which means that printed manuscripts could spread new ideas faster and to a wider public compared to the past; 2) the diffuse presence in Europe of absolutist governments held my monarchs, which fostered in opposition to them the emergence of the idea of *nation* as a communal and liberating force; 3) the new systems of production introduced by the capitalist system, which favored the idea of the positive effects of modernization in contrast with what was looked at as the backwardness of the previous era; and 4) the decline of the unifying force of the Latin language in the Churches of Europe and, furthermore, the emergence of the "*fatality of human linguistic differences*"<sup>78</sup>.

We see, then, that *nationalism* emerged as a force, or a set of ideas, able to "*fill the gap*" left by both Marxism and Liberalism and to adapt itself to the needs of the time. In this

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 183.

<sup>76</sup> B. Anderson, 1983, *Imagined Communities*, Verso, London and New York, p. 36.

<sup>77</sup> In Anderson, 1983, we read: "*neither Marxism nor Liberalism are much concerned with death and immortality*", p. 10.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

sense the primary meaning of *nation* was political and strongly linked to a specific territory<sup>79</sup>. As Hobsbawm suggests: *"the equation nation = state = people, and especially sovereign people, undoubtedly linked nation to territory, since structure and definition of states were now essentially territorial. It also implied a multiplicity of nation-states so constituted, and this was indeed a necessary consequence of popular self-determination"*<sup>80</sup>. However, what remained to be clearly understood was what constituted a *people*, and what differed one people from another: basically, what are the criteria that define the belonging to one nation or another. Hobsbawm suggests that a *"common language"* was considered the main criterion<sup>81</sup>, but people living in the same territory, in the same city, and speaking the same language could be of different ethno-religious affiliations and, hence, the need to include more criteria, like ethnicity, race, religion, history, and culture<sup>82</sup> in the definition of a *nation* started to emerge. Yet, when all these criteria are summed together, the *nation* becomes a mental projection of a collectivity. This is why Anderson defines a *nation* as *"an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign"*<sup>83</sup>, and ultimately *nationalisms* as *"cultural artefacts"*<sup>84</sup>. This *"artefact"* then needs to be physically substantiated into a territory. This is when the idea of *homeland* comes into play.

The concept of *homeland* can also assume various shades in relation to the different meanings that are associated with it. An *homeland* is something that intersects and puts in relation both the idea of nation (*identity*) and nationalism (*politics*). *Homeland*, on one side, refers to *"a territory believed to be the 'birthplace' of a group's identity"*<sup>85</sup>; and, on the other side, *homeland* refers as well to *"the territorial space, the 'hardware', in which a nation*

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<sup>79</sup> E. Hobsbawm, 1990, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*", Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. 18-19.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>85</sup> O. Yiftachel, 2012, *Re-engaging Planning Theory? Towards 'South-Eastern' Perspectives*, in S. Campbell, S. Fainstein. (eds.), 2012, *Readings in Planning Theory*, Blackwell Publishers, Cambridge, MA, p. 546.

*actualizes its own sovereignty*"<sup>86</sup>. In both definitions we see a territory (*place*) that is characterized by the *meaning* assigned to it by a specific ethnic group (*people*), and also by the control or sovereignty that is established over it (*politics*).

It is exactly for these reasons that the contemporary Israeli geographer, Oren Yiftachel, poses the question of *homeland* as a concept deeply rooted into *ethnicity*. He goes further by distinguishing between two characterization of ethnic identity: on one side, we see "*homeland ethnicity*", "*held by groups who reside on the territory they believe to be the 'cradle' of their identity and history*" and, hence, aspire to "*statehood, self-determination, or group autonomy*"; and, on the other side, he identifies the so-called "*immigrant ethnicity*", characterized by the "*distance from the homeland*", that progressively tries to put in place processes aimed at the recognition of "*minority and civil rights framed by a gradual (though uneven and conflict-riddled) process of incorporation into the 'host' society*"<sup>87</sup>.

The connection between the concept of "*ethnic identity*" with a broader idea of *nation*, and the reference to a common *homeland*, sets a political question that during the end of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century has been developed following the line of political nation-making. On this token, the contemporary Israeli historian, Shlomo Sand, identifies the main features that characterize nation-making projects. As he argues: "*just as nation-making projects cannot be carried out without a political mechanism or an invented historical past, they also require a geo-physical imagination of territory, in order both to provide support and to serve as a constant focus of nostalgic memory*"<sup>88</sup>.

"*Political mechanisms*", "*invented historical past*", and "*geo-physical imagination of territory*", combined with "*nostalgic memory*" are the essential contents that define the last step that connects *identity* to *territory* through a political project that we call *nationalism*.

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<sup>86</sup> Sand, 2012, *The Invention of the Land of Israel. From Holy Land to Homeland*, p. 31.

<sup>87</sup> O. Yiftachel, 2012, *Re-engaging Planning Theory? Towards 'South-Eastern' Perspectives*, in S. Campbell, S. Fainstein. (eds.), 2012, *Readings in Planning Theory*, Blackwell Publishers, Cambridge, MA, p. 545.

<sup>88</sup> Sand, 2012, *The Invention of the Land of Israel. From Holy Land to Homeland*, p. 31.

The relationship between *nationalism* and *ethnicity* is fundamental for the analysis of the historical development of both Lebanon and numerous political projects founded on the idea of giving an institutional architecture to a specific *ethnic group* or *nation*; the idea to give a State to each nation which would ultimately result in a world of *nation-states*.

The process that connects the idea of *ethnicity* to the idea of *nation* is a political process that results from a clear projection of a communal identity perceived as the utmost goal to achieve. In this sense *identity* is rearranged, reprocessed in function of a political project. There is a shift from the individual level to the group level. From individual consciousness to communal goals and needs, where an *identity-based ideology* shows as a *de facto* situation what, instead, is the goal that it craves to achieve<sup>89</sup>.

From this perspective nationalism ought to create a political institution, a nation-state, that is supposed to be settled within a natural, shared, and, of outmost importance, territory identified as the as a *homeland*. In this project though, the *nation* is perceived as a static and eternally immutable concept, unable to integrate differences, unable to adapt to the unavoidable changes of history, and, furthermore, containing in itself the very sources of possible conflict in similar ways to the exclusionary dimension of neoliberalism. It is indeed this static and artificial dimension of the concept of *nation* that is harshly criticized by several political scientists that highlight the fictitious - or as Anderson would say "*imagined*" - aspects of it. On this, the British philosopher Ernest Gellner affirms that "*nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist*"<sup>90</sup>. Furthermore, the contemporary Scottish political theorist, Tom Nairn, identifies nationalism with a childish form of society. He argues that:

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<sup>89</sup> On this, it is useful to think at what the Italian statesman Massimo d'Azeglio (1798-1866) said after the unification of Italy in 1861: "*Unfortunately Italy was made, but now Italians need to be made*", cit. in M. d'Azeglio, 1891, *I miei ricordi* (My memories), Barbera, Firenze, p. 5.

<sup>90</sup> E. Gellner, 1964, *Thought and Change*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, p. 169, cit in B. Anderson, 1983, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London and New York, p. 6.

*"nationalism is the pathology of modern developmental history, as inescapable as 'neurosis' in the individual, with much the same essential ambiguity attaching to it, a similar built-in capacity for descent into dementia, rooted in the dilemmas of helplessness thrust upon most of the world (the equivalent for infantilism for societies) and largely incurable"*<sup>91</sup>.

Finally, it is on the concepts of *nation* and *homeland* that the major nationalistic movements of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries started to emerge in Europe and contributed to the formation of *nation-states* as a collective form of space that spread throughout the world as the sole and only imaginable institutional and political framework. In parallel, nationalism as a collective enterprise and neoliberalism as an individual one represent two sides of the same coin.

A second important aspect of nationalism is represented by theories on the politics of citizenship. Indeed, a couple of important questions that scholars asked themselves are: what is the role of *nation-states* in contexts that experience the presence of more than one *nation* on the same territory (i.e. Israel/Palestine and Lebanon)? And how can *nation-states*, nowadays, adapt to a world in which the movement of populations from one area to another of the planet is a main feature of globalization?

Today, immigrant populations<sup>92</sup> put in danger the idea of *nation* intended as a static and imagined community sharing the same culture, tradition, and language. The concept of *nation* is, therefore, perceived to face either a positive process of cultural syncretism or a negative process of cultural contamination. In this sense, the approach to citizenship becomes nodal to understand the radical attachment of a State to a specific idea of *nation*. The

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<sup>91</sup> T. Nairn, 1977, *The Break-up of Britain*, New Left Books, London, p. 359, cit in B. Anderson, 1983, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London and New York, p. 5.

<sup>92</sup> Or refugees, as we will see in Lebanon.

contemporary Israeli academic, Uri Davis<sup>93</sup>, worked extensively on different definitions of citizenship that appear in the legal norms of countries of the Middle East, and eventually was able to define citizenship as a "*certificate regulating the relationship between the individual and the state*"<sup>94</sup>. Thus, as a certificate, citizenship is a concept able to go beyond the sense of belonging to a specific *ethnic identity or nation*, and to establish a wider sense of equality among the holders of this certificate. In Davis' words:

*"citizenship represents a recognized basic claim of the individual vis-à-vis the state of which he is a citizen, a right to equal access to the resources of the state - the civil resources of the state (e.g., the courts of law), the power-political resources (e.g., vote and election), the social services resources (e.g., welfare, education), and the material resources (e.g., land, water)"*<sup>95</sup>.

However, if we look at a State created on the basis of the nationalistic aspirations of one portion of the population, we can see that little room remains for a wider sense of citizenship. There is a mismatch between the fact of having a citizenship and the actual political representation. This means that the issuance of a document attesting citizenship risks to remain a formality that creates the basis for conflict and contestation where specific populations "*are citizens (they have valid full-term passports), but they have no rights or only partial rights*"<sup>96</sup>. Many examples could be made in this regard. Uri Davis talks about Israel and other countries in the Middle East, but this is an issue that can be found in numerous developed countries that attract a high number of immigrants from other regions of the world. An emblematic case in Europe is represented by France. During the decolonization process that started in the 1960s, France received millions of immigrants from his ex-colonies in Africa; in particular from

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<sup>93</sup> U. Davis, 1997, *Citizenship and the State: A Comparative Study of Citizenship Legislation in Israel, Jordan, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon*, Ithaca Press, Ithaca, NY.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, but also from the Middle East, from Lebanon and Syria. These populations did not resemble in any way the idea of a French *nation*: they had different traditions and customs, different religions and languages, but they all spoke French. Here we can, then, confirm what Hobsbawm told us that it is not "*language*" that makes a "*nation*"<sup>97</sup>. It is evident, therefore, the idiosyncrasy between the Republican values of *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*, on which the State bases its constitution, and the reality of these populations that speak French, that have been progressively segregated into poor suburbs, the *banlieues*, and who are officially recognized as citizens, they have Davis' certificate, but do not have access to equal rights and services.

These processes of contestation based on issues of citizenship are common to a wide variety of countries and can represent the source for conflict, violence and social unrest. A violence that the contemporary Slovenian philosopher, Slavoj Žižek, would describe as "*subjective*", because it represents a "*perturbation* [the riots, for instance] *of the 'normal', peaceful state of things*"<sup>98</sup> as opposed to what he calls "*objective*" violence, which is "*inherent to the 'normal' state of things*" and is structural, systemic, and anonymous<sup>99</sup>.

Thirdly, I believe it is important to analyze also theories on ethnonationalism that together with theories of *nation* and *homeland*, and politics of citizenship, can help inform our understanding of the Lebanese context. As we mentioned before, scholars found working on nationalism as an arduous task. Such task is even more knotty and complex if we look at a particular form of nationalism that is *ethnonationalism*. The difficulty that scholars encountered in the definition of terms such as *nation* and *nationalism* is something that is in common also in regard to *ethnonationalism*. As the term suggests, we can build a parallel proposition and say that *nation* stands to *nationalism* as *ethnicity* stands to *ethnonationalism*. However, the

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<sup>97</sup> E. Hobsbawm, 1990, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*", Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, p. 21.

<sup>98</sup> S. Žižek, 2008, *Violence*, Picador, New York, NY, p. 2.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 2 and pp. 12-13.



definition itself of *ethnicity* is not exempt from misunderstandings. As we said before, *ethnicity* is a term "*derived from 'ethnos', the Greek word for 'nation'*"<sup>100</sup>. In this sense the very meaning and origin of the word leads to a *nation*, a broad idea of a common descent and shared traditions. The real question though, beyond the difficulty of finding the correct definition of the term, is whether two or more *nations* can live within the same national boundaries, within the same State<sup>101</sup> or whether each *nation* or *ethnicity* that defines itself as such needs its own State. *Ethnonationalism* comes into play in situations in which there is a State that represents a *nation*, but within those political structures there is one, or more than one, other different *nations* that do not find that State as the expression of their own particular identity. *Ethnonationalism* is, therefore, the quest for political self-expression and political representation where a State is already in place. Examples of this phenomenon are the Basque nationalism in Spain, the Irish nationalism in Ireland, the Kurdish, the Syrian<sup>102</sup> and the Palestinian nationalisms in the Middle East. Each of these movements advocated for the creation of States that today do not exist under the boundaries that they had foreseen from the outset.

Subsequently, once States are formed in a condition of ethnic heterogeneity, the primary issue - beyond the legal issues of citizenship briefly discussed above - is that of the accommodation of such heterogeneity. Again Connor suggests that:

*"questions of accommodating ethnonational heterogeneity within a single state revolve about two loyalties - loyalty to the nation and loyalty to the state - and the relative strength of the two [...] When the two loyalties are seen as being in irreconcilable conflict, loyalty to the state loses out [while at the same time] to people with their own nation-state or to those people who are so dominant within a multinational state*

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<sup>100</sup> W. Connor, 1994, *Ethnonationalism. The Quest for Understanding*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, p. 100.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>102</sup> For Syrian nationalism I refer the ideas emerged from Antun Saadeh's intellectual stimulus and that are still supported today by the Syrian Social Nationalist party (SSNP), which envisions a Syrian nation beyond the boundaries of the Syrian Arab Republic.

*as to perceive the state as essentially their nation's state [...] the two loyalties become an indistinguishable, reinforcing blur*"<sup>103</sup>.

In the particular case of this work, I tried to understand what are the possible strategies for accommodating ethnonational heterogeneity in Lebanon, which ones were put in place in the past, and which ones we can consider for the future, in order to overcome divisions and conflict. Overall, theories on ethnonationalism have not been adequately studied but can tell us a lot about the more specific and refined development of ideas in the Middle East and in Lebanon.

In conclusion, what we said so far tells us much about the fact that both neoliberalism and nationalism create strong divisions within society. Neoliberalism fosters an individualistic project in which society is divided into different social classes with an extreme uneven distribution of resources at the poles. Nationalism, and its sub-form of ethnonationalism, divides society along ethno-religious lines or more generally on a vague idea of belonging to a common history and descent. Both neoliberalism and nationalism are exclusive forces that draw the line between an hypothetical *Us* and the rest of the population, the various *Others*. Nationalism, through a collective project, and neoliberalism, through individualism, segment societies and form dominant elites. These dominant elites are characterized by a common ethno-religious background under a nationalistic State, and by a common social class under a neoliberalist system.

The fundamental issue in countries of the Middle East, such as Israel/Palestine and Lebanon, both created under the pressure of a nationalistic project, is when neoliberal policies enter into play and further exacerbate the differences between various groups by thickening the

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

line between *Us* and *Them*. In this regard the *nation-state* is tenable as far as the regime in power is able to control the functioning of the State in a way so not to have any obstacles in its dominance. In the situation of a growing alternative group that starts to challenge such domination, the *nation-state* becomes untenable and falls into cycles of violence, war, or political impasse. The two possible ways for stability in the future are either the emergence of a dominant group able to take advantage of the rules of the ethnocratic regime existent in Lebanon and to dominate over the rest of the population, or a constitutional reform able to go beyond a confessional system and establish a true democratic regime.

#### 1.4. Literature Review

To address the complex research problem and its multifaceted research questions presented earlier on, I felt the need to look at a multidisciplinary set of literature that could help us build on the theoretical framework explained above and that included knowledge coming from different disciplinary areas such as: 1) Urban Planning Theory on the production of space (M. Foucault, 1986; D. Massey, 1994; M.J. Murray, 2008, 2011; M. Castells, 1997; D. Horowitz, 2000; L.M. Howard, 2012; S.A. Bollens, 1998, 2007); 2) Political Science Theory on nationalism and neoliberalization (B. Anderson, 1983; V. Chaturvedi, 2000; W. Connor, 1994; E. Gellner, 1964; A. Gramsci, 1948; D. Harvey, 2005; P. Marcuse and R. Van Kempen, 2000; M.A. Peters, 2001; J. Stiglitz, 2002); 3) Philosophy on ethics and violence (S. Zizek, 2008, 2012; H. Arendt, 1970; C. Benhabib, 2002; M. Buber, 1958; I. Levinas, 1961; G.C. Spivak, 1993); and 4) Middle East studies on culture, politics and society (A. Bayat, 2000, 2013; H. Corbin, 1964; U. Davis, 1997; M. Eliade, 1965; C. Hakim, 2013; F. Hasso, 2011; A. Hourani, 1946, 1976; S. Kassir, 2003, 2004; J.S. Makdisi, 1990; K. Salibi, 1988; M. Zamir, 1985; Z.N. Zeine, 1960).

##### 1.4.1. Urban Planning Theory on the Production of Space

The first set of literature taken into account goes beyond the classical boundary of planning, but I believe it is possible to find within *urban planning theory on the production of space* different disciplinary perspectives on the meaning of the concept of *social construction of space*; on the ways in which neoliberal policies affect the urban environment and its inhabitants; on the basic features of *modernity*; and, more broadly, on the relationship between contemporary cities and neoliberalism, analyzed in spatial terms.

David Harvey (1996) explains how neoliberalism developed as a conceptual apparatus and how it became dominant at a global level. In relation to this, going back at the very beginning of the 20th century, I believe it is also useful to think about what Georg Simmel (1903) said about *"concentration/specialization/competitiveness"* and how this triad affects the individual that lives in a contemporary metropolis. Nowadays, and this is also Harvey's argument, this competition is expanded at the level of cities, regions, and also States. The result is a precipitous run toward the attraction of more and more resources and investments that create what Harvey defines as *"uneven geographical developments"*.

The formation of an uneven distribution of resources among different cities and regions of the world affects the ways in which the physical space is shaped, but at the same time it affects also the social interactions that happen within its boundaries. Indeed, Lefebvre's work (1974) talks about the social production of space, which refers not to the directly physical and visible urban space but to that space created by the interactions and relations that individuals have with each other within an urban setting.

It is starting also from this concept of social production of space that Edward Soja (2011) explains the historical passage from *"history"* to *"space"*. To say it with his words, Soja says that:

*"a practical theoretical consciousness that sees the lifeworld of being creatively located not only in the making of history but also in the construction of human geographies, the social production of space and the restless formation and reformation of geographical landscapes: social being actively emplaced in space and time in an explicitly historical and geographical contextualization"* (Soja, 11).

I think it is fundamental to understand this shift in perspective represented by the progressive growth of importance of the physical space and the geographical context. It is, indeed, from this new standpoint that authors such as Katznelson (1997), Sandercock (2003) and

Agamben (1995) developed their analyses on the relation between neoliberalism, the city and social justice. It is interesting to see how planning theories became more and more complex over time (also in the use of language), incorporating more and more knowledge at the intersection between several different fields of research. If the first attempts to create planning theory looked simply at the urban space and tried to solve its problems focusing merely on the physical structure, we see with these authors that *people* and *politics* finally end up having a progressively more important role in developing planning theories.

This trend towards a more dense and complex set of analyses is paralleled by a similar development in society. Indeed, the drastic improvement and spread of technology worldwide and the expansion of cities into mega-cities caused an exponential increase of the factors that need to be taken into consideration in order to develop theories related to the *urban*. The overall idea of *planning* itself becomes this way rooted into concepts of process, fluidity, and continuousness, and less oriented on a static, ideal, and rational perspective.

Even if not strictly related to the Lebanese context, I believe these theories are important to be taken into account in order to understand the broader picture on *planning* and general global trends, and not to make the research biased in the sense of being too rooted into the Middle Eastern environment and lack, then, of generalizability.

#### 1.4.2. Political Science Theory on Nationalism and Neoliberalism

This second set of literature, instead, aims at the understanding of the relationship between nationalism and neoliberalism, already explained before, while looking in a specific way at the concept of *homeland*. We previously mentioned how the term itself can assume various shades in relation to the different meaning that are associated with it and we also tried

to explain how the concept of *homeland* is significant for planning theory because it intersects and puts in relation several dimension regarding *people, place, and politics*.

In addition to the work of Yiftachel, Sand, Davis, Gellner and Nairn, that we addressed before, here we can simply say that Anderson represents another important author for the understanding of the development of nationalism and his ideas were useful for the analysis of Lebanon. In his work, Anderson emphasizes for the first time the relation between "*nationalism*" and "*ethnicity*". The author analyzes the historical development of political projects founded on the idea of giving an institutional architecture to a specific "*ethnic group*" or "*nation*".

The form of nationalism that interests us the most is the one that focuses its attention on a specific type of *nation*, that we can define as *ethnicity*, and that, hence, takes the appellation of *ethnonationalism*. From this perspective, *ethnonationalism* is the political ideology that glorifies the concept of *homeland* in order to trigger a series of political processes and/or military actions aimed at the construction of an *ethnocracy*.

The goal of the work was to understand the role of nationalism in the creation of the Lebanese Republic, how it shaped the nation from its early days to more recent times. Finally, an important goal, related also to the following set of literature, was to understand the role, the position, the value, the meaning attributed to the *Other* by an ethnonationalist ideology; and what rights, resources, spaces are available and accessible to the *Other* in a geopolitical context identified as an *ethnocracy*.

#### 1.4.3. Philosophy on Ethics of the 'Other' and Violence

This third set of literature is strongly related to the previous one on nationalism and neoliberalism, but it tries to go more in depth at the reasons that stand at the basis of policy making in a multiethnic society.

Indeed, even if we take into consideration Gellner and Nairn's critics of nationalism, we have to face the fact that nation-making is a phenomenon that shapes modern societies and still influence, for several reasons, the ways in which public policy is created in contemporary cities.

In this case, what I want to stress here is the intent to look at planning theory from a South-Eastern perspective and, in this regard, the awareness of the *Other* represents a key aspect if we look at the geopolitical environment of the Middle East.

The Middle East represents the *cradle* of the three monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam and the numerous internal variations of each of them in relation to different local traditions, philosophies, customs, histories. Within such a *space*, the encounter with the *Other* is unavoidable and it deeply defines the relation between *people*, *place*, and *politics*. A better understanding of the ways in which the confrontation with the *Other* happened and still happens in the Middle East can inform planning theory in regard to processes of *territorialization of identity*.

While "*ethics of the Other*" can be misleading as a concept and orient the reader towards more philosophical dimensions, here I want to argue that "*ethics of the Other*" is a specific mode of planning that characterizes the ways in which *identity* is operationalized through the creation of specific urban spaces. A specific characterization of an *ethnocracy*, rooted in a *political ideology* that wants to establish an *ethnocratic hegemony*, is given by the process of assigning *meaning* to *place* through an exclusive use of language, symbols, and practices. More in details, Oren Yiftachel affirms that:



*"ethnic attachment to the homeland frequently translates into a program of stamping exclusive ethnic control over contested territory. Here lies its direct relevance to planning scholarship, since the instruments with which ethnicization is practiced are often classical planning tools of development controls, investment incentives, housing programs, land allocation and boundary delimitation" (Yiftachel, 2012, p. 546).*

This is what we can call *the easy lure of a partial identity*: the decision to hide ourselves within the boundaries of *personal heritage* and the attempt to reinforce it by triggering a process of *ethnicization* of the urban space, or better, of social production of an exclusive space from which the *Other* is either completely excluded or marginalized. This process tries to hide the *Other* and to pretend to create a reassuring space in which the *governing ideology* that lies at the base of the formation of an *ethnocratic hegemony* remains consistent with its internal goals and values. However, the encounter with the *Other* is unavoidable, no matter how fortified a space or identity is imagined, planned, and implemented.

However, the tendency to fortify and hide within the most comfortable side of our personal identity is a human tension identified also by philosophers such as Immanuel Kant. The German philosopher explains that even at the neighborhood level different populations tend to create localized forms of identities, local forms of parochialism we can say. As Kant says: *"every people finds another tribe in its neighbourhood, pressing upon it in such a manner that it is compelled to form itself internally into a state to be able to defend itself as a power should"*<sup>104</sup>. Indeed, the *Other* is everywhere, it's an essential component of life. The unavoidable encounter with the alterity of the *Other* stands at the basis of the concept of *"ethics of the Other"*, which means that the acknowledgement of this paramount and essential condition of the individual in the space directly influences the ways in which policies are shaped. This unavoidable and

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<sup>104</sup> I. Kant, 1795, *Perpetual Peace. A Philosophical Essay*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, UK, p. 152.

unintentional encounter with the *Other* is thoroughly described by Emmanuel Levinas. He argues that:

*"the relationship with the 'Other', the face-to-face with the Other, the encounter with a face that at once gives and conceals the 'Other', is the situation in which an event happens to a subject who does not assume it, who is utterly unable in its regard, but where none the less in a certain way it is in front of the subject. The other 'assumed' is the 'Other'" (Hand, 1989, p. 45).*

It is for this reason that our experience of reality and, hence, of the urban space is inextricably twofold. It cannot bypass difference. It is a continuum between a personal experience and the experience of the *Other*. Another philosopher that adds to the concept of the *Other* is Martin Buber. In his work entitled *"I and Thou"* he refers exactly to the twofold dimension of the urban experience or, more broadly, of the experience of life with the outer world. Buber develops the following chain of syllogisms that define the relationship between *"I"* and *"Thou"*<sup>105</sup>:

*"To man the world is twofold, in accordance with his twofold attitude.  
The attitude of man is twofold, in accordance with the twofold nature  
of the primary words which he speaks.  
The primary words are not isolated words, but combined words.  
The one primary word is the combination I-Thou.  
The other primary word is the combination of I-It;  
wherein, without a change in the primary word, one of the words He  
and She can replace It.  
Hence the I of man is also twofold.  
For the I of the primary word I-Thou is a different I from that of the  
primary I-It".*

Basically, in our twofold experience of reality we can relate ourselves looking at the *"Other"* as a *"Thou"* (a person) or risk to treat the *"Other"* as an *'It'* (an object) by flattening the

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<sup>105</sup> M. Buber, 1958, *I and Thou*, Scribner, New York, NY.

perception of the *Other* with the rest of the outer reality. This fact raises a serious question of "responsibility" (Hand, 1989; Spivak, 1993). Levinas reinforces this idea by arguing that "*the 'Other' becomes my neighbour precisely through the way the face summons me, calls for me, begs for me, and in doing so recalls my responsibility, and calls me into question*" (cit. Hand, 1989, p. 83).

The risk to look at the "*Other*" as a "*It*", or better, the risk to dehumanize the "*Other*" is at the base for the eruption of violence in societies (Arendt, 1970; Žižek, 2008). This is given by the fact that the process of dehumanization of people belonging to a different *ethnicity* facilitates the commitment of crimes because the sense of *responsibility* disappears because the *Other* is not a "*Thou*" anymore that sees myself as well as his/her corresponding "*Thou*" but becomes an "*It*", an object, of which the "*I*" can make any use. Furthermore, I like to emphasize the fact that the twofold relation with an external *Other* leads to a progressive reprocessing of *identity*, for its component of *lived experience*. In conclusion, this external process is reflected as well at a more intimate level within the person, especially when the territory in which the person lives is highly characterized by conflict and contestation, as it is in the case of Lebanon.

#### 1.4.4. Middle East studies on culture, politics and society

This last section of the literature review adds to the already analyzed literature on concepts of *ethnicity*, *homeland*, *ethics of the Other*, and *ethnocracy*. Here I wanted to explain the main references that focus on Middle Eastern studies on culture, politics and society.

For the study of the Middle East, post-colonial theory is certainly essential, from Frantz Fanon to Edward Said, from Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak to Homi Bhabha. For the purpose of this section, I decided to focus only on one main concept that was important for the understanding of the

case of Lebanon (the concept of “colonial situation”); and, then, briefly highlight the limitations and criticisms of the existing literature on Lebanon.

The concept of “colonial situation” was first presented by the French sociologist, Georges Balandier, in his work of 1951 entitled: “*The Colonial Situation: a Theoretical Approach*”. Despite its importance, Balandier’s work is highly underrated in post-colonial theory, while it is often mentioned, and personally I believe strongly misused and misinterpreted, by theorists of the relatively new branch of history called New Imperial History (i.e. Stephen Howe, Jean-François Bayart, Frederick Cooper).

What is important for us is that, in his seminal article of 1951, Georges Balandier drags the attention of the reader to the extra-ordinary aspects of European colonialism as an unprecedented and unique historical phenomenon. Balandier affirms that:

*"one of the most striking events in the recent history of mankind is the expansion throughout the entire world of most European peoples. It has brought about the subjugation and [...] disappearance of virtually every people regarded as backward, archaic, or primitive [...] The colonial movement of the nineteenth century was the most important in magnitude [...] It overturned in a brutal manner the history of the peoples it subjugated [...] We cannot ignore this fact. It not only conditioned the reactions of 'dependent' peoples, but is still responsible for certain reactions of peoples recently emancipated"* (23).

Given the complexity of the phenomenon of colonialism, Balandier argues that it is necessary to drag knowledge coming from different fields and to develop interdisciplinary research. The author explains that the “colonial situation” poses problems to the “conquered people” in relation to: 1) the administration representing the colonial power; and 2) the “newly-created state on which still rests the burden of colonial liabilities” (23-24). Furthermore, Balandier argues that the emerging “colonial situation” needs to be analyzed from different perspectives, through the lenses of historians, sociologists and anthropologists. From an

historical perspective, Balandier explains that we can learn how *"economic exploitation is based on the seizure of political power - the two characteristic features of colonialism"* (25). From a more sociological perspective, Balandier highlights how colonialism is characterized by *"social surgery"* (26), the external pressures of the colonizing power that puts colonial societies in a *"state of latent crisis"* (25). At a wider scale, the history of colonial societies is, according to the author, the result of a *"dual history"*: the history that forces together towards homogeneous social forms different populations through *"domination or assimilation"*; and a history that brings together heterogeneous populations in a relation of *"disintegration"* (27). While talking about the case of Africa, Balandier reports that the three major forces that disintegrated it are governmental administration, missionaries, and the new economy, and he says that: *"any current study of these societies can be made only by viewing them in terms of this dual history"* (27). In addition to this, similarly to Chakrabarty, Said, Bhabha, also Balandier identifies a strong connection between colonialism and capitalism. While quoting J. Guilton - who wrote that *"the metropole-colony relationship is in no sense different from the capital-labor relationship, or the relationship Hegel has termed master-servant"* (28) - Balandier affirms that sociologists should not look at the colonial situation *"exclusively in terms of its economic manifestations"* but that they *"must recognize the importance of such demonstrable facts"* (28). Furthermore, Balandier describes the colonial situation as marked by five circumstances: 1) the domination imposed by a foreign minority; 2) the domination linking radically different civilizations into some form of relationship; 3) a mechanized, industrialized society with a powerful economy and a Christian background imposing itself on a non-industrialized society<sup>106</sup>; 4) the fundamentally antagonistic character of the relationship between the two societies; and 5) the need to resort to force and to a system of pseudo-justifications and stereotyped behaviors to maintain domination (36).

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<sup>106</sup> The denominational connotation of colonialism provided by Balandier refers to the process of expansion of European colonialism in various areas of the world that were inhabited by groups with a different denomination (i.e. Latin America, Africa, Asia). In the case of Lebanon, the existence of a Christian tradition pre-dates European expansion in the region, thus, some necessary *distinguo* need to be kept in mind.

Lastly, it is interesting to notice the attention that Balandier poses on the idea of “*crises*” that characterize the colonized population in relation to its colonizer. A crisis that affects the “*evolution*” of the local culture and that we can connect with the idea of “*incomplete transition*” explained by Chakrabarty.

All these considerations made by Balandier in regard to “*colonial situation*”, “*dual history*”, and “*crises*” are something that emerged throughout the research and that I believe play an important role for the understanding of all three research questions. In particular, what seems key is the understanding of the never achieved passage from a colonial situation to a democratic system. Indeed, ethnocracy repropose a colonial situation. The difference is that it is a colonial situation in which both colonizers and colonized are local inhabitants.

Faced with this situation, if we look at the existing literature on Lebanon (i.e. M. Fawaz, M. Harb, E. Verdeil, A.R. Norton, S. Kassir, H.B. Akar, B. Chen and M. Cammett, N. Salti and J. Chaaban, etc.), it seems that it is somehow *blocked* in a sort of dead-end situation.

It seems that the process of production of knowledge never achieves a radical change in perspective, but, instead, we see a progressive process of addition of new research that tries to expand and explore more details, but it never addresses the structural issue that lies behind all the details. This way, a change in paradigm remains far in the background.

Nonetheless, the situation of the literature on Lebanon was not always incredibly narrow and dry as it is today. The historian, Albert Hourani showed throughout all of his work a wide vision and understanding of the structural dimensions of the Middle East and Lebanon. His work provides us with a comprehensive understanding of the region. An important role is given both to structural elements and to *memory*. Literature of today, in its astonishing narrowness, loses *memory* and analyzes few cases without a serious understanding neither of the structural dimensions nor of history and memory. In the analysis of the present, there is no understanding of the past, there is no serious attempt to understand why actors behave the way they do within

the existing structure and what alternatives they have, if any, to act in a different way. There is a fundamental deficiency in the understanding of what the French historian, Jacques Le Goff, explains as the relation between past and present<sup>107</sup>.

There is an overall difficulty in understanding what Fernand Braudel calls "*les régularités*" or "*les permanences de systems*"<sup>108</sup>, that cannot be unraveled by a literature that represents an "*histoire événementielle*"<sup>109</sup>, or a literature focused on "*events*", which characterizes the realm of the "*courte durée*", which is in turn "*le temps par excellence du chroniqueur, du journaliste*"<sup>110</sup>. What remains missing, then, is the analysis of the structure, which requires what Braudel defines as "*une attitude de longue durée*"<sup>111</sup>. As he says: "*rien n'étant plus important, d'après nous, au centre de la réalité sociale, que cette opposition vive, intime, répétée indéfiniment, entre l'instant et le temps lent à s'écouler*"<sup>112</sup>. The *longue durée* attempts, then, to explain the dimension intrinsic to a time "*that flows slowly*" as opposed to the time of the "*event*".

I think that one possible interpretation is that this deficiency that affects literature on Lebanon is probably due to the global phenomenon that characterizes a post-modern society and that Bauman calls "*the decadence of the intellectuals*"<sup>113</sup>, the idea that the hyper-specialization, intrinsic to postmodernity, produces an overall difficulty in achieving a unitary knowledge and, hence, the intellectuals themselves seem a species at risk of extinction.

This is something that was pointed out also by the American anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, at the beginning of the fourth chapter of his well-known "*The Interpretation of Cultures*",

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<sup>107</sup> See J. Le Goff, 1977 (1992 ed.), *History and Memory*, Columbia University Press, New York, NY.

<sup>108</sup> F. Braudel, 1958, *Histoire et Sciences sociales: La longue durée*, p. 733.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 727.

<sup>110</sup> [the time *par excellence* of the reporter, of the journalist], in Ibid., p. 728.

<sup>111</sup> [an attitude of *longue durée*], in Ibid., p. 732.

<sup>112</sup> [Nothing has been more important, according to us, at the center of the social reality, than this strong, intimate and indefinitely repeated opposition between the instant and the time that flows slowly], in Ibid., p. 726.

<sup>113</sup> See Z. Bauman, 1989, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-Modernity and Intellectuals*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK.

where, before to address the issue of *"Religion as a Cultural System"*, he affirms that:

*"Two characteristics of anthropological work on religion accomplished since the second world war strike me as curious when such work is placed against that carried out just before and just after the first. One is that it has made no theoretical advances of major importance. It is living off the conceptual capital of its ancestors, adding very little, save a certain empirical enrichment, to it. The second is that it draws what concepts it does use from a very narrowly defined intellectual tradition. There is Durkheim, Weber, Freud, or Malinowski, and in any particular work the approach of one or two of these transcendent figures is followed, with but a few marginal corrections necessitated by the natural tendency to excess of seminal minds or by the expanded body of reliable descriptive data. But virtually no one even thinks of looking elsewhere - to philosophy, history, law, literature, or the 'harder' sciences - as these men themselves looked, for analytical ideas. And it occurs to me, also, that these two curious characteristics are not unrelated".*

Thus, the main gap in the literature, and in the academic world in general, is a *human* gap: we miss intellectuals and scholars (like Albert Hourani, for instance) able to have a broad vision, because based on history and memory. The widespread middle-range and value-free approach causes an excessive accumulation of data; while, indeed, little attention is given to the process of *"asking new questions on existing data"*, and the result is a literature that, on one side, is too narrow and focused on *"marginal corrections"* within a process of progressive *"hyper-specialization"*; and, on the other, it does not do anything else but *reporting* facts, without being able to *explain* them; because intrinsically shortsighted and based on a short-term memory.

The intention of this work is to represent an initial step in a new direction. Data, facts, policies, and events are already there, the goal is to question them from an ethnocentric perspective, in order to put them in relation with the structure/s behind them and, ultimately, reach a better understanding of the past and present situation.



## 1.5. Methodological Approach

Before to explain the main characteristics of the methodological approach that I used for the development of the research, here I believe it is necessary to briefly explain four main limitations and difficulties that are intrinsic and peculiar to the study of Lebanon and that affected the decision to use a mixed-methods approach.

### 1.5.1. Four Main Limitations and Difficulties

Lebanon, as a case for analysis, is particularly complex for mainly four reasons. The first one is that it is difficult to find a point of departure to explain the development of specific concepts. This is so because some phenomena were already in place before the creation of the State of Greater Lebanon and were, then, fortified and consolidated by the State, but other phenomena were spurred by the very formation of the new political and institutional framework, and there is an overall continuation and overlap between the two.

In addition to the overlap of numerous layers, a second difficulty for us to read the development of Lebanon is the fact that Lebanon is a deeply divided society, where for "*deeply divided society*", I like to adopt the definition provided by the contemporary American political scientist, Ian Lustick<sup>114</sup>, who said that we can consider "*a society as deeply divided if ascriptive ties generate an antagonistic segmentation of society, based on terminal identities with high political salience, sustained over a substantial period of time and a wide variety of issues. As a minimum condition, boundaries between rival groups must be sharp enough so that membership is clear and, with few exceptions, unchangeable*"<sup>115</sup>.

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<sup>114</sup> I. Lustick, 1979, *Stability in Deeply Divided Societies: Consociationalism versus Control*, World Politics, Vol. 31, Issue 3, pp. 325-244.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p. 325.

The third problematic issue is that such divisions consolidated over time along ethno-religious lines, creating an overlying stratum of social classes that often matches with the ethno-religious group of the individual. This situation was even more accentuated by the development of the industrial sector - which brought with itself the inherent structural instability of a capitalist system - and the adoption of a neoliberal path in the policy arena. For this reason, I think that Lebanon cannot be studied neither exclusively from an ethno-religious perspective nor exclusively from a social class perspective, but the best explanation of the Lebanese context lies in the ability to identify the complementary role of both - and that's what is missing in the literature.

A fourth incredible difficulty is the lack of data at the national level, which renders the situation even more intricate to be studied. The main question in this case would be: who has interest in having a weak State that doesn't know its own population? Who has interest in keeping the Parliament a mere place for the maintenance of the status quo through the control of the shares of power? And, ultimately, who has interest in preserving the ethnocratic regime? A possible explanation is that probably, directly or indirectly, every side shares *in toto* or in part such interest: from the lowest to the highest social strata, from the right-wing to the left-wing, from Muslim to Christian groups. This is so because the system consolidated in such a wide period of time that it made all of its participants ingrained in it, everybody conquered its slice of power over the years and there is a sort of *first-mover dilemma* that hinders a possible change. Furthermore, the critical aspect of the system is that it can only be stable through domination and control of the ethnocratic regime, which in turn, through its domination, creates opposition that grows to the point of rupture into cycles of violence. This happened a first time in 1958, then a second time between 1975-1990, and more recently in 2008. In any case, the system is able to present itself as a democratic and unbiased enterprise, and this is one of the reasons why the Arab spring did not reach the coasts of Lebanon, if not through a mirroring effect of the war in

Syria. Nevertheless, contestation and violence are always around the corner and they regard micro-aspects of the political life and never the overall structure. As Slavoj Žižek would say, the various struggles that emerge can be interpreted as "*subjective*" phenomena, because they represent a "*perturbation of the 'normal', peaceful state of things*"<sup>116</sup>, while the "*objective*" violence is the one "*inherent to the 'normal' state of things*", it is the structural, systemic, and anonymous dimension behind it<sup>117</sup>; namely: ethnocracy, which is never directly addressed, neither in politics nor in the literature.

#### 1.5.2. Mixed-Methods Approach

In light of the limitations and difficulties explained above, I believed that the complexity of the research problem could be better addressed with a mixed-methods approach. The use of a mixed-methods approach does not simply mean to use both qualitative and quantitative methods, techniques, and data, but it actually means to organize (mixing) the data, following several steps.

Among the various definitions of mixed-methods approach, I found the one provided by Creswell and Clark<sup>118</sup> as being the most comprehensive one. In particular, they say this:

*"Mixed-methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better*

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<sup>116</sup> S. Žižek, 2008, *Violence*, Picador, New York, NY, p. 2.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p. 2 and pp. 12-13.

