

The Influence of International – Domestic Politics on the Production of Ethnic Identities:
The Case of Lebanon (2000 – 2010)

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The Influence of International – Domestic Politics on the Production of Ethnic Identities: The Case of Lebanon (2000 – 2010)

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Ethnic leaders' appeals center on polarizing ethnic identities for support in general, and during elections in specific, and it has been a general consensus until recently in electoral systems-based theories that these appeals are shaped by domestic factors such as local cultural institutions and electoral systems. For example, these theories argue that electoral systems that encourage inter-communal vote-pooling also encourage ethnic parties to forge inter-ethnic coalitions to win parliamentary elections and thus to avoid appeals based on narrowly interpreted identities that alienate the supporters of their allies. However, it is the contention of this dissertation that coalition formation and, subsequently, ethnic appeals, are not always dependent on domestic causes; rather, a major influence on an ethnic leader's choices of identities and domestic alliances is the interplay between international actors and domestic leaders. More specifically, rivalries between international state actors manifest as ethnic rivalries between ethnic leaders when the latter form coalitions on the basis of shared allegiances to the same foreign backer or bloc. Bound by their allegiances to international actors (out of either opportunism or ideological conviction), ethnic leaders re-conceptualize salient identities, revisiting specific historical narratives in order to accommodate new domestic alliances based totally or in part on international interstate blocs and to defend their domestic and international blocs.

Taking Lebanon (2000-2010) as a case study, this research focuses on four Lebanese ethnic parties (The Phalange, the Free Patriotic Movement, the Future Movement, and Hezbollah) and tracks both shifts and consistencies in their ethnic appeals before and after a major political event of international proportion in Lebanon: the assassination of ex-prime minister Rafic Hariri in February 2005 and the subsequent withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon after domestic and international pressure. Quantifying over 4,500 speeches given by leaders of these four parties over the course of this decade in Lebanon, this research applies the Constructivist lens, which treats all identities as social constructions, and discourse analysis to compare the types of identities that ethnic leaders directly appeal upon for support before and after they change coalitions.

Acknowledgements

My earliest memory goes back to 1982. My neighbourhood was on the receiving end of heavy artillery for 11 hours, and I remember my mother carrying me, a three year old child, and running down to the ground floor, while my older siblings ran behind us on the stairs. After the shelling ended, I peeked outside and saw dust and rubble. On the rare occasion that we had electricity back then, I would see the politicians on TV accusing each other of threatening their respective communities and being loyal to foreign forces instead of to Lebanon. Almost 40 years later, Beirut still lays in rubble due to an explosion at the port because dangerous explosive material was left there for six years, the result of negligence, corruption, and ethnic polarization. Tuning to the television, decades later, I see the faces of the same warlords who participated in the Lebanese Civil War, exchanging similar accusations and polarizing their supporters against some international conspiracy they claim was cooked up to strike them and their version of a prosperous Lebanon. For 30 years, I wondered how these ethnic leaders maintained control without losing their grip of power and how they maintained such a strong populist base despite their evident failure to deliver any progress to the Lebanese people. The answer is in the stories they continuously spin, on a daily, sometimes hourly, basis, controlling the facts through filters that creates realities for their respective audiences. As long as these warlords and ethnic leaders remain in power, Lebanon's fate is not a happy one. The Lebanese economy collapsed, the country was ranked one of the most corrupt in the world, and essential food material, social welfare, and medicine had vanished. Yet these leaders persist in dominating the Lebanese political scene, and they continue to receive support, albeit shaky nowadays, from their international allies in terms of financing or weapons. The hollowed Lebanese state is just a tool to ensure their survival and squash possible alternatives, as the failed 2019 uprising showed. I hope that I will be proven wrong.

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Chapter 1: The Lebanese Warlords and International Friendships

“Internal conflicts always invite foreign intervention. And as conflicts are more common in multi-communal states, intervention in their affairs, both direct and indirect are the rule. States seeking to establish regional hegemony seek clients among the communities of the multi-communal state in the hope of using them to influence the state’s policies. They are often both fire-lighter and fire-fighter, precipitating crises in the hope of exercising as arbiters the greatest possible influence. Rival communities themselves often encourage foreign influence” ~ Theodore Hanf (1994, 39)

Two Puzzles

After spending fifteen years in exile, the Anti-Syrian Christian figure Michel Aoun returned to Lebanon in May 2005, after he had fled to France in 1990 following his army losing to the Syrian and Lebanese army. In exile, General Aoun had built the Free Patriotic Movement, a movement banned in Lebanon during Syria's military presence there. The Free Patriotic Movement's dual purposes were to end Syria's hegemonic mandate over Lebanon and disarm Hezbollah (Hanf 1993, 593; Abdul Hussein 2003; Daily Star 2002a; Enman 2003). During his fifteen-year stay in France, General Aoun followed in the footsteps of traditional Lebanese Christian politics. He opposed the Syrian government's meddling in Lebanon, despised any forms of arms outside the Lebanese army, and dubbed Hezbollah a terrorist group (Fife 2003; Enman 2003). Similarly, he hated the 'Arab' face of Lebanon and argued that Arabism was just a tool with which leaders oppress their people (Raad 2005). He called upon the United States to include Syria and Hezbollah as part of its war on terror (LCCC 2003), and he considered the on-going Arab-Israeli conflict a Syrian ploy to justify their military presence in Lebanon (Assaf 2002; Fife 2003).

In a turn that surprised observers, after he returned to Lebanon, Aoun abandoned the anti-Syrian camp and its international allies and formed a robust coalition with the pro-Syrian forces, the same forces that had banned his movement in the country (Najem 2012, 74). He evolved quickly, becoming a reliable ally of Hezbollah and the Assad regime within ten months of his return from exile (BBC 2006; 2006a). He denounced anyone critical of either Syria's ruling party, the Baathi party, or Hezbollah's arms as traitors serving Israeli/American interests (BBC 2006d; Daily Star 2008). He accepted the Arab character of Lebanon and re-conceptualized the Christian identity as anti-Western and pro-Syrian. Despite Aoun's abrupt reversal in his political stances in 2005 (Sakr 2010), he maintained the largest Christian parliamentary bloc thereafter (Pan 2005; European Union Election Observation Mission 2009, 28). In

2016, General Aoun became the president of Lebanon, with the full support of Hezbollah and its allies (Aljazeera 2016). How could General Aoun maintain such support from his Christian base, especially when current partners physically attacked his supporters and banned them from gathering for over fifteen years? The answer lies in Aoun's creativity in re-conceptualizing his supporters' ethnic identities as anti-Western and pro-the Iranian-Syrian resistance axis. Hence, he equated the survival of Lebanon to the domestic pro-Syrian camp's victory by revisiting his movement's and Lebanon's historical narratives and steering the rage of his supporters, previously aimed at Syria and its domestic allies, toward his former allies and their respective foreign backers.

This phenomenon of new alliances among former archenemies is widespread in Lebanon; in fact, such alliances signal that, when parties share positions relative to international actors, this motivates them to become local allies, which in turn shapes the salience and historical narratives of ethnic identities used by the parties' ethnic leaders. Some ethnic leaders, such as those of Hezbollah and the Future Movement, are committed to their respective foreign backers, Iran and Saudi Arabia respectively, due to ideological and financial commitments. These alliances can shape Lebanon's domestic politics in regard to tensions within and across communities. For example, the Lebanese Resistance Brigades (*hereafter* AMAL¹ and Hezbollah, two Shiite parties with military wings in Lebanon) fought a destructive war against each other over the domination of the Shiite community toward the final years of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) (see Hanf 1993, 317-318). After Syria and Iran, the respective international allies of AMAL and Hezbollah, cemented an alliance, the Shiite parties gradually halted violence against each other (Hirst 2010, 235-236), becoming close allies and coordinating vote pooling in Shiite-dominated constituencies (Norton 2008, 102; Hirst 2010, 245).

In theory, as some scholars (Horowitz 2000 [1985], 358-359) have argued, parties like AMAL and Hezbollah should have engaged in ethnic outbidding. Ethnic outbidding is a spiral instance when rival leaders of the same ethnicity increasingly promise measures for their constituents' welfare and simultaneously push for an extreme isolationist form of community identification. In ethnically divided societies, ethnic parties that seek to represent the same ethnic community outbid each other to establish ethnic support. Ethnic outbidding should have placed these two parties in two rival electoral

¹ "AMAL Movement," or simply AMAL, is the Arabic abbreviation of Afwaj Al-Muqawamah Al-Lubnaniyah, which translates in English as the Lebanese Resistance Brigades. "Amal" as an Arabic word also means "hope."

lists. Instead, the opposite has taken place ever since Syria and Iran cemented their alliance in the late 1980s: these two ethnic parties allied with each other, along with other pro-Syrian parties. This alliance is no surprise from this dissertation's theoretical perspective since Syria backed AMAL and Iran backed Hezbollah. This two-level alliance reshaped Hezbollah's ethnic outlook on Lebanese politics: the leadership abandoned its support of an Islamic revolution and preached the Lebanese, Arab, and Islamic identities.

Such commitments do not entail that all political parties' interests intertwine with those of international camps. These types of political parties join internationally backed domestic coalitions to advance their political interests. They may abandon their international-domestic alliances when their position relative to international camps no longer advances their goals. For example, Michel Aoun abandoned the United States, the sole international actor, to grant him an audience in 2003 (see Assaf 2003b) to demand action against Syria and Hezbollah. This Syrian-Iranian alliance allowed Michel Aoun to join the pro-Syrian camp in 2006, despite the bad blood between the two Shiite parties and the Free Patriotic Movement. Once Aoun realized that he could not attain the Lebanese presidency through the Western-Saudi powers, he jumped ship, allied with his former foes, and remained committed to their international-domestic alliance. The common denominator between these three parties, irrespective of the past, was their shared position relative to the Syrian-Iranian axis. Each party had to re-conceptualize relations between their supporters, who identify with their parties on an ethnic basis, from a historical perspective, triggering significant shifts in ethno-politics between groups. Aoun's full abandonment of the United States provided an opportunity to seek powerful allies in Lebanon and resulted in a need to ethnically justify why such an alliance was vital for his Christian base.

Given that Aoun changed his two-decade-long rhetoric against Syria and its supporters in less than a year, he should have lost most of his Christian base after his political switch to join the coalition that symbolized the repression that his followers had endured for his beliefs. Instead, he won the largest Christian parliamentary bloc in the 2005 and 2009 elections. Similarly, Hezbollah and AMAL should have been at each other's throats trying to compete for Shiite voters. Instead, the two Shiite parties maintained a constructive and robust alliance, especially after the Syrian forces withdrew from Lebanon in 2005. Furthermore, neither AMAL nor Hezbollah lost the support of their Shiite constituents after they allied with Michel Aoun, especially puzzling given that both had considered the latter a national threat for fifteen years. The solution to all of these puzzles lies in the answer to the larger question of

how the positions of ethnic leaders relative to international allies shape domestic coalitions, and subsequently, identities. Even though Hezbollah is an extension of Iran's religious oligarchs, such as the Supreme leader Ali Khamanei, Nasrallah had to explain to his supporters why he allied with a man that the pro-Syrian camp in Lebanon had considered a threat (see for example Assaf 2003b; BBC 2006g; 2005h). For both Aoun and Nasrallah, their justifications centered on depicting the United States and Saudi Arabia, both backers of their rivals, as a threat to their respective communities, and a new historical narrative emerged by which each of these actors could depict the other as an ally.

At first glance, ethnic leaders breaking and forming alliances across the spectrum seems commonplace; however, ethnic leaders with histories of bloodshed and polarization forming new alliances are rather an anomaly. How can one explain this making and unmaking of unlikely alliances and coalitions between enemies that seem to set Lebanon apart from other countries? For the most part, the religious and ethnic rivalries and conflicts that characterize Lebanese politics are not exceptional; Bosnia-Herzegovina (Donia 2006) and Northern Ireland (McGarry and O'Leary 2009) experience similar tensions. However, the frequent, and sometimes bizarre, inter-ethnic coalitions within Lebanese politics and their subsequent, frequent breakdowns reveal a particular phenomenon: ethnic leaders choose allies based on agreements to share the same position relative to allied state actors, irrespective of their domestic history. This bizarre, seemingly particular aspect of Lebanese coalition building nevertheless reflects a dynamic that could possibly exist elsewhere: namely, the influence of international alignments on domestic ethnic politics. Thus, going back to the case of Lebanon, the history of bad blood can simply be revisited, and leaders can re-interpret salient or potential identities for themselves, their allies, and their rivals to mobilize support for this newly-born coalition. The maintenance of ethnic supporters depends on how ethnic leaders re-conceptualize and politicize these multiple identities to maintain their control. As the empirical chapters shall demonstrate, the supporters of Lebanon's parties mobilized ethnically for the sake of the domestic coalition, which was grounded in a relationship with the international Syrian-Iranian axis.

The influences of these alliances with international states on ethnic leaders generate allies at the domestic level and the salience of ethnic identities. The behaviour of Lebanon's ethnic leaders demonstrates the presence of this two-level interplay. Lebanon's politics reflects the international rivalry between the Syrian-Iranian axis and the Saudi-Western alliance through the commitment of domestic actors, such as Hariri and Nasrallah, who commit to these international blocs competing for

dominance in the Middle East. Once committed to an international bloc, Lebanon's leaders do not hesitate to openly defend their foreign backers and criticize the backers of their domestic foes, offering an opportunity to see how ethnic leaders build new coalitions that reflect the international competition.

Furthermore, such coalitions within a divided society plagued with multiple sectarian, regional, and family clanship identities mobilize their supporters in support of their allies and against their enemies through identity re-conceptualization. Scholarly work in the past has looked at international competition between states over the power to stabilize and destabilize weak, divided societies (Miller 2007; Jasinski 2011; Oakes 2012; Geukjian 2017; Seaver 2000; McGarry and O'Leary 2009; Arfi 2005). This work has not covered the types of identities that ethnic leaders use to polarize their supporters against rivals and support their coalitions. This dissertation fills the gap of this two-level approach. It highlights how ethnic leaders, on the receiving end of inter-state competition, become transmission belts for this international level (See "transmission belts" in Cox (1996 [1983])). As a result, these ethnic leaders polarize their vast supporters in reaction to international events propagating into the domestic sphere, as part of their strategy to appeal for support politically. In this context, there has been no study of how these ethnic leaders 1) choose allies in reaction to domestic and international developments or 2) polarize their community members against rivals on both levels through identity politics. Domestic coalitions, along the lines of international power, manifest in the speeches of ethnic leaders addressing their respective communities and signal the status of competition in the region. Lebanon's particular domestic inter-coalition polarization signals the intensity of the rivalry between the Western-Saudi alignment and the Syrian-Iranian axis. When Lebanon descends into chaos and riots, the rivalry simultaneously intensifies between the respective international groups.

Individuals are born into multiple identities (Chandra 2012) that include racial, religious, and regional categories, among others (9). Those identities that shape members' decisions are active, while others that simply allow membership qualifications remain dormant until circumstances, be they personal or stereotyped communally by others, make them salient (Chandra 2012, 9, 100-105). Ethnic leaders, in this case, politicize and appeal to multiple identities and their visible attributes, to suit the objective of winning in elections (Van der Veen and Laitin 2012, 288-289). This strategy enables a leader to target a variety of voters, such as "Catholics and the Working Class" (Ibid, 289). Ethnic leaders add the international positioning of their parties, their coalitions, and their rivals as indicators of national and

ethnic allies or threats to their communities. The clearest strategy to track these identities' salience among party supporters is observing the daily speeches of ethnic leaders to their supporters in reaction to domestic and international developments. These leaders cannot simply defend their foreign backers but must rather embed them within narratives that serve communal and national interests.

As detailed in this dissertation's empirical section, Chapters Six through Nine, Lebanon's leaders often discuss their relations to their allies, their rivals, and the international states that support or oppose their coalitions. These ethnic leaders have the ability to heighten or de-escalate tensions between rival ethnic parties through mass media coverage, rallies, membership muscle, and welfare services (see welfare service' in Cammett 2014; rallies in Volk 2010; party muscle in Khazen 2003). As this dissertation will demonstrate, this strength of ethnic leaders, paired with their focus on international events, gives the international cleavages between states the power to influence domestic identity politics. If ethnic leaders choose domestic allies on the basis of sharing common international states or blocs, then this international alignment shapes domestic societies. The changes in relations between ethnic leaders, especially those who lead strong, dominant parties, can re-define ties between the ethnic communities that support these leaders (Van der Veen and Laitin 2012, 233). These 'overnight' alliances that manifest along with newly re-conceptualized historical narratives and identities steer community supporters' attention toward new allies and rivals, both at the domestic and the international level.

Thus, this research contributes to the study of identities as social constructs, i.e., ideas that influential figures re-conceptualize or modify to suit their interests. Through examining the speeches of ethnic leaders, the appearance of identities and ideological trajectories, especially as they relate to other groups, are revealed to be more flexible than is assumed by Constructivists. If the salience and activation of identities depend on specific circumstances, then these identities change in ideology, scope, and history as international actors' circumstances change in parallel. The most apparent identity changes within ethnic leaders' speeches are made when these leaders abandon their foreign backers and choose new ones. This research focuses on four Lebanese ethnic parties, out of which two, the Sunni-majority Future Movement and Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement, re-conceptualized their ethnic identities in parallel with changing their ties with foreign allies (see more on this below). In these cases, the ethnic leaders did not respect the constitutional rules of competition because they were not solely concerned with domestic victories; instead, they regarded their foreign backers and allies' victories as part of their victory domestically.

A dominant strand of research has focused solely on the domestic level and has analysed how electoral systems shape ethnic leaders' behaviour. These researchers have argued that the electoral system can influence ethnic tensions between communities if ethnic leaders do not have any reason to cooperate with each other (Lijphart 1969; O'Flynn 2005; Laitin and Van der Veen 2012). When these elites form large coalitions, out of a need for votes, they do not appeal to exclusive votes in order to retain votes from constituents outside of their immediate communities (Laitin and Van der Veen 2012, 344-345). In this kind of case, the more members join a given inter-ethnic coalition, the more likely the ethnic leaders involved will appeal to overlapping non-ethnic identities, such as national or supranational ones. Beyond the need for cross-ethnic votes, the present research adds a new condition for changes in ethnic-identity rhetoric, arguing that when several foreign backers penetrate the divided society's politics, the electoral system does not play a role in coalition formation and salience of identities. Instead, the position of ethnic leaders relative to the international state(s) that have penetrated the society determines membership in a given coalition, and, subsequently, the types of ethnic and non-ethnic identities to which these leaders appeal for support.

As for the foreign backers, the success of their protégés within their respective countries advances the backers' geo-strategic interests. Such interests vary from gaining friendly allies in the face of international adversaries to economic objectives and the achievement of trade deals. Once an international power sets foot in a country through ties with ethnic leaders, other states will follow similar tactics to either limit their rivals' growing advantage or consolidate their foothold. As Corstange and Marinov (2012) stated: "Geopolitical rivalries, meanwhile, increase the cost of non-intervention when a rival sender aids one faction – providing incentives to aid the other side and offset the disadvantages imposed by the rival sender" (656). The best-case scenario for these international actors is establishing a proxy government that increases its military capability against and global bargaining power with rival states. In this scenario, a proxy or satellite government does not require any incentives or justifications from the backing government; hence, there is no need to bargain or incur costs with state officials who have already pledged allegiance to their foreign backer. The party, in turn, benefits from accessing state resources and political power, otherwise unobtainable. For example, throughout its 1990-2005 mandate over Lebanon, Syria bargained with Israel over the Golan Heights, using Hezbollah's guerrilla operations to apply pressure solely from Southern Lebanon (Hirst 2010, 223-225). In a reverse perspective, the defeat of these allied local ethnic parties is a disadvantage for the foreign backer or

coalition if the victors are in alliance with their rival state, which might gain an economic or strategic foothold in the country. By supporting a local protégé within a divided society, the international actor or coalition increases the domestic ally's success. This ally can then return the favour in terms of economic trade, the allowance of military bases on its soil, and the prevention of rival countries from benefiting from the influenced country in terms of trade, geo-strategic influential expansion, and voting in international organizations.

Ethnic leaders, in this research, are understood as opportunist actors who rely on multiple tools to survive, primarily through ethno-politics, weakening state institutions, and corruption, insofar as they rely on these tools for political survival. The international – domestic alliance is one of many tools that ethnic leaders rely upon to survive; however, once they commit to a foreign backer, ethnic leader become transmission belts for international politics into the divided country's politics. Domestic coalitions, in this case, are formed according to shared positions vis-à-vis international backers. Commitment to foreign backers varies according to the historical and beneficial ties between the ethnic leader and the foreign backer. However, in rare circumstances, some ethnic parties, such as Hezbollah, are fully committed to their foreign backer, in this case Iran, due to religious, financial, and arms backing and not just out of opportunistic calculation. This type of domestic – international connection is unique; however, it fits the current assumption: that parties, such as Hezbollah, will lose a lot of their political, welfare, and military strength, even weaken its very identity, without the Iran connection. Through their position on international actors, ethnic leaders in general will forge alliances and spin identities to justify to their supporters why these alliances matter. In defence of these international actors and in criticism of international foes, it is ethnic leaders speeches that manifest the international – domestic alliance clearly when they re-conceptualize identities to include the international partners.

Justification for Solely Observing Ethnic Leader

Leaders in the public have the power to persuade and manipulate their targeted audiences into filtering out facts that damage their interests (Van Dijk 2006). Their day-to-day appearances in the media provide the leaders the opportunity to spin facts and re-construct ideologies that resonate in cultural and traditional meanings with the audience (Wodak 2009, 8). These speeches become texts, and as Blommaert (2004) argues, circumstances surrounding the text or speech at the time can be analysed. Sharing an experience from a conference on the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, Blommaert notes that the

organizers produced a historical background to "provide the participants with sufficient instructions and background information for preparing their interventions in such a way to fit into the programme" (Blommaert 2004, 144-145). He notes that a narrated history, the way organizers deliver it, "includes historical materials and excludes some others in ways that reflect determination" (Ibid, 157). He refers to this process as synchronisation, which "occurs in the form of condensation of several historical layers into one, synchronic, layer of history, reflecting a position in history" (Ibid).

Borrowing Blommaert's argument and applying it to ethno-politics, ethno-politics' polarizing effects on divided societies is the result of organized ethnic parties and ethnic entrepreneurs, and not ethnic groups themselves (Brubaker 2002). Ethnic entrepreneurs are individuals who 'live off' of causing group boundaries that split societies (Ibid, 166); ethnic leaders interpret current events and target rivals in these speeches and historical recountings through ethnic exclusion (see stereotyping in Eriksen 2002, 23-29), and Blommaert reminds his readers that the mere discussion of identities in public can be produced in an "argumentative manner" (2004, 210) bringing forth their salience. The most effective means of mobilizations is the "process of commemoration and its influence within societies is central of understanding cultivation of group perceptions and memories" (Tint 2010, 241). In ethno-politics, ethnic ideologies that mobilize groups of people rely on the illusion of continuity of the past as they can praise older practices (Eriksen 2002, 86), and ethnic groups "can acquire a tragic and heroic history" (Ibid, 73). Eriksen reminds his readers "what we are looking at here is not the past, but present – day constructions of the past" (Ibid). These historical narratives, that are ideologically driven, may be the standard, but the international – domestic alliances play a role in identity formation when prominent ethnic leaders discuss international and domestic actors, in the same speeches, when listing heroism and tragedy. For example, the ethnic leader criticizes the states that rival their foreign backer but never the foreign backer or other domestic allies of their foreign backer.

