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# **Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon: From Co-Ethnics to a Racialized Minority**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Sociology)

by

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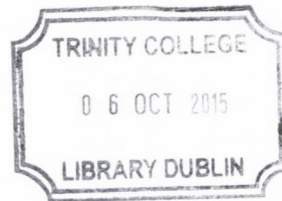
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## Summary

This study employs critical race theory to understand, explain, and theorize the exclusion and racialization of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. There exists vast and diverse literature on the exclusion of Palestinians in Lebanon, however, this study is the first to examine the exclusion of Palestinians by the Lebanese state through the theoretical lens of racialization. As such, it does not only enhance our understanding of Palestinian exclusion but also contributes to sociological knowledge in terms of assessing the usefulness of critical race theory in the Lebanese-Palestinian context. The importance of this particular context lies in that Lebanon is a consociational state founded on power-sharing between confessional communities officially recognized by the state, while Palestinian outsiders fail to fit these official administrative categories of consociation. This complex position of Palestinian refugees within a fragile consociational system revealed the strengths and shortcomings of the major racialization theories. I mainly employed the theories of Michel Foucault (1977; 2004) on the biopolitical and racial state, Zygmunt Bauman (1991) on the gardening state, and that of David Theo Goldberg (2002) on the racial state. All these theories had their merits and they complemented one another, but this qualitative study proved that some were more useful than others in this particular context.

The main research method was elite interviewing and consisted in researching the powerful or “studying up”. As the focus of the study was on the practices of the Lebanese racial state towards Palestinians, interviewing members of the Lebanese political establishment and of the Palestinian political class allowed for an enhanced understanding and theorization of the Lebanese racial state. I conducted fourteen semi-structured interviews during the summer of 2012 with Lebanese and Palestinian politicians and intellectuals. None of the respondents wished to remain anonymous, and

this added to the rigour of the research as one could identify who said what and from what position and perspective.

In addition to reviewing the vast literature on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, I conducted archival research of Lebanese newspapers in 2011, 2012, and 2013. The archival research was on key events and legislation pertaining to Palestinians in Lebanon. This provided material and evidence to the uniquely racialized position of Palestinians in a divided Lebanon. I also relied on the reports of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). As the Lebanese state had devolved its responsibilities towards Palestinian refugees in the social and economic spheres, UNRWA reports provide the richest and most comprehensive data on Palestinian refugees since 1949. This was important in terms of theorizing the Lebanese biopolitical state and in terms of obtaining data on Palestinian labour conditions to supplement a case study on Palestinian labour rights.

The core argument of the thesis was that, in relation to Palestinians, the Lebanese consociational state reproduces the racial state. Due to the position of Palestinians as “strangers” in Lebanon, they are both included and excluded in racial terms. While the dominant rationale of the racial state is to keep Palestinians “out”, they are also racially assimilated when such inclusion strengthens the consociational state and lends it coherence.

Palestinians are constructed as a demographic and military danger by the Lebanese state, and as a threat to the Lebanese “way of life”. Therefore the racial state, through exclusionary practices, aims to eliminate Palestinians by compelling them to emigrate from Lebanon. However, while still residing in Lebanon, Palestinians are constructed as docile bodies, and more importantly, they normalize Lebanese society.

## Table of Contents

Abbreviations .....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	viii
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
Chapter Two: Methodology.....	11
2.1 Fieldwork.....	11
2.1.1 Interview Sample .....	12
2.1.2 Access.....	16
2.1.3 Interview Schedule.....	17
2.2 Newspaper Archives .....	21
2.3 UNRWA Reports.....	23
2.4 Why the State?.....	25
2.5 Positionality.....	29
2.6 Ethical Considerations.....	34
Chapter Three: Literature Review.....	36
3.1 Race, Race-Relations, and Racialization.....	36
3.2 The Biopolitical, Racial, and Gardening State .....	41
3.3 The State and Governance.....	52
3.4 Conclusion.....	57
Chapter Four: Historical Context .....	59
4.1 Pre-Exile: Palestinians and Lebanon .....	59
4.1.1 Origins of Sectarianism .....	60
4.1.2 Greater Lebanon .....	62
4.1.3 Christian Dominance.....	64
4.2 Al-Nakba and Initial Exile .....	66
4.3 An Era of Politicization .....	68
4.3.1 Restrictions .....	68
4.3.2 The Cairo Agreement and Lebanese Popular Support for the PLO .....	69
4.3.3 Employment in Ayyam Al Thawra .....	71
4.4 Implicated in the Civil War.....	74
4.4.1 Factions of the Civil War .....	74
4.4.2 Destabilizing Factors in the 1970s .....	76
4.4.3 National Identity of Lebanon .....	77
4.5 PLO Departure and Deteriorating Conditions.....	78
4.5.1 Dwindling Support .....	79



4.5.2	Palestinians without Protection .....	81
4.6	Post-Ta'if Accord and New Complications .....	82
4.6.1	The Consociational System .....	82
4.6.2	Tawteen .....	85
4.6.3	Further Discrimination .....	88
4.6.4	The Cedar Revolution.....	89
4.6.5	Potentially Changing Tides .....	91
Chapter Five:	Dominant Myths and Narratives .....	92
5.1	Boundaries: Blurred or Defined? .....	92
5.1.1	Boundary Creation .....	92
5.1.2	Stigma .....	95
5.2	Racialization: Inevitable, Historical, or Irrelevant? .....	98
5.2.1	The Civil War .....	98
5.2.2	Colonial Past.....	107
5.2.3	Strangers or One of Many Others? .....	109
5.3	Construction of the Lebanese "self", Refugees, and Social Class .....	116
5.3.1	Self/Other Construction .....	116
5.3.2	The Refugee Category and Arab Host States .....	120
5.3.3	Neoliberalism, Social Class, and Racialization.....	135
5.4	Conclusion .....	141
Chapter Six:	Security and Demography .....	144
6.1	The Racial State .....	145
6.1.1	Externalization of the Different .....	153
6.1.2	Devolution and Security as Techniques of Governance .....	156
6.1.3	A Military Danger .....	161
6.1.4	A Danger With or Without Weapons .....	163
6.2	The Biopolitical State .....	166
6.2.1	Racially Configured Nationality Law .....	171
6.3	Demographic Engineering.....	174
6.4	Conclusion .....	178
Chapter Seven:	Case Study on 2010 Labour Law Amendment.....	181
7.1	Labour Conditions in the Post-Ta'if Accord Period .....	182
7.2	Labour Law Proposal in 2010 .....	186
7.3	Useful Illegalities .....	191
7.4	Human Rights or Sovereignty.....	194

7.5 Tawteen and Labour Rights .....	197
7.6 Conclusion .....	201
Chapter Eight: Conclusion .....	203
Appendix A: Biographies of Respondents.....	215
Appendix B: List of Political Parties.....	228
Bibliography .....	230

## **Abbreviations**

AUB American University of Beirut

CEDAW UN Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

CIA Central Intelligence Agency

CRC UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

CRTD Lebanese NGO Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action

FLF Front of Lebanese Forces

FPM Free Patriotic Movement

GUPT Union of Palestinian Teachers

GUPW General Union of Palestinian Workers

HDHR Universal Declaration for Human Rights

ICCPR UN international Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICESCR UN Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

ILO International Labour Organization

LNLM Lebanese National Movement

NGO Non-Government Organization

PLO Palestine Liberation Organization

PRCS Palestine Red Crescent Society

PSP Progressive Socialist Party



SAMED Palestine Martyrs Works Society

SSNP Syrian Social National Party

STL Special Tribunal for Lebanon

Ta'if The Document of National Reconciliation

UNRWA United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near  
East

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## Chapter One: Introduction

“With Palestine and against the Palestinians” - Shafik Al Hout

Lebanon claims to be one of the main champions of the Palestinian cause. This claim is not void or detached from reality. Large segments of the Lebanese population have made grave sacrifices for the Palestinian cause and Lebanon is, without dispute, the Arab country that has paid the heaviest price for the Arab-Israel conflict. Yet for decades of Palestinian refuge, the Lebanese state has imposed draconian restrictions on the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon. The relation between the Palestinian population and the Lebanese state is complex and multi-layered. This research aims to analyse and theorize this complex relationship. More specifically, it intends to theorize exclusion and disciplinary practices applied by the Lebanese state towards Palestinian refugees by drawing on the broader literature on racialization. The research question asks: how were Palestinians reconfigured from being co-ethnics with the Lebanese in the initial refuge stage to a racialized minority group in the post-Taif Accord period?

This research explores racialization between co-ethnics or peoples from the same ethnicity. Yet, the term co-ethnics does not accurately depict the Lebanese-Palestinian relation. Palestinians and Lebanese regard themselves, and are regarded by others, to be of Arab ethnicity, but so are Moroccans, Kuwaitis, Sudanese, and remaining Arabs. Palestinians and Lebanese are more precisely co-ethnics that share culture, history, dialectic, cuisine, norms and traditions, religions and sects, and even physical appearance that are distinct to their region. Historically, Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria had been referred to as “Greater Syria” or “Bilad Al Sham”. To this day, Palestinians, Lebanese, and Syrians are referred to as “shami” or “shwam” by other Arabs. The term

shami is derived from “sham” which translates into Damascus in Arabic and also denotes the region of historical Syria. Arabs from North Africa are referred to as “maghariba” which is derived from “Maghreb” which signifies the Arab region of North Africa and translates into Morocco. Similarly, Arabs from the Arab Gulf States are referred to as “Khalejyeen” from the word “Khaleej” meaning gulf. These terms are not empty signifiers and they represent a specific culture and history of each region of the Arab world and its people. This is important because it allows for studying and theorizing the racialization of peoples with a shared culture.

This is not to say that the case of Palestinians in Lebanon is unique in this regard. Fredrik Barth, although he does not focus on the state, was the first to study such kind of relationship in the 1960s and he illuminated our understanding in that cultural differences do factor into the creation and maintenance of ethnic categories and boundaries, yet one cannot assume a direct correspondence between ethnic groups and cultural similarities and differences. The features that are ascribed importance are not based on the sum of objective differences, but only those which the actors themselves perceive to be significant (Barth 1998: 13, 14). In line with this reasoning, minor differences between Lebanese and Palestinians in terms of accent, cuisine, and dress are inflated and exacerbated to create and strengthen ethnic boundaries (Petee 2005: 155). However, the process is not linear and the shift from co-ethnics or shami to a racialized minority consisted in a long, gradual, and complex process. While the racialization process is important in itself, I also make use of racialization as an analytical tool or theoretical lens to explore and theorize the governance, exclusion, and disciplining of Palestinian refugees by the Lebanese state. I argue that Lebanese state governance is based on the exclusion and disciplining of Palestinians, but that this is not possible without their racialization. Palestinians are racialized and categorized as outsiders to allow for their exclusion, while their exclusion enables and enhances their racialization



by Lebanese state. In this approach, I did not focus on racialization between the Lebanese and Palestinian populations in Lebanon, but rather on racialization as a phenomenon of the state.

While there are many theories of the state and its rationale, I found it most useful to use the theories of Michel Foucault (2004) on the racial and biopolitical state, Zygmunt Bauman (1991) on the gardening state, and David Theo Goldberg (2002) on the racial state. As Palestinians have been denied their civil and social rights in Lebanon since their refuge, these theories offer an explanation of exclusion and racialization beyond the narrow scope of economic rationality, immigrant/host relations, and refugeeness and humanitarian development. Rather, they look into the category of refugee as one of “inferiors” or “delinquents” (Foucault 1977; 2003), “strangers” (Bauman 1991), or “outcasts” and a “danger” (Goldberg 2002) who pose an “existential” threat to the dominant group[s] and therefore need to be eliminated or corralled. I also examine this racial state rationale by depending on and analyzing primary data I collected through interviews I conducted with Lebanese and Palestinian politicians and intellectuals in the summer of 2012 in Lebanon, secondary data obtained from the vast literature on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, and archival research of local Lebanese newspapers on key events and legislation that had influenced and impacted Lebanese-Palestinian relations.

I first became politically aware and conscious of the Palestinian cause with the breakout of the first Palestinian Intifada (uprising) in 1987. I followed the events of the Intifada on television on a regular basis as a child growing up in Kuwait. I was also aware of the ongoing civil war in Lebanon and Palestinian involvement in it, but my concern and understanding of the Palestinian cause centred on the liberation of historic Palestine and confronting the Israeli occupation. This remained my stance even after my family and I



left Kuwait in 1990 to Lebanon and did not return as Palestinians were expelled from Kuwait in 1991 without being allowed to return till this day. It was not that I was unaware of the injustices Palestinians in Lebanon endure, rather I understood the situation as one where part of the Lebanese population is supportive of Palestinians, while other Lebanese are anti-Palestinian. In both cases, my assumption was that the Lebanese state is negligent of the socio-economic well-being of both the Palestinian and Lebanese populations at large. In simple words my “problem” was with Israel that occupied our land and led to our displacement.

My uneasiness with the practices of the Lebanese state sharpened when as an undergraduate student I volunteered to teach English in Burj Al Barajneh Palestinian refugee camp in Beirut to youth and children, and intensified during three years of work in a non-governmental organization operating social and educational programmes in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. These experiences enabled me to understand the complexity of Palestinian life and hardship in the refugee camps. The narratives<sup>1</sup> used by Lebanese politicians and part of the Lebanese public to justify Palestinian exclusion became less convincing to me.

Prior to volunteering and working in the refugee camps, I had no direct contact with the camps. My father and my paternal grandparents resided in residential middle class neighbourhood of Beirut upon initial refuge in 1948 and therefore had never lived in a camp. They left for Beirut after their village, Al Kabri, was razed to the ground by Zionist paramilitaries after a battle that took place with the local Palestinian militia in the village. My father’s family was a land-owning and political family in Northern historic Palestine and the head of the Serhan family was a member of the Higher Arab

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<sup>1</sup> These narratives are explored in the findings chapters

Committee for Palestine<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, my mother's family resided in Burj Al Barajneh Palestinian refugee camp in Beirut upon initial refuge and up till the 1960s when my maternal grandfather was able to secure an administrative job with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). My maternal grandparents were from the town of Tarshiha in Northern historic Palestine which enjoyed a good standard of living relative to other towns in Northern historic Palestine. Their initial residence in a refugee camp did not stem from a deprived background in Palestine, but similar to most Palestinians at the time they simply lost their means of livelihood which was their land.

Through stories from both my mother and father, and prior to any academic reading on the issue, I had a general idea of early experiences of refugeeness of Palestinians who were immediately integrated into Lebanese society and those who were excluded. When Al Tharwa (the revolution) and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) arrived in Lebanon in the late 1960s/early 1970s, my mother worked as an accountant in the Planning Centre of the PLO based in Beirut and my father was the head of educational and social planning in the same Centre. My upbringing was secular and Arab national, as opposed to sectarian, and centred on the love of Palestine. When I was growing up in Kuwait, my parents seldom discussed the Lebanese civil war, at least not in my presence, and consequently I did not have a prior judgement of any specific sect.

When I returned to Lebanon the schools and university I attended had students and staff from various sects in Lebanon, as well as Palestinians, and I formed lasting friendships and relations with many of them. My friendships extend to both predominantly Muslim West Beirut and Christian East Beirut. The neighbourhood I resided in in Beirut is a mixed neighbourhood, both in terms of Lebanese and Palestinian diversity. Many of the

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<sup>2</sup> The Committee represented the political elites of Palestine that opposed the British mandate in Palestine and Zionist immigration into Palestine



workshops and forums I attended while working in the social development sector were also joint efforts between Lebanese and Palestinian civil society. Therefore, I approached this research as both an insider/outsider. I both belong and do not belong to the Palestinian and Lebanese communities; nonetheless, I have access to both. For the Lebanese, I will always remain a Palestinian no matter how well-integrated and accepted I am into Lebanese society as I do not hold Lebanese citizenship, and for Palestinian camp residents I do not share their suffering to fully qualify as an insider.

The focus on the research is on the post-civil war or post-Ta'if period and specifically till the year 2012. This year does not coincide with the practicality of completing the fieldwork in that year, but rather that matters changed dramatically following the 2011 war in Syria and specifically following the arrival of vast numbers of Syrian refugees in Lebanon in 2012. However, to understand the post-Taif Accord period and to trace the racialization process by the Lebanese state, I found it necessary to follow a historical approach both to provide context and as evidence to the core arguments of the thesis.

The three main periods I focus on, each which is distinctive in terms of the Lebanese state's treatment of Palestinian refugees, are the pre/initial refuge period (1918-1969), the period of PLO presence preceding and during the Lebanese civil war (1968-1989), and the post-civil war period (1989-2012). Of significance to the post-civil war period is the constitutional exclusion of Palestinians by two words articulated into the preamble of the constitution; i.e. "no tawteen". In Lebanese political discourse, tawteen signifies the naturalization or permanent settlement of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon which would lead to the demise of Lebanon if it were to occur. At the civil war's end, the long and complex Palestinian presence was summarized in these two words that constitutionally codified the rejection of tawteen. As such, the exclusion and racialization of Palestinians is centred on the pretext of protecting and preserving this

constitutional clause and, linked to this, the right of Palestinians to return to Palestine/Israel. The preceding two periods illuminate how Palestinians reached the point where they became the only named group to be singled out for exclusion in the Lebanese constitution and with the consensus of various Lebanese political parties and sects. While Palestinians were, more or less, excluded throughout their presence, in the initial refuge period they received a warm welcome from the state and most of the Lebanese population. Relations became antagonistic with the state from 1958 onwards, but specifically in the period of PLO presence starting in 1968, although this is also the period when Palestinian-Lebanese societal relations were the strongest especially with the Muslim population and a segment of the Christian population. The first two periods differ from the post-civil war period in that Palestinians were blamed and scapegoated for the breakout of the civil war in the latter by large segments of the Lebanese population. By grounding the research in the history and adopting a state-centrist approach, it is the post-civil war period that I attempt to understand and theorize.

The thesis is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter two explains the methodology used to trace the racialization process and its relation with the exclusion of Palestinians in Lebanon. The research consisted in “studying up” or studying the powerful. As the focus of the research is on the state, interviewing Lebanese and Palestinian politicians and intellectuals during the fieldwork allowed for gaining insights into the rationale behind Lebanese state practices from both a Lebanese and Palestinian perspective. Documentary sources were also used to answer the broader research question. This consisted in archival research of local Lebanese newspapers around key legislation pertaining to Palestinians and events or conflicts Palestinians were involved in, as well as of the reactions of various Lebanese politicians



to these events. The significance of a review of the vast literature on Palestinians in Lebanon is also explained in this chapter.

Chapter three presents the theoretical framework. It is centred on theories of the biopolitical state (Foucault 2004), the gardening state (Bauman 1991), the racial state (Foucault 2004; Goldberg 2002), and the relation between the consociational state and the racial state (Finlay 2011). The chapter also presents a review of the key literature on racialization and theories of the state.

Chapter four provides the historical context. As Palestinian presence in Lebanon since 1948 has been complex and multidimensional, the chapter provides an overview of this presence only from the angle of exclusion by the Lebanese state. It divides this presence into six main periods with each period characterizing a shift in the relation of Palestinians with the Lebanese state. The focus on exclusion and the shifting position of Palestinians aimed to contextualize the reconfiguration of Palestinians from co-ethnics to a racialized minority.

The fifth chapter analyses the racialization of Palestinians in Lebanon within a framework of the nation-building process that occurred in Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria under the British and French mandates in the first half of the twentieth century. This process is analysed within a post-colonial frame. I argue that the racialization of Palestinians had its roots embedded prior to Palestinian refuge in Lebanon, and that the Lebanese state was intrinsically constructed as a racial state (Goldberg 2002; Mitchell 1991). Unlike Palestine and Syria, the newly independent Lebanese state was a consociational state and the preservation of the “delicate” balance between Muslims and Christians was a priority for the Lebanese state. The analysis of *tawteen* and its various interpretations by Lebanese and Palestinians actors begins in this chapter and runs throughout the thesis. The core of this chapter considers the dominant narratives around

Palestinian presence in Lebanese discourse. Emphasis is placed on the position of the PLO in the Lebanese civil-war, not to determine who was at fault, but because Palestinians were blamed for this war in the post-Ta'if Accord period. This chapter also looks into the uniquely “othered” position of Palestinians in a divided Lebanon with many “others”. The emphasis was on analysing dominant racializing narratives that feed into and reinforce the racialization of Palestinians.

In Chapter six, I analyse the “killing” of Palestinians in Lebanon by the Lebanese biopolitical state (Foucault 2004) and their categorization as outsiders by the Lebanese racial state (Goldberg 2002). Palestinians are constructed as outsiders that “must” be kept outside Lebanese society and as a demographic and military danger to the Lebanese population that “needs” to be eliminated. As “strangers” in a “gardening state” (Bauman 1991), Palestinians disrupt the “cosy antagonism” between Lebanese friends and enemies in a consociational Lebanon. As such, I explored whether the consociational state reproduces the racial state (Finlay 2011). I argue that draconian restrictions imposed on Palestinians by the Lebanese state aim to compel Palestinian refugees to emigrate from Lebanon, and I show that by neglecting the socio-economic well-being of Palestinians and devolving its responsibilities to the humanitarian organizations, the Lebanese state is only interested in governing Palestinians as a security and military danger.

In chapter seven, I use the case of a 2010 parliamentary debate and vote on amending laws pertaining to Palestinian civil rights as means of analysing Palestinian labour conditions, but also their racialization through this month and a half long debate that aroused the spectre of tawteen once again. Here, the link between tawteen and the denial of the right to work is explored. By using Palestinian labour rights as a case-study, I look into the link between exclusion, racialization and discipline. I argue that by making

the activity of work an illegality for Palestinians, Lebanese society is normalized (Foucault 1977). Chapter eight is the conclusion.





## **Chapter Two: Methodology**

As we saw in the introduction my thesis examines the rationales and mechanisms used by the Lebanese state to exclude, discipline, and manage Palestinian refugees. The emphasis on critical race theory to theorise exclusion and discipline has been discussed. I employ the theories of Michel Foucault on state racism, biopower, and docile bodies, Zygmunt Bauman on the gardening state, and that of David Theo Goldberg on the racial state as a theoretical framework and to guide the research design. Answering the broader research question cannot be done quantitatively as it involves the tracing of processes. As such, the research is based on qualitative research methods. With the emphasis on the state and more specifically its practices, I found it most useful to base the research methods on elite interviewing, archival research of Lebanese newspapers, and an analysis of the literature on Palestinians in Lebanon. Cumulatively these varying modes of data collection allow for tracing the racialization processes, and theorizing the rationale for the exclusionary and racial practices of the Lebanese state.

### **2.1 Fieldwork**

I conducted the fieldwork during several visits to Lebanon during 2010, 2011, and 2012, but the most sustained was during the summer of 2012 when I conducted 14 interviews with members of the political elite and intellectuals who are engaged with the issue of Palestinians presence. During my time in Beirut, I was also engaged in archival research of Lebanese newspapers through the archives of the American University of Beirut. Various aspects of the fieldwork are discussed in the sections below.



### 2.1.1 Interview Sample

I interviewed politicians, academics and a journalist. They came from the left and right of the political spectrum and included both Muslims and Christians. Some were sympathetic to the Palestinian plight and others were strongly opposed to Palestinian presence. Seven of the respondents were Lebanese and seven were Palestinian. Six of the Lebanese respondents were politicians that were chosen for the positions they occupy within the state and/or their profound understanding of Lebanese political establishment. By interviewing politicians it was possible to gain insights into how policy pertaining to Palestinians was formulated, as well as the justifications for this political rationale. It also enabled gaining an understanding of their interpretation of events and their legitimating narratives, especially as these interpretations and narratives resonate within Lebanese society and hence influence the racialization process and perpetuate exclusion. In *Ethnicity Without Groups*, Rogers Brubaker delineates that the main protagonists of ethnic conflict in most cases are not ethnic groups per se, but various kinds of organizations including states, certain ministries, law enforcement agencies, armed groups, political parties, social movements, religious associations, the media and so on (Brubaker 2004: 14, 15). Although the focus of the thesis is on the state and although I acknowledge the power of such institutions, this top-bottom and functionalist approach of explaining ethnic relations and power-relations is not the one I adopt.

Following on Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, and Philip Abrams, I question the existence of the state and I agree with those theorists that the state is illusory and not a “real thing”. Therefore, I focus on state practices, the “state idea”, and the “state-system”; that is, that the state is a practice and not an apparatus (Abrams 1988: 64). I chose my

respondents based on their position within the state-system (Miliband 1974 in Abrams 1988) and as those enacting state practices.

Through the interviews, which were all digitally recorded and include a verbal approval by respondents, information was obtained beyond what these politicians typically reveal in the media. Of the six Lebanese politicians, two were no longer in office. This does not mean they were no longer politically active. Within the Lebanese political system these politicians represent certain political currents and they continue to have an influence in Lebanese politics as their views are still heard by the public. It is also not uncommon for them to be re-elected into parliament at a later stage depending on the coalitions formed after elections take place.

On the other hand, Palestinian politicians and academics were interviewed to obtain their interpretation of events and Palestinian conditions as a subjugated party. Some of the Palestinian respondents have a long history of dealing with the Lebanese state and struggling for Palestinian rights. Their involvement offered them insights into the workings of the state from a Palestinian perspective. Contrary to the Lebanese interviewees, more Palestinian intellectuals than politicians were interviewed. The purpose of this was to gain a Palestinian understanding of the situation as Palestinians fall outside the realm of policy making by the Lebanese state. Nonetheless, I did interview three Palestinian politicians to gain an understanding of the relation between Palestinian factions and the Lebanese state in terms of governance of the Palestinian population in Lebanon.

The narratives provided by the Lebanese politicians were contrasted with narratives presented by the Palestinian respondents. Although this gives both Palestinian and Lebanese respondents a voice, their voices remain unequal. Lila Abu-Lughod, writing on the resistance of Bedouin women to unequal family structures in a male-dominated



society, shows that women resist and assert themselves by taking advantage of contradictions in society but that their tactics of resistance are confined within culturally acceptable forms. This implies that their form of resistance is produced by power-relations dominated by men and cannot be seen as independent of them. In such a scenario resistance is not independent or outside the system of power (Abu-Lughod 1990: 47; Foucault 1978: 95, 96). In the same light, the oppositional voices and resistance of Palestinian intellectuals and politicians cannot be seen outside the realm of the power-relation produced by the Lebanese state. Their voices are not only those of resistance or opposition, but are also indicative of the power-relation they are implicated in. Keeping this in mind, on some issues the responses of Palestinian and Lebanese respondents converged and in others they differed. Similarly, the views expressed among the Lebanese and among the Palestinians were not uniform. This allowed for a more holistic and complex analysis of mechanisms of exclusion and discipline.

Yet the Lebanese and Palestinian political spectrum is too wide and diverse for this sample to be representative; the sampling was rather purposeful. The research participants were not chosen on a random basis, but rather based on the relevance of their position in the state-system in terms of answering the research questions (Bryman 2012: 418). The respondents chosen occupied different positions in their relation to the Lebanese state and Palestinian presence, and had different understandings of the questions posed to them. This allowed for a variety of interpretations that enhanced the analysis and strengthened the evidence. Despite the sample not being representative, it included Lebanese respondents from a variety of sects and Palestinians from different political parties and inclinations. However, the sample cannot be simply approached from a sectarian perspective despite the relevance of sect in Lebanon. For example, the interviewees included Christian politicians that are hostile to Palestinian presence and Christians who are supportive of Palestinian rights. The purpose of the sample is not to

generalize about a certain sect, but more specifically to understand the political rationale of the Lebanese state in managing the Palestinian refugee population.

Elite interviewing was the main research method. As such, I was researching the powerful or “studying up”. Herbert Gans had suggested that the social sciences serve a “dialogue” mechanism between elites and the general population, but as this process is asymmetrical, it further contributes to the power imbalance in favour of the elites. Elites are provided with knowledge about the population, but rarely does social science knowledge flow the other way according to Gans (Hunter 1993: 56). Although researchers may argue that studying down gives a voice to the socially disadvantaged and under-represented, their relative powerlessness is exhibited by the fact that their lives are so frequently recorded (Fitz and Halpin 1994: 48). As power and knowledge are intimately related and as differences in the distribution of knowledge are a source of power, researching the powerful becomes a political act whereby acquiring knowledge from and about elites enables distributing it more broadly in the public domain (Hunter 1993: 36). A more thorough understanding of elites may provide useful knowledge that empowers those with less power to challenge their control, exploitation, and subjugation (Mickelson 1994: 134). Even if social change is not actualized in the short-term, such research provides a documentation of elite dynamics and logic that may be useful in latter periods. The obvious danger in studying up is that researchers may end up reproducing the discourse of the powerful (Fitz and Halpin 1994: 48), however, this downside may be overcome in the analysis and interpretation whereby what was said in interviews is not taken at face-value, and is cross-referenced and analysed.



### 2.1.2 Access

It is often said that gaining access to elite respondents is difficult because elites are crafty in shielding themselves from exposure and criticism (Ostrander 1993: 15). One obvious way of easing access is exploiting pre-established links with those in power (Fitz and Halpin 1994). In my case, gaining access was a relatively smooth process. My background, or more accurately my father's background, greatly influenced the ease with which I gained access to my respondents. My father, Bassem Serhan, is an academic who wrote frequently on the Arab-Israeli conflict in widely-read newspapers in Kuwait and still does in Lebanon. As the public intellectual circle in Lebanon is small this made access easy. My second gatekeeper was Sakr Abu Fakhr who is researcher and prominent journalist and a long-term friend of my father. His assistance was also indispensable in terms of access as he is active within Lebanese intellectual and political circles. Nonetheless, without these personal contacts gaining access would have been very difficult, especially within the time-frame of one summer.

In the vast majority of cases, arranging for an interview only required one brief telephone call from one of my gatekeepers. When more than one telephone call was necessary, it was simply to set a date and time that were suitable to the interviewee. However, the process was not all smooth. Despite several attempts, I could not gain access to the Islamic Lebanese and Palestinian political parties, namely Hezbollah and Hamas. This was indirectly explained through their more pressing preoccupation with the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Syria. I cannot be certain whether this is the true reason or not.

Having pre-existing links to the powerful was indispensable for the research, yet the prestige of the institution I was coming from and the level of study I was at were also access-easing factors (Fitz and Halpin 1994: 48; Hunter 1993: 56). Even after I had gained access, two of the respondents asked once again when I arrived at the interview

which university I was enrolled in and double-checked that I was conducting the research at the doctoral level and not the master's level; this, in turn, determined the level of seriousness I was treated with.

In addition the pre-existing links with powerful and the prestige of the academic institution, flexibility on my part facilitated access. My gatekeepers telephoned only one interviewee at a time to allow for their preferences and convenience in the time and place of interview. I agreed to any appointment at any location suggested without hesitation.

Consequently, I conducted the interviews in a range of locations. These included political parties' headquarters, the Lebanese parliament offices, the Palestinian embassy in Lebanon, Assafir newspaper offices, a private office of a parliament member, non-governmental organizations inside and outside the refugee camps, and my own home for one of the interviews. Several of the locations were guarded with heavy security but I did not face any complications as my name and time of interview were provided to the security personnel prior to my arrival. With the exception of the interview conducted in my home, all interviews were conducted in the offices of the respondents. In some cases, respondents sat behind their desks adding to the feel of formality, while in most interviews both the respondent and I were sitting on office couches facing each other; nonetheless I was in their home territory and not mine.

### **2.1.3 Interview Schedule**

The interview schedule was composed of a list of open-ended questions that were put to the interviewees. It was semi-structured in that the same schedule was used for all interviewees. They were all asked the same questions in broadly the same sequence. (Fitz and Halpin 1994: 36).The interviews were centred on the interview schedule as it

allows for a certain level of control while conducting interviews with elites (Fitz and Halpin 1994: 37). The interviews were semi-structured in that the same open-ended questions, asked in the same sequence were presented to all interviewees. However, there was variation in how the interviews actually went. Some respondents requested that I read all the questions out to them first or read them themselves prior to beginning in order to avoid repeating themselves where there is overlap as they explained. Others simply told me to surprise them with the questions. Ball advocates accommodating the setting, style, mode, and pace of the interview to the preferences of the interviewee (Ball 1994: 97).

Nonetheless, I had a desire to maintain a certain level of control over the interviews.

When certain questions had already been touched on, I still presented the question to the subjects by explaining that “we have already touched on this, but I will read out the question just in case there is something additional you would like to say”. I thought it was important to present all the questions that are based on extensive research and insights from my two gatekeepers who are experts in the field of Palestinian presence in Lebanon. Although some respondents thought there was indeed overlap, they still had additional information to add when I presented the question to them.

Similarly, I did not always follow the pre-established sequence when a respondent had covered a certain area before I had actually asked the following question. I would simply say when they finish explaining that “you have touched on one of the other questions, so I will just ask it now since we are discussing the topic”. I did not shift abruptly but rather used something they have already said to get into the issues with which I am most concerned (Ostrander 1993: 21, 22), or used information said in a previous interview or from an authoritative secondary source. I noticed as I went along that the interviews actually feedback into each other. This was also a safe method to



question parts of what I was being told without appearing confrontational and therefore risking ending up with a much shorter interview.

That different researchers with different knowledge and backgrounds have different interviewing styles and abilities seems to go against the positivist conception of robust research. It does not seem to hold true that when the same techniques are applied to the same data to answer the same questions that this will lead to the same conclusions (Gilchrist and Williams 1999). Although I presented the same set of questions to all respondents, my personal experience revealed that this is not the actual case in practice. Had it not been for my long-term residence in Lebanon, involvement in the Palestinian social field, and political awareness of the Palestinian predicament, my probing abilities, and hence the responses I received, would have differed to a great extent.

Concerning the pace of the interviews, Susan A. Ostrander recommends periodic time checks to ensure that all issues are covered (1993: 22). I have to admit I was intimidated about interviewing politicians in the first two interviews and consequently I asked if they still had time following every set of questions. This made me appear unsure of myself. By the third interview, I only checked on the time once or twice as I noticed that the interviewees tend to set the pace of the interview according to the time they wish to grant me. The fact that they had agreed to an interview of roughly one hour renders frequent time-checks unnecessary. I also noticed that the more I addressed them as an equal when probing the more seriously they took the interview. Elite respondents have an understanding of what academic research involves, and they are accustomed to being interviewed and recorded and are therefore comfortable with the interview as a social event (Gewirtz and Ozga 1994: 194). Political actors are skilled interviewees (Ball 1994: 96). As such, I felt the need to address the subjects and probe as an equal in a

comfortable manner, although I was involved in occasional acts of deference simply as gratitude for the time and information they presented me with.

The probing style in itself is insufficient for a successful interview. I had to show that I had done my homework which is essential for establishing the respect necessary for doing research with elites (Ostrander 1993: 11). To exhibit that one lacks knowledge is, of course, the *raison d'être* for doing the research in the first place and is often the basis for convincing respondents to take the time to inform you of what they know. However, to be too ignorant of the setting and current conditions may convince elite subjects that you are too ill-informed or uninterested to have done your homework for them to give you their time (Hunter 1993: 51, 52). In my case, I had done two years of preliminary research prior to embarking on the fieldwork.

The ease of access and interview skills does not mean that none of the interviews were problematic. In one of the interviews, my questions were more or less avoided, despite my attempt to probe further. I was not able to make sense of why the interview went the way it did as the interviewee is an outspoken figure for Palestinian rights and against the exclusion of Palestinians. I can only presume that the interviewee was not comfortable with the questions or that he noticed he did not have sufficient time as the interview took place in the Lebanese parliament on what seemed to be a busy day. Another possible explanation, which I cannot ascertain, is that interviewees may have a set of responses that they would not venture beyond. As Ostrander remarked about her own elite interviews, elite respondents generally have the tendency to "just talk". She explains that this is an accurate understanding on their part of their social status and power and does not simply consist in self-centredness or a distorted self-importance (Ostrander 1993: 22).

## 2.2 Newspaper Archives

I conducted archival research of local Lebanese newspapers that consisted in purposeful researching of key events and legislation. This archival research was not aimless or random, rather I focused on these key events and key legislation in the post-Taif period to examine how Palestinians are uniquely racialized in comparison to the many Lebanese sectarian “others” and to supplement a case-study on labour rights. The importance of newspapers lies in how Palestinians in Lebanon were presented by these newspapers to their various readers who have different political affiliations and sectarian allegiances and hence in the exposition of the position of Palestinians as a racialized minority.

In 2011 and in 2013, I collected articles on two incidents that revealed Palestinians’ racialized existence. The first incident was the conflict in Nahr el-Bared Palestinian refugee camp in North Lebanon that broke out in 2007 when a group of Islamist militants attacked a Lebanese army post. The conflict lasted for four months and received almost daily coverage in Lebanese newspapers. The second incident occurred in 2013 and also involved an attack on a Lebanese army post in East Lebanon, except that in this case it occurred in the Lebanese area of Aarsal in East Lebanon. Archival research on both incidents allowed for a comparison between the representation of Lebanese and Palestinians in the media and by Lebanese politicians, but more importantly they revealed the differentiated state governance practices towards Lebanese and Palestinians; applying “soft” mechanisms in the case of the former and brute force in the case of the latter.

I used the archives of the American University of Beirut (AUB) which include newspaper archives dating back to the 1930s when the first Lebanese newspaper was established and from the date of establishment of newspapers that were issued in latter periods. For more recent events that occurred while I was conducting my research in



Ireland, I kept track of these newspapers online as almost all Lebanese newspapers issue an online version. Lebanese newspapers can vary in orientation and political inclination and range from the left to the right of the political spectrum. Therefore I mainly, but not exclusively, relied on and selected two newspapers with a wide readership in Lebanon. The first was Assafir newspaper which is a pro-Palestinian newspaper of an Arab Nationalist orientation and its readers are from various sects. The second was Annahar newspaper that is, by and large, opposed to Palestinian presence and predominantly represents the Lebanese Christian Maronite right.

To supplement a case study chapter on labour rights with additional data, archival research was also useful in tracing a month and a half-long debate in 2010 in the Lebanese parliament on a law proposal to amend the labour laws pertinent to Palestinians. This legislation was chosen in particular as it was the most recent in the post-Taif Accord period and it illustrated how the relation between various Lebanese political parties, the state, and Palestinians works in practice. It especially highlighted some of the gaps inherent in the official discourse of parties supportive of Palestinian rights and actual voting patterns and choices that run contrary to this claimed support. Just as important, this law proposal instigated a heightened emphasis on the “threat” of *tawteen* that reinforced the racialization of Palestinians.

Beyond purposeful researching of key events and legislation, researching Lebanese newspapers allowed for obtaining data I did not expect to obtain. Such data came from independent research centres in relation to the sectarian composition of Lebanese society. In the absence of an official census since 1932 and within the context of the Palestinian threat of *tawteen* to the confessional system, this data published in newspapers strengthened the research findings.

### 2.3 UNRWA Reports

One of the major sources of information on Palestinians in Lebanon is UNRWA. Other UN agencies and NGOs write on Palestinians, but UNRWA has the most extensive and oldest archives on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. UNRWA had, and still does, compile statistics and demographic data on Palestinians since 1949; the date of its establishment. UNRWA's data is often superior to that of the Lebanese state, which as we shall see mainly collects data related to the security dimension or threat inherent in Palestinian presence such as place of residence and personal information needed for the issuance of identity cards and travel documents. In fact, the Lebanese state relies on UNRWA for obtaining various forms of information making UNRWA an invaluable source for anyone researching Palestinian refugees.

UNRWA reports and publications were used as a source for a variety of data. Demographic data such as school enrolment rates was used to estimate the level of Palestinian emigration from Lebanon and thereby I inferred an estimate of the size of the Palestinian population in the absence of accurate figures. This is important because the figures claimed by many Lebanese politicians tend to be inflated in order to exaggerate the Palestinian threat to the "delicate" Lebanese sectarian balance. The reports and publications also cover the conditions of Palestinians in the areas of health, education, housing, and employment; areas that UNRWA is actively engaged in among the Palestinian refugee community. This is of relevance since it allows for delving into the governance of Palestinians by the Lebanese biopolitical state.

The Lebanese state also relegates ensuring the socio-economic well-being of Palestinians to UNRWA. In this regard, UNRWA publications also shed light on the exclusion of Palestinians under international conventions that the Lebanese state is bound by. Much has been written about this in terms of a "protection gap". While UNRWA has provided an unequivocal definition of whom a Palestine refugee is and has legitimated

them as refugees, Palestinian refugees do not benefit from the protection provided by the international refugee system till this day despite comprising one-third of the refugee population worldwide and despite being categorized as refugees for the longest period of all refugee populations.

A clause was articulated into the mandate of the United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to specifically exclude Palestine refugees from UNHCR protection whereby a person “who continues to receive from other organs or agencies of the United Nations protection or assistance” is excluded from the High Commissioner’s competence” (UNRWA 2012). This amendment to the universal definition exclusively applied to Palestine refugees as recipients of assistance from UNRWA and was articulated at the request of several Arab states, including Lebanon (Al Hussein and Bocco 2009: 266, 268; Goddard 2009: 487). Refugees who fall under the auspices of the UNHCR are guaranteed protection and it is the responsibility of host countries to secure their civil, social, and economic rights; this does not apply to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and it has a direct impact on the rights of Palestinians, or more accurately the denial of these rights.

Other United Nations reports that formed part of the data for a case study on labour rights was obtained from the reports and studies of the International Labour Organization (ILO). These shed light on the employment patterns and conditions of Palestinians. As Palestinians are, by and large, denied work permits and therefore comprise a labour force unregistered by the Lebanese state, surveys and studies conducted by the ILO become the only reliable source on Palestinian employment and labour.



## 2.4 Why the State?

Having discussed the research methods, it is also important to explain my methodological rationale behind focusing on the state. I conducted extensive research of the literature on Palestinians in Lebanon. I first began this research in November and December of 2010 in the library of the Institute of Palestine Studies (IPS) based in Beirut. IPS was established in 1963 and is the oldest institute devoted exclusively to the documentation, research, analysis, and publication on Palestine affairs and the Arab-Israeli conflict. I also regularly visited the library in the summer of 2011 and 2012. Throughout the research, I also accessed literature on Palestinians in Lebanon from various academic journals and by reviewing publications available at the Trinity College library. On-going research enabled the contextualization of Palestinian presence in Lebanon historically and at present, but more importantly it led to the identification of two gaps in the literature on Palestinians.

The first is related to the issue of “tawteen” or the naturalization or permanent settlement of Palestinians in Lebanon, and the second interrelated issue is the racialization of Palestinians by the Lebanese state. However, this was the culmination of a year and a half process of researching and writing on various aspects of Palestinian presence. I started with exploring the multi-layered governance of Palestinians, under the heading of “governmentality” (Faubion 1994: 216-218; Sharma and Gupta 2006), by the Lebanese state, international development organizations, and Palestinian governance bodies (popular committees) formed of Palestinian factions located in the refugee camps. I also explored, to some extent, the nuance in the positions of various Lebanese political parties and sects towards Palestinians. Following on this I questioned if Palestinians constitute a unifying factor for a divided Lebanese population.

As a result of this process, I discovered that the entry point to the research and the thread that ties the research together is “tawteen”. The exclusion of Palestinians in the

post-civil war period is premised on the pretext of preventing tawteen that would amount to the “demise of Lebanon” in a confessional Lebanon according to the dominant Lebanese discourse. Yet the Lebanese state is careful to not simply create a discourse around tawteen in negative terms. It argues that through the rejection of tawteen, the denied of civil rights is justified as it constitutes a means to preserve the Palestinian right of return to Palestine/Israel. Preventing Palestinian integration into Lebanese society by rejecting tawteen and consequently the denial of civil rights prevents Palestinians from forgetting and forgoing their homeland in this state discourse (Haddad 2004: 478; Salih 2013: 70, 71, 76).

There is a consensus among all Lebanese parties and sects to reject tawteen regardless of their position towards Palestinians (Sayigh, R. 1995: 37). Just as important is that through exploring tawteen, which factored heavily in my fieldwork, a link began to emerge between exclusion and racialization. This is so because tawteen is an integral part of the racialization process towards Palestinians in the post-Ta'if Accord period. Racialization has not factored as a theoretical framework in other research on Palestinian presence despite its importance in analysing and understanding exclusion. This process had also guided and assisted my efforts in formulating the research questions and the interview schedule. Starting with multi-layered governance, I finally settled on studying the state, or more accurately state practices, as racialization is integral to the way the state exercises its power. This vast scholarship was also used to provide historical context and to study key historical events that have impacted the position of Palestinians such as the breakout of the Lebanese civil war and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Although the focus of the research is on the Lebanese state in the post-civil war period, it is grounded in the history of the Lebanese-Palestinian relationship on various levels; Lebanese state, Lebanese and Palestinian political parties and society.