<sup>118</sup> J.W. Creswell, V.L. Plano Clark, 2007, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, SAGE Publications, New York, NY.

*understanding of research problems than either approach along*<sup>119</sup>.

I would add to this by saying that a mixed-methods approach not only explains the research problem better than qualitative and quantitative alone; but it has also helped me to redirect the focus of the work along the way, with the necessary flexibility that the case of Lebanon requires.

Looking at the various literature, at a global level, but also specifically on the case of Lebanon, I have noticed some of the deficiencies of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

First, quantitative researches collect an enormous amount of data, through questionnaires and surveys. For instance, the cases I looked at for Lebanon had numbers that fluctuated from one thousand to three or four thousand interviewees. But the room left for the *propositive* side is limited and there is no attempt to identify *new* policies that could improve the extant situation and identify what philosophy should be at the basis of new policies.

Second, as far as qualitative research, instead, I have noticed that the vast majority of the work is focused on Beirut, presenting historical, economic, and urban phenomena from the exclusive perspective of the elite. Little attention is given to the periphery of the country and, more importantly, we always find a middle-range approach guiding all scholars. The result is that analyses are developed on Beirut, or on neighborhoods of Beirut, but there is never an attempt to look at the structure that brings actors to act the way they do.

Thus, a mixed-methods approach was useful to explore the research problem better than a qualitative or quantitative methods alone. However, there were different models that

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

could have been applied in developing a mixed-methods research, based on the different weight that could have been assigned to each data set.

Creswell and Clark explain that there are four possible research designs that can be used, where for research design they mean: *"procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting data in research studies"*<sup>120</sup>. The four major types of mixed-methods designs are: 1) the triangulation design; 2) the embedded design; 3) the explanatory design; and 4) the exploratory design.

The overall idea at the basis of each of these four models is the different approach to the phase of *"mixing"* of the data. The *"mixing"* of the data is what distinguishes mixed-methods research from qualitative or quantitative research in such a way that the researcher can pose different questions such as *"Do results from quantitative and qualitative data converge or depart?"* or also *"what explains the quantitative results of the study?"*<sup>121</sup>.

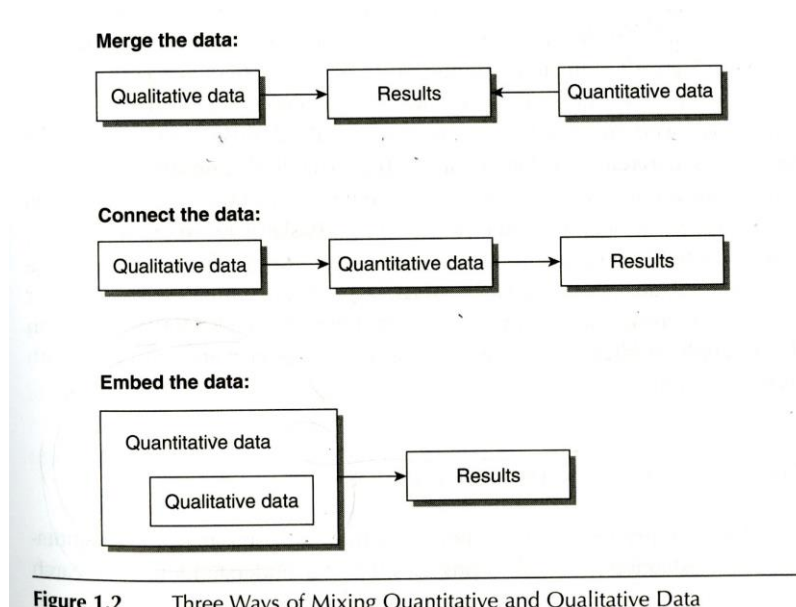
The possibility to ask different questions on the data is what makes mixed-methods, according to Tashakkori and Teddlie, the *"third methodological movement"*<sup>122</sup>. The image below shows how quantitative and qualitative data can be mixed together in order to ask new questions on the data.

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>122</sup> A. Tashakkori, C. Teddlie, 1998, *Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA, p. ix, cit. in J.W. Creswell, V.L. Plano Clark, 2011, p. 13.



**Figure 7:** In the image above the authors show three different ways in which quantitative and qualitative data can be mixed. Source: J.W. Creswell, V.L. Plano Clark, 2007, p. 7.

We see that the data can be mixed in three ways: a) by merging the different data sets together; b) by connecting them and build in sequence on one dataset after the other; and c) by embedding them if one dataset is considered as the primary and the second one is utilized in support to the primary one.

Thus, the four types of mixed-methods designs arrange in various ways the different possible "*mixing*" of qualitative and quantitative datasets. The triangulation design is used when qualitative and quantitative data are complementary to one another. More specifically, triangulation design "*is used when a researcher wants to directly compare and contrast quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings or to validate or expand quantitative results with qualitative data*"<sup>123</sup>.

The embedded design strategy, instead, is used when there is a primary dataset and a secondary dataset, and the goal is to use one to support the other because one alone is not

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

sufficient. I feel that these first two designs, triangulation and embedded, relate more to the organization and use of the data, they give a structure to the overall research, while the following two, explanatory and exploratory, relate more to the purpose of the research and can characterize a moment in its development but not the overall structure.

The other two mixed-methods designs are the "*explanatory design*" and the "*exploratory design*". They are both examples of two-phase mixed-methods designs. The explanatory design uses qualitative data to explain or to build upon initial quantitative results<sup>124</sup>; while the exploratory design uses the "*results of the first method (qualitative) [to] develop or inform the second method (quantitative)*"<sup>125</sup>.

As far as the case of Lebanon, I am aware that the triangulation design would have been the ideal strategy. I would have been able to compare two solid and strong datasets and to get the best understanding out of both. However, the lack of extensive quantitative data, their limited accessibility and/or reliability, moved the choice towards an embedded design. While triangulation design would have been the ideal strategy, the embedded design resulted to be a more pragmatic choice. With an embedded design, I used the qualitative data collected in my fieldwork as the primary dataset, and the quantitative data as the secondary dataset. To be exhaustive, I can say that also the explanatory design could have been an alternative to the embedded design, since, as shown below, both are pragmatic choices in the case of limited availability of quantitative data.

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>125</sup> J.C. Greene, V.J. Caracelli, W.F. Graham, 1989, *Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs*, Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Vol. 11, Issue 3, pp. 255-274; cit. in J.W. Creswell, V.L. Plano Clark, 2011, p. 75.

Quality of the data	Good Qual. & Poor Quant.	Good Qual. & Good Quant.
Mixed-Methods Design Strategy	Embedded Design or Exploratory Design	Triangulation Design or Explanatory Design

**Table 2:** In summary, the table above tries to show the various alternatives based on the 'Good' or 'Poor' quality of quantitative and qualitative data. The column on the right is the ideal situation, while the column in the middle represents the pragmatic choices.

As far as philosophical and theoretical frameworks, or paradigms, Creswell and Clark suggest that pragmatism is the paradigm best suited for a mixed-methods research. I believe that, in our case, a combination of influences coming from more than one paradigm is what describes best the research approach used. Without going into the details and the description of the different paradigms, we can just briefly mention here that the quantitative portion of the research has something in common with a post-positivist approach insofar as it tries to verify or falsify different hypotheses. In particular, it is interesting to see the correlation between geographical location at birth (town or region) and education, income, and housing quality, to see what are the possibilities of an individual born in a specific area in relation to individuals born in other regions of the country and how much *space* influences life chances. This is something that I tried to do with the data, but there are several limitations of the quantitative part of the work, which remained limited to a quantitative descriptive analysis, because of the lack of data and its fragmentation at different administrative levels (national, regional, provincial, and municipal), which is something that made it difficult to develop meaningful regression analyses.



In addition to this, the research approach that inspired the work was mostly a critical theory approach that has some aspects related also to constructivism and transformativism. Critical theory, from the work of the Frankfurt School onward, focused on issues of social justice and equality and tried to push for a change in this direction. Eric Bronner described the emergence of critical theory with the following words:

*“critical theory began with an emancipatory promise. It offered an interdisciplinary perspective seeking to inform the struggle against oppression in all its guises; it rejected the priority accorded to political economy by Marxism and subverted the ‘privileged position’ of the proletariat. It called the domination of nature into question and any identification of the subject with existing institutional arrangements; it championed the reflexive subject against totalitarianism and the ‘happy consciousness’. It defended hope and the concept of utopia”<sup>126</sup>.*

For this reason, the main drive of the work is rooted in critical theory. Then, some aspects of constructivism are given by the fact that I tried to build on existing theories (for instance, ethnocratic theories) in order to add to existing theories and I believe that, especially in the case of Lebanon, different ethno-religious groups developed contrasting *subjective meanings* of the Others, of society, of the State, and of Self, and, in this way, it was fundamental to use qualitative methods (i.e. semi-structured interviews) to understand the social construction of reality of these groups and to identify different patterns of meaning. Then, the aspects of transformativism simply refer to the fact that the overall attention on the importance of ethnocratic regimes derives from the understanding that such systems create issues of asymmetric power distribution, issues of social justice, issues of domination and oppression, and, furthermore, a goal of the work was also to *transform* existing ideas and interpretation of and on Lebanon .

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<sup>126</sup> S.E. Bronner, 1994, *Of Critical Theory and its Theorists*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, UK, p. 321.

Lastly, the aspect related to pragmatism derives from the fact that the complex situation of Lebanon necessitates the pragmatic use of different research methods and datasets in order to understand as much as possible the problem under consideration. The pragmatic aspect of the research, then, is related to the research approach and not to overall ideas of *truth* and the role of the researcher in society.

In conclusion, the research that I developed is a critical theory research that tries to draw from different paradigms and methods in order to develop the strongest research possible towards a positive change of the extant situation. To use the core-periphery analogy, critical theory is the core of the approach and purpose of the research, then there are important peripheral aspects related also to post-positivism, constructivism, transformativism, and pragmatism. Furthermore, the decision to use a mixed-methods approach was due to the wider possibilities to understand the problem of the ethnocratic regime in the context of Lebanon.

Lastly, fundamental case-studies that I kept in mind as important models of research are, on one side, the quantitative work on social classification in Israel/Palestine developed by Semyonov and Lewin-Epstein<sup>127</sup>, and on the other side, the qualitative work developed by Oren Yiftachel<sup>128</sup>. Thus, various limitations of the work resulted from the lack of data and the subsequent need to rely on secondary data gathered by other scholars and researchers in the past. However, a mixed-methods approach gave me the possibility to have more flexibility to face changing situations and, overall, it left me with more freedom of action.

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<sup>127</sup> In particular I think about two works: 1) N. Lewin-Epstein, M. Semyonov, 1993, *The Arab Minority in Israel's Economy. Patterns of Ethnic Inequalities*, Westview Press, Boulder, CO; and 2) N. Lewin-Epstein, M. Semyonov, 2004, *Stratification in Israel. Class, Ethnicity, and Gender*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick and London.

<sup>128</sup> In this case I think of: 1) O. Yiftachel, H. Yacobi, 2002, *Urban Ethnocracy: Ethnicization and the Production of Space in an Israeli 'Mixed City'*, *Environmental and Planning D: Society and Space*, 2003, vol. 21, pp. 673-693; and 2) O. Yiftachel, 2006, *Ethnocracy. Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA.

## **1.6. Data Organization and Analysis**

The lack of updated, accessible, and reliable data is something common in many developing countries. However, in the case of Lebanon, quantitative data has always represented a reason for contention, and this is due to the structure of the State. In the moment in which a State decides to distribute power and services along ethno-religious lines and based on the demographic presence on the territory, any demographic change represents a potential threat for the group in power. It is for this reason that the last comprehensive census was done in 1932, during the French mandate, and that since then Lebanon has never counted its own population again. The quantitative data that can be found is the result of estimates done by various national and international agencies and that show some factors aggregated at the municipal level, other at the province level (Qadaa), and other at the regional level (Mohafadha). At the municipal level it is very difficult to find useful socio-economic indicators (i.e. income, educational attainment), and also at the province level there are still some discrepancies. The Central Administration for Statistics (CAS), which is the official agency releasing data for Lebanon, presents most of the data aggregated to the regional level. This is an issue in relation to the possibilities of doing regression analyses and understand more in depth the correlation between different variables. However, it is still possible to do some interesting descriptive analysis of the existing quantitative data.

Below I tried to explain the data that was used and the different forms of analysis that I developed: quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, and spatial analysis.

Despite all the difficulties represented by the lack of updated and accessible data on Lebanon, however, I gathered a good amount of data that helped me to build an interesting quantitative dataset. The data collected contain total population data collected in 1997 by CAS, in addition to population data gathered by the United Nations within the framework of the

Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) that show an estimate of the population by municipality for 2015. In addition, there is a dataset resulting from a wide sample data collection conducted by CAS in 1997 on housing and death information. Again from CAS, there are a series of datasets on housing, education, health, crime, labor, and vital statistics always at the regional level, for a period that goes from 2006 to 2013.

Then, I found useful 2004 national data on income, education, and distribution within economic sectors at the regional level. I also looked at elections data from 2009 and 2010<sup>129</sup> that show information about the total number of people having the right to vote, those that actually voted, showing the areas that are more politically active than others, and showing the winning political parties, both at the province and city level. This last element means that from the winning parties we can somehow deduce the main ethno-religious group that dominates in one area and, when possible, also the secondary group. Given the well defined system of power through which political parties are based on ethno-religious affiliation, this data can give us a good understanding also about the distribution of various ethno-religious groups throughout Lebanon. A combination of all these sources represents a relatively good quantitative dataset that was used to support the qualitative dataset and the analysis on the existing literature.

This data needed to be elaborated and cleaned and it served as the basis for further investigation through qualitative research. Given the current availability of data, it was possible to aggregate information either at a province level (for some information) or at the municipal level (for some other). In general, then, we can say that it was possible to do an ecological analysis and not an analysis at the individual level. In any case, an ecological analysis seemed also best suited for an urban planning research, rather than a more minute individual level analysis that may be more suited for a sociological study on social stratification.

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<sup>129</sup> Lebanon will be conducting municipal elections in May 2016, but it is too early at the moment to have the possibility to include those data in this work.

- CAS 1997 Study (individual data):

- Housing Data: Sample of 61581 individuals, containing: # of floors, # of rooms, heating, water network, drinking water, sewage system, own or rent, estate, cars, telephones, HH type, etc.

- Death Data: Sample of 1453 individuals, containing: age at death, reason, place, etc.

Sources: Marianne El Khoury, and Eric Verdeil.

- CAS 2006-2013 Series (aggregate data):

- Aggregate data on housing, education, health, crime, labor and vital statistics at the regional level.

Source: CAS Website.

- UN - Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-2016 (aggregate data):

- Population estimates at the municipal level for 2015.

Sources: UN LCRP.

- Elections Data (aggregate data):

- Parliamentary Elections, June 2009 Data, containing: # of registered voters, # of votes cast, winning political parties, etc. (at the Qadaat level)

- Municipal Elections, 2010 Data, containing: # of registered voters, # of votes cast, winning political parties, etc. (at the city level)

Sources: National Democratic Institute, and Information International s.a.l.

- General Demographic Data (aggregate data):

- National Data 2004-2005, containing: Income, Education, Economic Activity Sector, etc (at the Mohafazat level).

**Table 3:** In summary, above we can see the list of quantitative data.

In addition to this, during the 6 month period of field-research in Lebanon (June-November 2015), I developed the qualitative portion of the work. More specifically, I conducted 29 in-depth interviews with local politicians, local planners and community organizers, and with local population from all regions of Lebanon.

The interviews with local politicians and planners tried to investigate the first two research questions: 1) the effects of the ethnocratic regime on the development of public policies; and 2) the effects of the ethnocratic regime on the urban environment. On the other side, the interviews with local population investigated the third research question on the effects of the ethnocratic regime on civil society. In addition to this, the interviews with politicians served also as a testing ground to verify the possible room for reform of the system.

Lastly, another goal of the field research was to develop a series of spatial analyses in order to better answer the second question on the effects of the ethnocratic regime on the urban environment. In particular, the main idea for the development of spatial analyses and visualizations was to provide the reader with a visual understanding of certain concepts and phenomena that are already visible from the quantitative dataset or to show something new. Throughout the text I inserted some of the spatial analyses that mainly tried to: 1) explain the core-periphery relation; 2) show the distribution of the total population; 3) show how recent estimates propose to explain the ethno-religious distribution in different regions; 4) visualize the extent of territorial segregation based on ethno-religious affiliation at a national level; and 5) try to explain how the State deals with emerging issues by visualizing the distribution of informal settlements developed by the recent waves of Syrian refugees.

This is, of course, something basic and preliminary. It would have been interesting to look at the access to education and health care facilities at the national level and see what an *hot spot analysis* and *distance to point analysis* could have possibly told us about the different ways in which core and periphery are served. Another idea could have been to study *location*

*quotients*, which are a measure of relative concentration of job opportunities and sectors in different regions at the core and the periphery of the country.

However, for the purpose of this work, and due to the difficulty in gathering extensive quantitative data, I preferred to use simple examples that can represent an initial point of departure for further analysis in the future.

TYPE OF DATA	USE OF DATA
Quantitative Dataset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Basic Demographic Profile.</li> <li>- Understand relation between place and life chances (income, ed. attainment, etc).</li> </ul>
Interviews with Local Politicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Investigate on Effects of Ethnocracy on the development of public policies.</li> <li>. Understand room for reform of the system.</li> </ul>
Interviews with Local Planners and Community Organizers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investigate Effects of Ethnocracy on the development of public policies.</li> <li>- Investigate local planning systems and procedures.</li> <li>- Investigate effects of Ethnocracy on the Urban Environment.</li> </ul>
Interviews with Local Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investigate Effects of Ethnocracy on Civil Society.</li> </ul>
Spatial Analyses (GIS, Illustrator, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investigate Effects of Ethnocracy on the Urban Environment.</li> </ul>

**Table 4:** The table above shows the organization of different sets of data and the meaning and purpose that each data set represents for the research. In particular, the column on the right shows the area of investigation that each data set is aimed for.

### 1.6.1. Quantitative Analysis

#### 1.6.1.1. Population Data

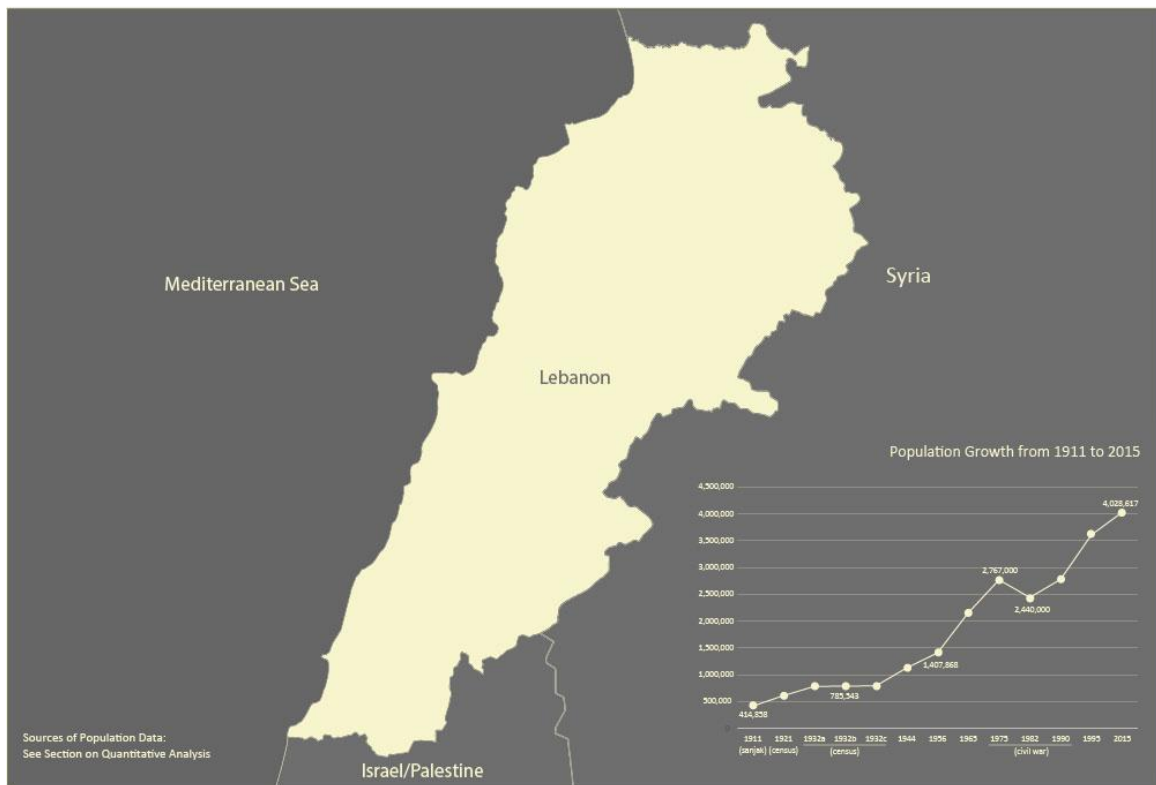
Gathering data on Lebanon can be frustrating and bring to few results, but it is in itself an important lesson that explains how structural features of the State work. Based on the various data collected, we can see that the population of Lebanon, within the boundaries of the semi-autonomous sanjak, was made of 414,585 people in 1911. This data shows a total Christian population of 329,626 individuals (79% of the total population), and a total Muslim population of 85,232 (20.5% of the total population). The figures of the first census done by the French in 1921 show, instead, a total population for Greater Lebanon including 609,069 people, of which 272,266 Muslims (44.7% of the total population) and 335,703 Christians (55.1% of the total population). Of course, this change is not due to dramatic demographic redistribution, but to the different areas included or not in the count in 1911 (the *sanjak*) compared to newly created State of Greater Lebanon. In addition to this, we also have to take into consideration the vast abstention from the census within the Muslim community. Furthermore, we always need to keep in mind that the data on Lebanon needs to be taken with a strong sense of skepticism because of the high level of *volatility* in relation to one count to the other, from one source to the other. This is a common feature that persists nowadays. Indeed, if we look at the results of the 1932 census, which was an official census, from which we would expect *stable* data, also in that case we can find sources reporting different figures. In the table below, I reported as 1932a, 1932b, and 1932c, three main sources that I found regarding the 1932 census and we can see how the data is, even if by a small margin, different from one source to the other. In general, the total population was counted as being between 782,415 (1932a) and 793,396 (1932c) individuals, with a distribution of 48.7% (1932c) or 49.2% (1932a) of total Muslims, and 50.0% (1932c) or 50.7% (1932a) of total Christians. What we can say is that, while within the



boundaries of the semi-autonomous sanjak created in 1861, the Christians maintained up to 1911 a favorable 79% to 20.5% ratio in relation to the Muslims, the new boundaries of the State brought the population in 1932 to be basically identical (50% Christians to approximately 49% Muslims).

Within these two main religions, we see that three main ethno-religious groups stand out: the Maronites, the Sunni, and the Shia (in this size order from the largest to the smallest community, according to the numbers). Within the sanjak, the Maronites in 1911 represented alone the 58.4% of the total population, the Sunni were the 3.5%, and the Shia the 5.6%. Within the boundaries of Greater Lebanon, in 1921, the Maronites were, instead, the 32% of the total population, the Sunni the 20.4%, and the Shia the 17.2%. These figures change again with the 1932 Census, showing 29.1% Maronites, 22.6% Sunni, and 19.8% Shia (1932a).

From the data, we see that the demographic situation, together with the presence of data, remains stable until the mid-1950s. The figures reported for 1944, just one year after the independence, show 29.1% Maronites, 20.9% Sunni, and 18.5% Shia; while in 1956, the situation remains approximately similar, with 30.1% Maronites, 20.3% Sunni, and 17.8% Shia. The following years show a deterioration of the political situation (i.e. the 1958 conflict and later in 1975 the beginning of the civil war), and this is paralleled both by lack of data, but also by contrasting figures, and this is something that will remain until today. For instance, the data found for 1982 show a distribution among the three main groups as follows: 21.7% Maronites, 25.6% Sunni, and 26.8% Shia; while data for 1985 show, instead, 27.8% Maronites, 26.2% Sunni, and 29.2% Shia. These differences may be due to a different rate of emigration to foreign countries among the various local communities and also a different rate of emigration between social classes. The overlap between the two, which is characteristic of Lebanon, may have caused this rapid change, in addition to different birth rate between communities and social classes.



**Figure 8:** In the map above, I tried to show both the location and geopolitical borders of Lebanon and the total population growth from 1911 to 2015. Its geopolitical borders are shared with Syria, to the north and east, and with Israel/Palestine, to the south. Then, the data gathered about total population show that the population of Lebanon increased throughout the twentieth century, with an important increase between the 1950s and mid-1970s. Data then show a decline in population during the civil war and a continuing increase in population from 1990 to our days. For more detailed data, look at the following table that I created combining most of the existing sources.

**Table 5:** In the table below, I tried to summarize data on population by ethno-religious affiliation from most of the existing sources, from 1911 to 2015. Some sources have data for all ethno-religious groups, while other sources have data only at the national level. However, given the data situation of Lebanon, this table was created to have most of the existing data in the same place and I hope that it can help other students and scholars.

### Population of Lebanon by Ethno-Religious Group Between 1911 and 2015

Ethno-Religious Groups	1911	1921	1932a	1932c	1942	1943	1944	1945	1950	1951	1955	1956	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1982	1985	1990	1995	1997	2010	2015
Muslims	85232	273366	385469	383180	386469	na	495003	519244	na	571109	na	624434	na	na	na	na	na	1460000	na	na	na	na	75,20%	na
Sunni	14529	124788	177100	175925	178100	na	222594	235595	na	271734	na	285698	na	na	na	na	na	635000	26,2%	na	na	na	21,60%	na
Shia	23413	104947	155035	154708	155035	na	206698	209338	na	237107	na	250605	na	na	na	na	na	655000	29,2%	na	na	na	42,20%	na
Druze	47290	48533	53334	53047	53334	na	71711	74311	na	62768	na	88131	na	na	na	na	na	180000	7,3%	na	na	na	7,00%	na
Alawi	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	3,40%	na
Kmali	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	1,00%	na
Christians	329626	335703	396946	392544	396756	na	514822	593430	na	700154	na	769558	na	na	na	na	na	940000	na	na	na	na	24,80%	na
Maronites	242308	199181	227800	226378	227800	na	318201	337846	na	377544	na	423708	na	na	na	na	na	530000	27,8%	na	na	na	18,80%	na
Roman Catholics	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	3117	na	4127	na	4506	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Greek Orthodox	52356	81409	77312	76522	77312	na	106658	109893	na	130858	na	148927	na	na	na	na	na	185000	na	na	na	na	na	na
Greek Catholics	31939	42462	46709	45999	46709	na	61956	64280	na	81764	na	87788	na	na	na	na	na	115000	na	na	na	na	na	na
Syrian Orthodox	na	na	na	na	2574	2723	na	3753	na	4562	na	4798	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Syrian Catholics	na	na	na	na	2675	2803	na	4984	na	5911	na	5699	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Armenian Orthodox	na	na	na	na	25462	26102	na	58007	59749	na	67139	na	63679	na	na	na	na	Armenians : 70,000	All Armenian s: 3,7%	na	na	na	All Armenian s: 3%	na
Armenian Catholics	na	na	na	na	5694	5890	na	na	10048	na	14218	na	14622	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Assyrians and Chaldean Catholics	na	na	na	na	528	548	na	na	1330	na	1390	na	1466	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Protestants	na	na	na	na	6712	6869	na	na	10440	na	12641	na	14365	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Jews	na	na	na	na	3518	3588	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Miscellaneous	na	na	na	na	6301	6393	na	6596	6261	na	12677	na	13876	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
Total Population	414858	609069	784415	785343	793396	1116000	1046421	1126601	1147000	1443000	1323940	1617000	1407868	1857000	2153000	2469000	2767000	2618000	2440000	2618000	2779000	3608000	4005000	na
Source: Zamir, 1985 p. 1946, p. 1																								

Beyond the particular differences between estimates, the trend that appears is that the Sunni community seems to have remained stable, in numerical terms, while both the Maronite and Shia communities experienced major changes. If we look at the last estimates that I found for 2010, we see that this process seems to be even more pronounced. For 2010, Professor Michael Izady shows this distribution: 18.8% Maronites, 21.6% Sunni, and 42.2% Shia. Of course, we have to use the maximum level of skepticism in regard to the specific numbers, but we can read a possible trend. The Shia, most of whom represent the lower classes, mostly concentrated in the rural areas of southern Lebanon and the Beqaa valley and the southern suburbs of Beirut, might have been growing more rapidly due to higher birth rate, compared to other communities; while the Maronites might have experienced a higher level of emigration and a lower level of births. Indeed, by combining the vital statistics published by CAS for 2013 and combining it with the elaboration on ethno-religious distribution by province (Qadaa) developed by El Khoury and Panizza (2005), we can see that the areas with a net population growth (based on the total population) close to zero are areas with a strong Christian presence. Areas like Kesrwane, whose 98.67% of registered voters are Maronites, grew by 0.2% in 2013. The same is true for Batroun (83.73% of registered voters are Maronites) that grew by 0.6% and Jbeil (85.72% of registered voters are Maronites) which grew by 1.0%.

On the other hand, areas that seem growing the most, in relation to their total population, are Marjayoun in southern Lebanon, where 91.62% of the total registered voters are Shia and that had a 4.4% net population growth in 2013; and also the area of Hermel, whose registered voters are 100% Shia and that grew by 4.3%.

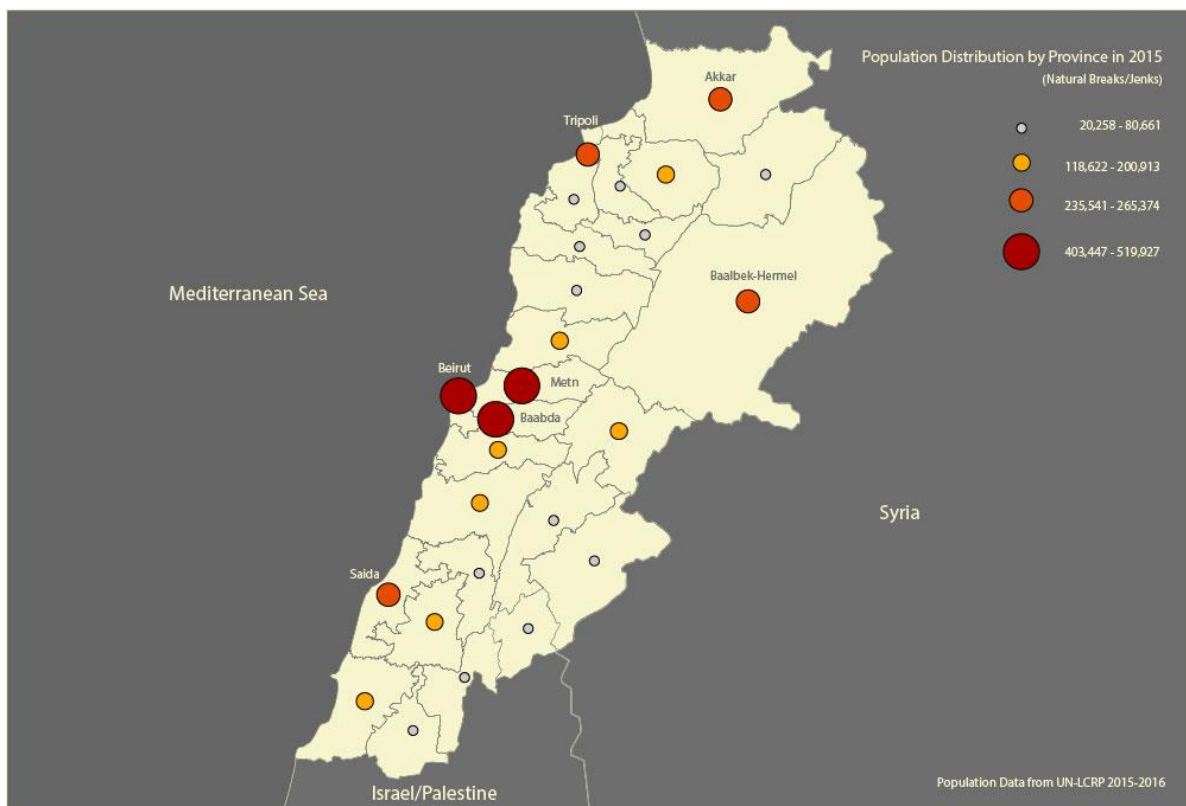
However, there are also Maronites areas that are growing at a good rate. Zgharta, with 93.23% of registered voters Maronites, grew by 1.9%; Jezzine, with 68.3% of Maronite registered voters grew by 2.4%; and Bsharre, where 100% of registered voters are Maronites, grew by 2.6%.

We can say, then, that Hermel and Marjayoun, which are two mostly agricultural areas at the periphery of the State, are growing more than four times as fast than Maronite areas at the core of the State like Kesrwane, and also in Maronite areas with a positive net population growth, like Zgharta, Jezzine, and Bsharre, they grow half as fast than Hermel and Marjaayoun.

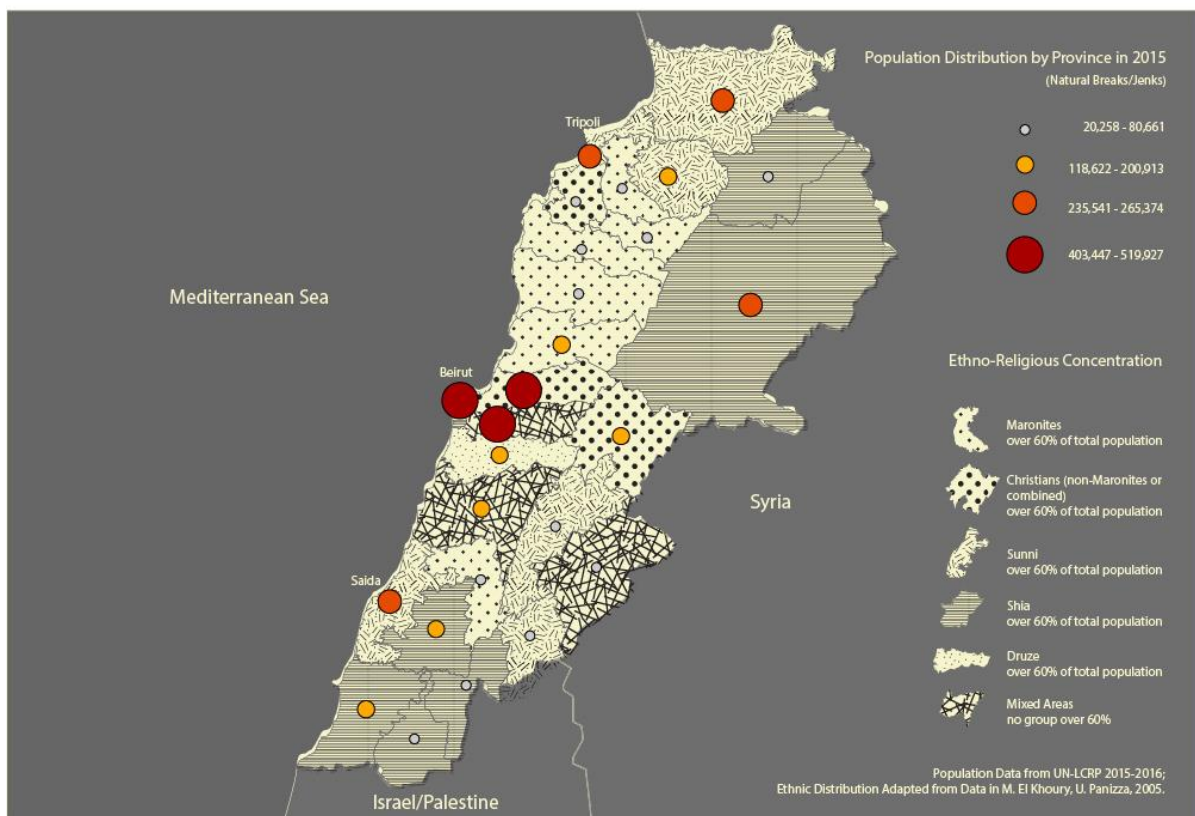
If we look at other groups, we can see, for instance, that an area like Koura, whose 75.52% of registered voters are Christians (non-Maronites) grew by 1.0%, while prevalently Sunni areas like Akkar (63.54% registered voters Sunni) grew by 1.1%, Saida (64.2% registered voters Sunni) grew by 1.2%, and Tripoli (88.66% registered voters Sunni) grew by 1.5%. Overall, from the data, it seems also that areas with a clear majority of Christian population is older than areas with a majority of Muslim population, but to confirm this we would need to develop a deeper analysis beyond the scope of this work.

However, if we look at aggregate data at the province level, we can visualize some structural features of the country. In particular, if we look at the latest estimates of the total population by province for 2015, we can see that the areas of Beirut, Baabda, and Metn are the most populated areas of Lebanon. At the outskirts we see the provinces of Saida, Baalbek, Tripoli and Akkar with a population that does not exceed 265,374 inhabitants. Then, there are provinces with a population comprised approximately between 100 and 200,000 inhabitants, like Zahle, Zgharta, Chouf, Tyre and Nabatiye. The remaining provinces seem to have, from the data, a lower number of population that does not exceed 80,661 people (See Figure 9).

To this, we can add also data on ethno-religious affiliation (See Figure 10). The data shown by El Khoury and Panizza are derived from election data and estimate the affiliation and the distribution (as a percent) based on registered voters. On the map, I decided to show the population by province and to symbolize the provinces that have an ethno-religious group that, alone, represents more than 60% of the total population.



**Figure 9:** Population distribution by province in 2015.

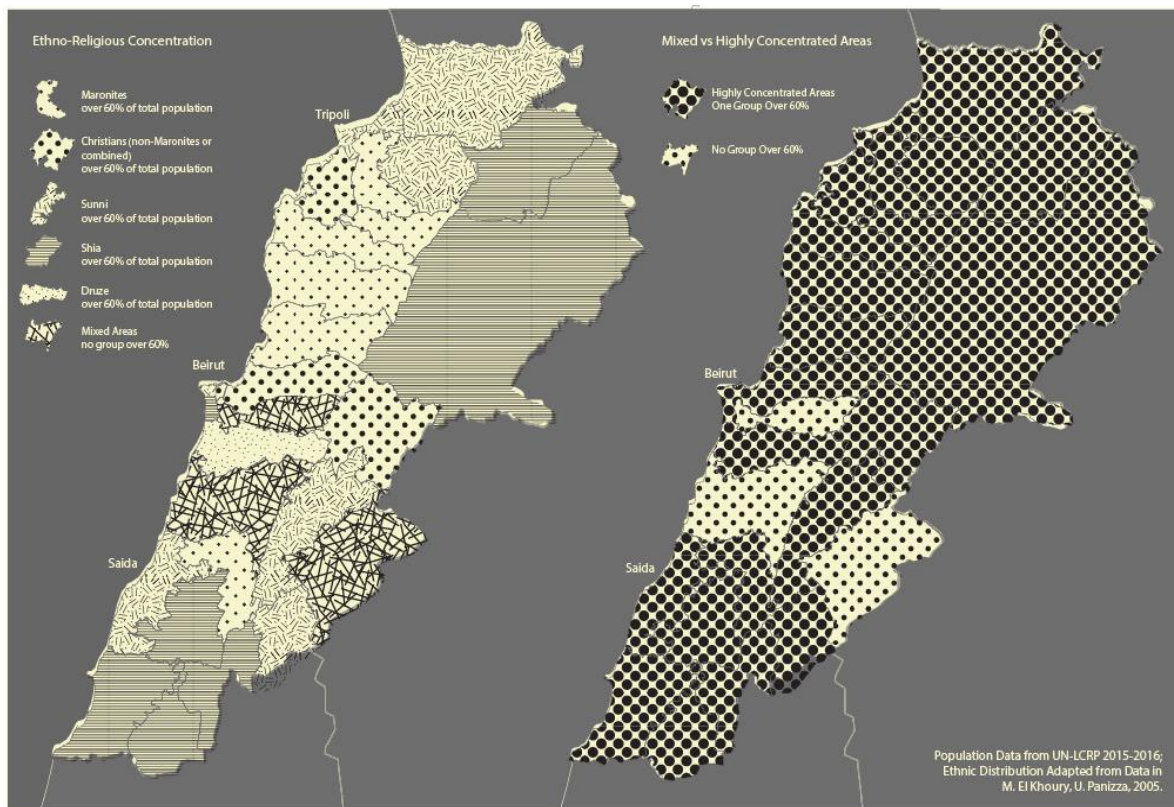


**Figure 10:** Population distribution and ethno-religious concentration, showing where a single group exceeds 60% of the total population of the province and mixed-areas, where no group represents more than 60% of the population.



From the legend, we can see the various groups and the areas where they represent the majority of the population. Of the 26 provinces of Lebanon, there are only three that do not have a single ethno-religious group representing more than 60% of the total population and they are Baabda, Chouf, and Rachaya.

Lastly, based on the previous map, I tried to look also at the level of territorial segregation by ethno-religious group at the national level. In the map below, we see that the vast majority of Lebanon has a single group that represents the majoritarian group in each area. This process is so accentuated that knowing the area of origin of a person automatically means knowing also his or her ethno-religious affiliation. In addition, even in the three provinces that appear *mixed* by looking at the aggregate data at the province level, when you actually analyze them more in detail at a closer look, you will find that their urbanization is as well fragmented along ethno-religious lines with municipalities and/or wider areas clearly associated with one group or another.



**Figure 11:** Ethno-religious concentration by province (left) and overall territorial segregation (right).

### 1.6.1.2. Socio-Economic Indicators

As far as socio-economic indicators, we have here some data at the province (Qadaa) level and some at the regional (Mohafadha) level. In this section, I tried to elaborate on this set of data.