While Blommaert (2004) considers that actors are also driven by an underlying ideology or unconscious bias, which is a primary aim of his research (Ibid. 123), this research borrows his observations on the power of background knowledge and places in conversation with the idea of the manipulative nature of leaders to bend narratives and reshape identities through manipulating history. As Van Dijk notes, "Obviously, in order to be able to manipulate many others through text and talk, one needs to have access to some form of public discourse, such as parliamentary debates, news, opinion articles, ...the internet, and so on" (2006, 362). Day-to-day speeches, in the context of Lebanon's leaders, offer a

glimpse, at least to the public eye, of ethnic leaders' reactions to international and domestic events and to actions taken by both domestic rivals and their foreign backers. The power of ethnic leaders to shape supporters' and communities' perspectives on identities can bend relations between ethnic communities when two ethnic leaders of popular ethnic parties change their ties. The international-domestic interplay becomes more evident when alliances occur on the basis of the ethnic leader's position relative to foreign backers. Ethnic leaders' speeches in Lebanon thus offer the key observations for each of the four empirical cases. Even though the speeches do not necessarily accurately reflect the intentions of the ethnic leader toward foreign backers, these speeches do depict the narratives of ethnic identities that supporters accept and mobilize against foes. At minimum, this research sheds light on the changes in ethnic leaders' speeches as international and domestic events unfold and trigger changes in ethnic appeals. Ethnic identities, as Eriksen argues, can be ideologically "symbolic tools in political struggles" (Eriksen 2002, 76) that also depend on historical interpretations of the past (Ibid, 73- 76), and ethnic parties are characterized for excluding one or more groups on the basis of belonging into another ethnic category. Through dividing ethnic identities into several categories such as race or religion (Chandra 2012), this research traces when ethnic leaders publicly re-conceptualize identities, through new narratives, as developments emerge with their international backers.

Methodology

This dissertation takes Lebanon between 2000 and 2010 as a case study. From 1990 until 2000, the Middle East enjoyed relative stability and a balance of power between multiple actors. The Al-Qa'eda terrorist attacks on the United States, on September 11, 2001, broke this decade-long status quo between the American superpower and international actors. Multiple states involved in the Middle East changed their foreign policy as a result, primarily to avoid the wrath of the United States' and its war on terror. These reverberations forced or encouraged some Lebanese ethnic leaders to choose new international allies against Syria and its allies. In order to demonstrate the impact of these international-local alliances on shifts in ethnic identity, this research uses within-case studies of four powerful ethnic parties. As mentioned above, two of these four parties maintained their alliances with their respective foreign backers, and two switched camps. The within-case studies are of two Christian parties, the Phalange and the Free Patriotic Movement, and two Muslim parties, the Future Movement and Hezbollah, with one party of each religion switching foreign backers after Rafic Hariri's assassination on February 14th, 2005. The Free Patriotic Movement abandoned its Western allies and joined Syria and its

domestic allies; the Future Movement, on the other hand, abandoned Syria completely and joined the Western bloc and Saudi Arabia. The Phalange maintained their anti-Syrian stance and remained closely allied with the United States, and Hezbollah maintained its alliance with Syria and Iran. The Free Patriotic Movement and Hezbollah thus ended up as allies, as did the Phalange and Future Movement. Former Prime Minister Rafic Hariri, head of the Future Movement, had died in a car bomb explosion, for which his supporters and anti-Syrian parties blamed the Syrian regime. His death, resulting in this change of positions relative to Syria and its domestic allies, placed unprecedented international pressure on President Assad to withdraw his forces from Lebanon. The end of the fifteen-year Syrian mandate of re-constructing Lebanon also ended Syrian hegemony, and a free-for-all ethno-politics last seen prior to the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) manifested again as a result, in a move away from Damascus-led electoral list manufacturing.

This free-for-all political arena in Lebanon coincided with the aforementioned changes in foreign policy on the part of international actors, further pressuring the Lebanese ethnic leaders to openly defend their foreign backers' interests and target their backers' rivals. Saudi Arabia's ties with Syria deteriorated after the American - British invasion of Iraq in 2003. Similarly, France joined the United States in calling for Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon in 2004 (Hourani 2013, 49-50; Dakhllallah 2012, 59). Both Saudi Arabia and France had ties with Hariri's Future Movement, and in parallel to the foreign policy changes made by these backers, the Future Movement broke all ties with Syria, especially after Rafic Hariri's death, and openly led the Anti-Syrian Christian camp, with which Hariri had clashed in the past on the issue of Syria's presence (Nagle 2016, 1149). The United States, favouring the Hariri clan over Aoun, encouraged the latter to seek new outlets for political survival in Lebanon. The outlet he found was joining forces with Syria's allies directly after he returned from exile and afterward with Syria and Iran directly (see Chapter Seven for details). In this way, unlikely alliances of former foes within the anti-Syrian and pro-Syrian camps materialized in Lebanon, with one camp focusing on the threat of Syria and Iran to Lebanon's sovereignty, while the other stressed the dangers emanating from Israel, the United States, France, Saudi Arabia, and others. Thus, the foundation of each camp was based on their position relative to international actors, and the latter repaid their domestic allies with political support, financial aid, and even military arms. Since each coalition involved ethnic parties with bloody pasts and post-civil war tensions between them, each member of a given coalition had to advance overlapping identities to justify these alliances as natural, and re-conceptualize these identities to include new allies and exclude new foes.

Lebanon is a crucial case for presenting a new approach to identity shifts (Gerring 2001, 219) because this country in specific demonstrates the influence of international alignments on the choices of ethnic leaders' identities. Such a phenomenon challenges electoral systems theories, as well as any cultural approaches that treat identities as products of domestic circumstances (ex. see Horowitz 2000 [1985]; Huntington 1006; Kaplan 1994; Smith 1999). While there is no one specific set of electoral systems-based theories (ex. Tsebelis 1992; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005; Lijphart 2008; Gerring and Thacker 2008; Cohen 2000), these theories generally center on the need of leaders to form coalitions to address policies of national importance and not simply those of interest to specific regions or communities. In regards to ethnic identities, electoral systems-based theories argue that voters' magnitude, as defined by the election processes, can force ethnic leaders to seek alliances and forge coalitions that steer them away from exclusive identities. In this logic, the bigger the coalition, the more likely ethnic leaders will appeal to national, rather than ethnic identities (Lijphart 2008; 1969; Laitin and Van der Veen 2012). This research challenges these electoral systems-based theories and argues instead that the electoral system, and the magnitude of voters needed to win, does not matter if the position of the ethnic leader relative to foreign backers determines coalition size and membership, as is the case in Lebanon. This dissertation argues that the international level shapes the ethnic identities to which ethnic leaders appeal for support, not just domestic or cultural values. The international level's influence on identity shifts is overlooked in dominant Constructivist theories, which also stress coalitions, economic competition, or demography (Chandra 2012). This research introduces a new causal variable through which to approach identity shifts: that the position of ethnic leaders relative to international alliances shapes domestic alliances and the narration of identities as a strategy for political gain or survival.

Lebanon is also a crucial case when it comes to ethnic fluidity because it also challenges dominant theories of ethnic party behaviour (Ibid, 20), particularly Huntington's Clash of Civilizations (1996) and Horowitz's observations on ethnic party coalitions (2000 [1985]). Huntington (1996) theorized that countries like Lebanon are hubs for clashes between civilizations, treating each religion, in this case, as a civilization. Horowitz predicted that ethnic parties that seek to represent the same ethnic group would be locked within the in-group competition and become more extreme vis-à-vis each other (2000, [1985], 358-359). Lebanon's parties do not manifest this process; instead, the ethnic parties of the same group have no problem forging alliances with each other if they share the same foreign backer. Lebanon's leaders shed light on a deeper phenomenon of ethnic party behaviour: international coalitions shape

the choice of allies, and in turn, the salience of ethnic identities used to justify these alliances. Beyond the illusions of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) and the bloodshed that emerged from it, Lebanon's ethnic leaders do not seem to be bound by either ethnic boundary or party ideology in their alliance formation. This two-level analysis is understudied within ethno-politics because the causal mechanism between foreign meddling and the identities those ethnic leaders politicize lacks attention. Returning to Horowitz (2000 [1985]) as an example, he acknowledged that Lebanon's Civil War (1975-1990) came as the result of internal and external factors (635), but he did not explain what the external factors were nor to what identities these ethnic leaders appealed as they formed coalitions and headed to war.

Through observation of the speeches of the ethnic leaders before and after Rafic Hariri's death on February 14th, 2005, this research makes a longitudinal comparative study of each of the four ethnic leaders. Keeping the impact of geo-strategic changes in relations between international actors in the Middle East, it tracks changes across speeches of these leaders' attitudes toward domestic actors and international allies, with particular emphasis on the identities invoked (ethnic and non-ethnic), the rhetoric of friends and foes, and public policies of concern. Over the course of their speeches, these selected ethnic parties' leaders changed their narratives as their domestic circumstances changed amidst international competition for the Middle East. The choices of these same leaders required new historical narratives to retain support from their respective communities. The alliances of the Free Patriotic Movement with Hezbollah and the Phalange with the Future Movement shed light on how ethnic leaders maintain support among ethnic supporters, defend their domestic and international allies, and criticize their rivals. All these objectives require identity re-conceptualization, since ethnic mobilization involves the exclusion of other ethnic communities (Chandra 2011). The reactions of the ethnic leaders as they addressed their supporters, and the frequency of appealing to the newly re-conceptualized identities between the two phases, allows for proper comparisons between the 2000-2005 and 2005-2010 phases.

Similarly to the qualitative approach toward ethnic appeals, I used a longitudinal comparison between the frequency of appeals to ethnic values before and after Hariri's death. Considering that ethnic appeals seek to marginalize opponents and consolidate power (Gagnon Jr. 2004; Gordy 1999), increased appeals to ethnic identities demonstrate the seriousness of the coalition and the efforts of each ethnic leader to continue mobilizing the party's supporters on an ethnic basis under domestic and international pressures. I have compiled a database of speeches made by leaders of the Phalange (630), Hezbollah

(670), Future Movement (3100), and the Free Patriotic Movement (640), and coded for the usage of ethnic identities, non-ethnic identities, foreign actors, and policies associated with the ethnic identity of the party. I then applied longitudinal comparison of the same ethnic leaders' reactions to the same identities, ethnic parties, policy objectives, and international actors, following Gerring and McDermott (2007, 693-694). These categories' frequencies were quantified and aggregated for the periods before Rafic Hariri's death (2000-2005) and after (2005-2010). The first category of identities involves the identities to which the ethnic leader belongs or might belong. In this category are discussions of the ethnic leader's religion, sect, town, clan, or/and specific history relevant to the community. The second category involves "the Other," which can be further divided into two sub-categories: allies and rivals. Both the "allies" and "rivals" sub-categories include international state actors. The "policy" category includes discussions of the same public policies for all ethnic leaders; this research thereby monitors the change in the four ethnic leaders' demands before and after 2005. Finally, another category of indicators is also common to all the ethnic parties: the appeals on non-ethnic identities. Quantifying discussions of non-ethnic identities serves to demonstrate the appeals of ethnic leaders to them. Particularly, in the cases where there is a post-2005 change in party participations in a grand coalition, these indicators reveal changes in overlapping identities and their ties with narrow ethnic groups. The method as a whole flags speeches made during election campaigns and those that offer changes in historical narratives. The dataset also accounts for every occasion when ethnic leaders speak, positively or negatively, of their allies or a rival coalition. The speeches in the dataset include unique speeches, party rally speeches, interviews, political statements, and other out-of-the-mainstream daily speeches. The dataset also accounts for instances when ethnic leaders issue a contradictory statement towards the same-targeted actors, when they are physically meeting with a rival leader, assuming that domestic diplomacy is in play.

There has until now been little focus on the day-to-day speeches of ethnic leaders when they appear in public media and respond to other leaders and events. This research shows that ethnic leaders creatively utilize both ethnic and non-ethnic identities as well as new historical accounts, and promote policies that benefit them and their foreign backers. Through changing small details of the historical narratives to accommodate day-to-day challenges, ethnic leaders deploy identities to justify decisions to pre-empt threats by polarizing their audience against possible problems.

Lebanon 2000-2010: The Middle East in Transition

The reverberations of the 9/11 attacks on the United States required almost three years to manifest domestically in Lebanon. From 2002 until 2004, the foundations of Syrian hegemony over Lebanese politics began to crumble; nevertheless, Syria maintained most of its allies, including Rafic Hariri's Future Movement, through coercion, censorship, and rewards for loyalty. In 2004, the United Nations Security Council issued U.N. Resolution 1559, which demanded Syria's withdrawal, respect for Lebanon's sovereignty, and disarmament of Hezbollah. The ramifications of Syria's weakening grip over Lebanon became more explicit, as the Future Movement and the Progressive Socialist Party, along with a few left-wing and Marxist figures, held meetings with the Christian-dominated anti-Syrian camp (Choucair 2005, 2). The expansion of the anti-Syrian alliance beyond the traditional Christian parties and figureheads forced the pro-Syrian camp to handle opposition to Syria on a broader scale. The Syrian officials and their allies could no longer reduce the anti-Syrian camp to a marginalized group of leaders reliving the glories of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990). What cemented this new opposition's alliance was the assassination of Rafic Hariri, igniting a well-organized anti-Syrian inter-sectarian movement, composed of major ethnic parties, such as the Christian Phalange, and the Free Patriotic Movement, the Sunni-majority, Future Movement, among others.

From February 14, 2005 until 2009, two rival coalitions emerged in Lebanon: the 14th of March bloc, which was anti-Syrian and in alignment with the Western and Arab Monarchs' bloc, and the 8th of March bloc, which was wholeheartedly with the Syrian – Iranian axis (Hirst 2010, 309; Najem 2012, 73-76). The status quo between these two grand coalitions remained active and alive, with salient identities re-conceptualized, new ones invented, and intense competition spiralling between the two groups. This aggressive spiralling went hand-in-hand, as argued above, with international actors dramatically changing their foreign policy on the Middle East. The United States, Europe, and the Arab Gulf monarchs increased pressure on Syria and Iran to abandon Hezbollah and the militant Palestinian Islamist group, Hamas. By 2009-2010, de-escalation between the various ethnic groups took place as the result of the Gaza-Israeli war and Arab-Arab dialogue. As the West intensified its pressures on Syria and Iran on a variety of issues, including the question of Hezbollah and Hamas, the two dominant grand coalitions in Lebanon also escalated their ethnic mobilization against each other. Ethnic leaders accused each other of allegiances with foreign actors, and ethnic and non-ethnic identities were re-conceptualized to

exclude the rival coalition members (see Chapter 6 - 9 for details). The exclusion did not rely on the ethnic identity itself or ancient hatred; on the contrary, each coalition targeted the other based on whether it was pro-Western (and later one can add pro-Saudi to that label) or pro-Syrian.

In this chaotic decade, three Lebanese parliamentary elections took place, in 2000, in 2005, and in 2009. The 2000 elections reflected the ten-year-old status quo in relations between Syria and the United States and the overwhelming dominance of pro-Syrian parties in parliament. The 2005 elections reflected the turbulence that hit Lebanon due to Rafic Hariri's assassination and the subsequent withdrawal of Syria's forces, and the 2009 elections reflected the strained relations between the two inter-ethnic grand coalitions.

Theoretical testing: Two-Level Analysis against Electoral Systems Theory

On the one hand, this research demonstrates that Lebanon's ethnic leaders politicize ethnic identities and re-interpret them in alignment with their coalition allies. Dominant theories (Lijphart 1969; 2008; O'Flynn 2005; Van der Veen and Laitin 2012) argue that the electoral system provides incentives for ethnic leaders to appeal to either broad or exclusive identities: if voters' magnitude does not require the ethnic leader to seek allies to vote-pool for victory, then the ethnic leader has no reason to appeal to national or non-ethnic identities (Van der Veen and Laitin 2012). The reverse is also applicable: the ethnic leaders will appeal to broad, overlapping identities, if the coalition is large, in order not to alienate supporters of allied parties (Ibid). In addition, this set of hypothesis sets out to investigate the extent to which electoral systems affect the coalitions mentioned above (and thus, indirectly, identities). Donald Horowitz (2000[1985], 633-635) stipulates that Lebanon's electoral system, which will be discussed thoroughly in Chapters Two and Three, particularly encourages ethnic leaders to form two grand coalitions, each holding a set of ethnic parties who compete with the other coalition's rival in-group ethnic parties. In this sense, the electoral system forges inter-ethnic coalitions that are involved in intra-ethnic competition.

The second set of hypotheses below seeks to refute this argument and argues instead that identity shifts are not based solely on domestic factors; instead, the ethnic leaders forge alliances on the basis of their positioning relative to international actors. If they share international allies, then most likely they will enter a coalition, irrespective of their position in the past. If the international actors intensify their

rivalry against each other, then this intensity will materialize in Lebanon. Similarly, if rival states de-escalate or even reach common ground, then these ethnic leaders will in parallel accept parties that are backed by the same coalition. As a result, ethnic leaders must re-construct salient identities, and sometimes introduce new ones, through targeting new domestic and international enemies, and thereby re-write their community's history.

Electoral Systems: Counter-theory

H1: Party leaders appeal to the salient ethnic identities institutionalized in the electoral law.

Ethnic leaders appeal to the identities present in the electoral laws. For instance, General Aoun lived five years in exile during the observed period (2000-2005) and afterward returned to the country. If General Aoun appealed to Christian-based identities between 2000-2005 or avoided appealing to them between 2005-2010, then this hypothesis fails to pass. Given that the electoral system reserves parliamentary quotas based on sectarianism (50% Christian and 50% Muslim), and that the presidency is reserved for a Roman Catholic Maronite, there is further testing required as to whether Aoun appealed to Christian and Maronite identities. If electoral systems influence ethnic identities, then the relative frequency of appeals to identities, per ethnic party, should be the same, since the electoral system did not change during the observed period.

H2: Ethnic leaders appeal to identities more frequently during parliamentary elections.

In order to test for the influence of the electoral system as a regulatory system, this research checks whether the ethnic leaders form alliances and appeal to ethnic identities for support solely during elections or not. Chapter Ten provides aggregated appeals per year, and per actor; the chart that presents ethnic leaders' appeals before and after 2009 should, for this hypothesis to pass, demonstrate that ethnic leaders appeal most to ethnic identities during the electoral year, given that elections are the gateways to consolidating power. The table aggregates ethnic appeals before the 2009 parliamentary elections (2006, 2007, 2008) and one year after the elections (2010). From 2006 until 2009, ethnic leaders were overwhelmed with internal and external crises, including the 2006 July War with Israel, the pro-Syrian open downtown protests from November 2006 through May 2008, and the Mini-Civil War of 2008. All these polarized tensions translated to slogans and electoral campaigns from the anti-Syrian

14th of March bloc, to which the Future Movement and the Phalange belonged, and the pro-Syrian 8th of March bloc, to which Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement belonged. 2010 was the calm year, since the foreign backers of both domestic blocs de-escalated tensions. If the 2009 elections year holds a lower frequency of ethnic appeals than the rest of the years, per actor, then there must be other causal factors behind appeals for support that polarize supporters.

H3: Ethnic parties in Lebanon enter inter-ethnic coalitions to maximize their chances of victory against rival parties within the intra-ethnic competition.

Given Horowitz's description of Lebanon's electoral system as encouraging both intra- and inter-ethnic competition (2000[1985], 633-635), Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement and Amin Gemayel's Phalange are expected to be in two opposing grand coalitions. Furthermore, Hezbollah and AMAL, the two most influential Shiite-based parties, are also expected to each be in one of these two opposing coalitions.

H4: The bigger the grand coalition, the more that national identities and issues, i.e., issues that concern all ethnic groups in Lebanon, will be politically salient.

Ethnic leaders, when entering grand coalitions, will appeal to their constituents on the basis of national issues, along with ethnically related issues. For this hypothesis to pass, national issues, whether foreign or public policy-related affairs, must outweigh ethnic demands in terms of the frequency in which ethnic identities are utilized in leaders' speeches. Each chapter quantifies and then aggregates (into two phases, pre- and post-2005) the extent to which ethnic leaders appealed to the Lebanese identity and Arab nationalism, as well as targeted subjects and actors while appealing on ethnic identities. In Chapter Ten, overall aggregated appeals for each ethnic party will be compared to observe whether grand coalitions force ethnic leaders to appeal to broad-based identities.

Interplay of Local and International Actors

This set of hypotheses tests for the connection between international and local actors as it appears in the speeches of ethnic leaders. Specifically, the hypotheses test the impact of the independent variable, i.e. the position of the ethnic leader relative to international actors, on the outcome, i.e., the final

product of a set of politicized identities in their speeches. The choice of local allies reflects the regional alignment of the international actors' regional or international positioning. Thus, this set of hypotheses explains the ethnic leaders' choices of allies and, subsequently, of identities in relation shared international allies.

This set of hypotheses focuses on the confounding effects of international-domestic alliances on the salience of identities (as opposed to that of the electoral system). Ethnic parties will ally with each other if they share the same international backer, or if two or more separate backers are within the same regional camp. The intensity of competition between the regional camps will overwhelm electoral systems, and the regulator of alliances will become regional cleavages and the positioning of the local ethnic parties with respect to those cleavages.

H5: Grand coalitions form around allegiances to an international camp.

Grand coalitions (and the subsequent effects on identities) do not come into existence out of opportunism and intra-ethnic competition in Lebanon; they are formed based on their position relative to international coalitions. Coalition members will not criticize their foreign backers. If Hezbollah or the Free Patriotic Movement criticizes either Syria or Iran in the 2005 or 2009 elections, then the hypothesis fails to pass. The same applies to the Phalange and the Future Movement in regards to criticism of France, Saudi Arabia, the Arab Gulf, and the United States. If alliances within Lebanon do not match the international balances of power, then this hypothesis fails to pass. Chapter Ten aggregates discussions of relevant foreign backers, and demonstrates whether ethnic leaders criticize the backers of their blocs

H6: Ethnic leaders will defend their foreign backers and react to events that concern their foreign backers.

Ethnic leaders will often heap praise upon their foreign backers and respond almost immediately to criticism of their foreign backers that arises within domestic politics. This response shapes the contents of their public speeches as they appeal on identities; they also integrate the international dimension as part of their polarizing schema. For this hypothesis to pass, the Hariri clan must defend France and Saudi Arabia while the Gemayels must defend the United States. Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement must

defend the United States before 2005 and Syria-Iran after 2005. Finally, Hezbollah must defend the Syrian-Iranian axis and respond to domestic criticism between 2000 and 2010.

Just as ethnic leaders re-conceptualize identities and reframe historical narratives in response to international alignments, they must discuss international relations between states and will specifically defend their foreign backers from criticism with respect to their activities. In this case, Rafic Hariri (2000-2005) and Hezbollah (2005) will defend Syria and Iran from criticism throughout the 2000-2005 years, while Amin Gemayel and Michel Aoun will defend the United States from criticism. After Hariri's Future Movement joins the Anti-Syrian camp, and Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement joins the Pro-Syrian bloc, Hariri is expected to defend foreign backers (including Egypt and the Arab Gulf states) against Syria and Iran; Michel Aoun is expected to defend Syria and Iran against American, French, and U.N. criticisms.

H7: Foreign backers will react positively or negatively to incidents that respectively benefit or harm their domestic allies.