As for the methodological significance of focusing on the state in the case of a consociational Lebanon, two issues are of particular importance. The first issue consists in the nuance in the positions of various Lebanese sects and political parties concerning Palestinian presence in Lebanon. Stances of Lebanese politicians range from those calling for the wholesale removal of Palestinians from Lebanon to more accommodating suggestions that they be granted civil and social rights until their return to Palestine/Israel (Haddad 2004: 470). The second interrelated issue concerns the effectiveness of the state in implementing its policies in the presence of powerful sectarian leaders in a confessional system. The Ta'if Accord introduced a number of constitutional amendments in 1990. One of those, Article 24, stipulated the equal distribution of parliamentary seats between Christians and Muslims. As such, and until non-sectarian laws are enacted, the Ta'if reaffirmed that political representation is to remain within the confines of sectarian representation (Ofeish 1999: 105, 108). The political process in Lebanon is centred on party-based politics as well as non-partisan independent politicians. Although there has never been a single political party in Lebanon to dominate the state and rule as parties do in some parliamentary systems, political parties have shaped parliamentary debate and participated in government, and party leaders, especially those of established parties, are decisive in influencing the political process (el Khazen 2003: 605). Lebanon's major sectarian communities have been associated with one or more parties and they mirror societal cleavages; political, confessional, and ideological, as well as elite rivalries. They vary in size, influence and representation across Lebanon's regions (el Khazen 2003: 607). This makes the power-sharing mechanism very complex and dictates a system of various checks and balances. A broad consensus is constantly required to pass government decisions and laws (Knio 2005: 227).



On one hand, the presence of such a political system, consociation, may raise a question on the significance of studying the state when sectarian leaders appear to have the upper hand in determining the fate and lived experiences of Palestinians. On the other hand, alternatively one can argue that because of different stances towards Palestinians and power-sharing, it is more methodologically plausible and feasible to study the state, and more specifically its practices, policies, and legislation towards Palestinians. Focusing on the declared positions of various Lebanese political parties and politicians may not enhance our understanding and analysis when the racialization and exclusion of Palestinians has been a permanent fixture in the presence of both supportive and hostile Lebanese parties across the decades. Whether a weak, divided or a failed state, it is the Lebanese state that, nonetheless, dictates the livelihoods of Palestinians.

Despite the importance of the state and my state-centrist position, I do not take the state for granted and I do not consider it a historical given. Philip Abrams, following on Foucault, understands the state as an ideological power that legitimates subjection (1988: 68). The state “starts its life” as a construct that is then reified to the point of acquiring an overt symbolic identity that is increasingly separated from practice (Abrams 1988: 58). The distinctiveness of the state is that it is a matter of processes and not of institutions - that the state is a practice and not an institution (Abrams 1988: 64). The state itself is the source of the state’s ability to defy our effort to study it. The real official secret of the state is, however, the secret of its non-existence (Abrams 1988: 63, 67). Similarly, Pierre Bourdieu argues that one of the main strengths of the state is its ability to impose and produce categories of thought which we then apply to everything in the social world including the state itself (1994: 1, 14, 16). I am not implying that the “non-reality” of the state renders it insignificant; rather, I am emphasizing the importance of studying state practices in comparison to state institutions.

## 2.5 Positionality

My position as a researcher is multifaceted therefore it is important to discuss what the implications of this position were in relation to my research and the knowledge I produced. I discussed my position as an insider/outsider to the Palestinian and Lebanese communities in the introduction. As insider/outsider I have access to the narratives and experiences of both Palestinians and Lebanese. Yet Andrew Finlay (1999) shows the difficulties researchers usually encounter when researching societies divided by ethnic or religious conflict. While I focused on state practices by interviewing those in positions of power, I was not subjected to those practices the way Palestinian camp residents have been and I do not claim to speak on their behalf despite being knowledgeable of their experiences. Although even as a non-camp resident I have faced discrimination on numerous occasions in Lebanon, I agree with Finlay that it might be considered “naïve” on the part of the researcher to over-identify with the people or group they research. In addition to the difficulty inherent in studying discrimination or racism on a communal level in a multi-denominational Lebanon, this forms part of my decision to focus on state racism, in contrast to societal racism, and to use elite interviews as the main research method.

Yet, I am theorizing the exclusion of Palestinians in Lebanon from a position of a doctoral researcher in a Western academic institution. I am also using European and American theories to explain social processes that are occurring in the Arab region, and specifically Lebanon. Arif Dirlik (1994) argues that post-colonial intellectuals, intellectuals of developing world origin, located in developed world institutions are in a position of power vis-à-vis native intellectuals in the developing world. In *Orientalism* (2003), Edward Said delineates that with Western hegemony over the Orient since the



end of the eighteenth century there emerged a complex Orient in the academy that is suitable for study. He argues that Orientalism acquired so authoritative a position that no one writing, thinking, or acting on the Orient can do so without taking into consideration the limitations on thought and action imposed by Orientalism. Orientalism put the Westerner in a position of superiority in their relations to the Orient whereby they maintain the upper hand (2003: 4, 7).

While Said's depiction of this relationship in both *Orientalism* (2003) and in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) is accurate, I am not exactly a Westerner despite my education in a Western academic institutions. I am an Arab Palestinian writing about fellow Arab Palestinians living in Lebanon. While my position as a researcher in a Western university studying an Arab country may be viewed as a "shortcoming" by some observers located in the Arab World, this shortcoming is not mine or of my making, if it is one at all. I have lived most of my life in the Arab World and I had been engaged in social issues as a student and development worker, and have been politically engaged as an interested observer. This shortcoming is related more specifically to the poor conditions of sociology in the Arab region and restrictions imposed on Arab researchers by most, if not all, Arab governments.

Arab social scientists work either in universities or in research institutions, most which are government controlled or financed. Freedom of thought and the areas of research open to Arab social scientists are highly restricted by various open and subtle state mechanisms. Studying ethnic or religious conflict and relations is frowned upon in some Arab countries and is considered taboo in others. Similarly, the theoretical foundations of indigenous Arab sociology are in their beginnings and their future remains unclear which hinders a complete reliance on Arab sociology (Serhan 1992: 257, 258). I do not mean to imply that the weakness of Arab sociology or its censorship by the state make



studying in a Western academic institution imperatively positive or even inevitable. However, my access to and understanding of both Europe and the Arab region makes me more, and not less, critical of both worlds since I take neither of these cultures or social formations for granted as a result of living in both regions for an extended period of time.

It is also a mistake to assume that the Western World and the developing world, or the Occident and the Orient, are completely separate entities. The relationship and impact between the global and the local has been explained at length in globalization studies. Said delineates that there has been a continual colonial, or neo-colonial, presence of Western powers over various parts of the Africa and Asia even following the wave of de-colonization post-World War II. To have been colonized was a fate with lasting and gravely unfair results, especially post-independence (Said 1989: 206, 207). Yet, there is no way of understanding our own Arab culture without also apprehending the imperial experience (Said 1989: 217). Therefore, it is difficult, if not impossible, to understand the current Arab World or region without also understanding and incorporating the colonial experience that was constitutive of modern Arab nation-states.

Ussama Makdisi (2000) brilliantly showed how the modern Lebanese state, sectarian categories, and the confessional system were constructed by France and Britain in the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. In line with Michel Foucault's (1977) understanding of power-knowledge, the domination inherent in power does not always produce negative effects and should not only be viewed as repression since power-relations also produce knowledge. While I used a Foucauldian approach in this thesis, I am aware that I am mainly using Western theories to analyse, explain, and understand an Arab society and that this may be described as a Eurocentric approach that does not apply to the Arab region. This also should not be necessarily viewed as a

shortcoming. Timothy Mitchell explains that Foucault's analyses are focused on France and Northern Europe. He delineates that Foucault's focus has tended to obscure the colonizing nature of disciplinary power. Yet the panopticon as a model institution of surveillance and discipline was a colonial invention and was first applied on the frontier of Europe with the Ottoman Empire, and only later in Europe. Schooling, as discussed by Foucault, as a model for disciplining and improving a population, became the model political process in the capitalist transformation of Egypt (Mitchell 1991: 35). Mitchell shows how the colonizers, first French and then British, designed and constructed a disciplined army that spread as a model to the entire social body and re-ordered colonial Egypt (1991: 38, 39, 64-72).

The fact that Arab countries are not industrial or post-industrial capitalist states in the sense that Western states are does not mean that Arab states and societies have escaped the disciplinary practices discussed by Foucault. As such, Foucauldian theory is applicable to the Arab region and to Arab states. On another interrelated level, an exclusive focus on Eurocentrism as a cultural or ideological problem fails to explain why Eurocentrism, in contrast to other ethnocentrisms, was particularly able to define modern global history and itself as a universal aspiration and the "end of history". What Eurocentrism does is throw the cover of culture over material relationships (Dirlik 1994: 347). Viewed in this light, the problem is structural and not cultural. I am theorizing the exclusion of Palestinians in Lebanon as a structural problem, albeit using post-structural theories, without making any claims to an inherently and "inertly deficient" Lebanese or Palestinian culture. This shifts attention from national origin to subject-position (Dirlik 1994: 335). This does not mean that I understate the question: how does the developing world write its own history? (Dirlik 1994: 332). However, post-colonial criticism occupies a space that is neither inside nor outside the history of Western domination but is rather in a tangential relation to it (Dirlik 1994: 333).



Nonetheless, this thesis does not, as one commonly hears and reads in Arab media, blame imperialism or colonization for most problems in Arab societies. As social history can be caused by nothing other than human agency (Said 1982: 11), through the interviews I conducted I looked into the agency of both Lebanese and Palestinian actors. Neither were portrayed as agentless victims and their position was not simply explained in terms of its relation to Western powers. Yet the formation of the Lebanese state within the colonial experience was indispensable for the analysis. If I focused on the colonial past, it was done to allow for the theorization of the rationale and practices of the Lebanese state towards Palestinian refugees as a “racial state” in the sense articulated by Foucault (2004) and David Theo Goldberg (2002).

There remains the issue of how the gatekeepers may have influenced the research outcome as my relationship with both gatekeepers is personal and a close one. As we have seen, the research sample was diverse although not representative. Despite both gatekeepers being outspoken supporters of Palestinian rights in Lebanon, the Lebanese sample included two respondents from Christian right-wing political parties that are explicit in their hostility towards Palestinian presence. The Lebanese sample also included politicians from parties that are most supportive of Palestinians and others that would be considered centrist in their stance on the issue. I cannot say that my close relationship to the gatekeepers did not influence the interviews, however, they did not influence the research outcomes or the answers I received.

On one hand, the respondents were conversing with me, in most interviews, as someone they knew, but this does not mean they were giving moderate or gentle answers in order to please or not offend me. As all respondents chose to remain non-anonymous and as they were aware of the possibility of the research being published, they made clear



statements on the issue. Some respondents were outright in their stance in rejecting granting Palestinians any rights. The reason for the respondents not accommodating my position and personal relation to the gatekeepers lies in their greater concern with their constituents should their views be published in the future.

Returning to my individual position, and the concern for objectivity, I am more in line with the understanding of C. Wright Mills of social research. Mills acknowledges that values are inherent in the selection of the problems we choose to study, our formulation of these problems, and that they affect the solution we reach. Whether aware of the fact or not, any researcher participating in the study of society is acting morally and in most cases politically as well (Mills 2000: 78, 79). Similarly, Pierre Bourdieu, who in participant-objectivation, dedicates his efforts to explaining the means of ridding oneself of personal bias and the bias of the discipline as a researcher, acknowledges that “there is no object that does not entail a viewpoint associated with holding a position within a social space to be studied” (Bourdieu 1998: 284, 285, 288; Bourdieu 2003: 6). This does not mean I did not present the finding as objectively as I can, rather, I allowed the entire research process to guide the findings despite my personal convictions and undisguised support of Palestinian rights in Lebanon.

## **2.6 Ethical Considerations**

The main issue I had to deal with was anonymity. None of the respondents wished to remain anonymous and I had obtained verbal consent from all the interviewees at the beginning of the digitally recorded interviews. However, this is a two-edged sword. On the one hand, it lends the research more credibility and offers stronger evidence as it is unequivocal who said what and from which perspective and political stance. On the other hand, not using pseudonyms requires a negotiation process on what can be

published when the research is finalized (Walford 2005: 91). In extreme cases, lawsuits could be carried out for libel. At the end of one of the interviews, one of my interviewees stressed twice that I be attentive and careful in the transcription process. I have used direct quotes from the respondents in writing the research and had been careful not to take what was said out of context. This does not mean that I had simply been reproducing their narratives and interpretations as this shortcoming was overcome in the analysis of what I was presented with.

Another ethical consideration I encountered consisted in how much of my own views do I make visible, especially when I had opposing political views to the interviewee (Klatch in Walford 2011). I went into the interviews with the intention of getting the most out of the respondents by adopting a “neutral” role. I had decided to probe but not to confront the respondents with too much counter evidence. In instances where I was asked my opinion, I gave an honest answer, albeit in a diplomatic manner. I did not make my political views clear neither with respondents that are opposed to Palestinian presence nor with those sympathetic to the Palestinian plight. I simply wanted to hear what they had to say and understand how they viewed matters.

## Chapter Three: Literature Review

The literature on Palestinians in Lebanon is vast and covers several themes. Yet, by and large, it remains descriptive and under-theorized. A review of this literature revealed that an integral aspect of the Palestinian experience, their racialization by the Lebanese state, has only been partially explored (Petee 2005), albeit, under the theme of “othering” rather than racialization per se. This chapter delves into theories that explain racialization based on an understanding of the biopolitical state, the racial state and the gardening state. A logical starting point prior to delving into these theories would be to define racialization since the concept as an analytical tool is used differently by different theorists and authors.

### 3.1 Race, Race-Relations, and Racialization

Racialization was first used in the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century but was out of use afterwards only to reappear within the sociology of race and ethnic relations. In the latter period, the term was first used by Franz Fanon in 1968 in the *Wretched of the Earth* (Barot and Bird 2001: 603). Fanon argued that Europeans constructed the “negro” as a category of degraded humanity as a means to relieve themselves of the guilt of colonization since according to this category and worldview the colonized are responsible for their own oppression as people who being “irrational” and “barbaric” cannot rule themselves. Thus for Fanon, to be racialized meant to be dehumanized as part of the colonial process (Garner 2009: 20, 21). Yet, the concept was used to analyse and to try to influence race-relations as early as 1918 by Arnold Toynbee and by Arthur Keith in 1931. Keith believed in a primordial “tribal feeling” that acted as the basis for community formation. He viewed this primordial tribal



prejudice as the element that makes groups prefer their own kind to the exclusion of others. He viewed personal, local, national, and racial prejudice as innate to humans by nature's own purpose of "the production of higher and better races of mankind". Keith was concerned with deracialization, a term predating racialization, indicating that the mixing of racial groups would present a threat to the progress of humanity that is advanced by the existence of separate racial groups. For Keith, racialization was positive (Barot and Bird 2001: 603, 604). Toynbee on the other hand, viewed racialization, the grouping of racial groups based on a primordial tribal feeling as deeply embedded, but he also considered it a problem that can be resolved through democracy and a decline in nationalism. He argued that racialization is only a stage in human civilization that can be overcome with democracy and with deracialization, in the form of mixing of racial groups, as the solution. To him, the consequence of racialization is the maintenance of racial inequality (Barot and Bird 2001: 606). The mode of thinking represented by Keith is in line with ideas that emerged in the nineteenth century and which formed the basis for eugenics at that time, but it is the meaning given to racialization by Toynbee that re-emerges in sociology in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Many academics in the field of racial and ethnic studies (Miles 1989; Rustin 1991; Winant 1994; Gilroy 1998; Banton 2005) have argued for the abandonment of the concept of race as its use reifies an empty concept and dangerous signifier, especially that scientific and biological racism had long been discredited (Barot and Bird 2001: 601). Similarly, in the study of race-relations it is assumed that "races" exist and then attempts are made to understand the relations between them (Small in Garner 2009: 19). However, "race" remains part of the lived experience of many people, this coupled with the uneasiness of sociology with the concepts of race and race-relations accounts for the current popularity of racialization (Barot and Bird 2001: 601).

Yet, how racialization is understood by various sociologists varies, and what they emphasize as the defining core of racialization also varies. Michael Banton is considered the author who reintroduced racialization into sociological analysis in his writing from 1977 onwards. Banton suggests that the concept of “race” developed when Europeans came into contact with people with a different physical appearance which led to the emergence of racial categories. All groups became to be seen through the lens of “race” which signified superiority and inferiority; that is, physical difference signified much more than just the physical. The effects of this signification were real despite the lack of a real foundation (Barot and Bird 2001: 606, 607) meaning that this consisted in the stereotyping of those who are racialized. Stuart Hall explains that stereotypes get hold of a few vivid, memorable and recognizable traits about a group, exaggerate and simply them, and then fix them without a possibility for change, that is, they reduce, essentialize, naturalize and fix difference (1997: 258). Hall’s last point on fixing difference till “eternity” is somewhat problematic since as Howard Winant delineates racialization is a process of constructing racial identities and meanings whereby social meaning is constantly being transformed by political conflict or struggle (Winant in Barot and Bird 2001: 608).

While Banton is correct in delineating that racialization involves the categorization of “races” as superior and inferior and in pointing out to the essentializing function of racialization which usually lacks a real foundation, racialization nowadays involves cultural racialization that is based on cultural rather than physical difference or phenotype (Barot and Bird 2010: 614; Lentin, A. 2008), although I would not totally dismiss the significance of physical markers and difference in the racialization of certain groups. Orlando Patterson, in analysing interracial relations in the United States, shows that it has become socially acceptable to speak of ethnic differences that are cultural, while it is unacceptable to speak of racial difference since they are biological. However,



comparative data on inter-group relations suggest that when people believe there are significant differences between them, they have a tendency to interpret these differences as biologically grounded (Patterson in Calhoun et al. 2012: 432).

Banton's delineation that racial categories emerged through the contact between Europeans and non-Europeans is also problematic. David Goldberg, in critiquing Charles Mills' (1997) argument that the social contract which established modern states was also a racial contract, points out that Mills seems to suggest that there is a race-neutral social contract and a racial contract whereby the latter regulated the exploitation of non-Europeans but the former remained race-neutral towards Europeans. According to Goldberg, this implies that social contracts which supposedly established European states are non-racial and that racial formations only emerged with colonial expansion. This masks not only Europe's own racial identity but also intra-European grounds of racial identification. For Goldberg, racially configuring discourse did not follow a social contract but emerged coterminous with modern state formation (2002: 36, 37).

Although it was Banton who reintroduced the concept into sociological study, it was with Robert Miles that racialization became important in the sociology of race and ethnicity as he championed for the use of the concept and paradigm as an alternative to race-relations (Barot and Bird 2001: 602; Garner 2009: 21). Miles invigorated the debate by analysing racialization in its relation to labour markets. By looking at the Irish in the nineteenth century and East European Jews in the early twentieth century in Britain, he shows that phenotype, while important, is not a crucial factor in the racialization process. It is rather the intersection of class and race in the context of workers competition in the labour market that attached racial meanings to the collective behaviour (racial categorization) of the Irish and Jews at the time according to Miles's interpretation (Barot and Bird 2001: 609; Garner 2009: 21).



While Miles was one of the main drivers of the debate, more recent studies such as the work of Nigel Harris reveal that racialization, although he does not use this term, cannot be explained in terms of actual competition for jobs but rather in terms of the search for a scapegoat. He suggests that workers who had lost their work due to market forces beyond their control want to express their anger and inflict it not on unreal economic forces but on a real person – the immigrant as scapegoat. Harris provides numerous examples and cases illustrating that native workers and immigrant workers seldom compete for the same jobs (2002: 51). Yet Miles's work is essential in terms of shifting the debate beyond the confines of physical difference and appearance as he advanced the view that it is not race but the ideology of racism that is the crucial factor in explaining and understanding racism (Barot and Bird 2001: 609).

Moving away from market explanations of racialization and explanations based on physical difference, one can also understand racialization in terms of psychoanalytic theories of self-other construction or the formation of the self through the denigration of the other (Hall 1997: 237). Other scholars such as Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis are interested in the intersection of ethnicity, gender and social class in terms of understanding racial boundaries and racialization (Barot and Bird 2001: 609). Similarly, Ali Rattansi explains that racialization is never simply about racism but exists in the complex intersection of nation, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality (2005:296).

While I agree that these constitute an integral aspect of the racialization process and all these approaches have their strengths and merits, I find that theories of racialization centred on the state are the most useful in explaining the racialization process, as state categories drive the racialization process in my research context. Liisa Malkki shows how powerful state and quasi-state categories can be in determining people's experiences and realities in her study of Rwandan refugees (1996: 388). This does not

mean racialization theories centred on self-other construction or a superiority/inferiority dichotomy are not accurate or useful, rather, they also factor into racialization as a feature of modern states. However, in this study I adopt the definition of racialization given by Goldberg “to impute exclusionary or derogatory implications to social conditions” (2002: 12).

Steve Garner, drawing of the work of Michel Foucault (2004) and David Theo Goldberg (2000) argues that racialization is an intrinsic attribute of the modern state’s functions of classification, biopolitics and governance (2009: 22). As I follow a state-centred approach to the study of racialization, it is useful and meaningful to explore the theories of Foucault and Goldberg on the “racial state”, as well as Zygmunt Bauman’s theorization of the “gardening state”. Racialization is an important analytical sociological tool because it explains the process of making “race” relevant in a particular situation and context which requires a study of the precise conditions and circumstances under which this process occurs (Garner 2009: 21). It is also necessary to explore racialization in terms of the practices and rationale of the modern state as racialization is an exercise of power in its own right (Wolfe 2010: 58).

### **3.2 The Biopolitical, Racial, and Gardening State**

David Goldberg, drawing on the work of Michel Foucault, views racialization in terms of subjugation. He views this as an inherent and integral part of the functioning of modern states which he describes as racial states. Goldberg explains that:

“as much as the modern state has been about anything - about increasing bureaucratization and rationalization, about increasingly sophisticated forms of democratization and social control, about the rule of law and the control of capital - it has been about increasingly sophisticated forms and techniques of racial formation, power, and exclusion. The modern state, it follows, has been about keeping racially categorized



others more or less “out” and about regulating otherness in spaces increasingly determined, defined, and rationally regulated by the state” (Goldberg 2002: 49).

Goldberg is not the first theorist to think in these terms in relation to the logic and practices of the modern state. Michel Foucault was the first to analyse modern states as racial states in his lectures at the College De France in 1975/1976. Zygmunt Bauman also approached the study of the modern state from this angle in *Modernity and Ambivalence* (1991), although the term he uses to describe this is the “gardening state” instead of the racial state. Before moving onto Foucault and Bauman, it is useful to elaborate a little further on how Goldberg understands and explains modern racial states.

Goldberg suggests that race has marked modernity and has been constitutive of modern states. This does not simply mean that modern states have invoked race in practices of governance, although this has clearly been the case. Rather, racial configurations have shaped modern states in relation to state classifications and population controls (2002: 149). Racial states are not to be understood in the simple terms of applying racial criteria when dealing with outsiders as is commonly understood in migration studies for instance. The fact that states condition migration policies on ethnic, class, and sometimes gender criteria has long been known and documented in numerous studies (Harris 2002; Maxwell 2012). The application of state-fashioned and rationalized exclusions, exploitations, and subjugations based on the intersection of race, ethnicity, class, and/or gender has developed into increased sophistication with the maturation of the modern state (Goldberg 2002: 41, 41). What is at stake is the exclusion of those who fail to fit into the official administrative state categories – those who are instead categorized as outcasts, strangers or terrorists (Goldberg 2002: 152). The state is an institutionalization of the exercise of power whereby the interests of some, in their



various forms, are elevated at the expense of the exclusion and devaluation of others. This exclusion is institutionalized into the apparatuses and practices of the state (Goldberg 2002: 130). Goldberg goes on to explain that state sovereignty, as a defining and refining condition of modern states is dialectically related to external powers and threats and the manufacture of internal threats, thus state sovereignty is predicated on a desire for legislated homogeneity, sameness across populations, and the externalization of threats and the different (Goldberg 2002: 154). What Goldberg describes as exclusion or externalization, Foucault (2003) and Bauman (1991) respectively refer to as “killing” or “elimination”. While Goldberg accurately depicts modern states as racial states and examines their practices, he does not provide an explanation for this racial formation, however, Foucault and Bauman do.

Foucault was the first to characterize modern states as racial states, but he arrives at this proposition because he also dealt with modern states as biopolitical states, or to put it in other words, as racial states operating in the biopower mode. For Foucault, the racial state and biopolitical state go hand in hand. He explains that under monarchical and divine rule, the sovereign practiced the right to “take life or let live”, that is, his sovereignty over life and death only manifested itself in his right to kill or the right to punish his subjects. With modern states, this right became embodied in the state rather than a sovereign monarch, and was transformed into the right to “make live or let die” (Foucault 2003: 240, 241).

Prior to the eighteenth century power was centred on disciplining the bodies of individuals through what Foucault terms the disciplines whereby they become docile bodies that are both useful and easily controlled (Foucault 2003). However, in the eighteenth century, power becomes centred of the mass of the population or the social body of the population in what Foucault terms biopower. In biopolitical societies the

birth rates, mortality rates, illness, health, fertility rates, longevity, human relations with their environment and so on enter the calculations of the state at the level of the population. The population becomes an object of knowledge and a target of state control (power/knowledge). The biological health of the population becomes important in state calculations as it directly impacts on economic and political relations and processes (Foucault 2003: 242, 243, 245, 246) Biopower as a power that fosters and improves the life of the population through scientific tools (statistics, medicine and so on) does not replace disciplinary power but rather intersects with it. Foucault explains how the disciplining of the sexuality of the individual, at a given period in history, intersected with the control of the sexuality of the population to foster the life of this population (Foucault: 1990). Yet, in the era of the dominance of these modern and biopolitical states that aim to foster life wars and genocides have never been as bloody. The question that presents itself is: how do states that aim to foster life allow for killing? Foucault does not perceive this as a paradox but explains that those who constitute a biological threat, either external or internal, to the life or health of the dominant population are "what must die". This end is achieved through racism and specifically racism inscribed in the mechanisms of the state, or state racism. Racism is a way of introducing a break or separation between what must live and what must die (Foucault 2003: 254). Killing only becomes acceptable and an imperative when it translates into the elimination of the biological threat to the improvement of the species or race (Foucault 2003: 256).

Of course, it is important to take into account, as we have already noted, that racism is predominantly cultural racism in contemporary times as biological or scientific racism had been discredited in the early twentieth century, although it still does exist among some extreme right-wing groups and occasionally even in academia under the disguise of genetics (Lentin, A: 2008). Finlay and Valverde, also argue in relation to cultural



racism, that biopower and biopolitics are not only about protecting the biological life of the population but increasingly about protecting the “way of life or culture” of the population (Finlay 2011: 39), and can be centred on the currently popular culturalist politics of the “clash of civilizations” such as that espoused by American neo-conservatives (Valverde in Finlay 2011: 40). Similarly, killing need not translate into the actual practice of killing, although that may also be the case, but it can also involve the process of social exclusion of certain groups or classes; what Foucault calls the “inferior” race (Foucault 2003).

Foucault’s theories of biopower and biopolitics have been extended, applied and used to explain many recent and present-day cases of racism and exclusions in a wide range of contexts. Yet, if we are to accept that a biological threat no longer applies in many of these cases, then what is the threat posed by the “inferior” race (Foucault 2003) or the outcasts (Goldberg 2002). Bauman, also exploring this problematic within the framework of the modern state or modernity, theorizes this phenomenon by analysing and problematizing the position occupied by the “stranger”, and the stranger’s relation to the modern state.

Bauman, in the difficult task of trying to pinpoint what qualifies as modern defines existence as modern so long as it is affected and sustained by design, manipulation, management, and engineering. This is seen in light of the collapse of the divinely ordered world which “just was, without ever thinking of how to make itself to be”, meaning it was a given and not a task (1991: 4, 7). He contextualizes this within the paradigm of order and chaos. Order is that which is not chaos, and chaos is not orderly. Order and Chaos are modern twins and modernity has set itself the impossible task of bringing about order. An orderly world is a world in which “one knows how to go on”, therefore we view the randomness of chaos as a threat, a threat embodied in



ambivalence. As such, modern practice is about eliminating ambivalence (Bauman 1991: 1, 4, 7).

Modernity makes itself possible by setting the impossible task of finalizing order. It is impossible because the elimination of ambivalence would amount to the end of history – there is no order without its twin chaos (Bauman 1991: 10, 11). Modernity attempts to bring about order through fragmentation. Fragmentation is its prime achievement and core strength. A world that can be broken down into a plethora of problems is a manageable world, although Bauman points out that in reality “it is the powers that are fragmented; the world, stubbornly, is not” (1991: 12, 13). Separating practices are the foundation of modern practice. Similar to Foucault and Goldberg, Bauman views separating and splitting between oppositions, dichotomy as he refers to it, as an exercise of power as well as its disguise. The modern state in its attempt to instate order is a gardening state – it splits, through planned design, the population into useful plants to be encouraged and weeds to be removed or rooted out (1991: 14, 20). When populations are at stake, building and maintaining order means making friends and enemies, but it ultimately means eliminating the ambivalence embodied in strangers – there are friends and enemies, and there are strangers (Bauman 1991: 24).

Bauman was not the first to theorize antagonistic and conflictual relations in terms of friends and enemies. Carl Schmitt (2007) also dealt with the issue in the first half of the twentieth century. However Bauman’s main emphasis is on ambivalence and strangers. If there are no enemies there would be no friends. This may appear as a form of symmetry but this is an illusion as we know from Derrida’s work on the asymmetry of binary oppositions since it is friends that assign the categories. The difference between friends and enemies is like the difference between the subject and object of action. Nonetheless there is a relationship in this opposition whereby the “other” is still

recognized as a subject, counted, and remains relevant (Bauman 1991: 53, 54). Against this “cosy antagonism” between friends and enemies there is a third element, the stranger, who cannot be included in this philosophical binary opposition. Instead strangers, as undecidables, who can be either friend or enemy, question the basis of the opposition as such – “they poison the comfort of order with the suspicion of chaos” (1991: 56). Strangers blur the boundaries necessary for the continuation of a particular kind of world order. This category of people has no place in the future world order. They cannot be classified, they are a synthesis between indifference and commitment, and they are beyond redemption or repair therefore they need to be destroyed for the rest of the social body to retain its health. For this reason, Bauman considers the modern state to be primarily designed to deal with strangers and not merely enemies (1991: 47, 58, 60, 61, 63).

It is evident from the above that there is much in common between Foucault’s biopolitical state and Bauman’s gardening state. The difference that emerges, it seems, is that Foucault theorizes these social relations of domination and exclusion based on a dichotomy between an “inferior” race and a dominant race or as one between friends and enemies, whereas Bauman takes it a step further and shows that the problem is not in fact one between friends and enemies, but rather one that has to do with strangers that disrupt the cosy antagonism between those friends and enemies. While both theories, as well as Goldberg’s, have their merits, the category of the stranger is particularly powerful in relation to my own research. Why this is the case can be revealed by an empirical and theoretical study by Andrew Finlay (2011) on consociation and identity in Northern Ireland.

Finlay’s study reveals that consociational states are in essence also biopolitical states, while the study is also of particular relevance to the theorization of strangers as



understood by Bauman. He draws on the work of Asim Mujkic on the Dayton Accords in Bosnia-Herzegovina and uses his premise – ethnopolitics is a form of biopolitics - to examine whether the Northern Irish consociational state could also be described as a biopolitical state. Within this context, members of sectarian communities do not vote for lower taxes, an improved welfare state and so on, rather they vote based on their sectarian identification for the survival of the group as it ensures their own survival. In Northern Ireland, a demographic argument and equation exists between the Catholic nationalists and Protestant unionists (Finlay 2011: 37, 38). This formed a biological relationship between the two populations as group survival and reproduction factored into political calculations during the Irish peace process. As such, the notion that ethnopolitics equals biopolitics also applies in Northern Ireland (Finlay 2011: 41, 42).

This notion also strongly applies in Lebanon, but in the Lebanese context voting on a sectarian basis to ensure individual survival through the survival of the group does not consist in a self-sustaining and self-perpetuating dynamic. Although this is the crucial and decisive factor when it comes to elections in a confessional system, sectarian allegiance is also reinforced in Lebanon by prevalent and pervasive clientalism. Within a patron-client relationship, voters are bound to the political leader or political party by a network of transactional ties, whereby economic resources and social services are distributed to the clients in exchange for political loyalty that translates into voting for those political leaders and parties as well as their allies in parliamentary elections (Hamzeh 2001: 173, Harik 1998: 136; Ofeish 1999: 108; Salem 1998).

Yet, the relationship between nationalists and unionists or the various sects in Lebanon is one of friends and enemies based on a cosy antagonism. To clarify this point, one can look at how consociation is applied in Northern Ireland. Consociation theory was pioneered by Arend Lijphart who sees power-sharing as a solution to conflict in



ethnically and religiously diverse democratic societies (Finlay 2011: 13). Northern Ireland applies liberal consociation based on self-determination; that is individuals and groups are, in theory, free to choose their identities or opt out of identifying on a sectarian basis. This is in contrast to corporatist consociation based on pre-determination whereby identities are treated as primordial and a given such as in Lebanon and Cyprus; that is, there is no right of exist and no alternative to sectarian or ethnic identification (Finlay 2011: 14, 15). However, concerning Northern Ireland's liberal consociation, the Liberal Alliance Party and the Women's Coalition in Northern Ireland were forced to change their identification on several occasions even though they choose not to be identified as nationalist or unionist. Similarly, in the 1991 census, 11% of the population declared that they had no religion or did not state a religious denomination, but some experts and observers advocated allocating these two groups to one of the two officially recognized sects in Northern Ireland (Finlay 2011: 19, 42).

These two examples reveal that those who refuse to identify on a sectarian basis are in fact strangers who pose a threat to the binary opposition and cosy antagonism between Catholic nationalists and Protestant Unionists – they are a third element in Bauman's words. They are strangers, and a source of ambivalence, anxiety, and discomfort because as Asim Majkic put it: "the notion of the individual citizen, abstracted from his ethnic and religious kinship, is viewed as subversive. It is thought of as a despicable form of atheism, moral corruption, decadence, and rebellion"- (Finlay 2011: 38). The significance of Finlay's theorization of the Northern Irish case is that it ties the theories of Foucault, Bauman and Goldberg and gives them vivid expression and material substance. This theoretical and empirical approach can be extended to the case of Palestinians in a confessional Lebanon.

Etienne Balibar, similar to Foucault, Bauman, and Goldberg, speaks of the obsessional imperative of modern states to eliminate or expel the “false”, exogenous”, “cross-bred”, and “cosmopolitan” elements for the nation to be racially and culturally pure. He sees that this imperative is translated into the racialization of social groups whose collectivizing attributes would be constructed as stigma and impurity, whether this relates to the styles of life, beliefs, or ethnic origin (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991: 60). However, Balibar also warns against concluding that we all live in equally racist societies (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991: 40). Although I am not conducting a comparative study, for example with Palestinian refugees in Syria, this warning is useful as a reminder that although all modern states are constituted as racial states (Goldberg 2002), not all are equally racist as that would render this research useless and would enable racist states to evade accountability and even criticism.

For now it would be meaningful to briefly consider Balibar’s emphasis on stigmatization as it factors into the racialization process, and into the mechanisms of elimination, killing, and exclusion of strangers. Bauman delineates that modernity’s strategy of splitting and fragmenting to bring about order and purge ambivalence cannot guarantee that strangers will be kept separate and not spill over. Therefore the natives constantly need to be alerted and re/constructed whereby the strangers are stigmatized and portrayed as dangerous. The sociologist who first theorized stigma was Erving Goffman (1990). Goffman’s work on stigma links very well to racialization although the term was not in use by sociologists at the time he was writing on the issue.

Goffman defines stigma as an “undesired differentness”. The dominant, or what Goffman refers to as the “normals”, believe that a person with a stigma is not quite human. On this assumption they exercise various forms of discrimination against the stigmatized through which they effectively reduce their life chances. The dominant

construct a stigma theory, an ideology to explain the stigmatized's inferiority and account for the dangers they represent (Goffman 1990: 15). Goffman's work is not only important because it links to racialization from above, but also offers an analytical tool to understand and explain how social relations between the dominant and the subordinate work out in practice from below and as everyday practice – what Foucault would describe as the study of power on the infinitesimal level (Foucault 1977).

Yet, it is also important to keep in mind that racialization as an exercise of exclusion and elimination can be practiced in more concrete and tangible ways once the racialized had been stigmatized and categorized as outsiders and strangers. If one is to accept that there is a war of numbers between populations and, hence, accept the existence of a biopolitical relationship, then one can see that state actors of the racial or gardening state have many tactics at their disposal to impact and shape populations. These tactics or practices can range from soft to hard. At the soft end of the spectrum one finds pronatal policies aiming to increase the size of a given population. At the hard end, states may resort to genocide, ethnic cleansing, and population transfers. In between, states may use direct and indirect economic pressures and incentives to alter the size and composition of the population (Bookman 2002: 29 -37; Horowitz 2000: 654 - 656). In all cases, the state needs to set the strangers apart from the rest of the population – racialize them – in order to exclude, control, eliminate, or expel them. While some of these practices factor into my research, I equally look into legal exclusion or exclusionary legislation as one of the main tactics at the disposal of the racial state; which Goldberg explains at length (2002). John L. Comaroff and Jean Comaroff argue that nowadays conflicts are, by and large, waged, fought, and settled through the law or what they term “lawfare” (in von Benda-Beckmann 2009).



As Ronit Lentin succinctly put it -“for racism to function it needs a political apparatus. That apparatus is the state, its bureaucracy, and its institutions which in turn influence the hearts and minds of people who live within it” – (Lentin, R. 2006: 14). Based on the same analysis and line of reasoning I have been focusing on racialization, and precisely racialization as an inherent practice of the racial state, but I have not yet defined how I understand the state.

### **3.3 The State and Governance**

I have been focusing on the state as a racial state and biopolitical state. I have also briefly touched on the state as a consociational state. Others scholars, such as Timothy Mitchell (1991), Mahmood Mamdani (2001), Edward Said (1993; 2003), and Homi Bhabha (1994), have explored the state as a post-colonial state. Yet, whichever way one approaches the state it appears in hindsight that we are dealing with coherent and unified state that excludes, eliminates, punishes, colonizes and so on. It is also a state that develops, manages, fosters life, and so on. James C. Scott is one theorist who appears to portray the state as an entity with unity and coherence. Scott theorizes the practices of the state, although mainly to show why the projects of the modern state have failed in their developmental efforts. He explains that state agents have no interest in representing a social reality in its entirety, rather they use abstractions and simplifications in the form of administrative grids which represent only what is of interest to the official observer. Simplifications such as population registers, standardized permanent last names, design of cities, and organization of transportation enable social practices and phenomena of interest to state officials to be centrally recorded and monitored. In other words, administrative grids make the social terrain more legible, and consequently, more manipulable from above and from the centre to

state officials. Processes such as taxation, policing, conscription, and calculation of state revenues are made all the more efficient. However, due to the imperative of using administrative grids, state projects fail as these grids prevent people from applying their everyday knowledge that is necessary to their well-being (Scott 1998: 2, 3, 13, 22).

Challenges have been posed to Scott's understanding of the state. Tania Murray Li questions Scott's depiction of the state as a unified entity capable of designing and implementing coherent plans and policies. She points out that Scott's account of the state leaves out the many non-state actors that may assist, or more importantly, oppose state schemes. Li contests the idea of a single state vision and shows that generally different government departments with different and sometimes competing visions are involved in the design of state plans (2005: 385, 386). A study by Vivek Chibber (2002) on the developmental state in India exhibits to what extent the state lacks coherence and unity and reveals the level of internal conflict and divisions within and between various state bureaucracies. Yet Li does agree with Scott's observation that state agents only generate a certain type and volume of data that allow for meeting specific objectives (2005: 388). This is also the view held by David Graeber (2012: 119) among others.

Pierre Bourdieu questions the coherent and unified image of the state, not to say that the state is in fact not powerful, but rather to explain why it is as powerful as it is. He argues that state agents are involved in what he terms "performative discourse", that is, by saying what the state is they bring it into being. One of the main strengths of the state is its ability to impose and produce categories of thought which we then apply to everything in the social world including the state itself. The state has imposed the cognitive structures, mainly through the education system, through which it is perceived (1994: 1, 14, 16). A case-study that can elucidate the imposing and production of cognitive structures is that of Nicholas Thomas who in studying colonial Fiji shows how

the government gathered various types of information that was not genuinely necessary for the practice of governing, but he argues that this gave an image of government as a coherent system with powers (Li 2005: 384, 385).

Yet the state's power also depends on symbolic capital, whether embedded in the physical, economic, cultural, or the social, as this is recognized by social actors and given value. The meta-capital of the state or the accumulation of symbolic capital that permeates economic, political, social, cultural fields, in fact all fields, gives the state the final say in all matters. Bourdieu gives the example a physician who signs a certificate and by this act mobilizes the accumulated capital of the bureaucratic universe. The certification follows a line of infinite regression and finally stops at the state as the final link (or the first) in the chain of official acts of certification (1994: 8, 9, 12). For Bourdieu the strength of the state lies in symbolic capital, with the state as bank of symbolic capital (1994: 12). This conceptualization of the state has its strengths and it reveals that is very difficult to escape the grip of a state that monopolizes the power to legitimate and consecrate or provide the cognitive categories through which we make sense of the world.

Foucault moves beyond the single focus on the state and emphasises the importance of state and non-state actors under his notion of "governmentality". He offers an illuminating understanding on the functioning of contemporary governance where he moves away from the traditional understanding of governance in the Machiavellian sense that is centred on the governance of territory. Instead, he analyses modern governance using the term "governmentality". What matters to contemporary governments is governing populations, or what Foucault describes as "men and things"; specifically, subjects in their social relations and links to resources, the environment, territory, traditions, and discourse. Governmentality or the art of government refers to



practices, tactics, programmes, and forms of discourse aiming to regulate or manage the conduct and mould the behaviour of individuals or groups towards specific goals and ends, ultimately guaranteeing the well-being of society as a whole. It constructs subjects and according to Foucault, governance takes place both within and outside state contexts, and includes various other non-state actors, organizations, institutions, and agencies which exercise power and control over populations (Faubion 2000: 216 – 218; Sharma and Gupta 2006).

Foucault places an emphasis on persuasion, encouragement, inducement, motivation, and incitement when theorizing government tactics and practices aiming to mould behaviour. This view has been subjected to criticism, and Graeber, who is not alone in this, and who demonstrates that all institutions involved in allocation and regulation of resources, that is governments, rest on the threat of force (2012: 112). In light of this, Foucault's views on modern governance suffer a weakness in cases when governments, including governments in Western states, resort to the use of force or violence, although some theorists such as Judith Butler suggest that power in the Foucauldian sense is applied differentially to different segments of the population. Foucault's emphasis on non-state actors, while indispensable for understanding modern governance, can also be critiqued on the grounds that non-state actors might have limited autonomy from the state if one is to accept Louis Althusser's notion of "ideological state apparatuses" (in Sharma and Gupta 2006) through which he shows how the state through the control of indispensable funding for most institutions and organizations spreads its own ideology in society and sets the agenda according to its own particular interests.

On the other end of Foucault's soft tactics we find Giorgio Agamben's theorization in what he terms the "state of exception". In the state of exception, certain constitutionally guaranteed rights and protections are suspended so as to confront a clear and direct

danger or threat to the state (De La Durantaye 2009: 129). The state of exception is best understood as a response to a condition of superior danger to the continuing existence of the state (Lentin, R. 2008: 4). Under the state of exception, potentially all individuals are reduced to bare life (killable bodies) and thereby exposed to an unconditional threat of death (Ojakangas 2005: 5, 6). Agamben provides numerous examples where states, and especially Western states, have suspended the law to deal with a threat or a state of “emergency”. His theory is very useful in understanding the governance mechanisms of modern states, especially ones in crisis or those confronting a real or perceived threat.