If we look at the data on income released by CAS, we see that the two regions with the highest mean individual income per year in Lebanese Pounds (1000 LBN = \$0.67) are the two regions at the core of the State, Beirut (10,663,400 LBN) and Mount Lebanon (9,075,100 LBN). The periphery of the country shows a relatively lower level of income. The lowest income is registered in southern Lebanon (6,467,100 LBN) and northern Lebanon (6,630,900 LBN); while the eastern regions falling within the Beqaa valley show a higher income (7,412,400 LBN), which is probably due to the presence of an important urban centre, Zahle, and the economic activities that expand towards Shtoura.

Also, if we look at the different ranges of income, we see that Beirut hosts 31.5% of the population that has a mean individual income per year higher than 20 million LBN (approximately \$13,361), while Mount Lebanon hosts the 54.2%. This means that the 85.7% of the total population that earns more than 20 million LBN per year (which is the highest income range registered by CAS) lives at the core of the State; while areas at the periphery show a concentration within lower ranges of income. The strongest concentration of people living with less than 3.5 million LBN per year (approximately \$2,321) is registered in Northern Lebanon, which seems to host 30% of the total population living below that income level. The data on Mount Lebanon seems odd in every income range, if we compare it to the other regions. This is probably due to the fact that this region includes the province of Baabda, which in turn includes the southern suburbs of Beirut, which alone make up to almost one third of the total population of Mount Lebanon, having Dahiye an estimated population of 500,000 individuals and Mount Lebanon a total population of 1,506,907 individuals (according to UN-LCRP 2015).

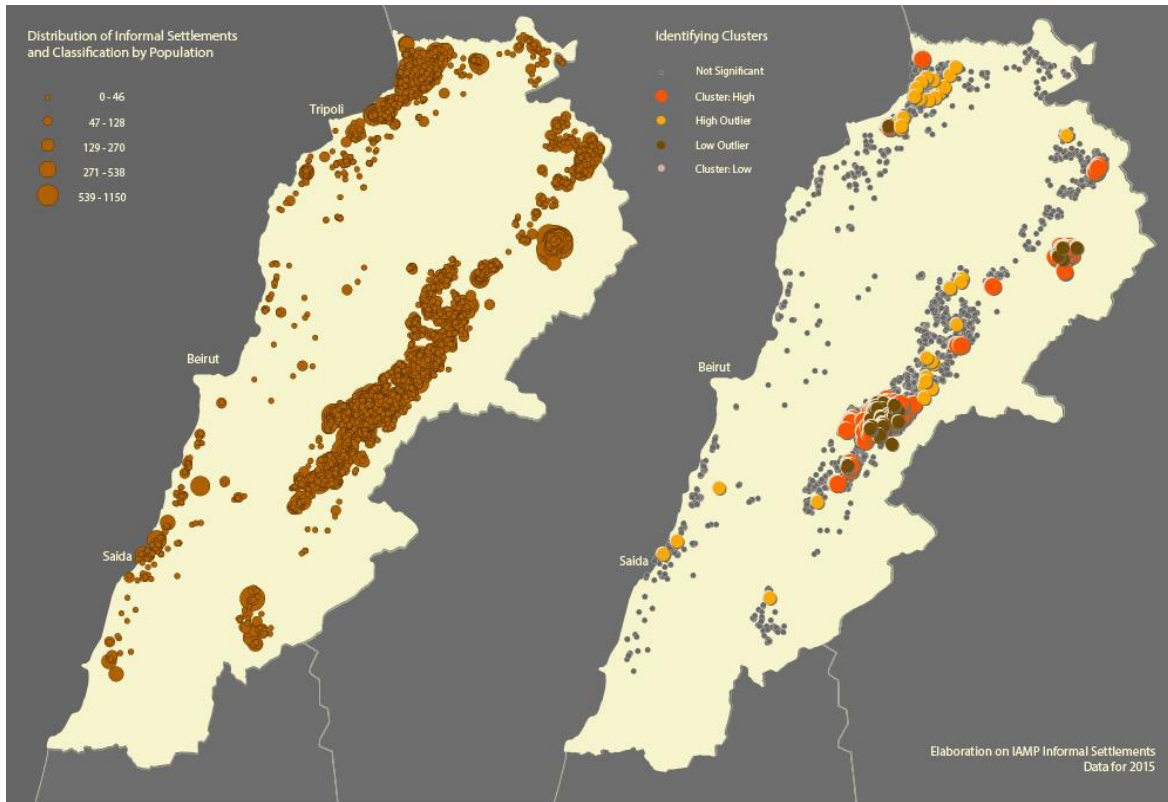


Finally, the two regions of southern Lebanon and the Beqaa valley host, as well, respectively the 14.1% and the 13.2% of the total population living with less than 3.5 million LBN per year, while the region of Nabatiye itself hosts 5.7% of this population.

If we look at the percent of illiterate population in 2009, we see that the two core regions of Beirut and Mount Lebanon have respectively 8.4% and 8.9% illiterates based on their respective total population. The periphery, then, shows a different picture. In the eastern regions, in the Beqaa Valley only 7% of the population are illiterates and in the region of Baalbek-Hermel only 7.6%. The south of the country shows that in the Nabatiye region 12.2% of the population are illiterates, while in the rest of southern Lebanon only 8.4%. In the north, though, in the region of Akkar we see that 18.2% of the population are illiterates, while in the remaining northern region the 11.2% of the population are illiterates.

It would have been interesting here to do a longitudinal study at the province level, instead that at the regional level, to see changes over time; however, the data is not sufficient enough to do this. While talking about our case study, we said that, in 1958, 79% of the Shia were illiterates, 59% of the Sunni, 51% of the Druze, 50% of the Greek Orthodox, and 42% of the Maronites (Kliot, 1987, p. 58). We see that the percent of illiterate population strongly decreased for all groups between 1958 and 2009. However, it seems that the Beqaa Valley and the South have been able to reduce the gap with the core regions and even reach lower percentages of illiterate population compared to the regions of Beirut and Mount Lebanon; while the most problematic situation remains in the northern region of Akkar, where 30% of the total population lives with less than 3.5 million LBN per year. This overlap of difficult socio-economic indicators shows how the region of Akkar seems today almost *falling out* of the State. These factors, combined with the high presence of refugees, informal settlements, and radical Islamic groups, have been causing various waves of armed conflicts, either between these groups and the Lebanese Army or in the last 5 years (2011-2016) in which these radical Islamic

groups formed terrorist organizations that joined the ranks of the terrorists in the war in Syria. In particular, if we look more in detail on this last issue of refugees, we can try to visualize data on the informal settlements developed in the last 5 years by Syrian refugees in various areas of Lebanon.



**Figure 12:** Distribution of informal settlements and identification of clusters.

On the left, we see the distribution and dimension, in terms of population, of each settlement. There are small settlements that group one or few families together, and larger settlements that host up to 1,150 people. Starting from this initial look, I decided to find where there are clusters, based on amount of population and distance from one another. If we look at the map to the right, we can see that the most dense clusters are close to the eastern and northern border with Syria, close to Zahle, Arsel, Qaa, and Arida. The three major clusters of Zahle, Qaa and Arida are in proximity to the respective official border crossings with Syria,

Masna towards Damascus, Qaa towards Qsayr and Homs, and Arida towards Tartus and Latakia. The cluster in Arsel, instead, developed outside the direct control of the UNHCR and it is on the ranges of the Qalamoun mountains that have multiple ways in and out of Syria that are not controlled by the State. This way, in August of 2014, various terrorist organizations, mostly Jabhat al Nusra (Al Qaeda branch in Syria) and ISIS, have been able to infiltrate to Lebanon and occupy the city of Arsel and its outskirts, killing approximately 20 soldiers and kidnapping close to 40 members of the Lebanese security forces (Army and Police combined).

Both the way in which the question of the refugees and the crisis in Arsel have been addressed show how the core-periphery relation is still strongly disadvantaging the periphery. While the Israeli occupation was viewed as an issue of the south, the refugee question is addressed as an issue of the areas at the border with Syria and, even in front of a direct attack to the institutions of Lebanon in Arsel, the central government has been unable to respond to the crisis in a united way and, ultimately, remained mostly quiescent. Similarly to the liberation of the south, also in this case, it was the Lebanese Resistance of Hezbollah that cleared the Qalamoun mountains from the terrorists of ISIS and Jabhat al Nusra and still to these days defends the border areas that go from Britel (mostly Shia) to Ras Baalbek and Qaa (mostly Christian), with the combined support of the local Christian and Shia population.

Looking back to the set of quantitative data that was gathered, we can also see that the UNDP 2004 data on mortality rate shows important numbers that confirm a core-periphery relation. Both infant mortality rate (under 1 year old) and child mortality rate (under the age of 5) are twice as high in the Beqaa valley than in Beirut and Mount Lebanon. The data is also worrying for northern Lebanon; while in southern Lebanon both rates are higher than the core of the country, but they are considerably lower than the east and the north of Lebanon.

The already precarious socio-economic situation at the periphery of the State is further complicated by the presence of refugees. The UN-LCRP data for 2015 shows a total population

of 4,028,617 Lebanese citizens and a total of 1,721,361 refugees, which means that today Lebanon is hosting a population of refugees as large as the 42.7% of its own population. Of these refugees, 321,362 are Palestinian refugees, which include people that left Palestine in 1948, 1967 or a later period; while 1,399,999 are Syrian refugees that arrived in Lebanon in the last five years because of the ongoing war in Syria.

The distribution of refugees is not homogeneous throughout Lebanon. The Beqaa valley is the area that is hosting the largest amount of refugees. If we sum the numbers for the whole valley, including the region of Baalbek-Hermel, we see that in 2015 there were 552,152 Lebanese citizens and a total of 548,576 refugees (Palestinian and Syrian combined), which means that the refugees are equal to the 99.3% of the total population of the area. If we split the whole valley in the two regions (Mohafadha) used by the State, we see that in the area of Baalbek-Hermel, the refugees are equal to 66.8% of the local population, while in the rest of the valley they outnumber local residents, adding a 131.1% of people to the existing population. Lower numbers are registered in other areas of Lebanon, however, the situation remains more problematic in the Beqaa valley. The InterAgency Mapping Platform (IAMP) of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has identified 3,758 informal settlements throughout Lebanon, 2,467 of which (65.6% of the total) are in the Beqaa valley; while, for instance, only 87 (2.3% of the total) are in Mount Lebanon.

Another important set of data is represented by the Census of Buildings, Dwellings and Establishments done in 2004 by CAS. Using data at the province level, we can calculate the population density, which shows us the impact of the major urban agglomerations, like the capital Beirut, Tripoli, Aley, Saida, Zahle, Nabatiye, and Akkar, but also dense provinces like Baabda, Meten, and Kesrwan. To population density, we can add also the density of urbanized soil, meant as the number of constructions per square kilometer, and see that Beirut is by far the most densely populated and urbanized urban area, followed by Tripoli, Baabda, Meten,

Jezzine, and Saida. Furthermore, looking at the data regarding the year of construction within the 2004 Census of Buildings, we can see that the vast majority of constructions built before 1950 are concentrated in the areas of Beirut, Batroun, Metn and Baabda, while the highest number of buildings developed between 1951 and 1993 are concentrated in Baalbek and Akkar, and finally the largest amount of constructions after 1994 seems to be concentrated again in Akkar, Baalbek and Tyre.

Other data from the Building Census regard the presence of an electricity generator within the buildings, the attachment to the water network, and to the sewage system. Data on electricity shows a difficult situation for the vast majority of provinces throughout the country. Beside the area of Jbeil and Kesrwane, where only 35% and 43% of the buildings do not have an electricity generator, the situation of the rest of the provinces seems very complicated. In Metn up to 53% of the buildings do not have an electricity generator, in Rachaya 68% of the buildings, in Beirut 82%, while in all the other provinces more than 90% of the buildings do not have electricity generator. This means that anytime there are cuts to the State-run electricity, households need to buy the electricity from either private companies or neighbors who have a generator. In Beirut, the electricity provided by the government is cut only for 3 hours a day, while in other areas it is cut for 12 hours a day. It is interesting to connect to this also the data on weekly internet use from UNDP 2004, that shows that in the two regions of the core, Beirut and Mount Lebanon, the median time spent online is respectively 17 and 12 hours per week; while in the Beqaa Valley is 9.4 hours, in the South approximately 8.2 hours, and in the North only 5.4 hours.

As far as attachment to the water network, in the provinces of Bcharre, Akkar, and Mnih-Dennie, respectively 70%, 58%, and 46% of the buildings do not have attachment to the water network; while the situation is better in the provinces of Kesrwane and Metn where only 2% of the buildings are not attached to the water network, and also in various provinces of

southern Lebanon, like Jezzine, Marjayoun, Nabatiye, Hasbaya, and Bint Jbeil, were only 3 to 4 percent of the buildings are not attached to the water network.

Then, if we look at the sewage system, only the provinces of Beirut, Tripoli, and Baabda show a percent of buildings not attached to the sewage system lower than 10% (4% Beirut, and 9% both for Tripoli and Baabda). Otherwise, in 12 out of 26 provinces more than 50% of the buildings are not attached to the sewage system, and in the provinces of Batroun, Bint Jbeil, and Jbeil more than 90% of the buildings are not attached to the sewage system (90% in Jbeil, 96% in Bint Jbeil, and 99% in Batroun).

Lastly, if we look at the level of home ownership, we see that everywhere in Lebanon more than 50% of the population owns the property where it lives. The lowest home ownership rate are registered in provinces that host main urban centers, like Beirut, Baabda, and Tripoli (55% in Beirut, 68% in Baabda, and 71% in Tripoli); while home ownership rate is higher in rural provinces at the periphery of the State, for instance, in Bsharre, Hermel, Baalbek, and Bint Jbeil where home ownership reaches 99%.

In conclusion, the analysis of the existing quantitative data gives us an idea of the main issues and characteristics of different regions and provinces at the core and periphery of the State and common features that characterize Lebanon in its entirety. Within the research design that I decided to use, the qualitative dataset and existing literature helped to explain, support, and build upon these initial results in order to provide us with a better understanding of the situation on the ground.

### 1.6.2. Qualitative Analysis

The descriptive analysis of the quantitative data showed us some geographic patterns in relation to the distribution of the population, density and quality of urbanization, and main socio-economic issues. The literature and the case study help us explain some of the data, while here the analysis of the qualitative data is meant to build on those initial results and to focus on our three main research questions, which try to examine the effects of ethnocracy on 1) the development of public policies; 2) the urban environment; and 3) the civil society; but also to examine the existing room for reform of the system.

#### 1.6.2.1. Coding

While explaining the differences between grounded theory and coding, Glaser and Laudel<sup>130</sup> argue that grounded theory methodology is aimed at the construction of theory through the analysis of data, where the review of the data can make emerge repeated “*ideas*” and concepts that are, then, tagged with “*codes*”, which are grouped into “*concepts*”, and lastly into “*categories*”, which become the basis for a theory (pp. 9-14). The authors quote Glaser and Strauss<sup>131</sup> that say that grounded theory was originally required “*literally to ignore the literature of theory and fact on the area under study, in order to assure that the emergence of categories will not be contaminated*” (p. 37; cit. in Glaser, Laudel, 2013, p. 10).

The main difference with coding outside of grounded theory methodology seems to be that we have a level of “*theoretical sensitivity*”. The fact itself that the work tries to apply ethnocratic regime theory to the case of Lebanon shows that we are utilizing an already existing theoretical framework. However, aware of a discrete level of theoretical sensitivity, the coding

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<sup>130</sup> J. Glaser, G. Laudel, 2013, *Life With and Without Coding: Two Methods for Early-Stage Data Analysis in Qualitative Research Aiming at Causal Explanations*, FQS, Vol. 14, no. 3, Art. 5, pp. 1-37.

<sup>131</sup> B.G. Glaser, A.L. Strauss, 1967, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Aldine, Chicago, IL.

process remained as much as possible an “open coding”, where theory was engaged but room was left for understanding possibly new concepts and categories; even if I did not use a grounded-theory approach.

After transcribing the interviews, I used ATLAS.ti and did two rounds of coding, which is the average standard for this kind of research. During the first phase, I created four code groups (Public Policies, Urban Environment, Civil Society, and Political Reform) aimed at focusing on the three research questions and on the ways in which the participants answered regarding the possibilities for political reform. Then, I created a “start list” of simple and general codes for each group, drawing concepts from the literature, but also adding points that I believed were relevant.

Code Group		Name			
<div> <div> <div></div> <div>Civil Society</div> <div>3</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div>Political Reform</div> <div>0</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div>Public Policies</div> <div>6</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div>Urban Environment</div> <div>5</div> </div> <div>4 Group(s)</div> </div>		<b>Civil Society (3)</b> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Informal networks</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Social fragmentation</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Urban and territorial stigmatization</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div>			
		<b>Public Policies (6)</b> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Geography of the past</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Housing market regulations</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Local planning policies</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>National planning policies</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Politics of citizenship</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Privatization of key resources</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div>			
		<b>Urban Environment (5)</b> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Core-periphery relation</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>National marginalization</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Process of securitization</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Urban peripheries-turned-frontiers</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Urban segregation</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>1</div> </div>			
		<b>No code group</b> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Census</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Electoral Law</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div></div> <div>Rules of Ethno-Religious Affiliation</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> <div>0</div> </div>			
		<b>Result: 17 of 17 Code(s)</b>			

**Figure 13:** The image above shows the initial phase of the coding, at the beginning of the first cycle of coding.



During the first phase of coding, ideas and concepts emerged from the texts and, for this reason, a second round of coding was necessary in order to refine the process of data segmentation and add new codes.

In most cases, I used “*descriptive codes*” and “*value codes*”, avoiding “*in vivo codes*”. Especially during the second cycle of coding, the use of “*simultaneous coding*” was particularly useful to enrich the role of segmented text that was relevant from multiple points of view.

The results (see Figure 14) show that some interesting concepts derived from the literature did not emerge enough or at all from the interviews. For instance, “*geography of the past*” is an interesting concept briefly explained by Ghandour (2006) in his article entitled “*On Cities and Designers: a Baalbeck Story*”. However, probably for my lack of knowledge of specific policies implemented over the years and the lack of knowledge on the side of the participants that I interviewed on this specific topic, I was not able to gather enough information to expand existing literature, though, I think that a research focused on this topic and based on interviews with actors that work in the field of historic preservation can provide interesting insights on public policies aimed at giving a predominant importance to pre-Islamic archeological and architectural heritage, in order to support the idea of pre-existing, unique, and distinctive characteristics of Lebanon within the Arab world, which is what Ghandour suggests by “*geography of the past*”.

In other cases, a wider set of interviews might have helped expand the work on specific codes, however, time limits of a field-research aimed at the development of a dissertation and limits in finding more *expert* participants played an important role in the determination of a necessary end date for data collection.

Overall, one of the main limitations of the work is that, while I was able to interview inhabitants from all regions of Lebanon, it was difficult to approach scholars, politicians and planners from all different components of the Lebanese society. The politicians that I was able

Code Group		Name			
◇ Civil Society	5	<b>Civil Society (5)</b>			
◇ Political Reform	4	◇ ● Activism	<div><div></div></div> 3	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
◇ Public Policies	9	◇ ● Informal networks	<div><div></div></div> 0	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
◇ Urban Environment	7	◇ ● Perception of the State	<div><div></div></div> 66	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
4 Group(s)		◇ ● Social fragmentation	<div><div></div></div> 17	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Urban and territorial stigmatization	<div><div></div></div> 11	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		<b>Political Reform (4)</b>			
		◇ ● Census	<div><div></div></div> 26	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Electoral Law	<div><div></div></div> 19	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Requirements for improvement	<div><div></div></div> 42	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Rules of Ethno-Religious Affiliation	<div><div></div></div> 61	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		<b>Public Policies (9)</b>			
		◇ ● Best practices	<div><div></div></div> 9	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Funding	<div><div></div></div> 14	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Geography of the past	<div><div></div></div> 1	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Geopolitics	<div><div></div></div> 35	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Housing market regulations	<div><div></div></div> 0	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Local planning policies and projects	<div><div></div></div> 62	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● National planning policies and projects	<div><div></div></div> 14	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Politics of citizenship	<div><div></div></div> 6	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Privatization of key resources	<div><div></div></div> 2	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		<b>Urban Environment (7)</b>			
		◇ ● Core-periphery relation	<div><div></div></div> 44	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● National marginalization	<div><div></div></div> 11	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Process of securitization	<div><div></div></div> 1	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Regional Issues	<div><div></div></div> 45	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Urban Issues	<div><div></div></div> 19	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Urban peripheries-turned-frontiers	<div><div></div></div> 0	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		◇ ● Urban segregation	<div><div></div></div> 0	<div><div></div></div> 0	1
		<b>Result: 25 of 25 Code(s)</b>			

**Figure 14:** The image above shows the results towards the end of the second cycle of coding.

to interview were the ones that were kind enough to respond and dedicate part of their time to my work. However, I was not able to reach politicians from all political parties. Also in the case of scholars, I found resistance to be interviewed and I found it interesting that the unwillingness to participate was due in some cases to the application of ethnocratic regime theory to the case of Lebanon.

Lastly, in the case of planners and professionals, snowball sampling did not always provide the expected positive results, also because the profession of *urban planner* in Lebanon has not yet achieved a stable and clear status, as it is in the US: it remains a fuzzy profession at the interstices of civil engineering and architecture.

## **PART 2**

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### **THE LEBANESE ETHNOCRATIC REGIME: STRUCTURE AND EVOLUTION**

### **2.1. Early Formation and Structure of the Ethnocratic Regime**

*"Par structure, les observateurs du social entendent une organisation, une cohérence, des rapports assez fixes entre réalités et masses sociales. Pour nous, historiens, une structure est sans doute assemblage, architecture, mais plus encore une réalité que le temps use mal et véhicule très longuement. Certaines structures, à vivre longtemps, deviennent des éléments stables d'une infinité de générations: elles encombrement l'histoire, en gênent, donc en commandent l'écoulement. D'autres sont plus promptes à s'effriter. Mais toutes sont à la fois soutiens et obstacles"*

Fernand Braudel, 1958,  
*Histoire et Sciences sociales: La longue durée*, p. 731.

### 2.1.1. Pre-1918 conditions and main features

As I mentioned earlier, the understanding of the Lebanese situation is particularly complex because it is difficult to find a point of departure to explain the development of specific processes. This is so because some phenomena were already in place before the creation of Greater Lebanon and were, then, fortified and consolidated by the State, but other phenomena were spurred by the very formation of the new political and institutional framework, and there is an overall continuation and overlap between the two.

The end of the First World War and the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1918 certainly marked a fundamental gateway towards a reorganization of the Arab lands in the Near East. However, as far as Lebanon is concerned, there are some peculiar conditions and features that were already in place.

During the four centuries of Ottoman domination (1516-1918), the area of Mount Lebanon had been able to maintain a status of relative autonomy within what was called "*geographical Syria*"<sup>132</sup> (see Figure 15).

Within this large geographical entity, from 1789 to 1840, Amir Bashir of the Shihabi family was able to rule the "*Mountain*" as a sort of "*independent monarch*" (Hourani, 1946, p. 27). Although the area of Mount Lebanon enjoyed a long period of semi-autonomy, different waves of armed conflict emerged on several occasions. In fact, the long government of Amir Bashir was followed by a first civil war in 1841 and a second conflict in 1845. These conflicts saw as principal antagonistic forces the Druzes and the Christian Maronites.

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<sup>132</sup> Geographical Syria includes modern Israel/Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan, see: A.H. Hourani, 1946, p. 8.

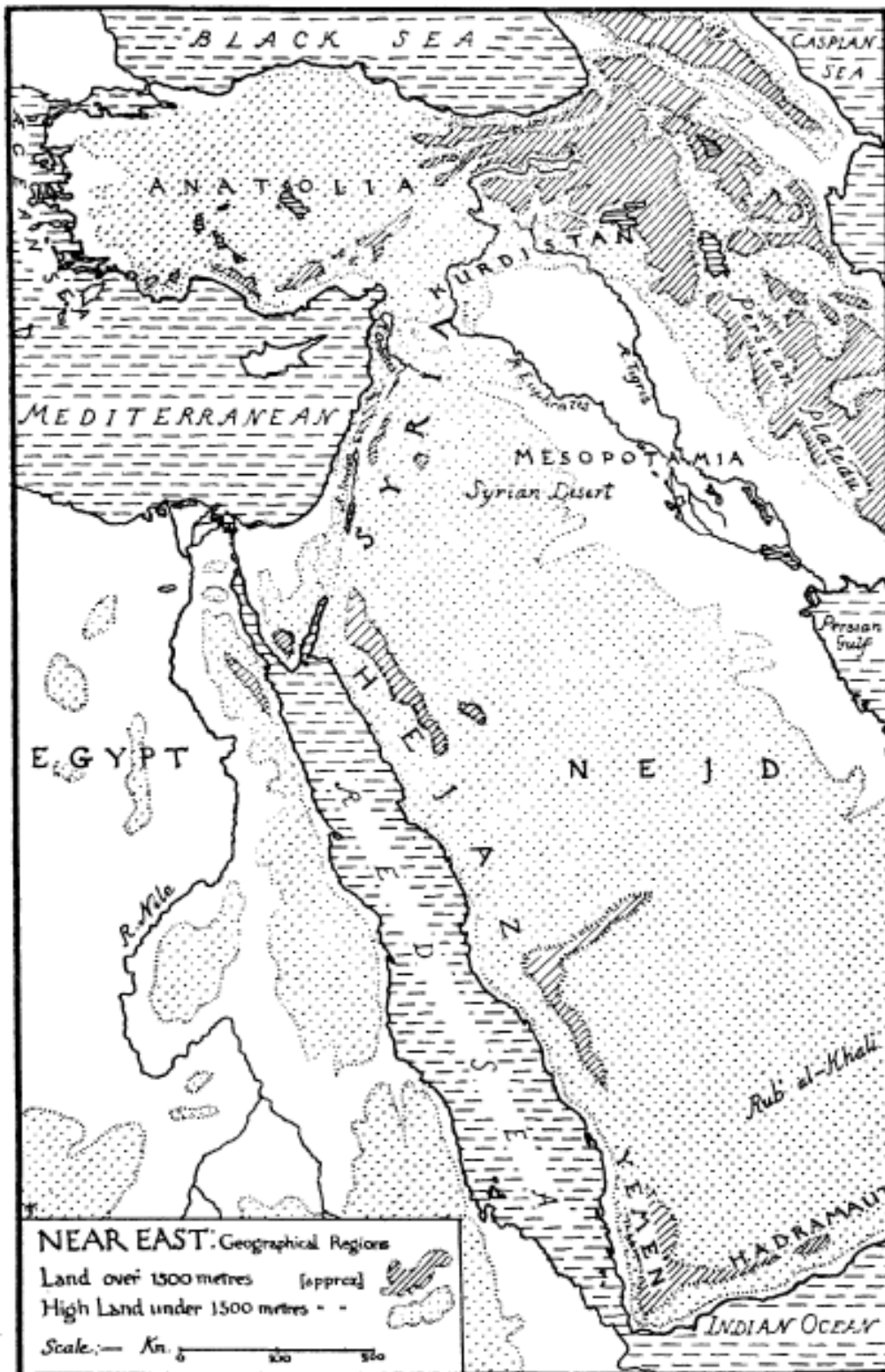


Figure 15: Main geographical regions of the Near East. Source: Hourani, 1946, p. 7.

The Druzes were mainly represented by landlords and owners of large agricultural lands, while the Maronites were mostly rural peasants. The struggle between them continued to the point that in 1860 the Druzes killed thousands of Christians in various parts of Lebanon and Syria. It is reported that in only one day in Damascus, 12,000 Christians were killed<sup>133</sup>.

It is to face these issues of instability that the central government of the Ottoman Empire decided to parcel the territory of geographical Syria into various and smaller administrative entities: *"the country was divided into the Vilayets of Damascus and Aleppo; subsequently a separate Vilayet of Beirut was created. A Sanjak of Jerusalem and a Mutassarifat of Dair az-Zur"* (Hourani, 1946, p. 31), and the following year Mount Lebanon became a semi-autonomous *"sanjak"* organized according to the tenets of the *"Règlement Organique"*, which envisioned the creation of a council with proportional representation given to each ethno-religious group (Norton, 1987, p. 6) and the government of the new semi-autonomous political entity was to be *"administered by a Christian Ottoman governor appointed by the Ottoman Government with the consent of the Powers, and directly responsible to it"*<sup>134</sup>.

The restructuring of the administrative boundaries of the area represented a phenomenon with wide social, political, and economic repercussions. Furthermore, the fact that it was a foreign-led process set an important geopolitical precedent that will strongly characterize the life of the country until our days. The Lebanese economist, Toufik Gaspard, explains well how the political decisions taken in 1861 caused a comprehensive change in all sectors of society. As he says that:

*"a new administrative system was established in 1861 at the recommendation of an international commission composed of France, Britain, Austria, Prussia and the Ottoman Empire. Mount Lebanon then had less than half the area of Lebanon today, and a population estimated at 380,000 in 1867. It was to be administered by a non-*

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<sup>133</sup> K. Salibi, 1988, p. 138.

<sup>134</sup> A.H. Hourani, 1946, p. 32.

*Lebanese Christian governor, assisted by an administrative council of members chosen by the heads of each religious community. This event marked an important turning point in the social and political history of Lebanon, for it represented a break with the previous feudal system of social administration in as much as it illustrated the rise of administrative, and hence political and economic, privilege of a new group of people who previously did not possess any feudal right or privilege" (Gaspard, 2004, p. 44).*

Furthermore, we should add that the establishment of this semi-autonomous entity, with a particular form of political structure based on the distribution of power according to ethno-religious affiliation, represented the first structural element that would later constitute the foundation of the ethnocratic regime.

Additionally, this change in the organization of the territory was not only political, but it influenced rapidly the population of Mount Lebanon also from a cultural and social standpoint.

In fact, on one side, European powers started to set alliances in anticipation of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire<sup>135</sup>, while, on the other, the second half of the twentieth century saw also a period of prosperity in Lebanon, characterized by the creation of important universities such as the Protestant American University of Beirut (AUB) in 1866 and the Jesuit Université de S. Joseph in 1875. It is in this period that the Christian Maronites, from being mostly peasants in constant struggle with the Druze elite, became themselves an elite. In these years numerous newspapers and periodicals started to be printed in Beirut and, most importantly, as Hourani explains:

*"around the mission-schools in Beirut gathered a group of Syrian writers, most of them Christians, who set themselves to evolve a modern Arabic idiom and style suitable for the expression of Western ideas, and to use the instrument thus created to familiarize the Arabs with the civilization of Europe and to render them conscious of their own problems"<sup>136</sup>.*

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<sup>135</sup> For instance, France built connections with the Maronites, Russia with the Greek Orthodox, Great Britain with the Druzes, and later on Germany with Iraq, and started to build the Berlin-Baghdad railway.

<sup>136</sup> A.H. Hourani, 1946, p. 36.



Through the access to Western education systems, the knowledge of multiple languages, and the considerable remittances coming from the first wave of migrants in the US, Europe, and Australia (Hourani, 1946; and Gualtieri, 2009), the Christian Maronites were able to become the real social, economic, and cultural elite of the country. Fundamental to this process was the city of Beirut.

Multiple concurrent factors created a situation in which Lebanon became *"a commercial and intellectual center in the region and a reasonably literate population became readily available for capitalist expansion"* (Gaspard, 2004, p. 46). Indeed, the second half of the nineteenth century saw also a period of relative prosperity that shows us how the actual appearance of a complex set of political, economic, social and cultural relationships with a European colonial power, which is what Balandier defines as a *"colonial situation"*<sup>137</sup>, preceded the creation of the State. From this point of view, the dichotomy colonizer-colonized was rapidly complicated by the existence of a strong and powerful local elite operating as an *"intermediary"* actor. In more detail, the French sociologist, George Balandier, in his famous article of 1951, explains how *"colonialism, in establishing itself, imposed on subject peoples a very special type of situation [that] not only conditioned the reactions of 'dependent' peoples, but is still responsible for certain reactions of peoples recently emancipated"* (Balandier, 1951, p. 23).

Furthermore, Balandier adds that *"whether currently present or in process of liquidation, this situation involves specific problems"* from three main points of view: 1) problems for the *"conquered people"*; 2) problems for the *"administration representing the so-called protective power (which also defends that power's local interests)"*; and 3) problems for the *"newly-created state on which still rests the burden of colonial liabilities"* (pp. 23-24).

The American political scientist, Walker Connor, showed how *"nation-formation is a process, not an occurrence or event"* (Connor, 2004, p. 42). From this perspective, the process of

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<sup>137</sup> Balandier, 1951.

nation-formation among the elite of Lebanon was strongly influenced by its relationship with the French colonial power and by the “colonial situation” that characterized the development of ideas in that period. We can say that the ethno-religious and economic elite, that was co-opted by the French, progressively assumed the position of “intermediary” actor between the colonizers and the colonized and the process of nation-formation that it envisioned for itself shows us strong symptoms of what we can identify as a sort of “colonial Stockholm syndrome” .

Another aspect that deserves to be taken into account is also the emergence of Arab National Movements. The progressively stronger connection of the educated elite with the European culture brought into being a process that the Indian post-colonial theorist, Homi Bhabha, would call of “self-identification” and “mimicry”<sup>138</sup>. In particular, Bhabha describes this process as follows:

*“colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a 'subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite'. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an 'ambivalence'; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. The authority of that mode of colonial discourse that I have called mimicry is therefore stricken by an indeterminacy: mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal. Mimicry is, thus, the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation, and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power”<sup>139</sup>.*

Indeed, the simultaneous cultural and political inspiration provided by the process of state-formation, that characterized Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century, is at the basis of the emergence of various Arab National Movements that began to ask full rights, decentralization, and administrative reforms within the Ottoman Empire. This process is seen by some scholars as the final and concrete sign of the long-awaited “Arab awakening” (Antonius 1938). Regardless of how much spontaneous or foreign-led was this process, what we need to

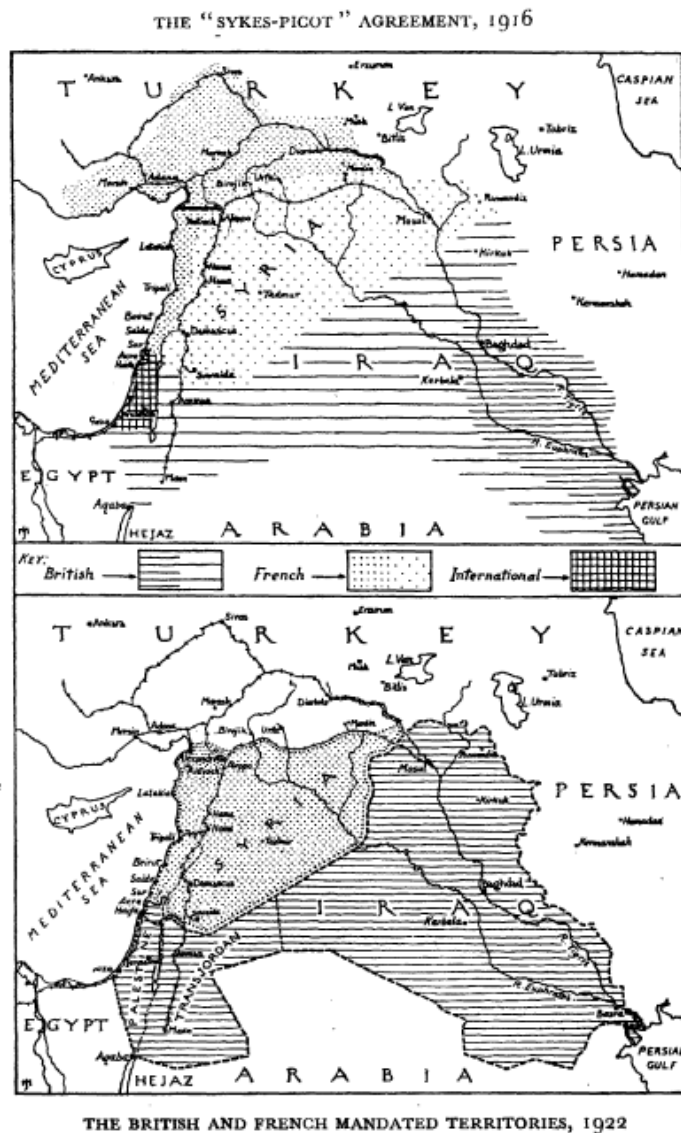
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<sup>138</sup> H. Bhabha, 1984, *Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse*, *Discipleship: A Special Issue on Psychoanalysis*, Vol. 28, pp. 125-133.

<sup>139</sup> H. Bhabha, 1984, p. 126.

observe is that such "awakening" was rapidly captured in a series of "pledges and counter-pledges" (Antonius, 1938, pp. 243-275), in which Arab leaders were promised independence in exchange for collaboration in the First World War against the Ottomans.

However, the disclosure of the secret Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916, that split geographical Syria between France and Great Britain, and the Balfour Declaration, were the first signs of the imminent betrayal of the Arab expectations (see image below).



**Figure 16:** Partition of Geographical Syria into different areas of influence, first, with the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and, later, with the British and French Mandates. Source: Hourani, 1946, p. 45.

In the meantime, the elite that was formed in the second half of the nineteenth century, had to face two conflicting perceptions of the historicity of the country. While the Arab movements saw Lebanon as a natural component of a broader Arab nation; the cultural and economic elite that emerged in the area of Mount Lebanon and Beirut posed the question of Lebanon particularism, rooted in what Hourani calls *"the ideology of the mountain"* (Hourani, 1976). What stands out is that this elite was, at the same time, economic, insofar as representing the upper classes, but it was also ethno-religious because it included predominantly Christian Maronites and Sunni Muslims. In particular, Hourani argues that the *"ideology of the mountain"* emerged from the *"broadening agreement between political elites, each of which controlled its community in its own way and in the name of its own political ideology"* (Hourani, 1976, p. 35).

The reorganization of geographical Syria, the tenets of the *"Règlement Organique"* governing Mount Lebanon as a semi-autonomous *"sanjak"* with the creation of a council with proportional representation based on ethno-religious affiliation, the emergence of an economic and cultural elite through a process of *"colonial mimicry"*, and the development of the so-called *"ideology of the mountain"*, are all together fundamental pre-1918 conditions and features that will strongly characterize the political, social, and cultural geography of Lebanon in the following decades.

### 2.1.2. Different national projects at the Paris Peace Conference

The end of the First World War brought an end to ancient empires, such as the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the heart of Europe, and the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East. The Paris Peace Conference of 1920 was meant to set the basis for the future of those areas. However, in the case of Lebanon, two foundational issues emerged: 1) the contested historicity of the country; and 2) its problematic "*right-shaping*".

As far as the historicity of the country, we can find that the area that is now called Lebanon is commonly described as an "*oasis*". In particular, the main idea is that the peculiar mountainous geography that characterizes the country helped various minorities of the Middle East to find protection and security from various waves of persecutions. During the four centuries of the Ottoman Empire (1516-1918), both Christians and Muslim minorities faced persecutions, either directly from the Sunni establishment of the Empire or from the majority of the population that lived within the area that goes from modern Turkey to the Arabian Peninsula. For this reason, some authors believe that the mountainous chains of Lebanon represented a refuge from persecutions.

The idea of the "*oasis*" is also presented by Hourani when he speaks about the long period that preceded the creation of the semi-autonomous *sanjak* of 1861. However, it is interesting to notice how different historians disagree both on the particularity of Mount Lebanon and on the idea of it being a "*safe haven*" for minorities. In fact, while Hourani calls it an "*oasis*", Kamal Salibi argues extensively against the idea of "*the mountain refuge*" or "*asile du Liban*". He argues that, even if the idea of Lebanon as a Syrian mountain refuge may appear historically plausible and highly seductive, the idea of the "*asile du Liban*" is historically inaccurate<sup>140</sup>. The strongest

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<sup>140</sup> K. Salibi, 1988, *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, CA, p. 136.

argument that Salibi builds is that for a proposition that presents Lebanon as a safe haven for the persecuted populations of Syria (i.e. Christians, Druzes, and Shia) to be true, it means that the various authorities in power in Istanbul did not have full control of the area, while, according to Salibi, that was never the case. Either-or, what we have to notice is that Lebanon hosts today eighteen different ethno-religious groups, most of which are minorities, if we consider the broader Middle East. Furthermore, such a highly mixed social setting is unique of this region, while other areas of the Middle East show the presence of one clear majority.

In any way, the disagreement between different historians is interesting because it is symptomatic of the general discord over the *historicity* of the country. This can give contemporary scholars the will to dig more in depth to understand the situation and, more importantly, to see how different perceptions of the historicity of the country - being true or untrue, plausible or implausible, accurate or inaccurate - affected the political and social behaviour of key actors in the twentieth century and still nowadays.

What is true is that two contrasting perceptions of the historicity of the country emerged: on one side, part of the population, mainly guided by the Christian Maronites, that perceived Lebanon as an area detached from the Arab world and that should have its own form of government; on the other, a second group of people, mostly Muslims, that perceived Lebanon as an integral part of the Arab world and, hence, aspired to the creation of a larger political entity. We can see two opposing visions for the future of the area: the elite that, through the "*ideology of the mountain*", developed a form of nationalism that is commonly identified as "*Lebanon particularism*" or "*Lebanonism*"; and the broader masses that, through the so-called "*Arab awakening*", started to focus on a wider idea of Arab nationalism.