The reactions of foreign backers are important because it further confirms the re-conceptualized identities and re-framed historical narratives that ethnic leaders employ. These reactions range from vocal condemnations of the heads of states that support their allied ethnic parties in Lebanon, to increases in aid to the Lebanese state when their respective allies win the elections. If this hypothesis is to pass, Saudi Arabia, the Arab Gulf, France, and the United States are expected to increase financial aid and loans to the Lebanese state after Syria's withdrawal and the victory of their allies, the pro-Western 14th of March bloc.

All seven hypotheses will be tested on the four ethnic parties that this research uses as within-case studies. If the first three hypotheses (the counter theory) pass, then the electoral system regulates coalition formation and salience of identities. If they fail to pass, and the final four do pass, then the international-local interplay forges coalitions in Lebanon, and subsequently, determines the salience of ethnic and non-ethnic identities.

Other Theories not applied in this Research

My focus solely on ethnic leaders' speeches does overlook multiple factors and possible phenomena that may influence the choices of ethnic leaders ideologically, which I would like to address here. For

starters, the Pre-Post comparative approach to ethnic leaders' identity reconceptualization does in some way limit this project's account of the leaders' calculations on audience costs. For example, Fearon (1994) argues that leaders who face domestic and international crises rarely back away from escalatory speeches (577 – 578) because they may face backlashes from supporters. My research does not fully track whether ethnic leaders lost support after changing coalitions, especially with former foes because I accept the performance of ethnic leaders in parliamentary elections as an indicator of the success of these marketed narratives. Yet I do not address whether the success of the ethnic party in elections is due to personal efforts or vote-pooling. Overlooking the ethnic demographics per constituency in Lebanon's electoral system, in this case, does to some extent undermine my ability to track ethnic leaders' propagation of speeches throughout the targeted audience. However, this absence does not fully nullify the testing of audience costs within this research project. Instead, the international – domestic ties can be seen as a type of constraint or cost for ethnic leaders, a line to avoid crossing when these domestic figureheads publicly discuss allied international actors and not criticize them. In the end, reconceptualising identities and appealing upon them can be a tactic to avoid such audience costs for ethnic leaders. Ethnic leaders' ability to reconceptualise identities and associate party objectives to them enables them to de-escalate by spinning narratives on victory without losing face with supporters.

My focus on ethnic leaders' speeches on domestic politics, international actors, and identity-based appeals on support also overlooks economic factors that might contribute to ethnic leaders' resonance among supporters. Economic grievances, in ethnically divided societies, may stir ethnic turmoil. Many scholars on the dissolution of former Yugoslavia noted that the under-developed rural site of each Yugoslav republic or province was a primary source of supporters for ethnic leaders, unlike urban centers such as Belgrade, Zagreb, or Sarajevo (ex. Gagnon Jr 2004; Zarkov 2007; Donia 2006; Le Bor 2004; Gordy 1999; Thomas 1999). This project does not address the urban/rural dichotomy since these ethnic leaders performed well with ethnic demographics, irrespective of development level. For example, the Future Movement and its allies captured all the seats in Beirut, the urban centre of Lebanon, and in constituencies with Sunni majorities, irrespective of the development level (ex. see European Union Election Observation Mission 2009, 8). In this case, indicators such as literacy rates or development levels per constituency do not play a direct cause on ethnic mobilization, at least for the observed period of 2000 – 2010.

Similar to the urban/rural dichotomy, class-based approaches did not play a role in this project. These approaches in general analyse the balances of class power within the society, primarily between the working and middle classes, the bourgeoisie, and the aristocrats during capitalist development (or another critical juncture), and predict whether a society will move towards democracy or other regime types (see for example, Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992). While Lebanon does merit a class-based approach, especially in the case of alliances between the merchants, warlords, and traditional leaders (Dib 2003), this approach does not explain identity shifts in the speeches of leaders in the country, especially Lebanon's ethnic parties garnering support from across different classes within the ethnic group. As a matter of fact, while other countries in the Arab world witnessed uprisings that came to be called the Arab Spring, the Lebanese did not witness a similar dynamic in Lebanon. Rather, many Lebanese preferred to continue to rely on their ethnic leaders rather than take a chance on the unknown results of a possible uprising (Hermes 2012). Other than the fact that ethnic leaders traverse multiple classes in their speeches (and the notion of clientelism, ex. see Cammett 2014), they also have charisma and engage their supporters to continue their political relevance. Class-based approaches overlook ideologues, charisma, and leadership skills in their explanation of societies' regime types (see for example Laitin and Wimmer 1992, 147 – 148 response to Skocpol's Class-based approach, on how she disregarded the role of Leon Trotsky in the 1917 Russian revolution). Key figures in the structural approach get overlooked in the class approach, as do their speeches (Ibid). However, does this mean that the class-based approach does not apply to Lebanon? On the contrary, the persistence of the bourgeoisie and the traditional leaders (some of them carrying feudal titles) and the dominance of clientelism in the state (see Salti and Chaaban 2010 for example) may provide a predictability model, especially in explaining why there has been no progressive front to face all the ethnic leaders at the time. However, this approach would eliminate the focus on ethnic leaders' day-to-day politics in maintaining identity salience and overlooks the behaviour of leaders in crises and as they bargain through public speeches and rallies with other ethnic leaders.

My strict focus on ethnic leaders' speeches contributes to another Marxist approach, the hegemonic capability of Lebanon's leaders in specific, and ethnic leaders in general, to impose a Gramsci style false consciousness on their followers and use sectarianism to block a class consciousness identification between the working class and the middle class (see hegemony in Cox 1996 [1983]). This is only possible through treating their ethnic communities as turfs for ethnic leaders to use their vast propaganda machinery for ethnic polarization in order to steer their supporters towards their political objectives. .

This spinning of history and identity reconceptualization is most evident when ethnic leaders block a class-consciousness identification with the middle and working classes. The wealth distribution in Lebanon should have enabled a class-based warfare confrontation against the strongest bourgeoisie and feudal lords (and occasionally came to close to manifesting) (see Traboulsi 2008, 163 - 170), since few families control most of the Lebanese economy (ex. Traboulsi 2008, 156 – 157, 171; Gilmour 1983, 42; Najem 2012, 15 – 17). Yet, sectarianism and violence always trumped these movements from fully developing. In this sense, this research becomes a base for understanding the hegemonic narratives that ethnic leaders try to impose on their targeted communities to ensure that rivals or new comers are not welcomed into the political arena.

The Layout of the Research

The position of the ethnic leader relative to the international actors encourages them to form alliances, extending international cleavages into Lebanon itself. Both the international backer and their domestic allies benefit from these alliances; furthermore, the ethnic leaders commit to supporting their foreign backer within the domestic outlets of Lebanon, such as in parliament or with rallies. When there is a change in international balances of power, the ethnic leader will either appeal more ethnically for support in face of this new uncertainty, or they will switch alliances. The speeches of the ethnic leaders, the same speeches that orient supporters toward allies and away from foes, carefully revisit the history of the party and community to justify choices of alliances, especially if there was bad blood in the past between new allies.

Given that Lebanon's history is rather complicated and rich with both ethnic conflict and international-local alliances, there is a need to understand the history of the country upon which the ethnic leaders base their claims to justify current decisions. Chapter Two briefly introduces the dominant non-ethnic identities, such as the Lebanese and Arab identities, and notes that analyses show that in some periods, these identities manifested in a sectarian manner. This chapter then provides a historical narrative that covers Lebanon from the 1920s through the 1958 Civil War, the Arab-Israeli Conflict (1967-1974), the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990), and Lebanon under Syria's hegemony (1990-2005). The chapter concludes with the developments from 2005 until 2010. Throughout the different sub-sections of the chapter, the focus will be on events of relevance, i.e. events that appeared in the historical narratives of ethnic leaders between 2000 and 2010, in order to track the emergence of new historical narratives. The overall purpose of the chapter is to introduce the various actors at both the domestic and the

international levels and to shed light on earlier and on-going relations between ethnic parties and their respective foreign backers. This chapter serves to provide the reader a context of Lebanon's rich history, especially the relevant events that continue to appear in the speeches of the ethnic leaders.

Lebanon has attracted much scholarly work in regards to proxy wars, electoral systems, ethno-politics, and peace building. Chapter Three summarizes the relevant theoretical and prominent works on Lebanon in regards to its unique electoral system, its position in regional competition between Middle Eastern hegemony, and the role of history in building ethnic mobilization. First, this chapter divides the literature into two main categories: those works that focused on the electoral system and domestic politics, and those that focused on international penetration of Lebanon's politics. This chapter argues that no study sufficiently focuses on the ethnic identities themselves that are salient within Lebanese politics. The chapter also discusses a group of scholars influenced by anthropology who advance a nascent body of literature that is solely focused on the fluidity of Lebanon's historical narratives. Concluding that this new literature has begun to tackle the two-level interplay between Lebanon and its international partners, this chapter suggests that there is a need for an alternative model that addresses ethnic leaders' behaviour and ethnic appeals in light of these international dynamics.

Since international competition and international balances of power between states and coalitions govern the international system (Waltz 1979; Gilpin 1981), there is a need to tackle the complexity of international rivalry and further scrutinize why international state actors seek local protégés in divided societies. Chapter Four introduces this theoretical framework and defines the Constructivist theoretical framework used to identify the salience of identities in ethnic leaders' rhetoric, the power of ethnic leaders' speeches to bend identities for specific purposes, and identity shifts made by ethnic leaders. This chapter also introduces indicators for the electoral system's regulatory power in forging coalitions.

Chapter Five builds on Chapter Four and explains the applied mixed methodology used to test the variables and empirically test the hypotheses presented in the current chapter. First, Chapter Five discusses the qualitative process tracing approach, then moves on to list the various coding process used to quantify the data on appeals to identities, actors, and policies. Next, there is a detailed explanation of the units of analysis, the process of data collection, and empirical testing. The chapter also articulates the means used to measure shifts in ethnic identities, lists the salient identities in Lebanon, and introduces a codebook for data collection. The chapter concludes with discussing how to qualitatively

and quantitatively test a pre-post longitudinal comparative method to provide empirical evidence with explanatory leverage.

Chapter Six is the first of the four empirical within-case studies. It discusses the history of the Phalange and the Gemayel clan. The first section of the chapter discusses the history of the Gemayels and the Phalange from 1937 until 2000. The second section demonstrates how Syria imposed a party leadership loyal to Damascus, which led to two leaders of the Phalange party preaching opposing policies and identities. Next, this chapter focuses on Amin Gemayel's speeches after the party unified its multiple factions under his reign. The chapter analyses the statistical data on the Gemayel family's appeals to identities, historical narratives, policies, and international actors. Finally, the chapter concludes by comparing how Gemayel's alliances with the anti-Syrian 14th of March bloc, including the Hariri clan, reshaped the Phalange's ethnic appeals and historical narratives of domestic and international actors.

Chapter Seven discusses Michel Aoun and the Free Patriotic Movement, the Lebanese Christian party that, unlike the Gemayel clan, changed foreign backers and domestic allies and re-conceptualized the party's identities in a full reversal of earlier anti-Syrian stances. The chapter commences with General Michel Aoun's history during the Lebanese Civil War, starting in 1976 until 2000. Afterward, as with the Phalange, this empirical case study splits the history of Aoun's nascent movement, the Free Patriotic Movement, into Aoun in exile and Aoun after he returned from Paris. These two sections offer a qualitative analysis of Aoun's usage of ethnic identities and his interplay with his foreign backers. Afterward, an analysis provides a statistical comparison of Aoun's usage of policies and identities before and after his return to Lebanon. Finally, Chapter Seven concludes by analysing the impact of international alliances on Michel Aoun and his vast Christian communities.

The next two chapters tackle two of the strongest Muslim parties in Lebanon. Chapter Eight discusses the rise of the Hariri family, their domination of the Sunni communities in Lebanon, and their perceptions of Syria, the United States, France, and Iran before and after Rafic Hariri's assassination on 14th of February, 2005. Like Aoun, the Hariri clan changed its relations with foreign allies; however, unlike Aoun, the clan went after Syria through international and domestic outlets. The chapter argues that the Hariri clan played a crucial role in managing Lebanon's politics. They held the most influential parliamentary bloc in Lebanon's history in both the 2005 and 2009 elections. The Clan also held the Prime Ministerial position from 2000 until 2004, then again from 2005 until 2010. They were the

gatekeepers for Western and Arab Gulf actors involved in Lebanese politics. They provided the counter-balance for the Aoun- and Nasrallah-led pro-Syrian bloc within Lebanon's internal arena and were additionally a major pillar in bringing Saudi, French, and U.S. support to their bloc. The chapter then demonstrates the surprising appeals to economic, national, and supranational identities after the breakup with Syria. The chapter concludes by showing the influence of France and Saudi Arabia on the Future Movement, particularly when ties between the foreign backers changed.

The final case study handles the well-known Hezbollah, the Muslim Shiite party that has received backing from Iran since the former's establishment in 1982. The chapter commences with narrating the history of Hezbollah and the Shiite community in Lebanon. It describes Hezbollah's ideological affiliation to Iran, their transformation from a militant Islamic group to a Lebanese party, and their achievements against Israel. It focuses on the party's priorities at both the international level and the local levels, with particular emphasis on American-Israeli meddling in Lebanese affairs and the fears of importing the Shiite-Sunni cleavage from Iraq to Lebanon. The chapter tracks Hezbollah's speeches in parallel to international pressures exerted on Syria and Iran and the impact of the party's alliance with General Aoun. The chapter compares Hezbollah's policies and identity appeals before and after Rafic Hariri's death, parallel to mounting pressures against Iran and Syria, especially between 2005 and 2010. This comparison includes discussing the frequency of policies and speeches in Hezbollah's statements and the party's perspective on its allies and foes before and after Prime Minister Hariri's assassination. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the influence of Iranian and Syrian ties on Hezbollah's politics and their continuous appearance in Nasrallah's speeches, especially when directed towards anti-Syrian factions and the United States.

The final chapter, the Conclusion, commences with the qualitative findings on each ethnic party by comparing historical narratives before and after Rafic Hariri was assassinated in 2005. Afterward, the chapter introduces statistical charts that demonstrate the changes in behaviour of ethnic leaders in terms of ethnic appeals and domestic – international relations. The sudden behaviour of ethnic leaders after allying with each other and their perspective on international politics is documented and compared in terms of frequencies. Then, the chapter tests the frequency of ethnic appeals during an election year and compares it to frequencies present in other years to determine the extent to which electoral systems encourage ethnic leaders to appeal for support. Finally, the chapter concludes with lessons learned and the possibilities for applying this model to other countries.

Chapter 2: Lebanese Identities: Ontology, Narratives, and Historical Events

“You Lebanese, you are shrewd, creative and successful merchants. Soon, you are going to have 12 million neighbours coming toward you. Create light industries. Engage in trade and commerce [...] Each has his domain in Lebanon: Yours is trade, ours, politics and security”

General Ghazi Kan’an – Security Chief of Syrian Troops stationed in Lebanon (Kan’an 1991 as cited in Traboulsi 2008, 243)

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the origins of the identities salient in Lebanon and their ideological and ethnic rules for individual membership, and to use these identities as a benchmark against which to measure the re-conceptualization of identities by ethnic leaders. The second part of the chapter provides a brief survey of Lebanon’s history, focusing on events that are relevant today. Lebanon’s two overlapping identities, the Lebanese and Arab identities, took the central stage as of the 1920s, persisting in this position until the Lebanese Civil War ended in 1990. The Lebanese identity excluded several groups, primarily the Muslim communities, and its ideologues stressed that the Lebanese and the Arabs shared nothing in common. These two identities changed across the decades, and Lebanon’s leaders often appealed to the Lebanese and Arab identities, but these leaders’ interpretations differed as circumstances for appeals to them changed. When ethnic leaders deviate from earlier historical narratives in regards to their respective communities and these overlapping identities, they often create myths to mobilize their supporters (see Mythmaking in Mearsheimer 2011, 22). This research treats the position of the ethnic leaders relative to international actors as the primary causal factor for Lebanon’s ethnic leaders’ push to re-conceptualize identities through narrating historical events in order to mobilize support for these international-local alliances. The aim of this chapter is to provide a historical context for the actors, the origins of dominant ethnic and non-ethnic identities, and earlier elite historical interpretations. Many of these events appear in the speeches of the ethnic leaders in the empirical chapters (Six through Nine), and this chapter thus acts as a benchmark for identity changes and re-conceptualization.

The Two Faces of Lebanese Identity

This section is divided into three sub-sections. The first section discusses the Phoenician identity, with which a segment of Christian intellectuals identified, and Lebanon as an Arab identity, which brings forward Arab nationalism with its two contradictory strands, a secular anti-

colonial identity and its antithetical Islamic identity. Both forms of identities, Phoenician and Arab, were the result of conflicts on-going since the establishment of Lebanon as a republic under the French mandate in 1919. Their comprehension is vital for understanding other non-ethnic and ethnic identities, since one or both appeared consistently in the speeches of the ethnic leaders across the decades. In some cases, ethnic leaders chose to include both of these faces of Lebanon. In the post-civil war era (1990-present), the Lebanese identity dominated, being used in speeches to denounce foreign intervention and promote co-existence, but also to bring to the forefront the Arab identity as a means of dictating closer ties with Syria and of opposing Western actors' political influence in the country. The foreign policy of Lebanon often defined the ethnic leader's vision of what being Lebanese truly meant in the context of international politics. Lebanon's identity often fluctuated between Arab brotherhood and unity on the one side, and non-Arab and Western in the other. In some cases, the same ethnic party fluctuated between these two interpretations when ethnically polarizing its supporters. The multiple faces of Lebanon often appear in the speeches of the ethnic leaders, depending on the domestic and international alliances.

Phoenician and Christian Identity

The Maronites, a sub-sect of the Roman Catholic Church in specific, and of the Christian religion more generally, identify with the Phoenician identity, whose saliency dates back to the nineteenth century. The Phoenician identity served Mt. Lebanon's elites to convince the French that the Lebanese were not Arabs and deserved a state. The foundations of this identity are in the historical records of the Phoenician states, which existed at least two millennia before Christ, i.e., thousands of years before the Islamic conquests. This rhetoric resonated with the French, who landed in Mt. Lebanon in 1860 to protect the Christians (Traboulsi 2008, 37-38), and continued to resonate among Christian elites throughout the 1920s, the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990), and post-Rafic Hariri elections (2005, 2009). This myth of descent, that every Christian is a Phoenician, resulted in closer Lebanese Maronite ties to Zionism in the 1920s and 1930s, and later to Israel in 1982, by reviving Hebrew-Phoenician ties against shared Arab threats (Zisser 1995; Hirst 2010, 22-44; see Boykin 2000; Rabinovich 1988, 26-28). The myth of descent has remained sporadically salient for the Christians of Lebanon. In several instances, the Gemayels and their supporters claimed that their community have existed for thousands of years in Lebanon; for example, Bashir Gemayel made this claim amidst the Civil War (1978),

and Sami Gemayel more recently traced the presence of the free Christians' lineage back 2000 years (Sami Gemayel as cited in FN 2010).

The Phoenicians themselves are a dead civilization that existed as independent city-states from 3000 B.C. until 700 A.D. (Salibi 1988, 171), when the Arab conquests arabized their cities. The most important formerly Phoenician cities are Beirut, Byblos, Tyre, and Sidon in Lebanon; Carthage in North Africa (Salibi 1988, 170); and Thebes in Greece (see Grabbe 2016; Boyes 2012). The Phoenicians also built the cities of Barcelona in Spain and Marseilles in France (Salibi 1988, 170). They are famous for inventing the Semitic alphabet and transferring it to the Greeks (Petrariu 2013); according to a popularly accepted narrative, King Cadmus, a Phoenician King whose ship appears as a symbol of Lebanon's heritage, is credited for transferring the alphabet to the Greeks (see Transference of Phoenician alphabet in Gomme 1913, 224). The king and his descendants appeared in several Greek literary works, including those authored by Homer, Sophocles, and Euripides.

More importantly, the Phoenicians are famous for their early interest in especially maritime trade, and for their development of powerful ships and the expertise to be able to travel long-distance trade routes (Christian 2013). The Persians, when they captured Phoenician city-states, relied on the Phoenician ships and expertise to establish their own naval power (Elay 2006). On the ground, the Phoenicians also had their glorious moments despite being known as merchants. One cannot forget the campaign led by Hannibal from Carthage across the Alps that threatened Rome's very existence (Salibi 1988, 170), or Tyre's final stand against Alexander the Great, a siege that lasted a record seven months during the young conqueror's career (De Santis 2020).

The history of the Phoenicians played a vital role in the Maronite elite movement as it sought to build a predominantly Christian Lebanon isolated from the Arab world, a concept that took root in the nineteenth century. In modern Lebanon, which included additional parts of Syria with substantial Muslim populations, the ratio of the Christians decreased to allegedly 53% of the total population, even though Christians represented 85% of the population in Mt. Lebanon (65% Maronite Catholic) and 54% in Grand Liban (see Hanf 1993, 66; Zisser 1995, 892). The Christian elites relied on claims of Phoenician lineage to justify the carving out of a Grand Liban away from Syria and the Arab world. For these elites, the Lebanese are not Arabs; they had existed before the Arab conquests (Salibi 1988 173). More importantly, chauvinism built a

national pride around the Phoenician myth of descent, in which the entire world owed the ancestors of the Lebanese Christians for advancing trade for teaching the world the modern alphabet (Salibi 1988, 173). Christian archaeologists searched for and excavated archaeological monuments to justify this history.

One can compare Phoenicianism to Zionist rhetoric, and in some instances, it has been called “Lebanese Zionism” (Hirst 2010, 25). This “Phoenicianism” resonated with Zionist circles, which “were pleased to discern in the Maronites something of the ‘European’ qualities they considered themselves to possess: modern, sophisticated, superior to other Arabs, and Muslims, in general. They were, Weizmann assured a Maronite archbishop, ‘the two progressive peoples of the Middle East’” (Ibid, 25). This rhetoric encouraged Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin to regard the Maronites as a persecuted minority; he subsequently vowed to protect them from a Syrian-led genocide (Boykin 2000, 45). As in the Zionist narrative, Phoenician lands had been under occupation from the days of the Persians until the end of the Ottoman empire, and had allegedly preserved the uniqueness of Phoenician culture despite the absence of any concrete tradition or cultural practice that dates back to that era (Salibi 1988, 170). The image of reviving an ancient Phoenician–Hebrew relationship has thus resonated both among Phoenician ideologues and in Zionist circles. Phoenicianism regarded the Phoenicians as a race instead of a culture, and Lebanese Christians as this race’s direct descendants. This perspective enabled Christian ideologues to claim lineage reaching back to a pre-Islamic era, which in turn encouraged Ben Gurion to mention, three times, the possibility of a minority alliance between the Jewish state and a newly-born Christian state above the Litani river (Hirst 2010, 51). Begin, decades later, succeeded in coordinating an invasion of Lebanon with the Phalange, Lebanese Forces, and Chamoun’s National Partisans on the basis of this rhetoric (Boykin 2000, 52 - 53).

Post-civil war Lebanon stomped out Phoenician rhetoric in mainstream Lebanese politics; nonetheless, it remains salient among the people (Perry 2007). Even though the identity is traditionally used among Christian communities to distinguish themselves from their surrounding Arab environment (Ibid) or even to claim indigenous rights as a result of their existence since an era prior to the Islamic conquests, the domestic-international interplay shattered the hegemonic claim of an ethnic group over the identity. Instead of relying on Phoenicianism as a lineage, Hariri’s Future Movement used this identity to market Lebanon as a unique bridge between the West and the East, preserving the Western dimension of its original ideological connotation

while dropping Non-Arab and Christian identities from Phoenicianist discourse (see Chapter Eight).