However, its weakness is that it leaves the object of these state practices, bare life, agentless and powerless. Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward (2005) have shown that even those we assume to be powerless do in fact possess power simply by having the right of exit from interdependent relationships with the powerful, or by breaking the rules or laws which amounts to a contestation of power and may even reshape the power relation or relation of domination. With this analysis in mind, Agamben’s notion of bare life or homo sacer appears drastic and deterministic.

In what can be considered a Foucauldian approach, Franz von Benda-Beckmann et al see governance in the form of administrating the access to and provision of rights, services, and goods, which also implies that categories of inclusion and entitlements are either explicitly or implicitly tied to governmental practices (2009: 1, 2). The strength of such an approach is that it allows the study of these practices at the infinitesimal level (Foucault 1977) as this is where the state’s power manifests itself most clearly. This strength becomes more evident if compared to, on the one hand, a Marxist approach that views the state as either a tool in the hands of the bourgeoisie or closely coordinating its activities with the bourgeoisie, or on the other hand, a Weberian approach that views the state as a monopoly over the use of the means of violence. While both the Weberian and

Marxist approaches have much truth to them, they do not offer much assistance in understanding how power operates on a micro level. Benda-Beckmann et al. also consider governance to involve state and non-state actors and delineate to the process, that can be actively initiated or passively enforced, of devolution of governance competencies from the state to alternative organizations (Von Benda-Beckmann 2009: 5)

This brief overview of theories of the state shows that there are many ways to understand, analyse, and study the state, and it would be difficult to rely on just one of these approaches since they all have their strengths as analytical tools. It also shows that defining what the state consists in is a very difficult task. For theoretical clarity, and based on the context, I chose to focus on the racial state and gardening state and their practices.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

I understand racialization as an exercise of power, and precisely as a practice of the racial state. While there are many different ways in which racialization as a process can be approached, I find the concept most useful when its meaning embodies the elimination of strangers (Bauman), inferiors (Foucault), and outcasts (Goldberg) by the racial or gardening state. Therefore, I find merits and strengths to the theories of Foucault, Bauman, and Goldberg as they assist in theorizing the exclusion of Palestinians in Lebanon through the lens of racialization or critical race theory. I am proposing that the notion of biopolitics is useful in understanding the relationship between Palestinians and Lebanese; that the notion of friends and enemies is useful in understanding the relationship between Lebanese sects; and that the notion of the stranger is useful in understanding how the sects relate to Palestinians. Although I



acknowledge the illusionary or symbolic essence of the state, my emphasis remains on the state, but precisely on state practices state towards Palestinians.

## **Chapter Four: Historical Context**

Palestinians have had a long and complex presence in Lebanon and their relation with the Lebanese state differed from one period to another. Their relationship with various components of Lebanese society and political parties has also varied. The Lebanese-Palestinian relation cannot be understood without also understanding the political structures of Lebanon historically and at present. Therefore, in line with other scholars (Hudson 1997; Suleiman 2006), I divide this presence into periods. Because of the particularities of each period and for the sake of clarity, I have divided this relation and presence into six periods.

This detailed overview is confined to the context of Palestinian exclusion, and more importantly, the shifting position of Palestinians from one period of their presence to another. This is important because it provides context to, and enhances tracing the process of, the reconfiguration of Palestinians from co-ethnics with the Lebanese to a racialized minority. The chapter also serves as a review of the literature on Palestinians refugees in Lebanon in relation to the themes of the position and conditions of Palestinians in different eras, their relation with the Lebanese state, and their legal exclusion. As consociation factors heavily in the thesis, a brief history of Lebanese consociation and its current structure under the Ta'if Accord are dealt with in terms of elucidating the Palestinian relation to consociation.

### **4.1 Pre-Exile: Palestinians and Lebanon**

Prior to the year 1917 there were no borders between Lebanon and Palestine and neither were there political territorial entities nor sovereign nation-states. Under the Ottoman administration, the Mediterranean coast from Latakia in Syria to Jaffa in Palestine formed a single administrative district known as “Bilad Al-Sham” or historical Syria.

People residing in the South of Lebanon regularly travelled southwards into what became Mandatory Palestine. These travels were not restricted to recreation, but Lebanese also travelled to Palestine in search of work or as investors interested in purchasing real-estate. Wealthy Palestinians in the Galilee also regularly travelled northwards into Lebanon for its attractive mountain resorts and the cosmopolitan charms of Beirut, while Palestinian farmers visited South Lebanon frequently to trade agricultural and manufactured products with Lebanese farmers. Inter-marriage between Palestinians from Northern historic Palestine and Lebanese from Southern Lebanon was characteristic of the relationship between the two peoples (Hudson 1997: 243; Sayigh, A. 2008: 150).

The partition of the region began with the arrival of the British and French mandates after 1918. Under the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 which aimed to create spheres of influence for the mandate powers in the region, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria were divided into separate nation-states. The mandates did not only lead to the consolidation of separate national identities, but also heightened sectarian tensions, especially in the case of Lebanon (Thompson 2000: 73 -87).

#### **4.1.1 Origins of Sectarianism**

Sectarian tensions and the sectarian system began to emerge prior to the French mandate in Lebanon. Sectarianism in Lebanon is a modern phenomenon which dates back to the nineteenth century. Although the civil war of 1860 between Christian Maronites and Muslim Druze is most commonly cited as the root of sectarianism in Lebanon, it could be more accurately traced back to 1841. That year, violence erupted between Maronites and Druze resulting in the partition of Mount Lebanon in 1842 into a Christian District and a Druze District (Hamzeh 2001: 170; Makdisi 2000: 77; Salibi



1989: 15). The 1860 civil war had its inception in the 1841 discord and partition of 1842 (Harik 1998: 129).

Despite Ottoman rule over Lebanon, the violence of 1841 allowed for intense interventions by France and Great Britain in the affairs of Mount Lebanon and indirectly the Ottoman Empire (Makdisi 2000: 69). These powers were deeply concerned with restoring order and harmony between the two communities and consequently the European powers proposed partition (Makdisi 2000: 71, 72, 73). The Ottomans feared this would be a recipe for civil war, but in December 1842 agreed to a partition nonetheless (Makdisi 2000: 78; Spagnolo 1971: 26). The European designed partition plan took it for granted that there were two distinct and primordial tribes of Christians and Druze and that all inhabitants of Lebanon adhered to one or the other (Makdisi 2000: 80, 81).

Partition had profound effects leading to the categorizations of either Druze or Christian. Since then, religion has been the most important political identification of each villager (Hamzeh 2001: 170). However, the local inhabitants and precisely the elites were not agentless victims in the process of sectarian identity formation. Instead of resisting their representation by the dominant powers as primordial sectarian communities, local elites used to their advantage these powers' concern for re-establishing order by presenting themselves as the genuine representatives of such sectarian communities. Both Druze and Maronite elites worked towards transforming their religious communities into political communities. (Makdisi 2000: 75).

After the civil war in 1860, which resulted in an estimated 11,000 deaths, the European powers and the Ottomans were involved once again in negotiations to restore peace in Mount Lebanon. On 9 June 1861 Mount Lebanon was reunified under a basic constitutional document "Reglement et Protocole Relatifs a la Reorganisation Mont Liban". As a result, Lebanon enjoyed a distinctive organization and status within the

Ottoman Empire and consequently an administrative council was established and governed by a Christian Governor. The council was comprised of 12 members with two members representing each of the six sects of Mount Lebanon (Maronites, Druze, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Sunni, and Shia), which was divided into six districts according to which sect dominated in each region (Hamzeh 2001: 170). As such, the districts were divided as much as was possible into homogenous sectarian cantons. This division and method of appointment ensured the continued influence of religious leaders and reinforced sectarian divisions.

Similarly, missionaries cannot be omitted from this historical account. They had a role to play on several levels, especially that of education. With the general lack of interest by Ottoman authorities in the education of rural subjects, both Druze and Maronite elites turned to missionaries to secure a modern education for their children. The Druze mainly attended Protestant schools and henceforth accepted an orientation towards Britain, while the Maronites attended Jesuit schools and thereby committed themselves towards France (Makdisi 2000). This sectarian system, although later modified to ensure a Maronite majority representation, formed the basis of governance until World War I when the French Mandate over Lebanon was established following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918 (Spagnolo 1971: 31, 32).

#### **4.1.2 Greater Lebanon**

In 1920 the frontiers of Lebanon were extended by the French Mandate which brought in a large Muslim population particularly in the coastal towns of Beirut, Sidon, Tyre and Tripoli, in addition to the Bekaa Valley in the East of Lebanon. These cities were annexed from the former Ottoman provinces of Beirut and Damascus whereby Mount Lebanon was enlarged to the State of Greater Lebanon which was later renamed the Lebanese Republic in 1926 (Hourani 1966: 259, 260; Salibi 1989: 17, 25). According to

the Maronite argument, Lebanon had a special social and historical character that differentiated from its Arab surroundings and neighbours and it enjoyed a heritage of its own which tied it to the West historically. The Muslims on the other hand desired unity within a greater Syria (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine) (Salibi 1966: 212).

On the eve of Independence on 22 November 1943, Lebanese Muslim and Christian sects agreed on an unwritten power sharing formula making Lebanon a consociational democracy. A compromise was reached between the two communities whereby Muslims demanded that their Christian counterparts officially recognize and regard Lebanon as an Arab State, that Lebanon should never work against the general interests of other Arab States, and that it adheres to the ideal of Arab brotherhood. Christians on their part demanded that Muslims uphold their loyalty to an independent Lebanese State rather than work towards any form of Arab unity (Haddad 2002: 291, 292; Hudson 1997: 106; Salibi 1966: 212).

Although the National Pact allowed for an agreement among various sects concerning Lebanon's political orientation and identity, most Christians did not feel any meaningful attachment to Arabism, while the Muslim population found it difficult to remain loyal solely to an independent Lebanon and as such they continued to hold onto their ideals of Arab unity (Salibi 1966: 212). This dichotomy in belonging and identity continued to strain relations between Muslims and Christians in latter periods (Salibi 1989: 25, 27). In comparison to the Palestinians and Syrians, their closest Arab counterparts, the Lebanese decolonization process and independence were not the result of an anti-colonial struggle which may have formed the basis for a unified national consciousness; rather independence consisted in a series of compromises between local elites and the French Mandatory Government (Makdisi 2000: 24; Suleiman, M 1972: 23).



### 4.1.3 Christian Dominance

Under a historicist form of governance, the French Mandate Government heavily recruited from the Christians who later dominated the state, army, civil service and the economy when Lebanon was established. Goldberg differentiates between naturalist and historicist racism. Naturalist racism, for example by states such as Germany under Bismarck or apartheid South Africa, governed by setting laws, imposing, and maintaining control of “eternally” and “naturally” fixed colonized “inferiors” because they believed they were destined by blood or genes to do so. On the other hand, governance practiced by states or empires that applied historicist racism, such as Britain or France, considered racial rule to be the outcome of historically produced superiority, and therefore their colonial rule was based on developmental assumptions. In relation to the colonized, the naturalist considered that it was their destiny to rule inferiors, whereas the historicists or the progressivists considered that the colonized were in fact capable of progress, but only under the guidance of their colonial rulers. Although historicist racism appears more humane, Goldberg points out that both are based on the assumption that the colonized are in some way lacking and inferior (Goldberg 2002: 75).

When it comes to governance and training in modern governance, the naturalists denied access to government offices to the racially “inferior”, whereas the historicists encouraged such access to some extent and at the lower ranks of government as a hands-on preparation for the historically less developed to ultimately reach the “political maturity” necessary for self-governance (Goldberg 2002: 85).

Timothy Mitchel’s analysis of the Egyptian state is instructive. Similar to Lebanon, the French and then British colonizers constituted the modern Egyptian state. They did not only institute racial governance practices, but also disciplinary practices by organizing society in Egypt based on European models and by having Egyptians travel for study in

France and Egypt who brought this know-how back to their country. The main model for organizing Egyptian society was the army and its disciplinary practices that spread to the rest of the social body (Mitchell 1991: 38, 39, 64-72).

The historicist approach was precisely the one adopted by the French Mandate in Lebanon. Lebanese state agents, especially from the Christian sects, were to reap most advantages from French rule, as well as from French missionaries prior to the mandate. Christian dominance in the state bureaucracy did not originate in the 1943 National Pact but stemmed from the fact the Christians, in addition to being a majority according to the census of 1932, were also politically active in the French Mandate Government and its various institutions, whereas the Muslim population deeply resented the French mandate government and refrained from taking part in its political structure at the time. (Faour 1991: 631).

Similarly, political power was monopolized by a business oligarchy mainly from the banking sector which directed government to its own advantage and interests. This oligarchy was mainly formed of Christians from various communities united by common economic interests and forming an exclusively Christian ruling class, although with time it attracted some Muslim and Druze leaders to join its ranks in an attempt to strengthen its position. The vast majority of Sunnis and Druze Muslims resented this monopoly of power. Although this alliance between government and capital led to the prosperity of Lebanon in the 1950s, such prosperity was mainly limited to the Christian population, particularly the elites, while Muslims and Druze were generally neglected and disenfranchised (Salibi 1966: 214, 215).

Christians also dominated in the army and the civil service. In the armed forces, close to 70% of the leadership positions were in Christian hands. This was due to both historical circumstances and conscious design (Baaklini 1983: 31). The French mandate recruited

heavily from among the Christians. Muslims who had the qualifications and felt the urge to join the army preferred to join the Arab forces in Syria, Iraq, and Palestine and eventually remained in the Syrian armed forces. This was because Muslims opposed the creation of an independent Lebanese state as they considered it a colonial creation that ought to be abolished and replaced by a Syrian or greater Arab state as soon as independence was achieved and colonialism defeated. This Christian dominance in the army continued post-independence (Baaklini 1983: 32, 33).

Additionally, many classically prestigious and sensitive ministries remained in Christian hands. Muslims were placed in the recently established ministries and departments which were economically and socially important but were not as influential and sensitive as the ministries dominated by Christians (Baaklini 1983: 30, 31).

#### **4.2 Al-Nakba and Initial Exile**

A little over four years following Lebanese independence, the state of Israel was created on 15 May 1948 in what has come to be known as the War of Independence for the Israelis and Al-Nakba (the catastrophe) for the Palestinians. The occupation of 78% of the land of historic Palestine by Israel in 1948 led to a massive refugee crisis that continues to this day (Knudsen 2009: 51). According to the estimates of the United Nations and the British Mandate Government, the number of Palestinian refugees that were displaced from their ancestral cities, towns, and villages ranged between 726,000 and 810,000. Of those, approximately 100,000, mainly from the Galilee and the coastal areas of Northern historic Palestine, took refuge in Lebanon (Siklawi 2010: 597; Suleiman 2006: 4).

Initially, the Lebanese government and population, especially in the South were welcoming. Many Palestinians were aided and sheltered by the local population until



they were able to settle in refugee camps. Being predominantly Muslim (80%), the refugees settled in Muslim towns and villages. Christians were less welcoming, a fact which foreshadowed increasingly damaged relations further along (Siklawi 2010: 598; Suleiman 2006: 21).

Faced with a regional crisis involving close to a million refugees that have been denied repatriation, the United Nations General Assembly established UNRWA on 8 December 1949. UNRWA settled Palestinian refugees in 15 refugee camps mainly spread along the coast of Lebanon. The Lebanese state deliberately allocated plots of land for these camps located near factories and agricultural fields whereby the camp residents constituted a source of cheap labour for these productive sectors (Haddad 2000: 81; Knudsen 2009: 53).

The warm welcome Palestinians initially received began to fade once it became clear that Palestinians were not returning to their homeland in the near future. As of 1951, the Lebanese authorities began imposing restrictions on Palestinians. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs issued a decision prohibiting Palestinians from working since they were working without permits and competing with Lebanese labour. Implementation was deferred at the request of the Lebanese President and by contention of the Prime Minister who declared during a parliamentary session: “we are duty bound to accord the Palestinian refugees the best treatment and we cannot treat them as foreigners” (Hudson 1997: 246).

While the majority of Palestinian refugees served as the backbone of cheap labour in Lebanese factories and agriculture, their middle class counterparts played another significant role in the 1950s economic growth of Lebanon. Beyond the 150 million Pounds Sterling brought into Lebanon at the time, the Palestinian middle class occupied leading roles in education, academia, medicine, journalism, banking, engineering, and contracting (Sayigh, A. 2008: 151, 152; Hudson 1997: 246).

Nonetheless, for the vast majority of Palestinians impoverished due to the loss of their land and means of livelihood in Palestine, UNRWA was, and still is, the main body concerned with their socio-economic well-being. In addition to establishing refugee camps, UNRWA provided services and assistance in the areas of education, health care, direct relief in the form of food rations, and camp improvement and infrastructure. Aside from food rations, UNRWA provides these services till this day (Besson 1997: 338; Bocco 2009: 248; Rosenfeld 2009: 290).

### **4.3 An Era of Politicization**

#### **4.3.1 Restrictions**

From 1962 onwards, legislation became increasingly stringent and prohibitive towards Palestinians, moving them from an exceptional space to one on par with other foreigners. Notwithstanding that, Palestinians, as a matter of fact had less rights than other foreign nationals. The Lebanese labour law is governed by the principle of reciprocity that, in practice, excludes Palestinians as refugees lacking a nation-state to reciprocate from (Al-Natour 1997: 367). Restrictive policies were not confined to employment. Between 1958 and 1969 Palestinians in the camps became the target of strict security measures. The refugee camps were placed under severe repression and surveillance by the Lebanese state security apparatuses, especially the Lebanese military intelligence - Deuxieme Bureau (Sayigh 1979: 150; Suleiman 1999: 67).

Although the repressive practices were targeted at Palestinians involved in covert political activities, the wider camp population also suffered from this repression. Camp residents were also restricted from bringing in building material. In the first five years of refuge they had to remain in tents. It took some years until they were allowed by the Lebanese state to build a low wall around the tents to stop rain water from entering

those tents. It required another five years until they were permitted to build proper-length walls, but the roofs were made of zinc metal as the Lebanese state considered concrete roofs a sign of permanent settlement. These were the housing conditions in the camps till 1969 (Sayigh 1979: 151, 151; Sukr Abu Fakhr 2012: personal communication).

It was not until the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Fida'iyyin (guerrillas) emerged victorious over the Israeli forces in the iconic battle of Karameh in Jordan in 1968 that the mass mood in the camps became increasingly more defiant towards the Lebanese authorities. The mood in the camps changed from one of patience and suppressed anger to one of revolutionary readiness (Sayigh 1979: 151, 151).

#### **4.3.2 The Cairo Agreement and Lebanese Popular Support for the PLO**

Following the defeat of Arab armies by Israel in the 1967 war and the demoralization that ensued as consequence of the occupation of more Arab lands, the Palestinian Fida'iyyin that emerged on the Arab scene in 1968 quickly gained wide support among the broader Arab populations. This popular support within Lebanon and across the Arab World, as well as external pressures from Egypt and Syria allowed the PLO to operate from Lebanon under the Cairo Agreement (Brynen 1989: 50, 52).

Initially, the Lebanese state tried controlling and suppressing the PLO activities in Lebanon and a series of clashes took place between the PLO fighters and the Lebanese army until the Cairo agreement was signed on 3 November 1969 (Al-Natour 1997: 362). The significance and indispensability of Lebanese popular support, mainly Muslim, for the Palestinian "Al Thawra" (revolution), the signing of the Cairo Agreement, and the consolidation of PLO presence in Lebanon cannot be understated.



The march of 23 April 1969 was a milestone in the path to the freedom of the camps and the eventual signing of the Cairo Agreement. In April, the Lebanese army besieged the Southern Lebanese village of Bint Jbeil for three days to arrest a group of fida'iyyin that returned from a military mission and that the local Lebanese villagers would not surrender to the army. The fida'iyyin voluntarily surrendered themselves to avoid bloodshed after the Lebanese army threatened to bombard the village. News of the captured guerrillas spread to other parts of Lebanon, Lebanese schools and universities, and the Palestinian camps. Consequently a march was called for on 23 April by the Gathering of National and Progressive Forces in Lebanon and the Palestinian organizations demanding the release of the guerrillas and freedom for Palestinian resistance activities. Lebanese and Palestinian demonstrators arrived in Beirut on that day from the South and the North of Lebanon as well as Beirut. The Lebanese security forces, in an attempt to change the course of the march fired shots directly into the crowd that instead of dispersing would regroup after every round of confrontation despite the dead and wounded (Sayigh 1979: 160-163).

Two days later, another confrontation occurred with the authorities during the funeral of one of the demonstrators who was killed on 23 April. Demonstrations spread all over Beirut city and student strikes went on for several days until the fida'iyyin were released. From that point on, the Palestinian resistance movement backed by wide Lebanese popular support and national/leftist Lebanese political party support became a force that the Lebanese authorities had to bargain with. By October 1969, the Lebanese military intelligence was expelled from one refugee camp after another by the Palestinian camp residents. Pressure was also mounting from Arab governments to allow Palestinian resistance operations against Israel, culminating in the signing of the Cairo Agreement (Sayigh 1979: 160-163).

The Cairo Agreement in terms of allowing a national liberation movement to be involved in armed resistance does not require much elaboration. However, the Agreement also granted Palestinians the right to work for the first time. It granted Palestinians freedom of movement and the right to form popular committees whereby Palestinians govern their own camps (Al-Natour 1997: 362; Haddad 2000: 83; Hudson 1997: 251; Knudsen 2009: 55; Said 1999: 330; Siklawi 2010: 601).

It also allowed the PLO to establish productive enterprises and social institutions in the camps and in Lebanese cities and towns which secured wide scale employment for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. In this phase and throughout the 1970s, the PLO employed up to 65% of the Palestinian labour force in Lebanon.

#### **4.3.3 Employment in Ayyam Al Thawra**

In “Ayyam Al Thawra” or the days of the revolution, the PLO employed up to 65% of the Palestinian workforce in Lebanon (Hanafi and Tiltnes 2008: 3). Being dominated by armed groups and its increasingly military functions, it follows that membership in the PLO military forces was also a source of income for the fighters among its ranks. The PLO had over 10,000 fighters in semi-regular formations backed by thousands more militia (Brynen 1989: 52). However, the PLO simultaneously developed an equally important infrastructure of social and economic institutions to serve the needs of the Palestinian people (Rubenberg 1983: 55) and strengthen steadfastness in the course of their liberation struggle. These institutions operated in the areas of health, education, economic development, culture, information, welfare, and mass organization. While all constituted a source of employment for Palestinians in Lebanon, the two major employing institutions were the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and the Palestine Martyrs Works Society (SAMED) (Rubenberg 1983).

The PRCS began its operations in Jordan in 1965 with several small clinics and dispensaries but by 1969 the PLO's National Council had taken the decision to institutionalize and expand its services both in the fields of preventive and curative medicine. As a result the PRCS grew in sophistication with 13 major hospitals of which 11 were in Lebanon and with one in each of Syria and Egypt. It also operated 100 clinics of which 60 were in Lebanon (Rubenberg 1983: 62). It quickly gained the status of observer in the International Committee of the Red Cross. The vast majority of physicians and nurses who worked for the PRCS were Palestinian, although some Lebanese, other Arabs, and Europeans were also employed in its hospitals and clinics (Rubenberg 1983: 63). The PRCS was not only a source of employment for Palestinians educated in the medical and nursing professions, but it also strengthened and enhanced Palestinian-Lebanese relations through the provision of its services for free or for a minimal and symbolic fee for both Palestinians and Lebanese alike, as well as any nationals resident in Lebanon. With health care in Lebanon being predominantly private, many disadvantaged Lebanese benefited from the services of the PRCS (Khalidi 1984: 257; Rubenberg 1983: 62).

The PRCS, through its Social Department, also created employment for unemployed women in the refugee camps by offering vocational training in sewing, Palestinian traditional embroidery, languages and typing and it assisted those women to find low-skilled employment outside the camps. This training not only provided a skill to secure a source of income, but also socialized these women to become self-reliant by charging them a token sum for the training they received (Rubenberg 1983: 65). A token sum may appear as an undemanding and perhaps trivial prerequisite, but its significance becomes manifest once one takes into consideration the dependency culture created by the pervasiveness of non-governmental organizations in the post-Ta'if Accord or civil war period (Rubenberg 1983: 66, 67).



The Palestine Martyrs Works Society better known as SAMED on the other hand, which was described as the nucleus of the Palestinian economy in Lebanon, was by far the biggest PLO employer of Palestinian civilian labour. SAMED was established in Jordan in 1970 but was soon to be expelled with the PLO after its clash with the Jordanian army in Black September of 1970. It therefore reorganized its activities in Lebanon in 1971. Although initially established to provide vocational training to the children of Palestinians martyrs, after the break of the Lebanese civil war in 1975 it began accepting any Palestinian that desired to be vocationally trained and employed. This more inclusive membership was intended to counter discrimination Palestinians faced in the Lebanese labour market. Within the industrial sector SAMED had 46 factories in Lebanon and 5 in Syria. There was at least one factory in each camp in Lebanon. Over 5000 Palestinians were permanently employed in these factories in Lebanon and they received a salary equivalent to the minimum wage paid in the Lebanese industrial sector; US\$200 per month at the time. Additionally, over 30,000 individuals had received training in SAMED workshops and later moved on to from cooperatives or work elsewhere (Rubenberg 1983: 66, 67).

Palestinians also enjoyed vibrant and effective trade and labour unions that are absent in the post-civil war period. The largest three of the ten Palestinian unions in the days of the revolution were the General Union of Palestinian Workers (GUPW), the General Union of Palestinian Teachers (GUPT), and the General Union of Palestinian Women. Of relevance to labour rights and conditions are the first two.

The GUPW is a member of the World Confederation of Trade Unions and enjoys observer status in the International Labour Organization. It was established in 1965 and has 13 branches in Arab countries, as well as branches in the former communist bloc and some Western countries. In Lebanon alone it had 23,000 members. The union had

been most active in defending workers' rights in Lebanon. In one case, 450 Palestinians dock workers won compensation through the union after the closure of the Beirut sea port at the breakout of the civil war (Rubenberg 1983: 72, 73).

Similarly, the GUPT had also been very active, although not always successful, in confronting discrimination Palestinian teachers faced in Lebanon. GUPT was established in 1969 with 15 branches and approximately 63,000 members (Rubenberg 1983: 74). Although the vast majority of teachers were employed by UNRWA and in the Arab Gulf States, the GUPT, and the rest of the unions, were represented in the Palestinian National Council of the PLO and influenced its decisions (Rubenberg 1983: 71). As such, Palestinian unions were not only interested in labour conditions and rights, but members were also highly politicized in that era.

Through the PLO, Palestinians were also awarded scholarships to study in universities in Arab countries, the Soviet Union, India and Pakistan, a trend which earned them the title of the educational elite of the Arab World (Hanafi and Tiltnes 2008: 3).

However, the PLO's presence in Lebanon antagonized the Lebanese authorities after the former "freed" the camps from Lebanese security agencies' control, established military bases in the South of Lebanon to carry out military operations against Israel, and established its own social and economic infrastructure (Hudson 1997: 251).

## **4.4 Implicated in the Civil War**

### **4.4.1 Factions of the Civil War**

By 1975, the Lebanese civil war broke out between left-wing Lebanese political parties (which included the Muslims, Druze, and some Christians) and the Palestinians on one side, and the Christian right-wing parties on the other. The arrival of the Palestine Liberation Organization to Lebanon in the late 1960s and early 1970s was received

unevenly across Lebanese communities (Zamir 1980: 50). In the early stages of the conflict, Palestinians were perceived and mobilized as an external force, but as the conflict developed they were more closely associated with one side of the conflict, namely the Lebanese National Movement (LNM) (Baaklini 1983: 18, 19). To the Christian right represented by the Front of Lebanese Forces (FLF), the conflict was essentially one between Lebanese and Palestinians who were aided by the international left, and they commonly referred to the civil war as a Lebanese-Palestinian war. Even the Lebanese left was referred to as the international left by the FLF. This framing strategy deliberately aimed to avoid portraying the war as a Lebanese-Lebanese civil war (Baaklini 1983: 46, 47).

The LNM and its Palestinian allies viewed the conflict differently. They acknowledged that the civil war erupted between Palestinians and the Lebanese right, but they did not perceive it as a conflict between Lebanese and Palestinians. They argued that the FLF cannot claim to represent all Lebanese across the spectrum and that their stance against the Palestinians stems from the support the PLO gave to the claims of the nationalist and leftist forces represented by the LNM. For the LNM, the regime had ample time to address the grievances brought to its attention but had failed to take action, thereby revolutionary action supported by the PLO was the last and only viable resort (Baaklini 1983: 46, 47). For the LNM, the struggles for the liberation of Palestine and for social justice in Lebanon were intertwined. To them, social justice in Lebanon was to materialize by breaking Christian Maronite hegemony with the assistance of the PLO just as it was their duty to assist Palestinians in liberating Palestine (Haddad 2004: 474).

The LNM was a strong advocate of secularization and did not share Christians their fear of demographic changes that would disrupt the sectarian system (Donohue, 2008). It may be the case that without the Palestinian armed presence the LNM would have not



been able to hold ground in the civil war, therefore Palestinian presence may have prolonged this war. Similarly, by allying themselves with the LNM, the PLO hoped to protect itself from being disarmed by the Lebanese power structure and its international allies (Baaklini 1983: 48).

#### **4.4.2 Destabilizing Factors in the 1970s**

Palestinian armed presence did polarize Lebanese society as it confounded an already fragile and contested power-sharing formula that favoured Christians. However, the Lebanese civil war had its own decisive internal factors. Since the 1970s, Muslims had been calling for a new census to replace the French Mandate census of 1932 and consequently the power-sharing formula of the National Pact, however their demand had been vehemently resisted by the Christians as they feared it would threaten their political and economic dominance (Faour 1991: 631; Ghosn and Khoury 2011: 383; Haddad 2002: 291, 292).

The official census of 1932, the last Lebanese census, conducted by the French mandatory power revealed that Christians comprised 54% and the Muslims 46% of the population (Baaklini 1983: 21). The greater emigration of Christians coupled with a higher Muslim birth rate had shifted the demographics of the country in favour of the Muslims. The turmoil of 1975 was also directly related to the disparity in political representation between Muslims and Christians, which was based on the National Pact that privileged the Christians (Dekmejian 1978: 254, 256; Ghosn and Khoury 2011: 382).

If the stability of the country was to be maintained as defined by the Christian elites, it was important that certain sensitive positions regulating the law and other institutions be kept with Christians. Muslims were not given equal access to those institutions for fear

that they would not protect the status quo as zealously as their Christian counterparts (Baaklini 1983: 30). From where they stood, Muslims were not fully satisfied and could feel the discrimination more than before (Baaklini 1983: 31). In 1975, when the Lebanese army split, it was unsurprising that many of the rank-and-file that joined the LNM and the PLO were Muslim, while on the other hand, most senior Christian officers and their units either continued to support the legitimately elected government or openly aided or joined the FLF (Baaklini 1983: 32, 33).

#### **4.4.3 National Identity of Lebanon**

There was also a struggle over the country's national identity and belonging that had its roots in 1920 and 1958 (Zamir 1980: 59, 60). A divide over national identity emerged with the extension of the borders of Lebanon in 1920 which was partially resolved in the National Pact of 1943. The National Pact managed to secure co-existence among the various Lebanese sects for over a decade before both internal and external factors destabilized Lebanon. A short-lived civil war broke out in 1958 between mainly Christian pro-West supporters of Lebanese President Chamoun and mostly Muslim Pan-Arab supporters of the Arab Nationalist Egyptian President Nasser (Haddad 2002b: 291, 292; Hourani 1966: 261).

The polarization induced by the Cold War and the 1956 Suez war led politicians and political parties to take a stance on the issues of the day: American-Soviet rivalry, Western sponsored defence pacts, and Arab Nationalism (El Khazen 2003: 608). President Nasser's ideas of Arab unity were pervasive among Arab populations, including Lebanon, after the Suez war that led to the expulsion of the French and British from Egypt in 1956 (Nir 2004: 110).

In 1957, the Lebanese government adopted the Eisenhower doctrine, which pledged American military and economic support to Middle Eastern countries that were willing

to protect themselves from Soviet expansion. This was seen as a breach of the National Pact by the Pan-Arabs (Nir 2004: 110). However, the decisive factor that led to the strife was the unity between Syria and Egypt in 1958 under the United Arab Republic (UAR). Lebanese Muslims, Druze and a segment of the Christians wished to join the UAR whereas the majority of Christians, on the other hand, felt Lebanon's existence as an independent state was threatened (Salibi 1966: 215). The conflict ended when American troops landed in Lebanon after three months of fighting and took control of the country at the request of the Lebanese Government. A new reconciliatory president, Fouad Shehab, was also elected to replace Shamoun (Nir 2004: 110, 111). When the civil war broke out in 1975, Christians still believed they belonged to a Christian West and Muslims' ultimate loyalty was given to the Arab World. Therefore, the "final" identity of Lebanon was also a main source of conflict for the Lebanese (Salibi 1989: 25, 27).

#### **4.5 PLO Departure and Deteriorating Conditions**

It was only post-PLO expulsion from Beirut after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon that Palestinians' conditions deteriorated drastically. In Lebanon, from 1969 to 1982, the Palestinian national movement enjoyed its first period of sustained political freedom. While Palestinians prior to 1969 were constrained by the interests and interventions of other Arab regimes and dependent on Arab nationalism as the only course to liberation, in Al Thawra the Palestinian national movement was free to construct its own institutions, promote its own national identity, and choose its own path to national liberation (Brynen 1989: 48).

While part of this autonomy stemmed from Lebanese popular support that limited the disciplinary powers and control of the Lebanese state, and from the support of some



Arab regimes that perceived the PLO as a strong bargaining chip with Israel following their defeat in the June 1967 war, this autonomy also stemmed from the mostly independent and self-sustaining funding of the PLO. The PLO's Palestine National Fund had chapters in various Arab countries that ensured the governments and companies remit the tax levied off Palestinian employees working in Arab countries. Approximately 60% of PLO funding came from this tax that amounted to 5% to 7% of each employee's income, 10-20% was derived from investments pursued by the PLO, and only 20% of funding was in the form of contributions from Arab states (Rubenberg 1983: 60).

Yet, this autonomy came at a high cost as many Lebanese began to speak of a state within a state. This phrase signified that Palestinians were achieving their own interests at the expense of Lebanese sovereignty (Khalidi 1984: 255).

#### **4.5.1 Dwindling Support**

By 1982, support was even dwindling among the LNM, the PLO's main supporter and ally. Constant and heavy-handed Israeli military retaliation on the Lebanese population of South Lebanon in response to Palestinian guerrilla activities across the borders was the major reason for this declining support. Israeli retaliation resulted in the deaths of thousands and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Southern Lebanese. This shifted the blame for the destruction of South Lebanon from Israel to the more accessible Palestinian armed presence in the South. Consequently, tensions between the inhabitants of South Lebanon and the PLO emerged as early as 1981 (Brynen 1989: 52). One could argue now, in retrospect, that Israeli interests in South Lebanon extended beyond PLO presence as Israel continued its constant aggression against South Lebanon after the PLO departure from Lebanon in 1982 and maintained its occupation of the region until its liberation in the year 2000.

Yet the decisive shift occurred following the Israeli invasion and occupation of Lebanon in the summer of 1982. Beirut only fell in the hands of the Israeli forces after a seventy-day siege and aerial, ground, and sea bombardment of the city. Palestinian and Lebanese fighters held ground longer than the Arab armies in the wars of 1956, 1967, and 1973 combined (Brynen 1989: 51). Nonetheless, it was seen by the Lebanese public that the PLO had brought about the destruction of Lebanon and the occupation of the capital Beirut. Although the highest number of casualties was among the Palestinians, the aggression left a wound in Palestinian-Lebanese relations as over 17,000 were killed and over 30,000 fighters and civilians were wounded.

The decline in support and the change in the Lebanese public mood towards the PLO cannot only be explained in terms of Israeli aggression. The PLO was also involved in what was known as “tajawuzat” or transgressions in Lebanese political discourse during Al Thawra era. Within a broad framework, lawlessness or political violence committed by Palestinians and Lebanese, whether officially or as a private enterprise, was perceived to be occurring under the PLO’s security umbrella. Hostile propaganda, that was often exaggerated, fed into the consciousness of both the Christian and Muslim publics. Although transgressions of PLO and LNM members were limited, they nonetheless acutely harmed the image of the Fida’yyin shifting it from a self-sacrificing freedom fighter committed to a cause to that of “zaaran” or troublemakers (Brynen 1989: 63). Similarly, a Lebanese narrative emerged that as freedom fighters, the Fida’yyin should be stationed in combat zones. The PLO had declared its commitment numerous times to remove Palestinian offices and military deployments from densely populated Lebanese urban areas, yet this commitment was never fulfilled. As a result, many supportive Lebanese lost their trust in PLO commitments and more readily accepted anti-Palestinian propaganda (Brynen 1989: 64, 65).

On another level, the presence of the PLO in Lebanon represented a threat to the hegemony of Christian and Muslim elites alike. The Lebanese Christian right felt the most threatened by the ability of the PLO to mobilize many of the Lebanese Muslims into Palestinian and Lebanese leftist organizations through the appeal of its anti-imperialist ideology. In fact, the PLO's non-sectarian and leftist ideology posed a threat to the leaderships of all sects and even to the notion of sect as basis for organizing the state and society (Brynen 1989: 54; Peteet 2005: 143, 144).

#### **4.5.2 Palestinians without Protection**

Regardless of the factors that led to a changing Lebanese perception towards the PLO, 1982 marked the end of Al Thawra era and the PLO lost most of its influence in Lebanon. Consequently Palestinians lived in three zones where they no longer enjoyed autonomy. In the Southern zone they were attacked and controlled by the Israeli occupation, in the central zone of Beirut they were subjugated and harassed by the Lebanese central government, and in the North and Bekaa Valley in the East they lived under the surveillance of the Syrian "mukhabarat" (secret police). To some extent Palestinians in the three zones faced similar problems, but conditions were worst and harshest in the South, severe in Beirut, and least severe in the North (Khalidi 1984: 258, 259).

Under Lebanese state control in the post-1982 invasion period, Palestinians, mainly young men, were routinely subjected to arrest by various state organs including the Deuxieme Bureau that re-emerged on the scene of Palestinian everyday existence. During arrest, torture was commonly used and family punishment in the form of arresting family members was common practice when the wanted person was not found. Palestinians lived in constant anxiety and fear of army checkpoints and the secret police of the Deuxieme Bureau. Moreover, as Palestinians need to obtain their identity papers



and travel documents from the Lebanese General Security, this presented Lebanese authorities with an opportunity for interrogations, imprisonment, extortion of bribes, and harassment (Khalidi 1984: 260). This period also witnessed outright violence, and one could suggest even revenge against the Palestinians. In September 1982, the Christian Maronite Phalangists, aided by the Israeli Defence Forces, massacred several thousand Palestinian civilians in the Sabra and Shatila camps in Beirut (Haddad 2004: 475; Khalili 2007: 735, 736). Several years later, the Shia Amal Militia, under the tutelage of Syria besieged the refugee camps between the years 1985 and 1988 in what became popularly known as the “war of the camps.” Amal besieged the camps in Beirut, Sidon and Tyre to eradicate any Arafatist influence that remained after the PLO’s departure. The death toll estimate ranged between 2500 and 13,000 (Khalili 2007: 735, 736; Hudson: 1997: 255, 256).

The Cairo Agreement was also unanimously revoked by the Lebanese parliament in 1987; combined with the PLO’s departure and closure of its institutions, unemployment among the refugees was pervasive once again (Hanafi and Tiltnes 2008: 3).

## **4.6 Post-Ta’if Accord and New Complications**

### **4.6.1 The Consociational System**

The Document of National Reconciliation, Lebanon’s post-war constitution, better known as the Ta’if Accord, ushered the end of the Lebanese civil war in 1989. The agreement was signed in the Saudi resort town of Ta’if and was brokered by Saudi Arabia, Syria and the United States. The Accord served as an amendment to the constitution of 1926 and a transitional document to phase out sectarianism in Lebanon. The Ta’if Accord was originally agreed upon as a transitional document that will ultimately lead to deconfessionalization. However, Article 95 of the Accord on

deconfessionalization did not set a time limit nor a time-frame to this transitional period. It also did not stipulate that the recommendations of the committee entrusted with deconfessionalization are binding neither to parliament nor the executive. In fact, this committee that was due to be established following the electing of the first post-Ta'if parliament never materialized (Ofiesh 1999: 107). The transitional nature of the document in fact came to be its greatest weakness since it lacked a timeline or clear steps towards removing sectarian power sharing, and it inadvertently reinforced sectarian divides.

Similar to the National Pact of 1943, under the Ta'if Lebanon remained a consociational democracy but with the distribution of power among the sects altered. The three primary offices remain the same, but the weight of each changed to reflect the change in demographics and power at the civil war's end. The president continued to be a Christian Maronite but his/her powers were reduced substantially. The power of the prime minister, who remained to be a Muslim Sunni, had been expanded and so have the prerogatives of the executive council. The office of president of chamber of deputies is now held by a Muslim Shia, but the position yields more influence and its term had been extended from one to four years. As such, this redistribution of power signified the decline of Maronite hegemony and the advance of the Sunnis and the Shias (Ghosn and Khoury 2011: 284; Haddad 2002: 33; Hudson 1997: 113, 114; Salem, 2006). Yet, the Sunnis had emerged as the principal sectarian winners with the powerful post of prime minister allocated to them (Hamdan 2012: 45).

Sectarian distribution is not limited to the three presidencies but extends to the parliament, civil service jobs, the judiciary, and military and security institutions. Article 24 of the Accord states that: "until parliament enacts non-sectarian electoral laws, parliamentary seats are to be distributed equally between Christians and Muslims, and proportionally among the sects within each of the two religious categories" (Ta'if

Accord, Article 24). As such, the Ta'if not only reinstated the National Pact, but also codified it for the first time. The National Pact was an unwritten agreement, whereas the Ta'if was a written amendment to the Constitution of 1926. Parliamentary seats were allocated on the basis of Christian-Muslim parity whereby seats are distributed on a 5:5 ratio instead of the 6:5 ratio in favour of Christians under the National Pact (Hudson 1997).

Despite reconfiguring the power-sharing formula in the Ta'if, this did not translate into equal representation and participation of confessional communities. Lijphart's classic consociational theory emphasises the necessity for broad representation of significant communities in executive authority. However, O'Leary's critique of and challenge to Lijphart's theory has bridged a gap between consociationalism in theory and practice. O'Leary contests Lijphart's view that representation of sectarian communities alone within executive government is sufficient for consociational democracy and instead emphasises the need for meaningful participation and not merely representation of these communities in executive power. What is necessary for democratic and stable power-sharing is the genuine participation of significant ethno-confessional groups within executive power (Hamdan 2012: 41).

We have seen that one of the causes of the 1975 civil war was unequal representation between Muslims and Christians. This was partially premised on Muslim, both Sunni and Shia, resentment of Maronite hegemony that stemmed from the National Pact of 1943. The Pact allocated the highest offices to the largest confessional communities at the time, namely the Maronites and Sunnis, whereby the President was Maronite and the prime minister was Sunni while the Shia were excluded from any top executive position (Hamdan 2012: 42). Even though the Sunnis were allocated the office of the prime minister, they still complained of unequal representation as executive authority was concentrated in the presidency (Hamdan 2012: 43).



The Ta'if Accord, in contrast to the National Pact, transferred executive authority from the president to the cabinet as a collective body. The text of the Ta'if is unequivocal and leaves no room for interpretation "executive power is given to the council of ministers". Theoretically, this redistribution of executive power could have satisfied O'Leary's crucial condition that all significant communities ought to participate in executive government, as Ta'if shifted executive power from the presidency that was reserved for a single confessional community to a collective body where all communities participate in power and decision-making. (Hamdan 2012: 44).

Yet the Ta'if was lacking an indispensable reform to enact meaningful and relatively equal power-sharing. The participation of all confessional communities recommended by O'Leary did not occur in practice. Whether there was a verbal agreement to allocate the ministry of finance to the Shias in the Ta'if is vehemently contested between the Shia represented by Hezbollah and Amal, and the Sunnis represented by the Future movement. Although it is not articulated into the Accord, Hezbollah and Amal insist that it was verbally agreed to during the Ta'if negotiations. Future contends that this was never agreed on in the Ta'if (Hamdan 2012: 44). In fact, Future refuses to acknowledge that it was even suggested. Viewed from a corporate consociational lens, the post of finance ministry co-signs executive decrees which also require the signatures of the Maronite president and the Sunni prime minister (Hamdan 2012: 49). Without it, the Shia are represented through their membership in the council of ministers, but they are not equally participating in power-sharing.