Syria :	Province of Damascus .. ..	531,267
	„ „ Aleppo .. ..	752,196
	„ „ Homs .. ..	182,312
	„ „ Hama .. ..	137,882
	„ „ the Hauran .. ..	108,603
	„ „ the Euphrates .. ..	218,667
	„ „ the Jazirah .. ..	103,514
	„ „ Latakia .. ..	371,880
	„ „ Jebel Druze .. ..	70,706
	Total .. ..	2,477,027 <sup>1</sup>
Lebanon :	Province of Beirut .. ..	232,000
	„ „ Mount Lebanon .. ..	278,000
	„ „ Northern Lebanon .. ..	241,000
	„ „ Southern Lebanon .. ..	198,000
	„ „ the Biqa' .. ..	167,000
	Total .. ..	1,116,000 <sup>2</sup>

**Figure 17:** the figures above show the total demographic distribution of the population in all regions of Syria and Lebanon. Source: Hourani, 1946, p. 85.

Community		Syria <sup>1</sup>	Lebanon <sup>2</sup>	Total
A. Moslems, and post-Islamic sects	1. Sunnis .. ..	1,737,402	175,925	1,913,327
	2. Shi'is .. ..	11,541	154,208	165,749
	3. Druzes .. ..	79,428	53,047	132,475
	4. Alawis .. ..	274,486	—	274,486
	5. Isma'ilis .. ..	24,390	—	24,390
	Total .. ..	2,127,247	383,180	2,510,427
B. Christians	1. Maronites .. ..	11,800	226,378	238,178
	2. Roman Catholics of the Latin rite .. ..	4,750	—	4,750
	3. Greek Orthodox .. ..	115,118	76,522	191,640
	4. Greek Catholics .. ..	42,427	45,999	88,426
	5. Syrian Orthodox (Jacobites) .. ..	32,892	2,574	35,466
	6. Syrian Catholics .. ..	14,182	2,675	16,857
	7. Armenian Orthodox (Gregorians) .. ..	86,742	25,462	112,204
	8. Armenian Catholics .. ..	12,137	5,694	17,831
	9. Assyrians and Chaldean Catholics .. ..	3,759	528	4,287
	10. Protestants .. ..	7,660	6,712	14,372
	Total .. ..	331,467	392,544	724,011
C. Jews .. ..		26,250	3,518	29,768
D. Miscellaneous .. ..		2,063	6,301	8,364
	Total .. ..	2,487,027	785,543	3,272,570

<sup>1</sup> Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Rapport*, 1938, pp. 220-1.

<sup>2</sup> Census of 1932. See S. B. Himadeh, *Economic Organization of Syria* (Beirut, 1936), pp. 408-9. These figures are now out of date, but are given here because they are more detailed than any published more recently. An official estimate for 1943 gives the following figures:—Sunnis 222,594, Shi'is 200,698, Druzes 71,711, Maronites 318,201, Greek Orthodox 106,658, Greek Catholics 61,956, Armenian Orthodox 58,007, Minorities 6,596—Total 1,046,421.

**Figure 18:** this additional graphic shows the distribution of the population of Lebanon and Syria among seventeen ethno-religious groups that live in the region. Among them, we see five internal denominations as Muslims, ten internal denominations as Christians, one as Jews and a last one as miscellaneous. If we look at the numbers, we can see how the Maronites have a consistent presence in Lebanon, which is something that makes also the country unique in the panorama of the Middle East. Source: Hourani, 1946, p. 121.

The Arab National Movements, supporting the latter vision, were also those groups that were co-opted by European powers in their fight against the Ottoman Empire, hoping to obtain a large and independent Arab State. However, the hopes of such movements were not met at the Paris Peace Conference of 1920, where the European powers decided to create Greater Lebanon as a separate entity from geographical Syria. This fact, put an end to the Arab aspirations of unity and independence and, from four centuries of Ottoman domination, the Arab awakening remained an unfinished project; at the same time, an unfinished project of modernity and independence.

Roger Owen explains that the reasons for the detachment of Lebanon from geographical Syria are many and they relate both to the importance of the core of the country, but also to a specific economic vision. As he says:

*"by splitting off Grand Liban from its natural hinterland the French not only confirmed the financial and commercial hegemony of Beirut over the Mountain, but also strengthened a pattern of economic activity in which agriculture and industry had become more and more subordinate to banking and trade"<sup>141</sup>.*

This way, the different national projects emerged in the previous years found a consolidation in the preference given to the project supported by the elite. Thus, the creation of the State gave the elite an undisputed hegemony over the country. In fact, the elite of the mountain was able to demand from the French a territory even larger than Mount Lebanon, including not only Beirut and the coast, but also the southern region of Jabal 'Amil and the eastern region of the Beqaa valley, two rural areas mostly inhabited by Shia Muslims. Ultimately, we can say that the establishment of Greater Lebanon as a separate entity from

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<sup>141</sup> R. Owen, 1976, *The political economy of the Grand Liban, 1920-1970*, p. 24, in R. Owen (ed.), 1976, *Essays on the crisis in Lebanon*, Ithaca Press, London, UK. Also quoted in F. Traboulsi, 2007, *A history of modern Lebanon*, Pluto Press, London and Ann Arbor, p. 88.



geographical Syria did not emerge from popular demands and needs, nor was it meant to create a democratic structure for a broad socio-political participation: the 1920 Paris Peace Conference represented the heyday of an *hegemonic moment*, in which a minoritarian elite was able to claim its sovereignty over a territory destined to be moulded at its own image and likeness.

Through this process, the elite progressively replaced the French colonial power, and perpetuated a colonial situation. This *original sin*, on one side, included Jabal 'Amil and the Beqaa valley as buffer zones in which minority groups, such as the Shia, were included only through their physical exclusion and territorial marginalization at the farthest outskirts of the State; while, on the other side, it put an end to the Arab aspirations of unity.

As we briefly mentioned before, Žižek argues that the *"illegitimate origins of power"*, or the *"founding crime"* of a State, need to be obliterated by offering *"noble lies"* (Žižek, 2008, p. 116). In the case of Lebanon, the process of legitimation passed through the problematic *"right-shaping"* of the country. If we interpret *"right-sizing"* as the process through which a State defines its own borders (O'Leary, Lustick, 2002; and Yiftachel, 2002), the inclusion of areas inhabited by a different ethno-religious group posed serious demographic issues to the State. Similarly, the process of *"right-shaping"*, indicating the attitude and policies toward peripheral groups (Yiftachel 2002: 358), did not obliterate the *"founding crime"*.

The set of policies that represents the most the goal of *"right-shaping"* of the State is explained by Rania Maktabi as *"politics of citizenship"*, which refer to the policies behind the 1921 and 1932 censuses. These policies were meant to provide citizenship to the thousands of emigrants that left geographical Syria in the second half of the nineteenth century for the US, Europe and Australia, and also to the Christian refugees from various parts of the Ottoman Empire (i.e. Armenians, Assyrians, Greek Orthodox, etc.); while part of the Muslim population already living in Lebanon was denied the right to citizenship. In the census of 1921, out of a total population of 710,562 inhabitants, the author shows that the 18.4% (130,784) (Maktabi, 1997,

p. 165) was made by emigrants who were not living in Lebanon. Then, in the 1932 census, the percentage of emigrant population was 24% of the total. The author counts the percent of the emigrant population that was actually composed by Christians and provides an image that shows that in 1932 in Lebanon there were 396,946 Christians and 396,450 non-Christians. A difference of approximately 500 people. This figure does not take into consideration the fact that the numbers of the Christian population included around 40,000 Armenian refugees, and excluded 60,000 Muslims living in Lebanon that were labelled in the census as "foreigners" (Maktabi 1997: 166). This excellent study shows how the teleology that presents the growing conflict in Lebanon as the result of rapid shifts in the demographic profile of the country is not accurate, because, in the reality of the numbers, the Christians of Lebanon probably never represented the majority of the population.

It is also for this reason, that within the elite itself, there was a debate on the issue that the Lebanese historian Fawwaz Traboulsi called of "*attachment and detachment*"<sup>142</sup>. The debate within the Maronite elite was focused on the actual demographic feasibility of an independent Lebanon *attached* to the new peripheral areas just incorporated versus the economic feasibility of a smaller Lebanon *detached* from the periphery that had a majority of Muslim inhabitants. Traboulsi shows how this debate involved also the French authorities of the time:

*"the debate over attachment and detachment continued unabated. On the French side, some mandate functionaries found they had created a 'too great a Lebanon' that needed reduction. Among the Lebanese, Riad al-Sulh<sup>143</sup> declared, in July 1928, that French Prime Minister Aristide Bryant had promised him to reannex the whole of Lebanon to Syria. At the other extreme, Emile Edde<sup>144</sup> presented a memorandum to the Quai d'Orsay in which he argued that a Greater Lebanon with a population of 405,000 Muslims to 425,000 Christians did not contain a majority strong enough to 'defend the country'. He proposed that Tripoli become a 'free city' under French*

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<sup>142</sup> F. Traboulsi, 2007, *A history of modern Lebanon*, Pluto Press, London and Ann Arbor, pp. 75-87.

<sup>143</sup> First Sunni Prime Minister of Lebanon.

<sup>144</sup> Maronite politician who served both as Prime Minister and President of the Republic of Lebanon.

*administration - its Christians inhabitants would be given Lebanese nationality and the Muslims, Syrian nationality - and south Lebanon would acquire an autonomous status similar to that of the Alawite country. As for the rest of the country - rid of some 55,000 Muslims from Tripoli and an additional 140,000 Sunnis and Shia from the south - it would constitute a reduced Lebanon but with a 'secure' Christian numerical majority of 80 per cent and sufficient agricultural area of the Biqa' to avert the danger of famine"*<sup>145</sup>.

This debate confirms what the French sociologist, Georges Balandier, observed in various colonial countries. While studying the effects of European colonialism, he was able to foresee how the *"colonial situation"* posed complex problems both *"to the administration representing the so-called protective power [but also] for the newly-created state on which still rests the burden of colonial liabilities"* (Balandier, 1951, pp. 23-24).

In the case of Lebanon, the problematic formation of the State was, then, made momentarily feasible and sustainable by creating a confessional system, on the footprints of the *Règlement Organique* of 1861, with a proportional distribution of power to all seventeen ethno-religious groups in order to accommodate them in the new system and provide an outward sense of democracy. Furthermore, what is of utmost importance is that the ethnocratic regime that was imposed on Lebanon in 1920 ultimately rendered it not only difficult, but almost impossible for the country to move from a *"colonial situation"* to a full democracy.

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<sup>145</sup> F. Traboulsi, 2007, *A history of modern Lebanon*, Pluto Press, London and Ann Arbor, pp. 90-91.

### 2.1.3. From "ideology of the mountain" to "ideology of the city"

"Ideologies of the mountain" is a concept that Hourani proposed in order to deconstruct the various political ideas that emerged from Mount Lebanon. The Maronite community of Lebanon represents *"the only Catholic 'nation' in the Near East"* (Hourani, 1976, p. 36), and they have been subjected to multiple waves of persecutions at the hand of the various Muslim rulers that succeeded one another along the centuries. It is also for this reason that Pope Leo X in 1510 described the Maronite community as *"a rose among thorns"* (Salibi, 1988, p. 72; Hourani, 1976, p. 36). It is around the idea of this special status that this community was able to find its own internal organization and maintain its particular identity along the centuries.

When concepts of nation-states began to be transplanted by European powers to the Near East, the aspirations of the Maronite community favorably leaned towards the consolidation of their own social formation within a specific and new political entity. The idea of a Greater Lebanon as a nation-state emerged, then, as an integral component of the ideologies of the mountain: an idea at the core of a new refined form of ethno-nationalism that is described in the literature as *"Lebanonism"* (Khalaf, 1976, pp. 44-45).

Even if it emerged from the aspirations of a single ethno-religious community, this idea of a Lebanese nationalism was characterized also by a certain degree of religious pluralism. In fact, for a new State to be feasible, it had to be sustained by a plurality of actors. Hourani highlights that the idea of a unique 'nation' was, at a second stage, enriched by the conviction of it being a 'nation' *"living within a broader political framework [...] established and maintained by a hierarchy of leading families [Maronites and Sunni], associated with each other as a political elite"* (Hourani, 1976, p. 36).

A key point here is to understand how these ideologies of the mountain settled within Beirut, where this proto-pluralism took the shape of a new socio-political formation in which

religious identity was progressively mixed with common economic and political interests. It is within this new physical environment that the ideologies of the mountain were remodeled into *"ideologies of the city"*, because the common interests of the ethno-religious elite, composed of the Christian Maronites and the Sunni bourgeoisie of Beirut, met and developed based on the awareness of the common need to maintain the newly created political entity, which could expand their status quo. It is from this perspective that Hourani says that these new urban ideas formed *"the 'official' ideological basis of the Lebanese State"* (Hourani, 1976, p. 39).

However, such accommodation within a different urban geography was not a straightforward move. For a group of ideologists of the mountain, that Hourani defines as representatives of a *"mountain populism"*, the city was perceived as a dimension that could potentially endanger *"the natural way of living"* of the rural society of the mountain (Hourani, 1976, p. 37) and they progressively became the spokesperson of that part of the Maronite community that continued to feel *"uneasy with the compromises of the political system"* (Hourani, 1976, p. 40). It is based on this sentiment that the Phalange Party, a right-wing Maronite political movement, was able to push forward an idea of nationalism even more refined than Lebanonism, which was *"Maronitism"* (Khalaf, 1976, pp. 43-57).

In particular, these ideas created frictions and contrasts within the Maronite community itself. In the 1930s, two Maronite leaders like Emile Edde and Beshara al Khoury - who would become the first President of the Republic after the independence from France - proposed different programs for the future of the country. Traboulsi summarizes their positions as follows:

*"Edde envisaged Lebanon primarily as a Christian homeland, insisting on its Mediterranean identity, which differentiated it 'ethnically' from the rest of Syria and the Arabs, and looked upon the Muslims as a threat that necessitated his proposed territorial and demographic reduction. In a famous remark, he admonished Muslims who did not want to live in a Christian Lebanon to emigrate*

*to Mecca. In addition, Edde was a strong partisan of private religious education, with a strong bias toward the Christian missionaries. During his term as prime minister in 1930, he created a scandal by abolishing 111 public schools, most of which were in Muslim-dominated regions. Khoury, by contrast, envisaged Lebanon as an independent country built in collaboration with its Muslim population and enjoying close relations with Syria and the rest of the Arab countries. Christian rights, instead of being protected by foreign troops, were to be inscribed in the constitution, which guaranteed Maronite political supremacy"<sup>146</sup>.*

The ethno-religious-centric form of nationalism supported by the Phalange Party and Emile Edde progressively attracted more strata of the Maronite community and became, later in the 1970s, as we will discuss later, the greatest ideology supporting the partition of Greater Lebanon into a smaller political entity, or "*Petit Liban*", on Mount Lebanon, in which the Maronite community could have had an undisputed leadership.

All these ideas are important because, even if not all of them realized their ultimate goal to become political realities, they all influenced the formation of the State of Greater Lebanon and, still today, they continue to have a strong influence on the structure of the urban environment, civil society, and the development of public policies.

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<sup>146</sup> F. Traboulsi, 2007, *A history of modern Lebanon*, Pluto Press, London and Ann Arbor, p. 94.

#### 2.1.4. The structure of the ethnocratic regime in its early stage

*"A hallmark of the ethnocratic system is its ability to maintain the dominance of the leading ethnonational group, which is premised on the exclusion, marginalization, or assimilation of minority groups. But not all minorities are treated equally. Some are construed as internal, whereas others are marked as external"*

O. Yiftachel, 2006, p. 37.

The structure of the Lebanese political system emerged under French colonial rule and this foreign influence characterized in depth the foundations of the State. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, the Paris Peace Conference of 1920 gave birth to the newly created State of Greater Lebanon and on May 23rd 1926 the French High Commissioner in Beirut promulgated the first Constitution of Lebanon that established rules of ethno-religious affiliation for key sectors of the political system, such as the formation of the government, the selection of the legislature, but also as far as public employment<sup>147</sup>.

This process was foreign-led and there was no participation of the Lebanese citizens. Also, the promulgation of a Constitution by a foreign country, interested in maintaining its control in the region, raised the issue of who's interests would the Constitution actually serve. The fact that France had interest in maintaining Lebanon as a State depending on its rule was fundamental for the creation of a fragile political system with a high potential for instability, in order to maintain for France an almost natural role of arbiter. It is for this reason that Michel Chiha, the Christian theorist of Lebanese nationalism, wrote that the Lebanese people are *"by vocation and necessity, the friends of the masters of the world"* (cit. in Hourani, 1976, p. 38).

This way, the Constitution created a system enshrined into rules of ethno-religious affiliation and paved the way for the consolidation of divisions that are still present today within the civil society. In his analysis of Israel/Palestine, Oren Yiftachel identifies the formation of

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<sup>147</sup> See A. Hourani, 1946; and K. Salibi, 1988.

three main social formations within the ethnocratic regime: a charter group, that is the founding group, responsible for the creation of the State, the drafting of the constitution and basically in charge, the group that represents the idea of nation enshrined into the State apparatuses. Then, there is a second group that is co-opted by the charter group in order to make the State feasible, economically, socially, and politically. And, then, a third group that is excluded from the process of construction of the new nation and that is, as he says, “trapped” within an inferior ethnoclass status. He explains the presence of these three social formations as follows:

*"the **founding (or 'charter')** group gains the dominant political, cultural, and economic status during the critical formative period of the new state. In Israel, this group is mainly composed of Ashkenazi Jews, the 'founders' of Zionism and of the state. The **second group** comprises various non-Ashkenazi 'immigrants', most notably the Mizrahi ethnoclass, and recently also Russian and Ethiopian Jews - who have joined the 'founders' in the national settlement project, albeit from an inferior economic and cultural position; the **third group** - the indigenous Palestinian-Arabs - has resided on the land for generations prior to the arrival of settlers. These people are largely excluded from the process of constructing the new nation, and are generally 'trapped' in their inferior ethnoclass status"<sup>148</sup>.*

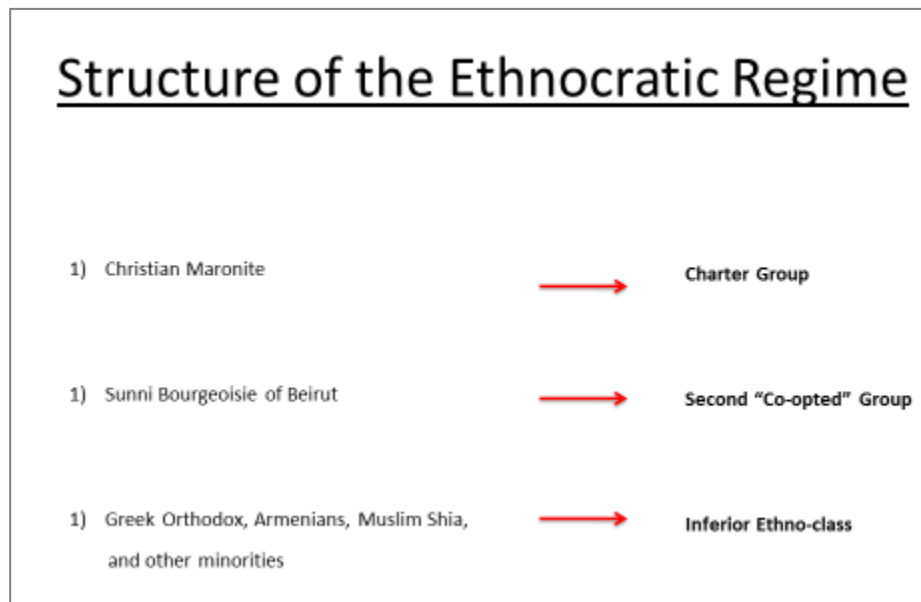
Based on this, we can see how in Lebanon we had the Maronites, who played the role of the charter group, having Lebanon cut from geographical Syria in order to have a State representing their own national identity. A second group, the Sunni bourgeoisie of Beirut, what remained of the Sunni elite that accumulated wealth while working at the economic and political level with the Ottomans for four centuries, and that were co-opted because they saw the immediate advantages of the new State, in contrast to the low chances that Arab nationalism had to create a wider Arab State. And lastly, various minorities that were incorporated within the State as an inferior ethno-class, and that are people that the historian

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<sup>148</sup> Source: O. Yiftachel, 2003, p. 678; bold added.



Hourani says that were “*precariously inside or virtually outside*” of the State (Hourani, 1976, p. 34). This is not only because they lived mostly outside of Beirut and the core of the State and because they were mostly peasants, but also because their very ethno-religious identity was not part of the identity of the new State. Here we can clearly see a very strong *state of exception*, produced by incorporation only through exclusion and territorial marginalization at the outskirts of the State.



**Figure 19:** The scheme above tries to identify the three main social formations that composed the structure of the ethnocratic regime during the early stage of the formation of the State.

This structure of power found its place in the Constitution of 1926, which established the separation of powers, by assigning the legislative power to the Chamber of Deputies (Art. 16), the executive power to the Council of Ministers (Art. 17) and the judicial power to “*courts of various degrees and jurisdictions*” (Art. 20). Furthermore, it was orally decided that the President of the Republic had to be a Christian Maronite, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim, the Head of the Chamber of Deputies a Shia Muslim, and the Deputy Prime Minister and the Deputy Speaker

of the Chamber of Deputies a Greek-Orthodox (Scheffler, 2001, p. 174). Moreover, the Census of 1932, never updated since then, distributed the seats in the Chamber of Deputies based on the demographic presence in the country and, hence, used a ratio of 6-to-5 in favor of the Christian communities.

Thomas Sheffler notes that in the 1922-1937 period five parliamentary elections were held for the newly created unicameral system and the total number of Christians and Muslims representatives in the Parliament was the following: 17:13 in 1922 and 1927, 25:20 in 1929, 14:11 in 1934, and 35:28 in 1937 (Scheffler, 2001, p. 174).

In 1943, the Maronite President, Bishara Al Khoury, and the Sunni Prime Minister, Riad Al Solh, created what came to be known as the National Pact - an oral agreement in which the two decided, on one side, to put an end to the French mandate, but, on the other, to maintain the political system created by the French. This process led to the independence from the French rule, though it did not succeed in developing a full democracy out of a colonial situation; but, instead, it perpetuated the same socio-political and cultural dynamics at an internal level.

This unwritten pact is widely presented as the ultimate compromise between the two main conflicting perceptions on the historicity of the country. On one side, the Maronites accepted Lebanon as an Arab country; and, on the other, the Sunni Muslims accepted Lebanon as a State detached from both geographical Syria and the rest of the Arab world. In fact, Farid Al Khazen argued that the National Pact marked *"the culmination of the post-1920 rapprochement process between the Maronite and Sunni political elite"* (Khazen, 1991, p. 5). We can say that this agreement represents the moment of compromise between the two forces that represented the core of the ethnocratic regime. On one side, the *"ideologies of the Mountain"*, the idea internal to the Maronite community to have a purely Maronite country, had to readapt on its way to the capital Beirut, and to become *"ideologies of the city"*, in order to co-opt the Sunni bourgeois class and to make the State viable.

The consolidation of this alliance revolved around the figure of the President of the Republic, who was granted by the constitution with extensive powers. The Maronite President was the pivotal figure of the ethnocratic regime, around whom a large system of political and economic powers found a common ground. The powers of the President were granted by the constitution promulgated by the French in 1926. In particular, Traboulsi says that the president *"was responsible to no one and no institution except the French high commissioner"* (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 90). This way, the elite had both a direct contact and control over the country's national institutions and the colonial power. In these years, we assist to the progressive concentration and expansion of a network of connections at the core of the country, in the form of strong social capital that becomes enshrined within the structure of the State and that reproduces itself thanks to this structure. When we talk about social capital, we refer to the work of the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, on the *"forms of capital"*, where he defined social capital in this way:

*"social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word"* (P. Bourdieu, 1986, p. 21)<sup>149</sup>.

The existence of a network of connections, and its concentration at the core of the State, around the figure of the President of the Republic, represented a form of uneven distribution of power and resources within the dominion of an elitarian group. In this regard, Traboulsi explains

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<sup>149</sup> P. Bourdieu, 1986, *The Forms of Capital*, in A.H. Halsey (et al.), 1997, *Education: Culture, Economy and Society*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 46-58.

very well the structure of this elitarian group, that he calls the “*consortium*”, and its relationship with the State apparatuses.

*"The Lebanese president's exceptional executive and legislative powers made him the main pole of attraction for the country's dominant economic interests [...] The commercial/financial oligarchy that came to power with independence was thought to comprise some thirty families articulated around a hard nucleus composed of 'the consortium': the president's two brothers, his sons, and a dozen related families. The extent to which those families held monopolistic control over the main axes of the country's economy is impressive [...] In sectarian composition, the families of the oligarchy were mainly Christian: there were 24 Christian families (nine Maronites, seven Greek Catholic, one Latin, one Protestant, four Greek Orthodox and one Armenian), to six Muslim (four Sunni, one Shia and one Druze). Christian families practised extended endogamy in order to preserve or increase family wealth and property and advance business partnerships. In one generation at least ten of the oligarchy's families (Pharaon, Chiha, Khoury, Haddad, Freige, Kettaneh, 'Arida, Bustrus, 'Asayli, Doumit) were associated by matrimonial bonds. Their capital came from three main sources: the silk economy and the import trade during the 'Mutasarrifiya' period; war profits (between 1940 and 1944 allied troops spent £76 million in Syria and Lebanon); and the emigrant money repatriated from Africa, the Americas and the oil-producing Arab countries" (Traboulsi, 2007, pp. 115-116).*

This group of people had a very diffused control over every sector of the economy of the country, from financial institutions and insurance companies, to tourism, the services sector, transportation, industry, and large property holdings. The extent of the power of this group is explained by Traboulsi in the most original piece of work<sup>150</sup> in his book on the history of modern Lebanon, in which he examines the extent of the economic power of this group, but also the relation between political power and economic power and, ultimately, the role of the parliament in this situation.

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<sup>150</sup> Here reported almost entirely.

*"Members of the consortium held controlling positions in all of the country's economic sectors. In finance, they owned a dozen local or mixed banks, headed by the BSL, the bank that issued the currency, administered the state's finances and controlled credit and commercial exchanges with France. The biggest insurance company, the Union Nationale, was a partnership between members of the consortium and French capital. The above-mentioned interests were mainly importers of Western manufactured products and controlled the biggest share of the market for food products, arms and ammunition, agricultural and industrial equipment, beverages, medical and pharmaceutical products, construction materials, electric equipment and telecommunication, stationery, wood, hardware, coffee, cars, spare parts, and many others. Of the 50 agencies representing US firms, half were in the hands of one family, the Kettaneh, and the rest distributed between the Fattal, Sahnawi and Pharaon. Families of the consortium were also pioneers in tourism: they owned the country's biggest and most luxurious hotels in Beirut (the St. Georges and Bristol hotels), the summer centres of Bhamdun and Sawfar and the ski centres of Faraya and the Cedars. In the services sector, the consortium, in association with French interests, controlled almost all the franchise-holding societies and public services companies: the port of Beirut, the water and electricity companies (Beirut, Qadisha, Nahr al Barid), the Régie des tabacs et tombacs, and so on. The consortium also controlled the biggest construction companies in the country (la Régie des travaux) and one of the biggest in the Middle East (the CAT of Emile Bustani). The two principal air transport companies, Air Liban and Middle East Airlines, and the biggest land transport company were owned by members of the oligarchy. In industry, the oligarchy directed the main industrial firms in electricity, cement, textile, beer, matches, agricultural products, vegetable oil, paint, glass, etc. They also combined the import and production of the same products in cement and construction materials. Finally, all the families mentioned had large property holdings in both city and countryside.*

*An estimated value of the fortunes of fifteen of those families amounted to LL 245 million, the equivalent of nine times the state budget for 1944 and to more than 40 per cent of the national revenue for 1948. A significant portion of those fortunes was invested overseas.*

*During that period<sup>151</sup>, thirteen of the oligarchy's members were elected deputies, five held cabinet posts and one was nominated prime minister. Most of the MPs of the oligarchy were 'parachuted' into the peripheries, particularly the Biqa' and the south, where they acted to fund the large lists of 'political feudalists' [...] Under the Khoury regime 36 deputies (of whom 26 were Christians) were owners or shareholders in the country's biggest 230 firms.*

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<sup>151</sup> The author refers to the 1943-1952 period.

*Be that as it may, Michel Chiha had set up an interesting bifurcated model for the relationship between economic power and political power. Economic power was to be exercised mainly through the executive. The president of the republic, rallying point and business partner of the commercial/financial oligarchy, represented, served and defended its economic interests, Similarly, the administration's main task was to speed up business deals and transactions [...] On the other hand, parliament, defined as an 'assembly of notables', was to be the reserve of the landed [local leaders] representing the country's various sects. Its principal, if not exclusive, role was the establishment of 'sectarian peace'. Nevertheless, that conflict-resolution function attributed to the legislative indirectly served the best interests of free trade, as it simply meant minimum legislation and very 'soft' budgets (implying also a minimum of taxes and customs duties).*

*Chiha's model was not followed to the letter. The oligarchy ceded the administration to the political bosses who soon filled it with their clients, and public function became a means to absorb some of the surplus labour power that the service economy could not absorb" (Traboulsi, 2007, pp. 116-118).*

Through this process the Maronites, which from an ethnocratic perspective represent, in Yiftachel's terms, the dominant "*charter group*", succeeded in co-opting a different set of ethno-religious groups, mostly Sunni, on the basis of common economic and political interests. This way, both groups became determined to maintain the new political entity in order to protect their status quo and privileges deriving from it. And this is also a cyclical process because: "*the profitability of this labor of accumulating and maintaining social capital rises in proportion to the size of the capital*" (P. Bourdieu, 1986, p. 52). The more this network of connections intensified and accumulated capital through and thanks to the new political entity, the more this political entity needed to be protected from any possible structural change, in order to maintain the official channel of transmission of economic capital.

Furthermore, this structure gave to the city of Beirut a prominent role not only as a decision-making centre, but also as the place where cultural trends and ideas were spread to the whole country. Beirut was the place *sine qua non* the ruling class could implement its ruling

ideology and, consequently, actualize its cultural hegemony and political sovereignty over the rest of the country. This way, the economic and social capital that lied in the hands of the members of the ethno-religious elite composing the consortium, manifested itself also through a production of space characterized by a strong drive towards the accumulation of cultural capital, in its *objectified* state<sup>152</sup>.

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<sup>152</sup> Bourdieu explains that cultural capital exists in three forms, that are the *embodied* state, the *objectified* state, and the *institutionalized* state. The objectified state refers to the transformation of cultural capital in “*material objects and media, such as writings, paintings, monuments, instruments, etc*” (P. Bourdieu, 1986, p.50).

### 2.1.5. Planning During the French Mandate (1920 – 1946)

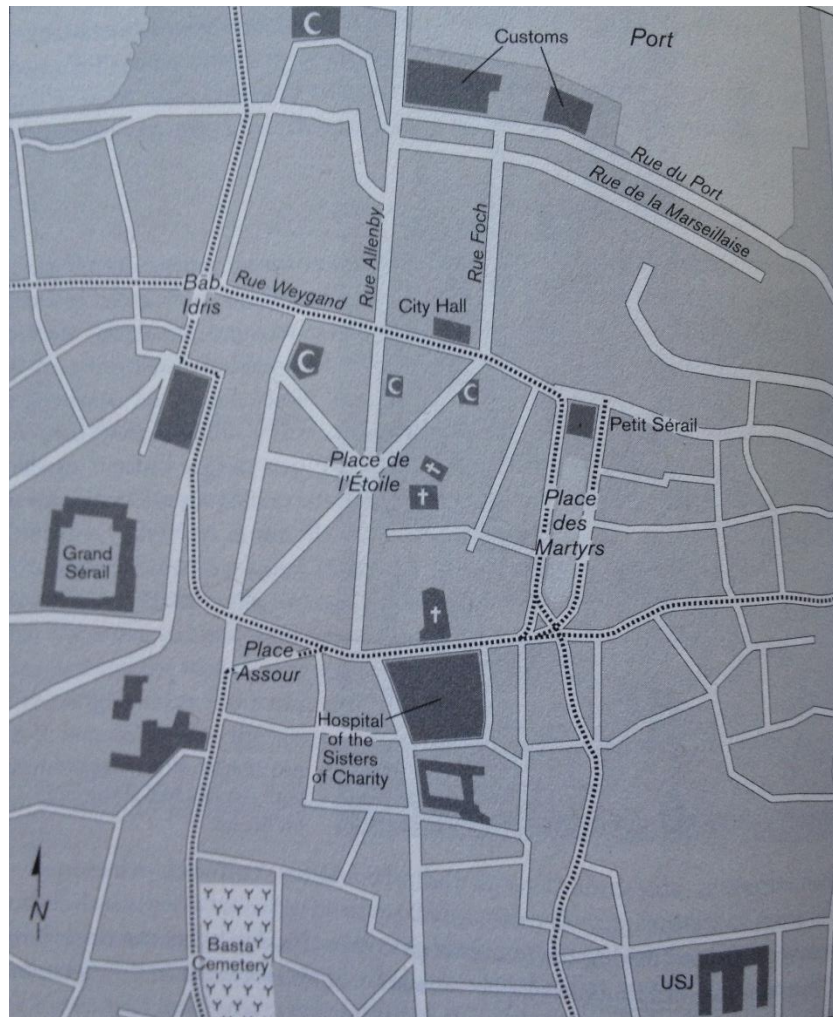
This structure of power created a hierarchy of spaces (core-periphery) and a hierarchy of social formations (the three groups), and it also gave a prominent role to Beirut, not only as a decision-making center, but also as the place where cultural trends and ideas were spread to the whole country.

The material legacy of this structure manifested in a series of projects centered in Beirut that translated into toponymic inscriptions (streets, squares and places were given French names, and the names of French politicians and generals of the Mandate), adoption of French planning laws (i.e. zoning), and the overall creation of large scale structures aimed to dignify the the colonial power and its local allies. The Mandate in a way, Kassir says, worked to promote *"Beirut's new status as a capital and its role as a showcase of French ideals"* (S. Kassir, 2003, p. 280). As he said:

*"typically Parisian vistas were re-created in Beirut [...] The entire southern part of the intramural town was razed, as well as the area that had grown up around the port, and with them vanished a dense network of alleys, markets, and workshops [...] The main public building of the new neighborhood was the seat of the city administration, the Palais Municipal, erected in 1927 on the site of the old Al Fashkha suq" and "what remained of the old fabric of the city [...] gave way to the perfectly precise radical plan of Place de l'Etoile" whose "star-shaped design was so intimately associated with Haussmann that it became the signature of the Mandate's urban planning" (pp. 280-281).*

The result of this planning transformation is that *"by the middle of the 1930s, Beirut could almost have passed for a new city"* (S. Kassir, 2003, p. 286). We can say that in those years, Lebanon experienced the emergence of a new elite, a new State, and a production of a space that represented this new elite and new State, and that reshaped Beirut as a new city.





**Figure 20:** At the center of the picture, it is visible Place de l'Étoile and the radial design of streets departing from it. Source: S. Kassir, 2003, p. 282.

The years that go from 1920 to 1946 saw not only a privileged attention for urban projects in Beirut, but an overall reorganization of the urban environment and the land property system guided by the idea of modernization and rationalization of both policy and place. As far as place, in addition to the projects for downtown Beirut, in those years we see also the work of French experts like the Danger brothers and Michel Écochard. Overall, their work is reduced to the reorganization of the land and infrastructures and they show a dry approach to planning, interpreted as the design of urban shapes, forms and lines, without particular attention given to the relation between physical space and social space. In parallel to the project of downtown -

which repropose, at a smaller scale, Haussmann's idea of perspective – there is also another aspect of these initiatives of reconfiguration and reorganization of the urban fabric, which is related, as it was also in Haussmann's project for Paris, at a better military control of the city. Economic speculation aimed at increasing land value and military control go hand in hand also in the projects for Beirut.

As far as policy, the French urban geographer, Eric Verdeil (2011), explains that land reforms of this period focused on the “*unification*” of the system of land ownership, in order to “*guarantee the certainty of property*”, which was a fundamental step to establish a system of credit, mortgages and bank loans, but also to be able to set property taxes and to introduce an “*authorization to build in 1920, progressively extended and transformed in building permit in 1934*”<sup>153</sup>. This is the first moment in which we see the emergence of the *formal*, as a category that, on one side, establishes itself by creating a boundary of self-proclaimed legality and, on the other, creates a duality with an outer space that is automatically identified as *informal* and *illegal*. While the process of Westernization of ideas and culture, explained by Hourani, brings about a dichotomy between *modern* and *backward*; in the planning sector it is the law that creates such separation between *legal* and *extra-legal*. All of this, within a strong core-periphery relation affecting the geographical development of the country, and rules of ethno-religious affiliation that distribute power and resources in an uneven fashion, thus, creating asymmetric power relations between different social formations.

Through this process, ethnocracy, in all its dimensions, produced its own geography of urban and territorial segregation based on ethno-religious affiliation. In this period, we see the physical manifestation of an ethnocratic city and an ethnocratic territory. However, the

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<sup>153</sup> The author analyzes the period of the French Mandate in the first chapter (pp. 31-49) of his book entitled “*Beyrouth et ses urbanistes. Une ville en plans (1946-1975)*”. The passage and quotations above have been readapted and translated from French to English to facilitate the reading. To read the original in French, look at the paragraph entitled “*Les réformes foncières*”, under the section on “*Les réformes encadrant l'aménagement urbain*”.

instability intrinsic both to capitalism and ethnocracy created over the years an accumulation of tensions and requests that were able to question the political system in various ways.

The strong ethnocratic hegemony of this period made it possible for the elite to expand its status quo and accumulate capital in all its forms, economic, cultural, and social. However, this situation depended on the necessary control over Beirut. As we will see in the next section, the political system proved relatively stable as far as the elite maintained an unchallenged presence in Beirut. However, when in the 1950s the requests of the disinherited of Lebanon progressively moved to the capital, the ethnocratic regime entered in crisis.

## **2.2. Evolution and Challenges to Ethnocratic Hegemony**

### 2.2.1. Economic and industrial policies of the 1940s

The spread of a particular form of identity, deriving from the new *"ideologies of the city"*, was still underway between the early 1920s and the late 1930s. In addition to cultural factors, such as the *"westernization of ideas"* described by Hourani, a fundamental driving force in this process was represented also by the economic and industrial policies of the 1940s.

The beginning of the 1940s brought to Lebanon several favorable conditions for economic growth. The Lebanese economist and former Minister of Economy and Trade in the government of 1992, Samir Makdisi, argues that several *"interacting factors"* co-participated in the delineation of a favorable situation for growth. In particular, he mentions six factors, that are: *"financial stability, an open economy, and enterprising private sector, helpful regional circumstances, a supportive internal environment, and non-obtrusive labour market conditions"* (Makdisi, 2004, p. 21).

The philosophical approach that characterized both the polity and the economics of the country was liberalism. Political liberalism was influenced by the idea that under the current power structure, the State had to limit its sphere of action. The result, on the political side, was that:

*"relatively free parliamentary elections were held, freedom of expression was allowed, presidents and cabinets changed, and political parties and other political groupings (both sectarian and non-sectarian) competed with each other. Political and intellectual dissidents from other Arab countries took refuge in Lebanon. The Lebanese press reflected a wide spectrum of political persuasions from extreme right to extreme left"* (Makdisi, 2004, p. 12).

The reflection of these developments on the social and urban space is that the ideologies of the city manifested themselves into the creation of a core, Beirut, characterized by a liberal way of life with progressively more European urban traits, going from the tramway (opened in 1908

under the Ottoman rule), to the rapid expansion in the use of automobiles, to the creation of urban boulevards, the plazas, the panoramic corniche along the sea, and the buildings, of what is now the historic center, that reproduced the architectural typologies of European cities like Paris, as we mentioned before.

In parallel to political and cultural liberalism, on the economic side, liberalism followed two main directions highlighted by Makdisi:

*"i) a truly open economy based on a liberal trade and payments regime, with no restrictions whatsoever on current payments or capital transfers, supported by a flexible exchange rate, and ii) limiting the economic role of government to supporting the private sector. The government was active in building the country's infrastructure and, at the same time, endeavoured to maintain financial stability in the conscious or unconscious belief that this was a prerequisite for private sector initiatives" (Makdisi, 2004, pp. 13-14).*

As far as financial stability, the governments of those years focused on maintaining a low inflation rate and a stable exchange rate (Makdisi, 2004, p. 15).

As far as *"helpful regional circumstances"*, instead, Gaspard highlights that the beginning of the Second World War represented an additional and unexpected favorable factor for the industrial sector. As he says:

*"during WWII, Lebanese industry received an unexpected boost in demand through military expenditures by the Allied troops present in Lebanon, at a time when imports were being severely curtailed. Between 1940 and 1944, the Allied forces spent some £76 million in Syria and Lebanon, with Lebanon's annual share representing approximately 10 percent of its national income. The two countries enjoyed a cumulative surplus on their current account balance of 607 million Syrian Lebanese pounds between 1939 and 1945, or approximately 40 percent of their joint national incomes in 1945" (Gaspard, 2004, pp. 52-53).*

It is also for this reason that he argues that *"by 1946, the economy was favorably set for an industrialization drive"* and *"the Lebanese authorities chose laissez-faire, not only as a long-term policy for economic development but also as a national raison d'être"* (Gaspard, 2004, p. 54). The unexpected positive backlash of the Second World War were later accompanied also by a more accentuated regional instability in the Middle East. The creation of the State of Israel on May 15, 1948, caused the expulsion of approximately 900,000 Palestinians from their land and a large portion of this population found refuge in Lebanon and many brought with them their savings (Gaspard, 2004, p. 59).