The Other Lebanese Nationalism: Arab Nationalism

The Phoenician ideology has not been the dominant doctrine in Lebanese circles except with elites in Mt. Lebanon; Arab nationalism has challenged the Phoenician rhetoric even in the Christian circles on the Lebanese coast. Arab nationalism also originated among nineteenth-century Arab intellectuals, with its center being Beirut (Kramer 1993, 175). It emerged neither from Islamic pride nor anti-Western sentiment, but in opposition to the declining Ottoman Empire (Ibid), which was not Arab but Turkish. This movement played a crucial role in forging the modern sense of Arab nationalism and inter-state solidarity (Traboulsi 2008, 63-68). Arab nationalism, in its secular sense, was the antithesis of the Phoenician ideologies in the 1920s. While Phoenicianism and Lebanese Christianity often go hand-in-hand due to President Emile Eddé's influence during the French mandate, and excluded Muslims and Christians who identified as Arabs (1919–1943), another strand of Christian intellectuals played a crucial role in the Cultural Renaissance movement that took over the Arab world (Traboulsi 2008, 63). From its roots as anti-Ottoman agitation, Arab nationalism became a secular movement that acknowledged the contributions of Christians and Muslims to its culture; this nationalism's primary objective is to weaken or absorb Islamic religious bias toward minorities (Kramer 1993, 175). It is a bridge that offered Arabs of all denominations the opportunity to express solidarity.

This form of Arab nationalism, as a secular, inclusive, and progressive ideology, was not the sole interpretation, despite its popularity in Lebanon (see El-Khazen 2000, for example). A second form of Arab nationalism manifested as pride as Islam, equating Arabism and Islamicism. Even though both forms of Arab nationalism take pride in Arabic as a language, Islamic Arab nationalism takes pride in Arabic as the Islamic language because Muslims only conduct prayers in Arabic and the Quran exists officially in Arabic only. This form of nationalism manifested among the Lebanese Sunni community during the Ottoman era when they were competing for Ottoman state positions against Turkish clerics (Ibid, 176). Given the Turkish advantage in reaching top Ottoman positions, Muslims directed Arab pride against the Turkish Ottomans as part of their bid for administrative autonomy and to achieve state resources (Ibid). The peak of their activism was during the early stages of the French mandate (1919-1943), during which they advocated for an Arab Islamic federation (Hanf 1993, 65). The legacy of this

form of Arab nationalism continued Muslim identification with other Arab issues, such as solidarity in Lebanon with Jamal Abdul Nasser's pan-Arabism (Hanf 1993, 133).

Both Arab nationalisms manifested in Lebanon, firstly as a reaction to the solidarity with the increasing Zionist settlement of Palestine, and secondly with Jamal Abdul Nasser's rise to power in Egypt in the early 1950s. Rooted in secular Arab nationalism, Nasserism in Egypt and Baathism in Syria and Iraq preached Arab Socialism. This socialism called for the replacement of decaying Arab monarchies with a harmony between workers and peasants, and proper management of state capital (Hanf 1993, 146). In theory, this form of Arab unity was the path to collectively confronting Israel for the liberation of Palestine, destroyed by the birth of the former state, in this narrative, in 1948. In practice, Arab Socialism did not go beyond a few nationalizations of enterprises, including the Suez Canal, and land reforms (Ibid). Returning to Lebanon, Muslims in general sided with Nasser's Arab nationalism. Even though Nasser's Arab nationalism was secular, his ideology was perceived as secular only with left-wing and non-Muslim communities, and was perceived as religious by several Muslim communities. This dichotomy between Arab and Lebanese nationalisms, despite the presence of the aforementioned left-wing movements identifying as secular Arab nationalists, became "code words for what is best termed a Sunni and Maronite sense of community" (Hanf 1993, 133 - 134).

In the 1960s, Arab nationalism became an anti-colonial movement, stressing the awakening of Arabs against foreign forces. This awakening was purely Arab, not Islamic. Even during the golden age of the Arab Caliphate of Haroun el-Rashid and the Abbasids, the caliphate was ruled not just by Muslims, but also specifically by Arabs. The great Arab Islamic *Caliphates* were actually "a community based on the Arabic language and Arab culture" (Browsers 2009, 21). In Lebanon, it was President Bshara Khoury, (1943-1952), a Maronite, and his Prime Minister, Riyad el-Solh, a Sunni, who positioned this interpretation of a secular Arab identity against the Phoenicianist logic of former president Emile Eddé, as will be discussed more thoroughly below. Despite El-Solh's endorsement of the secular form of Arab nationalism, several Islamic communities among the Sunni lower class merged Arab and Islamic nationalism (Hanf 1993, 132), paving the way for Sunni-Maronite clashes over Arab against Lebanese identities (Ibid, 133, 134). Several of the Phoenician ideologues and ethnic leaders accused Arab nationalists, especially Muslims, of a double allegiance to Lebanon and to the Arab countries, which their

logic deemed threatening to Lebanon's sovereignty in light of Nasser's rise in popularity and the union of Egypt with Syria (Ibid, 133).

The debates between Arab and Lebanese nationalists were aggravated when the Palestinian refugee camps, in Lebanon, became headquarters for the Palestinian Liberation Organization factions under the banner of Arab nationalism (Hanf 1993, 154-174). Several prominent Christian leaders, including the Gemayels, considered the *carte blanche* given to the Palestinian militias to wage cross-border wars against Israel to have marginalized Lebanese sovereignty. This development in the spread of Arab nationalism within different Lebanese circles did not mean the Islamic and Secular Arab nationalisms also agreed with each other; they often clashed due to contradictions in ideology. When political Islam arose in the Arab world, it clashed with the secular strand of Arab nationalism in several instances (Browers 2009; see Kamal Jumblatt's platform against Islamic Arab Nationalism in Hanf 1993, 135-136). In a sense, these two interpretations of Arab-Lebanese nationalism, until Rafic Hariri's death, did not meet eye-to-eye, nor did Arab and Islamic nationalisms accept each other, due to the former's denunciation of religious interference and segregation of the non-Arab communities. The Future Movement mixed both forms of Arab nationalism with the uniqueness of the Lebanese identity to push for excellent ties with the Arab monarchs, market Lebanon as modern to the West, and distinguish the Lebanese identity from that of Syria (see Chapter Eight for details on identity re-conceptualization). In this regard, the 14th of March bloc called for a return to neutrality in regards to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and sought excellent ties with regional and international actors, Syria and Iran excluded (see Najem 2012, 117).

Arab nationalism was perhaps the supra-national identity most appealed to in Lebanon's politics (see Chapters Six through Nine). It was the bridge by which ethnic leaders and coalitions appealed for support from Arab leaders, and in some rare instances, from Iran. While Pro-Palestine sentiment remained dominant in Lebanese political discourse, Arab nationalism used the Israeli threat to Lebanon's sovereignty for scapegoating purposes. Syria, during its mandate over Lebanon (1990-2005), used Arab nationalism and Arab brotherhood frequently to legitimate its presence in the country, and depicted the Christian anti-Syrian camp as a minority nostalgic for the Phoenician-Zionist Civil War era between 1980 and 1982 (see, for example, Rabil 2001). Collaboration with Israel, in Lebanese politics and law, is tantamount to treason, and the law forbids the Lebanese to even have Israeli friends over the Internet (see details of the law in Reiche, 2018, 30). The pro-Syrian camp often rallies their supporters against critics

through depicting Syria's critics as serving Israeli interests (Ibid). This rhetoric continued after Syria withdrew from Lebanon. More interestingly, the addition of Hariri's Future Movement to the anti-Syrian bloc, the 14th of March, opened doors for a dispute on what Arab nationalism means, particularly when Saad Hariri criticized Syria's Arab nationalism, which was based on Nasser's, as fake after his father died in 2005.

Lebanon: Between the Phoenician Identity and Arab Nationalism

France took parts of Ottoman-era Syria and added it to the autonomous region of Mt. Lebanon, and proclaimed the establishment of Grand Liban in 1920. Many of these regions were populated by a majority of non-Christians, and suddenly became part of the greater Lebanon project. Phoenician nationalists, such as Emile Eddé, called for a "Petit Liban," a Lebanon without those Muslim regions. Arab nationalists, on the other hand, had no problem with Grand Liban. One can summarize the clash between the two ideologies as a clash between Emile Eddé and Bshara Khoury, the head of a multi-ethnic bloc (Traboulsi 2008, 95). Eddé originally recruited the Lebanese to fight for the Allies in World War I, and returned from exile on a French ship as the primary French-backed candidate in Lebanese politics. In contrast, Khoury was a Christian native to Lebanon and was aware that this newly born country could not survive without collaboration with the Arab world regionally, and with Muslims locally. Eddé maintained close ties with the Maronite Church and urged Muslims to leave Lebanon for Mecca if they wanted to practice their religion (Ibid). France supported Emile Eddé in opposition to Bshara Khoury. It was during this era, in the 1930s, that the Phalange formed and gained momentum. Britain later broke a weakened French grip over Lebanon and Syria during World War II and coerced Paris into recognizing Lebanon and Syria's independence.

The National Pact of 1943 defined Lebanon's dual identities and united most of the Lebanese elites against the French mandate. The agreement was struck between President Bshara Khoury, a Maronite, and Prime Minister Riyad el-Solh, a Muslim Sunni. The agreement attempted to seek a middle ground for all ethnic leaders between the Petit Liban rhetoric and greater Arab unity. The agreement stressed the uniqueness of Lebanon vis-à-vis the Arab world, as a sovereign state, and the importance of maintaining its ties with the West. Simultaneously, the agreement affirmed that Lebanon has an Arab face and the country needs to maintain relations with its Arab neighbours (Traboulsi 2008, 110-111). The agreement also guaranteed that the Lebanese President and the Head of Army were to always be Christian

Maronites, and the Prime Minister always a Muslim Sunni. The Pact further guaranteed that the Muslims would not seek unification with neighbouring Arab countries; in return, the Christian elites would abandon their demands for Western protection (Ibid). This trade-off between President Khoury and Prime Minister El-Solh facilitated inter-ethnic mobilization against the French, with Emile Eddé's faction remaining alone in its alignment with France. The Christian parties, at least on the coast, had already mobilized against the French, spearheaded by Pierre Gemayel, Sr. of the Phalange. The Pact and its definition of Lebanon as a middle ground between Arab and Western cultures remained the source of cleavage between the ethnic leaders in disputes over powersharing formulas and foreign policy. The Pact gave a strong six-to-five ratio to the Christians in parliament and in executive powers; thirteen years later, in 1958, the country descended into war, indicating that this ratio had solved none of the problems in the country.

The National Pact attempted to reconcile major issues of disagreement but two unresolved issues lingered: Lebanon's foreign policy and the power-sharing formula tilted to the benefit of the Maronites. Even though "cultural ties" with the West had replaced the French military presence, and the Arab identity had replaced demands of unification with Syria (Traboulsi 2008, 110), there was no agreed-upon foreign policy. The 1943 National Pact reflects international changes that affected Lebanon. The British, from Palestine, supported Bshara Khoury's faction, while a weakened French authority supported Emile Eddé (Hudson 1968, 96). A decade later, the Cold War split the Middle East into ever-changing rival camps (Walt 1988), and Lebanese President Chamoun, Khoury's successor, sided with the West. Abuse of power, corruption, meddling with elections, and steering Lebanon's foreign policy unilaterally to favour the West had repercussions for the country. The British, who had backed the National Pact's creators, were gone, replaced with Jamal Abdul Nasser, the United States, and the Soviet Union (Hudson 1968, 96-97; Traboulsi 2008, 132-135). The other problem lay in the disparity of the six-to-five ratio in the public sector. Chamoun's successor, President Chehab, equalized public-sector recruitment to six-to-six, but this reform changed nothing, since the Maronites held all the top positions, including the "command of the army, the directorates of military intelligence, and state security, the governorship of the Central Bank, and the Chairmanship of the Conseil d'Etat" (Hanf 1993, 95). The full six-to-six representation in parliament, government, and the top of the public sector became active only after the Lebanese Civil War ended.

A Brief History of Lebanon: A Battleground for Warlords and Expansionary States

1940s–1975

Corruption plagued Lebanon's politics in the past, and continues to do so in the present. President Bshara Khoury was the first President of an independent Lebanon, and the first president that protestors ousted due to corruption. He attempted to amend the constitution to extend his term, constitutionally limited to six years, but mass protests forced him to step down in 1952 (Hanf 1993, 114). The most important event during Bshara Khoury's term was the arrival of Palestinian refugees to Lebanon after they fled the nascent Israeli Defence Forces' arrival in the Galilee in 1948. 120,000 Palestinian refugees arrived in the country, predominantly Muslim Sunnis, and the Lebanese at first greeted them with welcoming arms, but loathed them when it became clear they would not return to their homes in what was formerly known as Palestine. The majority of the Palestinian refugees were farmers, with only 20,000 coming from the middle class. Most of the refugees were Muslims, and the population of Lebanon suddenly increased by 12% (Hirst 2010, 75).

Camille Chamoun's reign (1952-1958) also ended with him stepping down in the face of a civil war and protests. Like President Khoury, President Chamoun had tried to amend the constitution and add another presidential mandate to his tenure. Unlike Khoury, Chamoun had to deal with the ramifications of Israel's expulsion of Palestinians on the ground, and the Cold War. From the 1950s onward, conspiracy theories and regional alignments dominated Lebanese politics. The Arab-Israeli conflict was partially a cause for the manifestation of the Cold War in Lebanon. The West supported Israel and the displacement of the Palestinians, which led Arab nationalists and Muslims to express solidarity with Jamal Abdul Nasser, whose rise to power sparked fear that his version of Arab nationalism meant alignment with the Soviet Union (Traboulsi 2008, 130). The United States' policy was to contain the Egyptian leader's influence in the region, which included empowering the Lebanese authorities to withstand his expansion (Ibid, 130). The U.S. administration declared that "Israel, the Arab Gulf, and Lebanon as the 'American positions' to be defended against the rise of Arab nationalism" (Ibid, 130). President Chamoun repaid the Americans by openly siding with their foreign policy (Hudson 1968, 96). He supported the Eisenhower Doctrine, supported the Baghdad Pact in 1955 against Nasser, and allowed the U.S. Air Force to use Lebanese space (Traboulsi 2008, 130). The United States provided the Lebanese government with six million dollars in 1953 (bid), for which

Chamoun faced many student protests and popular demonstrations, and dissent within his government (Ibid, 131). Even though he paid lip service to Nasser's remarkable war in the Suez Canal, he did criticize the President's sudden nationalization of the Canal, and opposed sanctions on France and Britain (Ibid 131-132). In 1957, Chamoun sealed his fate when he called for parliamentary elections that leading Muslim figures, along with the Druze-Sect popular leader Kamal Jumblatt, lost, leading the opposition to accuse the President of using the Central Intelligence Agency to buy him the elections (Ibid, 132; see details of American interests and strategy in Copeland 1969, 225-244).

One can say that the disputes between ethnic leaders have always been present; however, it was foreign policy and Lebanon's political alignment within the regional blocs that ignited strife in this particular period (Dakhlallah 2012, 56; Hanf 1993, 110-114). The breakout of the Civil War between President Chamoun and Pierre Gemayel, Sr. on one side and Kamal Jumblatt and Saeb Salam on the other was a domestic conflict according to the latter, but President Chamoun called it a Soviet encroachment. The United States did not come to Chamoun's aid at first, due to awareness of Lebanon's domestic turmoil, but sent 15,000 soldiers from the Sixth Fleet to Lebanon after the Iraqi Monarchy collapsed, while the British sent paratroopers to Jordan (Copeland 1969, 225-244). The U.S. Marines withdrew a month later due to lack of evidence of any meddling from Jamal Abdul Nasser (Traboulsi 2008, 133-138).

Fouad Chehab (r.1958-1964), the head of the Lebanese army, became the third president of the state (Najem 2012, 23). Two thousand Lebanese had died in the civil war, and the risk of another civil war threatened the country as the result of the Phalange establishing a siege and cutting all routes leading to Beirut. When Chehab was elected President as a means of reconciliation between the warring factions, under the banner of "No Victor, No Vanquished" (Nagle and Clancy 2019, 8), further riots nevertheless took place when the Arab Nationalist bloc, i.e., the Jumblatt-Salam supporters, celebrated his victory. As a result, the Phalange deployed their party members and cut Beirut off from the rest of Lebanon. Eventually, Chehab had no choice but to invite Pierre Gemayel into the government to end the crisis (Hottinger 1961, 136-139). The "No Victor, No Vanquished" slogan continued to appear at the end of every crisis in Lebanon, including at the end of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) (see Nagle and Clancy 2019, 3) and the end of the 2008 crisis (Al-Jazeera 2008).

The 1967 Six-Day War had significant reverberations in Lebanon. Jamal Abdul Nasser lost swiftly, and the Palestinian factions in Lebanon began to militarize in the refugee camps. Nasser's defeat spelled, for the Christian parties, the permanent disappearance of the Greater Arab unity project, and Lebanon's sovereignty was again safe. Lebanon did not participate in the Six-Day War or the 1973 Yom Kippur War, and thus avoided Israel's destructive superior military capabilities; however, Lebanon paid through Israeli retaliation against Palestinian cross-border operations from Lebanese territory (Hirst 2010, 73). The Palestinians, frustrated with the Lebanese government's refusal to give them rights accompanied by a repressive military crackdown within the refugee camps in Lebanon, reacted with passion when the Palestinian Liberation Organization (*hereafter* PLO) came into being (Sayigh 1994). They established a state within a state on Lebanese territory and began paramilitary operations from Southern Lebanon against Israel. The PLO forces received reinforcements when the PLO factions in Jordan failed to overthrow the Jordanian monarchy after King Hussein banned Palestinian paramilitary operations in the country in 1970. Around 20,000 "or so Palestinian fighters, therefore, washed in Lebanon, the only country in the region too weak to keep them out" (Boykin 2000, 43).

From 1967 until 1974, Palestinian cross-border attacks polarized Lebanese politics into two main camps, especially when Israel retaliated by bombing the Beirut International Airport on December 28, 1968, destroying thirteen Middle East Airlines planes (Traboulsi 2008, 153). A series of confrontations took place between the PLO fighters and the Lebanese army, with Chamoun and Gemayel declaring that the sole wielder of legitimate arms was the Lebanese army. The confrontations between the army and the PLO pushed Egypt to mediate the 1969 Cairo Agreement, which forced the Lebanese state to recognize the Palestinians' right to carry arms and move around Lebanon; furthermore, the Cairo Agreement banned the army from entering the Palestinian camps (Traboulsi 2008, 154; Hanf 1993, 166). The Agreement, in effect, stepped on Lebanon's sovereignty and allowed the PLO to establish a state within a state in Lebanon (Hanf 1993, 166). Arab nationalists like Kamal Jumblatt demanded solidarity with the PLO and cast doubt on the Lebanese army after several Israeli intelligence operations within Lebanon (Traboulsi 2008, 174-176). As escalations between the PLO and Lebanon increased, especially after Jordan expelled thousands of Palestinians in 1970, Pierre Gemayel declared that Lebanon could not be an arena for the PLO, and used the slogan "Lebanon First" (Amin Gemayel in Al-Jazeera Documentary Vol 1, 1:01:01-1:02:03). This slogan would again be at the heart of controversy in Lebanon between 2000 and 2010.

The Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990)

The Civil War officially commenced during the Ain Remaineh episode, when Pierre Gemayel was attending a consecration of a new church on a street that bore his name. Unknown assailants opened fire on the church, and four Phalangists were injured. On the same day, a Palestinian bus was passing through the same area when Phalangists opened fire and killed all the passengers on it (Hirst 2010, 98). To this day, the Lebanese consider April 13th, 1975, to be the day when the Civil War began. The Civil War itself was not a single war, but was composed of mini-wars that followed each other for fifteen years. While it is impossible to summarize the Civil War as a whole, key events are listed below because they appeared in the speeches of the Phalange, the Free Patriotic Movement, and Hezbollah.

Lebanon's scene was split into the Christian right, named the Lebanese Front, and the left-wing pro-Palestinian coalition, the Lebanese National Movement. Pierre Gemayel, Sr. led the former, and Kamal Jumblatt led the latter. The Lebanese Front, primarily the Phalange, split Beirut in half and kept Christian Beirut free from Palestinian and Syrian military forces until the final stages of the Civil War in 1989-1990. Despite being overwhelmed, the Phalange were able to enter Tel Zaatar refugee camp and engage in ethnic cleansing in the camp (Hirst 2010, 114); 3500 Palestinians were displaced, and "3500 died, between 1000 and 2000 of them after the camp had fallen, crushed under bulldozers, shot and hacked to death" (Ibid, 114). Jumblatt's Lebanese National Movement, accompanied with PLO firepower, ultimately overwhelmed the Lebanese Front due to firepower disparity and guerrilla warfare training. The Lebanese Front's desperation pushed Camille Chamoun, Suleiman Franjeh, and Pierre Gemayel to invite Syria to enter Lebanon as a deterrent force, under the auspices of the Arab League, to disarm the PLO (Ibid, 113-114). The Syrians, observing the extended gains of the Lebanese National Movement in Lebanon, feared that the Lebanese Front's cantons would act seditiously and seek an alliance with Israel (Hanf 1993, 208). The war manifested as the Christian right versus the Lebanese left; Muslim politicians, both Sunnis and Shiites, were in general not involved with the war (Hirst 2010, 213). President Assad, in 1977, secured an alliance with the PLO after Egypt signed its peace treaty with Israel, pushing the Lebanese Front to collide with the Syrian forces.

During these turbulent times (1976-1981), Bashir Gemayel, the younger son of Pierre Gemayel, began his ascension to power. He became known from the Tel Zaatar battles as the commander of the Front, and was popular with the younger generations of the Phalange, who

were not satisfied with Syria's entrance into Lebanon (Traboulsi 2008, 208). While Pierre Gemayel was hesitant to seek an alliance with Israel, Bashir lost hope that Europe would ever aid the Lebanese Christians and focused on seeking aid from Israel (Hirst 2010, 122). After one hundred days of battles in Ashrafieh, East Beirut, the Syrians withdrew, and most of Ashrafieh's residents hailed Bashir as a hero (Hanf 1993, 237-240, Traboulsi 2008, 209-210). Before that bloodbath, the "Paladin" had militarily attacked his brother, Amin, over the latter's full control of the Metn Constituency (Traboulsi 2008, 209 - 212), as part of his bid to unite the "Christian Rifle." By 1980, Bashir Gemayel had politically or paramilitarily eliminated all prominent Christian rivals, including his allies, to present himself as the sole Presidential candidate for the republic. Within the same year, he succeeded in pushing Israel to confront the Syrians over the Zahlé town of Bekaa. The Syrians felt that Bashir was linking the Christian heartland of Mt. Lebanon with Zahlé, and began pounding the city with artillery. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin authorized Israeli plans to shoot down Syrian helicopters (Boykin 2000, 45). In the meantime, Bashir Gemayel built the Lebanese Forces, a united military wing for the Lebanese Front factions, under his leadership (see Hanf 1993, 271; Traboulsi 2008, 208-209). Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, at the invitation of Pierre Gemayel and Camille Chamoun, to destroy the PLO once and for all, a move that American diplomats on the ground strongly discouraged (Boykin 2000, 50-57, 59). By January 1982, Israeli Minister of Defence Ariel Sharon had travelled to Beirut and met with Bashir Gemayel; later, he met with Pierre Gemayel and Camille Chamoun. The deal between the Lebanese Forces and Sharon was that Israeli forces would enter East Beirut, and the Phalange, in return, would enter West Beirut to flush out holed-up PLO militants (Boykin 2000, 52-53). The Lebanese Forces did not respect their side of the deal to enter West Beirut, but American diplomats evacuated the Palestinians to Tunisia and other Arab states to stop Israeli artillery from shelling the "Muslim" side of the Lebanese capital (Boykin 2000, 241). Under the shadow of Israeli tanks, Bashir Gemayel became President in 1982, voted in by the surviving members of the 1972 Lebanese parliament (Boykin 2000, 250; Hanf 1993, 266-267). He was assassinated twelve days later, and Amin Gemayel, Bashir's older brother, replaced him (Hanf 1993, 269). The assassination did not go unanswered. Israel broke the deal not to enter West Beirut that had been brokered by the U.S. and laid siege to the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila. They later allowed the Lebanese Forces to enter the camps and slaughter their defenceless residents for days in revenge for Bashir Gemayel's death (Boykin 2000, 269-271).