#### **4.6.2 Tawteen**

In relation to Palestinians in Lebanon, their long and complex presence was summed up with the phrase "no tawteen" in the Ta'if. In Lebanese political discourse tawteen

means the naturalization or permanent settlement of Palestinians in Lebanon. The Ta'if Accord states in the preamble: "there shall be no partition and no tawteen [of Palestinian refugees]" (Haddad 2000: 86).

When tawteen was signed into law as a constitutional amendment in 1990, Palestinians were not explicitly mentioned (Lebanese Parliament, 2009). Nonetheless, in every cabinet discussion since, and in every translation of the constitutional amendment, the phrase "of Palestinians in Lebanon" followed the term tawteen (Talhami, 2003).

Although it was codified with the Ta'if Accord, the term "tawteen" first surfaced in Lebanon following the signing of the Cairo Agreement in 1969 between the Lebanese state and the Palestine Liberation Organization. At the time, the concept was being propagated by the right-wing Christian Phalangist Party, which described it as a conspiracy by the Lebanese state and the Palestinian refugees themselves aiming to transform Lebanon into a substitute homeland for foreigners, namely the Palestinians. Nonetheless, the term did not resonate with the wider Lebanese society until the end of the civil war and the signing of the Ta'if Accord (Meier 2010: 147). In the post-Ta'if period, tawteen has great political and social resonance for all Lebanese, irrespective of their sectarian background (Nasrallah 1997: 349).

However, Tawteen no longer signifies a substitute homeland, but rather represents a threat to the delicate sectarian balance in Lebanon according to Lebanese discourse. It is understood in this discourse that the naturalization or permanent settlement of Palestinians, who are predominantly Muslim Sunnis, would tip the sectarian balance in favour of the Muslims and consequently lead to the demise of Lebanon that is based on power-sharing between Christians and Muslims. Opposition to the permanent settlement of Palestinians in Lebanon is one of the few issues, if not the only issue, which unites the Lebanese government and public across sectarian communities and across the political spectrum (Sayigh, R. 1995: 37).

Palestinians also reject tawteen as they hold onto their right of return to Palestine/Israel, but they do demand civil and social rights in Lebanon. Palestinians have been mainly denied these rights under the pretext of opposition to “tawteen” (El Sayed-Ali 2006: 14).

Three years on from the Ta'if, the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks set in motion a political and media machine against the tawteen “threat” which culminated in an “obsessive fear” among the Lebanese (Meier 2010: 149; Sayigh, R. 1995: 42, 43). Lebanese fears of such a scenario had increased in 1992 when a Refugee Working Group was established to complement bilateral negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis following the Madrid Conference. The Group enjoyed wide participation from the Arab Region, North America, Europe and Asia and was chaired by Canada since 1995. However, Lebanon and Syria have refused to participate in The Group (Robinson 1997: 315) as they believed it weakens the premises of UN Resolution 194 which upholds Palestinians’ right of return to their homeland occupied in 1948 and in response to proposals by the Group aiming to provide economic aid to settle the refugees in their host countries (Meier 2010: 149). Lebanese fears of an imposed settlement crystallized after the Palestinian-Israeli Oslo Accord had postponed the discussion of the right of return, alongside the issues of borders, water, settlements and Jerusalem, to the final status negotiations scheduled for 1996 (Brynen 1997: 43).

Although final status negotiation did convene in May of 1996, albeit only in a ceremonial opening session, they have not been resumed since (Brynen 1997: 43). The fact that Israel had consistently rejected the right of return did not help lessen Lebanese fears, especially since UN Resolution 194 stated that the refugees would be repatriated to their original homes, in Northern Historic Palestine or today’s Israel, and not the newly established Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Brynen 1997: 45).



In addition to the threat to the sectarian balance, on an economic level it is rationalized that resettlement and subsequently the economic integration of Palestinians is beyond the capacity of the Lebanese state which is facing difficulties in creating jobs for its own population. Lebanese politicians have argued that such integration would intensify competition with Lebanese labour as a justification for the denial of Palestinian rights (Nasrallah 1997: 350). The foreign minister at the time stated that it was a matter of geography as Lebanon is using all its inhabitable space and the rest is mountainous (Al-Husayni, 1996). On a constitutional level, some observers and politicians argue that resettlement would constitute a breach of the Ta'if regardless of the arguments for or against *fawteen* (Salam 1994: 24; Sayigh, R. 1995: 43).

#### **4.6.3 Further Discrimination**

As such, the Ta'if Accord and the Oslo Accords sparked a new round of discrimination against Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. At the civil war's end, segments of the Lebanese Muslim public, but particularly the Christian public, blamed Palestinians for the breakout of the civil war (Haddad 2000: 84; Hanafi and Tiltnes 2008: 4; Knudsen 2009: 56, Sayigh, R. 1995: 45). Palestinians were excluded from reconciliation initiatives taking place in the post-war period and were not entitled to benefit from the General Amnesty Law passed by the Lebanese parliament in 1991 which ensured immunity against atrocities committed in the civil war (Knudsen 2009: 57). They were also banned from rebuilding their war-damaged homes in the camps after 1991. Even UNRWA's efforts to reconstruct the camps or replace the four demolished camps were thwarted by the Lebanese state (Sayigh, R. 1995: 43).

In 1994, then Lebanese foreign minister, Faris Buwayz, proposed a four-point solution to the Palestinian presence in Lebanon in reaction to the signing of the Oslo Accords. The first proposal was that UN Resolution 194 be implemented. He proposed that

Lebanon would naturalize a small number of Palestinians (presumably wealthy), and others who cannot return to Israel would move to the Palestinian administered territories in the West Bank. The remainder he had three solutions for: family reunification wherever they had relatives, emigration to the US, Canada or Australia, and finally having the Arab Gulf countries accept them as migrant labour. (El-Khazen, 1997).

Similarly, the former Lebanese Prime Minister, Rafic Hariri, declared in 1998 that ‘Lebanon will never, ever integrate the Palestinians. They will not receive civic or economic rights or even work permits’ (Knudsen 2009: 58). A few years earlier, in 1995 under Hariri’s authority, Lebanon required re-entry visas of Palestinians to prevent the return of roughly 5000 Palestinians from Libya after the Libyan president Moamar Qaddafi expelled Palestinians in protest against the peace-process. The Lebanese Deputy Foreign Minister and Minister of Interior warned against a “human invasion” exaggerating the number of returnees from Libya up to thirty thousand, and cautioned that Lebanon will not become a dumping ground for “human waste”. The new law, which was not revoked until 1999, left thousands of refugees stranded abroad and prevented those in Lebanon from returning to their jobs abroad (Knudsen 2009: 59). Discrimination continued to intensify when in 2001 it became illegal for Palestinians to own property, even in the form of an apartment to live in (Al-Natour 2003: 57),

#### **4.6.4 The Cedar Revolution**

With the cedar revolution, the power-sharing formula and the political alliances that ensue from it were reconfigured. This had a direct impact on Palestinian presence, and especially in the domain of legislation. The assassination of the influential Sunni Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was the direct cause for the Cedar Revolution in 2005. Hariri was Lebanon’s longest serving prime minister, having won the 1992, 1996, and 2000 parliamentary elections. He was due to win for a fourth time were it not for the massive



car bomb that targeted his convoy in central Beirut in February 2004. (Knudsen and Kerr 2012: 3). Preceding the Cedar revolution, UN Security Council resolution 1559 was issued in 2004 calling for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and the disarmament of Lebanese and non-Lebanese political parties, in practice referring to Hezbollah and Palestinian factions (Knudsen and Kerr 2012: 10).

The main Lebanese political parties split between those who oppose Syrian involvement and hegemony in Lebanon and those who wish to maintain it. On 8 March 2005, Shia Hezbollah and its allies called for a mass demonstration in central Beirut. This was followed by another mass demonstration on 14 March 2005 organized by Hariri's Sunni Future movement. The two camps have been called the March 8 camp and the March 14 camp since then. March 8 is centred on a Syria/Iran/Hezbollah axis while March 14 is based on a US/ Saudi Arabia/Future Movement axis. These camps were also split over the international Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) established to bring the assassins of Hariri to justice. The conflict exacerbated when March 14 insisted on accusing Syria and its allies in Lebanon for the assassination. Consequently, the Sunni/Shia divide replaced the Muslim/Christian divide of the civil war in the post-Cedar Revolution period (Knudsen and Kerr 2012: 4, 5).

The Christian Maronite parties were split between those two camps with the Free Patriotic Movement joining March 8, and the Lebanese Forces and Phalangist Party joining March 14. (Knudsen and Kerr 2012: 5). With Christian Maronites split between both camps, the divide may appear political rather than sectarian. The fact is that the Cedar Revolution reinforced sectarianism instead of ending it. With the country split over the STL, the Syrian regime, and Hezbollah arms sectarian tensions, especially in mixed neighbourhoods, sharpened (Knudsen and Kerr 2012: 13).



#### **4.6.5 Potentially Changing Tides**

Currently, UNRWA official figures place the number of Palestinian refugees at approximately 450,000, and the Lebanese state adopts this figure. However, independent researchers estimate the actual number is between 200,000-250,000 due to emigration to the Arab Gulf States and Northern European countries during the years of the civil war (1975-1990) and beyond (Al-Natour 2003: 51; Hanafi and Tiltne 2008: 3).

At present, more than 50% of Palestinians in Lebanon still reside in refugee camps; a higher proportion than other host countries. Being deprived of almost all of their civil rights, and enduring various forms of marginalization, and deprivation, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are worse off than their counterparts in other Arab countries (Sayigh, R. 1995: 46; Suleiman 2006: 3).

A glimpse of hope emerged in 2010 when a law was passed in parliament granting Palestinians the right to employment and social security after Palestinians, Lebanese and international human rights organizations exerted intense pressure on the Lebanese government. However, thus far no implementation mechanisms have been put in place and work permits are seldom issued (Siklawi 2010: 611).

## Chapter Five: Dominant Myths and Narratives

In this chapter I draw on interviews, fieldwork and newspaper sources to analyse how the exclusion of Palestinians is legitimated in the dominant Lebanese discourse. This discourse revolves around the colonial past in relation to nation-building and processes of “othering”, the role of Palestinians in the Lebanese civil war, and Palestinians’ position as one of many “others” in Lebanon. I first explore boundary creation and maintenance before I move onto analysing the dominant narratives that constitute this Lebanese discourse on Palestinians. I end by questioning whether Palestinians may be important for the construction of the Lebanese “self”.

### 5.1 Boundaries: Blurred or Defined?

#### 5.1.1 Boundary Creation

Mary Douglas delineates that what disturbs cultural order is when things turn up in the wrong category or fail to fit a certain category within a classification system (Hall 1997: 237). If certain individuals have no place within a social system and are therefore marginalized individuals then all caution is taken against them by others (Douglas 1984: 97). Stable cultures require that categories and boundaries are clearly defined, as matter out of place represents a source of instability (Hall 1997: 237).

The issue of boundary creation and maintenance in a shared culture is worth examining, especially that the racialization of Palestinians necessitates a prior creation of a boundary between Lebanese and Palestinians. However, assuming racialization is a matter of fact is to get ahead of ourselves. Using the concept of racialization or race-critical theory is a means to study the exclusion and what appears to be puzzling management of Palestinians by the Lebanese state. Therefore, this chapter and the

upcoming chapters are yet to answer how, and whether, Palestinians have been reconfigured as a racialized minority. We saw in the Historical Context chapter that the long and interconnected history of the people of historical Syria preceding the French and British Mandates resulted in a lack of divergence in cultural, social, and ethnic characteristics between Palestinians and Lebanese. It is also difficult for an outsider to distinguish between the two in terms of physical appearance<sup>3</sup> (Hudson 1997: 245). To elucidate how difficult it is to differentiate between Lebanese and Palestinians, one need only refer back to the painful memories of the civil war.

The Lebanese civil war witnessed many atrocities of which one of the most inhumane was the practice of killing or abducting “on the ID”<sup>4</sup>. When moving between areas of different religious belonging, many Lebanese and Palestinians acquired fake identification cards to avoid such a fate. In this case, the only method to determine who were Palestinian and who were Lebanese was to demand from people at the checkpoint to say “tomato” which is pronounced as “banadoura” with a Lebanese accent and as “bandora” with a Palestinian accent. Slight differences in accent were the only means of identification.

Najah Wakim, who I interviewed in June 2012 and who is the leader of the leftist People’s Movement and former member of parliament, answering my question on what the differences are between Lebanese and Palestinians, pointed out that “Palestinians are not similar to the Lebanese... that is a lie... we are in fact one people”. He continued “if the request of the Lebanese Christian patriarch to Great Britain in the 1940s to have the Shia region of “Jabal Amel” as part of Palestine instead of Lebanon materialized, then

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<sup>3</sup> See Historical Context chapter section 4.1 for further discussion.

<sup>4</sup> Political parties set up checkpoints that were fixed in location and other that were “flying checkpoints” set up in random locations and at random times. If someone held a Lebanese-Muslim or Palestinian ID at a Christian political party checkpoint they were directly killed or taken hostage for prisoner swaps. Similarly Christians and Palestinians stopped at some Muslim political party checkpoints also met the same fate. Thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians are registered as missing persons because of this practice.



the inhabitants of Jabal Amel [located in South Lebanon] would have now been saying that there is cultural similarity between them and the Lebanese”.

As complex as it may appear, the creation of ethnic boundaries in a shared culture does not constitute an extraordinary phenomenon. Fredrik Barth showed through his research on tribes in Central Asia that although ethnic categories do take cultural differences into account, one cannot assume a direct correspondence between ethnic units and cultural similarities and differences. The features that are ascribed importance are not based on the sum of objective differences, but only those which the actors themselves perceive to be significant (1998: 13, 14).

This is also in line with the work of Michael Ignatieff on the Bosnian conflict. He delineates that Sigmund Freud once argued that the smaller the difference between two people the larger it was bound to bloom in their imagination. Freud called this effect the “narcissism of minor difference”. It implies that enemies need each other to remind themselves of who they really are. A Croat, is therefore, someone who is not a Serb. A Serb is someone who is not a Croat. Without hatred for the other, there would be no clearly defined national self (Ignatieff 1994: 14). Minor differences between Lebanese and Palestinians in terms of accent, cuisine, and dress are exacerbated to create and maintain ethnic boundaries (Peteet 2005: 184).

While Lebanese and Palestinian actors at the societal level are not passive agents, Barth’s depiction of boundaries omits the categorizations of more powerful actors such as the state. Steven Loyal and Kieran Allen, building on the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1994) on state categories and James Scott (1998) on making society legible, show that instead of granting all residents the same civil, social, and political rights, bureaucratic classification schemes engender systematic patterns of discrimination. The legal and administrative categories of “asylum seeker”, “refugee”, and “migrant worker” are

important state categories and classifications that confer different rights and entitlements on different segments of the population. These categorizations, in turn, enter public consciousness as key categories for seeing the social world (2006: 218).

Palestinians were first categorized as outsiders by UNRWA which was the first to legally define them as refugees in 1949. UNRWA formulated its own working definition of who constitutes a Palestine refugee, which states:

Palestine refugees are persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict, and took refuge in one of the countries or areas where UNRWA provides relief, and their descendants. (2012: unrwa.org).

The category of refugee is in itself is depoliticizing and de-historicizing hence subjecting refugees to states' and/or humanitarian intervention agencies' control as cogently argued by Liisa Malkki (1996: 378, 385, 386). Yet being categorized as refugee is only the starting point of an outsider's trajectory. This category was adopted by the Lebanese state, but we shall see in the Security and Demography chapter that Palestinians have also been categorized by the Lebanese state as a "danger", "strange body", and a "burden".

### **5.1.2 Stigma**

I briefly explore boundaries because their creation and consequently the separation of Lebanese and Palestinians into distinct ethnic groups is a "pre-requisite" for the racialization of Palestinians. However, when it comes to boundary maintenance in Lebanese-Palestinian social interaction the work of Erving Goffman on stigma can offer some insights. Goffman describes a stigma as an undesired differentness that is deeply discrediting to the stigmatized individual (Goffman 1990: 12, 13, 15). If a stigmatized

individual's differentness is already known about or recognizable on the spot, then she/he is discredited. If on the other hand, the stigmatized individual's differentness is neither known beforehand, by the "normals", nor immediately perceptible by them, then he/she is discreditable (Goffman 1990: 14).

In the absence of cultural or physical markers to differentiate between Lebanese and Palestinians, Palestinians in Lebanon fall between the *discredited* and the *discreditable*. If they choose to speak with a Palestinian accent then they can easily be identified as Palestinian. They are also identifiable in dealing with governmental offices and departments or on the numerous security checkpoints spread across Lebanon simply by possessing an identification card that is specific to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. In other instances, Palestinians may desire to pass as Lebanese which is easily done by overcoming the only barrier/marker through acquiring a Lebanese accent which the vast majority of Palestinians already have a command of in the post-Ta'if Accord period; in this case, however, they are discreditable.

While being a *discredited* person is more about managing tension during social contacts, being a *discreditable* person is more about managing information about this "failing" – to reveal or not reveal, and in each case, to whom, how, when, and where (Goffman 1990: 57). Stigmatized persons may find that they feel unsure of how the dominant group will identify and receive them. The uncertainty arises not merely from the stigmatized individuals not knowing which of several categories they will be placed in, but also from knowing in some cases others may be defining them in terms of their stigma (Goffman 1990: 24, 25). Palestinians may choose to conceal their identity and attempt to pass as members of the dominant group in encounters where they believe such an identity would automatically translate into lower social status. In cases where they are discredited, a stigmatized status maintains a boundary by determining the form various social relations between Lebanese and Palestinians will take.



With the absence of cultural markers Palestinians are discreditable by stigma symbols that convey social information (Goffman 1990: 59) which can lead to “visibility” or the identification of one’s social identity (Goffman 1990: 65). In Lebanon, such symbols or markers would include family name, place of residence, and place of origin. It is a socially acceptable and common practice to “innocently” enquire about these details in daily social encounters. This practice does not only aim to determine who is Lebanese and who is Palestinian, but also to determine which sect Lebanese themselves belong to as this can offer guidance as to what is permissible to say and what is not, and in deciding who to include or exclude in the case of both Lebanese-Palestinian and Lebanese-Lebanese encounters.

This is done in a similar logic to the practice of “telling” between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. Telling is a necessary social skill to avoid embarrassment in a sectarian milieu, a means by which Protestants and Catholics avoid offending each other in social encounters where they are unsure of the other’s identity as studied by Rosemary Harris (1986). Other ethnographers have noted that telling is also used for more nefarious purposes. According to Burton the cues used in telling such as first names and place of residence are used to single out Catholics and Protestants for intimidation, beatings, and discrimination in employment (1978: 49, 50, 57). Finlay (1999) suggests that telling is a form of communal discipline, of putting people in their place. Henry Patterson (1999) sees that civil society in Northern Ireland had collapsed into competing religio-political blocs or what Hannah Arendt terms “communities of meaning” whereby each group has a tendency to degenerate into mutually opposed self-absorbed worlds (in Finlay1999: 2.11). Finlay delineates that telling helps sustain these communities of meaning (1999: 2.12).

This is the state of affairs on the level of interaction between Lebanese and Palestinians, however to characterise the treatment of Palestinians in terms of racialization one would

expect to see racializing narratives, stereotypes, and a racializing discourse that resonate within society. As we know from Stuart Hall (1997), stereotypes need to be constantly repeated in order for them to be effective. A logical starting point would be the dominant narrative in which Palestinians are, by and large, blamed for the breakout of the civil-war by the Lebanese as this is crucial to the legitimatisation of their exclusion in the post-Taif period.

## **5.2 Racialization: Inevitable, Historical, or Irrelevant?**

### **5.2.1 The Civil War**

The view that antagonisms between Lebanese and Palestinians can be traced back to the civil war in 1975 was once prevalent among Christian Maronite parties. However, by the civil war's end, large segments of the Lebanese population blamed Palestinians for the breakout of the civil war (Haddad 2000: 84; Hanafi and Tiltnes 2008: 4; Knudsen 2009: 56; Salih 2013: 76 Sayigh, R. 1995: 45)

Joseph Abu Khalil, aged eighty six at the time of the interview, has been an influential member of the political bureau of the Phalangist Party, "Al Kataeb", from his youth. The Phalangist Party is an integral component of the Lebanese Maronite Christian right which up to the Ta'if Accord in 1989 dominated the Lebanese state. Three Lebanese presidents, one of whom was elected twice, had emerged from the party at the time when Lebanon was still a presidential democracy prior to the Ta'if Accord. Pierre Gemayel was elected president in 1964 and 1970, Bashir Gemayel, Pierre's son, was elected in 1982 but was assassinated ten days before he was due to take office at which point his brother Amin Gemayel was elected directly afterwards in the same year (Encyclopaedia Britannica). In answering my question on what factors transformed



Palestinians into the “other” in Lebanon despite the similarity between Lebanese and Palestinians culturally, in religion, and in traditions, Abu Khalil explained that:

Palestinians are advanced intellectually... Israelis fear the Palestinians and Lebanese... I know this, in terms of education and qualifications. We didn't see any differences between us and the Palestinians, this was before the creation of Israel, and after the establishment of Israel... you wanted to fight Israel from Lebanon... to eliminate the Lebanese state and its institutions, decisions, and its army... Abu Amar [Yasser Arafat] used to form the governments in Lebanon... and he, god bless his soul, bragged that he ruled Lebanon... he did in fact rule Lebanon... but it was an adventure that turned out to be a disaster for Palestinians and for us... we used to object to this. The rationale of the state dictates that it is responsible [for running the affairs of the country], it's not guerrilla activity... they are two contradictory logics... it's as if you are placing Palestinian rights in the face of Lebanese rights until they clash... and that's what happened. To answer your question [on othering], Palestinians are closer to us, even in accent... we are different to the Egyptians, Moroccans, the Somalis and so on... we lived together, under the Ottoman Sultanate we lived together, we were people living together. (July 2012).

Farid El-Khazen, who is a parliament member from the Christian right Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) and a Professor Political Science at the American University of Beirut, also answering why Palestinians had been transformed into the other despite the cultural similarity between Lebanese and Palestinians situated this othering process within a similar context to the one given by Abu Khalil. He directly responded:

Because there was a war in Lebanon... there was a war experience that Palestinians took part in to the point where they said that the road to Jerusalem passes through Jounieh<sup>5</sup>, it was an explicit involvement, and they clashed with the Christians, Muslims, the right, the left, Syria, and Israel, all this happened in Lebanon. This is not theory and it's not that we are imagining matters that never happened. There was an armed confrontation whereby Lebanon was transformed into a regional war arena because it was an arena for the Arab-Israeli conflict because of the PLO's presence in Lebanon. (August 2012).

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<sup>5</sup> Jounieh is Christian Maronite stronghold to the North of Beirut



In the Historical Context chapter we saw that Palestinian armed presence did in fact polarize Lebanese society and political parties as all Lebanese took a side on the issue; either in support of or against the PLO. We also saw that this is not the whole story. Abu Khalil portrays a harmonious picture of Lebanese-Palestinian relations prior to the occupation of historic Palestine and up to the breakout of the civil war. To him, the problem lies in the PLO wanting to fight Israel from Lebanese land in defiance of the Lebanese state. There are two issues that need to be paused at in this statement. First, in the understanding of the Lebanese Christian right there appears to be selective amnesia. As we have already seen, the Lebanese left represented by the LNM were strongly in favour of PLO armed struggle against Israel, and it was in fact the support of the LNM that allowed the Palestinian fadda'iyin (freedom fighters) to operate freely from South Lebanon. The disparity in political representation and in economic well-being between Muslims and Christians prior to the breakout of the civil war is omitted in the accounts of both Abu Khalil and El-Khazen. The second issue concerns how the state was understood at the time. The fact that the Lebanese state was dominated by the Christian Maronites and was, by and large, deeply resented by the Muslims is also forgotten in the course of events.

When Lebanon gained independence from the French, Christians dominated the state, army, civil service, and economic enterprise as a result of the French Mandate government's heavy recruitment from among the Christians concomitant with Muslims refraining from cooperating with the French colonial authorities. Muslims in contrast to the Christians were, by and large, disenfranchised (Faour 1991: 631). Similarly, many classically prestigious and sensitive ministries remained in Christian hands while Muslims were placed in the recently established ministries and departments that were not as economically and socially important and sensitive (Baaklini 1983: 30, 31).

As such, Muslim, and more broadly LNM, resentment towards Christian, and specifically Maronite hegemony, continued until the breakout of the Lebanese civil war in 1975. The civil war broke out between left-wing Lebanese political parties represented by the LNM which included the Muslims, Druze, a segment of the Christians, and the Palestinians on one side, and the Christian right-wing parties represented by the FLF on the other (Zamir 1980: 50). For the LNM, the struggles for the liberation of Palestine and for social justice in Lebanon were intertwined. To them, breaking Maronite hegemony with the support of the PLO was the only means to actualize social justice in Lebanon, while it was their duty to assist Palestinians in liberating Palestine (Haddad 2004: 474). The FLF, on the other hand, considered the Lebanese civil war as war between Lebanese and Palestinians who were backed by the international left (Baaklini 1983: 46, 47).

However, by 1982 support was even dwindling among the LNM, the PLO's main supporter and ally due to constant and repeated heavy-handed Israeli military retaliation on the Lebanese population of South Lebanon in response for Palestinian guerrilla activities across the borders (Brynen 1989: 52), the Israeli invasion and occupation of Lebanon in the summer of 1982 (Brynen 1989: 51), and the PLO's involvement in what was known as "tajawuzat" or transgressions in Lebanese political discourse during Al Thawra era<sup>6</sup> (Brynen 1989: 63-65).

The significance of the emphasis on the civil war is not to determine whether Lebanese or Palestinians were at fault. However, reviewing the positions of Lebanese and Palestinian parties prior to the outbreak of the war, and delineating that it was also an internal Lebanese civil war serves to highlight that Palestinians were, and still are,

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<sup>6</sup> See Historical Context chapter sections 4.1.3, 4.3.2, and 4.5.1 for detailed discussion of the LNM/PLO alliance, LNM resentment of Maronite hegemony, and dwindling support for the PLO.

essentialized. Whether Palestinians caused the war or not, they are blamed for it nonetheless.

The essentialization of Palestinians began shortly preceding the civil war. A speech given by the Christian right Phalangist leader, Pierre Gemayel, who later became president of Lebanon described Palestinians as the “filthiest of people from the holiest of lands” and added that “we gave them half a loaf and they took the other half”. The Christian right increasingly denigrated Palestinians to mobilize their supporter-base. At first seen as “diuf” or guests, by the early 1970s they were described as “ghoraba” or strangers; a phrase that eventually entered Lebanese discourse by the civil war’s end (Peteet 2005: 144). It was said that as guests they had violated the norms and code of hospitality and attempted to take over the host’s home (Peteet 2005: 144). Additionally, as guests, it is understood that they will eventually leave Lebanon. Regaining Lebanon and its lost beauty required the creation of boundaries that excluded foreigners (Peteet 2005: 174). Gemayel also stated that “we have no desire to throw these people into the sea or to annihilate them, all we ask of them is to start to look for another land to settle in outside Lebanese territory” (Haddad 2004: 475). The term ghoraba also carried a specific connotation within Lebanese discourse. The civil war, near its end, was described by the Lebanese as “the war of the ghoraba” who used Lebanon to advance their own interests while the Lebanese were mainly victims of those interests, regional/international conflicts and power struggles.

One could suggest that at the civil war’s end Palestinians embodied the “perfect” scapegoat for all the misfortunes that had befallen Lebanon. Additionally, if Christian Maronite hegemony was broken and Muslim Sunnis and Shias advanced by the war’s end, it was the result of PLO support to the LNM. The fact that Palestinians were excluded from reconciliation initiatives taking place in the post-civil war period and excluded from the General Amnesty Law passed by the Lebanese parliament in 1991



that ensured immunity against atrocities committed in the civil war (Knudsen 2009: 57) attests to the unique position of Palestinians in relation to other parties involved in the civil war.

The issue of post-civil war reconciliation is worth examining in its own right as it sheds light on the position of Palestinians as a scapegoat to carry the brunt of the war. Rene Girard, in analysing ritual sacrifice, extends his analysis to community relations and conflict. He delineates that in primordial societies sacrifice restores harmony to the community and strengthens the social fabric (1986: 8). The sacrificial victims are marginal victims who fail to share bonds with the rest of the community. They are not only chosen for lack of integration but also because their less-powerful position deprives them of reprisal. As violence towards those who more or less equally powerful brings about conflict, this impulse must be diverted to a sacrificial substitute (1986: 12, 13). Cyclical violence which is a threat to any society needs to be directed to a third party and to others. Thus, the sacrifice is mainly an internal process (1986: 53). In modern societies, Girard argues that what constitutes vengeance in primordial societies is carried out through the judicial system in modern societies. Through the judicial system the threat and fear of reprisal is eliminated (1986: 23).

Girard's analysis is relevant to post-Ta'if Lebanon. For reconciliation to work, the cycle of violence in the fifteen-year civil war needed to be stopped by finding a third party to sacrifice near the war's end. Michael Hudson (1997) questioned why the Lebanese civil war did not come to an end after the PLO expulsion from Lebanon in 1982 and instead lasted till 1990. The answer may lie in that Palestinians were not the only factor in the civil war. In any case, the Lebanese were then able to get along with restoring harmony in a scenario where they were all victims of the "wars of others" as one commonly comes across in Lebanese political discourse.

Returning to the second issue in Abu Khalil's and El-Khazen's response concerning the understanding of the state by the Lebanese political establishment prior to the breakout of the civil war, el Khazen further clarifies in response to a question on whether tawteen was initially a Maronite fear that later spread to the rest of the Lebanese that:

In Jordan there was a confrontation with the state, and the state in Jordan is headed by the king who is Sunni and the majority of Palestinians are Sunni. I mean to say that it is not a sectarian issue. The issue is the expansion of Palestinian armed revolution after 1967. This Palestinian revolution needs to find a space for it so it can operate, isn't that right? So by seeking to create that space, political space and military space, it was bound to clash with any authority. This authority might be the state or it could be a sector, any affected party... it will clash with it... a military expansion can't happen peacefully, it has to be by force, it cannot be by negotiation... so this is exactly the dynamic of conflict in Jordan and it's the exact same dynamic in Lebanon. Initially the clash was with state, with the Lebanese army in 1969 and in 1973, and when the Lebanese army was neutralized and was unable to move or take any action... so who took a stance in this situation? it was the Christians because they felt that they had no one to defend them. Who defends them is the Lebanese army and state... when the Lebanese state collapsed and it was paralyzed meaning there was no longer any decision making so this is when the Christians felt threatened. (August 2012).

El-Khazen and Abu Khalil make a very strong argument that the clash between the PLO and the Lebanese state was inevitable, thereby leaving Christians with no alternative but to defend the state. However, the clash was not simply one between the Lebanese state and the PLO. When the civil war broke out, the LNM represented the majority of the Lebanese population (Dekmejian 1978: 254, 256). Miliband's concept of "state-system" is useful here. He views the state more accurately as a state-system rather than a state per se. This system consists of a cluster or network of institutions of political and executive control and their key personnel (Abrams 1988: 71). This is in line with Foucault's characterization "a body of individuals who are capable of constituting a state" (2003: 223). Christian Maronites dominated these institutions prior to the civil



war in the era of “Maronite hegemony” (Baaklini 1983; Haddad 2004). Viewing the state in this light, Christians were more accurately defending their privileges that were guaranteed in this state-system against a growing Muslim population rather than the state per se as they considered Christian privilege as the rationale for the Lebanese state’s foundation. The fact that the leftist Lebanese from other sects stood against this state, and with the PLO, gives credence to this analysis. Whether an illusionary state or a state with symbolic capital, the PLO’s non-sectarian and leftist ideology posed a threat to the leaderships of all sects and even to the notion of sect as basis for organizing the state and society. The armed presence of the PLO and its ability to mobilize young Lebanese Muslims to join leftist political parties represented a threat to the hegemony and privilege of Christian and Muslim elites alike. (Brynen 1989: 54; Peteet 2005: 143, 144).

While El-Khazen and Abu khalil, and the Lebanese Christian right in general, view the civil war as one between Lebanese and Palestinians, it should also be considered, in Bourdieusian terms, as a struggle over the “symbolic capital” of the state between the FLF and the LNM. This symbolic capital, be it embedded in the physical, economic, cultural, or the social, is recognized by social actors and given value by them. The importance of controlling or maintaining hegemony over the state lies in that the meta-capital of the state or the accumulation of symbolic capital which permeates all fields gives the state the final say in all matters (1994: 8, 9, 12).

Yet, one cannot deny that the civil war, the milestone of Lebanon’s modern history, did in fact increasingly fuel the broader othering of Palestinians, especially with the PLO being one of the main participants in the fifteen-year long conflict and with a considerable segment of the Lebanese population blaming Palestinians for the breakout of the civil war as we saw previously. This transformation and the increasingly tense



relations between Lebanese and Palestinians from then onwards are also acknowledged by some Palestinian observers such as Jaber Suleiman who is a Palestinian researcher and civil society activist. However, he also considers Palestinians an external factor to the civil war. When I asked him what factors transformed Palestinians into the “other” in Lebanon, He explained:

Palestinians are people with a cause... we are not refugees due to famine or a flood... we have a cause and we are politicized... we are part of political life [of the countries we live in] and at a certain point the slogan of Arab unity centred around Palestine... the resistance stirs fears among host countries... in Jordan we know what happened, in Lebanon... let us be honest, there is a contradiction between the rationale of the state and the rationale of revolution... this is what transformed Palestinians into the “other” and especially after the civil war... maybe we were mistaken to take part in the civil war but we were not its cause, we were an external factor... it was also a class-based war... we were part of the conflict and this made us more of an “other” at a certain period and after the civil war stereotyping and misconceptions became common... some Lebanese have never even met a Palestinians but they have heard narratives from their parents or grandparents. (June 2012).

Suleiman and El-Khazen converge on the idea that the clash was in fact inevitable due to the contradiction in the rationale of the state and that of revolution; however, Suleiman, unlike El-Khazen, views Palestinians as an external factor to a Lebanese class-based war. El-Khazen, by giving the Jordanian example, was correct to point out that the Lebanese civil war was not simply a sectarian war. However, it happened to be that the Maronite sect dominated the Lebanese state and economy at the time thereby blurring the boundaries between sect and class. It may be true that the LNM, similar to Catholics in Northern Ireland, were excluded by the Lebanese racial state (Goldberg 2002), but by the war’s end those who previously constituted the LNM embodied and embraced the racial state themselves once they became an integral component of this state.

In the Historical Context chapter we saw that the exclusion of Palestinians had begun soon after their refuge in Lebanon. In the following section, we will see that the rationale for the exclusion and racialization of Palestinians had earlier roots than the civil war.

### 5.2.2 Colonial Past

Many Lebanese and Palestinian observers trace the separation of Lebanese and Palestinian as distinct “others” to the colonial past. This was a view held by a few of my respondents. Sakr Abu Fakhr’s social historical account of Palestinian, Lebanese, and Syrian nation-building provides insights into the beginnings of othering processes in the region in general and in Lebanon in Particular. Therefore, his account will be included in some detail. Abu Fakhr is a Palestinian researcher and journalist at Assafir Newspaper based in Beirut. He explained that:

Following the Sykes-Picot agreement, Palestinians in all their discourse focused on “Palestinization”... that we are here, this is our land, and Jews are coming from abroad. As such Palestinian identity was a newly formed identity which was against erasure, against Jews, and Arab in belonging. The first Palestinian National Pact stipulated three articles... stopping Jewish immigration, rejecting the [British] mandate, and unity with the motherland of Syria and this was as early as 1919. The Syrian identity centred on an Arab character because [historical] Syria was partitioned therefore they gave unity precedence... that we are all one country and we should reunite... Arab nationalist discourse was prevalent in Syria. In Lebanon, it was a sectarian identity since Lebanon was established for Christians otherwise it would be a meaningless entity, it would just be part of Syria... it has no purpose other than that there was a Maronite and French project to create a homeland and refuge for Christians... they [Lebanese] fear whatever comes from Syria since the geographical depth is stronger, it will swallow them... as such Lebanese identity was an ambiguous sectarian identity with a [new] focus on 6000 years of distinct history and culture by linking their identity to Phoenicians... this created an “us” and “them”... Lebanese identity emerged in contradiction to the identities of neighbouring countries, as such, when Palestinians arrived with the same traditions and culture, but because of this separatist Lebanese identity, Palestinians were directly considered the “other”. Later this “other” became armed, that is too scary [for the Lebanese], this “other” is also an Arab speaking



of Arab unity... this just won't work [for the Lebanese]... this is the basis of fear from Palestinians whether in the first phase of their arrival or in the latter phase of their armed revolution, especially within the isolationist<sup>7</sup> Maronite circles. (July 2012).

Abu Fakhr's account relates the othering of Palestinians in Lebanon to the process of nation-building and to Lebanon's particularly sectarian identity and character. As a country created as a refuge for Christians in the Middle East, Lebanese Christians directly perceived the arrival of predominantly Muslim Palestinians as a danger to the Lebanese entity; especially a Lebanese entity that works in their favour. If true, Abu Fakhr's account would clarify why Lebanon did not follow an assimilationist approach which was the conventional approach applied by states in nation-building during the era of modernity (Bauman 2011: 34, 35). Lebanon's confessional configuration almost immediately placed Palestinians in a position of outsiders as restrictions aiming at excluding Palestinians were being imposed as early as 1951. We shall see the rationale for exclusionary practices towards Palestinians "strangers" (Bauman 1991), by examining the link between the consociational state and racial state in the Security and Demography chapter.

The historical record and scholarship on Palestinians in Lebanon corroborates Abu Fakhr's account that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to overlook or dismiss the impact of this colossal geopolitical transformation involving the partition of Historical Syria that was followed by a nation-building process in the decolonization era. Yet this process had earlier roots. If Palestinians were excluded shortly after their arrival in Lebanon because of the sectarian organization of Lebanon, these sectarian categories

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<sup>7</sup> Right-wing Christian parties are described and named as "isolationist" by the Lebanese leftists and nationalists based on the former's rejection of their Arab surroundings and their insistence on a distinct Lebanese cultural identity that is tied to the West and for some originally Phoenician



and sectarian organization of society emerged as early as 1842<sup>8</sup> (Hamzeh 2001: 170; Makdisi 1996: 77; Makdisi 2000: 80, 81; Salibi 1989: 15). Plans to partition the region by the French and the British in 1916 only helped exacerbate sectarian tensions in Lebanon (Thompson 2000: 73-87). While Abu Fakhr's account traces othering back to nation-building by Lebanese, Palestinian, and Syrian elites, it is important to keep in mind that these ethnic and sectarian categories are colonial categories in the first instance (Makdisi 2000: 69-81). Taking this into account, the othering of Palestinians can also be considered a post-colonial phenomenon. In answering the same question, Abu Fakhr explained that "prior to colonization, the peoples of Historical Syria identified according to the village, town, or city they were from and not according to their religious or ethnic/national identity... that is how people identified themselves when moving from one place to another" (July 2012). Nonetheless, attributing the othering process solely to the colonial past only provides a partial explanation of this process.

### **5.2.3 Strangers or One of Many Others?**

While several of my respondents are happy to admit that Palestinians in Lebanon have been "othered" and while this is sometimes accompanied by the kind of derogatory language associated with racism, another key component of Lebanese discourse regarding Palestinians is to claim that Palestinians in Lebanon have not been singled out, that within a sectarian Lebanon, Palestinians are just one of many "others". One such account was given by Hassan Kabalan who is a member of the political bureau of the Shia Amal Movement. I asked him what factors transformed Palestinians into the other in Lebanon, he explained that:

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<sup>8</sup> See Historical Context chapter section 4.1.1 for detailed discussion on the origins of sectarianism.

The issue of the “other” for Arab people is not only an issue for Lebanese and Palestinians, but rather it is an issue in all corners of this Arab World. Regretfully, the other in our countries is the Christian in face of the Muslim, the Shia against the Sunni, the Salafists against the Muslim Brotherhood, the Jordanian against the Palestinian, the short against the tall, and those with green eyes against those with black eyes. We belong to a culture of division and fragmentation with the absence of the national and nationalistic dimension to our causes. (June 2012).

Similarly, in response to my question to Mahmoud Al Ali, a Palestinian researcher and academic, also on what transformed Palestinians into the other in Lebanon, he said:

In Lebanon, we are not living in a national environment to judge the Lebanese as Lebanese. You have to judge seventeen [types] of Lebanese [referring to sects], each depending on where they are coming from, and above the seventeen you need to judge an eighteenth type [referring to seculars] that does not fall within the framework of the seventeen. As for the Palestinians, you have those that are living inside and those that live outside the camps, and recently we have those with an Islamist orientation and so on. (July 2012).

With the acute divide among the various sects in Lebanon one might be inclined to accept such an interpretation, especially when some Lebanese political parties at the left of the political spectrum may appear on the surface of things to have more in common with some Palestinian factions than with some Christian right-wing political parties. However, two recent examples can be adduced to demonstrate that in practice this is not the case and that Palestinians are uniquely othered in Lebanon.

In May 2007, a Lebanese army post was attacked by a Sunni militant Islamist group, “Fateh Al-Islam”. The group was comprised by a vast majority of non-Palestinian Arab nationals who were predominantly Lebanese citizens and citizens from the Arab Gulf countries (Al Akhbar 14 June 2007). The group carried out an attack on Lebanese soldiers who were killed in a barbaric manner. The Islamist group was stationed in the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr el-Bared in North Lebanon and the Lebanese army

decided to eradicate the group through military means very shortly after the attack. The Lebanese army's decision received full political cover except from Hezbollah which initially called for a political settlement but later acquiesced due to political considerations. The conflict lasted for three months and the camp was completely razed to the ground leading to the displacement of its approximately 30,000 inhabitants (UNRWA: 2013).

A survey conducted by ARA research and consultancy three days after the breakout of the fighting revealed that 72% of the Lebanese population as a whole, including 85% of the Sunni sect, supported a military solution by the Lebanese army in the Nahr el-Bared camp. (Assafir 2 June 2007). Idolizing the army became a daily practice in Lebanese media. A TV video sketch aired numerous times daily on Lebanese television broadcasters showing Lebanese from all social strata, walks-of-life, and from both genders looking at an army soldier as he walks down the street in amazement and stopping to salute him with an elated sense of pride. The glorification of the army and the direct and indirect denunciation of Palestinians was a daily routine during the three-month conflict. In one day and on a single page of Annahar newspaper five articles were published praising the army and its soldiers, highlighting the heroism of the army, and lamenting the martyrs of the army. On this same page one article accused a Palestinian faction, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command, of smuggling weapons into Lebanon, and another article was about the Lebanese Army Command requesting from Palestinian civilians in the camp to refrain from turning themselves into human shields (Annahar 13 June 2007).

The scaremongering revolving around tawteen strongly resurfaced by linking it to the events of Nahr el-Bared one way or another. An article, which was one of many, in Assafir titled “Deliberations for a Settlement for the Palestinians of Lebanon... and the



Christians of Iraq” raised the question: “are we willing to accept tawteen after Lebanese from all sects and regions paid a heavy price to resist the implementation this scenario in previous periods” (Assafir 2 June 2007). The Palestinian population in Lebanon as whole was criminalized and stereotyped, and it was common to refer to their camps as “security islands” and “terrorist havens” in Lebanese newspapers (Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, 10 March 2006). The Lebanese Prime Minister at the time, Fouad Al Sanyoura, stated that “we will enforce the rule-of-law and security on those residing in the camps and outside the camps. The choices ahead of us extremely difficult and no one will carry arms except the army” (Annahar 21 May 2007).

Despite the portrayal of events in these terms, Assafir which is considered pro-Palestinian differed from Annahar which leans to the Christian right in that it portrayed a humanitarian angle to the issue when it came to the civilians of Nahr el-Bared. It was common to find headlines such as the following in Assafir: “People Need More Than Just a Loaf of Bread: the Displaced Need Medicine, Clothing, Detergents... and Return” (Assafir 31 May 2007). This humanitarian appeal, however, did not change the course of events or the conditions of the civilians.