It is in this period that the urban and liberal dimensions of the way of life of Beirut spread the idea of it being *"le Petit Paris"* and, at the same time, the economic development in the Middle East spread the idealized image of Beirut and, more generally speaking, of Lebanon as being the *"Switzerland of the Middle East"*. On this last point, Makdisi explains, in more detail, that:

*"at a regional level, major political upheavals and uncertainties rendered Lebanon, with its open economy, attractive not only for investment purposes but as a place of refuge for capital from countries that maintained exchange controls. The relatively developed Beirut money market (in comparison with other markets in the region) and expanding banking system acted as a conduit for Arab capital. The attractiveness of Lebanon was further enhanced by the government's economic stance, which was supportive of private initiative"* (Makdisi, 2004, pp. 21-22).

The last of the six favorable conditions for economic growth that we mentioned above was the *"non-obtrusive labour market conditions"*. This was due to the lack of trade unions, but also to the relatively loose legislation that focused on limited minimal requisites such as minimum wage, equal pay between men and women, maximum hours of work per week, and minimum

age of employment. Gaspard expands on this by highlighting some interesting and important data:

*"the labour market [was also] essentially a free market. The first labour legislation, which came into effect in 1943, was prompted by an expanding industrial activity and was mainly concerned with minimum wages and compensating for increases in the cost of living. It provided for equal pay for similar work by men and women. Despite the minimum-wage legislation, many workers have been and continue to be paid below the prescribed minimum. More important, minimum-wage levels have always been significantly lower than the urban subsistence levels and often at less than half that level [...] A virtually unbridled power to 'hire and fire' is vested with the employer, while allowing for severance pay usually equivalent to one-month pay for each year of service. Maximum weekly hours of work are 48 hours, with some exceptions. The minimum age of employment is eight years, a limitation borrowed from an 1874 French law" (Gaspard, 2004, pp. 63-64).*

However, the existence of a favorable political, geopolitical, and economic environment for growth did not produce the consequential improvements that we may expect. It is important to notice that different authors propose different rationals to explain the situation. While Samir Makdisi seems to argue that the main issue was that *"appropriate corrective policy measures should and could have been applied"* (Makdisi, 2004, p. 23), Toufic Gaspard's critique stems from what he himself describes as his personal belief that *"laissez-faire is not the way to go for developing countries, indeed for all countries"* while, instead, *"for over 40 years, Lebanon has been the only laissez-faire economy in the developing world"* and it *"operated as approximately as possible to a pure market economy"* (Gaspard, 2004, pp. xviii-xix). Makdisi focuses on the failures of the political class in relation to the State system. As he says:

*"the political system was sectarian/familial/clientist in nature" and created "a weak State (but not necessarily weak presidents, who enjoyed substantial powers in the running of the government and the dispensing of favours) and, in consequence, the inability to*



*implement substantive administrative reforms. In practice, the prevailing political set-up tended to foster corruption, nepotism, clientism, and laxity in upholding the public interest when it came to conflict with private interests" (Makdisi, 2004, pp. 11 and 14).*

The issue that we need to stress here, and that is not mentioned by the author, is that the economic and business leadership was strongly intertwined with politics. In reality, the economic elite was, indeed, heading also the polity of the country. The conflict of interest was so overwhelming that private and public coincided and perfectly overlapped. The "public" (the State) had been created and molded to the best interest of the "private" (the economic elite), that was, at the same time, representative of the upper classes and of a particular set of ethno-religious groups headed by the Christian Maronites and the Sunni Muslims of Beirut. Furthermore, the negative backlashes of the capitalist laissez-faire economy exacerbated the socio-economic and cultural divide in the country also along ethno-religious lines.

In the next section, we will see how the asymmetrical access to political power, the unequal rates of growth, and the disparities in the standard of living opposing core and periphery, urban and rural, upper-classes and lower-classes, privileged ethno-religious communities and underprivileged ethno-religious communities, were altogether major dimensions of the contestations that erupted in the following decades preceeding the civil war.

### 2.2.2. Reasons for contestation (1950s and 1960s)

Despite the favorable conditions for development, economic growth did not act as a tool able to create unity among the various strata of the population, within the delicate process of nation-formation. Rather, the laissez-faire approach stressed the already existing disparities between different ethno-religious groups.

The relationships around ethno-religious affiliation are key to understand Lebanon because not only class and affiliation tended to overlap, due to the laissez-faire approach, but also the geographic distribution over the national territory followed ethno-religious lines. This way, issues of socio-economic status, ethno-religious affiliation, and place of living altogether defined privileged and underprivileged groups and spaces.

We said that the territorial configuration of the semi-autonomous *sanjak*, established under Ottoman rule in 1861, was different from the situation of the State emerged from the Paris Peace Conference. In 1861 the *sanjak* of Mount Lebanon extended for an area of approximately 3,100 sq. km (Schleffer, 2001, p. 169) and had a population, of mostly Maronites, of 380,000 in 1867 (Gaspard, 2004, p. 44). The annexation agreed upon with the French, which resulted in the creation of the State of Greater Lebanon in 1920, resulted in a new territory of 7,300 sq. km (Schleffer, 2001, p. 169), which included mostly non-Maronites and gave the new State a total population of 600,000 (Gaspard, 2004, p. 49).

The new geographical configuration did not include only Beirut and the coast, in addition to Mount Lebanon, but it annexed also the southern region of Jabal 'Amil and the eastern region of the Biqa Valley, two rural areas mostly inhabited by Shia Muslims and that, up to the late 1940s, hosted 85% of the entire Shia population of Lebanon (Nasr, 1985, p. 10). Another area that was annexed was the northern rural region of Akkar, mostly inhabited by Sunni Muslims, with an

important presence also of Alawi and Ismailis<sup>154</sup>. These poor peripheral regions were incorporated within the State in 1920 as buffer zones in which the population, for the vast majority the Shia, was included only through their territorial marginalization at the farthest outskirts of the State. Indeed, in 1948 the Shia represented only the 3.5% of the total population of Beirut (Nasr, 1985, p. 10).

The already existing economic and social disparities - due both to the different kind of economy (urban versus rural) and also to the fact of having being left outside of the semi-autonomous *sanjak* in 1861 - were farther exacerbated by the economic and industrial policies of the first few decades after the creation of the State. At the national level, up until 1958, on a representative sample of CEOs in the industrial, financial, and services sector, Claude Dubar found that 80.2% of the CEOs were Christians, while only 16.4% were Muslims (C. Dubar, 1974, p. 306).

*Distribution par religion d'un échantillon représentatif de chefs d'entreprises au Liban (1957-58) :*

	CHRÉTIENS	MUSULMANS	AUTRES	TOTAL
Industrie .....	105	21	4	130
Finance .....	11	2	1	14
Services .....	40	5	2	47
Autres .....	10	6	—	16
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>166</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>207</b>

**Table 6:** The table above shows the distribution of CEOs by economic sector for Christians and Muslims on a representative sample used by the author. Source: C. Dubar, 1974, p. 306.

If we compare this with data on literacy rate, we can see that in 1958 the country was still very polarized, with an illiterate population distributed as follows among different communities: 79% Shia, 59% Sunni, 51% Druze, 50% Greek Orthodox, and 42% Maronites (Kliot, 1987, p. 58). The disparity in the provision of basic services, between core and periphery, was so pronounced

<sup>154</sup> In extreme synthesis: both Alawi and Ismailis refer to two particular schools of thought within Shia Islam.

that Kliot highlights that: *"in 1971, Mount Lebanon with 29% of the Lebanese population had 38.2% of the Lebanese schools while the South with 19% of the population, had only 14.8% of the schools"* (Kliot, 1987, p. 59).

In addition to socio-economic disparities between the core of the country and the recently annexed periphery, another important point regards the asymmetrical access to political power. We mentioned before how each ethno-religious community was assigned an unequal share of the seats of the parliament, the government, the army and public administration. However, more than an issue of ratio and seats allotted to each community, another important issue regarded the preparation of the political elite of each community. While groups living in Mount Lebanon, Beirut and the coast had access to better education, showed higher literacy rate, and with the process of industrialization began to take part to a capitalist way of living; the periphery of the country was still mostly rural, with a feudal system organized around the figure of the landowner, able to have around himself a circle of clients and that played the role of the chieftain of the village. In various areas, this system evolved over the previous centuries around landowning families that, with time, assumed privileged positions within their own local communities. Salim Nasr explains how the southern region of Jabal 'Amil had the important presence of the Asads, the Zeins and the Ossirans, while the eastern region of the Biqa Valley had the Hamadehs, the Haidars and the Husseinis (Nasr, 1985, p. 10). These families are still present today and still have a prominent role in their respective local communities. However, the main point that Nasr makes is that both the creation of the State in 1920 and the National Pact of 1943 left the Shia politically voiceless, due to the fact that their political representation was *"monopolized by six prominent landowning families"* (Nasr, 1985, p. 10).

These factors altogether left the Shia in a state of backwardness, in terms of educational attainment, employment opportunities, cultural development, collective awareness, and social mobilization, and this power structure remained unchallenged until the 1950s.

In particular, the 1950s saw the growing shift of attention toward Beirut. Indeed, the struggle over national citizenship, that characterized the two censuses and the different perceptions on the historicity of the country, progressively became also a struggle over contested urban citizenship. I believe there are mainly three factors that can explain this shift: one is geopolitical, one is economic, and one is social.

A first geopolitical factor refers to the reorganization of the international alliances between the West, the Arab countries and the countries of the Persian Gulf. The strategic maneuvering between the US and Soviet Union over the Middle East increased in the 1950s. Again, it is always difficult to find the perfect point of departure to tell a story, but for the sake of simplicity, let's say that in 1951, the Iranian Prime Minister, Mohammad Mossadegh (1882-1967), nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, which operated undisturbed under the Shah, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi (1919-1980). Subsequently, both the British and the Americans orchestrated a coup that removed Mossadegh and put all the power in the hands of the Shah. However, Charles Kupchan wrote<sup>155</sup> that, in those years, to have only a clearly pro-Western ruler in Iran was not considered enough; so several initiatives were taken in order to create a system of collective security. With this in mind, in 1955 Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and Britain signed the Baghdad Pact, which, however, did not have a long life because in 1958 Iraq experienced a coup that replaced its pro-Western government.

What was happening - from the time in July 1956, in which Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company, to the moment in 1958, when Egypt and Syria formed the United Arab Republic (UAR), and the July 1958 coup in Iraq - was the sign of an overall rebirth of impetus of Arab nationalism. This situation did not remain indifferent to Lebanon. Indeed, a growing opposition to the government of the Maronite President Camille Chamoun (1900-1987) started to emerge.

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<sup>155</sup> C.A. Kupchan, 1987, *The Persian Gulf and the West. Dilemmas of Security*, Allen & Unwin, Boston, MA.

The reasons for the crisis of 1958 are numerous. President Chamoun was trying to amend the Constitution in order to be re-elected for a second term as President of the Republic. To do so, he needed at least the two-thirds of the parliament, and the elections of June 1957 were the key instrument to achieve this goal. Baroudi notes that: *"as with most Lebanese elections, the 1957 one was preceded by intense dissension over the number and shape of electoral districts and marred allegations of bribery and electoral fraud"* (Baroudi, 2006, p. 13).

At the same time, Chamoun showed to have a rather opportunistic stance on key geopolitical issues. Even if in his early talks he seemed to support pan-Arabist causes, when critical issues emerged, such as the Baghdad Pact and later the formation of the United Arab Republic (UAR) between Egypt and Syria, he showed a clearer pro-Western foreign policy orientation that earned him a growing opposition both among non-Maronite ethno-religious groups, but also within the Maronite community (Baroudi, 2006, pp. 5-28).

Chamoun had to deal, at the same time, both with the internal opposition of his staunch adversary, Patriarch Paul Peter Meouchi (1894-1975), who did not see in the UAR a threat to the independence of Lebanon, and the growing opposition of the newly formed and Sunni-led political movement, the United National Front (UNF). Street protests organized by the UNF turned violent before the June 1957 elections and, on May 30, seven people were killed in demonstrations held in Beirut. Later in June, after the elections, another case of violence among opposing Maronite factions took place in Miziara. The city of Miziara is located close to Zgharta, the stronghold of the Franjeh family, which was another Maronite strong opponent of President Chamoun. While a Sunday memorial service was held, shooting started in the courtyard of the church and between 23 and 33 people were killed (Baroudi, 2006, p. 16).

Tensions did not decrease and in the spring of the following year street protests and strikes transformed into armed conflict. Traboulsi reports that: *"after two months of fighting, the opposition came to control three-quarters of Lebanese territory"* (F. Traboulsi, 2007, p. 134) and

the armed groups opposing the government, in June 1958, were threatening to assault both the Presidential Palace and the airport in Beirut (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 135).

President Chamoun, fearing that the creation of the United Arab Republic in 1958 could lead to similar political developments also in Lebanon, asked for US protection. The result, as Kupchan explains, was that *"Eisenhower responded by sending 14,000 marines in Beirut [...] the political challenge to Chamoun subsided without the Marines engaging in combat or leaving the limits of Beirut"*<sup>156</sup>. Even if the 1958 conflict turned to be a short conflict unable to seriously challenge the position of the ethnocratic regime, it represented a first moment of rupture of the previous stability of the system and it showed the importance of the control over Beirut<sup>157</sup>.

A second process was, instead, economic. The economic choice, taken by successive governments from the 1920s to the 1940s, of a laissez-faire economy combined with fast industrialization, caused a rapid economic shift from the rural area to the urban areas and, in particular, to Beirut.

TABLEAU I. — *Evolution de la population active par branche au Liban.*

	1959 *	1970 **
Agriculture .....	220.000 (49 %)	102.000 (19 %)
Industrie .....	87.000 (19,3 %)	136.000 (25 %)
Services .....	143.000 (31,7 %)	300.000 (56 %)
Total .....	450.000 (100 %)	538.000 (100 %)
Taux d'activité :		
— par rapport à la population totale .....	28 %	25 %
— par rapport à la population 15-65 ans...	56,2 %	47 %

**Table 7:** We can see here that in the 1960s the population working in the agricultural sector was halved, while population working in the industrial and services sectors increased. This was due to the rapid inner-migration from rural to urban areas. Source: C. Dubar, 1974, p. 307.

<sup>156</sup> C.A. Kupchan, 1987, pp. 18-19.

<sup>157</sup> Chamoun left office at the end of his term in September 1958 and he did not run for a second term. The elections saw, instead, the victory of the Maronite Fu'ad Chehab, who moved from being the General at the head of the Lebanese Army to representing the whole country as President of the Republic from 1958 to 1964.

This choice produced several economic changes. In 1959, 49% of the active population was working in the agricultural sector, while in 1970 it represented only the 19% of the total active population of the country. In the same years, however, the population working in the industrial sector increased, from 19.3% in 1959 to 25% in 1970, and this increase was even more pronounced in the services sector, from 31.7% in 1950 to 56% in 1970 (Dubar, 1974). This was the result of a wave of internal migration from the periphery to the core of the country. Beirut faced the arrival of the Shia, a poor population with a different ethno-religious background, coming from South Lebanon and the Biqa Valley (Dubar, 1974; Gaspard, 2004; Fawaz, 2012). Indeed, in 1970, 29.3% of the population of South Lebanon and 16.9% of the Beqaa Valley migrated to Beirut (Kliot, 1987, p. 63), and from 1950 to 1975 the population of Beirut grew from 300,000 to 1.2 million inhabitants (Fawaz, 2012).

The wave of internal migration toward the capital represented, at the same time, the arrival of a poor population with different ethno-religious background, mostly Shia rural peasants from the Biqa valley and south Lebanon, and the need for a rapid urbanization process to give a home to these new communities.

Then, a third factor is social, and it is represented by the growth of the Shia movement. We mentioned the role of the *"ideology of the mountain"* as an *"ideology of the elite"*, something that is neither completely related only to social class nor only to ethno-religious group. The balance of power between different ethno-religious groups was maintained by the elite of each of them. However, the monopolization of the political power of the Shia under the six landowning families, mentioned above, changed with the process of industrialization. Again Nasr notes that: *"more than 40 percent of the rural population had migrated by 1975. In the south, migration was more than 60 percent"*<sup>158</sup>. This process was accompanied by the emergence of a new bourgeoisie that in the 1970s widened its activities. As

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<sup>158</sup> S. Nasr, 1985, p. 11.



Nasr highlights: *"Shi'i overseas capital now entered the banks, industries and large business concerns. Finally, a new Shi'i elite emerged, including religious figures, politicians and financiers"*<sup>159</sup>.

A leading figure in this social change was Musa Sadr. As an innovative and progressive religious figure, Musa Sadr was able to defeat, in the streets and at local elections, both the elite of landowners and reactionary clergy that had been co-opted as local agents for the ethnocratic regime emerged from the National Pact in 1943 (Nasr, 1985, p. 12).

Building on the analysis developed by Nasr, I can say that the Shia social movement passed through a first phase of *"incubation"*, characterized by the election of Musa Sadr as head of the Supreme Shia Council (SSC) on May, 22nd, 1969; a second phase of *"organization"* and definition of a political strategy, with the formulation on June, 6th, 1973, of a list of 16 demands for the central government; and a third phase of *"mobilization"*, characterized by the creation in 1974 of the *"Harakat al Mahrumin"* (the Movement of the Dispossessed), and the overall spontaneous popular struggle for civil rights. What is important to notice is that the *"Harakat al Mahrumin"* gathered people coming from different ethno-religious groups. Nasr reports that the social goals of the movement were: *"to challenge the monopoly of privilege, to achieve a fairer distribution of wealth, to struggle against confessional and regional inequality"*, while the political goals were: *"to increase the national role of the Shia and their political and religious leadership and to force to adopt a serious national defense policy"*<sup>160</sup>.

What was really happening is that, in the same way in which the Maronites replaced the Druzes as the leading ethno-religious community of the sanjak of Mount Lebanon, the Shia risked to do the same with the Maronites at a national level. The policies of control of

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

the ethnocratic regime were not able to contain the advance of the Shia, and the contemporaneous presence of Palestinian refugees in Beirut.

All together these three factors progressively moved the ambitions of the marginalized populations from the periphery of the State to the main arena of political struggle: the city of Beirut. Geopolitical processes revived the strength and role of Arab nationalism; economic processes brought a huge number of migrants from the rural areas of Lebanon to the capital<sup>161</sup>; and the rise of the Shia movement captured the frustration of the people living at the margins of the Lebanese society and catapulted their uneasiness on the table of the central government.

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<sup>161</sup> From 1950 to 1975 it is estimated that the population of Beirut grew from 300,000 to 1.2 millions inhabitants. Source: M. Fawaz, 2012, *Notes sur l'historiographie de Beyrouth: pour une histoire populaire de la ville*, in E. Longuenesse, C. Pieri (Ed.), 2011, *Des banlieues à la ville. Espaces et acteurs de négociation urbaine*, Nouvelle édition, Beyrouth, Liban.

### 2.2.3. The fall of the State and the survival of the ethnocratic regime (1975-1990)

*"We will get our enemies. This town has no escape route. It is a one-way city. On one side there's the sea, and we control the east. We will advance westward with a vast circular movement. We'll empty the pockets of habitation, one after the other. Then we'll bomb the airport south of the city, and the circle will be closed. After three days of intense bombardment, they'll all be taken: imprudent friends living on the other side, enemies, self-proclaimed neutrals, all of them. It will be clean and definitive. There will be a victor and a vanquished, and we'll be able to talk, to reconstruct the country from a new base"*  
E. Adnan, *Sitt Marie Rose*, p. 33<sup>162</sup>.

In the decade preceding the civil war, several important political developments happened that need to be addressed. First, Chamoun's radical approach to politics was replaced by a more open-minded vision for Lebanon, supported by the newly elected Maronite President and Former General of the Lebanese Army, Fu'ad Chehab. As President of the Republic from 1958 to 1964, Chehab replaced the authoritarian methods of government of Chamoun and envisioned a different role for the State, able, at the same time, to create a sectarian balance in the political arena and actively work to reduce regional disparities through infrastructural policies and social reforms mainly in the fields of social security, healthcare and education.

Chehab was aware of the turmoil that was affecting the Middle East, at a regional scale, and tried to use social policies and development as a means for reducing tensions among rival factions of the Lebanese society. As Traboulsi reports:

*"the State played an active role in regional development and in the modification of the social distribution of economic growth. Sizeable funds were spent on building an economic infrastructure and unifying the domestic market via road construction and bringing water and electricity to remote villages - thus fuelling accusations that Chehab had depleted the treasury. Hospitals were built in rural areas and for agricultural development"* (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 141).

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<sup>162</sup> Full reference: E. Adnan, 1982 (US edition), *Sitt Marie Rose*, The Post-Apollo Press, Sausalito, CA.

However, this approach brought him oppositions from various political actors. On one side of the political spectrum, the Phalangist Party criticized him for his policies toward marginalized communities; while, on the diametrically opposite side, Kamal Junblatt, leader of the mostly Druze Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), wanted an immediate abolition of rules of ethno-religious affiliation, rather than compromising to achieve a sectarian balance within the political realm.

In addition to this, opposition to Chehab's policies came from three major directions:

*"First, a large section of the oligarchy, in both its Muslim and Christian factions, rejected any infringement on its rents and profits, in order to safeguard its mid- and long-range interests. Second, the 'political feudalists' reacted negatively against the new forms of patronage exercised by the Chehabist 'services' and to their own reduced influence in the administration. Third, Maronite autonomism was challenged by what appeared as the State's bias toward Muslims and by increased State intervention in society" (Traboulsi, 2007, pp. 141-142).*

Both the economic and geopolitical developments of those years did not help but to exacerbate the already tensed situation. At the economic level, the crash in 1966 of the Intra Bank, the then largest financial institution of Lebanon and the whole Middle East, produced a severe economic recession and in a State like Lebanon, described by some as a country *"run as a company"* (Khalaf, 1976, p. 44), this only further increased the intrinsic *"centripetal economy of the country which made of the whole of Lebanon a 'belt of misery' round Beirut"* (Khalaf, 1976, p. 43).

At a geopolitical level, in 1967 the six-day war further displaced the Palestinians in various countries of the Levant and the expulsion of the Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (OLP)'s members from Jordan in 1970, made of Lebanon the only possible destination for the group. For Lebanon, the increasing numbers of Palestinians represented a potential risk for the

already fragile demographic balance of the country. The Phalange Party strongly opposed any form of normalization of the Palestinian status within Lebanon, and to these days, the vast majority of Palestinians do not hold the Lebanese citizenship and do not have equal access to the job market. Furthermore, the presence of armed Palestinian groups, like the OLP, that could collaborate with the Lebanese opposition against the government, represented a second and even greater threat for the elite in power. Two ideas of "national security" clashed:

*"Junblatt and his nationalist allies on the one hand, and the Phalange and their allies, on the other, were disputing two contradictory versions of security. A partisan of a strong state based on an army backed by right-wing militias, opposed to any kind of reform, the Phalange party was only repeating, in a situation of crisis, its function as defenders of narrow sectarian privileges in the service of the big class interests. Junblatt, now recognized in the Arab world as the leading Muslim figure in Lebanon, emboldened by Syrian and Egyptian support and fully conscious that the presence of the Palestinian commandos had broken the Maronite 'monopoly of violence', proposed a bargain: moderate socio-economic reforms and more equitable participation by Muslims in managing the state, in return for an amicable limitation of PLO military activities" (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 176).*

In this context, the manifest unequal political representation kept growing in parallel with the progressive awareness of the masses. Gaspard affirms that the Lebanese system is a *"traditional system and conservative system since mostly it has served to concentrate and consolidate the power of the elite, i.e. to maintain the status quo"* and reports also that *"by 1972 and in almost fifty years of parliamentary life, 359 MPs had been elected, of whom a little more than 300 have 'inherited' their seat based on family ties"* (Gaspard, 2004, pp. 60-61). The overlap between the public and private, the political and the economic spheres of the country continued as far as the oligarchy at the core of the ethnocratic regime maintained its hold on power. Traboulsi highlights that:

*"the commercial/financial oligarchy continued to dominate the economy. According to a survey carried out in 1973, 41 of a total of*

*800 families controlled the majority of shares in 103 joint stock companies in trade and services (a third of the total), accounting for 70 per cent of their turnover. Five families among those controlled half of the country's import/export trade. Five agents of European and American companies controlled 22 per cent of the market for the exports of these countries, and 20 merchants controlled 85 per cent of the import of food products. Four of those families belonged to the 'consortium'" (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 157).*

In addition to this, also the standard of living and core-periphery inequalities kept growing. The cost of living doubled from 1967 to 1975 (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 160) and at the end of the 1970s, 79% of the Lebanese citizens lived with a monthly stipend lower than minimum wage (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 161). Furthermore, the disparities as far as income, education and healthcare between the core and the periphery continued to grow. Traboulsi says that:

*"despite the ambitious Chehab reforms, great disparities persisted between centre and periphery. While the annual per capita revenue in Beirut was estimated at \$803, it was \$151 in south Lebanon. Beirut and the surrounding Mount Lebanon totalled 64 per cent of private primary and complementary educational institutions, 73 per cent of those in secondary education and the entirety of university teaching. In the early 1970s, 65 per cent of all medical doctors lived and worked in Beirut, which accounted for 27 per cent of the population; 5.5 per cent were in the south for 18 per cent of the population, and only 3 per cent in the Biqa', where 13 per cent of the Lebanese lived" (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 161).*

The early 1970s saw an increasing amount of strikes throughout Lebanon and renewed ideas for reforms were pushed forward by the Lebanese National Movement, which included various leftist and nationalist organizations pro-Palestinians, headed by Kamal Junblatt. In particular, in 1975 the movement *"issued its 'transitional programme for the democratic reform of the Lebanese system'". Its highlights were the abolition of the system of political and administrative sectarian quotas; a voluntary civil code for personal status; a new electoral law*

*based on proportional representation in which Lebanon would become a single electoral district; extensive administrative decentralisation and the convocation of a constituent assembly on a non-sectarian basis"* (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 189). The leader of the Phalangist Party, Bashir Gemayel, said that this proposal was like *"play with fire"* (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 189). The situation deteriorated even more when the political conflict turned into an armed conflict. On December 6, 1975, members of the Phalangist Party killed around 200 Muslim civilians in the predominantly Christian East Beirut and started *"cleansing"* operations to drive Muslims and Palestinians outside of East Beirut (Traboulsi, 2007, p. 192). In the following months, the conflict grew stronger and the Israeli invasions of 1977 and 1982 further complicated the situation. The collapse of the State affected all spheres of society (Kliot, 1987), to the point that even the Lebanese Army was dismantled, with part of it forming the Lahad Army or South Lebanon Army (SLA), an armed group collaborating with Israel in southern Lebanon against the local population and the Palestinians. Several massacres and ethnic-cleansing campaigns affected Beirut. Approximately 200.000 people were evicted, via these *"cleansing campaigns"*, from the eastern suburbs of Beirut between 1975 and 1976 (Fawaz, Peillen, 2003, p. 2). Furthermore, in September 1982, the Phalange Party, in collaboration with the Israeli Army guided by Ariel Sharon, killed in two days more than 5,000 Palestinians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila.

The conflict exacerbated the urban segregation in Beirut. The so-called Green Line, dividing the predominantly Muslim west-Beirut from the predominantly Christian east-Beirut, was the urban boundary that separated the two conflicting souls of the country. This division was built starting from rules of ethno-religious affiliation. The Phalange Party and the so-called Lebanese Forces (LF), an armed militia headed by Samir Geagea would stop and interrogate civilians passing through east-Beirut and checking their national IDs - which at that time still showed the ethno-religious affiliation of the person - and they would kill on the spot anyone who happened

to have "*Muslim*" written on the ID. On the other side, in west-Beirut, pro-Palestinian forces related to Kamal Junblatt and the nationalist movements would control and interrogate anyone related to the pro-government forces. In this period, many Christians, either Maronites or belonging to other churches stood on the side of the Palestinians and the opposition and lived in west-Beirut, volunteering in the refugee camps and helping the local population. They were as well object of interrogations and arrest at the hand of the Lebanese Forces when they tried to move through Beirut and passed to east-Beirut. They were perceived as *traitors* and were treated as members of the opposition by Geagea and his armed militias.

The instability of the system was something that emerged at various phases from the very formation of the country. The Muslim boycott of the censuses of 1921 and 1932 were already an initial sign of the high potential for conflict enshrined in the very structure of the system. The strikes and protests of the 1930s continued to show signs of the precarious stability of the system, up to the armed conflict of 1958 that saw the direct military intervention of US troops on the ground. At the same time, the conflict was also dividing each community within itself. We mentioned the divisions within the Maronite communities, split between the conciliatory positions of people like Patriarch Meouchi and the social policies of President Chehab, on one side, versus the authoritarian rule of President Chamoun and the radical approach of the Phalange Party.

From 1920 to 1975 there was a constant struggle to maintain stability while being aware of the imminent risk of a rapid and uncontrolled escalation to an open conflict. From 1975 to 1990, the situation precipitated, but the old alliances interested in maintaining the ethnocracy as the law of the land succeeded in keeping their hold on power, despite the collapse of the State, and with the Taif Agreement, that signed the end of the war, the ethnocracy was reshaped, with minor concessions to the opposition, but essentially reinstating itself, and surviving the long years of civil war.



#### 2.2.4. Planning in the post-independence era (1946-1990)

The years that we described in this section on the “*Evolution and challenges to ethnocratic hegemony*” saw the transformation of the territorial structure of the country, led by the centripetal force that the industrial policies of the 1940s had on the active labor force. This centripetal force of the rapid industrialization of Lebanon, produced a transformation in the urban form of the capital Beirut and the rest of the country as a whole.

Even if the growth of Beirut and its capacity to attract labor force from other areas of Lebanon are something that existed since the Ottoman period, the acceleration resulted from laissez-faire economics and industrialization caused an unprecedented urban growth and an overall transformation of the society of Lebanon in an urban society. The lack of economic resources at the periphery of the country, in addition to the low economic possibilities of the agricultural sector, caused a forced urbanization of a large portion of the population of the periphery<sup>163</sup>. For *urban society*, I refer to the general definition elaborated by Lefebvre, who used the term *urban society* to identify “*the society that results from industrialization, which is a process of domination that absorbs agricultural production*” and, more generally, it is a form of society that “*results from a process of complete urbanization*”<sup>164</sup>. The process of industrialization and urbanization of society and space is described by Lefebvre as a “*critical phase*”, which represents a “*blind field*”<sup>165</sup> or a “*black box*”: “*we know what enters the box, and sometimes we see what comes out, but we don’t know what goes on inside*”<sup>166</sup>. These years represented, indeed, a *critical phase* not only because of the dynamics that are intrinsic to the process of industrialization and urbanization that characterize a capitalist mode of production, but also because these are the years in which - in addition to the difficulties peculiar to a capitalist

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<sup>163</sup> See Figure 21 in the next page.

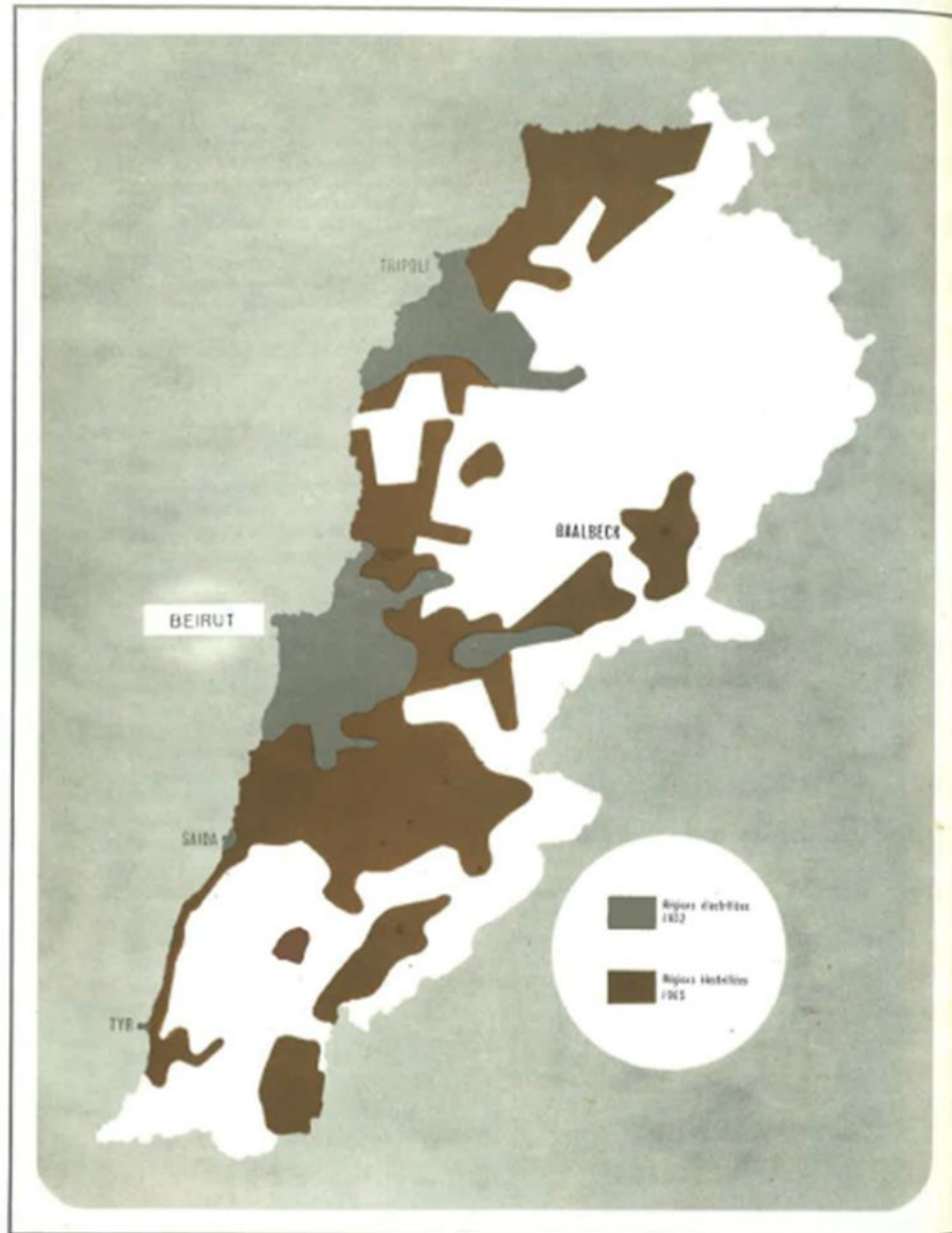
<sup>164</sup> H. Lefebvre, 1970, pp. 1-2.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., p. 17.



## ELECTRIFIED REGIONS IN LEBANON



**Figure 22:** Areas with Electricity in 1952 (grey) and 1965 (brown). This image shows the strong disparity in access to government-run electricity between the core and the periphery. Even if we see an important improvement between 1952 and 1965, vast portions of the periphery were still without any State-provided electricity. Source: Comprehensive Plan Studies for the City of Beirut, 1968, p. 68.

system - we see that ethnocratic control rules added an extra layer in the process, a critical dimension within Lefebvre's blind field, which is peculiar to regions that Yiftachel looks at to identify a "*South-Eastern perspective*" to planning theory.

Lefebvre explains that the responsibility of the scholar is to explain this transformation. As he says:

*"it is the analyst's responsibility to identify and describe the various forms of urbanization and explain what happens to the forms, functions, and urban structures that are transformed by the breakup of the ancient city and the process of generalized urbanization".*

We can say that the colonization of urban space initiated in the period of the French Mandate through toponymic inscriptions, adoption of French planning laws, and restructuring of the urban fabric and grid, continues in the post-independence era and it is accompanied by ethnocratic control rules that implement an anthropoemic strategy to deal with the Other. As we described this strategy in the section on informality of the theoretical framework, the anthropoemic strategy creates "*emic places*" resulting from the process of "*barring physical contact*" with the Other and manifesting themselves as hyper-segregated urban formations. This is a process that is characteristic of Balandier's "*colonial situation*", as we mentioned the aspect of "*domination or assimilation*" typical of the "*dual history*" that affects colonial societies. What stands out, though, is that we are in the post-colonial era. Thus, a "*colonial situation*" is reproduced thanks to the ethnocratic structure of the State. We could, indeed, talk of an *ethnocratic situation*, both for the case of Lebanon and of Israel/Palestine. This new ethnocratic perspective gives us the possibility to see in a clearer way through the "*blind field*". We can say that the anthropoemic strategy adopted with the creation of the State - which included several minorities as an inferior ethno-class through a relation of exception at the margin of both the physical State and the national identity - continued in the post-independence era with the

production of urban areas beyond the formality of the State. The structural core-periphery relation, existing at the national level, was urbanized. The urbanization of such a relation of exception produced Beirut southern suburbs as the urban periphery for the inferior ethno-class. While the Sunni bourgeois class underwent a process of *assimilation*, the inferior ethno-class remained under a relation of *domination*, either by living at the periphery of the country or when this relation was urbanized and found its physical space.

At the national level, we see also the progressive retrenchment of the State from basic sectors, such as education and healthcare, which remain to these days mostly private. Also as far as national planning, the initiative of the State is minimal and focused mostly in the capital, with a planning and funding system strongly centralized. In this situation, peripheral areas are left behind in terms of development, and local communities and administrations need to organize and plan for themselves in the absence of national planning initiatives.

Furthermore, even if the French withdrew, major urban plans that we see in these years are still developed by French architects and planners, like Écochard, or foreign experts, like the Swiss architect Ernst Egli, that continued to produce plans that combined the colonial planning culture and the then dominating ideas of the European rationalist movement expressed through the CIAMs<sup>167</sup>. As far as Écochard, his main focus revolved around the idea of the property of the urban soil, as he criticized speculation as *“un obstacle réel à une organisation rationnelle du territoire”*<sup>168</sup>. His rationalist views presupposed a role of the State that differed from the role that the Lebanese State always played and that the ethnocratic regime envisioned for it. While Écochard believed that *“il fallait, à tout prix, venir à la défense des masses qui mourraient dans*

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<sup>167</sup> For a detailed analysis of the work of Ernst Egli and Michel Écochard or the role of Louis-Joseph Lebreton and the Institut de recherche et de formation en vue du développement (IRFED) refer to M. Ghorayeb 1994, 1997, 1998, and to E. Verdeil 2011.

<sup>168</sup> See *L'urbanisme aujourd'hui. Mythes et réalité. Débat entre Henri Lefebvre, Jean Balladur et Michel Écochard*, in Les Cahiers du Centre d'Études Socialistes, No. 72-73, September 1967, p. 25.

*les bidonvilles et il fallait intervenir très vite*<sup>169</sup> and that “*quand un homme naît dans notre pays, il doit avoir droit au logement, ce qui doit amener une révision complète de l’aide à la construction, conduisant à la réalisation d’un habitat locatif et non pas d’un habitat privé, appartenant à chaque individu*”<sup>170</sup>, the ethnocratic regime had no plans neither to “*defend the masses living in the bidonvilles*” nor to “*realize public housing instead of private housing, belonging to each individual*”. The Lebanese State never seriously planned at the national level based on national needs, rather it created what we can call *administrative boxes*, in which local administrators were left the role to act towards the central government to ask for funding. They had to understand the needs of their *administrative box* and plan accordingly, without the State. This way, in addition to the uneven geographical development produced by a capitalist structure, we see an additional element of disparity created by the specific political structure of Lebanon. Thus, the difference in both cultural and social capital of each *administrative box* played a role in creating uneven possibilities for development. Furthermore, the fact that Lebanon did not organize municipal elections between 1963 and 1998 nor parliamentary elections between 1972 and 1992 created a situation in which peripheral regions, starting with an already lower economic, cultural, and social capital, in comparison to the core, were not even in the situation to ask for funding, while vast portions of the periphery were also under Israeli occupation between 1982 to 2000. In the following sections we will see how development at the periphery is something that will happen, in each area differently, starting in the 1990s and more clearly with the liberation from the Israeli occupation in 2000.

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

### **2.3. Post-War Restructuring and Prospects for the Future**

*“Frappé du double langage de la classe dominante des grands financiers américains contemporains de Pierpont Morgan, langage intérieur à la classe et langage extérieur [...] frappé de ce double langage, il y voit la réaction habituelle à toute classe dominante qui sent son prestige atteint et ses privilèges menacés; il lui faut, pour se masquer, confondre son sort avec celui de la Cité ou de la Nation, son intérêt particulier avec l'intérêt public”*

Fernand Braudel, 1958,  
*Histoire et Sciences sociales: La longue durée*, p. 742.

### 2.3.1. Reshaping ethnocracy (1990s)

In September 1989, the major parties involved in the civil war gathered in the city of Taif, in Saudi Arabia, and signed the so-called Taif Agreement, that would later be approved by the Lebanese parliament on November 4th of the same year.

This agreement set the main guidelines for the reorganization of the State for the post-war period. If we read the document, we can see that it focuses on some *"general principles"*, *"political reforms"* and what it calls *"other reforms"*, and key security issues. As far as the *"general principles"*, it states that *"efforts (will be made) to achieve comprehensive social justice through fiscal, economic, and social reform"* (Point i. g.) and that the citizens of the country *"may not be categorized on the basis of any affiliation whatsoever and there shall be no fragmentation, no partition, and no repatriation [of Palestinians in Lebanon]"* (Point i. h.).