Amin Gemayel's reign (1982-1988) witnessed the downfall of the state. While Israel attempted to create a peace treaty with Gemayel, their demands were far-fetched and unrealistic, prompting the American diplomat Philip Habib to scornfully criticize the Israelis for not asking "about the kitchen sink" (Boykin 2000, 285-288). The U.S. Marines withdrew as the result of Hezbollah operations against the American Embassy, and over 241 U.S. Marines died, along with fifty-eight French soldiers, when their barracks were struck (Hirst 2010, 194). Gemayel refused to sign the May 17th agreement with Israel after Walid Jumblatt² and AMAL's Berri declared an insurrection against what became known as the May Accords (Hanf 1993, 275 - 291). Israel's sudden pulling out from the Druze region of Mt. Lebanon resulted in the War of the Mountains, in which the Druze ethnically cleansed Christians in the region. The War of the Mountains resulted in the deaths of 1500 Christians and the destruction of sixty-two villages (Traboulsi 2008, 224). The "displaced" file would continue to be a politicized issue for Amin Gemayel and Michel Aoun between 2005 and 2010. Sharon's dreams for a Christian Lebanon and the subsequent signing of a peace treaty faced harsh reality when another car bomb targeted the Israeli military headquarters in Tyre, killing over 141, mostly Israelis and many Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners (Hirst 2010, 196).

From the Taef Accord into the Syrian Mandate (1988-2005)

Under the eyes of the world, the surviving pre-Civil War parliament ratified the Taef Accord in 1989 as a means to end the fourteen-year war (Traboulsi 2008, 240). It was during this stage of the war that Rafic Hariri made a powerful entrance into Lebanese politics. He flew twenty-six members of parliament on his private jet to Paris, and the surviving fifty-eight deputies, elected in 1972, held quorum to ratify the Taef Accord (Hanf 1993, 592). The purpose of meeting in Paris was for the parliament to avoid an artillery attack from Aoun, who opposed the Taef Accord (Ibid). The final pocket of resistance against Syria was General Michel Aoun. Syrian warplanes bombed the Presidential Palace, where Aoun had barricaded himself for years, and

² Walid Jumblatt belonged to the Jumblatt clan, whose political legacy dated back to the sixteenth century (ex. see Traboulsi 2008, 5-7). He was the son of Kamal Jumblatt, founder of the Progressive Socialist Party. Even though the Party is 'Socialist' in name, currently, the Party is predominately sectarian, and represents most of the Druze community. The Druze are an offshoot sect from Islam. He took the leadership of the Progressive Socialist Party in 1977, after Syria allegedly assassinated his father in 1977 (see Martin 2010 for a quick summary on Walid Jumblatt and his ties with the Druze Community in Lebanon, Syria, and Israel).

the general ultimately fled to France. He remained in exile for fourteen years (1991-2005) (Hirst 2010, 213-214).

The First Gulf War had ramifications for Lebanese politics, because Syria received Saudi and American blessing to take over rebuilding Lebanon. Syria offered invaluable support for an Arab-Western coalition to repel Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. In return, "Assad won *carte blanche* to clinch matters in Lebanon as he saw fit" (Hirst 2010, 213). Indeed, while on paper, it was Saudi Arabia and Syria together who were the patrons of the new peace era for Lebanon, it was realistically Syria that made all final decisions in regards to political affairs (Najem 2012, 66 – 67; Traboulsi 2008, 242-248), including forming electoral coalitions, rewarding its allies with political cover and finance, and appointing officials. Within President Assad's grand scheme for Lebanon, they ended up following the Hong Kong model for Syria, benefiting from Lebanon's *laissez-faire* capitalist system while maintaining Syria under semi-socialist rules (Hanf 1993, 644). Lebanon's system gave Syria access to the markets, and the former's ports, enabled Syria to benefit from providing access for ships to the rest of Asia. At the same time, Syria managed the security and foreign policy of Lebanon through local allies who held financial and security advantages over the Lebanese opposition (El-Husseini 2012).

Iran benefited immensely from Syrian control over Lebanon. Syria disarmed all militias except for Hezbollah, a party that openly supported Iran and its Ayatollahs' vision of Khomeini's *Wilayat al-Faqih* (see Norton 2008). Hezbollah became the most potent post-war militia after the Civil War and was able to humiliate the Israeli military on several different occasions (see Norton 2008; Cammett 2014, 72-74; Hirst 2010, 214-398; Hourani 2013), including the liberation of Southern Lebanon and the Second Lebanese War of 2006 (Norton 2008; Hirst 2010). The more Hezbollah expanded its influence, the more Iran gained leverage over the region, to the extent that by 2010, the Iranian President, Ahmadinejad, was speaking on behalf of the Lebanese state and reaping the rewards of Hezbollah's victories in Lebanon. For Iran, Hezbollah remained a deterrent for Israeli strikes on its nuclear program, a phenomenon that Amin Gemayel constantly reiterated, complaining about the fact that Lebanon had become, unwillingly, a part of an axis that did not serve its national interest, but Iran's.

For Syria, Hezbollah played a crucial role; its military operations on the Lebanese-Israeli border were par excellence the means by which to pressure Israel during Syria's negotiations with

Israel for the Golan Heights³ (Najem 2012, 56-57). Indeed, Hezbollah offered Syria every mechanism to wage war on Israel without having its country receive a single bullet from the IDF. These military operations in the South do not exclude Hezbollah's genuine interest in liberating Southern Lebanon from Israeli occupation and in supporting its allies, the Southern Lebanese Army. An informal agreement between Israel and Hezbollah about waging war in the South kept the Syrian Forces neutral during the confrontations of 1993 and 1996, and throughout the guerrilla warfare operations that Hezbollah conducted against the IDF when the latter occupied Southern Lebanon until 2000 (Hirst 2010, 247-253). This deal limited combat between the two parties within the occupied territories of South Lebanon (Ibid), and it was broken during two escalated encounters in 1993 and 1996. Hezbollah also adapted to suit its new role in the Lebanese parliament as a reformist party and a national liberation army (Matar et al. 2014, 58-63). The climax for Hezbollah came when Israel withdrew from Lebanon in 2000, putting to the question whether the militant party should retain its arms after achieving its goal (Hirst 2010, 268-269). To maintain the legitimacy of its arms post-liberation, Hezbollah targeted a small, disputed piece of land, the Sheba'a farms, located between Lebanon, Syria, and Israel, claiming it was Lebanese, to justify its on-going operations as being for the sake of liberation (Kaufman 2014, 178). The United Nations considered this land part of the Golan Heights, which was Syrian but was annexed by Israel during the 1967 war, so Israel considered itself to have fully withdrawn from Lebanon (Ibid).

The Regional Balance of Power and Local-International Alliances 1990-2005

Rafic Hariri gave leverage in Lebanon once again to France, Saudi Arabia, and the United States, even if it was limited due to close Syrian - Saudi ties (Nizameddin 2006, 97). He became prime minister in 1993 and gambled on the Arab-Israeli negotiations to rebuild the country; however, this bet led him on a collision course with Syria and its protégé, President Emile Lahoud (Ibid). He relied on the West to economically boost the country, but he also had to face-off with the pro-Syrian hardliners. Seen by the anti-Syrian parties as part of the Syria package, Rafic Hariri became at the same time pro-Syrian and pro-Western (Ibid, 98). His rise to power had started Lebanon during the Civil War, and he played a role in the success of the Taef Accord. He had made a fortune in Saudi Arabia, and he was close to the monarchy. More interestingly, he was supposed to handle the economic dimension of post-war Lebanon as a

³ The Golan Heights is part of Syria. Israel captured that region during the 1967 Six Day War (see Kaufman 2014 for details).

representative of Saudi Arabia and the United States, under the mandate of Syria (Hanf 1993, 635; Najem 2012, 67). This arrangement over Hariri's role as prime minister does not signal that Saudi Arabia and Syria were at odds over Lebanon; on the contrary, Saudi Arabia respected Syria for its involvement against Saddam Hussein in the First Gulf War in 1991 (Nizameddin 2006, 103). The 9/11 attacks and President George Bush's pressure on the Saudi monarch resulted in the first cracks in the relationship between Syria and the United States (Ibid, 104).

Syrian ties with Hariri were hampered when the latter, along with Saudi Prince Abdullah, launched the Arab Peace Initiative during the 2002 Arab League Summit in Beirut. Nevertheless, Syria always managed to obstruct his projects (Najem 2012, 70; see Chapter Eight for details) and create, through its close allies, riots whenever its interests were not satisfied in further consolidation of power in Lebanon and of the refutation of the Oslo Accords. Hariri had also gambled on the Oslo Accords (Nizameddin 2006, 97-98) and hoped that the Israeli-Palestinian Accords would weaken Syria's grip on Lebanon. As for France, Hariri was close to President Chirac, to the extent that President Chirac faced accusations in France of having financial ties with Hariri (Daily Star 2002f). Chirac was among the first Western leaders to exert pressure on Syria to withdraw from Lebanon; instead of succumbing to this pressure, the young Syrian President pushed France and the United States to converge on Lebanon (Hirst 2010, 300–301) when he imposed an extension of President Lahoud's term in 2004.

The Death of Rafic Hariri (2005)

After President Emile Lahoud's extension for a further half-term (three years), Rafic Hariri resigned and did not form a new government. Omar Karami, of the Karami clan in the North, continued his family's legacy as prime minister instead. Rafic Hariri and Walid Jumblatt joined the anti-Syrian bloc, which included the Lebanese Forces, the Phalange, Qornet Shahwan, the Free Patriotic Movement, and Chamoun's National Partisans (Choucair 2005, 1-2). On February 14th, 2005, Rafic Hariri was killed in a massive bomb explosion in downtown Beirut. Hariri's death gave more leverage to France, the United States, and Saudi Arabia (Najem 2012, 78) as the result of the subsequent mass protests against Syria's presence (Hirst 2010, 307), but the euphoria was short-lived. Amidst huge protests, each including over a million participants, on both the pro-Syrian and anti-Syrian sides, the United States had high expectations for crippling the Syrian-Iranian axis's hand on Lebanon and disarming Hezbollah (Hirst 2010, 316). On March 8th, the pro-Syrian protestors assembled to thank Syria for its efforts in rebuilding

Lebanon; on March 14th, anti-Syrian protestors demanded the full and immediate withdrawal of Syria (Ibid, 307-309). The Syrian withdrawal and the isolation of the Shiite parties, Hezbollah and AMAL, raised expectations that the United States' War on Terror would cut the funds flowing between Iran and Hezbollah, and would alleviate tensions between Lebanon and Israel. Henceforth, the United States sought to weaken both Syria and Iran (Ibid 319-320).

On the international level, Hariri's assassination was a topic of discussion of almost every foreign leader worldwide. The Bush administration was the first to dub the protests and anti-Syrian mobilization the "Cedar Revolution." The Lebanese referred to them as the Lebanese Intifada ("uprising" in Arabic), although the term *intifada* is more often associated with Palestinian activities in Israel during the First and Second Intifadas (1987 and 2000, respectively). President Bush, realizing the failure of his democratic project in Iraq, had high hopes for the Cedar Revolution, and told the Lebanese people that the American people stood with them, adding that their restored democracy would knock at the doors of every Arab regime (Hirst 2010, 307). French President Chirac, on the other hand, flew immediately to Beirut following the assassination, stayed in the Hariri mansion there, and attended Hariri's funeral (Future Newspaper, *hereafter*, FN 2005u). By February 28, 2005, Prime Minister Omar Karami, a close ally to Damascus, resigned amidst mass protests in Martyrs' Square, after MP Bahiya Hariri, Rafic's sister, harshly criticized the government's failure in protecting her brother (FN 2005e). Syria's woes escalated when the U.N. Security Council and its officials further condemned Syria and implicated pro-Syrian officials in its independent probe into Hariri's assassination (Hirst 2010, 310; see Chapter Eight).

The Local Players, 2005-2010

There are two grand coalitions that existed after Hariri's death: the pro-Syrian 8th of March and the anti-Syrian 14th of March blocs. The names reflect the dates of the two protests immediately following the assassination, both estimated to have gathered at least a million participants in the streets of Beirut. The Phalange was already part of an earlier anti-Syrian bloc: the Qornet Shahwan Gathering, and Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement was protesting Syria's hegemony, with other Christian parties, such as the Lebanese Forces and Chamoun's National Partisans. Walid Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party and Future Movement's Rafic Hariri, initiated talks in December 2004 with the opposition movement (Choucair 2005, 1-2). When the March 14th protest took place, Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement was involved, side-by-side, with the

Phalange, the Lebanese Forces, the National Partisans, the Democratic Left Movement, and other groups (Hirst 2010, 309). Aoun, after he returned from exile, gradually started shifting toward Syria's smaller allies, such as Suleiman Franjeh Jr., Michel Murr, and others. The 14th of March tried to win over Hezbollah and AMAL through sharing a national unity government with them; however, Hezbollah would abandon neither President Lahoud nor its ties with Syria. The 8th of March bloc fully became active after Prime Minister Siniora, Rafic Hariri's former finance minister, and his cabinet pushed for a tribunal toward the end of 2005.

The 8th of March fully mobilized as a front to oppose any International Tribunal to investigate Rafic Hariri's death, out of fear that the Tribunal, and the United Nations that would sanction it, had already been politicized by the United States. Throughout the process, Michel Aoun remained in the opposition and refused to join the government, despite his victory in the elections of 2005 within the Christian-majority constituencies. Toward the end of February 2006, Aoun and Nasrallah signed a Memorandum of Understanding (Atwi 2006), which shifted the Free Patriotic Movement's alliances toward Syria and Iran, as well as AMAL and Hezbollah. The Memorandum continues to hold to present day (2021). There are other smaller allies within the 8th of March bloc, including the Ossama Saad, a challenger to the Hariri family in their hometown Saida; Najah Wakim in Beirut; Omar Karami in Tripoli; and the Syrian Social Nationalist party, which took credit for assassinating Bashir Gemayel (Boykin 2000, 267; Reuters 2017), among others.

The 14th of March Bloc

Almost every party that participated in the 14th of March has historical bad blood with the others. Its members gathered to oppose Syria's meddling in Lebanon, and all the violence during the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) was rewritten to solely blame Syria. Some examples will serve to demonstrate the extent of the bloodshed that members of the 14th of March leveled against each other during and after the Lebanese Civil War. Michel Aoun and Samir Geagea, head of the Lebanese Forces, had fought a fierce battle in East Beirut in what became known as the "War of Cancellation" in 1989, after Aoun's failed "War of Liberation" against Syria and its Lebanese allies. This "war" had destroyed Christian political power during the Syrian mandate era of 1990-2005 (Traboulsi 2008, 243; Hanf 1993, 572-573). Walid Jumblatt and Amin Gemayel had serious clashes throughout the war (see Hanf 1993, 289), with Jumblatt accusing Amin Gemayel twice of attempted assassination. Jumblatt was involved in the ethnic cleansing in Mt. Lebanon, following the sudden Israeli pullout, putting him at odds with Christian parties

such as the Phalange, the Lebanese Forces, and the National Partisans (Ibid). More interestingly, the Hariri–Phalange–Lebanese Forces connection was complex, given that the Christian parties had suffered repression during Syria’s mandate while Rafic Hariri was the Prime Minister and often defended Syria’s role in Lebanon (see Chapter Eight). The Phalange and the Lebanese Forces had also allied with Israel, during which time Sharon had laid siege to West Beirut and shelled it for months (Boykin 2000). Hariri’s constituents had also suffered under Aoun’s Lebanese Army during the doomed War of Liberation (Hanf 1993, 574). Among the left-wing members of the 14th of March, former General Secretary of the Lebanese Communist Party George Hawi and head of the Democratic Left Movement Elias Attallah, also a former member of the LCP, had also waged wars against the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces during the Lebanese Civil War (see Hawi’s background in Joffe 2005; The Democratic Left Movement in Bassil et al. 2020; see interviews with Hawi and Attallah in NBN 2003).

The alliances within the 14th of March bloc did not long last, given that few parties switched foreign backers. General Aoun ran an independent bloc, backed by several junior pro-Syrian parties, during the 2005 elections; afterward, he completely changed alliances and foreign backers in February 2006. Walid Jumblatt also jumped ship from the 14th of March coalition, and allied politically with the 8th of March coalition, and changed, in less than 24 hours in 2009, his speeches from support of the United States to raining praise on Syria’s Assad (see Chapter Seven). By 2010, the Phalange had briefly suspended their membership in the 14th of March coalition as the result of Prime Minister Saad Hariri’s cabinet formation and his opening of a new relationship with Syria’s Assad regime (see Chapters Six, Eight). Perhaps what hurt the 14th of March coalition most was the string of assassinations that followed Rafic Hariri’s death. The timing of each of the assassination operations coincided with an international or local push for the establishment of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, the U.N.-sanctioned Tribunal to investigate Rafic Hariri’s death. Mass protests by the 14th of March coalition’s supporters followed each successful assassination (Special Tribunal for Lebanon, *hereafter*, STL 2020).

While militarily the 14th of March coalition was outgunned, nevertheless, the 14th of March leaders coded in this dissertation held the United Nations Security Council’s Resolutions as a final defence against the 8th of March bloc politically. They held the support of the United States, several European countries, the Arab League states, except for Syria; and the United Nations. Indeed, Hezbollah grumbled via Nasrallah’s speeches that almost all of the United Nations’ resolutions with respect to Lebanon were part of a greater conspiracy to serve US-

Israeli interests (see Chapter Nine). On the other hand, the 14th of March coalition clung to these resolutions as legitimate and essential for the survival of Lebanon in order to avoid economic and political isolation. In practice, these resolutions sought to further weaken Syria's influence over its Lebanese allies; however, they failed to curb Assad's influence or the strength of the 8th of March parties.

The 8th of March and its Complexities

The pro-Syrian coalition involved many parties that had historically been close to Syria, with the exception of Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement. The dominant parties were Hezbollah, AMAL, and, later, the Free Patriotic Movement. There were also smaller parties, such as the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, Franjeh's Marada, Talal Arslan's (Druze) Unity Party, The Populist Naserite Organization (in Saida), and the Syrian Baath Party, among many others. Complexity arose first between AMAL and Hezbollah. Both were the largest Shiite parties in Lebanon, and vote distribution shows that they dominated, with minimum contestation, all parliamentary seats in Shiite-majority constituencies (Pan 2005; Chambers 2009). AMAL and Hezbollah reflected the Syrian–Iranian alliance, as they were, respectively, directly and openly in alliance with the aforementioned states. After a bloody war between the two Shiite parties in the 1980s over the South and Dahhieh, except for a few tensions after the Civil War ended the two parties enjoyed a resilient and robust alliance, especially during and after the 2000 elections, at times even sharing a joint base of non-party affiliates, as election results demonstrate (Pan 2005; Chambers 2009). It is possible that the membership of the most influential Christian, Sunni, and Druze parties in the 14th of March coalition further cemented AMAL's and Hezbollah's alliance, as the pro-Western coalition appeared to be anti-Shiite.

When Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement joined the 8th of March coalition's line-up, despite insisting that they were independent of any coalition, complexities and frictions heightened within the pro-Syrian camp. Most of the political parties and political personalities within the 8th of March coalition had been allied with Syria for at least fifteen years; they knew each other and shared various cabinets in the government, or ran together within their respective constituencies. Aoun's arrival, out of the blue, was bound to create friction. Aoun's and Nasrallah's Memorandum of Understanding, in February 2006 (Atwi 2006), allowed the 8th of March bloc to claim that the majority of the Lebanese supported them. This logic disregarded parliamentary results that supported the 14th of March as representing the majority, and argued

that the strongest Shiite and Christian blocs were in the same alliance as AMAL and Hezbollah. Hence, they argued, the majority of the Christians and Shiites stood with the 8th of March bloc, and that count also included the smaller pro-Syrian parties. Most of Michel Aoun's speeches between 2006 and 2008 elaborated on how the anti-14th of March coalition held a majority on the street, a sentiment that Hezbollah's Nasrallah reiterated (see Chapters Seven, Nine).

Key Events between 2005 and 2010

This section outlines a chronology of events to which all four ethnic parties reacted, with variation, as analysed in the empirical chapters. Within this section, a list of events at both the international and domestic levels will be provided as a critical historical framework for the chapters to follow.

As the Western and Arab Gulf states stood with the 14th of March coalition, Syria suffered the rise of a new opposition that opposed the unilateral rule of the Baathi regime (Choucair 2005, 1-2). Syria's decline in power in Lebanon seemed imminent, as it withdrew from Lebanon before the elections in June of 2005, and after the international fact-finding investigative committee sanctioned by the U.N. Security Council implicated Syria in Hariri's assassination. Worse, Syria's Lebanese allies, four generals within the security apparatus, were arrested as a response to the international investigation (Hirst 2010, 310). President Bush continued to blame the Assad regime for Lebanon's woes as explosions rocked various areas of Lebanon in the evenings, and assassinations began to target the 14th of March coalition's officials. In parallel, Syria's woes intensified when former Syrian Vice President Abdul Haleem Khaddam defected and fled to France after Rafic Hariri's death (Daily Star 2020).

Syria fought back with a vengeance. The 14th of March coalition failed to impose their will on Syria's two most influential allies within Lebanon, AMAL and Hezbollah. The anti-Syrian bloc attempted to reach out to the Shiite parties at first, partially because they wanted to avoid a Christian–Durzi–Sunni political civil war against the Shiites. The other reason for 14th of March sought to impose its will on the Shiite parties relates to Hezbollah's and AMAL's military capability as militias, and the inability of the 14th of March bloc to impose its will through the Lebanese state due to the firepower that Hezbollah held (see Hirst 2010, 312). The 14th of March coalition opted to win over Hezbollah and the AMAL movement through sharing the government with them, despite winning 72 out of 128 parliamentary seats (Hirst 2010, 310).

Michel Aoun's movement, and his enlarged coalition comprised of pro-Syrian allies, opted to remain outside the government.