In February 2013, a similarly barbaric attack against the Lebanese army occurred. This attack was carried out by Lebanese Sunni Islamist militants in the town of Aarsal, a Lebanese region in East Lebanon bordering Syria. From the start, there was a political consensus to resolve the issue through judicial means by arresting the perpetrators and for justice to take its course. The numbers of those wanted for trial diminished from 300 wanted persons to 80 in a matter of one week, and in the end no arrests were made despite the state knowing the place and identity of those involved. Only checkpoints were set up by the Lebanese army at the entrances of the town.

In an article published in Assafir titled “Future Movement Calls on the Army to End the Siege of Arsal”, the Future Movement, Lebanon’s largest Sunni political party, stressed that “the town of Arsal and its decent and kind inhabitants are not rebellious or outside the confines of law and order” and requested “the government to conduct a transparent and just investigation by the military judiciary to expose what occurred as the evidence is strange and incomprehensible... we also call on the army to lift the siege off Arsal” (Assafir 6 February 2013). The day the attack occurred and the day that followed the attack was described by Lebanese newspapers as “a very vague incident” (Assafir 2 February 2013). The Head of Military Intelligence, speaking on behalf of the Lebanese army, stated:

Arsal is not an Imara [Islamist Emirate] for Al Qaeda or extremists. We will not interrupt people’s lives, smuggling of diesel will be overlooked, and we will not enter people’s homes to confiscate their weapons. The army will not fight the *Lebanese people* [emphasis added]

He went on to say “there is no siege on Arsal, but there are 80 wanted persons who were involved in the ambush against the army. They move under pseudonyms and arresting them will take some time”. (Almustaqbal 5 Feb 2013).

The Prime Minister at the time, Najib Mikati, stated “the army has full cover to carry out its duties”, but went on to elaborate that “it’s important to resolve the problem in Arsal as soon as possible, and to hand over those who fired at the army to the specialized judicial authorities” (Almustaqbal 4 February 2013). The leader of the Druze Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), Walid Jumblatt, expressed “What occurred in Arsal, the noble Arab town that had struggled and continues to struggle on the right side of history, requires an unequivocal and transparent judicial investigation” (Almustaqbal 6 February 2013). The leader of the Christian Maronite Lebanese Forces, Samir Geagea “advised Arsal residents to hand over those wanted by army”. The Sunni Muslim Olama (Muslims Scholars) in an attempt to protect their Sunni counterparts in Arsal by turning

the issue sectarian stated that they “reject attempts to create strife between the army and the Sunni sect, and called for “an independent investigation committee to look into the incident”, while stressing that “the Lebanese army ought to represent and protect *all the Lebanese*” [emphasis added]. (Almustaqbal 5 February 2013).

Once these two incidents are placed in juxtaposition ones begins to notice that Palestinians are “uniquely” othered within the Lebanese context. Aside from the consensus among other Lebanese sects, the Lebanese Sunni sect failed their Palestinian Sunni counterparts in the case of Nahr el-Bared, but went to great lengths to spare their Sunni counterparts in Aarsal who are considered part of the Lebanese people. Palestinians in Lebanon, in Giorgio Agamben’s terms, live in a “state-of-exception” whereby they are “homo sacer” or “bare-life” (killable bodies). In a state of exception, certain constitutionally guaranteed rights and protections are suspended so as to confront a clear and direct danger or threat to the state (De La Durantaye 2009: 129; Lentin, R. 2008: 4). Lebanese lives were being protected and valued, while in the case of Palestinians, they were unquestionably reduced to bare life and thereby reduced and exposed to an unconditional threat of death within this state of exception. Agamben’s reading of Carl Schmitt’s state of exception does not only rest on the sovereign suspending the law and simultaneously enacting it, but also on the notion that the nation, and not the citizenry or residents that are within the borders, is what needs defending (Lentin R. 2008: 5).

This is in line with Foucault’s biopolitical state in terms of defending the population (Foucault 2003). Yet for Foucault, what defines a nation is its relation with the state. The nation is not in essence characterized by its relations with other nations. What defines the nation is not a horizontal relationship with other groups such as other nations, hostile or enemy nations, or the nations with which it is juxtaposed. What does



characterize the nation is, in contrast, is a vertical relationship with the state. Within this nation-state intersection or axis is where the nation is to be situated and characterized (2003: 223). Following on this, othering, and more accurately racialization as we shall see in the Security and Demography chapter, becomes a phenomenon of modern states that are also racial states, and not a relation between various nations.

For now, Zygmunt Bauman's analytical concepts of "strangers" and "cosy antagonism" suffice for the analysis. The relationship between various Lebanese sects is to be understood as one between friends and enemies. If there are no enemies, there will be no friends. In this relationship or binary opposition the "other" is still recognized as a subject, counted, and remains relevant (Bauman 1991: 53, 54). Against this cosy antagonism among the Lebanese there is the Palestinian stranger who can be either friend or enemy and who needs to be eliminated as a source of ambivalence that disrupts this binary opposition and brings it into question (Bauman 1991: 53, 54, 59). Palestinians strangers disrupt the world order of the Lebanese by blurring the distinctions between them. For this reason and from the above case, we see in line with Bauman's reasoning that the modern state is primarily designed to deal with or to eliminate strangers and not merely enemies (1991: 47, 58, 60, 61, 63).

These two incidents are also in line with Monique Nuijten and David Lorenzo's analysis of state violence in a Peruvian commune. They emphasize how different segments of the population are subjected to different forms of power and governmentality by the state, making some subject to softer forms of governance - the judiciary in the case of Aarsal, and others to brute force - the destruction of the camp in the case of Nahr el-Bared (in Benda- Beckmann 2009: 16). Similarly, Aihwa Ong's concept of "graduated sovereignty" applies to the Palestinian case in Lebanon. She shows how in South East Asia, particularly Malaysia, various segments of the population are subjected to

differential treatment by the state based on their position within globalized economic networks (Ong 2000: 57). While linking the Palestinian case to globalization processes and market calculations might not be easily done in this case, Ong's concept of graduated sovereignty applies and is useful for understanding their position in Lebanon.

The events of Nahr el-Bared and Arsal send out the message to Palestinians and Lebanese, but especially Palestinians, that Palestinian blood is cheap and that Lebanese lives are valued over Palestinian lives. The course of events also revealed that Lebanese daily lives are not to be disrupted while the normality of the daily lives of Palestinians is of little worth. While Lebanese politicians are careful in avoiding being labelled as racist and no Lebanese politician described matters in these terms, this could be reasonably inferred from the actions and discourse of the Lebanese state and army in dealing with these two events.

The question that presents itself is whether the construction of the Palestinian stranger or interloper strengthens relations between Lebanese friends and enemies and enhances the coherence of the Lebanese "self" or of the Lebanese "people".

### **5.3 Construction of the Lebanese "self", Refugees, and Social Class**

#### **5.3.1 Self/Other Construction**

Prior to delving into whether Palestinians are "used" in Lebanese self-construction, we need to remind ourselves that Lebanese identity had been problematic since the nineteenth century, but especially when Mount Lebanon was enlarged to Greater Lebanon in 1920 bringing in a large Muslim population (Hourani 1966: 259, 260; Salibi 1989: 17, 25). There existed a dichotomy in belonging between Muslims, and a segment of the Christians, who favoured being part of a greater Syria and the majority of

Christians who championed an independent Lebanon tied to the West lasted until the breakout of the civil war in 1958 and up to the breakout of the Lebanese civil war in 1975 (Hourani 1966: 261; Salibi 1966: 212, 215; Salibi 1989: 25, 27). Lebanon also did not wage a decolonization struggle that may have formed a basis for a unified national consciousness<sup>9</sup> (Makdisi 2000: 24; Suleiman, M. 1972: 23).

As such, it could be argued that the “racialization”, or for now othering, of Palestinians factors into the construction of the Lebanese self. This proposition can carry more weight with a closer examination of the Lebanese constitutions of 1926 and 1989. The preamble of the 1926 constitution states:

I. Lebanese territory is one for all Lebanese. Every Lebanese is entitled to live in and enjoy any part of the country under the sovereignty of the law. The people may not be categorized on the basis of any affiliation whatsoever and there shall be no fragmentation, no partition, and *no colonization*. [emphasis added].

The Preamble in the 1990 constitutional amendment states:

H. Lebanese territory is one for all Lebanese. Every Lebanese is entitled to live in and enjoy any part of the country under the sovereignty of the law. The people may not be categorized on the basis of any affiliation whatsoever and there shall be no fragmentation, no partition, and *no tawteen* [of Palestinians in Lebanon]. [emphasis added].

In both constitutions many rights and duties of Lebanese citizens ensue from belonging to one of the officially recognized sects despite that the constitution stipulates equality in these rights and duties between citizens. Paragraph C. of the Ta'if's preamble stipulates:

Lebanon is a democratic parliamentary republic founded on respect for public liberties, especially the freedom of expression and belief, on social justice, and on equality in rights and duties among all citizens, without discrimination or preference.

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<sup>9</sup> See Historical Context chapter sections 4.1.2 and 4.4.3 for a discussion of the dichotomy in Lebanese national identity between Muslims and Christians.



However, Article 2 of section III of the Ti'af titled "Other Reforms" stipulates:

To ensure the principle of harmony between religion and state, the heads of the Lebanese sects may revise the constitutional council in matters pertaining to:

1. Personal status affairs.
2. Freedom of religion and the practice of religious rites.
3. Freedom of religious education.

As such, in matters of marriage, divorce, inheritance, and in certain cases in education and voting in elections, Lebanese citizenship is practiced through the sect thereby making Lebanese citizenship incomplete without sectarian belonging. If Palestinians are excluded it is because they are not officially recognized as sect per se, rather they are officially categorized on a national basis as Palestine refugees, or precisely as belonging to the wider Diaspora of the Palestinian refugee population regardless of sect. Yet Palestinians in Lebanon are predominantly Muslim Sunnis, and we can see here why they constitute strangers that disrupt the binary opposition around which the Lebanese people is constructed. As such, Palestinians, especially, need to be singled out. In the 1926 constitution and prior to Palestinian refuge, Lebanese identity was constructed against a colonial other. In the 1990 constitutional amendment, the term "colonization" was substituted with "tawteen" (naturalization/permanent settlement of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon).

The constitutional singling out of Palestinians is in line with David Theo Goldberg's analysis whereby, following on Foucault, he perceives all modern nation-states as racial states that use their state power to construct homogeneity through exclusion (Goldberg 2002: 30). Modern states, each according to their specific circumstances and in their own way, are characterized by their power to exclude and include in racially determined terms, with the aim of producing a coherent and homogenous population.

This is achieved by excluding racialized others and by legislating against the “degeneracy” of minorities (Goldberg 2002: 98, 110).

Yet, the Lebanese do not constitute a homogenous population as the sectarian and political divisions among them are clearly visible even to a non-specialist outside observer. When asked whether Palestinians can constitute a unifying factor for the Lebanese, Sakr Abu Fakhr responded: “they [Lebanese] might agree on a certain stance in a certain historical moment but it is impossible for them to be unified... you can see them vehemently attacking each other every day... it’s impossible” (July 2012). This, however, does not contradict the argument that Palestinian presence goes some way in resolving the problematic of a divided Lebanese people and in lending Lebanese national identity, if not unity or homogeneity, then a certain degree of coherence. After all, the Palestinian threat embodied in tawteen affects all Lebanese regardless of their sect, although in Chapter Seven we shall see that Lebanese state exclusionary practices are centred on normalization (Foucault 1977) rather than homogenization as understood by Goldberg.

The important issue at this point of analysis concerns the position of Palestinian’s within the Ta’if Accords which codifies their exclusion. Finlay, by analysing consociation in Northern Ireland and to some extent in Bosnia-Herzegovina, delineates that the power-sharing formulas in these countries reinforced rather than transcended ethnicity. While the draft Bill of Rights in Northern Ireland extends recognition to groups other than the two dominant ethnicities, this recognition is only extended to those who define themselves in ethnic terms (2011: 86). When Palestinians cannot officially define themselves in sectarian terms in Lebanon, the question that presents itself and which Finlay raises is whether the consociational state, by default, reproduces the racial state. In the Lebanese case it certainly does as we shall see in the Security and

Demography chapter dealing with the inclusions and exclusions of the racial state. However, before examining in the next chapter whether the position of Palestinians as refugees in a consociational state has its own particular dynamic, it would be meaningful to first examine the position of Palestinian refugees in other Arab host societies as that would highlight whether the category of refugee in itself is sufficient to explain Palestinian exclusion, or whether the political structure Palestinians live under determines their relationship with the state.

### **5.3.2 The Refugee Category and Arab Host States**

Ruba Salih (2013) examines how the category of refugee brings state administrative categories into question. She particularly looks into the case of Palestinian refugees in Arab host countries. We have already discussed that Palestinian strangers (Bauman 1991) disrupt administrative categories necessary for Lebanese consociation. The question that presents itself is whether the Lebanese state's exclusion of Palestinians is any different to the other two main Palestinian refugees' host countries; namely Syria and Jordan. This question is not only important for comparatively analyzing the position of Palestinians in Lebanon, but also in terms of generalizing the findings of this study to post-conflict consociational societies. Once we consider the cases of Syria and Jordan it will become more evident that the Palestinian predicament in Lebanon is, by and large, related to and driven by consociation and not only by refugeeness. Let us start with Syria, prior to the 2011 conflict, which appears to be the less problematic context and then move onto Jordan.

By law and by practice, Palestinians in Syria were treated equally with Syrians in all rights and entitlements except citizenship and voting (Brand 1988: 624). Legislation was passed as early as 1949, a year following Palestinian refuge in Syria, granting Palestinians access to public employment while more professions were made accessible



to Palestinians in the early years of their presence in Syria. Law No. 260 promulgated in 1956 governs the Syrian state's relationship to Palestinians. Article 1 states:

The Palestinians residing in the Syrian republic as of the adoption of this law are to be regarded as Syrian in origin in relation to all laws and regulations that have thus far been adopted viz. Employment, work and trade rights and military, while retaining their original nationality

Law 260 is still in effect granting Palestinian refugees in Syria civil rights and social rights on par with Syrian citizens, with the exception to the political rights of citizenship and voting in elections. These include the right to employment in the private and public sector, public education (including higher education), and limited property ownership. Men who are over eighteen years of age are conscripted to military service, to be undertaken in the Syrian branch of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) (Al-Hardan 2012: 66; Brand 1988: 623).

Palestinians in Syria, especially those residing outside the refugee camps, have lived in what has been described as "relative ease" (Brand 1988: 636). In contrast to Lebanon and Jordan at the time of Palestinian refuge in 1948, Syria was not facing an unemployment problem or difficulties related to shortages in natural resources. As such, the arrival of approximately 90,000 – 100,000 Palestinian refugees did not pose a threat to the Syrian economy or social structure. Palestinians in Syria never constituted more than 2 – 3 percent of the population (Brand 1988: 622).

In fact, economic conditions in Syria have allowed about 70% of Palestinian refugees to move out of the refugee camps into residential neighbourhoods. However, this stable and non-bloody relationship, cannot only be explained by economic conditions. The socioeconomic integration, and at times, political integration of Palestinians was also permitted by the strong popular Arab national sentiment that consecutive Syrian

governments have adopted (Brand 1988: 624). In contrast to Lebanon, the strong Arab Palestinian identity was a route to inclusion in Syrian society, whereas in Lebanon a strong Arab identity held by many Palestinians held was viewed as threat, especially by right-wing Christians who feared and were hostile to Pan-Arabism. Taking this prevalent Pan-Arab culture in Syria into account, we see that the Palestinian refugee category did pose a threat to Syrian state categories as is the case in Lebanon and as we shall see below in Jordan.

Despite the importance of stable economic conditions and an inclusive Pan-Arab culture in Syria, this alone does not explain the stable and non-bloody relationship between the Syrian state and Palestinian refugees. The Syrian state, characterized by and known to be a strong state, did not allow the Palestinian resistance movement to venture beyond what threatened Syria's interests. Following the 1967 war and the emergence of a Palestinian armed resistance, Syrian military leaders supported the doctrine of a people's war embodied in the evolving Palestinian resistance movement; however, they were equally concerned that Palestinian commando activities remain carefully controlled so as not to provoke Israeli retaliation that may result in dragging Syria into a war with Israel it does not desire (Al-Hardan 2012: 626). This contributed to the absence of bloody conflicts between the Syrian state and Palestinians in contrast to the case in Lebanon and Jordan which the PLO used as bases to launch military operations against Israel.

Syria has also steadily provided forums for expression of Palestinian national identity (Brand 1988: 632). In fact, the Syrian state has had a historically unique relationship to Palestinian refugees, in comparison to other Arab host countries, which facilitated the integration of the Palestinians into the Syrian socio-economic structure while, simultaneously, preserving their separate Palestinian national identity. (Al-Hardan



2012: 62, 63; Brand 1988: 621). Yet, as a result of high levels of integration, a strong state, and the nature of the Syrian political system, Palestinian popular organizations in Syria have tended to be weak and only marginally active (Brand: 628). This too may explain the stability of the relationship between Syria and its Palestinian refugees and the non-threatening position of Palestinians to the Syrian state and society.

In Jordan, the category of Palestinian refugee and even Palestinian-Jordanian citizen is more threatening to the Jordanian state than it is/was in Syria. The relation between the Jordanian state and Palestinians in Jordan is a complex and multifaceted one. There exist tensions around identity and belonging, a private/public divide, and following the Oslo Accords tension relations with the PLO over who represents the Palestinians of Jordan, but more importantly narratives accusing Palestinians of wanting to transform Jordan into a “substitute homeland”. Unlike Syria, there had also been a military clash between the Jordanian state and the PLO in Black September on 1970.

Following the occupation of historic Palestine, between 1948 and 1949, approximately 70,000 Palestinians took refuge in Jordan, or what was Transjordan at the time. As the West Bank, which was not yet occupied by Israel, fell under the authority of Jordan, the Jordanian state extended citizenship to all 440,000 West Bank Palestinians, 280,000 refugees from North Palestine or what became Israel in 1948, as well as the 70,000 West Bankers that directly took refuge in Jordan (Brand 1995: 47).

Since the West and East Banks were unified in the 1950s, Jordanian official speeches and media presentations emphasized and framed Palestinians and Jordanians as two branches of the same family. This did not involve denying the existence of two groups in Jordan, but they were not portrayed as ethnically or nationally distinct. As such, in the initial stage, the Jordanian state exerted efforts to create and promote a hybrid Jordanian-Palestinian identity. Central to this identity has been emphasis on the



monarchy in general and the king in particular as the symbol of Jordan. Nonetheless, this identity was embraced by only a limited sector the population (Brand 1995: 50, 51, 52).

For Transjordanians, the Ashira (large clan or tribe) as a basis for affiliation and a source of prestige and patronage remained to be a central component of their native East Bank identities (Brand 1995: 48). In addition to tribal affiliation, another central element of Transjordanian identity is their service in the civilian and military state apparatus. Continuing with pre-1948 recruitment from among the indigenous population, Jordan considered Transjordanians to be more trustworthy and reliable than the recently uprooted and displaced Palestinians and therefore preferentially recruited from among the Transjordanian population. To be Jordanian is strongly associated with being employed by the state, and especially the security and military services (Brand 1995: 48). Matters worsened with the clash between the Jordanian army and the PLO in Black September of 1970, whereby in Jordanian estimations, the Palestinians were not just ungrateful for the refuge that Jordan had provided them, but they were also traitors, real or potential (Brand 56). This perception resulted in a concerted government effort of “Jordanization” or “de-Palestinianization” in the state apparatus. The civil service, the public economic sector, political institutions, the army and the press became increasingly restricted to Palestinians who’s only remaining access was to the private economic sector (Reiter 2004: 74).

The hybrid identity did failed to materialize not only because of Transjordanian ethnic loyalties. The establishment of the PLO in 1964 strengthened and reinforced Palestinian nationalism on the popular and institutional levels which provided many Jordanian-Palestinians with a concrete and alternative form of attachment. As a result, the PLO which became the sole representative of the Palestinian people as of 1965, constituted a

challenge to Jordanian claims to Palestinian allegiance (Brand 1995: 52). What underlied Palestinian identity in general was, and still largely is, attachment to the village or town of origin in Palestine/Israel (Brand 1995: 48).

There were not only tensions around ethnic or national identity. Restricting access to state institutions and enterprises did not translate into draconian exclusion as is the case in Lebanon. Therefore, the fact the Palestinians have access to the private sector resulted in a situation where Palestinians, although a political minority, constituted a slim demographic majority, over half the population, with economic strength through domination in the private economic sector (Reiter 2004: 72). Palestinians capital earned in the Arab Gulf during the oil boom of the mid-1970s began to pour into Jordan, having its greatest impact through a construction boom in the capital Amman. The inflow of Palestinian monies exacerbated a public sector/private sector dichotomy that closely followed inter-communal lines (Brand 1995: 53).

In 1989, rioting broke out in the Southern town of Ma'an, a Transjordanian stronghold, in response to state subsidy reductions on certain basic items as part of a debt rescheduling scheme agreed between the Jordanian state and the International Monetary Fund. The state, or more accurately the king, opted not for political repression but for a new course of political and economic liberalization (Brand 1995: 54, 55). Despite political liberalization, the electoral law was formulated to favour Transjordanian tribes and other minorities that are loyal to the regime. Palestinians, who constitute a demographic majority, continued to be seriously under-represented in the parliament, executive, and state ministries (Reiter 2004: 74, 75). However, given that the economic liberalization means a shrinking state sector and the encouragement of the private sector, Jordanians felt threatened by economic restructuring which Palestinians were positioned to benefit from most (Brand 1995: 55). So powerful was the impression

created about Palestinian economic strength that according to some commentators the government actually delayed the privatization of state-owned companies for fear that the only buyers would be Palestinian (Reiter 2004: 75). Consequently, the Jordanians fear the demographic increase of Palestinians coupled with domination in the private sector. Palestinians, on their part, view preferential recruitment in the state apparatuses and enterprises as obstacles to national unity (Reiter 2004: 74, 75).

However, it is worth noting the Palestinian economic power does not translate into political power in the case of Jordan. The Palestinian economic elite in Jordan are not organized into a lobby aiming to influence government policy, except in business and economic matters. In Jordan the regime is organized around the king and policy resides in his hands only. In fact, the Palestinian economic elite primarily view themselves as Jordanians who support the status quo as they have acquired a real stake in the security and stability of the country and regime (Reiter 2004: 87, 90).

Unlike Syria, but a lesser extent than Lebanon, there are additional complications in the Palestinian-Jordanian relationship. The lowest point in Palestinian-Jordanian relations in the post-Black September period came in the summer of 1988 when the PLO self-declared a Palestinian state in the 1967 territories including the West Bank. In response, King Hussein announced Jordan's administrative and legal disengagement from the West Bank thereby depriving West Bankers of their Jordanian citizenship if not also their passports (Brand 1995: 53). Matters further worsened with the peace negotiations between the PLO and Israel. Following the Madrid conference of 1991, where Palestinians were denied a separate negotiating team by Israel and America, the Jordanian delegation acted as an umbrella for the Palestinians. However, when Palestinians were able to operate as a separate delegation, reports of dissatisfaction were increasingly voiced on both sides over lack of coordination.



This trend continued until the signing of the Oslo Accords between the PLO and Israel in 1993. Tensions heightened with clear anger from the Jordanian king over not being informed of the sensitive Oslo negotiations. These tensions at the state level quickly found expression at the popular level thereby further fuelling inter-communal tensions (Brand 1995: 57). A growing number of Jordanian nationalists viewed the peace process as an opportunity to reorganize the internal Jordanian structure and demand that political rights and Jordanian citizenship would only be an entitlement to Palestinians who renounce their Palestinian identity and accept political assimilation. In the Jordanian context, political assimilation meant accepting the monarchy, the role of the army, and remaining loyal to the Jordanian regime even in the case of a clash between Jordan and possible Palestinian state (Reiter 2004: 73). Palestinians are generally considered to be in opposition to the regime and hence are treated as a suspect group. Given these multifaceted inter-ethnic tensions discussed, Palestinians in Jordan have refrained from forming Palestinian political parties to avoid be categorized as citizens with dual loyalty or as promoting the idea of Jordan as a substitute Palestinian homeland (Reiter 2004: 85).

Concerning the remaining two host countries of Palestinian refugees, namely Egypt and Iraq, Palestinian refuge was very small, both in terms of the absolute numbers and relative to the size of the host population. In Egypt, Palestinian refugees amounted to less than 10,000 and in Iraq it was approximately 5000 refugees (Brand 1988: 621). All Arab host societies, with the exception of Jordan, resisted resettlement and naturalization and only granted Palestinians refugee documents (Shiblak 1996: 39). Partially this was because Arab states refused that the refugee problem be resolved at their expense, claiming that this is in opposition to Israel's insistence that Palestinian refugees would eventually melt into Arab host societies that share language, history, culture, and mostly religion with the Palestinians (Shiblak 1996: 36). However, a

distinct Palestinian identity remained strong due to the refugees' resistance to resettlement plans, and not only because of host societies' refusal to naturalize them (Shiblak 1996: 37). Although citizenship was not granted to Palestinians in Egypt and Iraq, restrictions against employment were eventually dropped and Palestinians were treated as citizens with the exception of political rights (Brand 1988: 621). As for the Arab Gulf states, where sizable Palestinian communities reside, Palestinians are simply considered and legally treated as migrant workers required to return to their country of first refuge at the end of employment, whatever their status may be in that country (Shiblak 1966: 41).

This brief overview reveals that matters for Palestinian refugees are least problematic in Syria, especially in terms of the relationship with state. The picture is more complicated in Jordan. Inter-communal tensions exist and Palestinians are treated as a suspect group by the Jordanian state. To a certain extent, Palestinians are also racialized as untrustworthy, and even as traitors, especially following the events of Black September. Yet, in Jordan these tensions do not stem from a threatening Palestinian refugee category that disrupts state categories. In fact, the majority of Palestinians in Jordan are Jordanian citizens. Tensions are, by and large, a result of Palestinians being a demographic majority with economic might whereby Jordanians feel threatened and feel a relative loss of power, while some also fear the transformation of Jordan into a substitute Palestinian homeland. As for Syria, Palestinians had been strongly integrated into various fields of Syrian society, except the political, as a result of a strong and stable state with an embracing Pan-Arab culture.

While the existence of outsiders always has an impact on state categories as they can bring out the contradictions in such categories, Syria and Jordan have a very different dynamic to Lebanon. In Syria, Palestinians pose no threat while they do to some extent

in Jordan; however, neither in Jordan nor in Syria does the state apply practices that aim to eliminate Palestinians as a danger to the foundations and continuation of the state and the system it is premised on. In Jordan, Palestinians are mostly citizens, and they also dominate the private sector; a far cry from the case of Palestinians in Lebanon who are not even entitled to legal employment. Jordan is ruled by a monarch, while Syria is ruled by a strong state or ruling party, and neither propagate a discourse on the demise of Jordan and Syria because of Palestinian presence on their territories.

While it may be useful to conduct a comparative study between Lebanon, Syria, and/or Jordan, especially when it relates to the issue of Palestinian civil rights, it is a mistake to attempt to generalize the findings of this study to the Syrian and Jordanian contexts. In simple terms, Lebanon is a consociational democracy premised on power-sharing between various confessional groups since its independence in 1943 and to present. On the other hand, Syria, prior to the 2011 conflict, was ruled by a ruling party and a network of state “strong statesmen”, while power in Jordan centres on the monarchy represented by the king. Again, we will start with Syria to elucidate the differences in each context and political system.

Syria is officially ruled by the Arab Socialist Baath Party, which Article 8 of the Syrian constitution stipulates is the “leader of the state and society” (Haddad 2005: 6). While the president is the central figure in the Syrian political system, Syria is more accurately characterized by a centralized political system premised on a network of state officials, high-ranking military officers, and powerful businessmen who all benefit and gain from the current arrangement (Haddad 2005: 12). Those who pull the strings of power in Syria, alongside the Baath Party, occupy sensitive positions in the general security, military security, and the Republican Guard (Haddad 2005: 7).



The Baath Party came to power in a 1963 coup. At the time, Syria was divided along identity and class lines. Political life, prior to the coup, was destabilized as a result of conflict between the landed and commercial oligarchy, a growing middle class which came to dominate the military, and an aggrieved peasantry. Officers from the Alwi sect, of which Hafiz al-Asad belonged to, emerged as dominant as a result of their heavy recruitment into the army and party prior to the coup, and as a result of class and regional divisions among the majority Sunni sect (Hannebusch 2012: 96). Hafiz al-Asad transformed Syria from a conventionally unstable state into a robust and strong one by concentrating fellow Alwi officers in the highest positions of the military and security forces. This center of power was connected to society through networks of bureaucratic and party-corporatist institutions that cut across sectarian and urban-rural divides, and represented the interests of a sizable regime coalition (Hannebusch 2012: 96, 97). However, authoritarianism alone did not secure the stability of the Syrian regime and state. The regime was able to break the economic grip of the oligarchy, win the support of the peasants through land reforms, and through nationalizing the private sector employed vast segments of the middle and working classes (Hannebusch 2012: 96). In parallel to this, the new regime represented by the Baath party was able to bridge inter-communal divides and create cohesion between the majority Sunnis and remaining Arab minorities by promoting and instilling a strong sense of Arabism in the population (Hannebusch 2012: 96).

This is not to suggest that a strong Syrian state lacked internal and external problems, but as we shall see below, these problems are associated with a political system that differs considerably to Lebanon. Following the death of the strong statesman president Hafiz al-Asad in the year 2000, and his succession by his son Bashar al-Asad, the Syrian regime had faced several dilemmas. As segments of the Syrian leadership were opposed to Bashar taking power, political and military officials who were not

considered part of the "team" had been gradually either replaced or "retired" by Bashar (Haddad 2005: 8). Instead, Bashar formed a team who were distinguished by their proximity to his current leadership, and not necessarily by the skills or expertise they possess. On the one hand, this guaranteed unquestioning loyalty to Bashar and ensured less erratic policy, but on the other hand, the new leadership lacked vision, and some may say, competence (Haddad 2005: 8).

The Syrian leadership also needed to find a balance between political and economic liberalization. The Syrian economy stagnated between 1996 and 2004, with an estimated growth rate of 2.4%. Meanwhile, the population was growing at a rate of 2.7%, with all that entails in terms of development difficulties and unemployment problems (Haddad 2005: 11). To counter internal economic pressures, Syria had to undergo a process of political liberalization both to satisfy Western demands and its own population, which the leadership was reluctant to proceed in. Syria needed to open up to the West, but struggled to reconcile its integration into the world economy with its Arab nationalist identity that locked it into conflict with Israel and its Western backers (Hannebusch 2012: 100).

Jordan too is considerably different to Lebanon. While Lebanese politics center on power-sharing, Jordanian politics center on the monarchy and specifically the king. It is difficult to differentiate between the Jordanian state and the monarchical regime, and separately thinking of one without the other is unlikely (Lucas 2008: 281). In some ways, the monarchical regime predates the Jordanian state or mandate Transjordan. The history of Jordan has been characterized by the efforts of the first king Abdullah and his successors to consolidate their power and regularize a circle of loyal supporters around them (Lucas 2008: 287).

In more contemporary times, and specifically following the “bread riots” of 1989, the process of political liberalization resulted in a hybrid political system. Jordan is a monarchy that is neither absolutist nor quite constitutional, although it is officially a constitutional democracy (Kamrava 1998: 138). The constitutional democracy was the fruit of the National Charter of 1991. The Charter consisted in political pact which supposedly reflected the consensus of the Jordanian political spectrum at the time. The Charter was meant to serve the purpose of strengthening national unity and stabilizing a coherent coalition of regime supporters for the monarchy. The Charter was a “compromise” that allowed for a degree of political pluralism whereby the opposition participate in political society in return for their acknowledgment of the supremacy of the monarchy (Lucass 2008: 286, 288).

Despite the excitement it generated among the Jordanian population, all liberalization measure that ensued following the National Charter, ranging from the forming the committee to draw up the Charter itself to setting the larger agendas of the prime ministry, were directed by none other than the king himself. Although there was constant reportage in the press and in talk in official circles of the ongoing “democratic process”, it is widely and well-understood by everyone in Jordan that there are clear limits to what is permissible to be said and done, and that all major political and economic decisions continue to be made by the king (Kamrava 1998: 142). The power of parliament had been institutionally limited to prevent the emergence of an autonomous and possibly contending center of power. Nonetheless, limited liberalization has enabled the monarchy to build its legitimacy, diffuse popular pressure, and to strengthen its hold on power (Kamrava 1998, 138, 139).

In relation to legalizing political parties, the legislation articulated into the Charter’s recommendations did not only reflect the Palestinian-Jordanian divide but also a



number of Jordanian-specific social cleavages. Regional divisions were accounted for through a system of proportional representation in many government appointments, especially in the executive. The electoral system for parliamentary elections over-represents rural areas which ensures the election of large numbers of Jordanian tribal deputies that are loyal to the regime. Similarly, preferential inclusion in the military and the state bureaucracy have ensured that tribes remain loyal to the monarchy. Moreover, the inclusion of secular political parties balances against the strength of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood, on its part, faces internal divisions as well as competition from independent Islamist rivals outside its ranks. These various social and political divisions combined undercut the possibility of forming a block that could unite to challenge the hegemony of the monarchy (Lucas 2008: 289). The three major ideological blocs in parliament are the Islamists represented by Islamic Action Front, the centre-right which are loyal supporters of the monarchy and represented by the Jordanian National Front Alliance, and Pan-Arabist groups, often with strong ties to the Palestinian movement and represented by the Progressive Coalition and the Hashd Party. Let alone contesting or contending the power of the monarchy, oppositional groups seldom come out in opposition to government policies or legislation proposed by the executive, or more accurately the king who appoints the prime minister (Kamrava 1998: 144). In fact, by mid-1993 or only two years following the introduction of the National Charter, liberalization measures were frozen at this level of political “freedom” and many gains were even reversed (Kamrava 1998: 140, 143).

Returning to the Lebanese context, and whether it is useful to compare it with other major host societies of Palestinians refugees, we can see that the political contexts and systems considerably differ. In Syria, power rests on a network of powerful statesmen and businessmen and crucial decisions are made at the top levels by this network. In Jordan, all major and crucial decisions are made by the king. In Lebanon, however,

there is a constant need for negotiation, compromise, and consensus among the major confessional groups. Consensus on rejecting tawteen, and consequently the exclusion of Palestinians, is one way the Lebanese consociational system maintains an image of coherence. That is, Palestinian presence is a central component of Lebanese consociation and its relative coherence as we shall see in the coming chapter; Security and Demography. Consequently, the position of Palestinian refugees in a Lebanese system based on power-sharing has its own specificities, especially when compared to Syria and Jordan where decisions, including decisions related to Palestinians, are made by a handful of officials or even a single person such as the king.

The position of Palestinians, and their relation to the state, is far more complicated in Lebanon than it is in Jordan or Syria as they are held hostage to the requirements of maintaining a confessional power-sharing arrangement between the Lebanese. In Jordan and Syria, decisions related to Palestinians can be made without the need for consensus by the central state and the king respectively. We have seen, and will continue to see in upcoming chapters, that the position of Palestinians under Lebanese consociation is that of a sacrificial victim that restores harmony between the Lebanese (Girard 1986), and that of strangers that disrupt the administrative categories of Lebanese consociation (Bauman 1991). This does not apply in neither Syria nor Jordan.

Having considered the ethnic position of Palestinians under the political systems of Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan, an important question remains to be answered; namely, the influence of social class on the trajectory of Palestinians in Lebanon and on their othering or racialization. Similarly, this study focuses on Palestinian exclusion by the Lebanese racial state, but the Lebanese state is also a neoliberal state and this too ought to be addressed.



### 5.3.3 Neoliberalism, Social Class, and Racialization

Lebanon, since independence has been characterized by a free market economy. The most prevalent understanding propagated by generations of pre-civil war scholars is based on a national myth that Lebanon is the unique and exceptional product of an energetic and cosmopolitan merchant elite. Lebanon's free market economy was hailed as a symbol and example of liberalism and modernity to be adopted and followed by the Arab region (Hourani 2010: 294, 295).

At the civil war's end, Lebanon followed a neoliberal path to economic recovery or what is described as the neoliberal turn in Lebanon by some commentators (Fawaz 828). Neoliberalism, in simple terms, is understood as the decline of the role of the state and the entrenchment of market mechanisms into daily activities through privatization and economic liberalization (Fawaz 2009: 839; Harvey 2005). The IMF, pressured the Lebanese state and insisted on the implementation of structural adjustment programmes. The World Bank also placed pressure on the Lebanese state for the adoption of structural adjustments by delaying direly needed funding in a donor conference for Lebanon throughout 1992 (Hourani 2010: 291). It was argued that only through neoliberal reform could Lebanon reinsert itself into the global economic system following sixteen years of civil war. Through neoliberal reform it was believed that market relations, and the invisible hand, could be re-naturalized by the removal of political and cultural obstacles (Hourani 2010: 291, 291).

Although Lebanon had chosen a neoliberal trajectory at the civil war's end, neoliberalism's main champion in Lebanon was the Lebanese-Saudi billionaire who became prime minister in 1992; namely Rafik Hariri. The symbol of Lebanon's post-civil war reconstruction was the Hariri Solidere project for the reconstruction of central Beirut. Although Solidere brought in considerable direct foreign investment and



resulted in a construction boom, it focused on high value apartments that the vast majority of Lebanese could not afford (Roberts 2007: 61).

Although Hariri gained wide support among segments of the Lebanese population for stabilizing the Lebanese currency which was volatile and substantially devalued in the civil war, as well as for his reconstruction programmes, his critics pointed out that he failed to tackle other vital economic and social problems. They argued that Hariri was over spending on infrastructure development, based mostly on borrowed money that was increasing the public debt, while under spending on economic sectors such as agriculture and industry and social sectors including health and education. He was also criticized for reducing direct taxes which helped the rich and raising in-direct taxes which mostly heavily impacted the working and middle classes (Baroudi 2002: 64). Consequently, it became common to hear of the disappearance of the middle class in Lebanon (Baroudi 2002: 67).

The question that presents itself is whether the exclusion of Palestinians in the post-civil war or post-Ta'if period could be explained, or even partially explained, in terms of the neo-liberal turn in Lebanon. One could also ask if such a neoliberal climate affects Lebanese and Palestinians equally. To answer these questions we need to look into the dynamics of the Lebanese political system and not only its neo-liberal economics; or more specifically how the two systems intersect.

What we ought to keep in mind is the existence of a, well documented, clientalist system in Lebanon (Fawaz 2009: 836; Hamzeh 2001: 173, Harik 1998: 136; Ofeish 1999: 108; Salem 1998). The majority of the Lebanese population are in a clientalistic relationship with Lebanese state officials depend on them for securing, in return for their votes in elections, economic and social services and favours rather than on a functioning state civil service (Fawaz 2009: 836; Salem 2007: 18). While this

relationship may appear more related to the state rather than the economy under neoliberalism, the fact is that a number of Lebanese politicians have established strong oligarchic positions within Lebanon, using their political posts to consolidate their position within the economy, and in some cases, vice-versa (Salem 2007: 18). Just as important, this relationship is not only a clientalist relationship but more accurately a sectarian-clientalist relationship. The provision of healthcare, housing subsidies, education, and other basic services is delegated and devolved to non-state actors, predominantly religious authorities and institutions that respond to their own sectarian constituencies' needs. That is, to secure social and economic services and privileges, Lebanese citizens vote for politicians from their specific sect, and not simply any politician due to the configuration of the electoral system and the sectarian provision of many services (Fawaz 2009: 828, 839).

In view of this, Lebanese citizens are in a position to better their lot socially and economically, even under a neoliberal system, in a confessional arrangement where client-patron relations are prevalent. Palestinians, on the other hand, are placed in a position of permanent disadvantage as a category of people who do not fit in Lebanon's consociational system and the clientalist culture that ensues from it. Of course, neoliberal policies have negatively affected the Lebanese and we have already mentioned the dominant notion of the disappearance of the middle class in Lebanon. Yet, Palestinians are doubly excluded because they do not fit the categories of the consociational system and also cannot avail of the clientalist culture connected to this system. Nonetheless, it is inaccurate to fully explain the exclusion of Palestinians in terms of the neoliberal turn in Lebanon. Palestinians in Lebanon have been excluded almost since initial refuge, long before neoliberal reforms, policies, and practices took effect. Following on this position of disadvantage in terms of both consociation and

neoliberalism, one has to ask whether social class has an impact on the othering or racialization of Palestinians.

Any hierarchical social system necessitates mechanism and practices to reproduce itself and place social actors within it. Racialization is one such mechanism and practice (McDonnell and de Lourenco 2009). In terms of the consociational system, Palestinians represent matter out of place and are therefore classified as outsiders; they must be externalized as they represent a danger to the continuation of the Lebanese consociational order. Yet, Palestinians cannot be easily racialized, classified, and dismissed as a degenerate class, although this does occur in indirect ways; some that we have already discussed, such as Palestinians as guests who betrayed Lebanese hospitality, and some that will be discussed in coming chapters such as Palestinians constituting a demographic, cultural and security danger to the existence and continuation of the Lebanese world order and Lebanon in itself. Palestinians have made influential and substantial contributions to all the spheres of Lebanese economic, social, cultural, and academic life (Sayigh, 2008: 151, 152; Hudson 1997: 246). Palestinians also share the Arab Gulf labour market with the Lebanese and occupy superior positions in many instances. Therefore they cannot easily be placed and categorized in a position of the inferior or degenerate.

Yet, despite that 50% of Palestinians reside outside the refugee camps, they are generally stereotyped and essentialized as impoverished camp residents and predominantly treated as inferior due to their statelessness regardless of their class position. Having lived in Lebanon mostly as an adult for sixteen years, and with the exception of few neighbourhoods in Beirut, it is first assumed by many Lebanese when they encounter a Palestinian that he or she is camp resident. I have personally been asked numerous times if I were from the Ein El-Hilweh camp, the most notorious and



impoverished of Palestinian camps in Lebanon. Even Lebanese whom I know personally express sympathy bordering on pity, well-intentioned nonetheless, for the fact that I lacked the citizenship of any country. This tendency in Lebanon is to essentialize Palestinians as impoverished and stateless.

This does not mean that social class does influence the life trajectory of Palestinians in Lebanon. Once middle class status is established in various encounters, the perception and treatment of such middle class Palestinians by the Lebanese directly improves. Middle class Palestinians are also more likely to have Lebanese friends, that Palestinian camp residents generally do not, which eases their access to employment and certain services. Nonetheless, in random encounters, and until middle class status has been “verified” it is initially assumed by the Lebanese that Palestinians are impoverished camp residents. I have also personally encountered Lebanese who expressed surprise when they discovered that I am a Palestinian who holds a university degree. When I asked Jaber Suleiman, a Palestinian researcher and civil society activist, what the differences are between Lebanese and Palestinians, he said: “Stereotypes and misconceptions about Palestinians are common among the Lebanese. Some Lebanese have never even met a Palestinian but they have heard stories from their parents and grandparents (June 2012).

Also on a class-based level of analysis, it may be possible that the othering or racialization of Palestinians serves to blur class distinctions between the Lebanese. Preoccupying the wider Lebanese society with the threat of *tawteen* by reiterating its “immanent” and “destructive” impact can serve to blur class distinctions in a society with wide income disparity and an increasingly widening gap between rich and poor<sup>10</sup>.

Zygmunt Bauman in analysing governance strategies of global elites or the international

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<sup>10</sup> According to the Living Conditions Index, 32.1% of households live below the satisfaction threshold, including 7.1% of households having a very low degree of satisfaction, and 41.6% of households having intermediate satisfaction (UNDP: 2008)

capitalist class concludes that the old tried and tested tactic of “divide and rule” is still used by these elites to prevent the accumulation and concentration of grievances present among dispersed populations. In order to drain their energies and divert them from pursuing their own class interests or from directing their energies at confronting those causing their hardships in the first instance, ethnic conflict as well as the focus on cultural differences within an immigration context is just one way this is achieved according to Bauman. He goes on to explain that global elites later step in as intermediaries aiming at reconciliation in a situation or condition that is, by and large, of their making (2011: 41, 42). Clearly, Bauman is influenced by a Marxist analysis of the politics of social classes and particularly the role of the capitalist class in weakening class consciousness among the disadvantaged, or more specifically labour, although he does not explicitly use these Marxist terms.