The *"political reforms"* focus on the redistribution of powers between the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, and the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, and the increase of the number of deputies from the 99 of the 1972 election to 108, with an equal distribution between Muslims and Christians (Point ii. 6). The number of deputies will be later increased to 128 for the elections of 1992, maintaining a 50% distribution between Muslims and Christians. An interesting political reform was the idea of having parliamentary elections for the Chamber of Deputies on a non-sectarian basis and, in parallel, create a Senate with sectarian representation (Point ii, 7). This reform has never been implemented and to these days the seats in the parliament are still distributed based on ethno-religious affiliation and there is no Senate (Majlis Ash Shuyukh). The idea of going beyond rules of ethno-religious affiliation is something that the authorities said from the very formation of the State in 1920, and it is something that was reiterated also after the independence in 1943. In a way, it is a political



reform that is always mentioned, but always in relation to an unspecified future. The Taif Agreement follows the same political narrative as it states that:

*"Abolishing political sectarianism is a fundamental national objective. To achieve it, it is required that efforts be made in accordance with a phased plan. The Chamber of Deputies election the basis of equal sharing by Christians and Muslims shall adopt the proper measures to achieve this objective and to form a national council which is headed by the president of the republic and which includes, in addition to the prime minister and the Chamber of Deputies speaker, political, intellectual, and social notables. The council's task will be to examine and propose the means capable of abolishing sectarianism, to present them to the Chamber of Deputies and the cabinet, and to observe implementation of the phased plan. The following shall be done in the interim period:*

*a. Abolish the sectarian representation base and rely on capability and specialization in public jobs, the judiciary, the military, security, public, and joint institutions, and in the independent agencies in accordance with the dictates of national accord, excluding the top-level jobs and equivalent jobs which shall be shared equally by Christians and Muslims without allocating any particular job to any sect.*

*b. Abolish the mention of sect and denomination on the identity card".*  
(Point ii. g.)

Of course, none of the above has been implemented, beside marginal attempts. For instance, as far as identity cards, the mention of sect is not indicated anymore only on permanent identity cards, while it is still present on temporary identity cards (Ikhraj al qaid). This narrative is something that persists in official documents. The idea of going beyond rules of ethno-religious affiliation is mentioned here and there but there is no serious reform in that direction.

Among the *"other reforms"*, the agreement poses the attention on the need to implement *"administrative decentralism"* and give more responsibility to *"smaller administrative units"* (Point iii. 4), as well as improving both private and public education and the information media.

Finally, the agreement highlights the road towards the reorganization of the Internal Security Forces and the Lebanese Army and stresses the importance of *"liberating Lebanon from Israeli occupation"*, saying that Lebanon should take:

*"all the steps necessary to liberate all Lebanese territories from the Israeli occupation, to spread state sovereignty over all territories, and to deploy the Lebanese army in the border area adjacent to Israel; and making efforts to reinforce the presence of the UN forces in South Lebanon to insure the Israeli withdrawal and to provide the opportunity for the return of security and stability to the border area"* (Third section, Point c).

On the basis of this agreement, in 1992 the first parliamentary elections were held, after 20 years (the last elections were held in April 1972). At the elections only 30.3% of registered voters casted their votes, which means 25.5% of the total population (Scheffler, 2001, pp. 183-184). It is interesting to notice that the areas with the highest participation were the areas of the periphery, the Biqa and the south, mainly inhabited by Shia. The distribution of votes casted on the total number of registered voters was the following: Beirut 16.2%, Mount Lebanon 22.2%, North 30.8%, South 38%, and Biqa 46% (Scheffler, 2001, p. 188). It is also interesting to notice that the south and the Biqa have always had the highest participation to parliamentary elections in the post-independence period, since 1943. This data seems to show a stronger propensity and interest for political participation in the Shia community.

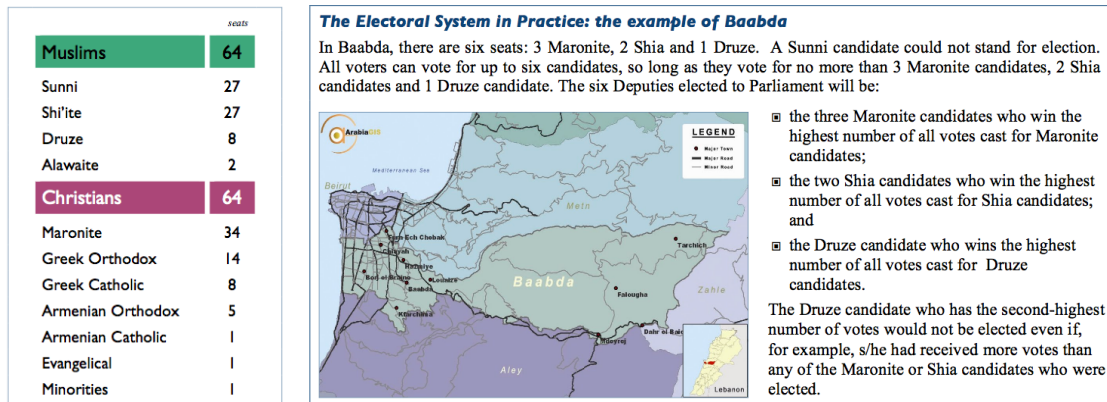


Figure 23 and 24: Lebanese Electoral System.

The following period (1992-1998) signed the emergence of Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, a Lebanese multi-millionaire, as the key figure in the reconstruction of Beirut and the development of a new vision for Lebanon. Hariri represented the perfect figure for the ethnocratic regime. He had positive connections with the West, strong and direct economic ties with Saudi Arabia, and a clear neoliberal approach. His rule saw the creation of a plurality of neoliberal spaces throughout Beirut. Both Western and Gulf countries invested in the new Beirut envisioned by Hariri. As Prime Minister he represented the perfect compromise to reinstate the Maronite-Sunni alliance of the National Pact of 1943 and project it to the following decades. Indeed, instead of progressively disappearing, the ethnocratic regime was able to reinforce itself by co-opting the secular, bourgeois, and neoliberal section of the Sunni community. In this period the economic polarization between upper and lower classes increased exponentially. In the table below, we can see how Maroun divides the population into three groups: low-income class, middle class, and upper class. Before the civil war there was a solid 60% belonging to the middle-class, with 20.4% of the population within the low-income class and 19.5% in the upper class. The effects of the civil war strongly influenced the social stratification of the 1975-1990 period and in 1992 the situation was already drastically different from the period before the war. The middle class was reduced to 40.2% of the population, with

a 49.5% within the low-income class, and only 10.3% in the upper class. However, this situation only worsened in the years of Hariri's government. In fact, from 1992 to 1999, the middle class kept reducing to 29.3%, the low-income class became three times as big as it was before the war, reaching 61.9% of the population, and the upper class reduced both in quality and quantity, reduced to 8.8% of the total population and with a lower monthly income per household.

Tableau 3		Répartition des ménages au Liban par classes suivant leurs revenus, et la catégorie socio-professionnelle du chef de ménage entre 1974 et 1999.				
Année	Classe des revenus bas		Classe des revenus moyens		Classe des revenus supérieurs	
	En % du total des ménages	Limite supérieure du revenu mensuel par ménage (L.L.)	En % du total des ménages	Revenu mensuel par ménage (L.L.)	En % du total des ménages	Revenu mensuel par ménage (L.L.)
1974	20,4	385	60,1	385 - 1.293	19,5	1.293 et +
1988	57,7	34.916	38,3	34.916 - 124.916	4,0	124.916 et +
1992	49,5	666.670	40,2	666.670 - 1.500.000	10,3	1.500.000 et +
1997	54,6	1.200.000	29,7	1.200.000 - 3.200.000	15,7	3.200.000 et +
1999	61,9	1.200.000	29,3	1.200.000 - 2.400.000	8,8	2.400.000 et +

Source: Les chiffres de ce tableau ont été calculés à partir des données fournies par:  
 -L'enquête réalisée dans le cadre de l'USJ et supervisée par Yves Schemel pour l'année 1974.  
 -Les enquêtes effectuées par MASS Institute (Reach - Mass) en 1988, 1992 et 1999 sur échantillons respectifs de 1417, 1495, et de 1201 ménages.  
 -L'enquête réalisée en 1997 par l'Administration Centrale de la Statistique (ACS) sur un échantillon de 16.330 ménages.

**Table 1:** Source: Maroun, 2000

In parallel to the political and economic developments of the 1990s, South Lebanon was still under Israeli occupation and the central government did not take the “*necessary measures*” to assure the safety of its citizens living under occupation, contrary to what the Taif agreement stated. As we will see in the next section, it is only through the military activities of the Lebanese Resistance Movement, Hezbollah, that the Israeli army was progressively forced to retreat throughout the 1990s until the liberation in 2000.

### 2.3.2. Post-Liberation and July War: towards cross-ethnic civic sentiments?

The Lebanese Resistance Movement, Hezbollah, was first founded in 1982 as a reaction to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. People in southern Lebanon could not count on the State to provide safety for their properties and lives and, for this reason, a then small group of local Shia leaders began to think about the possibility to create an armed movement for the liberation of Lebanon. The group did not become active until 1985, when its first military activities began. At the time of the Taif Agreement, all parties agreed that the State should have taken all necessary measures for the liberation of the country, but this, as well as many other ideas contained in the agreement, was not implemented. The population at the periphery of the State was left alone and the occupation was almost treated as a problem of the Shia. This is easy to understand if we look back at the "*attachment/detachment*" debate, but also later with Chamoun, Gemayel, and Geagea's strong intentions for the partition of the country. Even if their plans were not transformed into reality, however, their approach to the country reflected the fact that they never really considered the periphery of Lebanon as an integral component of the State, and the Shia as Lebanese citizens. The prominent role that right-wing movements, like the Lebanese Forces and the Phalange Party, played in the government of the State resulted in a form of institutional indifference towards the plague of the occupation and its deep socio-economic repercussions.

The Resistance was able throughout the 1990s to make the occupation unsustainable for the Israelis and on May 25, 2000, the Israelis were forced towards an unconditional and unilateral withdrawal from the vast majority of the occupied lands in southern Lebanon. The liberation represented a special turning point in the life of Lebanon. The Shia, who have always been the most marginalized and poorest community of the country, were the ones that defended the State and liberated it from a foreign occupation. The paradox is that the State,

which was not created to serve the interests of the Shia and that always neglected their community, was then saved by the very community that was barely considered part of the Lebanese society. This event brought forth the first signs of cross-ethnic civic sentiments. Among the Sunni, Christian and Druze communities, more and more people, especially the youth, began to praise the activities of the Resistance and started to look at themselves from a different perspective. From the creation of the State of Israel, the Arabs always felt impotent towards its advance and military might. The continuous lost wars and battles, from 1948 to the six-day war, spread a sense of resignation and the idea of the loss of their own lands as a progressive, unstoppable, and inevitable process. The liberation changed all of this. The images and flags of the Resistance could be seen in various parts of Beirut and the country and its leader, Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah, entered the popular culture as a positive example of Arab leadership, to the point that the renowned Lebanese Christian Maronite singer, Julia Boutros, even dedicated a famous song to him entitled "*The most honorable man*".

This way, Lebanon experienced fundamental changes that led the country in a new direction by forming what Howard calls "*cross-ethnic civic sentiments*" that need, however, a prepared institutional basis on which to redesign the country beyond the paradigm of ethnocracy (Howard, 2012, p. 167). After 2000, the institutional basis was still precarious and geopolitical forces put at risk the shift towards a possible democratic reform of the system. The terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center opened a new phase in global politics, signed by the so-called "*Bush Doctrine*", which enlisted Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Iran among what it called the "*rogue states*". After intervening in Afghanistan and Iraq, the goal of the Bush administration and its allies was, then, to weaken the so-called "*axis of the resistance*" (Hezbollah-Syria-Iran). We know how important deterrent is in geopolitics and after the liberation of 2000, Lebanon only had two deterrents against any further Israeli invasion: 1) the Lebanese Resistance; and 2) the presence of the Syrian Army in Lebanon. This way, Israel knew that any initiative in Lebanon

could represent the entrance into an armed conflict with both Lebanon and Syria simultaneously, and this represented a deterrent that prevented an armed conflict in the early 2000s. In 2005, however, the assassination of former Prime Minister, Rafiq Hariri, was used as an opportunity by the ethnocratic regime to push for the expulsion of the Syrian Army from the Lebanese territory. It took, then, less than a year and in July 2006 Israel brought a new war to Lebanon with the goal of eliminating what was believed to be the weakest point of the *"axis of the resistance"*, namely Hezbollah. During the war, members of the parliament, like MP Boutros Harb, collaborated with Israel, suggesting to occupy at the first possible occasion Bint Jbeil, the city of southern Lebanon where the celebrations for the liberation were held and which represented an iconic place for the Shia Resistance Movement. At the end of 33 days of war, Israel and its allies were not able to achieve their goals and the development of cross-ethnic civic sentiments grew even stronger with the consolidation of the political alliance between the Maronite party headed by Michel Aoun, the Free Patriotic Movement, and the Shia movement. This political alliance has visible effects in the society because it improved the relationship between Maronite and Shia communities and, more importantly, it strengthened a feeling of mutual trust between these two different ethno-religious groups.

The parliamentary elections of 2009 saw, however, a new victory of the forces representing the ethnocratic regime, which were able to take advantage of the rules of ethno-religious affiliation that govern the elections and, hence, the institutional basis that can lead to a change in the system remains missing to these days.

### 2.3.3. Impediments of ethnocracy (2013-2016): waiting for... a President

Ethnocracy itself, as a political reality, creates a condition in which different ethnic groups are antagonists to each other. Their mutual relation is intrinsically rooted into antagonism and competition. After the 2009 elections, the balance of power has never been solid enough neither to allow the majority in power to govern undisturbed nor the opposition to take the lead. This situation of political impasse is well represented by the inability of the parliament to elect a new President of the Republic. The 14 March alliance and the 8 March alliance, the strongest in the parliament, the first, and the one leading the opposition, the second, proposed each their candidate, respectively Geagea and Aoun. However, no one seems able and/or willing to elect their respective candidate.

The war that started in Syria in 2011 further complicated the situation, because geopolitical instability makes any decision taken in Lebanon a potential risk for wider regional conflict. The political impasse degenerated in the summer of 2015, when the municipality of Beirut was not able to manage even the garbage collection and the city started to be covered by garbage at any street corner. Even in this situation the government showed its inability to function properly and to face the situation, and street protests grew stronger in the capital. This is only one small example that shows how the impediments forced by the ethnocratic regime on the whole country do not allow its citizens neither to fully participate in the life of the country, nor to have their basic rights and services.

At the beginning of 2016, the candidate of the 14 March alliance, Samir Geagea, in a surprise decision, unexpectedly announced his support for the candidate of the 8 March alliance, Michel Aoun. Given the old age of Aoun, this is seen by many as an attempt to bandwagon the most popular Christian Maronite leader and to become his future political heir. In any way, in the first



months of 2016, Lebanon still has no President of the Republic, while the garbage left on the dry banks of the river around Beirut during the summer is still there.







**Figures 25, 26, 27 and 28:** Garbage around Beirut. Source of the images: Al Alam.

#### 2.3.4. Planning in the post-civil war era (1990-2016)

The production of space in the period of transition from the civil war to the post-civil war era provides us with an interesting image of the process of reconstruction of the territory and the restructuring of the *formal* national identity. It is in this period that the State had to reorganize itself and decide, more or less directly, and more or less consciously, which image to assign to itself and the nation.

This was certainly not an easy task because of the length and effects of the war. The civil war in Lebanon lasted for fifteen years (1975-1990) and affected all sectors of society. The country was fragmented into various areas of influence, each of which controlled by an armed militia. While the population could feel relatively safe inside the urban and territorial *boxes* dominated by armed groups that, either on a political basis or an ethno-religious basis, represented them, conflict was a constant risk at the urban fringes where the clear dominance of a single group was still contested.

The situation was further aggravated by the dismantlement of the Lebanese Army. Part of the regular army reorganized and became known as the South Lebanon Army (SLA) or Lahad Army, taking its name from its chief general, Antoine Lahad, which allied with the Israeli forces in southern Lebanon; while the rest of the soldiers of the army aligned each with the armed militias operating in their town or region of origin.

In this complex situation, the capital Beirut was separated on a north-south axis, the Green Line, which divided the city into a mostly Christian Eastern sector and a mostly Muslim Western sector. Furthermore, the contemporary presence of Israeli forces, Syrian military, and Palestinian refugees was an additional element of instability.

We mentioned how this period of prolonged conflict ended after the various factions involved signed the Taif Agreement in 1989. Although the structural causes of the conflict were

not addressed by the document, that moment opened the road for a period of relative stability - especially at the core of the country - that, however precarious, gave birth to a first reconstruction phase.

To go beyond a war that left behind approximately 150.000 dead and 300.000 wounded (Makdisi, 1997, p. 664), and that heavily destroyed Beirut, the main efforts focused on the reconstruction of the city centre as a possible place from which a reconstruction of a national identity could have emerged.

Indeed, from this perspective, if we look back at the literature on urban geography that we analyzed at the beginning of the work, we see how authors like Bollens argued that "*cities are the focal point for unresolved nationalistic ethnic conflict*" and they have the possibility to represent "*prisms*" through which conflict can either be magnified or, through positive and shared experiences, they can become the first place from which a broader sense of coexistence can spread to the rest of the country (Bollens, 1998, p. 189; and Bollens, 2007, p. 248).

In 1994 the former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri founded "*Solidere*" or "*Société libanaise pour le développement et la reconstruction de Beyrouth*"<sup>171</sup> with the aim of guiding the reconstruction. This was but the last attempt of a ten year process. In fact, in 1983, in a period of relative stability in the midst of the war, Rafik Hariri had already started to propose the first plans to rebuild the downtown area of the city with his private company, OGER Liban. In these initial plans we see already some traits and policies that characterized also the work of Solidere.

The main idea was to create a *tabula rasa* on which to build, from scratch, a new financial and economic centre with spaces dedicated for conventions, luxury hotels and high-rises oriented toward an international audience. From this standpoint, the existing urban fabric and existing population was left outside of any decision-making process. The political and economic approach presented by Hariri in the 1980s became known as "*Harirism*" and it represented a set

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<sup>171</sup> The Lebanese Company for the Development and Reconstruction of Beirut.

of ideas appealing to the population that later elected Hariri as Prime Minister in 1992 (Makdisi, 1997, p. 670).



**Figure 29:** Map of the 1991 Reconstruction Plan for the center of Beirut. Source: Beyhum, 1992; reference in Makdisi, 1997, p. 673.

Being the Prime Minister and at the same time the chief of the only reconstruction company entitled for the reconstruction of the city centre gave a privileged position to Hariri, who was able to develop his company as a joint-company granted by his government with special eminent domain powers. The company was granted exclusive real-estate rights in the area of the reconstruction. Even if this facilitated the reconstruction in bureaucratic terms, people raised concerns over issues of conflict of interest and over the possible unconstitutional nature of the overall process (Makdisi, 1997, p. 672).

Another issue is related to the involvement of the inhabitants and the attitude towards pre-existing buildings. First, the inhabitants of the area were given only the possibility to join the company as stakeholders in exchange of leaving all property rights to Solidere. People who refused lost their property rights without any form of indemnification, and those who joined the company never received an amount close to the value of their properties. Second, the plan did not consider the possibility of reuse or renovation of historical buildings of the city centre. Demolition started already by OGER Liban in the 1980s, continued under the work of Solidere to the point that Makdisi ironically affirms that: *"more buildings have been demolished than in almost twenty years of artillery bombardment and house-house combat"* (Makdisi, 1997, p. 662).

This process described as *"Berytus Delenda Est"* (Makdisi, 1997, p. 666) resulted in the reconstruction of the core of the capital as a *"non-place"*<sup>172</sup>, in which the identity of the city was erased to make room for a neoliberal space in which the elite in power could mirror itself. To a certain extent Solidere represented a case in which *"state and capital [were] incorporated as one and the same force or process defined by the same discourse (Harirism)"* (Makdisi, 1997, p. 698).

The plan implemented by Solidere was inspired by a clear neoliberal approach. As Georges Corm said: *"Enrichissez-vous! Tel semble bien être le coeur de l'idéologie de la reconstruction"* (Corm, 1994, p. 85)<sup>173</sup>. Furthermore, the implementation of the reconstruction plan caused also the displacement of poor strata of the population that occupied the buildings left empty during the war. In this case, the rush toward profit was so high that on February 16th, 1996, a Solidere demolition crew brought down a building killing the family of squatters that was still living inside of it (Makdisi, 1997, p. 700). The people that successfully survived the displacement resettled in the southern suburbs of Beirut.

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<sup>172</sup> The concept of *"non-place"* is elaborated by the French anthropologist Marc Augé in: M. Augé, 2009, *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity*, Verso, London and New York.

<sup>173</sup> "Get rich! Such seems to be the heart of the ideology of the reconstruction", cit. in Makdisi, 1997, p. 692.

Overall this experience of urban reconstruction followed a very top-down approach that centralized all political and economic power in the hands of one person, Hariri, and his clientele. On one side, the reconstruction developed at a relatively fast pace and it created economic centres and areas for new business that helped boost the economy and improve employment opportunities after the war; on the other, however, the cost of the removal of bureaucratic aspects was very high. Population was displaced from the area, people owning properties either lost it or were not adequately compensated and, ultimately, the biggest loss was given by the use of a public good as the playground for private interests and the vanished possibility to use the core of the capital as a "*prism*" of coexistence by showing the rebirth of a national identity and the creation of a space able to represent the society as a whole.

The result that we see today is a downtown with new buildings built in a false historical style, with luxury stores and shopping malls. The area remains almost completely empty at any time of the day and the entrance to it is heavily militarized with the presence of the Lebanese Army all around it. Overall, the area had an immense potential and the idea to prioritize it to create a place for positive coexistence was a correct approach. However, the design and implementation of the project, ultimately, created what Bauman would call an "*empty space*"<sup>174</sup>, intended as a place characterized by physical constructions empty of meaning for the collectivity.

While the reconstruction of downtown Beirut was underway, other parts of the country began to experience the first attempts toward community development and planning. With the first municipal elections of 1998, municipalities around the country were given the possibility to reorganize themselves. At the periphery of the country, I found that the main projects of this period involved basic projects for the community, such as the construction of a city hall, the

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<sup>174</sup> For a thorough explanation of the concept of "*empty space*" refer to: Z. Bauman, 2000, *Liquid Modernity*, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK, p. 101.



organization of garbage collection and waste disposal, the channeling of water for agricultural use, the construction of electric facilities able to make up for the gaps in the distribution of government-run electricity, as well as the pavement of main roads, the construction of health facilities, schools, and sports centers.

In this process, each municipality depended on the ability, credibility, organization and reliability of its own mayor to formulate clear demands to the locally elected MP, who, in turn, had to be as well reliable, organized, and willing to negotiate the approvation and funding of local projects in Beirut at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. This structure of power makes it so that local communities are the ones that need to do the first step to understand their local needs, plan for themselves, and create funding applications and requests to the central government; otherwise, the State, by itself, would not commence any planning initiative by itself. The lack of an updated census is certainly a major obstable that does not allow the central government to know its population and, hence, its local needs. In this situation, each area develops at a differential pace, according to the ability of each local political organization to initiate a process of local development.

Among the various areas visited at the periphery of the country, I was able to understand, by talking to the local population and administrators, that the municipalities of Anjar, Maqne and Hermel seem to represent for the population of the Beqaa valley examples of best practices. For the population of the south, I found that Nabatiyye was looked at as a positive example of local administration. While in the north of the country, I found contrasting views regarding local administrations and, in particular, the general idea that seemed to emerge is that Tripoli could play a stronger role at the national level if the administration were able to take advantage of existing infrastructures (i.e. the port) and develop new ones<sup>175</sup>.

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<sup>175</sup> Of course, what I am stating here should be taken as a general indication, because the number of people interviewed is not sufficient to develop any generalizable conclusion; however, this seemed to me the local





**Figure 30:** City Hall of the City of Maqne, Beqaa Valley. The local administration, after the municipal elections of 1998, bought a piece of land and built the building that you see at the center of the picture, in addition to a wide open space behind it where local inhabitants can gather. Author: Nabil Nazha.

Another interesting aspect that emerged from the fieldwork is the need of local administrations to find funding sources other than the State. Each municipality can take advantage of the local tax on properties and commercial activities. This is an annual tax that local inhabitants pay in relation to the dimension of their properties (i.e. houses or stores). However, this tax is very low<sup>176</sup> and municipalities do not have any coercive power to make sure that these taxes are paid. Inhabitants that do not pay are neither solicited to pay nor fined. They may not pay for years. Only when they need official documents from the municipality, the

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perception that I was able to understand from the people that were *formally* interviewed and the many more with whom I had *informal* conversations throughout the six months of fieldwork. This is so because I did not interview people from every single municipality of Lebanon, but few people from each region. In the future it would be interesting to develop a more comprehensive study and interview a large number of mayors and local administrators from various parts of both the periphery and the core of the country.

<sup>176</sup> A household pays average between 20,000 and 50,000 Lebanese Lira per year (approximately between \$13 and \$35).

administration will check and will not provide them documents, unless they pay. This way, it is difficult for small municipalities to count on these forms of local taxes. While in major cities like Beirut, Saida, Tripoli, Zahle, and Baalbek, people pay local taxes, in smaller municipalities it is more difficult for the administration to have a steady revenue to count on. For this reason, municipalities, either individually or within organizations of more municipalities together, need to find other sources of funding. These sources vary considerably from area to area, and they include the European Union, Mercosur, USAID, the Caritas, foreign countries, or other cities worldwide.

While being involved with several projects over the years, local administrators progressively learned to plan. The mayor of the small town of Maqne, in the Beqaa Valley, told me this, in the interview that we had:

*“at the beginning there were no clear plans or projects, they appeared over time based on different situations. Like now, for instance, the idea of doing solar panels, these are ideas that we did not have at the beginning. For this project we gathered together a group of 8 municipalities that wanted to do this: Baalbek, Maqne, Yunin, E’at, Majdalun, Hosh Tal Safiyye, Dures, and Nahle... we proposed the project together, we made studies and analyses to understand if this project could be implemented and in 2016 it should start, God willing”<sup>177</sup>.*

In a very honest way, I have to admit, here the mayor is explaining that after the elections of 1998, we can say that nobody knew what it meant to manage a municipality. The previous elections were held in 1963, almost a generation before. This means that the new class of administrators had to learn how to become mayors and planners, in all aspects that relate to the work, from understanding the needs of the area and develop projects, to manage important

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<sup>177</sup> Interview with Fadi Meqdad, Mayor of Maqne. Date: October 4th, 2015.

fundings from multiple sources, with the difficulty of having a low know-how, especially during the first few years.



**Figure 31:** Above is the Health Center of Maqne. The center includes also a cultural and conference center. The construction costed 1.5 million dollars and the funding came mostly from Caritas and USAID. The center can do mammographies and other exams, which are something that serves a vast part of the population of the Beqaa Valley. Author: Nabil Nazha.

It is interesting to notice that also infrastructural projects, which ideally should be directly funded by the State, instead, are not planned and implemented by the central government, rather the local administrations are the ones that need to find external sources to provide the necessary services to their population.

In the image below, for instance, we can see a new expressway that was built recently, that goes from Baalbek to Labwe, in the northern part of the Beqaa Valley. The project was done

thanks to the collaboration between all the municipalities interested by the passage of the road, the funding came from Iran, and also the engineers that realized the project came directly from Iran.



**Figure 32:** Above you can see one side of the new expressway that connects now Baalbek to Labwe. The sign in Arabic says: “The Iranian people at the service of the Lebanese people”. Author: Nabil Nazha.

In addition to the work of local administrators that had to reimagine themselves as planners and community developers, in order to overcome the lack of State planning initiatives, there is also another aspect related to what seems to be the ability and possibility of each area to make their voice heard. While interviewing Dr. Ali Meqdad, one of the ten members of the Parliament elected from the electoral district of Baalbek-Hermel, he told me this: “for a long time, for 30 or 40 years, all the way to 1992 or 1996 this area was outside of the State agenda.



*Now we are on the map*<sup>178</sup>. This means that, even if starting from a disadvantaged position within the ethnocratic system, over the years, certain groups and communities have been able to improve their condition, to become visible to the central government, or, as Dr. Meqdad said: to *“be on the map”*.

Based on these considerations, we can say that this section of the fieldwork, based on qualitative data, adds to the quantitative descriptive analysis, because it gives us an understanding of the reasons behind the changing numbers over time. While the whole periphery of the country was in a subaltern position from the very formation of the State in 1920 - and this is proved also by the continuing *“attachment/detachment”* debate internal to the Maronite community that, however, today is, for the vast majority, consolidating on the *“attachment”* option - different parts of the periphery developed at a different rate, based on different local political situations. For instance, the civil war ended for everybody in 1990, however, southern Lebanon remained under Israeli occupation until 2000, so the development of the area was slower. Nevertheless, the fact that municipal elections were not held until 1998, caused an overall slow development at the periphery in the 1990s. It is only after 2000, with the liberation, that we see a bigger difference. In those years, up to our days, the development of the periphery has been stronger in the south and the Beqaa valley because of the presence of strong political actors, such as the Amal Movement headed by Nabih Berri, who has been serving as the Speaker of the Parliament since 1992, and has been able to create development, especially in the south; and the Resistance Movement, Hezbollah, that developed a solid system of services provision and produced urban planning initiatives both in the south of the country and in the eastern Beqaa valley. In the north of the country, however, in the absence of strong political actors such as Amal and Hezbollah, development has not been so rapid. In particular, in

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<sup>178</sup> Interview with MP Dr. Ali Meqdad. Date: October 4th, 2015.

the region of Akkar, where all data analyzed before show how this region is, so to speak, *falling out* of the State.

The reasons for the absence of political actors able to act to support the population of northern Lebanon are many and an analysis of them would require us to go beyond the boundaries of this research. What we can say here is that the electoral system of Lebanon creates a situation in which areas with a strong concentration of one single ethno-religious group are more exposed to lower competition at the elections, because each ethno-religious group has its own political party and in areas where there is a strong majority, these parties are practically running alone against themselves. In addition to this, everywhere in Lebanon, ancient feudal families have in turn a strong majority in specific areas. This way, the competition for elections is even more limited and, hence, there is no incentive on the side of the politicians to be seriously proactive towards planning and development for their regions. In reality, development of cultural capital can even endanger their local feudal political hegemony, and this is particularly true for northern Lebanon.

In the Beqaa valley and the south, both the Amal Movement, but even more Hezbollah, have everything to lose by not creating development or failing to do so, because, since the years of Musa Sadr, these movements emerged as counter-hegemonic forces that questioned the legitimacy of the government and the political system, so, once becoming part of the political system, they feel the pressure to show that they are going to act differently from the previous political actors. This is even more accentuated in the case of Hezbollah because it emerged in the early 1980s as a resistance movement to counteract the Israeli occupation. So it had from the very beginning a very strong *revolutionary* character. Today, Hezbollah has 12 MPs in the Parliament and 2 ministers in the government<sup>179</sup> and this situation, on one side, gives them the

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<sup>179</sup> The current ministers are Hussein Hajj Hasan, Minister of Agriculture, and Mohammad Fneish, Minister of State for Administrative Reform.

possibility to influence policies at the core of the country, but, on the other side, it brings them the *burden* of the responsibility to show to the population that they have something to offer that is different from other political parties. Based on my interpretation, it seems to me that it is, indeed, this idea that they have more to lose, than other political parties, by not acting enough or failing through their policies, that brought them to act in a more organized way and at a faster pace in comparison to other political groups and this seems visible when we do a comparison of the various areas of the periphery and we see that the areas where they have a political majority have been developing more than other areas of the periphery.

In conclusion, we can briefly do a reflection here about the production of space of the post-civil war era. The core of the country experienced the advent of *Harirism* as a new political and economic ideology. Harirism became what we can call the *new ideology of the city* of the post-civil war era. It was able to represent the common denominator for the various components of the ethnocratic regime, revolving around the figure of the Prime Minister, Rafiq Hariri. While in the years of the Mandate, and later in the post-independence era, the pivotal figure, around whom emerged what Traboulsi calls the “*Consortium*”, was the President of the Republic; in the 1990s the political and economic centripetal force at the core of the ethnocratic regime shifted towards the Prime Minister. Certainly the Taif agreement reduced some of the powers of the President of the Republic and redistributed them to both the Prime Minister and the Speaker of the Parliament; however, I believe that this change in the configuration of the ethnocratic regime was something that was, on one side, necessary<sup>180</sup> to end armed hostilities and, on the other, it had been possible thanks to the *extra*-ordinary character and powers of Hariri. The fact of being a successful businessman with wide political and economic connections both with the

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<sup>180</sup> We can think of the economic crisis of 1929 and the following reorganization of the liberal forces at the Mont Pèlerin Society in order to develop a *neo*-liberal ideology, *necessary* to fix the flaws of the capitalist system and avoid another major economic crisis, while presenting itself as the best alternative path to be undertaken. In the case of Lebanon, the civil war certainly brought to the forefront the idea that the system, as it was, was not tenable anymore, and a restructuring of the ethnocratic regime, within itself, was *necessary*. In this situation, Rafiq Hariri represented the right man at the right time for the elite at the core of the country.

Arab countries of the Gulf and Western powers gave him the *green light* to act with a great level of condescension within the national political framework. From the moment of his assassination in 2005 to these days, no one else has ever had the same *green light* from all major geopolitical actors and this is also one of the many factors that contribute to the current political impasse. On the other side, what we can ask is why a country like Lebanon needs its leader to have this *green light*? Isn't this a sign of the lack of sovereignty and autonomous decision-making power? The analysis of the qualitative data collected during the fieldwork helps to understand these questions. From the interviews with the population of various regions of Lebanon, a recurring phrase that was often said was: "*Ma fi dawle*" [There is no State]. I think that in this simple sentence that represents the perception that the population has of the State, we can read a twofold process. The State is at the same time *absent* and *heavy* for its population. *Absent* because it does not provide basic services to all its population (i.e. healthcare, education, water, electricity, sewage system, road construction and maintenance, public transportation and railways [see Figure 33]), and each community has to count on itself to create development, and both the uneven *position of entrance* in the State and the asymmetric distribution of power and economic, cultural and social capital further exacerbated disparities between different territories and social formations. *Heavy* because it is not open to change and from any minimal proposal of reform can spring a new wave of conflict and violence. On this it is interesting what Carmen Geha, who is Visiting Professor of Public Administration at the American University of Beirut (AUB) and civil society activist, explained in the interview that we had regarding the concepts of "*path dependence*" and "*bounded rationality*".



As she told me:

*"I make a pessimistic projection that it is unlikely, unless there is structural change, that the election system will change in Lebanon because it is path dependant on historical features that are very difficult to overcome. So today, especially from a civil society perspective demanding change, it is difficult because the change would have very high strategic costs on them [the political parties]. So I use them [the concepts of 'path dependence' and 'bounded rationality'] to say that there would not be likely any election reform"<sup>181</sup>.*

And she continued by explaining also the role of ethno-religious affiliation by saying that:

*"Sect is subservient to protection and political recognition. So sect, regardless of which sect, for you to be recognized legally, you are recognized within your sect, to vote within your sect, to get married within your sect, to get divorced within your sect, and so sect is subservient to political interests, people that support political parties are of two types: either because they promote the very wealthy and their private interests or because they need basic protection and services. This is why for example you can meet people from all over Lebanon that will tell you that they are not sectarian but at the end we need to support this guy because he brings electricity and finds job for our children, so this is the reality.*

In the post-civil war era the ethnocratic regime finds its possibility to achieve ethnocratic hegemony only in the presence of a strong man with geopolitical and economic *green light*, like Hariri. We can even say that Hariri was *used* by the ethnocratic regime in order to recreate what Yiftachel calls the "*democratic facade*" of the ethnocratic regime, "*democratic facade*" that was lost with the civil war, together with the ethnocratic hegemony over the whole territory.

Overall, from 2005 onwards, the absence of a strong man with *green light* and the progressive emergence of more and more areas of the periphery that started to "*be on the*

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<sup>181</sup> Interview with Prof. Carmen Geha. Date: September 14th, 2015.

*map*”, brings today serious issues to the ethnocratic regime and its ability to maintain the system as it is.

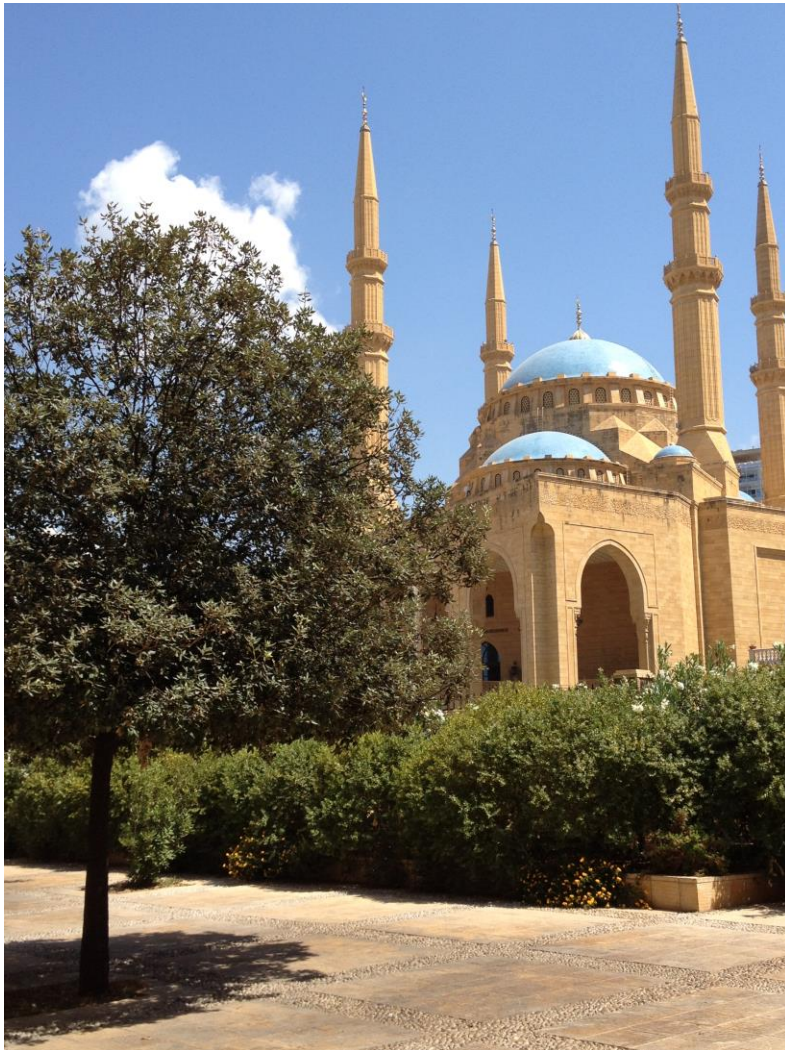


**Figure 33:** The abandoned railway that once connected Beirut to Homs. Today the absence of basic national infrastructures are an ulterior element that reinforces the idea that “*Ma fi dawle*” [There is no State]. Of course, the lack of the railway is due to various geopolitical factors, the main of which is the Israeli presence in the region; however, this situation, in addition to the poor provision of electricity and water to peripheral regions, influences the perception that the population has of the State as *absent*. Photo taken in the area of Labwe. Author: Nabil Nazha.

The production of space of the post-civil war era is, hence, influenced by this political and economic development. At the core of the country, Hariri’s leading force reshapes the *formal* identity of the nation through a *new ideology of the city*. We can say that Lebanese nationalism - that emerged within the Maronite community, who represented the charter group, the founding group of the State and its national identity - was rearranged in the 1990s into a business-oriented neoliberal ideology, which is *Harirism*; and the Sunni bourgeois class of Beirut

in the 1990s moved from being the second co-opted group to representing nowadays a more central role within the system, acting today as the main driving force and agents of the ethnocratic regime.

The construction of the immense Mohammad Al Amin mosque, at the center of Beirut, thanks to a donation from Hariri, represents the physical manifestation of the new reconfiguration internal to the ethnocratic regime, in which the Sunni bourgeois class of Beirut took or, better, were left the possibility to take a more central role in politics because the ethnocratic regime realized the *need* for this internal restructuring in order to maintain a strong hold on power.



**Figure 34:** Al Amin mosque, imposing itself today as an urban landmark of the center of Beirut. Author: Nabil Nazha.

In parallel to the reshaping of ethnocracy at the core of the country, the periphery experienced a different production of space, resulting from the process in which local political actors reimagined themselves as agents for community development. However, the lack of strong political actors like Amal and Hezbollah in the north, created a situation in which today the region of Akkar is the *new* periphery, while southern Lebanon and the Beqaa valley are progressively transforming into a *semi-periphery*.

While the urbanization of the core-periphery relation in the 1940s and 1950s created Beirut southern suburbs as the urban periphery of the nation, in the case-study analysis that follows, I tried to explain how also the new territorial relation given by the emergence of a semi-periphery at the national level is progressively mirrored in the transformation of Beirut southern suburbs into an *urban semi-periphery*. The significance of this case is that it represents a paradigmatic example able to explain the larger historical trajectory of the nation.

## PART 3

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### CASE-STUDY ANALYSIS<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> A version of this case study has been sent for publication under the title: *"Dahiye, Beirut: An Active Space for Social Justice and Resistance. Reimagining Urban Informality in the Light of Growing Urban Marginality"*. Expected publication by the end of 2016 as a chapter within the following handbook: R. Rocco, J.V. Ballegoijen (eds.), 2016, *The Political Meaning of Informal Urbanisation*, Routledge, London, UK.

### **3.1. A Case Study: Dahiye, Beirut: An Active Space for Social Justice and Resistance**

*"To an oppressed and calumniated class of men who with all their faults and under all the disadvantages of their situation, yet command the respect of every one"*

Friedrich Engels, 1844 (1987 ed.),  
*The condition of the working class in England*, p. 27.