Facing pressure from the United States to disarm Hezbollah and the full implementation of U.N. Resolution 1559, the 14th of March coalition declared that only the Lebanese agreed amongst themselves as to how and when Hezbollah should give up its arms. Finance minister Fouad Siniora became the prime minister on June 30th, 2005 (Whitaker 2005) and reiterated the 14th of March coalition's rhetoric about the United States. On the ground, though, many of the 14th of March coalition's officials saw no reason for Hezbollah to maintain its arms, especially after Israel's withdrawal in 2000. Hence, the weapons of Hezbollah became one of the three major topics when Speaker of the House and AMAL leader Nabih Berri chaired the National Dialogue from March 2006 until the war with Israel broke out in July 2006 (Najem 2012, 78-79; Hirst 2010, 314; Wählisch 2017, 7). Before the National Dialogue, the government passed a motion requesting an investigation from the U.N. Security Council's International Tribunal after a 14th of March coalition member, Member of Parliament, and Editor-in-Chief of Annahar Newspaper, Gebran Tueini, was killed. This move prompted Hezbollah and AMAL to boycott the government under the pretext of the latter breaching Consociationalism, since both Shiite parties opposed the Special Tribunal for Lebanon out of fear of United Nations bias against Hezbollah and Syria. The Shiite ministers returned in February after Saudi Arabia's efforts to dialogue with Syria for de-escalation in Lebanon (see FN 2006s). As a result of Saudi-Syrian talks, Prime Minister Siniora's statement acknowledging that Hezbollah was resistance and not a militia brought the Shiite ministers back to the government after the latter halted accusations that the Prime Minister was serving American-Israeli interests (Bassam 2006).

During the National Dialogue sessions (March-July 2006), the participants agreed on Lebanon and Syria's unique ties historically, culturally, economically, and politically (Najem 2012, 78-79). The participants also agreed that the relations should be positive between the two countries, and the two should engage each other as equal partners. Hezbollah saw no reason to disarm itself, since it had been recognized to be not a militia but a resistance and liberation organization, and, hence, U.N. Resolution 1559 did not apply to it. Hezbollah succeeded in deflecting the topic of its arms during these sessions. It put energy instead into the discussion of the Defence Strategy, particularly focused on how the party could defend Lebanon in case of an Israeli invasion (Ibid, 79). The Defence Strategy also included the need to liberate the Sheba'a

farms, as discussed above (Wählisch 2017, 8). The topics of the Defence Strategy and Hezbollah's arms continued to appear frequently throughout the years under observation.

The July War on July 12, 2006 commenced after Hezbollah crossed the border and kidnapped two Israeli soldiers, killed six others, and destroyed a tank. The response to the war within Lebanese politics was contradictory (El-Masri 2008, 83). The 8th of March hailed it as a victory while the 14th of March condemned it as bypassing the Lebanese state in deciding on peace or war for the Lebanese people. The war was devastating to Lebanon despite Hezbollah's impressive performance on the ground (ex. Hirst 2010, 355-356). The West and the Arab states blamed Hezbollah for the war, and figureheads of the 14th of March coalition did the same (Ibid, 330, 339 – 343, 358). For example, Hezbollah and its allies insisted that Israel had planned the war to destroy the Lebanese resistance. Hezbollah's steadfastness, the ongoing Katyusha rockets, and damage to several Israeli establishments had embarrassed Israel, but the greatest embarrassment came in the town of Bint Jbeil. Israel had regarded its invasion of that Southern town as symbolic for Hezbollah's pride since Hassan Nasrallah delivered his victory speech in 2000 in it after Israel withdrew in 2000. On July 25th, 2006, the IDF proclaimed victory against Hezbollah in that town, and the town's capture. After five days of counter-offensives, and paratrooper reinforcements from the IDF, Hezbollah conceded defeat; this remarkable battle was similar to events in other Southern towns, which were also proclaimed captured by the IDF, including the small border town of Maroun el-Ras (Ibid, 354-355). The Arab media blackout during the first half of the July War eased after Israel committed a massacre in Qana on July 30th, 2006, which became a symbol for the Lebanese of Israeli atrocities, and a reminder of the 1996 Qana massacre, where at least a hundred Lebanese had died in an Israeli bombardment (Ibid, 362-365).

Throughout the July War and until mid-August, Prime Minister Siniora, with support from the Speaker of the House, Nabih Berri, domestically, and France and the Arab League internationally, pushed the U.N. Security Council to issue U.N. Resolution 1701 (Hirst 2010, 371, 388-389), which came into effect as a ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon on August 13th, 2006. The war itself had been highly damaging to Lebanon. From almost the second day of the war, Israel immediately began targeting the Lebanese army and state infrastructure, and bombed areas that were mainly Shiite. Direct costs included: "1,100 civilians were killed, a third of whom were children; 4,000 more were wounded; one million [out of 4 million] were displaced [...] By the end of August 2006, the direct damage of the war was estimated to be 3.6 billion\$"

(Sayed and Tzannatos 2008 [2006], 318). Despite the fact that the war officially ended with U.N. Resolution 1701, Israel continued its siege on Lebanon, from the air and sea, for another month (Hirst 2010, 374).

The resolution served to increase the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), a peacekeeping force, from 2,000 to 15,000 soldiers (United Nations 2006), and the border towns still had not been freed from Hezbollah militants (Hirst 2010, 328-374). Hezbollah's performance on the ground gave the Syrian regime room to claim victory in the July War, and shed light on Iran's actual role within Lebanese politics. Before the July War, the 14th of March coalition, and, to a lesser extent, the international community, had focused on Syria's hegemony and meddling in Lebanese affairs; afterward, Iran's expansionary role was discussed with alarm within the Arab Gulf States, with leaders' speeches centered on these themes (see Chapters Six through Nine).

The war brought further complications to Lebanon's politics and the region, beyond the ongoing disputes. The 14th of March coalition shifted position on the illegality of Hezbollah's arms outside the Lebanese state. It criticized the monopoly Hezbollah seemed to enjoy on decisions about Lebanon's path to war and peace (see Chapters Six and Eight). Meanwhile, Hezbollah claimed divine victory over Israel and made further demands of the 14th of March government, including that they award the 8th of March coalition the one-third veto within the government (Najem 2012, 80). Furthermore, the 14th of March coalition and the 8th of March coalition accused each other of serving American or Syrian-Iranian objectives, respectively, instead of Lebanese goals. The accusations intensified to the extent that each coalition feared that Lebanon might follow Iraq's path to Sunni-Shiite divisions. This fear translated into a regional rivalry as well, beyond Lebanese borders. Hirst noted that the possibility of a Hezbollah victory domestically threatened the 14th of March bloc's 'moderate' Arab allies such as Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia by paving the way for an expansionary Iranian influence throughout the region (Hirst 2010, 258). After that war, Nasrallah escalated his criticism of Saudi Arabia, forcing Saad Hariri and Prime Minister Siniora to defend their allies.

Worse, the Shiite ministers, along with one Orthodox minister close to President Lahoud, resigned from Siniora's government after the latter approved the call for the Special Tribunal to investigate Hariri's assassination, placing the two grand Shiite parties, along with their allies, on a collision course with the Saudi-French-U.S.-backed Sunni prime minister on November 11th,

2006 (Slackman 2006). The scheduled 8th of March protest in Beirut's downtown area was postponed after Minister Pierre Gemayel, Jr. died from gunshot wounds after being attacked by unknown assailants on November 21st, 2006 (Ladki 2007). The reactions to his death from the two blocs were contradictory: the 14th of March accused Syria of continuing its streak of murders, while the 8th of March accused Israel of seeking to destabilize the country (Chassay 2006).

The 8th of March bloc's open protests in Beirut's downtown lasted until May 2008. During that period, Lebanon went through several crises simultaneously. The first crisis involved the complete shutdown of the Lebanese parliament, since the AMAL head, Nabih Berri, was the Speaker of Parliament and had closed the parliament until Prime Minister Siniora's government resigned. Furthermore, a terrorist group spawned in a Palestinian refugee camp in the North called Nahr el-Bared, claiming affiliation to al-Qaeda and committing acts of terrorism. As they had done in reaction to Hariri's death (2005), Pierre Gemayel Jr.'s death (2006), or the July War (2006), the 8th of March coalition leaders accused the United States of funding the group while the 14th of March coalition leaders accused Syria. The Lebanese army entered the camp, even though Hassan Nasrallah had politely warned them not to do so out of fear of massacres (BBC 2007k); the army emerged victorious, making its head, Michel Suleiman, a candidate for the presidency of the republic in the face of Michel Aoun (Perry 2008; see Chapters Six through Nine).

The downtown protests ended with a "mini" Lebanese civil war when the Siniora government decided to dismantle Hezbollah's telecommunication network near the Rafic Hariri International Airport and to dismiss a customs officer in the airport who had been closely tied to Hezbollah (Hirst 2010, 391-393). The mini civil war swiftly resulted in Hezbollah and its allies overwhelming the 14th of March coalition's Future Movement and Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party, and the 8th of March coalition proclaimed victory over the American-Zionist project of bringing sectarian sedition into the country (BBC 2008). Army Chief Michel Suleiman officially became President Lahoud's elected successor on May 25th, 2008, as a reconciliatory president for the two large Lebanese coalitions, in the presence of foreign representatives and prominent figures, including the Qatari Prince Hamad bin Khalifa, who mediated the Doha Accords. The Saudi and Iranian ambassadors met for thirty minutes after President Suleiman was sworn in, signifying regional approval from the backers of the 14th and 8th of March blocs respectively (Perry 2008).

There are winners and losers in the years between 2005 and 2008. Even though the United States and Israel at first appeared to be the winners, their gains ultimately took a different turn. Initially, Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon had signalled a weaker Iran, since the sole Arab state that was allied with the Ayatollah regime was Syria. However, Israel's war on Lebanon had failed to disarm the Iranian-backed Hezbollah; worse, Hezbollah and its allies had used their arms to overwhelm the 14th of March government militarily, and had secured a veto at the governmental level after Prime Minister Siniora formed a National Unity Government in the wake of President Suleiman's election (Hirst 2010, 391-392; France 24, 2008a). Even though the 14th of March bloc held a parliamentary majority, they refused to accept President Bush's call to elect President Lahoud's successor with a simple majority, fearing a bloody civil war (Hirst 2010, 286-287). The July War proved that Hezbollah was a formidable deterrent force in the South and prompted speculation as to whether the Lebanese government could truly disarm them. If Israel's military force had failed in this aim, how could the 14th of March government get a weaker Lebanese Army to succeed? The events of May 2008 demonstrated how Hezbollah, along with other pro-Syrian parties such as the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and AMAL, could swiftly and easily overcome Israel's Lebanese allies. For example, Hezbollah and their allies took over Beirut within twenty-four hours in May 2008. The events of May 2008 also demonstrated that neither the U.S. administration nor the 14th of March government could disarm Hezbollah, and talks about the legitimacy of their arms had been forcefully set aside (Perry 2008).

The allies of the United States did not fare better elsewhere in the Middle East, providing Syria and Iran a swift comeback after the Syrian forces withdrew from Lebanon. Israel's Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, fell into a coma after suffering a stroke in early 2006, leaving a power and experience gap in his nascent Kadima party for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to fill (Haaretz 2020). Sharon's military experience would have been helpful, given the double military fronts that Israel faced against Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon in 2006. Hamas dominated the 2006 elections against U.S.-backed Fatah, signaling that the majority of the Palestinians viewed Fatah, an ally to the 14th of March coalition, as collaborators (The Guardian 2009). A year later, Iranian-backed Hamas defeated Fatah militarily in Gaza, forecasting similar events in Lebanon between the 8th of March and the 14th of March blocs on May 8th, 2008. Dahlan, a former Fatah figurehead in Gaza, later resigned from Fatah, and his defeat gave Hamas control, politically and militarily, over Gaza (Issachoroff and A.P. 2007). Despite Israeli military offensives that took place afterward, Fatah failed to set foot again in Gaza and remained

confined, under Israeli occupation, in East Jerusalem and the West Bank (Hirst 2010 400-401). Hamas and Hezbollah's victories strengthened the Iranian arm in the Middle East and placed Israel and Fatah in worse conditions with respect to both the Peace Process and security.

Saudi Arabia also lost immensely between 2005 and 2008. Even though its primary Lebanese ally and protégé, Saad Hariri, led the 14th March coalition into parliamentary victory in 2005 and 2009, Saudi Arabia failed to curtail both Syria's influence and Iran's expansionary politics in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia was the leading country in financial aid and donations to Lebanon's ailing economy, followed by Kuwait, with over two billion U.S. dollars in funds (see Chapter Eight and Appendix 1). Syrian and Saudi relations moved in a perfect circle. Shortly after Israel's offensive on Gaza between December 2008 and January 2009, King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz launched the Arab-Arab initiative with the sole objective of unifying the Arabs in the face of Israeli threats against the Palestinians (FN 2009). This Arab-Arab Initiative resulted in further de-escalation, with King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and Syrian President Bashar Assad holding a tripartite summit in Beirut with Lebanese President Suleiman (Black 2010). The initiative sought to alleviate tensions in the Palestinian territories between Hamas and Fatah; in Lebanon, between the 14th of March and 8th March coalitions; and between Syria and the rest of the Arab world (Ibid). As Syria became positively receptive to the initiative, especially after the return of right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, newly appointed Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri established a new relationship with Syria and exonerated them from the charge of assassinating his father. Even though Saad Hariri directed his electoral campaign against the 8th of March coalition, Syria, and Iran, his government marginalized the Phalange's presence and paved the way for official visits to Damascus and Tehran (see Chapter Eight).

Chapter 3: Literature Review: Lebanon's History and Ethnic Identities

"Thus, Lebanese of all religions will assure you that God is Lebanese [...] And thus, each group think they are God's favourite children – and the others really only stepchildren." ~ Theodore Hanf (1994, 48)

International alliances and domestic violence are not new in the dynamics of ethno-politics in Lebanon; however, what remains absent from scholarship is the historical role of the country's ethnic leaders in creating identities for their followers to mobilize against rivals. For centuries, the leaders of Lebanon waged war against each other while receiving backing from multiple kingdoms and empires. Scholars have noted that, as of 1516, the ancestors of the Lebanese had engaged in bloodbaths against each other, and in parallel, sought alliances and counter-alliances with the reigning Ottoman overlords or European powers (for example, see Traboulsi 2008, 5). The warlords sought to win against their own domestic rivals; the European powers made use of these ethnic and tribal clashes to gain a foothold in the region (Ibid). These wars continued well into the nineteenth century, when European powers intervened to save their domestic allies as they warred against another (Traboulsi and Kfoury 2008 [2006], 351). Indeed, as Hanf noted: "at one or other time all Lebanese factions placed their hopes of victory in outside help. And all the factions fostered illusions to varying degrees about the interests and objectives of their respective allies" (Hanf 1993, 562). This interplay continues in the twenty-first century between the Lebanese allies of the Iranian-Syrian axis and of the Western-Saudi bloc (Fisk 2008).

However, there has not been empirical evidence published to date about the extent to which these foreign-domestic alliances shaped the identities that ethnic leaders preach for support. To simply state that Lebanon is locked in a proxy war (Ibid) or ancient hatred (Huntington 1996) is to oversimplify the complexity of ethno-politics and, more specifically, the role of identities throughout these chaotic times and the extent to which an ethnic leader commits into intertwining the interests of the international backer with domestic objectives. This two-level interplay, if an ethnic leader commits to an international bloc, intertwines with the narratives used in appeals to the identities that ethnic leaders use to mobilise support from the community, and against their foes. An ethnic leader, then, cannot simply declare their interests blatantly, out of fear of providing material by which rivals can accuse this leader of multiple allegiances taking precedence over concerns for the welfare of the targeted community.

No scholarly work, with the exception of that of a few, has fully captured the interplay between warlords and international states. Most observers have approached Lebanon through either an extremely focused domestic lens, or an exclusively international one, both overlooking the agency of ethnic leaders in politicizing identities, and seeking international allies willingly or out of necessity. This middle ground of the domestic-local interplay is absent; without it, scholarship either places Lebanon in a locked grid of ethnic violence or situates it as simply a battleground for proxy wars. On the international extreme, Ghassan Tueini considered the wars of Lebanon purely foreign and not reflective of Lebanese interests (Haugbolle 2010, 13). This perspective reduces the interests of local actors to inconsequential non-factors and suggests that the international system's dynamics spill over "all the way down" into domestic politics (see for example "international structures" in Waltz 1979; Wendt 1999; Jervis 1998). Criticizing structural analysis of alliances in general, Ashley (1986) noted that leadership qualities of party leaders on the domestic level academically vanish in analyses of power-related structures between international actors whose military capabilities determine outcomes. On the other hand, in the exclusively local lens of ethno-politics, domestic actors react to each other without any consideration for the international conditions factored into the choices made by ethnic leaders (see criticisms of McGarry and O'Leary 2009; Taylor 2009 on "power-sharing"). In this theoretical frame, divided countries like Lebanon are immune to foreign pressures, or, these pressures do not exist in a practical sense, overlooking the possible polarizing influence of an external actor. Cleavage leaders are automatically driven only by electoral laws that encourage them to bargain with each other (Lijphart 1969). Both lenses, due to their limitations in scope, overlook identity shifts and give a false sense that the same ethnic identities remain salient for decades.

In order to comprehend the impact of international-domestic alliances on the salience of ethnic identities, there is a need for a theoretical lens that captures the agency of ethnic leaders, including their option in choosing international allies and advance identities that overlap with new allies either to commit wholeheartedly to these allies, or simply to reach common interests when escalating and de-escalating domestic polarizations. Returning agency to the ethnic leaders of Lebanon, who react not only to domestic pressures, but also to international developments, provides a different insight into a phenomenon that requires further scrutiny: the ways in which the positions of ethnic leaders shape domestic coalition formation and the salience of ethnic identities. This agency is most evident when these ethnic leaders spin

narratives and re-interpret the past in order to maintain ethnic support from their base. It is the words of ethnic leaders to their audiences that steer identification with identities in a specific manner. This chapter will first discuss Lebanon from the perspectives of these two polarized scholarly extremes; afterwards, it will evaluate the efforts of the group of academics, who have tried to reconcile these extremes.

The Domestic Level

The fifteen-year-long civil war attracted a lot of attention, including on the part of academics, who treated the sectarian cleavages as stemming from monolithic and ancient hatred. Scholars who made use of this frame wrongfully assumed that Lebanon's elites belonged to one single ethnic identity, that solely this identity was salient, and that the community that identified with a given representative ethnic leader thought in the same manner as that leader. A case in point is Huntington's Clash of Civilizations model, in which Lebanon is a point of cleavage between multiple civilizations including the Judeo-Christian and the Islamic (see Huntington 1993; 1996). Similarly, Haddad treated the history of the Maronites as a narrative of a single group while vaguely referring to their leaders as "Maronite leadership," assuming that all the members of the Maronite community seek the same objectives (2002, 321, 323). The error of considering a group monolithic overlooks internal collisions within the same community and assumes that individuals only identify with a single identity and share the same demands of their organized actors (see Chandra 2012, 1-2; Sen 2006, 21-29, 32-36). This illusion is relying on the straightforward assumption that "wars begin and end, states grow and die, economies boom and crash, but through it all, ethnic groups stay the same" (Chandra 2012, 1). Such an approach does not accurately capture the ways in which ethno-politics can be used as a tool to marginalize opponents and consolidate power (Gordy 1999; Gagnon Jr. 2004), including over challengers within the same ethnic group (Wilkenson 2012). Furthermore, it limits any potential capacity to interpret how the positions of ethnic leaders relative to international alignments may escalate or de-escalate tensions in divided countries such as Lebanon.

The monolithic lens, which considers the salience of a single identity within a community, overlooks the salience of multiple identities, across many communities, in competition; thus, rendering any possibility of an effective international mediation as ineffective. This lens assumes that ethnic leaders are locked in ethnic conflict that centers solely on clashes between two communities' identities. This discourse is at the heart of ancient hatred rhetoric (see Kaplan

1993; Huntington 1996; Kaufman 1998; 1996; Lutwak 1999). Boykin (2000), for example, demonstrated how Ronald Reagan's top diplomat Philip Habib faced several obstacles in mediating peace in Lebanon during the Israeli invasion, as the result of the U.S. administration's myopic bias toward the Gemayel clan and their clear division of "good vs. evil" sides in Lebanon's wars, which manifested as Christians versus others (Boykin 2000, 58)⁴. Similarly, Copland (1969), a former American diplomat, published his experience during the 1958 Lebanese Civil War and noted how President Chamoun, a right-wing Christian, received financial backing to prevent a possible Nasserite-led coup. This American myopia overlooked Chamoun's corruption, and automatically assumed that non-Christians were in close alliance with Egypt's Jamal Abdul Nasser (Ibid, 225-244). Indeed, these diplomats revealed how a simplified lens on divided societies, such as the case of Lebanon's Christian versus Muslim, resolves no problem. This rhetoric, that ethnic communities are locked in eternal confrontations assumes that members of these salient ethnicities are ideologically homogenous. A Lebanese person is born into a single homogenous identity, which manifests as the sect of their family, and immune to conflicting ideologies and political influences. Such a perspective overlooks the dynamic circumstances and conflicting beliefs that propagate across communities (Sen 2006, 32-36). These circumstances, at least in Lebanon, include the rise of socialism in Lebanon, the clanship rivalry between Lebanese elites, historical bad blood between regions, and Arab nationalism. Habib's failed mission to bring peace to Lebanon during the 1982 Israeli siege of Beirut echoes these complexities within ethno-politics: "I got the Medal of Freedom because I saved the city of Beirut from destruction. Of course, a year later the Lebanese were out destroying it themselves!" (Habib as cited in Boykin 2000, 309).

The current research adds to the mounting criticism of this monolithic lens of ancient hatreds and simplified version of ethnic wars (see also "primordial identities" in Kaufman 1996; 1998; Lutwak 1999; Huntington 1996; Smith 1999) that overlooks the shrewdness of ethnic leaders in bypassing ethnic boundaries to secure their objectives without abandoning ethnic politics. Such a rigid perspective fails to explain how the Lebanese enjoyed decades of peace, and not only war, and how overlapping identities, across inter-ethnic groups, can play a positive role in de-escalation. Further scrutiny into ethnic leaders' speeches may demonstrate that salient

⁴ For example: Nicholas Veliotes, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, reported that Philip Habib was trying to educate President Reagan, in 1981, that in Lebanon "No One wears a white hat...it wasn't good Christians against bad guys. And Palestinian is not synonymous with Terrorist" (Boykin 2000, 58).

identities, for whom supporters risk ethnic riots and bloodshed, are not the same ideological identities, they are sacrificing themselves for.

The monolithic approach was not the sole framework that analysed Lebanon's politics solely at the domestic level. Electoral systems-based theories also followed the same fallacy of equating ethnic groups with leaders; however, these latter theories at least accepted that ethnic leaders have an array of identities to which to appeal when running in elections wither individually or as part of a coalition. Before the Lebanese Civil War, Lebanon's power-sharing formula was one of the cases used to illustrate the success of inter-ethnic power sharing regimes. Lijphart (1969) considered Lebanon a successful case of power-sharing among the elites and used it as a case study to advance the Consociational Democracy research program. Lijphart noted that countries like Lebanon are divided into multiple subcultures, and cannot function in majority-based democratic systems (Ibid, 214). In Lebanon, sectarian quotas exist from the top of the Lebanese republic to the recruitment of army soldiers and public sector employees. The Lebanese presidency, for example, always goes to a Maronite Catholic; the Prime Minister position to a Sunni Muslim; and the Speaker of the House to a Shiite Muslim (Nagle 2016, 1147). Recruitment in the country originally required the implementation of a six-to-five sectarian formula, i.e., for every six Christians entering the public sector; five Muslims must receive similar offers to maintain sectarian balance. The parliament's sectarian demographics reflected a similar distribution. The Christian and Muslim ratio is not simple; the sects within each religion are also carefully selected when recruiting for the public sector and allocating parliamentary seats based on sectarian quotas (Ibid).