Foucault on the other hand would generally diverge from such an analysis. For him power is not concentrated at the top of a pyramid whereby it permeates to the bottom of society, but instead power, or more accurately disciplinary power, functions in a diffused, multiple, polyvalent way throughout the social body (Foucault 1977: 208, 209). This disciplinary modality of power or disciplinary society, which is not limited to institutions, assures an infinitesimal distribution of power relations through hierarchal surveillance and hierarchal networks; or put simply, through panopticism (Foucault 1977: 216, 217, 220).

The two approaches need not be mutually exclusive. The ownership or control of the means of production by the capitalist class, and/or the control of ideological state apparatuses in Althusserian terms (Althusser 1970) endows ruling elites with considerable power to control society according to their interests; however disciplinary

and surveillance society are also indispensable to this control or governance of populations on the everyday infinitesimal level.

One can argue that sectarianism or the sectarian system in Lebanon is sufficient to guarantee a blurring of class distinctions. Nonetheless, such sectarianism and sectarian concerns and interests do not eliminate the possibility that the othering of Palestinians mainly, but not exclusively, through the threat of *tawteen* in post-Ta'if Lebanon also serves such a purpose, especially in periods when the Lebanese political elites are in agreement to some extent and sectarian tensions are less acute and intense. As such, the applying Bauman's analysis to the level of local Lebanese elites can further explain the othering process and what ways such othering or racialization can work in favour of Lebanese elites, although it remains difficult to provide evidence for this beyond theoretical reasoning.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

Scapegoating Palestinians for a civil war that cost hundreds of thousands of lives and casualties, displaced hundreds of thousands, and led to the destruction of urban space is not a matter to be taken lightly. If Palestinians receive harsh treatment in Lebanon, in a sense, it is justified by such narratives. While PLO armed presence in Lebanon was certainly a factor in the civil war, it was by no means the only factor. It is considered by Palestinian observers, and some Lebanese observers, an external factor that came into play between the FLF and the LNM. There appears to be selective amnesia on the part of the Muslims and Druze who formed the LNM. If the Muslim Sunnis and Shias politically advanced at the civil war's end, it was mainly due to the support they received from the PLO which broke the Christian Maronite hegemony in the conflict of over the symbolic power of the state. Christian Maronite resentment of Palestinians can



be understood for this same reason, although Christian Maronite political parties also suffer from selective amnesia in relation to their conflict with the LNM. As for the LNM that were previously excluded by the Maronite racial state, it appears that they embodied racial practices themselves once they become an integral component of the Lebanese state.

The othering of Palestinians, or as we shall see in the Security and Demography chapter the racialization of Palestinians, whether they caused the civil war or not, had earlier roots in the formation of sectarian categories in the era of Ottoman colonization and in the formation of separate nation states under British and French colonization. Yet, this only provides a partial explanation. The exclusion of Palestinians and caution against them began soon after their refuge in Lebanon. In a country organized on the basis of sect, Palestinians constitute strangers that disrupt the cosy antagonism between Lebanese friends and enemies and blur the distinctions necessary for the continuation of the Lebanese “world order”. As such, the governance of Palestinians by the Lebanese state “necessitates” treating them differentially. Such graduated sovereignty can range from legal exclusion to brute force as was the case in the state dealing with the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr el-Bared and the Lebanese town of Arsal. These events revealed that Palestinians occupy a “uniquely othered” position in Lebanon.

Substituting the threat of colonization for the threat of *tawteen* in the Lebanese constitution is not to be taken lightly either. This does not only factor into Lebanese self-construction, but also factors into the othering of Palestinians by essentialization them as a danger. The substitution of *tawteen* for colonization and the danger each poses to Lebanon legitimates almost any draconian measures against Palestinians.

Explaining the exclusion and othering or racialization of Palestinians simply in terms of their refugeeness is problematic and this becomes event once a comparison is made with

other countries of Palestinian refuge. The importance of the Lebanese context lies in its relation to post-conflict consociation states and not only in situations of refugeeness.

Middle class Palestinians have it “easier” in Lebanon, but they too are stereotyped and essentialized as impoverished camp residents and as an inferior stateless group. In view of this, it race/ethnicity appears to have more influence than class on the lived experiences of Palestinians in Lebanon despite the importance of class in this regard.

In the next chapter, Security and Demography, the position of Palestinians as “outsiders” under the racial state and as “inferiors” under the biopolitical state is explored. We will see that the rationale for Lebanese governance practices is to compel Palestinians to emigrate from Lebanon. Just as important, we will see that in relation to Palestinians, the Lebanese consociational state reproduces the racial state.

## Chapter Six: Security and Demography

The Lebanese state has deemed Palestinians dangerous outsiders to be controlled and excluded rather than a minority group to be integrated or assimilated. To keep them separate from the Lebanese social body, Palestinians are constructed and racialized as both a demographic danger and a military/security danger by the Lebanese racial and biopolitical state. They are also racialized as a danger, through *tawteen*, to the Lebanese “way of life” that is based on religious co-existence and “balance”.

Palestinians who do not fit the official and administrative state categories of consociation are only counted and recognized when defined in ethnic/sectarian terms.

As such, Palestinians are viewed from a sectarian angle and are both included and excluded by the racial state on racial terms. The reality of Lebanese consociation reproduces the racial state in relation to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Palestinians in a confessional and divided Lebanon lend this fragile consociation relative coherence.

Despite the variation in treatment since 1948, what has been a common strand to all periods of Palestinian presence is the security angle applied by the Lebanese state in the governance of Palestinians, while the responsibilities of the Lebanese state in the economic and social fields are devolved to UNRWA. Coupled with these security measures are severe legal restrictions imposed on the livelihood and everyday lives of Palestinians. Such draconian restrictions primarily aim to fulfil and facilitate the undeclared Lebanese state policy of compelling as many Palestinians as possible to emigrate. At the heart of this policy is a process of demographic engineering driven by the rationale characteristic of the racial state.



## 6.1 The Racial State

Prior to exploring the Lebanese racial state, it is important to briefly review the formation of this state in order to understand the Palestinian relation to it. We saw in the historical context that the French colonial government adopted a “historicist” governance approach or applied historicist racism in governing Lebanon whereby the colonial rulers trained the colonized in self-governance until they acquired the “political maturity” necessary for self-rule<sup>11</sup> (Goldberg 2002). To some extent this makes the phenomenon of Lebanese racial governance less puzzling as Lebanese state agents who were recruited and trained by the French mandate government acquired, adopted and later maintained racial forms of governance (Goldberg; Mitchell). Moreover, this is not to suggest that this is the only explanation to racial governance formation since Goldberg also shows that modern state formation in Europe emerged from its inception as a racial state prior to any colonial experience (Goldberg 2002: 149).

However, Lebanon’s colonial past is of great significance in terms of constituting the Lebanese racial state. Lebanese state agents, especially from the Christian sects, were to reap most advantages from French rule, as well as from French missionaries prior to the mandate (Makdisi 1996). The French Mandate Government heavily recruited from the Christians who later dominated the state, army, civil service, sensitive and prestigious ministries, as well as economic enterprise when Lebanon was established in 1943 as we have already seen (Baaklini 1983: 30, 31).

As such, through colonial “guidance” the modern Lebanese state was constituted as a racial state and through heavy participation in the colonial mandate government Christian Maronites came to dominate this state. Christian dominance within this state, or Maronite hegemony, lasted from independence in 1943 until the signing of the Ta’if in 1989. Palestinian presence had been strongly opposed by the Political Maronite

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<sup>11</sup> See Historical Chapter section 4.1.3 for discussion on formation of the Lebanese racial state.

establishment that viewed Palestinians as a threat to their dominance as we have seen in Chapter Five. Even though Maronite hegemony has declined in the post-Ta'if Accord period, the impact of Christian parties within the state on Palestinian presence is still strongly felt due to the practicalities of and pragmatism inherent in Lebanese-Lebanese political alliances.

An interview I conducted with Salah Salah reveals why Maronite parties continue to have a strong influence on policy with respect to Palestinian presence in the post-Ta'if period. Salah is a member of the Palestinian National Council and formerly from the leadership of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. In response to a question on why the Ta'if Accord did not include an article on Palestinian civil rights, Salah responded:

Because they [Lebanese] are interested in finding common grounds and Palestinians are not a common ground... Palestinians are an element of disagreement therefore all Lebanese allies of Palestinians are sacrificing their alliances with them in order to maintain their Lebanese-Lebanese alliances... this is what is happening. (August 2012).

The scapegoating of Palestinians at the time of the Ta'if Agreement to restore harmony between the divided Lebanese was thoroughly discussed under Girard's (1986) notions of a sacrificial victim and scapegoat in the last chapter. This trend of "sacrificing" Palestinians is still prevalent in the post-Ta'if period. However, Lebanese-Lebanese alliances were specifically reconfigured with the Cedar Revolution of 2005 creating a different political dynamic in relation to exclusion and rights of Palestinians, especially with Christian parties splitting between both sides of the Sunni/Shia divide, or the March 8 camp and the March 14 camp, created by the Cedar Revolution. This split had created a new dynamic in relation to the issue of Palestinian civil rights<sup>12</sup>. This will be elucidated when we examine the case of a 2010 parliamentary vote on Palestinian civil

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<sup>12</sup> See Historical Context chapter section 4.6.4 for an analysis of the Cedar Revolution.



rights in the upcoming chapter. Christian parties from both camps were united in opposition to granting Palestinian rights. To maintain their alliances and the unity of each camp, non-Christian parties refrained from fully amending the proposed changes to legislation pertaining to Palestinians. To maintain their alliances with Christian political parties, Muslim parties accommodated Christian reservations on the proposed amendments.

Sakr Abu Fakhr proclaimed a similar interpretation of sacrifice, however in relation to tawteen, when I asked him how tawteen was transformed from a fear among the Maronite sect to a fear among all Lebanese sects. He explained:

Tawteen is scaremongering and the other sects do not care about it but they go along with their allies from the sects that do care, for example, what do the Druze care so long as Palestinians do not compete with them in areas where they constitute the majority? I personally think it is not a fear, for example among the Sunni sect it is not a fear but they are obliged to play along with the fears of the other sects and specifically the Maronites. (July 2012)

The tacit support given by non-Christian parties to the Lebanese Christian opposition to Palestinian presence can be explained in terms of the rationale of the consociational state that reproduces the racial state (Finlay 2011: 86). If Palestinians are sacrificed or scapegoated, it is because of this racial/consociational state dynamic. As we have been discussing the racial state, it is reasonable to begin with analysing this racial state, then moving onto the Lebanese consociational state, and finally examining how a link emerges between both forms of state in relation to Palestinians.

So what is the rationale behind the Lebanese racial state? David Goldberg considers all modern states to be racial states as race has marked and been constitutive of the modern state. To Goldberg, race is not only incorporated into technologies, mechanisms, and practices of governance, rather, racial configurations have been constitutive of modern



states precisely because modern state formation is constitutively marked from its inception by self-defined racial design and by racial restriction (Goldberg 2002: 149). This does not imply that “race” is all there is to modern states. Modern states have also been centred on bureaucratization, increasingly sophisticated forms of democratization and social control, private property and the rule of law, but they have also been about increasingly sophisticated forms and techniques of racial formation, power, and exclusion (Goldberg 2002: 49).

Joseph Abu Khalil’s account elucidates the racial logic of the Lebanese state. Arguably, Abu Khalil personifies the ideology of the Lebanese right. In response to a question on whether Palestinians constitute an economic, security, or political burden, he replied:

First of all it’s a security burden and then a political one. The Palestinian presence... yes it’s a burden on us, the numbers are many relative to the population... they are an *existential burden*... these are large numbers in an abnormal situation, and the factor of weapons also entered the formula. A small country like Lebanon, a country of 3.5 million is to carry 400,000 meaning 10% of the population, 10% and they belong to certain identity whether we like it or not, an extra 10% to the Muslim population, and they are Sunni and in addition to the Shias... we can’t play with this, Lebanon is a country that is very delicate... its character [religious pluralism] is its importance but it’s also its weak point... What will be the future of Lebanon then that is based on a delicate balance between Christians and Muslims... some say what is this balance?... that we are all Arabs... are we going to lie to each other? When this character is done with Lebanon is gone and this is what might happen... up till now its special character is not being respected... there is a lot of intervention [by Western states] making Lebanon carry a Palestinian burden... can this country carry it? (July 2012).

This account reveals that Palestinians are considered an *existential* burden and a threat therefore the Lebanese state finds itself in a state of crisis. The “Lebanese Formula” is based on a balance and co-existence between Lebanese Christians and Muslims. Palestinians threaten this balance and consequently the foundations of the Lebanese entity. According to Goldberg, when the modern state finds itself in a situation of crisis,

it finds it necessary to react to the challenges to its authority whether that be in situations of revolution, chaos, anarchy, or statelessness. The modern state therefore finds itself required to intervene to reinstate stability and security in the face of crisis (2002: 40).

Goldberg goes on to explain that state sovereignty is fashioned dialectically in relation both to external powers and threats, as well as the manufacture of internalized threats. Thus the very thinking of state sovereignty is predicated on the dream of a legislated homogeneity, of sameness across populations and the relative externalization of threats and the different (2002: 154). The modern state, it follows, has been about assimilating racially categorized others or excluding them (Goldberg 2002: 49). The state imperative and the logic of state institutions are inherently directed towards homogenization of the dominant population, and its reproduction (Goldberg 2002: 30).

Goldberg is correct to suggest that modern racial states “need” to externalize threats and keep out those who cannot be assimilated. Palestinians in Lebanon have experienced exclusion by the state very early on and this is inscribed in Lebanese law. However, within the Lebanese context the aim of exclusion is not constructing a single homogenous Lebanese people or population, but rather in lending the Lebanese consociational state a relative degree of coherence. According to Abu Khalil’s account, the crisis of the Lebanese state consists in the demographic danger embodied in Palestinian presence to the balance of Lebanese confessional communities. One is led to assume from such analysis that once this threat is eliminated the Lebanese consociational system will begin to work harmoniously.

However, it appears from the brief review of the consociational system in the Historical Context chapter<sup>13</sup> that Lebanon's genuine crisis consists in unequal power-sharing among the dominant confessional groups. The power of the Christians has declined, the Shias are represented but not equally participating in decisive and crucial government decisions, while the Sunnis emerged as the greatest winners from the Ta'if with power concentrated in the post of prime minister that was allocated to them. In fact, the consociational arrangement in Lebanon had broken down several times, specifically in 1858, 1975, 2005, 2006, and 2008 (Knudsen and Kerr 2012: 5; Hamdan 2012: 41, 42).

Within this context, the exclusion, and ultimately, sacrifice of Palestinians is the one of the few, if not only, matters various Lebanese sectarian groups can reach a consensus on (Sayigh 1995: 37). This does not only strengthen Lebanese-Lebanese alliances, but consequently also lends the consociational system relative coherence.

By allowing various Lebanese parties to reach a consensus on a certain matter, precisely the rejection of *tatween*, Palestinian presence provides coherence to Lebanese consociation. One needs to look into population figures and the "war of numbers" to see how this is. Officially, UNRWA figures place the number of Palestinian refugees at approximately 450,000 and these are the figures the Lebanese state adopts. However, in relation to the Lebanese population, the figures are not as "accurate". The last official census conducted in Lebanon by the French Mandate Government in 1932 placed the Christian population at 54% and the Muslim at 46% (Baaklini 1982: 21). Since then there has been no official census in Lebanon, but the last reliable survey conducted in 2013 revealed that Lebanese Christians comprise only 27% of the Lebanese population at present (Assafir; Information International: 2013).

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<sup>13</sup> See Historical Context Chapter sections 4.6.1 and 4.6.4 for an analysis of Lebanese consociation.



These figures problematise the myth of a delicate Muslim/Christian balance and highlight the centrality of “no tawteen” in Lebanese political discourse. The dominant narrative of a “delicate” sectarian balance that is crucial to protect and the reiteration of the threat of tawteen to this balance reinforces the persistent idea that co-existence and balance do in fact exist, are threatened, and need to be protected. More importantly in relation to this thesis, the Palestinian threat of tawteen feeds into their racialization. This racializing narrative involves both biological and cultural racism. In a biological sense, a predominantly sizable Muslim Sunni Palestinian population would tip the sectarian balance in favour of Lebanese Sunnis, and culturally Palestinians constitute a threat to the “Lebanese way of life” (Finlay: 39) based on religious co-existence and balance. Even enthusiastically pro-Palestinian Lebanese politicians I interviewed, such as former Minister of Interior Beshara Merhej, believe that the implementation of tawteen would lead to the demise of the Lebanese entity which is based on such religious co-existence and balance as he said in response to a hypothetical question on what might occur if tawteen were to be implemented (July 2012). This war of numbers, and biological and cultural racism, constitutes a form of biopower (Foucault 2003) that will be discussed in the Biopolitical State section below.

Thus far, we have seen that Palestinians are constructed as a demographic danger to be excluded by the racial state, and biopolitical state, and an external element that lends the consociational state relative coherence, but we are still to see the relation between both forms of state in relation to Palestinians. In the Dominant Myths and Narratives chapter we asked, based on Finlay’s work (2011), whether the consociational state reproduces the rationale of the racial state, specifically in terms of racial inclusion and exclusion. In answering my question on whether Palestinians constitute an economic burden, Suheil Al Natour, a Palestinian lawyer and Director of the Union of Palestinians Lawyers in Lebanon based in Beirut, responded:

There are Lebanese-Lebanese disagreements over the concept of citizenship whereby citizenship in Lebanon is tied to sectarian belonging and they therefore classify Palestinians from a sectarian angle. Palestinians view themselves as part of the greater whole of the dispersed Palestinian people that want to return to Palestine, while the Lebanese political Maronitism naturalized many Palestinian Christians. They viewed us as numbers that strengthen their position. And when the Shia power grew following the Ta'if they also naturalized the Palestinian Shias. As such, we are viewed according to sectarian belonging. (August 2012).

This account confirms Finlay's analysis and shows that groups in society are only counted and recognized when they define themselves, or in the case of Lebanon, when they are defined according to ethnic or sectarian categories that are party to the consociational deal. Therefore, the racial state is not only racial in its exclusions but also in practices of inclusion. When Christians dominated the state approximately 50,000 Palestinian Christians were naturalized in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1994, when the Shia became more powerful, 27,000, mostly Shia, Palestinian refugees were naturalized. Christian Maronite protest at the time ensured that the remaining Palestinian Christians still without Lebanese citizenship were also naturalized (Haddad 2004: 478). This also raises a question on the "threat" of tawteen. Tawteen stops being a danger when it strengthens the position of sectarian groups and the rationale of the racial and consociational state. As is the case of consociation in Northern Ireland, ethnicity in Lebanon has become normative; it is the only means by which groups and individuals are officially recognized by the consociational state (Finlay 2011: 4, 21). Palestinians have no place within the administrative categories of consociation and therefore they are constructed as outsiders and a danger that must be externalized by the racial state.



### 6.1.1 Externalization of the Different

So the racial state both excludes and includes in racially defined terms. The state is also an institutionalization of the exercise of power whereby race is an expression of relations of power. It is, both by design and effect, the institutionalized safeguarding and elevation of political, economic, social, and cultural interests of certain groups to the exclusion and devaluation of other groups. These interests are safeguarded and advanced or devalued by the institutionalized apparatuses of the state (Goldberg 2002: 130). This is in line with Foucault and Philip Abram's characterization of the state as an ideological apparatus that governs by and legitimates subjection (Abrams 1988: 75). But what about those who are excluded or who fail to fit officially recognized administrative categories? Goldberg has it that the power of the racial state is expressed through the racial configuration of the law whereby those "outside" the law are categorized as strangers, criminals, or terrorists (Goldberg 2002: 139, 140).

The following passages by Abu Khalil in response to my question on whether Palestinians constitute a security, political, and/or economic burden, reveals some of these categorizations:

We know that the conditions Palestinians are living in the camps are impossible, it doesn't only touch on human dignity, it's an impossible living, these camps are like prisons, what will they produce other than more *danger* to themselves and to the Lebanese. How will Lebanon carry this burden?

We and the Palestinians say we are against tawteen and it's in the constitution, what value does this have? ... and the right-of-return, what value do they have in practice when we know that in the foreseeable future there is no Palestinian state?... No to tawteen... okay no to tawteen, but the Palestinians are here to stay on Lebanese territories, what do we call this? Will they remain a strange body as they are? ... can you open the door for integration, can you? That means tawteen... what is tawteen? ... it's permanent settlement and a matter of fact. (July 2012).



These accounts reveal that the Lebanese state actors view the state to be in crisis due to the inevitability of *tawteen* and the impossibility of Palestinian return to Palestine/Israel. Thus far Palestinians have been categorized as a danger, strange body, burden, security danger, and an existential danger. This is not only evident in Abu Khalil's accounts. Lebanese President Emile Lahoud in 2003 stated "Palestinian refugees in Lebanon should know that in the end they will leave. If they remain here they will be a ticking time-bomb that could explode at any moment" (Addustour 25 June 2014). MP Farid El-Khazen expressed that "the danger of *tawteen* is a real danger and it is a demographic, political, and security danger. There are international pressures to implement *tawteen* and if it is implemented it will lead to war and the sabotage of the country" (Palestine Today 7 December 2009).

Palestinians were not only categorized as a "danger" to Lebanon, but in statements by some Lebanese politicians they are also disparaged and denigrated in terms redolent of racism. When Palestinians were expelled from Libya in 1995, some of whom were Palestinians from Lebanon, the Lebanese Christian Deputy Foreign Minister and Minister of Interior warned against a "human invasion" and cautioned that Lebanon will not become a dumping ground for "human waste" (Knudsen 2009: 59). On 14 June 2011, the Lebanese Sunni Mufti who is the highest ranking Sunni cleric in Lebanon angrily expressed to a Palestinian delegation "you are mercantile and rapists [of Lebanese land]. We hosted you and we no longer want you as guests. You are garbage. Your cause will never succeed and I am against you" (PalPress 14 June 2011).

Goldberg considers racialization as "the imputation of exclusionary or derogatory implications to social conditions" (2002: 12). Yet, overtly racist and derogatory statements by Lebanese politicians are rare. This brings into question whether Palestinians are truly racialized by the Lebanese state. One needs to keep in my mind

that Lebanese politicians are careful not to appear blatantly racist, but the rarity of derogatory statements is telling and deserves attention in its own right. Lebanese politicians evade the racist label by propagating the Palestinian danger embodied in tawteen. Through tawteen, Palestinians are constructed as a demographic danger and a cultural threat to the Lebanese way of life, and as we shall see below also as a military/security danger. Ultimately, Palestinians are racialized as a danger to the continuance of the Lebanese entity and the Lebanese people which is by far more serious than being excluded simply for being categorized as “degenerate”. Tawteen allows the Lebanese state to clothe its racism and racist practices in noble terms, as well as justify and legitimate the exclusion of Palestinians using noble, nationalistic, and patriotic terms, narratives, and discourse. Through this discourse, the Lebanese state is not only protecting the foundations of the country, its co-existence, and its people, but it is also preserving and upholding the Palestinian rights of return which Palestinians are untrustworthy to uphold if this cause was left to them.

Palestinians are in fact racialized in multiple ways and through multiple narratives. In the Chapter Five we saw that what my respondents called the “othering” of Palestinians revolved around their supposed responsibility for the outbreak of the civil war and as Diuf (guests) that did not respect and abide by the norms of guest/host relations and betrayed the hospitality they received from the Lebanese state and people. Their de facto permanent settlement and possible tawteen is a recipe for the demise of Lebanon and its heritage of “co-existence”. They are a “strange body” and at times even “human waste”, and as we shall see below, their refugee camps are “security islands” transgressing Lebanese sovereignty and they constitute a military danger.

### 6.1.2 Devolution and Security as Techniques of Governance

Goldberg (2002) cautions against applying the racial state paradigm without adapting it to each specific context so it remains to be seen, in the remainder of this chapter and in the upcoming chapter, how the Lebanese racial state governs and manages this “outcast” Palestinian population.

In the previous section we saw that the Lebanese state considers Palestinians a demographic danger that jeopardizes the “delicate” sectarian balance in Lebanon despite the fact that the sectarian balance had tipped in favour of the Muslims since the 1970s (Baaklini 1983: 22). Palestinians have also been constructed as a security and military danger by the Lebanese state. On one hand, the biopolitical state excludes them, and on the other, the racial state constructs them as a danger. These do not constitute mutually exclusive practices as the exclusion of the biopolitical state is justified by racism, and specifically state racism embodied in the racial state; the two go hand in hand. The Lebanese state legally excludes Palestinians from the socio-economic sphere and devolves its responsibility in this domain to UNRWA and non-governmental organizations. Instead, its main domain of governance in managing Palestinians is centred on security and military concerns.

Racial states, as modern states in general, are bound by necessity to legal expression and their very modernity is ordered through the racial configuration of the law (Goldberg 2002: 139). The capacity of modern legal logic is to order similarities, to create the very likenesses across difference that modern law claims to treat alike. Those who fall outside the law, or who fail to fit the categories of legal similitude are marked by the force of criminalization or varieties of other racio-national and ethnoracial exclusion (Goldberg 2002: 140).



That Palestinians do not fit the official Lebanese sectarian and administrative categories had been examined. We also saw in the historical context that Palestinians in Lebanon face legal restrictions and exclusion on many levels and in most fields. This legislation has been enacted over time but became increasingly restrictive and stringent in the post-Ta'if Accord period. It is uncontroversial to state that the ethnoracial exclusion through the law that Goldberg suggests is a matter of fact in Lebanon. Palestinians are constitutionally restricted from acquiring Lebanese citizenship. Palestinians are also legally prohibited from working in more than seventy two professions. This does not mean that they constitute an entirely unemployed population; rather they work illegally with all that it entails in terms of exploitation, lower pay, and longer work hours. As for the tiny minority of Palestinians that have been able to obtain a work permit, they do not benefit from social security despite paying the contributions. Palestinians do not benefit from public health services. Since 2001, they have been prohibited from owning property. Their heirs are also prohibited from inheriting property owned prior to 2001; instead they have to sell it. From 1995 to 1999, Palestinians were required to obtain a re-entry visa into Lebanon which was very difficult to obtain. This left those working or studying abroad stranded and discouraged those residing in Lebanon from travelling for fear of being cut off from their families (Suleiman 2006: 14 – 20).

Through these legal restrictions the Lebanese state has, in practice, absolved itself of its responsibilities towards Palestinians in the economic and social spheres. Instead it has devolved these responsibilities to UNRWA and non-governmental organizations. An analysis or distinction of state governance based on devolution of services and competencies is offered by Franz von Benda-Beckman. Quoting De Sousa Santos explains that “the centrality of the state lies to a significant extent in the way the state organizes its own decentring” (Santos 1995: 118 in Beckmann 2009: 5). The formal or

informal process of devolution of governance competencies which can be actively initiated or passively enforced can take five forms (Von Benda-Beckmann 2009: 5).

Within the Lebanese-Palestinian context, two are of interest. The first is the devolution of state productive and distributive tasks to private organizations like charitable organizations or commercial companies, and the second is the independent constitution of parallel centres of governance authority that wield control over specific territories, specific groups of people, or specific economic spheres (Benda-Beckmann 2009: 5). Let us start with the first.

In the first piece of legislation pertaining to Palestinians, legislative Decrees No. 42 and No. 927 of 31 March 1959, the first article stipulates contacting UNRWA for ensuring all the socio-economic needs of the refugees. The Lebanese state pledges to merely contact UNRWA to ensure that basic social services are provided to Palestinians. In addition to UNRWA, vast numbers of non-governmental organizations operate within the Palestinian refugee community whereby they attempt to fill the gap in social services that are conventionally provided by the state as research conducted by Laleh Khalili (2007) and Ruba Salih (2013) reveals. The devolution of conventional state responsibilities and functions is also in line with Michel Foucault's notion of governmentality. Governmentality or the art of governance takes place both within and outside state contexts, and includes various other non-state actors, organizations, institutions, and agencies which exercise authority and control over populations (Faubion 2000: 216 – 218; Sharma and Gupta 2006).

Yet, this does not involve a complete devolution as UNRWA needs to coordinate with the Lebanese state prior to the implementation of any changes to its operations in the refugee camps, while non-governmental organizations in Lebanon are required to obtain an official licence from the Ministry of Interior prior to their establishment. Of greater



importance is the security concern of the Lebanese state regarding Palestinians once the Lebanese state has “freed” itself from providing for their socio-economic well-being. The remaining eight of the nine articles of legislative decrees No. 42 and No. 927 deal with security aspects of Palestinian presence such as the issuance of passports and personal identification cards, change of residence, and transfer of money. These legislative decrees provide the legal framework for governing the Palestinian population in Lebanon. While the decrees seem to formulate a mere bureaucratic function, they in fact serve a more specific purpose. By entrusting the Lebanese Ministry of Interior through the Department of Affairs for Palestinian Refugees with these functions the decrees ensure that the Lebanese state has an accurate and detailed profile of each refugee thus enabling it to assess the security risk he or she presents (Said 1999: 327, 328) and they provide the state with a general mechanism of intimidation and control.

As such, the Lebanese state has not completely renounced its governance of Palestinians, as security continues to be the domain of the Lebanese state and possibly its only field of interest. The Lebanese state has not entirely relinquished its control, and neither does the legal exclusion of Palestinians mean that they fall outside the reign of governance. As security and legal exclusion are techniques of governance, there exists a tendency among some scholars studying Palestinian refugees in Lebanon to use Giorgio Agamben’s notion of the “state of exception”, as an alternative to the racial state, to analyse these Palestinian conditions of exclusion and security control (Hanafi and Long: 2010; Ramadan: 2009). The state of exception institutes “an unprecedented generalization of the paradigm of security as the normal technique of government” (Lentin R. 2008: 5). In a state of exception, constitutionally guaranteed rights are suspended so as to confront a direct danger to the state whereby those who constitute this danger are reduced to “bare life”. Bare life falls neither within the law nor outside it, but within a zone of indistinction whereby it is included only through its exclusion



(De La Durantaye 2009: 129). Potentially all individuals could be reduced to bare life and are thereby exposed to an unconditional threat of death (Ojakangas 2005: 5, 6). The state of exception is, by and large, a security state, or according to Agamben's definition, security is a technique or practice of government that separates bare life from the rest of the social body (Lentin R. 2008: 6).

The case of Nahr el-Bared which we discussed and the legal exclusions towards Palestinians corroborate that Palestinians are in fact living in a state of exception. Yet, this characterization has two pitfalls that ought to be avoided when theorizing Palestinian presence in Lebanon. First, the state of exception is centred on a paradigm of emergency situations, whereas exclusion is a routine technique of the racial state (Goldberg 2002). We examined how the consociational state reproduces the racial state. Palestinians were excluded by the state soon after their refuge in Lebanon because they do not fit the ethnic/racial categories of the consociational system and not because of a state of emergency. By being strangers (Bauman 1991) they also disrupt the categorical distinctions this consociational system is premised on regardless of whether there is a state of emergency or not.

Second, the concept of bare life eliminates or deprives subjects of agency. Ruba Salih, who also concurs with the notion that Palestinian refugee camps are within a space of exception, shows that this is only part of the picture. Palestinian refugees are also active political agents who "articulate powerful critiques from below". Salih describes them in Hannah Arendt's terms as the "vanguard of their people" (2013: 68, 69). In the case of this study, the racial state remains to be a more useful theoretical paradigm for understanding and explaining the exclusion of Palestinians in Lebanon.

### 6.1.3 A Military Danger

Returning to the second of Benda-Beckman's points on the independent constitution of parallel centres of governance to the state, these centres of authority, in this case Palestinian refugee camps, are not in a subsidiary or parallel relationship but instead stand in an autonomous relation to the state which constitutes a sign of state crisis and an infringement on state sovereignty (Von Benda-Beckmann 2009: 5). The Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon are considered by the state as an infringement on Lebanese sovereignty. The main concern of the Lebanese state is the military danger embodied in weapons possessed by Palestinian factions in the camps. In answering my question on the non-implementation of the labour law amendment in 2010, Farid El-Khazen responded that "we [Lebanese] used to have political and economic fears, today we have security fears and concerns because the Lebanese state cannot enter the camps and we don't know what [weapons and people] is inside the camps" (August 2012). The refugee camps are increasingly described by Lebanese politicians and Lebanese media as "security islands" and as a "haven for terrorists" (Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, 10 March 2006). Such categorizations have a history that date back to the Cairo Agreement of 1969.

With the signing of the Cairo Agreement between the Lebanese state and the PLO, the refugee camps gained their autonomy and were freed from Lebanese security control. A security relation emerged between the Lebanese authorities and the Palestinian popular committees which are responsible for administering the camps. These committees are comprised of representatives from each Palestinian faction and their duties include maintaining peace, solving internal disputes, providing security, interfacing with the Lebanese state and aid agencies, and generally administering the camps in coordination with UNRWA (Hanafi 2009: 139). However, under the Cairo Agreement, the popular

committees were required to hand over any camp resident/s wanted for criminal or security reasons to the Lebanese state. Lebanese state agents were denied access to the interior of the camps in 1969 and continue to be so in the post-Ta'if Accord period despite the unanimous revoking of the Cairo Agreement by the Lebanese parliament in 1987.

Currently, the Lebanese state only maintains army checkpoints at the entrances of some of the camps; mainly in South and North Lebanon. The denial of entry to Lebanese authorities is perceived as an infringement on sovereignty and fits into what Von Benda-Beckman et al. (2009) term "fragmented sovereignty". The Lebanese state agreed to the autonomy of the camps under the Cairo Agreement as a political compromise to manage relations with the then powerful PLO (Al-Natour 1997: 362; Haddad 2000: 83; Hudson 1997: 251; Knudsen 2009: 55; Said 1999: 330; Siklawi 2010: 601).

Through the categorization of the camps as security islands, and in terms of racialization, the Lebanese state constructs these Palestinian camps as a security and military danger. Lebanese army checkpoints at the entrances of the camps reinforce the construction of the camps as a security threat. The only official dealings with the camps, and specifically the popular committees, by the Lebanese state are focused on security. The popular committees are still required to hand over wanted criminals and terrorists, whether Palestinian or of other nationalities, to the Lebanese state. The Lebanese state is not involved or concerned with the socio-economic well-being of the camps and its inhabitants, but only with security. This embodies both the rationale of the racial and biopolitical state in terms of constructing Palestinians as a security danger and in terms of their socio-economic exclusion.



In recent times, the Lebanese state's perception of the Palestinian camps and weapons as a military danger was most evident in the Cedar Revolution of 2005 and the years that followed. Concerns had emerged at the time within Lebanese political circles whether Palestinian factions that are comprised of predominantly Palestinians Sunnis would be swayed in favour of the March 14 camp and its main pillar the Sunni Future Movement, or whether they would ally themselves with the March 8 camp that is centred on Hezbollah which claims to be the champion of resistance for Palestine in Lebanon. Although some Palestinians as individuals were attracted to one camp or the other, Palestinian factions officially adopted a policy of non-interference in Lebanese affairs.

Yet, this reveals that the Lebanese political establishment considers Palestinian factions a military force that can work in support of certain Lebanese groups as had previously occurred at the breakout of the civil war in 1975. This position and concern is best illustrated by Hassan Kabalan in response to my question of whether he thinks Palestinians constitute an economic, political, or security burden. He expressed:

I don't think Palestinian presence is a burden in the economic, social, or political meaning of the term... Palestinian presence is transformed into a burden when it interferes in the constantly troubled Lebanese situation, the Lebanese reality generates crises... today the policy of neutrality that the Palestinian leaderships in Lebanon are following by not engaging themselves in Lebanese politics and conflicts... this is considered a great accomplishment. (June 2012).

#### **6.1.4 A Danger With or Without Weapons**

It would be a mistake to conclude that Palestinians had been constructed as a security threat and concern by the Lebanese state only in recent times and as a direct reflection of material conditions such as the possession of weapons by Palestinian factions since the late 1960s. Palestinians had been constructed as a security threat and danger since initial refuge as the following two accounts reveal. The possession of weapons only

exacerbated and reinforced such categorizations and stereotypes. In an interview I conducted with Walid Mohammed Ali, a Palestinian researcher and Director of the Baheth Center for Palestine and Strategic Studies based in Beirut, and in response to a question on how the Palestinian relationship with the Lebanese state developed over time and what factors influenced this trajectory, he explained:

I do not think there is any significant development in the relation with the Lebanese state by consecutive Lebanese governments. It was and still is a perception from a security angle towards Palestinians. The development is relative in the degree of oppression and deprivation which increases and decreases between one period and another, but from the beginning and until now, Palestinians are viewed as a security concern. Sometimes these practices intensify to the point of overt racism and at others they are less intense. (July 2012).

In response to my question on the factors that transformed Palestinians into the other in Lebanon, Salah Salah explained:

Since 1958 the [Lebanese] intelligence bureau reinforced the ghetto image whereby Palestinians constitute a security threat, that they cause problems, chaos and so on... at that time Palestinians did not have weapons, we were not fighting against anyone, and did not have a resistance... at that time we were living in tents or homes without a concrete roof, we had just emerged from a tragedy and were looking for a means of livelihood... this created a conception and perception among Lebanese citizens of Palestinians as a security danger... that if they [Palestinians] do not constitute a threat to us [Lebanese] then there wouldn't be all these strict security measures against them. (August 2012)

The Lebanese state was not acting unsystematically over the years, but rather was following what James C. Scott describes as creating legibility. It was also following the rationale of the racial state in constructing outsiders as a danger as we saw in the previous section. Scott, in *Seeing Like a State*, explains legibility to mean that state agents have no interest in representing a social reality in its entirety, rather they use abstractions and simplifications in the form of administrative grids which represent only



what is of interest to the official observer. Simplifications such as population registers, standardized permanent last names, design of cities, and organization of transportation enable social practices and phenomena of interest to state officials to be centrally recorded and monitored. In other words, administrative grids make the social terrain legible to state officials and consequently manipulable from above and from the centre (Scott 1998: 2, 3, 13, 22).

Despite challenges posed to Scott's depiction of the state and its coherence by Tania Li (2005) as we saw in the literature review, Scott's depiction of how a state operates and manages its population offers insights into Lebanese state practices and policies. For the most part, the Lebanese state has only dealt with the Palestinian refugee population in terms of its external and internal security. It is no coincidence that the Ministry of Interior was put in charge of dealing with Palestinian refugees' affairs, while the Military Intelligence was given the authority to monitor and curb political activism in the camps.

The Lebanese state's concern with the Palestinian security and military danger as a routine practice of governing Palestinians by the racial state is illustrated by Salah Salah's account of his personal experience of negotiations with the Lebanese state in 1991 shortly after the end of the civil war. This account combines rationales of both exclusion of outsiders and the construction of these outsiders as a danger. It is also reasonable to suggest that by constructing Palestinians as a security danger and dealing with them on that basis, the Lebanese state makes the Palestinian population legible and hence easier to control. When I asked him if he considers Palestinian presence a security or political burden, he said:

The Lebanese state formed a ministerial committee following the Ta'if Accord [in 1991] with the purpose of dialogue with Palestinians to reach an agreement similar to the Ta'if agreement whereby Lebanese-



Palestinian relations are re-normalized. It was a work plan with three main strands. The first was the Palestinian armed presence. The second was security within the camps. The third strand was civil and social rights. Heavy and medium-calibre weapons were collected by a committee from Palestinian and Lebanese factions and were handed over to the state. As for light arms, the state informed us that it did not collect those weapons from the Lebanese, therefore we do not want to collect them from you... therefore light arms remained with the Palestinians by a decision and the approval of the Lebanese state... and these light arms remain with Palestinians as they remain with the Lebanese. There was an agreement to end the military presence outside the camps... we agreed on this and it was implemented. The second issue is that of weapons inside the camps. The Lebanese state also approved that security within the camps is a Palestinian issue and responsibility and is dealt with within a Palestinian framework. Therefore the issue of weapons and security has been dealt with in agreement with the state. When the dialogue reached the issue of civil and social rights... the dialogue stopped. (August 2012).

The Lebanese state, in this case, was only interested in the possible or potential military danger Palestinians constitute as the dialogue reached its limits at the stage of civil and social rights negotiations. As such, Palestinians need to be “kept out” (Goldberg 2002) not only because they constitute a demographic danger to the Lebanese population, but also because they are a security and military danger that can work in the advantage of one Lebanese political camp or another. The fact that Palestinians had been constructed as a security danger by the Lebanese state a decade prior to their armed presence corroborates Goldberg’s analysis that those who are deemed outsiders are categorized as a danger and as terrorists by the racial state (2002: 152).

## **6.2 The Biopolitical State**

These mechanisms of exclusion and governance may appear as natural for a state in crisis or as part of the racial state rationale. However, Goldberg differentiates between racial and racist states whereby a racist state is driven by an explicitly racist project of

governance (Goldberg 2002: 114). Similarly, Etienne Balibar, writing on race and nation/nationalism warns against concluding that we all live in equally racist societies (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991: 40). The legal exclusion and racialization of Palestinians that we have discussed qualifies Lebanon as a racist, and not merely racial, state. However, the exclusion and racialization of Palestinians by the Lebanese state could also be understood and theorized by the paradigm of the biopolitical state.

As we saw in the literature review, Foucault was the first to define modern states as racial in his wider analysis of biopower and biopolitics. As such, racial states are equally biopolitical states. When biopower is the power to “make live or let die” (Foucault 2003: 240, 241), letting die becomes an imperative to protect the life or health of the dominant population. The break between what must live and what must die under a state that aims to foster life is achieved through racism and specifically state racism. Through racism, the elimination of the “inferior race” becomes acceptable, justifiable, and even imperative (Foucault 2003: 254, 256).

Foucault explains that those to be eliminated are not enemies in the political sense of the term but rather in a biological relationship, whereby they constitute internal or external threats to the life of the dominant population; that is, a biological threat. Keeping in mind that racism is predominantly cultural nowadays and in analysing whether ethno-politics is a form of biopolitics, Finlay (2011) expands on the work of Valverde (2007) to suggest that there is a stretch in this statement whereby biopower and biopolitics. Biopolitics is not only about protecting the biological life of the population but increasingly about protecting the “way of life or culture” of the population (Finlay 2011: 39). For Foucault, biopower is a transition to government as a form of rationality based on scientific knowledge applied to the life and health of the population, but Valverde delineates that conflicts such as the Bosnian conflict had reverted back to what

Foucault terms “race wars” of medieval times as that conflict relied on a discourse of “blood and honour” (Finlay 2011: 39).

While the biopolitical state in Lebanon incorporates scientific knowledge by referring to and relying on UNRWA data in its management of the Palestinian populations, in times of conflict it too reverts back to race wars. We have seen that Palestinian presence and the “inevitability” of tawteen are considered a threat to the Lebanese way of life or culture that is premised on religious co-existence and balance thereby subjecting Palestinians to cultural racism. As important as it is, so far we have focused on the elimination of outsiders by both the biopolitical and racial states. Yet, these states also foster the lives of the dominant populations. Both “killing” of Palestinians and improving the life of the Lebanese need to be juxtaposed to capture the practices of the Lebanese biopolitical state.

The Lebanese state fosters the life of the Lebanese population, while letting the Palestinians “die”. Killing occurs through legal exclusion but also by devolving state responsibilities to UNRWA which is officially entrusted by the Lebanese state and international community to foster the lives of the Palestinian population. It is important to explore the role of UNRWA since the Lebanese state evades its responsibilities towards Palestinians through the existence of UNRWA and its internationally mandated responsibility for Palestinian refugees, just as it evades being labelled racist by flagging the banner of preventing tawteen.