### 3.1.1. The urbanization of Beirut's southern suburbs

Dahiye represents today a vast conglomeration of seven municipalities that host more than 500,000 people<sup>183</sup>, of which the vast majority are Shia. It extends east to west from the sea to the former Green Line - the line of demarcation between East and West Beirut during the civil war - and north to south from Mar Elias and the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila to the areas of Ouzai and Hayy Sellom surrounding the International Airport. Within this wide area, it is possible to find settlements with precarious structures in tin sheet or even wooden houses, especially around the refugee camps and close to the airport, though there are also very dense areas with permanent multi-family high-rise building of 10 to 12 stories, hosting 30 to 40 units, or more, such as in the central areas of Haret Hreik. The heterogeneous character of Dahiye is given by the fact that buildings were built without formal legal permits, urbanisation did not follow a plan, but developed in an incremental way to provide housing to the large number of newcomers.

The socio-economic situation in Dahiye has been improving in the last ten years, but there are still considerable disparities in the provision of basic services compared to other areas of Beirut. Government-provided electricity is cut for only 3 hours a day in central Beirut, while in Dahiye it is cut for 12 hours. Also, central Beirut has continuous running water provision, while in Dahiye people need to buy water from private companies because piped water is provided only for few hours a day.

The analysis of the qualitative data highlighted that there is a strong feeling of place attachment among residents, due both to the difficulties that the Shia had to face in order to remain in the area, but also due to the cultural stigmatization that they are subjected to by living

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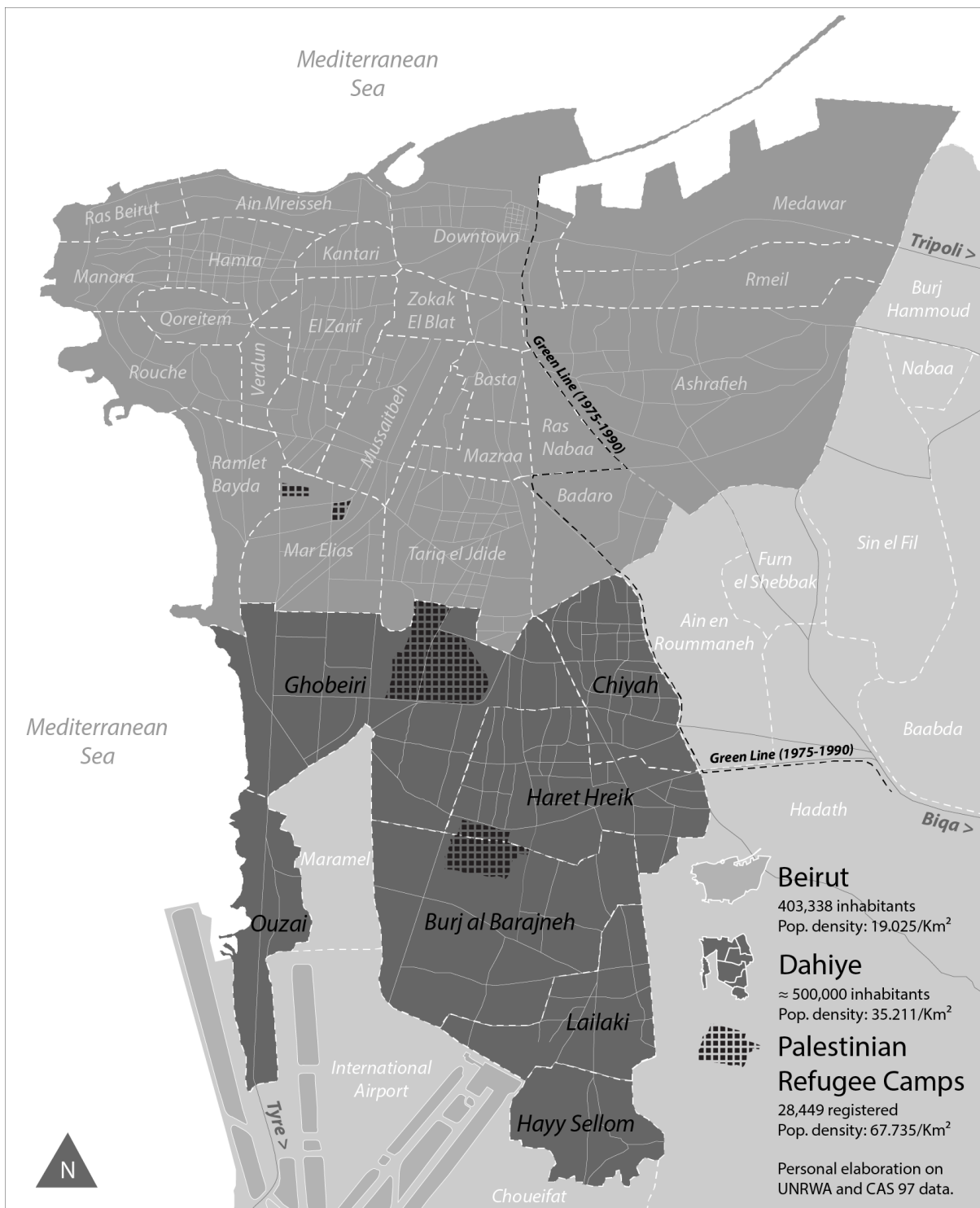
<sup>183</sup> Elaboration on UN GIS Data based on CAS97 showing a total of 4,005,028 million inhabitants for the whole country. The data for Dahiye is certainly today a gross underestimation of the real population living in the area.

in what is defined by the authorities as the *"belt of misery"*, an informal place that Harb identifies as associated with ideas of *"illegality, poverty, chaos, and anarchy"* and inhabited by a population made of *"Shia, poor, refugees, and peasants"* (Harb, 2003, p. 75).

This situation has been strongly influenced by the ethno-religious polity of Lebanon, but also by the special status and importance of Beirut. Cultural trends and ideas are spread to the whole country starting from *"le Petit Paris"* (Kassir, 2003, pp. 301-326), which is the physical embodiment of the modern, bourgeois and international spirit of the "true Lebanese citizens". As the Lebanese economist, Mazen Ousseirane, argued in 2009: *"In the country of Cedars, there is 'us' (Sunni of the coast, the true Christian citizens and the Druzes, the cream of Mount Lebanon) who are the custodians of the millenary identity of Lebanon, the original citizens, civilized, educated, the only ones able to appreciate urban life, its splendors, who have the right to its delights, which we are able to enjoy with taste and originality"* (cit. in Boulaaba, 2009).

Furthermore, Beirut is also the center of both political power and major planning institutions, such as the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation, the Directorate General of Urban Planning and the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), which in 1977 became responsible for the framework of urban planning policies.





**Figure 35:** Map showing Dahiye (dark grey), and its internal subdivision into 7 municipalities; and the administrative boundaries of the City of Beirut (light grey), and its neighborhoods. Author: Nabil Nazha.

It is for these reasons that Beirut has always represented a nevralgic point for the life of the country and, as we already mentioned before, it has always been the place without the control of which the ruling class could not possibly actualize its cultural hegemony and political sovereignty over the rest of the country.

Major changes to the structure of the city started to appear in the years from the 1920s to the 1950s, in which the Lebanese authorities adopted a *laissez-faire* approach to economic development (Gaspard, 2004, p. 54). The economic changes due to this approach were considerable. For instance, in 1959, 49% of the active population was working in the agricultural sector, while in 1970 it represented only 19% of the total active population. In the same years, the population working in the industrial sector increased, from 19.3% in 1959 to 25% in 1970, and this increase was even more pronounced in the services sector, from 31.7% in 1950 to 56% in 1970 (Dubar, 1974). This was the result of a wave of internal migration from the periphery to the core of the country. This included the arrival into Beirut of the Shia, a poor population with a different ethno-religious background, coming from South Lebanon and the Biqa Valley (Dubar, 1974; Gaspard, 2004; Fawaz, 2012). Indeed, in 1970, 29.3% of the population of South Lebanon and 16.9% of the Biqa Valley migrated to Beirut (Kliot, 1987, p. 63), and between 1950 and 1975 the population of Beirut grew from 300,000 to 1.2 million inhabitants (Fawaz, 2012).

Up until the early 1970s, the population migrating to Beirut was able to settle both in the eastern suburbs and in the strip of land that goes between the southern boundary of the municipality of Beirut to the International Airport. Such lands, either public or private, were zoned as agricultural and included vast wooded areas (Fawaz, Peillen, 2003). In the case of private lands, early migrants assumed the role of constructors, buying large plots from Druze and Christians landowners and subdividing them into smaller parcels in order to sell them to other migrants, usually people coming from their own region of origin or even town. For the people living at the periphery of the country, the possibility of moving to Beirut, knowing

directly the constructor or his family, represented a minimum form of assurance that helped them to come to the capital and to maintain family and community ties (See Bou Akar, 2012).

In this period, we see also the emergence of the *Shia movement*, a complex social movement capable to organize the population mainly around questions of social justice, political representation, and resistance.

Here it is important to clarify that, for *Shia movement*, I refer to the variety of grassroots associations that emerged from the first impulse given by Imam Musa al Sadr in the 1960s, in the context of the growing demand of reform of the national political system among the poorest strata of the population. Musa al Sadr was the first personality to provide an alternative to the control of the six landowning families and their leaders (Nasr, 1985; Norton, 1987; Shanahan, 2005). He founded the Movement of the Disinherited in 1974 and his work addressed simultaneously issues related to political representation, social justice, religious identity, and military occupation. From its initial activities in the city of Tyre, in Southern Lebanon, the Movement of the Disinherited moved closer to the capital and settled its headquarters in Dahiye (Nasr, 1985, pp. 10-11).

After Musa al Sadr disappeared in Libya in 1978, in what was most likely a political assassination, the Shia movement continued to grow and was reinforced by the work of other figures, like Mohammad Mehdi Shamseddine and Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, who created a plurality of organizations in Dahiye, from the Islamic Institution of the Arts to the Mabarrat Association and the Islamic Centre of Haret Hreik, with the main intent to provide basic services in the fields of education, healthcare, and charity.

While in other informal contexts in the Middle East, authors like Bayat identified the emergence of the "*art of presence*" (Bayat, 2013), resulting from the spontaneous action of non-structured and non-ideological actors that try to cope with everyday issues, what is unique about Beirut is that Dahiye took life through the voluntary and organized action of collective

organizations. This way, the assertion of what we can call, instead, a *need for presence* - meaning the need to remain in that specific area of Beirut to claim their right both to the city and the nation - passed through active patterns of socio-political organization. This movement raised issues that questioned the legitimacy of the central government. In 1974 the Movement of the Disinherited issued a list of 16 demands from the central government that included the gradual reform of the confessional system through the elimination of the confessional distribution of civil service posts, a change in the electoral law, and policies aimed at reducing regional inequality and achieving a fairer distribution of wealth (Nasr, 1985, p. 13).

These demands challenged the existing power structure and progressively moved the ambitions of marginalized groups from the periphery of the State to the main spatial and symbolic arena of political struggle: the city of Beirut. The ethnocratic regime felt threatened and enacted a series of policies to limit the development of Dahiye, in order to keep the Shia as far away as possible from Beirut. As Yiftachel argued: *"a hallmark of the ethnocratic system is its ability to maintain the dominance of the leading ethnonational group, which is premised on the exclusion, marginalization, or assimilation of minority groups. But not all minorities are treated equally. Some are construed as internal, whereas others are marked as external"* (Yiftachel, 2006, p. 37). The Shia represented a threat both to the political balance of power and to the dominant identity of Beirut and the nation. The Shia had no formal channel to improve their status. Thus, informality was the urban tool they used in the room left empty by the State.

### 3.1.2. The need for presence: subverting stigmatization with meaning

In reaction to the early development of Dahiye, the elite in power opted for what we can call, readapting Bauman's theory, an "*anthropoemic*" strategy "*to cope with the otherness of the other*" (Bauman, 2000). This strategy resulted from the perception of the impossibility of an integration with a population, the Shia, who were still, as in 1920 and 1943, "*precariously inside or virtually outside*" of the State (Hourani, 1976, p. 34). This strategy manifested on multiple occasions in which authorities tried to enact slum clearance policies that, however, failed due to resistance of the population. At the same time, a particular terminology referring to the extraordinary and informal aspects of Dahiye was promoted by central authorities in official documents and urban analyses (See Fawaz, Peillen, 2003, pp. 25-26). In a period in which many, including former president Camille Chamoun, favoured a partition of the country<sup>184</sup>, the definition of a formal-informal divide represented a key tool to define which groups were perceived as alien to the nation. This way, the very categorization of Dahiye as an *informal space* has been used as a form of what some authors would call a "*governmental tool*" (McFarlane, Waibel, 2012), aimed at presenting a derogatory image of a certain urban reality and its population. Najib Hourani argues that: "*the effort to exclude the Shia from the city drew upon larger stereotypes within which the Shia as a group are represented as the epitome of the rural, backward looking, fanatical, irrational and untrustworthy anticosmopolitan other to the Sunni or Christian Beiruti. Their very presence, for some, endangered both city and nation*" (N. Hourani, 2015, p. 6).

Facing the failure of clearance policies, the government tried to build highways and large-scale infrastructures to halt new development and parcel the existing informal neighborhoods, but also in this case the result was only partially attained (Fawaz, Peillen, 2003, pp. 31-32). In

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<sup>184</sup> See Traboulsi (2007) on the development of the so-called "*attachment/detachment*" debate throughout the 20th century within the Maronite political elite.

addition, control policies were enacted by strengthening the ties of zoning to avoid further development. Especially in the area around the airport and Sahra al Choueifat, agricultural lands were zoned as industrial in order to boost the construction of a new industrial corridor that could halt residential development (Bou Akar, 2012). However, also in this case, authorities could not prevent local Druze and Christian landowners from selling private lands to Shia constructors because the influx of migrants from other parts of Lebanon increased exponentially at the end of the 1970s due to the Israeli invasion of Southern Lebanon.

Nevertheless, the displacement that authorities failed to achieve was fulfilled in some instances by armed militias like the Christian right-wing Phalangist Party that, at the beginning of the civil war, enacted so-called "*cleansing campaigns*" in the eastern suburbs of Beirut. The result is that approximately 200,000 people were evicted from the eastern suburbs and moved to Dahiye between 1975 and 1976 (Fawaz, Peillen, 2003, p. 2). In this context, Dahiye became the only possible destination for the Shia of Lebanon in Beirut.

Furthermore, during the civil war, the national army was dismantled and the collapse of the State affected all spheres of society (Kliot, 1987). In this situation the informality of Dahiye was an informality in the absence of formality. There was no legitimate actor possibly providing a *formal 'plan directeur'*. The paradox of the informality of Dahiye is that it consolidated in a period in which no State authority could have possibly drawn the line between legal and extralegal. No municipal elections were held in Lebanon between 1963 and 1998, and no parliamentary elections between 1972 and 1992. This means that no State or city authority was in the position to develop clear urban plans and zoning laws or to uphold existing ones.

The situation of forced displacement from areas of east Beirut repeated itself also during the post-civil war reconstruction of downtown Beirut in the 1990s, this time through reconstruction projects. Makdisi (1997) shows how Solidere, the private company owned by the former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, represented a case in which "*state and capital* [became]

*incorporated as one and the same force or process defined by the same discourse (Harirism)"* (p. 698). The plan implemented by Solidere caused the displacement of the Shia and other people from downtown Beirut and their forced resettlement in Dahiye. In addition to displacement, Solidere demolished the majority of historical buildings of downtown Beirut, to the point that Makdisi ironically highlights that: *"more buildings have been demolished than in almost twenty years of artillery bombardment"* (p. 662). This process resulted in the erasure of the spatial identity of the core of Beirut that *"virtually does not exist any longer"* (p. 662).

The displacement from downtown Beirut represented the last moment in which the control strategy put in place by the ethnocratic regime evolved into a form of *"creeping urban apartheid"* (Yiftachel, 2009, p. 94). Through a gradual, but constant, process of discrimination, the Shia were left progressively marginalized inside Dahiye. Hourani argues that: *"the representation of the Shia Lebanese as epitomizing an anticosmopolitan threat legitimized their expulsion from the suq, and from Beirut as well, swelling the Southern Suburbs with those marginalized from the nation and its capital"* (N. Hourani, 2015, p. 6).

Yiftachel argues that the concept of *"creeping urban apartheid"* is related to the *"inferior position of marginalized gray spaces"*, but also to the discrimination resulting from *"deeply embedded institutional [...] systems which accord unequal 'packages' of rights and [...] fortify the 'separation' between them"* (Yiftachel, 2009, p. 94). From this perspective, the *sumoud* - intended as the *"steadfast struggle to remain on their land"* (Yiftachel, 2009, p. 98) - that Yiftachel encountered in the informal settlements around Beersheba is an attitude that describes also the struggle of the people of Dahiye.

This idea of being *"steadfast"* against adversities widened also beyond issues of housing. In fact, in the 1980s, the term *"Dahiye"* became tied also to the military activities organized by the Shia Resistance Movement, Hezbollah, against the Israeli occupation (Harb, 2003, p. 77). In the 1990s, areas like Haret Hreik became home to Hezbollah's officials as well as its network of

health, education, social service and media organizations (N. Hourani, 2015, p. 7). More in detail, Hourani argues that: *"these organizations, linked to the party but often independent in defining and pursuing their respective missions include networks of hospitals, clinics and pharmacies and social service and educational NGOs, as well as micro-finance youth and sports organizations, and a newspaper, television station and online news websites that address social, cultural, political and economic topics"* (N. Hourani, 2015, p. 7).

With the liberation of Southern Lebanon from Israeli occupation on May 25th, 2000, the population of Dahiye started to subvert stigmatization also with the positive *meaning* associated with the resistance, the liberation, and resilience to injustice and hardship.

Today the streets of Dahiye are named after the leaders and what are referred to by the local population as *"martyrs of the resistance"*. Their pictures are exposed along the streets and flags and symbols related both to contemporary political developments and Shia traditions are common features of the urban landscape of the area. In addition to the activities of the various organizations, that operate as an alternative welfare state, and to the shared social practices (See Figure 37), also these symbols represent an attempt to subvert stigmatization, while promoting a social and political *meaning* of Dahiye.

Such attitude became even more important during the July War of 2006. In 34 days Israel's bombings left behind a trail of more than 1,100 people killed, more than 4,000 wounded, and the destruction (only in Dahiye) of 274 apartment blocks hosting 6,000 housing units (N. Hourani, 2015; Qassem, 2010, p. 40). The purposeful use of disproportionate power followed what became known as the *"Dahiye Doctrine"* (Samaan, 2014). The conflict put in danger the only space of Beirut that was left for the Shia.





**Figure 36:** Dahiye in the immediate aftermath of the July War. August 15th, 2006, Author: Nabil Nazha.

The immediate risk of a reconstruction following the model of Solidere would have caused a new displacement of the population further south. Hezbollah created a specific architectural firm for the reconstruction, Wa'ad, composed of local architects and engineers. The population was involved and participated in the initial decision-making regarding the reconstruction strategy. The need to provide housing to the people affected by the war in the shortest time possible, the necessity to avoid gentrification, and the need to preserve the *political meaning* of Dahiye, are the main elements that affected the reconstruction model.

Even if the central government initially tried to take charge of the reconstruction, the people of Dahiye preferred to be represented by local grassroots organizations such as Hezbollah, Wa'ad, and the Jihad al Binaa Development Agency. While the reconstruction of

downtown Beirut was led by a private group owned by a political and economic elite that represented the ethnocratic regime and used the reconstruction as a tool for profit, the reconstruction of Dahiye represented both a form of *counter-hegemony planning* (Bollens, 2013) and the further emergence of a sense of *civic governmentality* (Roy, 2009).



**Figure 37:** Mal'aba Al Raya, Center of Dahiye, Shia celebrations for Ashura, 24 October 2015. Author: Nabil Nazha.

As reconstruction completed, some authors seemed to criticize the fact that such process did not increase the amount of open spaces and public parks (Fawaz, 2014). Recent literature has shown that new green amenities should be considered as Locally Unwanted Land Uses (LULUs) in marginalized neighbourhoods because they either trigger or accelerate displacement and gentrification (Anguelovski, 2015). In addition to this, open spaces and public parks were not a priority or request emerged from the population and the analysis of the interviews shows that local inhabitants remain, to this day, more concerned by the unequal distribution of primary services (i.e. electricity, water) in relation to other areas of Beirut.

In the meantime, the *Shia movement* was able to have representatives both in the Parliament and the Government - through the Amal Movement and Hezbollah - and its political approach changed as well. While interviewing three MPs of Hezbollah - Nuwar al Sahili, Walid

Sukkariye and Ali Mokdad - they all confirmed me the fact that the priority today is to create dialogue and positive relations between different ethno-religious communities, rather than pushing for potentially conflictual radical structural reforms. This change has been possible because today the Shia have a stronger say in key national policies, but also because Dahiye represents a stable platform from which the Shia are able to organize themselves and to participate in the political life of the nation.

### 3.1.3. Conclusions: Dahiye as a semi-periphery altering the elite-driven structure of Lebanon

Some interesting key elements emerged from the analysis of the process of informal urbanisation of Dahiye.

First, the structure of the State produced a core-periphery relation that combined class with ethno-religious affiliation. The formal-informal divide separated *formal* core groups from *informal* peripheral groups. We can interpret this dualism as a form of power that ascribes an uneven position (and thus legitimacy) to each community in a power scale and, hence, produces a hierarchy of social groups and a hierarchy of urban spatial formations within both the State and Beirut. This structure of power influenced the production of space around the capital, which mirrored the core-periphery relation existing at a national level. If it is true that “*every society [...] produces [...] its own space*” (Lefebvre, 1974, p. 31), in Lebanon the use of *informality* as an instrument for the determination of the legitimacy of the presence of the Shia in Beirut, determined the creation of Dahiye as an informal physical space and the categorization of its population as a social formation beyond the formal identity of the nation.

Second, by using Yiftachel's theory of *"urban regime"*, we can say that Dahiye developed as a *"gray space"*, intended as an area *"positioned between the 'whiteness' of legality/approval/safety, and the 'blackness' of eviction/destruction/death, [that is] neither integrated nor eliminated, forming pseudo-permanent margins of today's urban regions"* (Yiftachel, 2009, p. 89). Authorities today are aware that neither clearance and eviction policies nor armed conflicts have been able to change the demographics of the area. This way, the urbanisation of Dahiye succeeded in overcoming the rigid core-periphery relation enshrined into the structure of the State. It represents today a semi-periphery able to question the legitimacy of the core, because it problematizes the dichotomy formal-informal, acting as an intermediate reality. Nonetheless, the dichotomy *Us-Them* constantly re-proposes an apparently ineradicable *"colonial situation"*. The 2011 draft law proposed by MP Boutros Harb, even if temporarily put aside, to ban sales of land between Christians and Muslims for a 15-year period is only the last expression of the *"creeping urban apartheid"* that tries to limit the development of Dahiye through the imposition of ethnocratic control rules.

Despite being a marginalized *"gray space"*, Dahiye is not, though, a *passive* space. Rather, it is an *active* space, in which its population developed a sense of place-attachment and social cohesion, and through which it collectively claims a right to the city and a position within the nation.

Looking at the following decades, we can say that the analysis of the Lebanese case through the lenses of Dahiye shows how the social and political development of the country is characterized by an ethnocratic regime that was able to incorporate enough political stakeholders to maintain a weak State from which each stakeholder benefits in terms of political dividends and personal benefits. Within this framework, we see the existence of a *first-mover dilemma* that hinders any possible change coming from within the elite.

Within this complex environment, the Shia community moved from being a silent minority among the historically poorest and most marginalized of the country, to assuming a progressively growing national role. The process of informal urbanisation of Dahiye was a key factor in challenging the elite-driven structure of power and, ultimately, made of the southern suburbs an alternative space for democratization and social participation of a previously marginalized and stigmatized community.

The importance of Dahiye for our analysis is that it is a space in which the ethnocratic regime manifested itself. While marginalized populations were living at the margins of the State, at the farthest rural periphery, what Agamben calls the *"homo sacer"* could have been hidden under the veil of the inclusion within the State; however, when the *"homo sacer"* moved closer to the main centre of power, what Yiftachel calls the *"democratic facade"* of the ethnocracy crumbled in front of a direct process of exclusion and stigmatization of the Shia, enacted by political actors through official and formal State apparatuses that tried to limit the development of the area. Furthermore, the categorization of Dahiye as *informal* is an ideological tool through which the stigmatization of the people living in the area is further promoted and it is a process directly aimed at delegitimizing the political actors that act inside of Dahiye. I will mention this also later, but the idea of *"decolonizing planning"*, suggested by Porter (2010), refers to *"the continuing work of exposing and locating colonial spatial cultures in planning"* (p. 157). This way, we can say that the promotion of the categorization and the framing of Dahiye as an informal space is symptomatic of the persistence of a colonial attitude within urban planning scholarship and literature on Lebanon. These are the remnants of a colonial culture that creates boundaries in between groups (i.e. formal-informal) and in this situation the overall result is that the national interest remains unaddressed.

## **PART 4**

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## **FURTHER OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### 4.1. How the Research Problem Manifests Itself

In this first section of the conclusions, I tried to explain how the research problem manifests itself in Lebanon, based on the overall analysis of both secondary sources and data analysis developed during the fieldwork.

The following sections are organized in a way that aims to present the effects of the ethnocratic regime by research question. For this reason, there is a first section that shows the effects of the ethnocratic regime on the development of public policies, a second section that deals with the material legacy of the ethnocratic regime, both from a regional and urban perspective and, lastly, the third section that discusses the effects of the ethnocratic regime on the civil society.

The results of this work should be considered as a preliminary step for further research to be done in the future, as a base for further analysis. The main idea for the development of the research, given that it utilizes a deductive approach, was to test an hypothesis, the presence or not of an ethnocracy in Lebanon and the applicability or not of ethnocratic regimes theory beyond the reality of Israel/Palestine, in order to contribute to the development of what Yiftachel defines "*South-Eastern perspective*" to planning theory.

From this perspective, I can say that the presence of an ethnocratic regime is tangible in every sector of society and this reality will require the development of additional research in the future that could possibly focus on only one of the research questions at a time, to go more into depth, or to focus on the *room for reform* based on what emerged from this research and what appears necessary for the country in this historical period.

#### 4.1.1. Effects on Policy

The effects of the ethnocratic regime on the development of public policies are many. They influence the way in which political actors at the national and local level think about themselves, how they plan for the future and how they implement policies. The strong parcelling of the territory in segments that refer each to a different ethno-religious group, a different political party, and a particular network of local alliances, makes it difficult to create an overarching framework able to bring together these various pieces of policy, territory and population.

In order to organize the explanation of the various effects on public policies, here I highlighted five major sets of policies that are the direct product of an ethnocratic way of thinking. The policies analyzed are: 1) the politics of citizenship; 2) national and local planning policies; 3) housing market regulations; 4) geography of the past; and 5) privatization of key resources.

We have seen throughout the work how, from the very inception of the State of Greater Lebanon in 1920, *politics of citizenship* have been crucial for the definition of the dominant group. The work of Rania Maktabi, in particular, unravels how politics of citizenship played an important role in the definition of groups and communities that were included or not in the censuses of 1921 and 1932. The definition of the conditions that guarantee the right to citizenship have always been contentious because granting citizenship to a community directly affects the internal demographics of the country, which is perched upon a delicate and precarious balance of forces. This is one of the reasons why the different waves of refugees over time experienced each a different treatment. While Armenian refugees were granted citizenship, Palestinian refugees and, more recently, Syrian refugees have not been granted citizenship because their *becoming Lebanese* would drastically change the balance of power



within the political realm, and this is a direct effect of a system rooted into rules of ethno-religious affiliation. In a non-ethnocratic political environment, the considerations behind the possibility to grant citizenship revolve, for instance, around the possibility to adopt a *jus soli* instead of a *jus sanguinis* or based on the duration of the legal stay in the national territory for working or family reasons, and not based on the ethno-religious affiliation of specific individuals. This way, politics of citizenship acted as a form of biopolitical tool that renders manifest the idea of the State as a living being and *bio*-politics as a political tool to preserve the *life* of the nation-State.

A second effect of the ethnocratic regime on the development of public policies regard, in particular, national and local planning initiatives. What I found is that planning at the national level is limited to the creation of basic national infrastructures that connect Beirut to other towns along the coast and to inner-cities such as Zahle and Baalbeck. However, local planning is left to the initiative of each singular municipality.

Mona Harb<sup>185</sup> developed a qualitative research on the work of the mayors of three different municipalities: Ghobeyri, a suburb south of Beirut; Hermel, a town in the Biqa valley, toward the eastern border with Syria; and Aitaroun, a city in southern Lebanon. The author noted that each mayor activates different economic strategies in order to attract foreign investments. Given the lack of financial resources provided by the central government, these projects are made possible by the cooperation with international agencies and European countries. The lack of national planning and of government resources causes a competition between the capital Beirut and other main cities, and between cities at the core and at the periphery of the State, increasing, then, a process of uneven geographical development. This is something that is confirmed also by the analysis of the qualitative data and interviews with local

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<sup>185</sup> M. Harb, 2009, *La gestion du local par les maires du Hezbollah au Liban*, Critique Internationale, Vol. 42, Issue 1, pp. 57-72.

politicians and administrators of the periphery of the country. The reason behind this situation is that the State is shaped in a way to have a limited role in planning, because within an ethnocratic environment it is not imaginable to utilize taxes and economic resources collected in one area for the development of projects in another area of the country.

This way, peripheral areas that did not have the tools to propose plans and projects or even to elaborate their needs and exercise pressure on the government for funding remained for a long period of time *off the map*. The State left each group in the position to ask funding from the central government for local projects. This way, areas that already had a high cultural and social capital, were able to take advantage of the system and use national funding in order to boost the economy at the local level in their own areas; while regions that did not have a strong cultural and social capital were unable to fully participate in this system. The State was purposefully left in the position of not being able to plan for the whole country. It remains even today a source of funding that each community has to be able to use while, at the same time, being able to do its own planning with its own planners and experts at the local level.

In this situation, underdeveloped areas were automatically left behind and grew at a lower pace. Furthermore, we have seen how, from the liberation in 2000, both southern Lebanon and the Beqaa valley have been developing quite rapidly in all sectors; while the northern area of Akkar remains the most problematic one. We have seen also how the reason for this uneven geographical development within the periphery is due to the fact that the Amal Movement and Hezbollah have been able to enact development policies in southern Lebanon and the Beqaa valley, where they have a strong presence, while in Akkar there is no political actor that has been able, or willing, neither to represent the local population nor to develop local planning projects and implement them in a similar way.

The interviews with key actors at the periphery of the country highlighted that local mayors and planners perceive that there is an uneven distribution of resources between core

regions and peripheral regions, however, they all seemed to point out that if local administrations are determined enough to achieve positive results for their communities, they can have the necessary funding and create development. The question that local mayors and aldermen raised is that they are dependent also upon the relationship they have with the MPs elected from their regional district. If this relation is strong and direct, they can effectively have a voice at the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation or at Council for Development and Reconstruction. Nevertheless, also in this case, the various MPs need to be in their turn determined enough to ask and require action and funding from the central government. The current electoral system makes it so that in certain areas with a strong majority of one single ethno-religious group and one single political party, the situation of low competition and the certainty of re-election, may decrease the determination of the local MPs or local mayors to be proactive.

A third way in which ethnocracy affects public policies relates also to the use of land use policies in relation to zoning and the housing market. The ethnocratic regime is challenged by the constant movement of predominantly Muslim population from the rural areas of the periphery to the city of Beirut. For this reason, different strategies have been developed over time to control these new incoming populations. Akar<sup>186</sup>, in particular, studied the settlement of Sahra Choueifat, an underserved suburb directly south of Beirut, which is located alongside Beirut International Airport. This settlement was historically inhabited by a population mostly composed by middle-class Druzes. However, we have seen how the process of reconstruction of downtown Beirut, initiated by Solidere, caused the displacement of the population, mostly Shia, that had found refuge in the abandoned buildings of the center. Once evicted and forced to relocate, these populations looked at the area of Sahra Choueifat as a possible destination because the area in the 1970s was zoned from agricultural to residential, but was not yet

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<sup>186</sup> H.B. Akar, 2012, *Contesting Beirut's Frontiers*, City and Society, Vol. 24, Issue 2, pp. 150-172.

developed as such. Facing the arrival of new Shias and the potential demographic shift in the population that could have changed the balance of power in the area, the municipality of Sahra Choueifat changed the zoning of the area from residential to industrial, trying to foster industrial development close to the airport. This way, zoning was used as an *ethnocratic control tool*. Eventually the project for the development of an industrial area failed and many landowners began to sell their lands to construction companies that started to build residential units.

Another failed example of market regulation policy thought as *ethnocratic control rule* is represented by the bill proposed by the Minister of Labor, Boutros Harb, on December, 30th, 2010. The Minister proposed a bill forbidding the sale of properties between Christians and Muslims for a period of fifteen years. Even if never passed in the Parliament, this proposal, combined with the use of zoning laws explained before, represents a manifestation of an ethnocratic regime that tries to maintain control of the territory through the development of public policies.

A fourth very interesting manifestation of ethnocracy through public policy and that is still understudied in the literature is related to what Ghandour identifies as policies oriented towards the definition of a *“geography of the past”*. We mentioned this before so here we can just summarize this point by saying that Ghandour<sup>187</sup> looked at the development of the City of Baalbeck, which is internationally known for the ruins of its Roman temples, and he noticed that the actual city, inhabited predominantly by Shia Muslims, has been deliberately neglected by the State, which progressively separated the area of the temples from the rest of the city, preventing a possible benefit that the population could have from tourists visiting the historical site. The author affirms that this policy was developed to create in the whole country a *“geography of the past”* that would serve the dominant idea of Lebanon as a non-Muslim

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<sup>187</sup> M. Ghandour, 2006, *On Cities and Designers: a Baalbeck Story*, Architectural Research Quarterly, Vol. 10, Issue 1, pp. 37-49.

nation. From a Lebanese perspective, the preservation of a pre-Islamic heritage functions as a proof to validate the nationalistic idea of Lebanon as a special territory that needs to be divided from the rest of the Arab world. I believe “*geography of the past*” is a very fascinating concept and there is little work done in the literature and, as I already said, it would be interesting in the future to delve more into this topic and to do a research at a national level to see if there is enough evidence to support Ghandour’s argument.

Lastly, a fifth way in which the ethnocratic regime manifests itself through the development of public policies is represented by the privatization of essential resources, such as healthcare, housing market, education, and water. Privatization, and the overall economic approach that evolved from *laissez-faire* to the neoliberal approach of the 1990s, is a sign of a State that, as we said, is for its population *absent* but *heavy* at the same time. The absence of the State relate also to the lack of a welfare state and the privatization of public goods.

As far as healthcare, as Chen and Cammett<sup>188</sup> say: “*the Lebanese health system is characterized by minimal state regulation and heavy reliance on private, non-state providers*”<sup>189</sup>. This way political parties develop their own enterprises to serve each their own ethno-religious group. Furthermore, the authors found that an easier and faster access to healthcare is provided to those people that are more politically active in their particular community, adding, this way, a second layer to the already existing ethno-religious disparity in the access to healthcare. Furthermore, both the housing market and the education systems work along ethno-religious lines. The State does not provide public housing, which is subsequently left to the initiative of political parties or constructors related to political groups which buy parcels of land, negotiate with the municipality for a favorable zoning regulation and then develop new constructions.

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<sup>188</sup> B. Chen, M. Cammett, 2012, *Informal Politics and Inequity of Access to Health Care in Lebanon*, International Journal of Equity in Health, Vol. 11, Issue 23, pp. 1-8.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p. 2

As far as education, the situation is even more critical. Kliot<sup>190</sup> argued that *"there are three indicators for separate educational development: 1) illiteracy rates are differential, and follow sectarian lines; 2) student enrollment in private or public schools runs along sectarian lines; 3) general levels of education in the different regions of Lebanon operate according to confessional lines"*<sup>191</sup>. However, even if I believe that the Lebanese situation needs to be understood as a combination of both social class and ethno-religious relations and that the two are intertwined with one another, and also that I personally believe that the figures presented by the author in the 1980s are a bit overestimated, the work done by Kliot undoubtedly highlights a general pattern.

Lastly, policies oriented toward the privatization of water are something that emerged only recently and that is still under discussion. In any way, this process would benefit the areas of the core and leave fewer funds for the management and treatment of public water at the periphery.

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<sup>190</sup> N. Kliot, 1987, *The Collapse of the Lebanese State*, Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 23, Issue 1, pp. 54-74.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

#### 4.1.2. Effects on Place

The second research question focuses on the material legacy that an ethnocratic regime leaves on the ground both at the regional and urban level. In this case, I found at least three ways in which the ethnocratic regime manifests itself in spatial practices and spatial inequalities. These factors are related to: 1) core-periphery relation; 2) inward structure; 3) urban peripheries-turned-frontiers; 4) toponymic inscriptions; and 5) process of securitization.

First, the core-periphery relation seems to affect both the economic and political development of the country. All major functions and services of the State are centralized in the capital Beirut or the area adjacent to the capital. The space that results from this relation is characterized by the uneven geographical development of different territories. Public policies at the national level remain characterized by a limited transformative potential. Beside the short period of social reforms initiated by President Fouad Chehab between 1958 and 1964; for the rest, public policies create a situation in which, in addition to the core-periphery relation, we can see the emergence of *administrative boxes*, which means that each region or province develops an *inward look*, based on administrative boundaries, not on geographical needs that may go beyond the boundary of a single province. This way, infrastructures like roads and expressways are developed by each area for the area, and the material legacy of this process is that we see an *inward structure*, in which various provinces and districts represents *islands* that tend each to part away from the rest of the country, each with their own healthcare system, educational system, and a majoritarian ethno-religious group. In addition to this, the physical separation into different *islands* or *administrative boxes*, made it so that over the decades each ethno-religious group developed not only its own healthcare and educational systems, but also each its own television channels, newspapers, cultural activities, and sports teams, further exacerbating the issue of *social fragmentation* and the development of *conflicting sub-identities*.

A third effect on the urban environment is characterized by the phenomenon that some authors called "*urban peripheries-turned-frontiers*". In the study already mentioned before<sup>192</sup>, Akar talked about the history of the settlement of Sahra Choueifat. In particular, she explains that, in the 1990s, when the project of development of an industrial area alongside the airport failed, the areas started to be developed as residential and the population that was displaced from the city center moved in. The influx of a poorer and ethno-religiously different community remained a reason for conflict. On May 7, 2008, a general national crisis erupted between supporters of the government and supporters of the opposition. This national conflict translated at the local level by transforming urban peripheries into frontiers. The supporters of the Shia and Druze communities, belonging each to a different political alliance, were not exempt from the fight that, in one week, saw the death of over a hundred people. What later became known as the "*May 7 events*" are but one case in which national contention can ignite local divisions and erupt in new cycles of violence. From the fieldwork, I can add to this by saying that the urban and territorial boundaries of each of the *administrative boxes* and *islands* sign a clear demarcation line in the territory that is often readable through the symbols, flags, paintings, and images that each ethno-religious group utilizes to *mark* its own territory and that represent modern forms of *toponymic inscriptions*. This way, urban and territorial fringes are not activated into frontiers only in cases of contestation or violence, as it is in the case that Akar described, but such frontiers are permanent and visible anywhere in Lebanon and in any situation, both during political stability and turmoil. This is something that represents a direct effect of the ethnocratic regime on the urban environment.

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<sup>192</sup> H.B. Akar, 2012, *Contesting Beirut's Frontiers*, City and Society, Vol. 24, Issue 2, pp. 150-172.



Lastly, a fifth effect of ethnocracy, strongly connected to the previous ones, is the process of "*securitization*". In particular, Fawaz, Harb and Gharbieh<sup>193</sup> developed a research on "*Beirut's security zones*" and they affirm that *security* is a main structuring force of the city, able to leave a physical and visible architecture on the ground. An architecture made of blocked streets, deviated passages, no parking zones, no photography areas, the use of tanks or regular army jeeps at the corner of the streets, the use of sand bags, barbed wire, or concrete blocks<sup>194</sup>. This process of "*securitization*" is, of course, more visible in major cities that include what the authors call "*hot-spots*". In the case of Beirut, they mainly describe four hot-spots:

*"(i) the former residence of the former Prime Minister Hariri that acts as the headquarter for his political coalition, (ii) the city center which houses a large group of business and governmental agencies including the national parliament, the seat of the Prime Minister, some foreign embassies, and the regional headquarters of the United Nations, (iii) the cluster of public buildings housing the headquarters of National Security, a central police station, the Military hospital, and the French Embassy on the Old Damascus Road, and (iv) the private residence of the Head of national Parliament, the national legislative power, also considered to be the head of a main national political coalition opposed to the Prime Minister's"*<sup>195</sup>.

The same authors explain how each ethno-religious group develops its own security system that is complementary to the security provided by the State through the national Army. In conclusion, we can say that this process of securitization analyzed by the authors in Beirut is something that goes beyond the limits of the capital and that affects the whole territory of Lebanon, where security forces and check points are heavily present and visible with armored vehicles and military personnel. The result at the regional and urban level is that within an ethnocratic framework the territory itself becomes a *military asset* for each ethno-religious

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<sup>193</sup> M. Fawaz, M. Harb, A. Gharbieh, 2012, *Living Beirut's security zones: an investigation of the modalities and practice of urban security*, City and Society, Vol. 24, Issue 2, pp. 173-195.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., p. 192.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., p. 192.

group. These assets were contested in the capital during the civil war in a military way, however, today both urban and regional areas continue to be contested through other means, political, economic and demographic, but they still remain forms of *military assets* that each *administrative box* and political actor is forced to compete upon to expand its degree of control and room of operation within the system. This is something that characterizes every single ethno-religious group and political actor and that is not related to the cultural identity of a community, but it is the direct effect of a system that does not allow the actors within it to behave in a different way, rather it forces them to compete with each other for control of over the public good.