Lijphart defined Consociational Democracy as "means of government by elite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented political culture into a stable democracy" (1969, 216). These elite cartels are capable of bargaining with each other and accommodating the contradictions of the various subcultures of the country (1969, 218). Lijphart advocated for electoral systems that encouraged elites to cooperate with each other, i.e., electoral systems that could re-draw voting processes and constituencies such that ethnic leaders would require support from outside their ethnic community to win elections. Continuing in the same vein as earlier assertions in criticizing majority-based elections for multi-ethnic societies, Lijphart argued, decades later, that minority ethnic groups require representation and autonomy and advocated for proportional elections (Lijphart 2004, 1000). Cooperation between ethnic leaders encourages those leaders to avoid extremism in their appeals so that they receive votes from

their allies' supporters. The resulting grand coalitions ensure stability, since no leader is interested in polarising the society (Lijphart 1969). In this analysis, Lebanese leaders do not rely solely on ethnic appeals when seeking votes, or else they could not successfully seek votes from other sects. The need for inter-ethnic coalitions thus paves way for stable societies whose leaders appeal to overlapping or national identities.

The problem with Lijphart's seminal work is that it assumes that there are automatically stark differences between communities that require a special electoral arrangement to ameliorate ethnic tensions through power-sharing formulas. In fact, other cases, such as the breakdown of Yugoslavia, demonstrate that it is the ethnic leaders who trigger ethnic tensions and control the historical narrative to polarize communities in order to survive politically (Donia 2006; Hoare 2007; Gagnon Jr. 2004; Gordy 1999; Velikonja 2004). To resolve the dilemma of ethnic leaders polarizing societies on the basis of ethnic politics, Lijphart advocated for proportional elections to ensure the autonomy of minority ethnic groups, and suggested power-sharing at the executive level, with votes of no confidence at the legislative level (Lijphart 2004, 100, 103-104). This logic sustains coalitions at the executive level to stabilize divided societies; however, the problem doesn't resolve ethnic polarizations since ethnic leaders resort to votes solely from their respective ethnic communities to win parliamentary elections. In Lebanon, the ethnic parties competed in majority-based elections, but their system also included power-sharing at the governmental level, public-sector recruitment quotas, and a consensus president as head of state (Lijphart 1985a, 8-9). Even though Lebanon did not apply proportional voting during the 2000, 2005, or 2009 elections, the country fits Lijphart's model for Consociationalism of non-majority-based democracies. Lijphart was specific that countries like Lebanon do not have a single majority party; in fact, all parties are minorities, resulting in a delicately-balanced government whose participants differ in other dimensions, such as ethnicity, language, and religion (Ibid); minority vetoes through voting against the party or parties in government if minority votes combine to reach 1/3 of ministers in opposition to the majority; and quotas in parliament and the public sector. Nevertheless, Lijphart fails to account for why Lebanon suffered from moments of civil war and severe political crises despite all these accommodations. I argue that the missing piece may be the penetration of international actors into Lebanon's politics overwhelms local arrangements and domestic regulatory powers: they influence the salience of ethnic identities.

Horowitz (1999) severely criticized Lijphart's view of the Lebanese system in resolving Lebanon's ethnically polarized problems; instead, Lijphart's powersharing rhetoric neither stabilized Lebanon nor resolved its political ethnic woes. Horowitz's argued that the Lebanese sectarian quota system does the opposite from stabilizing countries like Lebanon on the basis that this system in fact discourages leaders from appealing to center-based or national-based identities and acknowledged that Lebanon's sectarian communities have many strong leaders within each sect. For Horowitz, ethnic leaders should be encouraged to steer away from ethnic mobilization, but the Lebanese system fails to achieve such an objective (2000[1985], 633 - 635). The system instead encourages Lebanese leaders to form coalitions, with each member of the coalition involved in intra-ethnic competition with a party present in a rival coalition (Horowitz 1999, 21; Horowitz 2000 as cited in Cammett 2014, 61). Such a process does not resolve any ethnic tensions among the leaders, contrary to what Lijphart asserted, because no single grand coalition can emerge to lead the country (Horowitz 1999, 21; 2000 [1985], 635) and Lebanon, for Horowitz, will end up with two ethnic coalitions competing, instead of one stable ruling, since ethnic leaders are still competing on ethnic terms, affecting their post-election commitment to their constituents (Horowitz 1999, 22). Worse, the absence of strong parties to lead nationally and the weakness of state institutions would keep Lebanon at the mercy of militias (Horowitz 2000 [1985], 635; see also Gerring and Thacker 2007, 59). Horowitz's observations predicted the rise of the two coalitions that formed in 2005, the anti-Syrian 14th of March bloc and the pro-Syrian 8th of March bloc. He was also correct when he noted that grand coalitions neither resolve ethnic polarization nor fully assist Lebanon in shifting toward a healthy democratic system. Even though Horowitz elegantly tackled the tensions between the ethnic leaders of the country, he scrutinized neither the ethnic identities with which supporters identify nor the role of international factors in Lebanon's cycle of ethnic violence. Although he acknowledged that external factors were part of what pushed Lebanon to a Civil War in the 1970s (Horowitz 2000 [1985], 635), he did not analyse, or even list, these factors and focused, instead, on the weaknesses of state institutions (see Najem 2012; Geukjian 2017 on the power of international developments on Lebanon).

Coalition-formation and power-sharing formulas in Lebanon also revealed another set of problems for electoral systems: the impediment to mainstreaming non-ethnic politics in the political arena. The Lebanese case, among others such as Bosnia-Herzegovina (Bieber 2000), drew criticism for institutionalizing sects and religions into the quotas of the parliament. The presence of eighteen sects in Lebanon required a constitution to accommodate representation

for many of these sects to avoid the emergence of identity-based extremism, especially in spreading fear of the other amongst various ethnic groups (Nagle 2016, 1150-1151). This form of elections discourages leaders from appealing only to secular identities, since parliamentary quotas are based on sects for each constituency (see also Lijphart 1985 on identity institutionalization within state institutions). The other problem lies in the quota system itself amidst the change in ethnic demographics between the Lebanese Christian and Muslim communities (Ibid), raising questions about the proper representation of these communities. The seats reserved for Christians and Muslims in parliament became split in a 50/50 quota after the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) ended; however, the number of Christian registered voters declined to 37% in the same period. This decline means that, in several locations, Christian parliamentary candidates become clients to parties that dominate constituencies that are not Christian (Ibid). Such a phenomenon causes some Christian parties, such as the Phalange, to be fearful of underrepresentation because their candidates are running against Christian candidates backed by the majority of non-Christian parties in some districts (Ibid). Thus, the electoral system entrenches the ethnic leaders in power and leaves no room for non-ethnic leaders to advance effective non-ethnic programs (Nagle 2016, 1149; O'Flynn 2005).

The persistence of ethno-politics, due to institutionalized ethnic quotas, also empowers the ethnic leaders of divided societies. Gilmour noted that there could be no new players in Lebanese politics without the consent of the dominant ethnic leaders. The ethnic leaders, whose strength grows on the basis of ethnic mobilization, weaken state institutions to abolish a merit-based system (Gilmour 1983, 42) and center these leaders at the heart of a corrupt patronage system that traverses the heart of the public sector (Ibid, 43). This system also includes the post-civil war power-sharing arrangement, the Taef Accord. In the remaining state institutions, ethnic parties not only offer client-based services to supporters, at state expense, they also replace the state with security services. El-Khazen (2003) noted that Lebanon's ethnic leaders maintained their own militia organizations, pulling special favours in a patrimonial manner, and individuals could rely on them for protection instead of on the state, further empowering ethnic leaders and de-legitimizing state institutions (see also Cammett 2014). The set of scholarly work that addresses these trends properly explains the salience of ethnic identities in Lebanon's politics, accompanied by the overwhelming of state institutions and the power of the ethnic leaders vis-à-vis the state itself; however, this frame assumes that ethnic leaders appeal to the same identities over and over again for support, irrespective of the identities of their allies, or where they stand relative to international developments. Despite the accuracy of these analyses

of client-based ties between ethnic leaders and society, such an approach does not account for domestic escalations and de-escalations, along with the polarization of identities, within the Lebanese sphere.

Overall, electoral systems-based analyses of Lebanon focused on three ramifications: the ongoing strength of the ethnic leaders, the need to politicize a specific set of identities on the basis of the size of the coalition, and the rigidity of ethnic politics as the result of ethnic quotas. The ethnic parties of Lebanon, benefiting from the electoral system, limited the rise of alternative forms of politics as the result of the institutionalization of ethnic quotas. What these theories, collectively, omit is the empirical evidence for ethnic leaders appealing to multiple ethnic identities, rendering the argument that mobilization is based on a single identity baseless. Furthermore, there is no explanation in this literature as to why a specific set of ethnic leaders chooses to align with each other, sometimes in a bizarre manner or including members of the same sect, and to appeal to a collective identity to mobilize allied support. The penetration of international competition into Lebanon, through its elites, also suggests that stability and polarization do not result merely from the rules of the electoral system, especially given that regional instability between multiple actors in the Middle East is accompanied by instability within Lebanon itself.

The absence of discursive analysis in both Horowitz's and Lijphart's work included a failure to consider whether ethnic leaders were consistently polarizing their supporters under the same ethnic identities. For example, Rafic Hariri and Saad Hariri both appealed for Sunni support through Arab nationalism and Arab solidarity with Palestine. However, Rafic Hariri's Arab nationalism targeted Israel and the anti-Syrian camp in Lebanon as its enemies, while Saad Hariri's Arab nationalism, between 2005 and 2009, also targeted Syria and Iran (see Chapter 8). Each narrative defined relations between the Christian and Muslim communities of Lebanon. The first excluded the Christians as anti-Arab, and pushed Rafic's supporters to have no ties whatsoever with the anti-Syrian activists. Saad Hariri, after he took leadership of his party following his father's death, reversed this first narrative; his new narrative fully supported the traditional Christian parties against Syria. While Horowitz acknowledged that electoral systems could shift ethnic leaders' appeals from a narrow toward a more overlapping approach, his perspective must, in order to align with changes like the above, be supplemented by an understanding of the socially-constructed dimension of ethnic identities, as demonstrated by Chandra (2012, 2).

Enter the International Arena

While domestic-level theories offer important insights into the mechanics of the politics within divided societies, they failed to consider the volatile Middle East, where Lebanon spearheads the Arab-Israeli conflict as a sovereign Arab state, resulting in pressure on its economy, foreign policy, and state institutions. The above set of domestic-based theories mentioned international developments as events beyond the control of the ethnic leaders of the country that further destabilized the country (see, for example, Seaver 2000). Scholars of Lebanon usually address the trajectory of international phenomenon to domestic impact into two categories: events and actors. The scholars, who discuss the international impact on the country, albeit in a limited manner, usually focus on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the influx of Palestinian refugees into Lebanon in 1948 and 1967 from Israel, and in 1970 from Jordan. The 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States and the subsequent invasion of Iraq in 2003 also had indirect effects on Lebanon's politics, especially in polarizing the Sunni-Shiite cleavage among the Muslim communities, which was matched by escalating competition between the monarchs of Saudi Arabia and the Ayatollahs of Iran (see, for example, Miller 2007; Khashan 2011; Eksi 2017; Dalton 2017). These scholars tracked the spread of these Sunni-Shiite cleavages across the Middle East, but overlooked the role of Lebanon's leaders, and their respective foreign backers, in importing Iraq's polarized ethnic cleavages into Lebanon.

It is within this context that another set of scholars, primarily specializing in International Relations, discussed Lebanon as part of a grand phenomenon in geo-political and strategic studies. Neo-Realist scholars, in specific, applied their school's discourse to analyse how military capabilities define relations between states (Waltz 1979; 2000; Mearsheimer 2001). Neo-Realism focused on international and regional powers, whose economy and military capabilities become power-poles by which neighbouring countries can forge alliances (Waltz 1979; Mearsheimer 2001). States, in this rhetoric, form alliances, and, when pooling their resources together, balance against potential aggressors, in a stand-off that is referred to as "Balance of Power." Saudi-Arabia and Iran often appeared in this literature as expansionary states, seeking to establish regional hegemony over the Middle East, and Lebanon appeared on the periphery of this phenomenon (see "the Middle East" in Buzan and Waever 2003, 185-219; Miller 2007, 205-255). These works merely mention Lebanon when analysing the Middle East or testing their geo-strategic, primarily Neo-Realist, theories on entire regions. These geo-strategic

theories are important in discussing international inter-state rivalries, economic wars, proxy wars between Tehran and Riyadh, and their ramifications for the rest of the region. Nevertheless, these strategic scholars do not sufficiently enter the domestic level and analyse how leaders are pressured to react to international events.

Miller (2007) argued how unstable regions de-stabilize states whose institutions are incapable of imposing their rule on some segments of their societies. He provided analysis of multiple regions, including the Middle East, and demonstrated how leaders of strong states can appeal to ethnic minorities, especially if they share the group's ethnicity, to expand their influence (Ibid). Even though Miller demonstrates how regions suffering from wars and intense inter-state competition impact states, in an attempt to apply a two-level analysis, he stops short of the domestic level when he discusses Lebanon. He uses Lebanon in a single observation without going deeper to see how the competition between Iranian and Saudi funds influences the situation in Lebanon. Miller's theoretical framework for his two-level analysis is thorough; however, empirically, he does not thoroughly examine Middle Eastern countries when discussing the intensity of the Iranian-Saudi rivalry. He suggests that where there is a presence of Shiite and Sunni communities, the countries that contain them will become a battleground between Iran's and Saudi Arabia's influence. Empirical evidence on the Middle East shows that neither Iran nor Saudi Arabia have solely relied, respectively, on Shiism and Sunnism to expand their influence. For instance, Saudi Arabia supported the Gemayel clan, after Rafic Hariri's death, and Iran acknowledged Michel Aoun as an ally of theirs in 2006, but neither Michel Aoun nor the Gemayel clan are Muslims (see Chapters Six and Seven for details).

Other scholars committed similar errors to Miller (see, for example, Buzan and Waever 2003), and did not tackle Lebanon's domestic politics. The argument remains current that unstable regions destabilize divided societies because the state institutions cannot react to international and domestic turmoil at the same time (Jasinski 2011). For example, Arfi (2005) discussed the 1958 Civil War in Lebanon as a result of international factors, such as Egyptian-Syrian unification or the anti-Soviet Baghdad Pact in the 1950s. Yet, there has been no discussion of the impact of domestic politics, such as the corruption that dominated the 1950s in the country. Worse, if the Lebanese Civil Wars of 1958 and 1975 broke out purely as the result of Cold War politics and regional actors, there is no explanation as to why domestic actors chose to back opposing superpowers in Lebanon, and there is no empirical evidence as to whether they deployed their supporters, using identity politics, in support of these great powers.

Another set of scholars focused on the Syria's mandate over Lebanon (1990-2005) and blamed the former for the ongoing dominance of ethnic leaders over the country. Salloukh (2006) initially acknowledged that Lebanese leaders usually bargain on constituencies' borders only to ensure victory in elections and continue to access state resources. Later, Salloukh (2010) updated his observations and took a post-colonial approach. He argued that Lebanon's entire post-civil war political and judicial system exists as the result of Syrian reconstruction efforts. Syria, in this argument, never intended to rebuild Lebanon as a healthy democratic country; instead, Lebanon received a weak system to ensure Syrian hegemony over Lebanon's internal politics (Ibid). Syria's departure, in 2005, thus left the Lebanese with a weak system that was not intended to represent Lebanese interests, but Syrian; hence, the Lebanese system was ripe to be captured again by ethnic leaders. Salloukh's work (2008; 2010) demonstrated how ethnic leaders use any means to maintain power; however, he did not examine the fluidity of ethnic identities and reconstruction of history until his later work, discussed below.

Hudson (1984) was the first to criticize the collapse of Consociational democracy in Lebanon and the subsequent fifteen-year civil war that began in 1975 as the result of regional development and multiple domestic-international alliances. Hudson criticized theorists of Consociational democracy for overlooking the influence of international level on Lebanon. These apologists for Consociationism had argued in the late 1970s that Lebanon was not democratic enough; hence, war had been inevitable. Hudson bluntly joked about these apologists, by stating: "the problem in Lebanon may not have been that it was democratic but that it was not democratic enough. How sadly ironic it would be if Lebanon could be shown to have had the 'right' political model all along but somehow had failed to employ it to meet changing circumstances" (278). Following that line of thought, he condemned how these scholars viewed the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Syria, and Israel as an occupying and foreign forces while overlooking the large number of domestic actors who either invited each of these actors into the country or fought side-by-side with them during the Lebanese Civil War (Ibid 278-279).

Hudson's analysis of this interplay between the national and international levels is probably the first of its kind with respect to Lebanon. He argued that Lebanese warlords reacted to international developments and chose their international allies strategically, and that the international actors reacted according to their interests as well. For Hudson, Lebanon's

developments empirically demonstrate that the leaders of a divided society do not unite; instead, a segment of them support the invaders, a phenomenon that continues decades later (see El-Masri 2008, 83 - 84; Dakhlallah 2012, 56 – 57, 64; Corstange and Marinov 2012, 659 – 660). In this case, Hudson (1984) considered the opposite: international development and domestic elite interests often create opportunities for each other to maximize benefits at the expense of other rivals. Hudson's work focused on the interplay between the international and domestic actors during the Lebanese Civil War; however, his work lacked any contribution to discourses of the fluidity of identity politics as the result of such interplay, particularly the alliances made to appease foreign backers.

More recent scholars have shed light on the interplay between ethnic leaders, their foreign backers, and the competition between international coalitions, which in case of Lebanon is between the Western-Arab Gulf bloc and the Syrian-Iranian bloc. Unfortunately, these works treated Lebanon as a battleground between the two blocs without considering Lebanon itself. In these analyses, as in Seaver's mentioned above, ethnic leaders lacked free will and were relegated to being chess pieces awaiting orders. This problematic approach ignored the agency of ethnic leaders in the choice of allies and construction of ethnic identities to appeal for support. If the political circumstances of ethnic leaders domestically change as the result of such alliances, including the weakening of a foreign backer, there are no means to identify how ethnic leaders reach out for support from their constituents in relations to the domestic-international interplay. Eksi (2017), and Dalton (2010,) are among such scholars to analyse geo-strategic rivalry between the competing blocs in the Middle East, primarily the Saudi, American-Israeli, or Western rivalry with Iran and Syria but they did not tackle the impact of such rivalries on countries like Lebanon. These scholars focused on how states compete for regional dominance through non-state actors, such as ethnic parties, who receive support and funds from their respective allies. However, in this work there is no analysis of the parties that receive the support, what they do with such support, or how they market their visions and polarize identities afterward.

On the other hand, Eksi's (2017), and Dalton's (2010), contributions are essential in that they analysed the geo-strategic calculations made by these states in advancing their interests, despite the fact they overlooked impacts on domestic societies. They provided an outline by which to identify the international actors relevant to Lebanon's ethnic parties, the history between these foreign backers, and the strategies they applied to win over smaller countries in

the Middle East. Eksi (2017) analysed the proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran over the Middle East, particularly how Iran is attempting to build a Shiite crescent from Tehran, passing through Baghdad and Damascus, to Beirut and how Saudi Arabia countered with similar tactics in Lebanon. Similarly, Dalton (2010s) analysed Iran's proxy war tactics across the Middle East, particularly how Iran benefits and loses from such strategies, without analysing its Lebanese allies thoroughly in terms of their behaviour, reaction to international developments, and mobilization of supporters. Even though their work is important for strategic studies and those of balances of power, these scholars neglected Lebanese politics, on the receiving end of international actions, in terms of how domestic leaders reacted to developments concerning their backers, and how they used their international allies' foes to scapegoat their domestic rivals as traitors, triggering further ethnic identity shifts. It is worth noting to follow-up on Najem's 2003 work. He followed up on Lebanon's politics and how it is vulnerable to international actors (see Najem 2012). I will expand more thoroughly two sections down on the importance of his work.

Other scholars focused on the myopia of international actors, and their bias toward the parties backed by their international rivals. Hourani (2013) articulated how the United States viewed the pro-Syrian camp, the 8th of March, negatively, to the point of accusing them of weakening the Lebanese state. He compared the U.S. administration's support of Gemayel's Phalange in the 1980s and of Hariri's Future Movement in the 1990s to the taking over of state institutions from within the public sector through appointing and favouritism (45-46). Hourani described how Bush's foreign policy polarized the Middle East when he invaded Afghanistan and Iraq. He also shed light on how the bickering between President Lahoud and PM Rafic Hariri became, for the United States and France, a means by which to penetrate Lebanon and to push for UN Resolution 1559, which demanded Syria withdraw from Lebanon and disarm Hezbollah (Hourani 2013, 46). Hourani compared Rafic Hariri's treatment of state institutions to that of former President Amin Gemayel (r.1982-1988), arguing that both subverted state institutions and both attempted to take over the state for the welfare of their parties. He concluded that the United States did not care about democratic values but instead favoured strategic approaches, as the Bush administration overlooked the activities of the anti-Syrian 14th of March bloc and their reliance on sectarianism to mobilize against Iran's expansionary influence in Lebanon. Hourani's work provides a glimpse into how Lebanon's parties work through clientelism and sectarianism to gain support and spread fear, within their respective communities, in the face of their domestic rivals (49-50, see also Rabil 2001). Hourani demonstrated how sectarianism and

corruption go hand-in-hand in maintaining dominance over domestic rivals, and how the so-called “great powers” do not care about the behaviour of their domestic protégés as long as they defeat their rivals, who are backed by rival states. What remains missing from Hourani’s work is how ethnic leaders narrate their communities’ risks when they are challenged domestically, identity fluidity, and what other circumstances trigger identity shifts.

Dakhlallah (2012) advanced a similar argument to that built on Hourani’s seminal work but moved further in discussing Lebanon’s weak state institutions that generate sectarian allegiances away from the state itself (56). She listed the categories of salient ethnic identities, be they sectarian, tribal, clan, or regional, and added a class for the ruling elites (Ibid). She also analysed the three dominant perspectives of Lebanon: as a national identity, a perspective that centered on Lebanon as Switzerland; as a dependent Arab nationalism that relies on the support of other Arabs under the Arab identity; and as Islamist, emerging from Hezbollah. More importantly, Dakhlallah argued that these broad identities are fluid, and that Hezbollah itself shifted somewhere between the Arab and Islamic identity (56-57), hinting at how flexible ethnic parties could be in choosing identities to reflect their circumstances, steering supporters to identify with foreign backers as an extension of their identification with domestic parties. She focused on how international divisions manifest in Lebanon and become a source of contention domestically (58). Such divisions prompt new alliances, such as that of Aoun and Nasrallah, and generate schizophrenic responses from the Lebanese in reaction to international developments that concerned the country. For example, Dakhlallah demonstrated how the Lebanese had opposing views about the war with Israel, an ally of France and the United States, and how they intensely disagreed about Hezbollah’s monopoly on determining acts of war and peace for the entire country through its military operations against Israel (64). Finally, she described how international states mediated peace between Lebanon and Israel, and domestically, in 2008, between the 8th and 14th of March (66-68). This seminal work described how the Lebanese, due to the allegiances of their ethnic leaders to foreign backers, view international politics as a natural extension of their own politics, and how identities in general serve as tools to reflect their political needs. The collection of day-to-day speeches, throughout this research’s empirical chapters adds empirical evidence to her arguments about the extent to which international and domestic events are embedded by ethnic leaders in historical accounts and current instructions.