Compiling statistics on Palestinians in Lebanon is mainly conducted by UNRWA, but also by the International Labour Organization (ILO). In some cases these international organizations conduct their studies in cooperation with the American University of Beirut. The Lebanese state relies on those institutions for acquiring statistics and various indicators relating to Palestinians. UNRWA for example has annual indicators on



demographics, health, and education. It also provides and funds numerous programmes in its various fields of intervention including health care, education, infrastructure and camp improvement, shelter, direct relief and micro finance (UNRWA 2013). As has been mentioned, the Lebanese state had devolved its responsibilities to UNRWA in these fields since initial refuge and this was later codified into law in 1959. While UNRWA is responsible for the well-being of Palestinians, this does not mean that the life of the Palestinian population is being adequately fostered. Despite being in existence for over 60 years, UNRWA still finds itself in a precarious position mainly due to funding difficulties making its services inadequate. Its funding is secured through the voluntary contributions of donor countries as it lacks a self-generating financial base. There has been a steady decline in financial contributions from the Arab Gulf states following the first Gulf War in 1990 as a consequence of Yasser Arafat's siding with Iraq at the time (Bocco 2009: 246), but the agency has also been securing funding from Western donors since the 1950s as it is perceived by them as a "peace servicing factor" in the Near East (Al Hussein and Bocco 2009: 268, 269). With these funding difficulties UNRWA's programmes have been deteriorating, especially in the vital fields of health and education (Bocco 2009: 245).

Lebanese citizens on the other hand receive from their state public health care, public education, governmental housing mortgages, and social security despite the relative weakness of these programmes. As such, the Lebanese state is concerned with exclusively improving the life of the Lebanese population in terms of confining access to these benefits and governmental services to Lebanese citizens. In contrast, it considers the welfare of the Palestinian population to be the responsibility of the international community through UNRWA and other international and non-governmental organizations. Therefore, the practices of killing and fostering by the biopolitical state becomes more perceptible by examining the role of the state in

distributing, assigning, and allocating services, privileges, entitlements, and rights differentially to Lebanese citizens and Palestinian refugees (Von Benda-Beckmann 2009: 1, 2).

The following response from Abu Khalil to a question on why Palestinians have not been granted civil rights reveals the logic of the biopolitical state even though this view may not be representative of Lebanese politicians across the spectrum; it does, however, provide an indication on the position of the Lebanese right.

Abnu Khalil: What does civil rights mean? Civil rights will also be political rights. What civil rights?

*Waleed*: as in, they don't vote.

*Abu Khalil*: yes but the term itself is ambiguous. I and them will have the same civil rights if we consider the accurate meaning of the term, *we will be the same* [my emphasis]... the right to work and own property... these are humans that have the right to live like humans, why should we escape from this... Palestinians have the right to live like all other humans... the right to work, freedom of expression, the right to political activism, education... like the rest of humans and their dignity... where could this be secured and how will it be secured?... this is secured in a country or state of their own... Lebanon can never secure these rights for them and neither can any other Arab country. (July 2012).

In the above exchange between Abu Khalil and I, the lines around economic, political, social, and cultural rights are drawn distinctly to create exclusivity for Lebanese citizens, whereas Palestinians who also deserve such rights as humans are to secure them in their own country or state as Lebanon can never secure these rights for them. First, it can be strongly suggested or inferred, not only from Abu Khalil's account but also from the legal restrictions and exclusionary practices discussed already, that the Lebanese biopolitical state has determined who it will "let die". The justification for this is premised on state racism since "making Palestinians live" will amount to Lebanese and Palestinians being the "same". For them not be the same, only racism can make the break between who must live and who must die.



Second, for the nation to be itself, it has to be racially or culturally pure. It therefore has to isolate and then eliminate or expel the “false”, “exogenous”, “cross-bred”, “cosmopolitan” elements within. This is an obsessional imperative which is directly responsible for the racialization of social groups that are stigmatized and categorized as an exteriority and impurity, whether in relations to these groups’ life style, beliefs, or ethnic origin (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991: 60). The notion of “sameness” also brings to mind Bauman’s (1991) notion of strangers once again. Palestinians as strangers disrupt the binary opposition between Lebanese friends and enemies and they therefore must be kept separate and eliminated, and not allowed to be the same.

### **6.2.1 Racially Configured Nationality Law**

This racist break between the two populations is most clearly evident in the Lebanese nationality law which is not only racial but also gendered. The Lebanese nationality law prohibits Lebanese women married to foreign nationals from conferring their Lebanese citizenship onto their non-Lebanese husbands and children. Spouses and children of Lebanese women are not entitled to benefit from public education, health care, and are denied work permits, residency rights, and inheritance rights (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012: 4, 11, 12). This law is in violation of international treaties Lebanon had ratified and even of the Lebanese constitution. As a member of the United Nations, Lebanon has ratified most international treaties and conventions on gender equality such as the Universal Declaration for Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948, the UN international Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966, UN Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of 1966, the UN Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 1979, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989 (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012: 5,



6, 7). Combined these conventions and treaties obligate the Lebanese state to observe equality between men and women in economic, social, cultural, and political rights.

Moreover, the preamble of the Lebanese constitution and Article 2 of the Lebanese Civil Procedure Code recognize the supremacy of international treaties over national law and once ratified these treaties are applicable as national law (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012: 10.). Paragraph C of the preamble of the 1926 constitution which was reinstated in the 1990 Ta'if Accord amendments states:

Lebanon is a parliamentary democratic republic based on respect of public liberties, especially the freedom of opinion, and respect for social justice and equality of rights and duties among all citizens without *discrimination or preference* [my emphasis]. (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012: 9).

Consequently, civil society in Lebanon has been lobbying and mobilizing for amending the nationality to grant women full citizenship rights. The first initiative towards this end emerged in 1992 when the Lebanese Association for Human Rights was launched in collaboration with other women associations. These associations presented a draft amendment to the law to the Ministry of Justice, and consequently a draft ministerial committee was established in 1993 with the purpose of revising the law. It was not until 1995 that the Parliamentary Committee for Justice and Administration endorsed a draft law allowing Lebanese widowed mothers to confer their nationality to their children. A parliamentary sub-committee was formed to study the draft law but to no avail (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012: 14).

More recently, in 2005, a movement network of around sixty Lebanese NGOs initiated a national campaign titled "Because they are my children my nationality is a right for them" (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012: 14). As the Lebanese constitution stipulates that a Lebanese citizen is a person "born to a Lebanese father" (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012:

10), the campaign demanded amending the nationality law to “is Lebanese every person born to a Lebanese father or of a Lebanese mother” (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012: 14).

A year later, and as a result of the efforts of the Lebanese NGO Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action (CRTDA) which works on gender and citizenship in the Arab region since 2001, the “my nationality is a right for me and my family” campaign was launched in 2006. The campaigns involved marches and sit-ins, conferences, workshops, and media coverage, in addition to lobbying government (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012:15, 16). In addition to NGOs, other components of civil society such academics and activists also campaigned for the amendment. National and international bodies, such as the National Committee for Lebanese Women, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch, also exerted pressure on the government to amend the law. (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012: 15)

A few Lebanese politicians individually proposed draft laws to the council of ministers and parliament. Of interest is the amendment proposed by then Minister Ziad Baroud which stipulated:

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, is considered Lebanese, every person born to a Lebanese mother, provided that the nationality of the father is issued by a recognized state and does not contradict the provisions of the constitution pertaining to the rejection of tawteen

To date, the Lebanese government has rejected granting full citizenship rights to women but it has modified some legislation and regulations. In May 2010, under Decree No.4186, it granted the husbands and children of Lebanese women a courtesy residency of three years provided they had been resident in Lebanon the preceding year. On 23 September 2011, new labour regulations No.122/1 amended the labour law pertaining to foreigners whereby the spouses and children of Lebanese women are granted work permits without the need for a Lebanese sponsor. (Mansour and Abou Aad 2012: 11).

Yet, Lebanese legislators ensured that Palestinians were excluded from these modifications to residency and labour legislation. This was justified by a fear of a shift in the delicate sectarian balance if a large Palestinian refugee community were suddenly naturalized. Officially, the Lebanese state justified the exclusion of Palestinians on the grounds of preventing *tawteen* and safeguarding the Palestinian right of return. (Assafir 16 March 2012; Mansour and Abou Aad 2012: 9, 15).

As has been noted, despite overtly racist statements at times, Lebanese politicians are generally careful to code their political messages in morally plausible language, therefore analysts and researchers need to infer the underlying message in most cases.

The exclusion of Palestinian husbands and children of Lebanese women was justified in part by claiming that these measures safeguard the Palestinian right of return. However, the underlying message in this case is that Palestinians are toxic and a source of pollution, and therefore distance ought to be kept from them by the Lebanese. Women are implicated in reproducing the nation-state's population, therefore the racial state indirectly defines and regulates who one can marry and what the children's life opportunities are once they have been racially defined and classified (Goldberg 2002: 115). A Lebanese woman marrying a Palestinian man is therefore risking her well-being and future, and that of her children. That is, Palestinian toxicity and contagion will most likely spread to her and her children. As Mary Douglas had it, all caution must be taken by others against those who have no place within a social system and are marginal beings (1984: 97).

### **6.3 Demographic Engineering**

What the racial, biopolitical, and gardening state have in common is the elimination of "outcast", "inferiors" or "strangers". In Lebanon, this elimination is, by and large,



carried out through legal exclusion in almost all fields of life. However, exclusion is a means to an end. Ultimately, Palestinians are eliminated by being compelled to emigrate from Lebanon. All Palestinian respondents and some of the Lebanese respondents explained that the end result of the applied security measures coupled with draconian legal restrictions is the compelling of Palestinian emigration; especially for those who possess the necessary financial means and migration networks that facilitate migration. This undeclared Lebanese state policy (Hadded 2004: 478; Sayigh, R. 1995: 43) which consists in a process of demographic engineering could also fall under the classification of ethnic cleansing. Ethnic cleansing is not an easy term to define. At one end of the pole it is indistinguishable from forced emigration and population exchange, and at the other end it coincides with deportation or genocide. At the most general level, it is understood as the expulsion of an undesired population from a given territory for religious, ethnic, political, or ideological considerations (Bell-Fialkoff 1993: 110).

In situations where the state is involved in demographic engineering the state has a number of tactics at its disposal to alter the size and composition of ethnic populations and induce populations to relocate. These can range from pro-natal policies, assimilation, direct and indirect economic incentives and pressures, to population transfers (Bookman 2002: 29, 31, 32, 37, 38). In other scenarios where states are involved in managing or reducing ethnic conflict, states may apply structural techniques including federalism, regional autonomy and the design of specific electoral systems (Horowitz 2000: 601). Many states also apply preferential programmes. These preferential policies can be applied in education, the private sector, and/or the public sector. Some of these policies are explicitly pursued and some are applied subtly. Some of the countries that have adopted preferential policies include India, Nigeria, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Fiji, Zaire, and Indonesia (Horowitz 2000: 654, 655, 656).

Of those policies and techniques, the one of relevance and most pertinent to Palestinians in Lebanon in the long range is the application of indirect economic incentives or pressures as the above restrictions reveal, albeit at times it has involved outright violence. Such indirect economic pressures are predicated on a policy that makes a group feel less welcome, restricts its rights and stifles its economic opportunities. These indirect policies are based on discrimination between groups in terms of property ownership, labour, tax policy, development projects, and education, as well as the selective use and manipulation of access to natural resources (Bookman 2002 :36) This is not to say that Lebanon is unique in such practices. This was also the case, although this list is not exhaustive, in Sri Lanka, the new post-Yugoslav states, and the new Baltic post-soviet states, (Bookman 2002:36, 37), yet these countries have been criticized for these same practices. One could argue that Lebanon partly escapes criticism by Western governments despite the blatant institutional discrimination against Palestinians because it is a consociational state while the West is trying to promote power-sharing as a model for conflict resolution in divided societies.

James Hughes, in analyzing the consociational models in Northern Ireland and Kosovo, reveals that Western states shy away from the shortcomings of consociation and its biopolitical logic. In Kosovo, where 93% of the population are Albanian, the insistence by the West on a “multi-ethnic” society in order to include the minority Serbs only serves to antagonize the Albanian population and destabilize peace when Kosovo is de facto partitioned (2009: 299). Some local elites in Kosovo favour a “culture of silence” when it comes to transitional justice. In Northern Ireland, the issue of transitional justice was peripheral, while in Kosovo it had high political salience (Hughes 2009: 301).

Among others elements, transitional justice is centred on restorative justice though trials punishing perpetrators of war crimes and truth hearings through public hearings to



develop a culture of forgiveness. In practice, the culture of silence revolves around states having an interest in sustaining their own well-established narratives of the conflict and to protect their agents from accountability for crimes they had committed (Hughes 2009: 296, 301). Therefore, consociational societies are shielded from criticism both by external actors, usually international or regional, as well as internal actors.

As such, the Lebanese state's unequivocally racist laws that compel Palestinians to emigrate, for the most part, escape international criticism and shaming. A passage from an interview I conducted with the former Lebanese Minister of Interior, Beshara Merhej, sums up the intersection of exclusionary Lebanese practices and the compelling of Palestinian emigration. In response to a question on how and why did various Lebanese parties reach a consensus on rejecting tawteen in the Ta'if Accord, Merhej explained:

tawteen is not only scaremongering by the Lebanese right to preserve their positions and blackmail the other parties... No... there are continual contacts and pressures on Lebanon to find a solution for Palestinians... maybe they don't say it directly, but they say it in various ways... most ambassadors of Western countries and not only America... I have heard this personally from a number of ambassadors, but they know that tawteen is difficult to occur in Lebanon and would lead Lebanon to explode, as such their intention is to tighten matters on Palestinians so they would leave. The continuation of pressures on Lebanon to implement more security measures and restrictive policies so that Palestinians would not return, that is, if they travel they would not think of coming back and if they are here they would think of leaving... this is the deep policy [of the Lebanese state] and I am saying this is a former Minister of Interior... this is how it is. (July 2012).

Merhej points to the external factor represented in Western states' pressures and contacts to explain the conduct of the Lebanese state in inducing emigration whereby the state appears to have no agency or choice in the matter, yet he unequivocally states that this is the core of Lebanese state policy towards Palestinians. If Palestinians are to



be eliminated by the racial, biopolitical, or gardening state, this is carried out through compelled emigration.

This elimination has being very effective to say the least. Approximately half the Palestinian population in Lebanon had already emigrated. While the Lebanese state adopts UNRWA figures of approximately 450,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, independent researchers estimate the figure at 200,000-250,000 due to emigration the Arab Gulf States, Europe, North America, and Australia (Al-Natour 2003: 51; Hanafi and Tiltnes 2008: 3).

With the absence of accurate figures one could deduce the emigration rate by comparing school enrolment rates at the elementary level in Lebanon and Syria as the populations are almost of equal size. While the difference in dropout rates are almost negligible, Lebanon 1.41% and Syria 0.39%, the percentage of children enrolled in school in Syria in 2010, and prior to the 2011 conflict, was 214.3% greater. This means that over half of Palestinian children in Lebanon, and their families, have emigrated and are currently outside the country (UNRWA 2010).

## **6.4 Conclusion**

The Lebanese racial state, governs the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon through exclusion and from a security angle. This state excludes Palestinians who are deemed a danger, outcasts, strangers, and/or terrorists. If Palestinians are kept out or eliminated, it is because they do not fit into the official sectarian/ethnic categories of the consociational arrangements and threaten its “delicate balance” between the official categories.

The socio-economic well-being of Palestinians does not appear to concern the Lebanese state, or rather the economic and social domains are fields of intervention for the state in a negative sense. Draconian restrictions are applied with the aim, admitted by some of my respondents, of compelling the emigration of Palestinians from Lebanon, while making return an undesirable option even for those who might suffer from the hardships of migration and adapting to a new culture and country. The figures of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are contested (Al-Natour 2003: 51; Hanafi and Tiltnes 2008: 3), but there is evidence to suggest that the undeclared policy of compelling or inducing Palestinians to emigrate has been very successful and effective. More than half the Palestinian population has already emigrated. The size of the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon and Syria are almost equal, but one can deduce from UNRWA figures that over half the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon has already left the Lebanon to various immigration countries (UNRWA 2010).

Palestinians in Lebanon are subjected to cultural racism, while they are equally seen as a biological danger, but the use of derogatory terms by Lebanese politicians to describe or denounce Palestinians remains rare. However, this does not imply that Palestinians are not in fact racialized. By reiterating the danger of *tawteen* to both Lebanese and Palestinians, the Lebanese state evades being labelled as racist. Palestinians are legally excluded under the pretext of rejecting *tawteen*, but this is justified by the Lebanese state with noble and national/ist narratives of protecting the Lebanese entity and people, and protecting the Palestinian right of return.

As such, the racial state racializes Palestinians and keeps them out and separate from the Lebanese social body. However, when the inclusion of Palestinians strengthens the position of confessional communities they are racially included or excluded on ethnic/sectarian terms that fit the consociational categories. Palestinians are both

racially included and excluded from a sectarian angle, whereby the consociational state reproduces the racial state.

racially included and excluded from a sectarian angle, whereby the consociational state reproduces the racial state.



## Chapter Seven: Case Study on 2010 Labour Law Amendment

As we saw in the introduction and previous chapters, Palestinians are legally denied most of their civil, social, and humanitarian rights by the Lebanese state. The denial of any of these rights, with the exception of perhaps political rights, is unjustifiable under international law and especially under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that the Lebanese state had assisted in formulating in 1948 and which is articulated into in the Lebanese constitution. Yet, the starkest denial of these rights consists in denying Palestinians the right to work in most professions. As the popular Arab saying goes “cutting off from a means of livelihood is equivalent to the cutting off of necks”.

This chapter consists in a case-study on Palestinian labour rights in the post-Ta'if period. It specifically looks into the law amendments proposed in the Lebanese parliament in June 2010, especially concerning the Palestinian right to work. However, this chapter is not strictly confined to analysing the labour rights of Palestinians, but extends beyond that to examine how proposing the law amendments instigated an intense resurfacing of the narratives centred on the danger of tawteen, thereby feeding into the racialization of Palestinians.

Through reviewing Palestinian labour conditions, it became evident that the denial of the right to work for Palestinians cannot be simply understood in material terms, rather, by making the activity of work an illegality (Foucault 1977), Palestinians subjects are constructed as docile bodies, and more importantly as “delinquents” that normalize Lebanese society.

Finally, the link between tawteen and labour rights is analysed through the dominant narratives that legitimate, justify, and perpetuate Palestinians exclusion in the Lebanese labour market.

## **7.1 Labour Conditions in the Post-Ta'if Accord Period**

We saw in chapters Four and Five how and why support for Palestinians dwindled from 1982 onwards and culminated in their constitutional exclusion in the Ta'if Accord in 1989. We also saw how Palestinian conditions drastically deteriorated from 1982 and into the post-Ta'if Accord period. Laleh Khalili, relying extensively on the work of Julie Peteet (2005) and Rosemary Sayigh (1979), traces the dominant narratives, or what she terms “mnemonic narratives”, among Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. She detects a shift from celebrating the heroic in *Ayyam Al Thawra* to evoking the tragic in the post-Ta'if Accord era (2007: 736). She attributes this shift to the available political discourses on the international arena in the two periods and to the change in institutions that govern populations, or more precisely the spread of NGOs since the 1990s. Until the 1980s, anti-colonial discourse was the basis for political mobilization in the developing world. This discourse espoused political violence as a means to attain political ends and sought to instil national dignity and pride among exploited peoples (Khalili 2007: 751, 752).

Yet, it is important to keep in mind that this shift also reflects changing economic and political conditions on the local level and not just in terms of “Third World” revolutions and the spread of an NGO culture globally. We have seen that when Lebanon was experiencing economic growth in the 1950s Palestinian camp residents constituted the backbone of cheap labour in Lebanese agriculture and industry. We also saw that the era of *Al Thawra*, when the PLO was the major political player in the local Lebanese political arena, represented the “golden age” for Palestinian labour; both in terms of the

PLO employing up to 65% of the Palestinian workforce and in terms of Palestinians enjoying the right to work for the first time under the Cairo Agreement<sup>14</sup>.

Khalili explains that the spread of humanitarian/human rights norms in the 1990s had shifted the Palestinian narratives in Lebanon into ones of victimhood and plying for sympathy and attention from the international community and international NGOs as important institutions organizing life in the refugee camps of Lebanon (2007: 752, 753, 754). This interpretation and depiction is accurate in terms of deteriorating Palestinian conditions since 1982. Yet, as we shall shortly, 92% of the Palestinian community in Lebanon is in fact economically active in some form of employment (ILO 2012). If they do depend on NGOs, it is mainly for health care that is beyond their financial means and in hardship cases, but they nonetheless enjoy the esteem of an employed individual that can retain part of their pride and dignity even if their worker rights may be precarious and employment unsecure for most.

The following statistics, that reveal Palestinian labour conditions, are all based on the International Labour Organization (ILO) *Labour Force Survey among Palestinian Refugees Living in the Camps and Gathering in Lebanon* published in 2012. The survey was conducted during the period extending from September 2011 till March 2012. These statistics, which provide comparisons with Lebanese labour in some fields, also reveal whose life is to be fostered by the biopolitical state and who is to “let die”. Nonetheless, this chapter does not aim to theorize the biopolitical state, although it does provide material substance to the biopolitical practices of the Lebanese state discussed in Chapter Six.

Despite that Palestinians are legally prohibited from working in more than 72 professions (Suleiman 2006: 14-20) and contrary to the prevalent perception, the overall

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<sup>14</sup> See Historical Context chapter sections 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 for a detailed overview of Palestinian labour conditions prior to 1969 and from 1969 to 1989.



Palestinian employment rate is 92%, at 93% for men and 85% for women. About 14% of females are unemployed compared to 7% of males; however, women are employed in higher status professions such as health and education, while the majority of men work in construction and commerce. Women also enjoy more benefits and more stable work contracts than men. This can be attributed the fact the females have higher qualifications than males (2012: 10, 13, 14, 16, 17).

Only 11% of Palestinians in Lebanon hold a university degree and more than 60% left school at secondary level or earlier. For both males and females, the better educated are employed in the health, education, and the “other” category, while those with no or low education work in construction and commerce (2012: 14, 16). The low education levels in the 2010s represent an indication of deteriorating conditions and a clear contrast to the 1980s when Palestinians enjoyed the highest literacy rate in the Arab region and the highest percentage of university graduates in the entire Middle East (Rubenberg 1983: 77).

More than one third of those employed are paid weekly, daily or based on productivity in comparison to only 10% among the Lebanese. Of the university educated, 74% are paid monthly, while 47% of those who can read and write are paid daily, weekly, or based on productivity (2012: 15). Of men in employment, 34% are paid on monthly basis and 35% are paid daily, weekly, or based on productivity, while 70% of women are paid monthly. One can infer from these statistics that workers with low or lower skills are hired when needed and let go when they are not, thereby constituting disposable, or to use a milder term, flexible labour. The private sector employs most workers (86%), while the remainder work in UNRWA and NGOs (2012: 15).

Unemployment is concentrated among the youth with 49% of the unemployed being below 24 years of age and 28% being in the age group 25-34 years (2012: 18). In

security studies, this is a “dangerous” youth cohort to have as unemployed (Goldstone 2002: 10, 11), and it is contradictory to the Lebanese state’s concern with the Palestinian security and military danger.

Although 92% of Palestinians are in employment, this figure conceals various forms of exploitation and a lack in basic workers’ rights. On average Palestinian workers earn a net income of 537,000 LBP (US\$358) considerably lower than the minimum wage of 675,000 (US\$450) per month for the Lebanese. Only 3% of Palestinians workers/employees earn over 1,500,000 (US\$1000) per month compared to 7% of Lebanese (2012:19). Palestinians work longer hours than their Lebanese counterparts at 47 hours per week. Only 5% are covered by health insurance, compared to 53% of the Lebanese. Approximately 50% of the 5% of Palestinians covered by health insurance are university educated, while only 2% of the illiterate and 3% of workers that can read and write are covered (2012: 20). Only 26% are entitled to sick leave, 17% are entitled to paid leave, and 3% qualify for pensions (2012: 21). If we compare this to benefits received by SAMED workers in Al Thawra period, any married SAMED worker used to receive a monthly payment for their spouse and a monthly allowance for each child. Bonuses were awarded for quality performance, while free health care was provided to the family members and children received free education. In case of death of the worker the full salary was paid to the family indefinitely (Ruebnberg 1983: 68). Even unemployed Palestinians were protected by the PLO safety net, as were many of the Lebanese<sup>15</sup> (Brynen 1989: 52; Khalidi 1984: 257).

The lack of benefits and entitlements means Palestinians are less costly to employ, which explains Lebanese employers’ incentive to hire Palestinians despite the severe legal restrictions imposed on them by the Lebanese state. A mere 2% have a work

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<sup>15</sup> See Historical Context chapter section 4.3.3 for a discussion of Palestinian labour condition in Al Thawra era.

permit, with the vast majority working on verbal agreement at 80%, and 20% with written contracts (2012: 22). This renders Palestinian workers disposable, unprotected, and incapable of claiming their rights in cases of conflict with Lebanese employers.

## **7.2 Labour Law Proposal in 2010**

There had been calls for imposing restrictions on Palestinian refugee labour as early as 1951, but the first law to indirectly regulate Palestinian labour was the labour law of 1962 that put Palestinians on par with other foreign labour and required of them to obtain a work permit. The law exclusively excluded Palestinians, albeit, without naming them. The law operated on the principle of reciprocity and Palestinians were the only foreigners in Lebanon to be excluded as they did not have a country or state to reciprocate from (El Natour 1997: 367). The unanimous revocation of the Cairo Agreement in 1987, and consequently the Palestinian right to work, returned Palestinians to the dictates of the 1962 Labour law.

As such, Palestinian civil society and part of the Lebanese civil society had been lobbying the Lebanese government to improve labour conditions for Palestinians in the year preceding 2010. The Palestinian National Authority also expressed its concern in meetings and correspondence with Lebanese officials. Similarly, Lebanon is subjected to criticism in this regard by international human rights organizations. Under pressure from all these sides, a law amendment was proposed in June 2010 to the Lebanese parliament by the Druze Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) headed by Walid Jumblat to amend the laws pertaining to Palestinian civil rights, especially the right to work. After a month and a half-long debate in parliament the law was finally amended to grant Palestinians the right to work and social security. Palestinian in the liberal professions such as physicians, engineers, and lawyers were excluded from this amendment



(Siklawi 2010: 611). Nonetheless, Palestinian non-professionals did not experience any change in their employment status either as no implementation mechanisms were put in place by the Lebanese government and the law amendment never took effect (ILO 2012: 23).

The law proposal, did however, provoke a reaction from the Christian right that once again raised the spectre of tawteen. Instead of improving the labour conditions and standards of living for Palestinians, the proposal fed into their racialization with the resurfacing of, and emphasis, on the danger Palestinians represent to the continuance of the Lebanese entity. The Lebanese Christian right vehemently opposed the amendment by labelling it “tawteen in disguise” and a conspiracy to permanently settle Palestinians in Lebanon.

Michael Aoun, the leader of the Christian right FPM warned against American and Israeli plans to naturalize Palestinians. He stated:

The US is not interested in assuring the security, stability and sovereignty of Lebanon, but rather in solving the Palestinian problem at the expense of the Lebanese. You will face a class of politicians with treason as their main objective. I urge you not to sell your land, emigrate, or allow the plan to naturalize Palestinians in Lebanon to succeed. Naturalizing Palestinians is a real rather than theoretical conspiracy that began in 1948 (Daily Star 26 July 2010).

The PSP’s proposal called for granting Palestinians full civil and social rights. It stated that:

Foreign workers enjoy the same rights as Lebanese workers based on the principle of reciprocity and on condition that they obtain a work permit. Palestinian workers officially registered in the registries of the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities are to be exempt from the conditions of reciprocity and work permits decreed by the Ministry of Labour until they return to their homeland (Annahar 20 July 2010).

However, the head of the committee, Robert Ghanem, in charge of studying this file explained:

After discussions and listening to the views of parliament members, it became apparent that it is necessary to maintain work permits because this is the only procedure that differentiates Lebanese from others. There is a fear that if we drop the work permit the status of refugee will also be dropped because in such a case they will become the same as Lebanese which also harms the interests of Palestinians (Annahar 20 July 2010).

We have already discussed the concept of strangers (Bauman 1991) who disrupt the cosy antagonism between Lebanese friends and enemies. By dropping the work permit Lebanese and Palestinians would become the “same”. We saw that to be Lebanese is premised on belonging to the officially recognized sects, therefore Palestinian strangers that disrupt this binary opposition and sectarian “world order” need to be kept out and separated from the Lebanese social body for this Lebanese social order to maintain its coherence. This separation is achieved through the racial configuration of the law (Goldberg 2002), and, here again the racist implications of the law are clothed with the noble narrative of protecting “Palestinian interests”.

This amendment to the original proposal was a result of pressures from the Christian right and was justified by the constitutional clause on rejecting *tawteen*. The Maronite Patriarchs Council expressed “we fear that the calls for granting Palestinian rights will be transformed into a local political issue whereby Palestinians become permanent residents in Lebanon” (Annahar 8 July 2010). The leader of the Christian right Phalangist Party, Amin Gemayel said when the law was first proposed “this proposal is *tawteen* in disguise” (Al Balad 24 June 2010). At a later date, he expressed “the right to own property is an advanced step towards *tawteen*, and so is allowing Palestinians to work in the liberal professions” (Assafir 1 July 2010). The parliament member from the

FPM, Alain Aoun, said in relation to the proposal “we all know that there are plans to assimilate Palestinians in the societies they reside in” (16 July 2010 Annahar).

This fierce opposition from the Christian right occurred despite the law proposal excluding Palestinian labour from professional work. In a conference organized by the PSP, parliament member Alaa Terro said:

We want to overcome this issue to grant Palestinians the right to work in professions Lebanese do not work in, just as the Syrians, Egyptians, Bangladeshis work in these professions. We reject *tawteen just as Palestinians reject it*, but some use it as scaremongering for the Lebanese or at least part of the Lebanese (Annahar 28 June 2010)

In the month and a half-long debate the proposal was drained of its original content. Initially the proposal called for full civil rights, including work without work permits, social security, and the right to own property. The final amendment included the right to work in professions that do not compete with Lebanese labour and the need for a work permit was maintained. Palestinian workers were required to pay into a separate social security fund that does not affect the Lebanese treasury. Despite some positive elements in the amendment, there were no implementation mechanisms put in place and Palestinians, for the most part, continue to work illegally. The reluctant position of Lebanese parties towards labour rights was interpreted by my respondents in a similar fashion. In response to a question on the labour law amendment of 2010, Salah Salah, a member of the Palestinians National Council, said:

Many Lebanese parties support Palestinians and sympathize with them, and they support granting them rights. Walid Jumblat held a conference specifically last year under the title of granting Palestinians their full civil and social rights... the right to work and the right to own property, everything. Hezbollah and Amal... they all support Palestinians gaining their civil and social rights... but who of those would strongly defend it in parliament... none of them, not Jumblat, nor Hezbollah, Amal, the Syrian Social National Party, the Baath Party... none of them... because they are interested in finding common denominators among them[selves]. Palestinians are a source of



disagreement among them and not a common denominator... they don't mind sacrificing their Palestinian alliances to secure their Lebanese alliances [with Christian parties]". (August 2012).

In response to Christian right opposition to the law proposal, Jumblat described them as "the dumb right, I don't mean all Christians because there are many Christians that struggled with the National Movement. I expected a reaction, but not to this degree, this is historic stupidity, this will lead to the growth of Islamist extremists in the camps, what will you do then?" Despite such strong statements against the Christian right and despite that political parties in favour of granting Palestinian rights form the majority in Parliament, the priority was for maintaining Lebanese-Lebanese alliances. We have already discussed the concept of sacrifice as understood by Girard (1986). At times, Lebanese politicians who claim to be supportive of Palestinian rights are more explicit about their stance. The influential Sunni former Prime Minister, Rafic Hariri, declared once in 1998 that "Lebanon will never, ever integrate the Palestinians. They will not receive civic or economic rights or even work permits" (Knudsen 2009: 58). We saw that only those defined in ethnic terms and who fit the categories of the sectarian system are counted and recognized, whereby the consociational state reproduces the racial state (Finlay 2011). A statement by the Speaker of Parliament, Nabih Berri, confirms this rationale. He stated in a parliamentary session held for discussing this proposal: "This issue will only be concluded with a Lebanese consensus" (Annahar 16 July 2010). The ultimate concern in the parliamentary vote was Lebanese consensus and consociation, and not Palestinian rights that the parliament was called in to convene for in the first place.

### 7.3 Useful Illegalities

It is evident from this glimpse on labour conditions in the post-civil war period that Palestinians in fact do work, albeit without work permits, and the Lebanese state must be well aware of this, therefore the conundrum of the Palestinian right to work must lie elsewhere. The Lebanese state, one could strongly suggest, is involved in producing a certain kind of Palestinian subject. Michel Foucault in, *Society Must Be Defended*, shows how power relations produce subjects - that subjects are manufactured through relations of domination and relations of subjugation (2003: 28, 45). At first glance, one could conclude that the restrictions imposed in the labour market simply serve the productivity and growth of the Lebanese economy through cheap and exploitable Palestinian labour that benefits the Lebanese class of employers. There is some truth to this, but it remains a weak strand of analysis. The bourgeoisie are not interested in exclusion per se, although it does offer a political and economic utility.

Foucault uses the examples of mental illness and infant sexuality to show that the interests of the bourgeoisie lie in practices of control. He delineates that exclusion of the mentally ill and repression of infant sexuality in the nineteenth century can be explained by productivity and unproductivity in terms of relations of production. However, he argues that the opposite could also be tolerated. At a certain historical moment, the interest of the bourgeoisie was not simply exclusion as such but its mechanisms. It was the mechanisms of exclusion, surveillance apparatuses, and normalization and their relation to power that became of genuine interest to the bourgeoisie (Foucault 2003: 31, 32). The severe exclusionary practices and mechanisms, or systematic and institutionalized inequalities backed by the threat of force that David Graeber (2012), following on Johan Galtung, refers to as structural violence, by the Lebanese state serve a dual purpose. On the one hand, they compel Palestinian emigration from Lebanon, and on the other they keep the Palestinian refugee population disciplined and docile

while residing in Lebanon and until they have worked out a viable emigration route. One can add that in relation to Lebanon they normalize Lebanese society.

The undeclared emigration-inducing state policy was analysed in the Security and Demography Chapter. In relation to the surveillance of Palestinian labour, Bassel Haddad<sup>16</sup>, who is a Palestinian engineer that has been working in the Lebanese private sector for over thirty years and in response to a set of questions I emailed him in May 2013, offered some insights into the working and dynamics of the Lebanese labour market. According to Haddad, the Lebanese state through its tax authority agents conducts regular visits to Lebanese companies and checks on the numbers and nationalities of employees. In his case, when the employer knew beforehand that the agents will be conducting a check he was told not attend work that day. In cases of random checks, Haddad had to convince the government agents that he is only involved in piece-work for the company and not a permanent employee. He added that in many companies, Palestinian professionals were classified as janitors and movers on their work contracts and they identified themselves as such during checks, while in some cases they were obliged to quickly change into a less professional outfit.

In James C Scott's *Weapons of the Weak* (1985) and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (1990), these tactics used by Palestinian employees would be considered a form of resistance by the subordinated who find ways of resisting their oppression and exploitation without coming into direct confrontation with the powerful. Timothy Mitchell on the other hand, cogently argued in his article *Everyday Metaphors of Power* (1990) that what Scott considers acts of resistance amount to "petty resistance" as the subordinated are still implicated within a power relation that continues to work in favour of the powerful. We have also seen through Mitchell's work (1991) that these

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<sup>16</sup> A pseudonym. He wished to remain anonymous.



disciplinary mechanisms had been incorporated by post-colonial states as a result the governance practices they adopted from their colonizers. Alternatively, these may not qualify as acts of resistance at all since it is the employers suggesting such tactics to Palestinian workers to escape the surveillance of the state. More accurately, Lebanese employers and Palestinian workers are merely coping with the disciplinary practices of the state, and Palestinians workers continue to be constructed as docile bodies through these disciplinary practices and surveillance hierarchies.

The surveillance of the Lebanese state does not only discipline Palestinians, but also transforms the activity of work in itself for Palestinians into an illegality and manufactures Palestinian subjects as “delinquents” that normalize Lebanese society. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault offers an analysis of why the prison as a form of punishment survives till this day despite neither reducing the crime rate nor rehabilitating the prisoners. He delineates that rather than missing its target or “failing”, the prison creates one form of illegality in the midst of others that it is able to isolate, control, make useful and docile. This illegality makes it possible to push into the background other illegalities it desires to or must tolerate. The prison produces this illegality as delinquency; a politically less dangerous and at times useful illegality (1977: 276, 277). The disciplinary techniques of the carceral network or prison/judicial system spread to the entire social body whereby the slightest divergence from the norm constructs an individual as a deviant or delinquent (Foucault 1977: 298, 299). In modern times, the carceral network with its disciplinary practices and surveillance mechanisms operates as a normalizing power within society (Foucault 1977: 304). When work is legally and socially constructed as an illegality, Palestinians’ only fate is to that of delinquents that normalize the rest of Lebanese society and push their illegalities into the background.

## 7.4 Human Rights or Sovereignty

When discussing labour rights during my fieldwork, all Palestinian respondents spoke of the usefulness of Palestinian labour to the Lebanese economy should they be granted the right to work. This was in response to my question on whether Palestinians constitute an economic burden and whether it is true that the Lebanese economy cannot absorb the Palestinian labour force. Yet, this does not mean that the Palestinian respondents were unaware that this is not the essence of the exclusion of Palestinians from the labour market. Suheil Al Natour who is a Palestinian lawyer, in response to a question of whether Palestinians were excluded because they constitute an economic burden, replied “that is a lie ... this is about the sectarian system” (August 2012). When I asked Abu Fakhr, a Palestinian researcher and journalist, about Palestinian labour he estimated the Palestinian workforce at between 50,000 to 80,000 (July 2012). The CIA World Fact Book estimated the number of migrant workers in Lebanon in 2007 at approximately one million workers (CIA 2013) of which the vast majority were non-Palestinian. As such, the Palestinian workforce is only a fraction of migrant labour in Lebanon, Therefore the denial of the right to work based on the pretext of the inability of the Lebanese economy to absorb these numbers attests to the argument that market and economic calculations are not at the core of labour exclusion. Rather, Palestinians are denied the right to work to compel their emigration and to normalize Lebanese society as I have argued.

Some Palestinian respondents also expressed, in line with Laleh Khalili’s interpretation of Palestinian post-war narratives that are based on a human rights discourse, that the right to work is an inalienable right under international conventions that Lebanon had ratified. Lebanese respondents, both Muslim and Christian, from the left of the political

spectrum also expressed that Palestinians ought to be granted their humanitarian rights until they return to Palestine. Yet among the supportive Lebanese, Hassan Kabalan's position was more reserved. In response to a question on the position of the Lebanese state on Palestinian labour rights, he expressed:

labour rights is a technical issue that ought not to be used for political bargaining but to be studied by a specialized economic committee. The Lebanese economy can absorb Palestinian labour. The Palestinian mentality (or mode of thinking) shouldn't always throw accusations and all problems on the Lebanese. Palestinians should also take initiative, and we have suggested this several times, to communicate with all Lebanese parties, especially those who are fearful... just as Palestinians demand security and peace-of-mind... we should secure this peace-of-mind to all parties. Regretfully we are in a country where sectarian fears are mutual. Palestinians should instigate the widest network of relations and communication with all parties so they can provide to those who are fearful the necessary assurances. (June 2012).

Kabalan, although supportive of granting Palestinians labour rights, thinks this process should be gradual and studied by an economic committee. He places the onus on Palestinians to ease Lebanese fears and to instigate communication with all Lebanese parties. David Graeber delineates that those in positions of power, who in most cases can rely on the threat of use of force, are not required to be involved in interpretive labour and they seldom do. He gives an example of interpretive labour in gender relations where women are almost always expected to imagine things from the man's side, while men seldom reciprocate. The same can be said of race and ethnic relations (2012: 115-117) and this is the case for Palestinians who are required to thoroughly understand and ease Lebanese fears while the Lebanese are not required to consider Palestinian hardship.

Kabalan goes onto to say that "Palestinians should first organize their own internal conditions before they request of others that they help them". Palestinians do suffer from a lack of a unified authority and this pretext has been reiterated by Lebanese



politicians. Yet this request seems contradictory, and one can say unreasonable, when the authority or power of the Lebanese state itself is divided among a number of sectarian leaders and when this issue is mainly humanitarian. More importantly, there appears to be a contradiction in Kabalan being for granting rights and at the same time calling for the issue to be studied by a specialized committee. Kabalan, and the Shia Amal Movement he represents, by demanding a unified Palestinian authority and demanding a specialized committee are, in practice, deferring the resolution of this issue for the foreseeable future. These demands collide with the strong Maronite opposition to Palestinian rights concomitant with the need for consensus in the consociational system of Lebanon. Beshara Merhej, the former Lebanese Minister of Interior, said when I asked about the 2010 labour law amendment that “they [supportive Lebanese parties] merely pay lip service [in relation to Palestinian civil rights]” (July 2012).

Right-wing Christian Maronite parties, while strongly opposed to granting labour rights, are more clear on their position. Both Farid El-Khazan and Joseph Abu Khalil expressed similar views in this regard. El-Khazan, when I asked why the labour law amendment of 2010 was not implemented, replied:

Look, any subject that has to do with issue of Palestinians in Lebanon is a very controversial and divisive issue... this is well known. We all know that the international community does not want to solve the problem, and the international community is unable to put pressure on Israel, they put pressure on the weak and we will not accept, this is the responsibility of Israel in the first degree and the responsibility of the international community which has been supporting Israel since 1948, and if Palestinians are the victims of this it is because of this stance, they cannot bully us because we are weaker, and we also have fears, we have big fears. (August 2012).

Both Abu Khalil and El-Khazan explicitly stated that Palestinian livelihood is the responsibility of the international community. The statements of the Christian right are

not to be underestimated in terms of Palestinians' right to work. As we have already seen, the priority of sympathetic and supportive Lebanese political parties is to maintain their alliances with Christian parties. This leaves Palestinians in legal limbo for the foreseeable future in relation to labour rights, and civil and social rights more generally. This account also reveals that part of the Lebanese political establishment is not concerned with labour rights as a humanitarian issue but more precisely it places emphasis on state sovereignty. That is, Lebanese sovereignty is being violated and ought to be protected against pressures from international community that is trying to resolve the Palestinian crisis at the expense of Lebanon. In this scenario, Palestinians appear to be held hostage between the international community and the Lebanese state.

### **7.5 Tawteen and Labour Rights**

I have argued that the Lebanese state is careful not to appear exclusionary or racist. Legal exclusion is coded in moral and noble terms. As civil rights are a step towards tawteen and permanent settlement, the denial of these rights becomes a safeguarding of the Palestinian right of return to their homeland. The Lebanese state claims that without such measures Palestinians would forget their homeland (Haddad 2004: 478). The narrative of no tawteen emerged from the Christian right in the early 1970s. It was used to rally their supporter-base against the PLO by propagating that Palestinians desired to permanently settle in Lebanon and transform Lebanon into a substitute homeland after the loss of Palestine. By the end of the civil war, the narrative of tawteen resonated across Lebanese sectarian communities and across the political spectrum (Peteet 2005: 173).

The threat of tawteen was, and still is, reiterated by Lebanese politicians creating a distrust of Palestinians by the Lebanese public. The fact that Palestinians hold onto their

right of return to Palestine and also reiterate their rejection of tawteen does not ease Lebanese fears (Peteeet 2005: 173). In the post-Ta'if period Palestinians are implicitly, and even explicitly, portrayed as weak in defending their rights for having left their homeland so easily and as untrustworthy to uphold the right of return, while the Lebanese state portrays itself as more committed to the right of return and upholds this right for Palestinians by preventing them from forgetting their homeland (Haddad 2004: 478).

Stereotypes of Palestinian untrustworthiness and of them “selling” their rights are still dominant in Lebanese public discourse. Narratives of Palestinians selling their lands to the Jews prior to the occupation and of Palestinians fleeing their lands had resonated from initial refuge to the post-Ta'if period. Salah Salah, who was a young man at initial refuge, had indicated in response to my question of how Palestinians became the “other” despite the cultural similarity between Lebanese and Palestinians that “since Palestinians’ arrival there have been attempts at distorting their image through rumours and others means, for example when they [Lebanese] used to say Palestinians fled their country or Palestinians sold their lands although this is not what history reveals” (August 2012). The documented fact that less than 5% of Palestinians sold their lands, mostly absentee landlords, and that Palestinians were subjected to terror and even massacres by the Zionist paramilitaries (Masalha 1992) does not assist in confronting or subverting these stereotypes.