#### 4.1.3. Effects on People

Lastly, if we look at the third research question, also the effects of the ethnocratic regime on the civil society are numerous. There are visible and durable effects both at the individual and at the community level. The main effects that I was able to identify are mainly five: 1) urban and territorial stigmatization; 2) social fragmentation; 3) informal networks; 4) different subjectivities; and 5) conflicting sub-identities.

We have seen how the country is deeply divided and we tried to explain what this means in terms of public policies and in terms of production of the physical space. The divisions augmented by the ethnocratic regime manifest themselves in a widespread sense of urban and territorial stigmatization. Areas of the periphery are perceived as *dangerous, poor, rural* and *Muslim*; all characteristics that collide with the idea of a *modern, European, rich, and educated* nation presented via the "*ideology of the mountain*". The territorial stigmatization comes first, it is more ancient and it goes further back in time. In the 1960s and 1970s, with the massive influx of rural population towards the city of Beirut, stigmatization was brought closer to the urban level. Mona Harb<sup>196</sup> described the process of urban stigmatization of the southern suburb of Beirut called Dahiye. In this sense, the author explains that Dahiye:

*"concerne des populations spécifiques: des réfugiés, des migrants, et des pauvres, majoritairement des Palestiniens et des Chiïtes. La «ceinture de misère» comme antécédent sémantique de l'actuelle dâhiye est toujours inscrite dans l'imaginaire des gens, qui s'y réfèrent régulièrement pour justifier la situation socioéconomique inéluctable de la banlieue sud: «la banlieue sud a toujours été une ceinture de misère», comme si une force historique empêchait cette 'mantiqa' (région) d'être partie intégrante de la ville"<sup>197</sup>.*

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<sup>196</sup> M. Harb, 2003, *La Dahiye de Beyrouth: parcours d'une stigmatisation urbaine, consolidation d'un territoire politique*, Genèses, Vol. 51, pp. 70-91.

<sup>197</sup> [it represents specific populations: refugees, immigrants, and the poor, mainly Palestinians and Shia. The 'belt of misery' as a semantic antecedent of the present 'dahiye' is still present in the collective image that people have of the area, who regularly refer to it to justify the ineluctable socio-economic situation of the southern suburbs: 'the southern suburb has always been a belt of misery', as if an historic force prevents the 'mantiqa' (area) from being an

The same author mentions that despite the perceived element of never-changing poor and marginalized identity of Dahiye, the area in the 1980s took the present name of Dahiye al Janubiyye (Southern Suburb) with an attached image of being “*rebel area*” that hosts main politicians and officers of the Lebanese Resistance of Hezbollah. In some way, the people of the area were able to overturn a negative stigmatization into a sign of an alternative identity to the one of the rich neighborhoods of Beirut. Either way, though, both through a derogatory or positive stigmatization, the area remains strongly marginalized giving the people who live there a special status of *Otherness*.

The process of territorial and urban stigmatization influences also the phenomenon of social fragmentation. People of different neighborhoods in Beirut do not see each other as neighbors, but, instead, see each other as intruder to their own ethno-religious space. As Slavoj Žižek says:

*“a Neighbor is [...] primarily a thing, a traumatic intruder, someone whose different way of life (or rather, way of ‘jouissance’ materialized in its social practices and rituals) disturbs us, throws the balance of our way of life off the rails, when it comes too close, this can also give rise to an aggressive reaction aimed at getting rid of this disturbing intruder”<sup>198</sup>.*

We mentioned how, to delimitate the *ethno-religious space*, each group attaches symbols, posters, flags, banners, and graffiti on the streets and walls of its own neighborhood in order to define a space of *meaning* and *identity* that separates the area from the rest of the city or territory. This exclusive space is the physical representation of a fragmented society that finds itself inside an ethnocratic regime that prescribes rules and norms based on ethno-religious

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integral part of the city]. Source: Ibid., pp. 73-74, the statement quoted by the author is derived from an interview with a resident of Dahiye.

<sup>198</sup> S. Žižek, 2008, *Violence*, Picador, New York, p. 59.

affiliation. Furthermore, various communities *play* according to the rules of the game and each feels frightened to diverge from this ethno-religious path because of a sort of *first-mover dilemma*: what if we stop acting following ethnocratic principles and the others do not?

A third interesting way in which the ethnocratic regime affects civil society is through the creation and multiplication of *informal networks*. Guilain Denoeux developed a whole comparative analysis of informal networks in Iran, Egypt, and Lebanon in order to understand the role that informal networks play in rising urban unrest. He identified four kinds of informal networks: 1) patron-client clusters; 2) networks based on occupational ties; 3) religious associations; and 4) networks based on residential affiliation (i.e. street, quarter, neighborhood). He developed an argument against the conventional wisdom that sees informal networks as a tool in the hands of the central government to neutralize the revolutionary potential of the lower strata of the population<sup>199</sup>. In contrast with this idea, he affirms that, in the case of Lebanon, for instance, the structure of the system had two effects:

*"first, it made sectarian affiliation the official basis for political participation [and] a second major shortcoming of the confessional system was its overreliance on the formation of an intra-elite consensus to hold together the various sects, regions, and factions that constituted Lebanon"*<sup>200</sup>.

The main issue with these two shortcomings is that, basically, the ethnocratic regime brought informal networks at the core of the formal system, bringing with them the potentials for instability characteristic of informal networks.

The last two manifestations of ethnocracy on the civil society are strongly intertwined with one another. On one side, we have seen how the strong core-periphery relation affected the country. The core had a capitalist mode of production with an advanced

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<sup>199</sup> G. Denoeux, 1993, *Urban Unrest in the Middle East. A Comparative Study of Informal Networks in Egypt, Iran, and Lebanon*, State University of New York Press, Albany, NY, p. 20.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., pp. 83-84.

educational system, since before the creation of the State; while the periphery was characterized by a peasant mode of production, without basic services. This way the country became split also between two forms of subjects, two *different forms of subjectivities* at the core and periphery of the State. The subjectivity at the core of the country representing the *formal* identity envisioned by the State, and the subjectivity at the periphery representing the *informal* identity beyond the boundaries of the Lebanese identity imagined by the ethnocratic regime and propagated through the State apparatuses.

During the fieldwork, I was able to see two phenomena that are located at two diametrically opposite poles on the possible range of individual behaviors. On one side, parts of the civil society at the periphery of the country developed an *inferiority complex* by comparing their social and economic condition with the social and economic condition of communities at the core of the country and they also ended relating this difference to their ethno-religious affiliation, arriving to identify their situation as something intrinsic to their affiliation with one of the communities that are part of the system as inferior ethno-classes.

On the opposite side, I found a strong feeling of hatred towards minorities within the civil society of the core. While interviewing members of the Sunni bourgeois community of Beirut, I found a deep hatred towards minorities, in general, and towards Muslims Shia, in particular. In a similar way in which the Jewish communities of Europe were the object of antisemitism, that essentialized them as Other and inferior to the majority of the population; also in Lebanon, within the Sunni bourgeoisie community of Beirut, there is a very strong anti-Shia sentiment. People referred to the Shia as if they were a population outside the Lebanese citizenry. Among the participants, Joussef, a wealthy Sunni of Qraitem (a central neighborhood of Beirut) ended up attributing all issues of Lebanon to the presence of the Shia in Lebanon. According to him also the recent shortage of water that affected Beirut in the last two years (due in reality to an unprecedented low level of rainfalls) was due to the Shia that: “*come to*

*Beirut with trucks and take our water back to Dahiye*<sup>201</sup>. Then, while asked about the possible policies that can be done to improve the livelihood of the people living in Beirut or, in general, in Lebanon, he answered that: *“to really solve all problems of Lebanon we need a foreign power to come and do a war in Lebanon to eliminate all the Shia”*<sup>202</sup>.

On the other side, people within the Shia community reported that they fear to say their names or area of origin in certain neighborhoods of Beirut because they feel they could be in danger. Another participant, Jamili, owner of a store in the Beqaa valley, explained in the interview that she travels to Beirut to buy large amounts of products wholesale in order to sell them at her retail store. However, after going once to buy products in the area of Tariq al Jadid, she decided that it was too dangerous and stopped going in that area for business purposes because she was constantly exposed to anti-Shia rhetoric.

Now, I am not aware if this feeling, that is very similar to antisemitism towards Jews, has been studied in depth in sociological theory and beyond. In any way, this process represents an extremization of a feeling of antagonism between different communities, which is inherent to an ethnocratic system.

Overall, the development of different subjectivities and conflicting sub-identities that consolidate over a long period of time represent an obstacle for the creation of unity within the civil society and, ultimately, render the possibility for reform a remote scenario.

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<sup>201</sup> Interview with Youssef, resident of Qraitem. Date: August 17th, 2015.

<sup>202</sup> Same interview cited above.

#### 4.1.4. Summary and possibilities for future research

In conclusion, we can try to summarize here the various ways in which the ethnocratic regime manifests itself, depending from which perspective we look at the research problem, either through the lens of public policies, spatial structures or civil society.

The current research is certainly only a beginning in the direction of analyzing Lebanon from an ethnocratic perspective and it is for this reason that sometimes it only scratches the surface of certain phenomena without going too much into the details, and this is also due to the fact that the focus of the work is the overall structure and its evolution over time. Future research could be developed in different directions and, in particular, I believe that a wider analysis and focus with political actors could help, on one side, to further improve the definition of the ethnocratic structure and, on the other, understand the possibilities for reform.

Research Problem	Ethnocracy in Lebanon		
Research Questions	1. Effects on the development of Public Policies	2. Material legacy on the urban environment	3. Effects on the civil society
How the Research Problem manifests itself for each of the three Research Questions	a. Politics of citizenship	a. Core-Periphery relation	a. Urban and territorial stigmatization
	b. National and local planning policies	b. Urban peripheries-turned-frontiers	b. Social fragmentation
	c. Housing market regulations	c. Process of securitization	c. Informal networks
	d. Geography of the past	d. Inward structure	d. Different subjectivities
	e. Privatization of key resources	e. Toponymic inscriptions	e. Conflicting sub-identities

**Table 8:** The table above shows the relation between research problem, research questions, and the findings for each research question.



#### 4.2. Towards a synthesis: *unity in alterity*

*"To understand the edifice of universal history and the process of its construction, one must know the materials that were used to construct it. These materials are men. To draw what **History** is, one must therefore know what Man who realizes it is [...] Man is not only the material, the builder, and the architect of the historical edifice. He is also the one **for** whom this edifice is constructed: he lives in it, he **sees** and **understands** it, he **describes** and **criticizes** it"*

Alexandre Kojève, 1947 (1989 ed.),  
*Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, pp. 32-33.

The analysis of the development of the ethnocratic regime over the decades was the main way that I used to explain the characteristics of this particular form of political organization; and I believe that, by looking at this development from an historical perspective, we have been able to identify some main ways in which the ethnocratic regime affects the development of public policies, the physical composition of the urban environment and the civil society.

The emergence of a Maronite elite in the 19th century was facilitated by the establishment of the sanjak of Lebanon as a semi-autonomous province within the Ottoman Empire and by the progressive economic and cultural exchanges with European powers. While the Ottoman administration fostered the creation of a Sunni elite acting as an intermediary actor between the empire and the governed populations; the development of European cultural elements helped the emergence of a Maronite elite as a new social and cultural reality. This new social formation was able to develop its own ideology under the shape of a particular form of nationalism that attracted the interest of more than one ethno-religious group.

Connor said that: *"nations, national identity, and nationalism are 'the stuff that dreams are made of', and this helps to account both for their emotional appeal and for their resistance to rational inquiry"* (Connor, 1994, p. 210). In the case of Lebanon, the ideology of the mountain certainly had an emotional appeal, but on its way to Beirut and through its transformation into the ideology of the city, it acquired also a stronger and determinant socio-economic dimension.

The pre-existing conditions within the Ottoman Empire, which represent a balance that lasted for four centuries (thesis), was complicated by a national ideology able to represent a moment of rupture of such equilibrium (antithesis), and the creation of the State of Greater Lebanon after the Paris Peace Conference, but, most visibly, the agreement of 1943, between

the Sunni elite represented by Riad El Solh and the Maronite elite represented by Beshara El Khoury, signed a moment in which the formation of a new public *spirit* found its synthesis.

This spirit permeated the establishment of a structure, the ethnocratic regime, that presented itself in an antagonistic way to a culture, tradition and past that did not consider its own. It was a spirit that enshrined into the structure of the State a relation of exception, through which groups that did not conform to the spirit of the new political entity were included only through their cultural, physical and political marginalization.

This process was possible because the territory that became Lebanon was characterized by different social formations living following different modes of production.

The periphery of the country had a pre-capitalist mode of production at the time in which the spirit of the new nation emerged. The periphery of the country was living within a peasant mode of production in which, indeed, the means of production was the land, labor came from the family, and the unit of production was the household<sup>203</sup>.

In this context, the presence of intermediary actors working, first, for the Ottoman Empire and, later, for the State, created a class of local chieftains that benefited from the structure and worked for the preservation of their condition of privilege, which entailed the development of clientelar relations between local inhabitants and chieftains, and between chieftains and upper administrators in the hierarchy of the State.

The core of the State, instead, was characterized by major urban centers developing within a capitalist mode of production that was boosted by the acceleration of the industrialization process and laissez-faire politics of the first decades of the State.

This situation created a hierarchy of social groups: there were groups like the Maronites and the Sunni bourgeoisie of Beirut that were the main brokers with the colonial

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<sup>203</sup> See L. De Graca, A. Zingarelli, 2015, *Studies on Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production*, Brill, Leiden, the Netherlands, p. 162.

power and that, within the colonial situation that existed up to the mid-1940s, acquired the privileges of the colonizers and their approach to political practice, urban planning included. On the other side, there were groups that started from a different socio-economic condition and were not in the position to act as brokers with the colonial power and this produced a cascading effect of prejudice and exclusion in the long term. The Greek Orthodox, the Shia, and the Armenians, were included in a lower rank in the hierarchy of social formations and they were, as Hourani said, "*precariously inside or virtually outside*" of the State (Hourani, 1976, p. 34).

This hierarchy of social formations shaped also the production of space at a national level, creating a parallel hierarchy of spaces from the core to the periphery. Through "*partisan policies*" the elite was able to implement its ideology and achieve a strong ethnocratic hegemony.

Up until 1958 such ethnocratic hegemony remained unchallenged. The cultural values, attitudes, traditions and way of living of the privileged ethno-religious groups represented the accepted standards that defined a duality between formal and informal, legit and illicit, Lebanese and non-Lebanese.

In this situation, marginal social formations remained dependant to the ethnocratic regime established in Beirut. The groups that decided to boycott the census, ultimately, accepted the new political reality, because collaboration and recognition of the structure meant provision of services.

The hegemony of the elite was granted in many ways. One way was the establishment of a neoliberal economic system in which the privatization of the education and healthcare systems created an obstacle to social mobility. A second way was urban planning. In line with French colonial planning culture and practice implemented both in "*colonies of exploitation*" and

"settler colonies" of Africa<sup>204</sup>, planning represented a key ideological state apparatus. Njoh found that in Africa *"in the town planning domain, French colonial authorities proceeded with unparalleled gusto to introduce widespread reforms in land, spatial organization and building practice"* (Njoh, 2015, p. 97).

This idea translated into a process of toponymic inscriptions, adoption of French planning laws, promotion of European building materials (p. 103) and structures of exaggerated scale for new constructions and colonial governmental buildings in order to *"symbolize and dignify the power of the imperial government"* (p. 103). In Lebanon, the seduction of place as an instrument of power manifested through the urban transformation that made of Beirut a *"French city"*<sup>205</sup>. Kassir reported that urban planners during the Mandate worked to promote *"Beirut's new status as a capital and its role as a showcase for French ideals"* (p. 280). As he said:

*"typically Parisian vistas were re-created in Beirut [...] The entire southern part of the intramural town was razed, as well as the area that had grown up around the port, and with them vanished a dense network of alleys, markets, and workshops [...] The main public building of the new neighborhood was the seat of the city administration, the Palais Municipal, erected in 1927 on the site of the old Al Fashkha suq" and "what remained of the old fabric of the city [...] gave way to the perfectly precise radical plan of Place de l'Etoile" whose "star-shaped design was so intimately associated with Haussmann that it became the signature of the Mandate's urban planning" (pp. 280-281).*

The result of this planning transformation is that *"by the middle of the 1930s, Beirut could almost have passed for a new city"* (p. 286). The close connection between the local elite and the colonial power created the condition for, what we can say, a new State, a new city, and a new class as a cultural bourgeoisie.

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<sup>204</sup> See A.J. Njoh, 2015, *French Colonial Urbanism in Africa*, in C.N. Silva (ed.), 2015, *Urban Planning in Sub-Saharan Africa. Colonial and Post-Colonial Planning Cultures*, Routledge, New York and London, pp. 95-109.

<sup>205</sup> See S. Kassir, 2003 (2010 ed.), *Beirut*, University of California Press, pp. 279-300.

The accumulation of wealth and the position of privilege within the system made it possible for the elite to substitute the colonial power after the independence and maintain a colonial attitude towards peripheral regions and socio-economic groups.

Later, we have seen how the ethnocratic hegemony was shaken by the crisis of 1958 and the civil war, but it was able to reshape itself in both cases. Ethnocracy remained, but something changed in the 1990s that showed the first signs of a difficulty in achieving the extent of the pre-civil war hegemony.

The reconstruction of Beirut through the projects of Solidere was a repositioning of a form of colonial urbanism that, with the grandiosity and luxury of new buildings, tried to re-utilize the seduction of place as a tool for power, not *"to symbolize and dignify the power of the imperial government"*, as colonial planners did, but to symbolize and dignify the new ideology, Harirism, at the core of the ethnocratic regime of the post-war period.

However, this process was but a faded copy of the construction projects of the Mandate. While colonial planners created a French city, Harirism - as a planning ideology aimed at creating a neoliberal and international capital on the footprints of the Gulf state urban centers, but with a more fashionable European outfit, remnant of the Mandate - failed to be fully implemented.

The classes able to participate to this change were radically reduced. Both neoliberal policies and the civil war pushed the majority of the country below the poverty line. The *spirit* emerged after the war had a smaller population able to consume a neoliberal space and greater issues affected their daily practice.

With the assassination of Hariri in 2005, Harirism, both as a political and planning ideology, seems disappeared and there is no figure able to follow his legacy.

However, a new dialectical process seems to have been taking place. If we consider the *spirit* of the ethnocratic regime, as the development that goes from the Mandate to Harirism, in parallel we can also see an *antagonistic spirit* or *counter-hegemonic spirit*.

From the social movement of Musa Sadr to the political actions of Kamal Junblatt, we have seen a growth of a spirit able to bring together the lower classes and marginalized social formations. This spirit found its urban actualization today in Beirut southern suburbs of Dahiye as a paradigmatic example that we tried to explain before.

This spirit is the result of its own cultural forms, it has its own counter-hegemonic planning culture, and its toponymic inscriptions. Nevertheless, if the spirit of the elite is the thesis that lost its hegemonic moment because of the growth of a counter-hegemonic spirit representing an antithesis, looking at the future, what can possibly be the new synthesis?

## 2.

*"Every people finds another tribe in its neighborhood, pressing upon it in such a manner that it is compelled to form itself internally into a state to be able to defend itself as a power should"*  
Immanuel Kant, 1795 (1917 ed.), Perpetual Peace, p. 152

We have explained how the ethnocratic hegemony has been shaken and the result is that it has reduced its field of action. In planning, it has been unable to set its rules for the reconstruction of Dahiye, for instance, but Boutros Harb's proposals of 2011, even if not implemented, to ban land sales between Muslims and Christians for 15 years is an example of its potential to still impose ethnocratic control rules.

In cultural terms, the initial hegemony was facilitated by the process of modernization. Modernity at a global scale seemed an unrestrainable process. However, the fall of modernity and rationalism in the 1970s and the shift towards a post-modern world, makes it more difficult today to impose a single and monolithic culture above the others. The dualisms formal-informal, modern-backward, core-periphery, have been problematized and complicated by the emergence of intermediary phenomena, such as semi-peripheries that question the legitimacy of the core.

The ideological state apparatuses still exist, but their reach is more limited. Marginal ethno-religious groups have been able to create their own universities, cultural centers, publishing companies, and media channels that counter-balance the work of ideological state apparatuses and question hegemony.

This process of antithesis, however, needs to reach a new synthesis. Looking at the short passage from Kant, we can easily understand how the Maronite community, and more broadly the Christian community in the Middle East, always found itself immersed in a context dominated by an overwhelming majority of Muslims who always had a political system representing their culture and aspirations (from the Umayyads to the Ottomans).



It is understandable that the pressures exercised from the dominant group caused the Maronites to develop an inward look to survive and preserve themselves, both physically and culturally. It is easy to see how, then, the process of nation-state formation in Europe attracted their imagination and gave shape and concreteness to a long felt need for recognition and safety.

However, the political structure that was created, reified difference along ethno-religious lines. It made them stronger. At the same time, the elite derived advantages from the structure and, hence, a change could not come from within the elite and the continuous geopolitical turmoil still restrains to these days the ability and possibility of counter-hegemonic forces to act to a full extent. Counter-hegemonic forces, then, need to limit their actions to stop the ethnicization and domination process and to develop, internally, organizations and smaller structures with the aim to enact the necessary reparations for the negative effects caused by the ethnocratic regime to their own communities.

The necessary moment of synthesis that I foresee is what should create *unity in alterity*. This moment should be characterized by what Levinas calls ethical relations, in which the contact with the Other is characterized by what Buber identifies as an "*I and Thou*" relationship, opposed to an "*I and It*" process through which the Other is objectified.

While in the European philosophical tradition, ontology has been presented, since Aristotle, as *first philosophy* - a *discourse on being* (essere) through which the essence (the substance) of being is analyzed and, hence, a process through which the question of *being* becomes the common denominator above individual differences; Levinas argues that this form of universality imposes *sameness* to the Other and, from his work, it emerges that "*man's*

*relation to the other is prior to his ontological relation to himself*"<sup>206</sup> and, for this reason, it is not ontology, but, rather, ethics, according to Levinas, that should be considered as *first philosophy*.

Ethical relations are, then, relations rooted on this awareness and on the ability to preserve the otherness of the Other as it is. Both perspectives, either ontology as first philosophy or ethics as first philosophy, seem to counterpose sameness and otherness. On one side, ontology focuses on being (*essere*) as the substance that bring all beings (*enti*) to the awareness of the fact that they all *are* and it is this fact of existing that represents a common denominator that brings with it the idea of sameness, but, in order to do this, it means that the first relation of the being (*ente*) is with the self; on the other side, ethics as first philosophy explains that the first relation of the being (*ente*) is with the Other and, thus, the self is understood *through* the Other.

I believe that both ways, either by imposing sameness or by reifying absolute otherness are two counterposing extreme poles that either eliminate difference or preclude unity. This way, I think that we should not utilize an *aut-aut* approach to deal with this question and, for this reason, the development of an intermediate position, a third path, is necessary. This third path is what *unity in alterity* indicates: it is a process through which ethical relations are established without precluding the possibility of unity.

Indeed today in Lebanon, enough time passed from the creation of the State and enormous amount of historical events occurred so that a new idea of the historicity of the country can be identified by looking at the contemporary history of Lebanon. A history that does not refer to an imagined community of the past<sup>207</sup>, but that refers to a common and recent history actually lived by its population. An attempt to overcome the idea of a myth of common

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<sup>206</sup> R. Kearney, 1995, *States of Mind: Dialogues with Contemporary Thinkers*, New York University Press, New York, p. 187, cit. also in B. Treanor, 2006, *Aspects of Alterity. Levinas, Marcel, and the Contemporary Debate*, Fordham University Press, New York, p. 11.

<sup>207</sup> i.e. Phoenicians, "*rose among thorns*", "*house of many mansions*", "*the mountain refuge*" or "*asile du Liban*", etc.

ancestry with a factual shared experience and, ultimately, rethink the very *raison d'être* of the State.

What needs to happen, though, is a decolonization of culture. This is something that should happen at all levels. As far as planning, Porter (2010) indicates a possible way to "*unlearn privilege*" or "*decolonize planning*". She proposes a "*transformative practice*" and says that the decolonization of planning "*might occur along three conceptual and practical lines [...]: the question of recognition, justice and 'formal equality'; the continuing work of exposing and locating colonial spatial cultures in planning; and the necessity of a radical politics of love*", where for love she means "*a deep practice of connection: of selflessness, humility and compassion*" (pp. 153 and 157). A selflessness, humility and compassion that is nowhere to be found today on literature that focuses on the periphery of Lebanon and its marginalized communities and that is still absent from the planning practice in Lebanon.

The decolonization of planning is one process in the direction of the creation of what I call *unity in alterity*, and, as far as our work as planners, this should be the core connecting theory to practice.

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The Daily Star is a Lebanese newspaper. In the link above it reports the estimates of the IMF regarding the dimension of informal economy in Lebanon. Discussion on this document at page 28.

- <http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/412372-informal-nonstandard-employment-in-us.pdf> [Last viewed: June, 2016]

The Urban Institute is a research center founded by President Lyndon Johnson in 1968. At the link above, the Institute provides us with an analysis of informal economy in the United States. Discussion mentioning this article is on page 28 of the dissertation.

- [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTURBANDEVELOPMENT/Resources/336387-1269364699096/6892630-1269364758309/abiko\\_english.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTURBANDEVELOPMENT/Resources/336387-1269364699096/6892630-1269364758309/abiko_english.pdf) [Last viewed: May, 2016].

The link above relates to the article by A. Abiko et al., entitled: *"Basic Costs of Slum Upgrading in Brazil"*. Discussion related to this article is on page 29 of this dissertation.

- <http://en.alalam.ir/news/1800698> [Last viewed: June, 2016]

The link above refers to the Al Alam News Network article that reviews the garbage crisis that affected Beirut in the summer of 2015. This is the source of figures 25, 26, 27, and 28, at pages 180 and 181 of this document.

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Source: <http://www.webmanagercenter.com/magazine/economie/2009/08/11/79038/liban-un-urbanisme-au-c%9Cur-de-toutes-les-polemiques> [Last view: June, 2016].

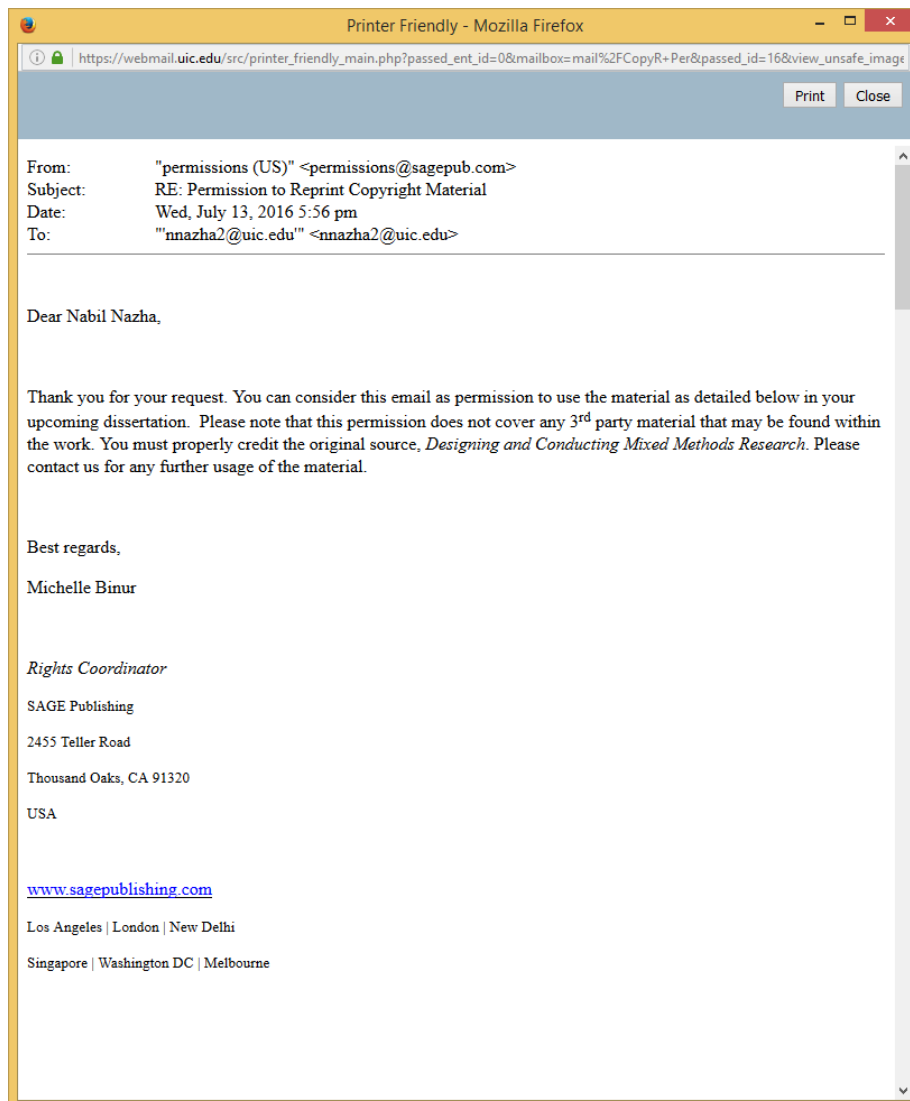
The article found at the link above refers to an explanation developed by I. Boulaaba in which the author explains few key issues related to urban planning in Lebanon. Discussion related to this work can be found at page 203 of this dissertation.



## APPENDICES

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1. Permission to use Figure 1.2 at page 7 of: J.W. Creswell, V.L. Plano Clark, 2011, 2nd ed., *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, SAGE Publications, New York, NY. This image is Figure 7 at page 81 of this dissertation (Three ways of merging quantitative and qualitative data)].



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- Figure 2.2 at page 35, and Figure 2.3 at page 46 in: O. Yiftachel, 2006, Ethnocracy. Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. These are Figure 5 and Figure 6 at page 23 of this dissertation (Forces, bases and counter-forces within an ethnocratic regime; and Conceptual framework behind an ethnocratic regime)

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Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beersheba, Israel  
Homepage: <http://www.geog.bgu.ac.il/members/yiftachel/yiftachel.html>

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Nabil Nazha

Phd Candidate

Doctorate in Urban Planning & Policy

University of Illinois at Chicago Teaching Assistant

Urban Data Visualization Laboratory

nnazha2@uic.edu

via le courrier électronique

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Cher Nabil Nazha,

En réponse à votre demande d'autorisation de publier, dans votre dissertation de doctorat, « Ethnocratic Regimes: Identity and Territory in the Lebanese Context », les tableaux des pages 306 et 307 de l'article de Claude Dubar, « Structure confessionnelle et classes sociales au Liban », paru dans la *Revue française de sociologie*, 1974, 15, 3, p. 301-328, nous avons le plaisir de vous informer que nous vous l'accordons bien volontiers.

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Pour Louis-André Vallet  
Directeur de la RFS

Christelle Germain  
Secrétaire de rédaction



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Sincerely,  
Nabil Nazha



# CURRICULUM VITAE

nabil nazha

Main Interests: History & Theory of Urban Planning, Urban Design  
Globalization & International Planning, Middle Eastern Studies

## Education

- 2012/2016 **PhD, Urban Planning and Policy**, GPA: 4.00/4, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA  
Dissertation Title: *"Ethnocratic Regimes: Identity and Territory in the Lebanese Context"*.  
Starting from O. Yiftachel's intellectual stimulus to move towards South-Eastern perspectives to planning theory, I developed a research on the Lebanese political, social, and urban context using the concepts of ethnicity (people), homeland (place), and ethics of the 'Other' (politics).
- Winter 2014 **Visiting Doctoral Student**, University of Chicago, USA  
Courses: PLSC 49500 American Grand Strategy, taught by Professor John Mearsheimer.
- Fall 2013 **Visiting Doctoral Student**, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA  
Courses: SOC483 Middle Eastern Societies and Cultures, taught by Professor Asef Bayat.
- 2010/2012 **M.S. Urban Planning and Policy**, GPA: 3.74/4, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA  
Specialized in Urban Design, Globalization & International Planning and Transportation Planning.  
Focused on the relationship between these dimensions of planning and their social implications.
- 2007/2010 **B.S. Urban Planning**, *Summa Cum Laude*, Politecnico di Milano, Italy  
Research Thesis: *"The CIAM Debate and the Birth of Urban Design. A Study on the Metamorphosis of Urban Project and the Decline of Modernism"*. Supervised by Professor Alessandro De Magistris, the thesis aims to show the contextual conditions, reasons and influences that characterized most of the passage of the Western design culture from the discourse on urbanism, developed within the International Congresses of Modern Architecture (CIAM), towards the birth of urban design in the United States during the second half of the twentieth century.

## Publications

- Publication Exp.  
Dec. 2016 Book Chapter: *"Dahiye, Beirut: An Active Space for Social Justice and Resistance. Reimagining Informality in the Light of Growing Urban Marginality"*, in R. Rocco, J.V. Ballegoijen (Eds.), 2016, *The Political Meaning of Informal Urbanisation*, Routledge, London, UK.
- April 2015 UN Report: *"The Social Pillar and the Paradox of Development in the Arab Region"*, Expert Report for the Arab Sustainable Development Report, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA)  
Personal Task: Research Assistant under the direction of Professor Nadine Naber, Phd.
- May 2012 *"Complete Streets. Complete Networks. A Manual for the Design of Active Transportation"*  
Contributor: responsible for all the street cross sections contained in Chapter 2: *"Typologies. Complete Networks Through Places, Modes, and Links"*, pp. 25-84.  
Publication available at the following website: <http://www.atpolicy.org/Design>

## Conference Presentations

- Sept. 2016 *"The Death of the Body. Digital Biopolitics and its Relation to Subjectivities: the Case of Post-Historic American Academic Research Settings"* (Co-presenter)  
MANCEPT Workshops in Political Theory, Manchester University, 7-9 September, 2016, Manchester, UK.
- May 2015 *"What is Left of Islam after Wahabism? Geopolitical and Philosophical Dimensions of the Current Struggle for the Soul of Islam"*  
5th Annual International Studies Conference, DePaul University, May 8th, 2015, Chicago, IL.
- April 2015 *"Lebanon Post-War Reconstruction as a Model for the Future of Syria?"*  
Urban Affairs Association (UAA) 45th UAA Conference, 8-11 April 2015, Miami, FL.
- April 2015 *"Challenging Lebanon's Ethnocracy. The Role of Bottom-Up Movements in Altering Structural Patterns of Socio-Political and Spatial Inequalities"*  
Association of American Geographers (AAG) 2015 Annual Conference, 21-25 April 2015, Chicago, IL.

## Academic Experience

- Spring 2016 **Teaching Assistant**, College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA  
AY 2014 - 2015 **Courses:** *UPP461 Geographic Information Systems for Planners*, Prof. Max Dieber  
AY 2013 - 2014 Currently assisting faculty for UPP461 GIS for Planners, which provides both undergraduate and graduate students an introduction to the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Personal tasks included: reviewing, correcting, grading of weekly assignments, and assisting students of the course during office hours.
- AY 2012 - 2013 **Teaching Assistant**, College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA  
Fall 2011 **Courses:** *UPA494 Senior Capstone in Urban Planning and Public Affairs*, Prof. Philip Ashton  
AY 2010 - 2011 *UPA495 Senior Capstone in Urban Planning and Public Affairs*, Prof. Valerie Werner  
Assisted faculty in the delivery of the courses UPA494-495, which were designed to provide seniors enrolled in the undergraduate program in Urban Planning and Public Affairs with a year-long immersion into an applied policy topic within urban and public affairs. During the academic years indicated above we analyzed the food systems of six different community areas within the City of Chicago.  
Personal tasks included: collection, compilation, cleaning, and analysis of geographic, economic, demographic, housing and transportation data, including geographic analyses utilizing GIS.

## Professional Experience

- Sept 11 - Mar 12 **Planning/GIS Intern**, Active Transportation Alliance, Chicago, USA  
Responsible for the new "Bikeroute Signage Plan" for the City of Schaumburg, IL.  
Responsible for the design of street cross sections and the creation of 3D models of street intersections and their surrounding areas, in order to better display and design bicycle and pedestrian access to public transit.
- Sept 09 - Nov 09 **Planning/CAD Intern**, Department of Architecture and Planning (DIAP), Politecnico di Milano, Italy  
Worked on the creation of the new comprehensive plan for the City of Lodi, a municipality with 40,000 inhabitants south of Milan, with a team guided by Professor Federico Oliva, President of the Italian Planning Institute (INU). Responsible for the analysis of the modern and industrial urban fabrics and the design of strategies for future interventions in those specific areas of the city.

## Awards

- 2015 **Best Conference Paper Award (Recipient) - \$150**  
Recipient of the 2015 Best Conference Paper Award at the 5th Annual International Studies Conference, held at DePaul University, Chicago, IL.
- 2013 **Chicago Consular Corps Scholarship (Recipient) - \$1,000**  
Recipient of the scholarship award organized by the Chicago Consular Corps in collaboration with the UIC Office of International Affairs.
- 2011 **UIC George Krambles Scholarship Award (Recipient) - \$500**  
Recipient of the scholarship award organized by the UIC Urban Transportation Center for graduate students of the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs.
- 2011 **Schiff Foundation Fellowship on Critical Architectural Writing (Nominated)**  
Nominated by the Department of Urban Planning and Policy at UIC to participate in the competition for the Schiff Foundation Fellowship on Critical Architectural Writing at the Art Institute of Chicago.  
Research Title: *The Plan Obus: the 'Construction of the Territory' as a Means of Physical Representation of Society.*
- 2010 **FIAT Group Scholarship 2010 (Recipient) - € 3,000 (approx. \$4,000)**  
This Scholarship Programme organized by the FIAT Group awards every year a limited number of scholarships to graduates with outstanding final results.

## Awards (continued)

- 2007 **"Il Tempo della Storia" - The Time of History (Recipient) - Travel Award**  
Recipient of the scholarship on contemporary history called "Il Tempo della Storia" organized by the University of Pavia (Italy). Participated in the travel award in Russia and Ukraine to visit the cities of Saint Petersburg, Kiev, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant and the "ghost town" of Prypiat.

## International Programs

- Summer 2014 **London School of Critical Theory, Birkbeck University, London, UK**  
Took part in a two-week seminar on critical theory led by Slavoj Žižek, David Harvey, and Etienne Balibar.
- Summer 2011 **UIC - Great Cities London Program, GPA: 4.0/4, London, UK.**  
Developed a comparative research between Chicago and London focused on the effects that globalization and political economic changes had on these two cities as far as land use development, housing and education.
- Spring 2010 **International Bilateral Exchange Program, GPA: 4.0/4, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA**  
Trained in the theories, issues, and techniques that characterize the urban and regional planning profession in the United States, through a bilateral exchange program between Politecnico di Milano and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

## Extracurricular Activities

- AY 2013 - 2014 **President of the Phd Planning Students Organization (CUPPS)**  
Represented the Phd student body to the College of Urban Planning and Policy at UIC. Personal tasks included participation at faculty meetings and constant interaction with faculty to discuss about issues and strategies to improve the doctoral program; and the organization of conferences, such as the Friday Forum, a weekly event in which scholars and professionals from various parts of the nation present innovative work, research, and techniques.
- AY 2010 - 2011 **GIS Analyst/Transportation Planner/Urban Designer, Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety in Chicago, USA**  
Responsible for data analysis on crashes involving motorvehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians in the City of Chicago over a 4-year period. The overall goal of my work, as part of a team led by urban transportation planner and expert Steve Vance, is to make public administration aware of safety issues related to bike lanes and routes, and to promote ways to improve the safety of the Chicago system.
- AY 2010 - 2011 **Graduate Representative for the UIC Urban Planning Student Body, Chicago, USA**  
Represented the student body to the UIC Search Committee on Transportation, composed by faculty members of the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, and actively participated in selecting and hiring new faculty.

## Certificates

- 2010/2011 **Geospatial Analysis and Visualization Certificate (GSAV Certificate)**  
Trained in the use of visualization softwares such as ArcGIS, Illustrator, Photoshop and Google SketchUp through the completion of a series of courses offered by the Great Cities Urban Data Visualization Laboratory (GC-UDVL) at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

## Volunteering Experiences

- Summer 2012 **Associação Suburbana para Desenvolvimento Cultural e Social em Moçambique (ASDECUMO)**  
Took part in an intensive five-week volunteering program mainly focused on the mapping of the informal settlement of Polana Caniço in Maputo, Mozambique.
- Jan. - May 2012 **Chicago Books to Women in Prison (CBWP), Chicago, IL, USA**  
Actively volunteered for CBWP, reading women detainees book requests and sending donated books to prisons of twelve states in the US.



# nabil nazha

Main Interests: History & Theory of Urban Planning, Urban Design  
Globalization & International Planning, Middle Eastern Studies

## Community Service Activity

- 2009 **Scrutineer**, San Martino Siccomario, Italy  
Worked for the organization of the European Parliamentary Elections (June 6-7, 2009), and the Referendum on Electoral Law (June 21, 2009) held in my hometown.

## Sport Achievements

- 1999-2005 **Kayaker**, Italy  
2004 Italian National Championships:  
K1 5,000 meters (1st place)  
K1 500 meters (1st place)  
K1 Marathon (2nd place)  
K1 1,000 meters (3rd place)

## Additional Information

- Technical Skills** Wide experience with ArcGIS, AutoCad, Adobe Suite, SketchUp, and Microsoft Suite.  
**Language Skills** Italian: native; English: fluent, written and spoken; French: fluent spoken, and intermediate written;  
Arabic: intermediate knowledge; Spanish: intermediate knowledge; Portuguese: basic knowledge.