In relation to the link between labour rights and tawteen, Marwan Fares, who was a member of parliament from the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and Head of the human rights committee in the Lebanese parliament at the time of the interview, sees tawteen as a pretext by the Lebanese right to deny Palestinians their civil rights. He had an interpretation of tawteen directly to the issue of compelling Palestinian immigration. In



response to a question on his view of the conditions of Palestinian presence in general, he says:

Palestinians are not permitted to work, the right to own property is prohibited in Lebanon under the pretext of tawteen... this is an alibi by the Lebanese right... Palestinians do not want tawteen in Lebanon, Palestinians want to return to Palestine, whereas the pretext of tawteen is an alibi to prohibit Palestinians from work and comfortable residence, therefore Palestinians who were able to emigrate have emigrated and I think this is the American- Zionist colonial objective whereby Palestinians emigrate and especially from Lebanon. (June 2012).

The interpretation of tawteen and its link to labour rights by Fares converges with that of all Palestinian respondents, but they diverge on the last point. Palestinians view induced emigration as the policy of the Lebanese state, while Fares attributed it to an American-Zionist project. Fares is not alone in this line of reasoning. Raising the issue of tawteen by the Lebanese state is portrayed as a rejection of an Israeli and American plan to naturalize Palestinians in Lebanon (Petee 2005: 173). However, Israel and America would be equally satisfied to see Palestinians emigrate to faraway countries and regions such as Scandinavia, Canada and Australia and be naturalized there.

In previous chapters we saw how the Lebanese racial state keeps racially categorized Palestinians out of Lebanese society through the racial configuration of the law, homogenization, and the creation of boundaries between Palestinians and Lebanese through exacerbation of minor cultural differences. Yet, this is more accurately about normalization rather than homogenization as tawteen does not only impact labour rights but also creates and maintains boundaries between the Palestinian and Lebanese populations.

Kabalan argues that some forces in Lebanon are working on the naturalization of Palestinians by melting them into Lebanese society. He explained that:

The shortcoming of the Ta'if was that the issue of tawteen should have been complemented with stressing the right-of-return, and ensuring the requirements of this return, this didn't happen and this was clearly not intentional. This is not a slogan, I know that some political forces in Lebanon due to internal rivalry express that they all agree on the right-of-return, but there is a big difference between someone who is with the right-of-return and who practices resistance and who says that this cause must remain alive, we should constantly remind the world that the Zionist project threw on Lebanon the 440,000 Palestinian refugees, and between someone who says the right-of-return and that's enough while working towards integrating Palestinians in their places of presence, and working towards the dismantlement of the camps which represent one of the most important symbols of the Palestinian cause, and melting Palestinians into Lebanese society through naturalization one way or the other, and diluting Palestinians' accent, culture, traditions, norms, and modes of thinking, and integrating Palestinians into Lebanese forces and parties to forgo this cause. (June 2012).

This account reveals the link made between tawteen, non-integration, and the preservation of the right of return by some Lebanese politicians and the Lebanese state's role and claims in this regard. It also reveals that tawteen constitutes material for political bargaining and blackmail between various Lebanese parties. The Palestinian predicament in Lebanon is not only caused by contradiction between the responsibilities of the Lebanese state and international community, but moreover by the use of Palestinian presence as material for Lebanese internal rivalry and settling scores. More importantly, Palestinians moving out of the closed space of the camp and their integration into Lebanese society would amount to the loss of their cultural distinctiveness or what Kabalan termed above as "the melting of Palestinians into Lebanese society". One could infer from this statement that by keeping Palestinian society separate from the Lebanese, in the camps, or without the right to work is justified by the claim that it enables the Lebanese state to preserve Palestinian cultural distinctiveness; a necessity for keeping the Palestinian cause alive. In all this, Palestinians are constructed as passive actors who lack agency being untrustworthy to uphold their cause.



## **7.6 Conclusion**

The proposed law amendment intensified the racialization of Palestinians instead of improving their work conditions. Although Lebanese political parties that claim to be in favour, and even enthusiastic, of granting Palestinians their civil and social rights failed to fully vote in favour of those rights. Due to the dynamics of Lebanese consociation, and the political alliances between Lebanese Muslims and Christians, Palestinians were sacrificed to strengthen these alliances. Palestinian strangers once again provided the divided Lebanese with material for consensus and allowed consociation to appear coherent and functional.

Palestinian labour conditions in the post-Ta'if period are the most drastic in the long Palestinian presence in Lebanon. In the 1950s and 1960s, Palestinian camp residents constituted the backbone of cheap labour in Lebanese factories and agriculture, while the Palestinian middle class and wealthy made substantial contributions to the Lebanese economy, media, academia and cultural production (Abu Fakhr 2008: 151, 152; Hudson 1997: 246). Under the Cairo Agreement from 1969 to 1987, Palestinians legally enjoyed the right to work for the first time. Currently, Palestinians have to work illegally and to compete with migrant labour, mainly Syrian and Egyptian, who provide a substitute for Palestinian labour.

Yet, the vast majority of Palestinians are in some form of paid employment although this employment largely remains illegal. This shows that the legal exclusion of Palestinians from the Lebanese labour market cannot be simply understood in material terms. Although true that Palestinians are produced as cheap, exploitable, and flexible labour, this remains a limited strand of analysis. By making the activity of work an



illegality, Palestinians are constructed as docile bodies, and constructed as “delinquents” that normalize Lebanese society.

A link is made between labour rights and tawteen. Labour rights are viewed, by some members of the Lebanese political establishment, as a first step towards tawteen. Once again, the Lebanese state evades being labelled racist for its exclusionary practices by waving the “noble” preventing tawteen banner to safeguard the interests of both Lebanese and Palestinians.

## Chapter Eight: Conclusion

This thesis aimed to theorize the exclusion of Palestinians and the relationship between exclusion and racialization. More precisely, it asked: how Palestinians were reconfigured from co-ethnics with the Lebanese to a racialized minority group? To answer this broader research question I used critical race theory. As such, I will now assess the usefulness of those theories in terms of understanding the governance and management of the Palestinian refugee population by the Lebanese state.

The works of Foucault, Bauman, and Goldberg were employed to theorize the exclusion and racialization of Palestinians in Lebanon. What these three theorists have in common is an emphasis on the exclusion and elimination of the “inferiors”, “strangers”, and “outcasts”. For Foucault and Goldberg it is by the racial state (Foucault 2003; Goldberg 2002) and for Bauman the elimination is carried out by the gardening state (1991). All three theorists explain the “how” of elimination, but slight differences of emphasis emerge in the “why”, although each understand elimination to be a phenomenon of modernity.

For Goldberg, modern states by keeping the racially defined “out” are mainly concerned with homogenization of populations (2002: 30, 49). Bauman sees modern states as concerned with creating and maintaining order and eliminating chaos, whereby strangers are seen as a source of chaos and ambivalence (1991: 1, 4, 7). Foucault explains the elimination of inferiors in terms of biopower and normalization. By “killing” the “inferior race” the “dominant population” becomes stronger in a biological type relation between the two populations (2003: 255). Similarly, in a normalizing society or the carceral system keeping inferiors or delinquents out based on a norm, normalizes the rest of society and allows for social control through state racism (1977: 298, 299, 304; 2003: 61, 223).

Based on the research findings I will deal with each of these approaches. First, there is a common thread between normalization (Foucault 1977) and order (Bauman 1991) in that normalizing society is a form of order. There is also a common thread between normalization and homogenization (Goldberg 2002). The common denominator between the three theories is normalization. Once the inferiors or strangers have been eliminated or excluded the people are homogenised and are normalized. My research findings are consistent with Foucault's notion of biopower and a biological relationship between populations. First, there is a biopolitical relationship between various Lebanese confessional communities in terms of growth in the size of Muslim population and decline in the Christian population, especially in what that entails in terms of power-sharing and consociation. Second and interrelated, is the construction of the Palestinian population that is predominantly Muslim Sunni as danger that will tip the sectarian "balance" between the Lebanese in favour of the Muslim Sunnis. In this dominant discourse, the Lebanese biopolitical relationship is pushed to the background and the Palestinian danger, embodied in tawteen, becomes the ultimate threat to the Lebanese entity, people, as well as the Lebanese "way of life" premised on religious co-existence and balance. As such, the state racism inherent in biopower is both biological in terms of a demographic danger (Foucault) and cultural in terms of protecting a way of life (Finlay 2011: 39) in the case of Palestinians in Lebanon. Abu Khalil's account, a member of the political bureau of the Christian right Phalangist party, elucidates this biopolitical rationale:

The numbers are many relative to the population... they are an existential burden... these are large numbers in an abnormal situation. A small country like Lebanon, a country of 3.5 million is to carry 400,000 meaning 10% of the population, 10% and they belong to certain



identity whether we like it or not, an extra 10% to the Muslim population... and they are Sunni in addition to the Shias.

If you open this space [for Palestinians] then you are actualizing integration, can Lebanon absorb these large numbers?... absorbing them socially and culturally and on all levels? What will be the future of Lebanon then that is based on a delicate balance between Christians and Muslims... when this character is done with Lebanon is finished and this is what might happen. (July 2012).

The fact that Palestinians do not benefit from Lebanese public services while Lebanese citizens do also corroborates with Foucault's notion of biopower. Lebanese citizens are entitled to public health care, public education, public employment, social security, and governmental housing mortgages, while these are denied to Palestinians. Yet Foucault poses the problem as one between a dominant population and an inferior race. His prime evidence was the Nazi Holocaust which is not congruent with consociational regimes such as Lebanon which are premised on a compromise between friends and enemies. Foucault, in his wider analysis of biopower and biopolitics, does not explore the significance of what Bauman's terms a "third element". This third element is the "stranger" that disrupts the "cosy antagonism" between friends and enemies (1991: 53, 54, 56). If there are no enemies there would be no friends. In this binary opposition between friends and enemies, what Bauman refers to as dichotomy, there is a relationship in this opposition whereby the "other" is still recognized as a subject, counted, and remains relevant (Bauman 1991: 53, 54).

Against this "cosy antagonism" there are strangers who cannot be included in this philosophical binary opposition. Instead strangers question the basis of the opposition as such – "they poison the comfort of order with the suspicion of chaos", and therefore Palestinian strangers blur the distinctions between Lebanese friends and enemies necessary for the continuation of the Lebanese "world order" that is based on consociation and religious "balance" (Bauman 1991: 47, 56 58, 60, 61, 63). To maintain

the cosy antagonism the Lebanese state racializes and constructs Palestinians as a danger, thereby keeping them separate and out of the Lebanese social body, whereby Palestinians lend Lebanese consociation a relative degree of coherence. The reiteration of the constant and imminent “danger” to the confessional balance embodied in tawteen, overshadows the fact that this balance had already tipped in favour of the Muslims since the 1970s (Baaklini 1983: 22) and renders it insignificant. That is, when tawteen is constructed as the only danger to consociation, and when this danger is kept in check, consociation gains the appearance of a coherent system.

As such, Palestinians had been, and still are, eliminated or, to use Girard’s (1986) notion, sacrificed and scapegoated by various Lebanese sects of friends and enemies. At the civil war’s end this scapegoating was codified in the Ta’if Accord. Girard’s concept of “sacrifice” is similar to Bauman’s notion of a third element in that a third party that is marginal is sacrificed to restore harmony and strengthen the social fabric between the dominant group/s, or in the case of Lebanon, the various confessional communities. Palestinian presence provides Lebanese power-sharing with material for consensus. Walid Mohammed Ali, a Palestinian researcher and director of the Baheth Center for Palestine and Strategic Studies, in response to my question on how various Lebanese sects reached a consensus around rejecting tawteen in the Ta’if, expressed:

It’s well known that societies that are experiencing crises strive to resolve these crises at the expenses of the minorities present among them, especially if these minorities are viewed as strangers. In Lebanon, there is a crisis that is related to the composition and configuration of Lebanon. A crisis inflicted with the disease of sectarianism and sectarian considerations. Lebanon has a deep crisis that culminated in the civil war and which they attempted to resolve through the Ta’if Accord. Within this Accord, there needed to be issues they could have a consensus around and agree on. The easiest approach was to agree that the conflict in Lebanon was due to Palestinian presence and this was coded in the rejection of tawteen. (August 2012)

Hassan Kabalan expressed that “the Ta’if was about finding a settlement among the Lebanese”. The relationship and conflict between various Lebanese sects could also be understood in terms of biopower as we have seen. As such, the Lebanese context also fit Foucault’s biopower categorizations of inferiors that need to be eliminated because they threaten the dominant population, but without the Palestinian third element this analysis is incomplete. Bauman’s notion of a third element offers a more nuanced understanding, than that offered by biopower, of the position of Palestinians under a Lebanese consociational state where Palestinians, and not any of the Lebanese, are always the ones to be sacrificed or eliminated.

The Lebanese state is in fact a biopolitical state, but the analysis is lacking without [Bauman’s analytical concept of strangers. Goldberg (2002), on the other hand, cautions us against using the racial state as a theoretical framework that fits all contexts. Following on Goldberg’s own advice and in applying his racial state theory within the context of consociation, the evidence does not support Goldberg’s emphasis on racial state rationale being centred on the homogenization of populations. In Lebanon, sectarian groups that are party to the consociational deal are not homogenized, rather consociation reproduces the racial state at the level of the sect (Finlay 2011: 86). This can be elucidated by the stipulations of the Ta’if Accord. Paragraph C. of the Ta’if’s preamble stipulates “equality in rights and duties among all citizens, without discrimination or preference”. However, Article 2 of section III of the Ta’if titled “Other Reforms” stipulates:

To ensure the principle of harmony between religion and state, the heads of the Lebanese sects may revise the constitutional council in matters pertaining to:



1. Personal status affairs.
2. Freedom of religion and the practice of religious rites.
3. Freedom of religious education.

One can see that on a broader level the constitution treats all Lebanese citizens as equal, but that in practice rights and duties are differentially tailored according to sectarian belonging; that is, the racial state is reproduced at the level of the sect (Finlay 2011: 14, 15, 19, 42). Notwithstanding that the racialization of Palestinians offers the Lebanese “self” relative coherence, Lebanese society remains far from being homogenous.

Yet, Goldberg’s theory of the racial state does have its merits. Goldberg points out that racial states are racial both in terms of exclusion and inclusion (2002: 94). In this sense, Goldberg is less absolutist than Foucault and Bauman in relation to elimination. The fact that over 75,000 Palestinians had been naturalized by the Lebanese state attests to this racial inclusion. Those Palestinians were viewed from a sectarian lens and were only naturalized in terms of their sectarian belonging. To strengthen their sectarian position, Christians, when they dominated the state, naturalized approximately 50,000 Palestinian Christians in the 1950s and 1960s. Similarly, in the post-Taif period when the Shia became more powerful they naturalized 27,000, mostly Shia, Palestinian refugees in 1994. Christian Maronites protested at the time to ensure that the remaining Palestinian Christians still without Lebanese citizenship were also naturalized (Haddad 2004: 478; Peteet 2005: 177). As such, tawteen or permanent settlement of Palestinians stops being a danger when it reproduces, strengthens, and reinforces the consociational system and sectarian interests.

This concurs with Finlay’s analysis that only those who define themselves or are defined in ethnic/sectarian terms are counted and recognized by consociational

states (2011: 86). In contrast, Palestinians who do not fit official administrative categories are kept “out” of Lebanese society by the racial state as they have no place within the consociational system and official state categories (Goldberg 2002: 30, 49). In Bauman’s terms these strangers bring these categories into question. This also validates Finlay’s proposition that the consociational state reproduces the racial state (2011: 86). That is, Palestinians are racially excluded because they do not fit the consociational categories and bring them into question, and are only racially included under ethnic/sectarian terms that strengthen and enhance consociation and its coherence. If Palestinians have been reconfigured from co-ethnics with the Lebanese to a racialized minority, it is precisely for this reason; that is, they have no place within the sectarian system and within official state sectarian categories. They do not only have no place, but they also threaten to blur the distinctions and the binary opposition between the Lebanese which are necessary for the coherence of the Lebanese “world view” embodied in consociation and “way of life” premised on confessional co-existence and balance (Finlay 2011: 39; Bauman 1991: 56).

Goldberg’s theorization of the racial state further illuminates the otherwise puzzling treatment and governance of Palestinians by the Lebanese state by delineating that those who are legally excluded and who are viewed as a source of crisis by the racial state are categorized as a danger, outcasts and terrorists (2002: 152). Palestinians have been categorized by Lebanese politicians, including the president, as a “demographic danger”, a “ticking time-bomb”, and as a “strange body” (Addustour 25 June 2014; Palestine Today 7 December 2009). They have also been racialized as “human waste”, “mercantile”, and as “garbage” (Knudsen 2009: 59; Pal Press 14 June 2011). Yet, such derogatory terms by Lebanese politicians are in fact rare. Goldberg defines racialization as the “imputation of exclusionary or derogatory implications to social conditions”

(2002: 12). This brings into question whether Palestinians are actually racialized by the Lebanese state. The main legitimating narrative of Palestinian exclusion in the post-Ta'if period centres on the danger of tawteen. If Palestinians are legally excluded this is only to prevent tawteen and to protect the Palestinian right of return to Palestine/Israel. Exclusion is legitimated and justified by such noble terms and narratives centred on protecting Lebanese co-existence and the Palestinian right of return. By reiterating the danger of tawteen to both Lebanese and Palestinians, the Lebanese state evades being labelled as racist for its draconian exclusion of Palestinians. The construction of Palestinians, for their mere presence on Lebanese soil, as a danger to the continuance of the Lebanese entity and people is by far more serious than "simply" excluding Palestinians for being racialized as "degenerate". Palestinians are not only constructed and stereotyped as a current and future danger, but one also needs to consider the more serious and harmful racializing narrative of Palestinian Diuf (guests) betraying Lebanese hospitality and causing a civil war in Lebanon. Blaming Palestinians for causing the war, in a sense, justifies draconian measures against them in the post-civil war period.

Just as important, Palestinians are essentialized and stereotyped as impoverished camp residents regardless of their social class even though 50% of Palestinians in Lebanon reside outside the camps, or at least until they have "proved" their middle class status. The trajectory of middle class Palestinians is smoother than that of Palestinian camp residents, yet they too are placed in an inferior position for being stateless. Documenting such radicalizing narratives would require a study on the societal level based on interviews and focus groups with Lebanese and Palestinians. However, the focus of this study was on the state, and Lebanese state actors are generally careful to avoid the use of racist and derogatory language towards Palestinians as had been stressed throughout the thesis.



We have considered the merits and shortcomings of the theories of the biopolitical, gardening, and racial states in terms of understanding the governance practices of the Lebanese state towards Palestinians. The importance in using racial state theory or race critical theory to analyse exclusion lies in that racialization creates a boundary between Lebanese and Palestinians that allows for their exclusion. Foucault (2003) considers the state to be an ideological power that legitimates subjection, and in this case, the Lebanese state subjugates Palestinians through a discourse, or ideology, that racializes and essentializes them as a constant source of trouble and danger for Lebanon. As Ronit Lentin succinctly put it, “for racism to function it needs a political apparatus. That apparatus is the state, its bureaucracy, and its institutions which in turn influence the hearts and minds of people who live within it” – (Lentin, R. 2006: 14). As such, racialization is an exercise of power in its own right (Wolfe 2002: 58). Since *tawteen*, as understood in Lebanese discourse, will lead to the demise of Lebanon, all caution needs to be taken against Palestinians and the Palestinian danger must be externalized (Goldberg 2002). This racialization discourse links the past, present, and the future of the Lebanese crisis. In the dominant Lebanese narrative the Palestinians caused the Lebanese civil war in the past, while their present presence on Lebanese territory may lead to the demise of the Lebanese entity in the future. As Bauman has it, the gardening state, which is similar to the racial and biopolitical states, is designed to primarily deal with strangers and not merely enemies (Bauman 1991: 47, 58, 60, 61, 63). This is done by a strategy of separating strangers from the rest of the social body (Bauman 1991: 14, 20), and this separation occurs through their racialization.

Thus far, I have been using post-structural theories to explain the racial governance practices of the Lebanese state towards Palestinians. However, in critiquing the prevailing consensus that the conflict in Northern Ireland is a conflict of identities, Finlay shows that the Protestant unity against Home Rule

had a basis in material reality. Protestant defeatism and sense of alienation, at least within a segment of the Protestant population, since the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement is more validly explained in terms of the uneven development of capitalism in Northern Ireland (2007: 3, 4, 14). This analysis is not only important because there are many similarities between the Northern Irish context and the Lebanese context as the work of Michael Kerr shows (Kerr 2006: 3, 4), but also because it allows me to take a step back from post-structural theories and ask whether the exclusion and racialization of Palestinians can be understood or explained in material terms.

A focal point that allows for an investigation into a material basis for exclusion is the Palestinian right to work as it most clearly reflects material or economic interests and calculations. To support themselves and their families, Palestinians have no choice but to work. When the Lebanese state denies Palestinians the right to work, the activity of work itself becomes an illegality they cannot escape. While this may be explained in terms of producing Palestinians as cheap and exploitable, but since the vast majority of Palestinians do in fact work, making work an illegality goes beyond this to normalize Lebanese society (Foucault 1977: 276, 277, 280; Peteet 2005: 155). Palestinian illegality pushes Lebanese illegalities into the background (Foucault 1977: 276, 277, 280). Foucault's notion of normalization is the thread that ties the biopolitical, racial, and gardening states. As such, while it may be true that Palestinians are produced as cheap and exploitable labour, this interpretation remains limited. By making work an illegality, Palestinian workers who subjected to the surveillance and discipline of the Lebanese Ministries of Labour and Finance that check on illegal labour, do not only normalize Lebanese society, but are also constructed as docile bodies through hierarchies of surveillance (Foucault 1977). Finally, making work illegal

for Palestinians is one way the Lebanese state fulfils its undeclared policy of eliminating Palestinians by compelling them to emigrate from Lebanon (haddad 2004: 478; Sayigh, R. 1995: 43). As the former Lebanese Minister of Interior, Beshara Merhej, said in the interview I conducted with him:

The continuation of pressures on Lebanon to naturalize Palestinians is a path or trajectory to push Lebanese authorities to implement more security measures and restrictive policies so that Palestinians would not return, that is, if they travel they would not think of coming back and if they are here they would think of leaving...this is the deep policy [of the Lebanese state] and I am saying this is a former Minister of Interior... this is how it is. (July 2012).

To answer whether the exclusion of Palestinians could be explained in material terms, quite simply, the answer is no. Conventional wisdom tells us that in divided societies, blocking access to resources for subordinate groups preserves the privileges and power of the dominant group/s. This may be true, but we have seen that beyond this, the exclusion and racialization of Palestinians also normalizes Lebanese society and constructs Palestinians as docile bodies while they remain in Lebanon, while simultaneously eliminating Palestinian strangers through compelled emigration. Yet, the Palestinian plight is in fact structural. Not structural in terms of an economic base and a super-structure, but rather as a consequence of the political structure of the Lebanese consociational state that reproduces the racial state. That is, if Palestinians are excluded by the Lebanese state and have been reconfigured into a racialized minority, it is because of the rationale of the consociational state that reproduces the racial state.



Generalizing the findings of this study is threefold. First, the research aimed to theorise and explain the exclusion and racialization of Palestinians strictly within Lebanese context, and this constitutes an additional contribution to the literature on Palestinians in Lebanon. This we have discussed thoroughly. On another level, this study primarily tested the usefulness of critical race theory in analyzing consociational states, and specifically the position of outsiders, such as Palestinian refugees, within such states. Finally, the findings can be generalized to other consociational states premised on a power-sharing arrangement including Northern Ireland and Bosnia-Herzegovina. These states have more in common with a consociational Lebanon than do other Arab states which host Palestinian refugees such as a monarchical Jordan and Syria with its centralized political system.

## Appendix A: Biographies of Respondents

### Sakr Abu Fakhr

Sukr Abu Fakhr is a Palestinian journalist and the editor of the Palestine Journal in the Pan-Arab Assafir newspaper based in Beirut. He is also researcher in the Beirut Office of the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies based in Doha, Qatar. He had previously been involved as a researcher in the Institute of Palestine Studies based in Beirut for a period exceeding 20 years, and before that as a researcher in the PLO Planning Centre. He also worked for numerous years on the Palestinian Encyclopaedia published in Beirut, Lebanon.

Abu Fakhr has been aware of and interested in the Palestinian cause since his early childhood. His father lived in Haifa and in the year of the Nakba (catastrophe/occupation) in 1948 he took refuge in Acre in Northern historic Palestine and from there moved to Lebanon. He says “consequently I have lived and experienced the period of initial Palestinian refuge”. Abu Fakhr was born in Lebanon shortly after the Nakba and he do not know Palestine at all, but heard stories from his father about life in Palestine since early childhood. He was always enthused to listen to these stories and his father’s memories in Palestine and this formed his early attachment to the Palestinian cause. He says “we used listen to Palestinian poems on the Radio. We used to also regularly listen to messages on Radio Israel from those still in Palestine trying to get in touch with their families in the camps of Lebanon and Syria... we didn’t have any relatives left in Palestine but we still listened to these radio messages in case someone knew us and was trying to reach us... Therefore the Palestinian cause is part of our skin since childhood and not a contingent interest during the years of youth or activism. He goes on to say that “ to the contrary, the Palestinian cause was part of our life and part

of our essence, as was our attachment to the Palestinian cause and the struggle for the return of the Palestinian people to their homeland and not just return on an individual basis”.

### **Joseph Abu Khalil**

Joseph Abu Khalil is a Lebanese intellectual and member of the political bureau of the Christian right Phalangist Party (Al Kata'eb). Abu Khalil joined the Phalangist party at the age of sixteen in 1939 for nationalist reasons after he witnessed a march for the party which he says “moved something in him”. At that time he was responsible for distributing the party’s newspaper, Labour, that was issued in Arabic and French. He later became the editor of the newspaper from 1962 to 1982, but the turning point in his political career was in 1985. He was requested by the Party to dissuade people from a strike called for by leftist and nationalist parties in downtown Beirut, in which he felt helpless against the revolutionary songs that were mobilizing people in the downtown square. At that point he decided to establish an underground radio station of his own from his home which aired three times daily. When the leader of the party, Pierre Gemayel, heard of the radio station he offered Abu Khalil the position of deputy chairperson of the party. However, Abu Khalil later resigned the position based on the conviction that the “political game blinds one’s vision”. He preferred to be away from the frontline positions of the party as he desired a liberated intellectual role whereby he could practice oversight. Although a member of a right-wing political party, he was influenced by the organizational forms of socialist parties and their connections to their supporter-base. Abu Khalil does not conceal his admiration for Israel, which he visited, as a state built on institutions and technological advancement.



As for Abu Khalil's concern with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian presence in Lebanon, he explained that "I became interested in Palestinian presence in Lebanon because of the conflict between Palestinians and Lebanese, a conflict of which the causes are well known today and recognized... the need for Palestinians to carry arms, of course, to defend their rights, from Lebanese territory which placed them in confrontation with the Lebanese state which is supposed to be the one to make decisions of war or peace. It's not possible for armed groups to spread on Lebanese lands without taking anyone's permission and resort to armed activities independently of the Lebanese state, a matter which caused the Lebanese state to be shaken of course. This concerns us of course, because what protects us as Lebanese people other than the state as an institution, as a political authority, as a legal entity? The main condition for the existence of a state is its sovereignty over its territories. As such, the Lebanese state lost its sovereignty and it was forced, and we were all forced to accept what was known as the Cairo Agreement which recognizes the armed presence of the PLO. Our interest started with this issue. Of course our interest also preceded this matter as we've been concerned with the Palestinian cause since 1948, but we did not feel a danger towards us directly then from Palestinians as a political presence. We were committed to the Palestinian cause just as the rest of the Lebanese, however from the position of being a country of assistance and not confrontation which was approved the by the Arab League. The evidence for this is that Lebanon was not forced to or requested to participate in any wars with Israel except for the 1948 war when Lebanon participated as much as was possible. Of course we became concerned and I personally became concerned".

**Walid Mohammed Ali**

Mohammed Ali is a Palestinian academic, researcher, and the Director of the Ba'eth Research Centre for Palestine and Strategic Studies based in Beirut. He has been involved in the Palestinian cause as a political activist and a researcher on Palestine and Palestinians for over thirty years.

Walid explains that his involvement in the Palestinian cause is part of his lived reality and not something that he chose. He explains that “first of all, I am Palestinian to both parents. I was born and raised in the refugee camps therefore naturally I have lived-experience of the tragedy of Palestinian refugees. Their deprivation from belonging to a nation-state on the one hand, and their deprivation from the simplest of human rights on the other”. He goes onto say “Palestinians were not viewed from a civil or humanitarian angle, they were only viewed from a security angle and I grew up in this atmosphere so it’s natural that this problem is ingrained within me. I am not interested and I did not choose this interest, rather I am ingrained in this reality because I live it, I suffer from it, I carry its consequences, and I pay a price for being Palestinian and not for anything that I have committed. I interact with this reality day and night”.

### **Mahmoud Al Ali**

Mahmoud Al Ali is a Palestinian academic and civil society activist. He is the director the “Aaed” (Return) Centre involved in upholding the Palestinian right of return. Al Ali has several publications on the history and conditions of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. His involvement and interest in the field of Palestinian rights in Lebanon stem from the reality of harsh conditions. He explains that “it is mainly due to the living conditions. I am from the refugee camps originally. Growing up there you feel that your home is not your home and your school is not your school... the home and school

belong to UNRWA. Growing up in the camp I didn't have any interaction with my Lebanese surroundings, the camps were controlled by the Lebanese state and Lebanese security and I had little reason to leave the camp. With the Palestinian revolution this changed... it was actually the Lebanese who came to the camp as the revolution represented the aspirations of Arab populations and was a model for them. In either case, one didn't feel like they were living in a normal environment in the camp and I wanted to improve conditions... this is when my involvement began”.

### **Souheil Al-Natour**

Souheil Al-Natour is Palestinian lawyer specialized in legal issues relating to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. He is the chairperson of the Union of Palestinian Lawyers in Lebanon and a member of the Palestinian Writers and Journalist Association. He has many publications in Arabic and English on the legal status of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

Al-Natour was born in the city of Acre in historic Palestine one year prior to the occupation in 1948. His parents were forced out of Palestine under the threat of force by the Zionist paramilitaries and they carried him on their shoulders to Lebanon as they left on foot. The beginnings of his political awareness were in elementary and intermediate school in Lebanon when he was personally confronted with legal restrictions on basic human rights. His school organized a trip to Syria and only Al-Natour and another two Palestinian students were excluded from the trip by the school administration as Palestinians were required to obtain a clearance for travel from the Lebanese intelligence and the Syrian intelligence. In his words, “this was the first slap to the face that made me feel I was different to the rest and that there was something against me”.



His political consciousness and awareness became deeper and shifted to the political organizational level when the split occurred in the United Arab Republic (Syria and Egypt) in 1961. Al-Natour has been an active political figure in the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) since the 1970s and till present.

### **Farid El-Khazen**

Farid El-Khazen is a Lebanese academic and member of the Lebanese parliament for the Christian right Free Patriotic Movement. He is a Professor of Political Science at the American University of Beirut and he chaired the department from 2000 to 2005. He received his Ph.D. in International Relations from the John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and he has numerous publications on the Lebanese political establishment and on Palestinian presence in Lebanon. El-Khazen was first elected to parliament in the year 2000 when his uncle stepped down from his parliamentary seat for him to take his place, and he has been a parliament member till present. He is from a political family and his father was the mayor of the city of Jounieh. However, he refuses the concept of “hereditary politics” in Lebanon, although he does acknowledge that there are historically political families in Lebanon, but to him the individual needs to be a competent politician before he or she can take over the post.

El-Khazen’s interest in the Arab-Israeli conflict was academic at first. He explains: “my interest stemmed from an academic angle as a professor at the American University of Beirut. I wrote a number of studies on Lebanon in the 1970s period when the Palestinian armed presence was an essential factor. I wrote a book, *The Breakdown of the State in Lebanon*. Many sections of the book are on the Palestinian presence in

Lebanon... From here I began to have an interest in the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole and specifically the Palestinian aspect of it in relation to the Lebanese experience”.

### **Hassan Kabalan**

Hasan Kabalan is a Lebanese intellectual and a member of the political bureau of the Lebanese Shia Amal Movement. Kabalan has several publications in Arabic on Lebanese politics.

Kabalan attributed his concern for and interest in the Palestinian cause to personal connections and to the positive early relationship between Lebanese Shias and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. In the 1970s his sisters received their education in a school that was run by the Palestinian revolution therefore, as he explains, he had personal interaction with the suffering of Palestinian orphans and children, and direct interactions and relations with the residents of Palestinian refugee camps. Kabalan’s nieces and nephews from his sister are Palestinians and his aunt’s children are Palestinian due to their marriage to Palestinian husbands. His connection to the Palestinian cause also stems from the history of the Shia-Palestinian relationship. He explains that it “is no secret that out of 15 Palestinian refugee camps, 11 are located in areas with strong Shia presence and this created a network of strong social relations even if in certain periods, this relationship was characterized by violence and conflict. The Shias embraced Palestinians and their cause from an early stage which led to political awareness beyond the confines of sect”.

Kabalan’s connection to the Palestinian cause began in his early childhood. He explained that “at an early stage and since my eyes first opened to life when I was five-years old there was the 1967 war and I remember that in that war I heard of waves of

refuge. I was a young boy when I witnessed the fundraising campaigns under the banner of Palestinian refugees in Jordan. In June 1967, the lights were turned off in Lebanon and lamps were painted in blue. Since that time, the Palestinian cause became part of my everyday life just like all Lebanese youth that grew up and were raised on this cause. The Palestinian cause became part of our cultural, moral and value-system". He also stressed the importance of the Palestinian cause to him at present. He explained that "despite all the difficulties that face the Palestinian cause today, I still think that this cause is still the central cause of the Arab world and the essence of our national and religious belonging. I am not taking a risk if I say that the outcome of the Palestinian cause will determine the fate of the entire Arab region and the even Arabism as an idea, and even the fate of Islam as a religion... because who will control the city of Jerusalem and ultimately Palestine will control the entire region".

### **Marwan Fares**

Marwan Fares is a Lebanese intellectual and parliament member for the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP). He was first elected to parliament in 1996, and he chaired the parliamentary committee on human rights from 1996 to 2005. Fares hold a Ph.D. in French literature from the Sorbonne University in Paris. While studying in France he participated in the student protests of 1968. This experience made him conscious of the role of youth in reforming the state and in attaining various forms of rights. When he returned to Lebanon in 1969, he joined the SSNP and was a main member in the National Lebanese Students Union. He also was elected as a member of the Lebanese Writers Association in 1980. He has numerous publications in Arabic and French, and he has participated in organizing many international academic conferences. Fares is an outspoken politician for Palestinian rights in Lebanon and a strong proponent of



resistance against Israel. He explained that his involvement and interest in the Palestinian cause stems from the fact that “Palestine is Southern Syria” as the political party he belongs to calls for unity in Greater or Historical Syria.

### **Beshara Merhej**

Beshara Merhej is a Lebanese politician and writer. He was elected as a parliament member in 1992 and 1996, and served as the Lebanese Minister of Interior from 1992 to 1995. He received his education at the American University of Beirut (AUB) in the discipline of economics, but he explains that his genuine interest is politics. Merhej is an Arab Nationalist and affiliated with the Arab Baath Socialist Party (Hezb Al Baath). He is a Greek Orthodox Christian from the town of Dhour Al Showir and was born in 1946. He is known for his supportive stances towards Palestinians and the Palestinian cause. In terms of local Lebanese politics, Merhej considers the sectarian system as the cause of Lebanon’s failings, and therefore he is a strong proponent of implementing the deconfessionalization clause in Lebanon post-civil war constitution, the Ta’if Accord.

Merhej’s involvement and interest in the Palestinian cause, as he explains, is “first and foremost from a humanitarian angle. I felt the injustice the Palestinian people endures, whether in the occupied territories or in the Diaspora, and even here in Lebanon where the Palestinian people live in the camps in very harsh conditions. I personally visited the camps to examine their conditions more closely and it is very difficult to live in many of these camps. I became familiar with most of the Palestinian camps and I resided in them for a period due to my sympathy towards the Palestinian revolution and due to being part of a political party that believed in supporting the Palestinian revolution. As such, I became familiar with reality of Palestinian conditions and I was affected from a

humanitarian angle. This is in addition to books and political ideas presented to me by many leftist and nationalist intellectuals of whom the majority were Palestinians... this also had an impact on me. There is also the artistic dimension...He explains that the songs of the Syrian National Lebanese singer Fairuz also had an impact on him. He says “for example, the songs “We Shall Return One Day”, “Bisan”, “Shadi”... these are very beautiful songs, as well as the song for Jerusalem, Zaharet Al Madaen”, which was released in later years“.

### **Salah Salah**

Salah Salah is a member of the Palestinian National Council and formerly from the leadership of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Salah has a long history of political involvement in the Palestinian cause and of dealing with the Lebanese state since the 1950s. He had represented Palestinians in Lebanon in official negotiations with the Lebanese state, but in his earlier years of political activism he had also been arrested by the Lebanese state numerous times for politically defending the rights of Palestinians in Lebanon.

Salah says that his political interest and involvement in the Palestinian cause began at an early stage based on a fundamental foundation to the cause related to opposition actions to resettlement plans that were proposed in the early 1950s. He explained that at that time they used the term “rehousing” instead of “tawteen” which is commonly used today. The proposed plans included the Marshal plan, Johnston plan, and others. He says “at that early stage we began rejecting these plans on the basis of our holding on the right of return to Palestine. There was UN resolution 194 and we argued that instead of placing all these efforts for resettlement why not place them towards implementing

the UN resolution. I started at that early stage and I'm still involved in defending the right of Palestinian return”.

### **Jaber Suleiman**

Jaber Suleiman is a Palestinian researcher and civil society activist. Suleiman's involvement in the Palestinian cause began as a researcher in the 1970s in the PLO Planning Centre based in Beirut. His main interest at the time was in the Arab-Israeli conflict and in the Palestinian cause specifically. He explains that following the departure of the PLO from Lebanon in 1982 and the tragedy that followed, the Lebanese perception towards Palestinians changed. All the PLO institutions collapsed, whether economic, social, or cultural. At that moment, Palestinian civil society emerged to fill the gap in services left by the collapse of the PLO institutions. He says “this is when I became involved in Palestinian civil society organizations that provided services to Palestinian society and compensated for the deficiency and lack after the collapse of the PLO institution”. Having centred his focus on civil society, in 1996 he contributed to the establishment of the Coordination Forum of Palestinian Civil Society Organizations in Lebanon. This forum is comprised of sixteen NGOs that operate in the fields of education, health, nurseries, women empowerment and many other fields such as the cultural and national identity. As such, since 1996 Suleiman had begun focusing on the socio-economic difficulties Palestinians face in Lebanon. 1996 was also the year Suleiman began researching the socio-economic conditions of Palestinians in Lebanon. He explains that “in 1996, a conference was held in Oxford University on Palestinian refugees. Why 1996? Because there was a European interest in Palestinian refugees in Lebanon after the Oslo Accords and how to reach a settlement for them. Much of the funding that was supposed to be provided to Palestinians in Lebanon actually went the



West Bank, but in 1996, I was requested by the Refugee Studies Centre at Oxford to present a paper on the role of Palestinian NGOs in Lebanon. This research was published in the Journal of Refugee Studies. This encouraged me to keep publishing. I received a one-year scholarship to study at the Refugee Studies Centre in Oxford where I spent a year. I was a research fellow on forced migration at the Centre. From that point I began publishing in English more than I did in Arabic and I participated in many research projects in Western and Arab universities. I also conducted research for UNRWA. I'm also involved with the refugee camps, combining between research and activism”.

### **Najah Wakim**

Najah Wakim is a Lebanese politician and leader of the leftist People's Movement. His education is in the discipline of law. He is also a writer with several publications on the Lebanese political system. Wakim was first elected to the Lebanese parliament in 1972 as the youngest parliament member to ever join the parliament. He was again elected as parliament member in the years 1992 and 1996. He boycotted the year 2000 elections as he considered the electoral law was designed by the Syrian regime to bring back the same politicians to parliament. He escaped an assassination attempt in 1989 and was jailed for criticizing the Lebanese president in the 1970s. Wakim is Greek Orthodox and was born in 1946. Politically, he is an Arab Nationalist and a strong supporter of unity between Lebanon and Syria. He is also a strong opponent of the Lebanese sectarian system and he stands for the deconfessionalization of this system. He was also an outspoken critic against the role of the Syrian regime in Lebanon.

Wakim's awareness of and interest in the Palestinian cause began in his early childhood. He explains that "when I was a child, four Palestinian families were our neighbours and they were friends with my parents and our family. I began to ask what is the story of those people and why did they leave their country? One of the neighbour's daughters, Siham Deebi, was my classmate when I first entered school at the age of five. She was distinguished. One day she entered the class chanting long live Abdul Nasser. This was the first I hear of president Abdul Al Nasser and I associate his name with this little girl. 1953 or 1954 was the period of Arab liberation movements as well as international liberation movements. We started hearing of the Soviet Union and we insisted contrary to their image in Western media that the Soviets are our friends because Nasser said they were our friends. In this period, Nasser transformed the struggles in the regions from tribal struggles and conflicts to ones centred on modern causes and one's focused on liberation. In that same period, Palestinians were people who experienced injustice, and they are people like us, with the same language and from the same skin and blood. In contrast, we also heard of the Israeli who expelled them. The Arab liberation movement was also centred on Palestine. Here is when my first attachment to Palestine was formed, and it later translated into awareness on Arab liberation, Arab unity, and on the Palestinian cause".

## **Appendix B: List of Political Parties**

### **Amal Movement**

The Amal Movement was established in 1974 under the name “the movement of the disposed” by Imam Moussa Al Sadr. The Lebanese party is secular although it only includes Shia members and prior to the 1990s was the largest Shia political party in Lebanon. After the disappearance of Al Sadr, Nabih Berri became the leader of the party. Amal and Hezbollah are currently in a strategic alliance.

### **Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)**

The DFLP is a Palestinian Marxist-Leninist political party. It was established in 1969 by a group of Palestinian intellectuals who were originally from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The party is non-sectarian and included Palestinian and Lebanese members and supporters in the 1970s.

### **Free Patriotic Movement (FPM)**

The FPM was founded in the 1980s by the general of the Lebanese army of East Beirut Michel Aoun. The party is a Christian right Maronite political party is still headed by Aoun. It is one of the two largest Maronite Maronite political parties in Lebanon at present.

### **Future Movement**

The Future movement is the largest Sunni political party in Lebanon. The Party was officially established in 2007 and adopts a secular ideology but its members are predominantly from the Sunni sect. The party was founded by Rafik Hariri, but following his assassination his son Saad Hariri has heeded the party.

### **Hezbollah**

Hezbollah is an Islamist Shia political party and was founded following the 1982 Israeli invasion and occupation of the Lebanese South and the capital Beirut. The party was primarily formed to resist Israeli occupation. By the 1990s Hezbollah became the largest Shia political party in Lebanon and it is currently headed by Hassan Nasrallah.

### **People’s Movement**



The People's Movement is a Lebanese Arab Nationalist and leftist political party. It was founded by Najah Wakim in 2000 and it is popular among educated Lebanese youth. The party is secular and non-sectarian and this is reflected in its supporter-base. The party is still headed by Wakim.

### **Phalangist Party (Al Kata'eb)**

The Phalangist party is a Lebanese Christian right political party currently headed by Amin Gemayel. The party was founded in 1936 as Maronite youth paramilitary organization. Up till 1989, the end of the Lebanese civil war, it was the largest Maronite political party in Lebanon.

### **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)**

The PLFP is a Palestinian Arab Nationalist and leftist political party. It grew out of the Arab Nationalist movement of the 1950s and was founded by George Habash in the 1960s. It is a cross-sectarian party and in the 1960s and 1970s it included Palestinian and Lebanese members from various sects.

### **Progressive Socialist Party (PSP)**

The PSP is the largest Druze political party in Lebanon. It adopts a secular ideology but its members are only from the Druze sect. The party was founded in 1949 by Kamal Jumblat, but following his assassination, it has been headed by his son Walid Jumblat.

### **Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP)**

The SSNP was founded in 1932 as an anti-colonial and national liberation political party against French colonization. The party was founded by Antoune Saade on the basis of unity within Greater Syria. It is one of the only three secular and cross-sectarian Lebanese political parties and this is reflected in its supporter-base.

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