Between the Two Poles: International Actors and Split Domestic Reactions

International alignments and the positions of ethnic leaders directly influence policy objectives in Lebanon, depending on the position of the ethnic leaders relative to such alignments. Both Dakhllallah (2012) and El-Masri (2008) thoroughly discussed the mixed responses that emerged from the Hariri-led 14th of March and the Nasrallah-led 8th of March coalitions with respect to the UN-sanctioned Special Tribunal for Lebanon to investigate Rafic Hariri's assassination and other political assassinations. In summary, the 8th of March refused any criticism of Syria and cast doubt on the legitimacy of the Tribunal, since the United States had politicized it and thereby encroached on Lebanon's judiciary and sovereignty. The 14th of March reacted differently: the anti-Syrian bloc saw the Tribunal as a means to protect Lebanon's sovereignty from Syria and to hold the Assad regime accountable for the assassination sprees that rocked Lebanon between 2005 and 2009 (El-Masry 2008, 83). Such empirical observations are important to note and are confirmed by this dissertation's empirical chapters, which collect, with more in-depth description and detailed breakdown of frequencies, the pairing of ethnic parties' policy objectives and their appeals to ethnic identities.

Corstange and Marinov (2012) argue that international-local alliances include mutual benefits but tracking aid and funding to Lebanese parties is no easy feat. The Lebanese talk about foreign aid to political parties amongst themselves, but there is no evidence for this aid, except for Hezbollah's occasional blunt declarations of arms and funds received from Iran. Corstange and Marinov (2012) take foreign intervention in Lebanese affairs for granted and build on its impact on domestic politics. Focusing on the divisions of Lebanon, they analysed Lebanon's grand coalitions, the Pro-Western "14th of March" and the Pro-Syrian "8th of March," and what detailed which sect leaders are present in each coalition. They collected voters' reactions and deduced that each Lebanese party's voters reacted with passion to the foreign "sponsor's" statements, irrespective of if these sponsors are allied with their parties or foes (Ibid, 664-665). Supporters would react positively to allied foreign actors and negatively against the rivals of these international foes. Corstange and Marinov's work is essential in revealing how Lebanese voters consider international politics part of their domestic arena. Indirectly, these two scholars demonstrated how ethnic leaders mobilize support for their coalitions and international backers through their supporters' reactions and attitudes to foreign meddling. Affirming that the ethnic leaders of each of the two coalition share foreign backers, Corstange and Marinov take for granted that ethnic leaders already dominate their constituents' political orientations. This

approach, despite its focus on international meddling within Lebanon, overlooks how a given ethnic leader marketed their alliance with a given foreign backer and was able to extend ethnic identification to the latter. A more detailed scrutiny of the speeches of the leaders, as this dissertation provides, unveils the multiple identity re-conceptualizations used to articulate the foreign backers' interests as the same as the those of the ethnic community and, indeed, the nation.

Between the Domestic and the International: Lebanon's Historical Narratives

Tracking the influence of foreign meddling in Lebanese affairs is challenging because Lebanon lacks a unified history of the day-to-day activities of the ethnic leaders themselves (Volk 2010, 18). Lebanon's official history, as taught in schools, ends in 1943, the moment when el-Solh and Khoury agreed on the National Pact as heads of the Muslim and Christian communities. Many of the events that led to the National Pact are also omitted from Lebanon's official narrative because they might offend a community or a leader in the present, especially as many actors from the Lebanese Civil War-era (1975-1990) are alive and still involved in Lebanese politics. Hence, a hero in one narrative will most likely be a villain for another community. The official narrative also lacks any analysis of the appeals to ethnic identities made during times of violence, in order to avoid sectarian tensions in school classrooms. Scholarly work, particularly that which treats Lebanon as a case study, fills the gap left in the official narrative to explain the country's history.

Traboulsi (2008) provided a history of Lebanon from a Marxist structural perspective; he analysed the events not as stories of leaders alone, but of leaders, people, and geo-strategy. His work is the first of its kind, as most historians focused on Lebanon's history as the story of leaders or of unitary ethnic groups. Throughout his book *A History of Modern Lebanon*, Traboulsi analysed the economic conditions of various actors, the roles of associations as political pressure points, and the interaction of ethnic leaders with each other. He utilized several critical speeches from various leaders in support of his argument, providing empirical evidence to compare ethnic leaders' claims between 2000 and 2010, and those from earlier historical events. The change in historical narratives signals a shift in identity when an ethnic leader re-baptizes a traditional historical foe as an ally. The sole problem with Traboulsi's version of Lebanon's history is that it stops a few years after the Lebanese Civil War ended in 1990. Despite this weakness, Traboulsi elegantly demonstrated the birth of the Lebanese

identity, and traced its origins to a warlord from the nineteenth century who converted from Islam to Christianity (Traboulsi 2008, 9-12).

Salibi (1988), like Traboulsi, stopped his historical narrative before the end of the Lebanese Civil War. Unlike Traboulsi's work, however, Salibi's focused on the origins of ethnic and non-ethnic identities that remain salient in day-to-day politics. He traced ethnic leaders' ideological objectives and the accompanying myths of origin for each identity, and afterward, offered historical empirical evidence to criticize these myths. Given that Salibi's work is unique, since it tackles identities as a primary objective, it offers a rare opportunity to compare the ideological and historical backgrounds of the identities salient in the first decade of the 2000s, and track if the identities themselves changed across time through the speeches of the ethnic leaders. Salibi's rich historical evidence refuted ethnic claims that went back centuries ago. Using Salibi's historical framework, this research tracked ethnic leaders' claims on the past, especially personal heroics, to justify present decisions, and compared whether these events in the past represented a true continuity to the present. Such approach demonstrated the ethnic leaders' art of spinning narratives and historical events to ideologically polarize present day events, decisions, and politics.

Hanf (1994) built the most detailed narrative of the Lebanese Civil War, covering day-to-day incidents, party platforms, and foreign leaders' speeches. He collected the speeches of the leaders reacting to their rivals and to friendly or hostile foreign actors and published a survey of Lebanese citizens during the Lebanese Civil War. Finally, Hanf listed the public policies of interest to the Lebanese actors and their foreign backers. He published party platforms, speeches, and follow-up speeches made by ethnic leaders reacting to each other and to foreign actors, including all parties studied in this dissertation. The geo-political circumstances of the international actors also shed light on decisions made by these backers to choose and support Lebanese warlords during the Civil War. Hanf, however, offered a limited analysis of the Pre-War era, even though his summary of it, and the sociological conditions surrounding it, is still rich. Hudson (1968) fills the gap by providing a detailed history of Lebanon thoroughly from the 1920s until 1967. He analysed the strategies that ethnic leaders deployed in their speeches when seeking support from their constituents. He noted that several Lebanese parties appeared to be modern, but he warned that their objectives should be severely evaluated (Hudson 1968, 144). For example, he provided a recap on the Phalange's activities throughout the 1930s till the 1960s, demonstrating how the Phalange spoke as a modern secular party. Afterwards, he

highlights that such speeches aimed to “preventing any moves that would lead to shifts in the ratio of Christians to non-Christians in high political positions” (Ibid). This objective also includes the promotion of Lebanese nationalism, under the slogan of “Lebanon First”⁵ becoming also publicly “a guardian of Christian interests” (Ibid 146). This slogan ‘Lebanon First’ became widely popular among the Phalange to counter Arab nationalists, especially those expressing solidarity with the Palestinians and Jamal Abdul Nasser’s pan-Arabism. For this reason, Muslims interpreted ‘Lebanon First’, and its intended objective to place Lebanon neutral within the Arab – Israeli conflict generated a sectarian interpretation, among Muslims, as ‘Christians First’ (Ibid). Through identifying the policies that are strictly important to ethnic communities, despite their appearance as modern and reformist, Hudson’s book provides the keys to coding public policies that hold ethnic features for the ethnic leader. Such an identification of doublespeak is important for tracking the policy objectives of ethnic leaders before and after they change domestic and international allies.

Hudson (1968) and Hanf (1994) together offer a rare insight in identifying camouflaged identity politics. Several non-ethnic identities, such as Lebanese and Arab, combined with specific policies to camouflage ethnic appeals with which only party supporters identify. One example is that “Lebanese” may strictly be for Christian and “Arab” for Muslim supporters (Hudson 1968). Like Hanf, Hudson also listed vital public policies that ethnic leaders discuss and demonstrated the ethnic factor involved in such policies as a means to subtly appeal for ethnic support. Had they not collected these platforms and policy objectives, accompanied by sociological analysis of the Lebanese society, most ethnic leaders would have passed as modern or moderate, and many of their attempts to reconstruct or re-conceptualize new identities would have escaped the eye, especially when tracking the interplay of domestic-international influence on ethnic leaders’ choices of identities.

As mentioned earlier, few scholars applied the two-level analysis to Lebanon, and their numbers are even less when we consider writing on the country’s foreign policy after the Lebanese Civil War ended (Najem 2003, 209). Given that most historical studies stopped at the Taef Accord or Aoun’s ousting in 1990, this research relies on Najem (2012), Hirst (2010), and Geukjian (2017)

⁵ Pierre Gemayel Sr.’s Lebanon First slogan became a divisive focal point between Arab nationalists and Lebanese nationalists throughout the Lebanese Civil War (1975 - 1990), and eventually made its way as a core cleavage between the 14th of March bloc and the 8th of March bloc. Saad Hariri, head of the predominantly Sunni party, the Future Movement, called his Parliamentary bloc, during the 2009 elections, as ‘Lebanon First’, to appeal for votes from Christian supporters.

for their discussions of Lebanese history between 2000 and 2010. Najem (2003)'s seminal work was among the first to tackle the interplay of between Lebanon domestic and the international level. Focusing on Lebanon's foreign policy, Najem argued that the engineers of Lebanon's 1943 National Pact aimed to advance a neutral foreign policy (211) while safeguarding sectarian spheres for the communities' elites. The state became a 'forum' for these elites, and Lebanon's sectarian system weakened the state institutions (Ibid, 210 – 211). Neutrality, in the pre-1975 period of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and to a lesser extent the Cold War, was important since the Christian and Muslim sects disagreed on the position of Lebanon across clear sectarian lines: the Christians with the West, the Muslims with the Arab and Muslim worlds (Ibid, 211). Najem tracked the gradual Syrian domination Lebanese affairs throughout his article and focused on the interests of the elites at the regional level, be it in Lebanon, Syria, Israel, and Europe post-1990 (211 – 217). His work tracked the economic autonomy that Syria granted to Lebanon, the possibility of conflict with the former, and what possible outcomes might translate between Lebanon's future international politics, amidst splits between Lebanon's elites and ongoing weak state institutions. Although Najem's work (2003) focused primarily on Syria, and to a lesser extent Europe and Israel, he fully accounted for the allegiances of domestic actors within the country. The rationale for this focus on Syria was simple: his article came out before Lebanon's politics was turned upside-down in 2005: Michel Aoun was still living in isolation in France (Ibid, 228), and international pressures on Syrian withdrawal did not yet build momentum.

To resolve the issue, Najem (2012) updated his observations and focused on Lebanon's politics, as a penetrated society, until Saad Hariri's election as prime minister in 2009. This work (2012) continued his research on Lebanon and included the gradual withdrawal of Syria, the elite politics between the players before and after Syria's withdrawal, and the gradual emergence of other actors that increasingly gained a foothold in Lebanon. He tracked the foreign policy of Lebanon after the Lebanese Civil War ended but also discussed the relations between Lebanon and other international stakeholders, including the Arab gulf, Syria, Europe, and the international community (Ibid, 110 – 116). He also examined how Lebanon's foreign policy became contentious again after Syria withdrew, manifesting in the foreign and domestic politics of the 14th and 8th of March blocs (Ibid, 116 – 121). It is also worth-noting that Najem provided a rich empirical context that this research relied upon to construct Lebanon's historical narrative from 2000 till 2010.

Hirst (2010) covered Lebanese politics thoroughly until 2008, as well as unveiling the impacts of Israeli, American, French, and other international players on domestic Lebanese developments. He focused on the interplay between the West and its Lebanese allies, the 14th of March, and provided minute details of the pro-Syrian the 8th of March, due to his overwhelming interest in Hezbollah. No other scholar has as thoroughly covered both domestic and international developments as the 2006 war between Lebanon and Israel unfolded. The problem with Hirst's work is that he provided only a modest coverage of the 14th of March, and his analysis of the interplay between the international and domestic levels is only complete in his coverage of the 1958 Lebanese Civil War, the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, and the 2006 Lebanese-Israeli war. Hirst's narrative of the 2006 war covers, on a day-to-day basis, international reactions and those of lobby groups in the United States, France, Israel, and the Arab world. He omits the interplay of the international-domestic politics and alliances in times of peace, overlooking the role of ethnic leaders in de-escalating tensions, especially when their foreign backers also see no gain from polarization and escalations.

Geukjian (2017) provided a thorough historical narrative that includes the main international and domestic events of this research, with emphasis on ethnic parties, international actors, and how international politics de-stabilizes the country. Taking Consociational democracy theory to the next level, Geukjian considered external stability a key factor in internal stability and focused on the international-domestic alliances between state actors and political parties. Geukjian argued that Lebanon's power-sharing governments have never resulted in long-term conflict resolution. Instead, they are a "tool for conflict regulation, provided that a stable external political environment exists to guarantee the political structure" (Ibid, 6). Countries that experience civil war are furthermore vulnerable to foreign influence as "groups try to reach agreements on political institutions with the help and guidance of external actors" (Ibid, 7) with the alleged goal of achieving democracy in the long run. The interests of these foreign actors change with time, and it is these external interventions that can break or make power-sharing arrangements in countries like Lebanon (Ibid, 5, 7-10).

Geukjian's seminal work documented the interactions of ministers of the Lebanese governments with each other, in parallel to international developments (2017). In Lebanon's case, ministers represent the status quo of ethnic parties at the executive level. He provided a ready-made model for resolving the "overly endogenous" traditional Consociational democracy theory and, at the same time, demonstrated how international actors and domestic ethnic leaders may

stabilize or de-stabilize divided societies, especially when the interests of the former change with respect to Lebanon. Through shifting Geukjian's lens to the breaking and making of alliances via international alliances and domestic rivalry, this research seeks to understand the salience of identities as outcomes beyond the documented alliances and the interplay between the domestic and the international levels. By adding the layer of identities and the focus on day-to-day speeches, this research demonstrates how ethnic leaders react to foreign events, while at the same time advancing their own and their coalition's agenda.

These scholars' works are important since they tackled the strength of interplay between international actors and domestic leaders. Even though their focus was not centered on identities, they covered relations between these ethnic leaders and their respective foreign backers, and they unravelled the extent of geo-strategic ramifications on Lebanon's politics when international developments take place. This research contributes to their work. For starters, this research further demonstrates the extent the international – domestic alliances take place through observing and quantifying the speeches of these ethnic leaders on foreign actors, with specific indicators (see Chapter 5) the extent they discuss positively and negatively their respective foreign backers and other international actors. Furthermore, this research takes the impact of this two-level interplay one deeper level: the interaction of ethnic leaders with their communities publicly and tracks how this interplay shapes policies and alliances. Finally, given that Lebanon is ethnically divided, this research also focuses on identities that ethnic leaders appeal for support, in parallel to international developments and inter-state rivalries. For this project, the final form of constructed identities matters most, especially Lebanon's foreign policy no longer manifested clearly as Christians with the West and Muslims with the Arab/Muslim world.

Lebanese Leaders, Identities, and Historical Narratives

While the question of identities has not been sufficiently attended to within scholarly work on Lebanon, a plethora of literature has recently tackled the historical fluidity that allows ethnic leaders to have flexibility in re-writing or rebranding history to justify current decisions and alliances (also see Salloukh 2019; Volk 2010; Larkin 2012; Haugbolle 2010). Focusing on memory, these scholars were able to demonstrate how Lebanon's leaders manipulated historical narratives, and indirectly identities, to serve their objectives (Haugbolle 2010, 10). This important collection sheds light on the power of ethnic leaders to reconstruct history to steer

their supporters toward rivals for political gains. Dominated by anthropological breakthroughs on memory, these scholars have criticized the traditional argument of Lebanese scholars that Lebanon's identities manifested one time in the nineteenth century and have since maintained their monolithic values. Volk, in particular, argued that such a focus is problematic (2010, 20-22) when tackling the impact of memory on the Lebanese. Instead, she proposed that narratives change when involving identities; for example, within the Lebanese collective, memorials provide political legitimacy to their sponsors and provide a platform for ethnic leaders to claim legitimacy stemming from the identities they claim to represent (Ibid, 2). She further demonstrated how each sect has its historical narrative, which remains malleable based on the interests of ethnic leaders that seek to gain legitimacy versus their rivals (Ibid, 32-39, 36). Following constructivist logic, she argued that identities change when circumstances change. This research steers Volk's attention from memorials and the ethnic messages they send to the power of international-local alliances in leaders' speeches that provide value for the martyrs, as part of their day-to-day historical narrations, to justify the present and urge supporters to action.

Salloukh (2019) most recently updated this growing field and looked at Lebanon's elites reacting to each other and to foreign threats after the Arab Spring commenced in 2011. Noting that history is malleable and selective, he analysed how the Free Patriotic Movement and the Lebanese Forces resorted to describing historical events in their respective community histories to advance their objectives or to avert criticism. These selected memorials served to mobilize supporters but also gave a boost to their legitimacy within the arena of intra-ethnic competition between the Christian parties on which Salloukh focused (2019). Leaders often revisited history whenever they needed to mobilize supporters against their rivals. It was in this context that the Free Patriotic Movement shifted from a pre-2005 patriotic discourse toward a more Christian rhetoric that was competing with the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces. Salloukh (2019), in this argument, demonstrated how history itself is a social construct, when ethnic leaders, engaged in intra-ethnic competition, control the narrative to de-legitimize rivals' claims over the targeted community. This argument goes in parallel to Volk (2010) that historical events in collective memory depend on the interests and needs of the Lebanese leaders.

Toward a Two-Level Dynamic Constructivist Model

There is a deficit in tracking the historical narratives of ethnic identities within Lebanese politics. As Geukjian (2017) argued, external factors may make or break power-sharing arrangements;

however, historical narratives rarely track these external factors' influence on Lebanese identities. These external factors require geo-strategic lenses to trace the regional alignments, the proxy wars, and the economic wars that have plagued the Middle East, besides the Arab-Israeli conflict. Walt (1987) mapped a highly volatile Middle East whose alliances, both internally to the region and with external actors, frequently shifted. The Middle East continued to be volatile after the Cold War era, especially after the events of 9/11. The American invasion of Iraq, and the dominance of the right-wing in Israeli politics, further exacerbated the situation in a Middle East that was already heading for a showdown between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Lebanon is at the center of this competition, as both countries poured resources into Lebanon to assist their protégés to win against their rivals domestically, and subsequently to keep out the foreign backers of those rivals politically.

This highlighting of the international dimension, even though it focuses on the Middle East as a whole, lacks the longitudinal comparative identity approach and often hesitates to closely investigate the domestic affairs of each country. The current research dives deeper into the speeches of the ethnic leaders of Lebanon and embeds its leaders and their decisions within the chronology of international events. While previously-published scholarly work effectively maps out the international competition and rivalry between various state and non-state actors in the Middle East, this research project serves to bring Lebanon's domestic specifics into the conversation by offering a focus on how ethnic leaders react to these international developments, identifying their agency in juggling multiple identities. By monitoring the political speeches of these ethnic leaders on day-to-day bases, these narratives offer a context for the international and domestic issues addressed by each ethnic leader, who often reacts to international events in the same manner as the foreign backer.

In the absence of a study of identities in Lebanon and moving away from Huntington's reductionist approach to 'civilizations,' this research relies on the historical narratives that ethnic leaders utilize when appealing for support. Because it considers memory and historical narratives, from the mouths of the leaders, to influence relations within ethnic communities (see, for example, "leaders" and "identities" in Laitin and Van Der Veen 2012), this research compares historical narratives before and after Rafic Hariri was assassinated on the 14th of February 2005. Through focusing on speeches made during riots and domestic crises, this research further filters these historical narratives using a constructivist approach (see Chapter Four) to identify ethnic and non-ethnic identities and identity shifts. The use of a constructivist

lens as a guide to trace these identities allows this research to fully account for when electoral systems regulate relations between the multiple ethnic parties, and when international actors overcome the regulatory powers of these systems. While the electoral systems-based theories are correct to note that coalition size does influence the stickiness of identities (Laitin and Van der Veen 2012; Lijphart 1969), the choice of alliances between ethnic leaders, amongst each other, and their possible breakdown is fully unexplained. Divided societies do not descend into violence without a polarized interpretation of multiple ethnic identities, be it the 'Self' or 'Other', and only through the speeches of these leaders can track the ideological motivations behind such moments of violence. Speeches of ethnic leaders demonstrate more than signals of disagreement, inter-ethnic coalitions, and rivalry, it also demonstrates the impact of international politics when international cleavages become domestic cleavages.

Chapter 4: Conceptual Framework of the Research

“The Lebanese Republic is one of the most unusual states in the world. It is a conglomeration of paradoxes and contradictions...it is Arab and Western, Christian and Muslim, traditional and modern. Its precarious survival is a fascinating subject for the student of politics” ~ **Michael C. Hudson** (Hudson 1968, 3).

“No matter how many Crusader castles, Roman ruins, and fine food you have in the Arab world, the only way to create a modern state is to deconfessionalise it so that anyone can hold power. But if you deconfessionalize Lebanon, it will cease to exist. Because sectarianism is the identity of Lebanon” ~ **Robert Fisk** (Fisk 2019).

Introduction

As outlined in Chapter Three, this research investigates the phenomenon of the ethnic leader’s position relative to international alignments and the subsequent impact of international, interstate competition on domestic identity shifts. In order to comprehend this impact, the identities themselves require further scrutiny in terms of their fluidity, the differences between ethnic and non-ethnic identity, and the circumstances in which ethnic leaders trigger identity shifts. The speeches, interviews, public statements, and articles that ethnic leaders produce often reveal appeals to multiple identities, as well as embedded community-oriented policies, relations to foes and allies, and discussions of international events. The purpose of these speeches is to mobilize ethnic supporters to rally for the party and its allies and against domestic and international foes. This chapter will conclude with the importance of using Discourse Analysis to approach ethnic speeches, and the parameters for this research in identifying identity shifts and supporters’ polarization. The content of the speeches of the ethnic leaders and political developments at the domestic and international levels can shed light on the mechanics of identity politics within countries like Lebanon. This chapter argues that through treating the international alignments as incentives for or limitations on what ethnic leaders discuss publicly, these alignments can appear as a structural constraint shaping identity marketing and re-conceptualization. The counter-theory, as outlined in the previous chapter, offers a true challenge to this argument in cases where an ethnic group’s boundaries truly limit the ethnic leader’s choice of political action.

This chapter will detail the theoretical parameters that form the phenomenon of international politics shaping domestic identities once an ethnic leader commits to an international bloc. The chapter will introduce, first, the mechanics of ethnic identities and their characteristics from a Social Constructivist approach, and, after, will identify the instances of identity re-conceptualization. This section will apply geo-strategic analysis and explain the instances in which strong states use elites of weaker states as gatekeepers to advance their interests. Next, the chapter discusses a cluster of theories that relate to electoral systems and their regulatory powers of coalition formation and appeals to collective identities. A final section concludes the primary argument through providing indicators that demonstrate the position of the ethnic leader relative to international alignments, and the subsequent influence of these alignments on coalition formation and manifestations of identities. The ultimate objective is to demonstrate that a divided society, whose citizens view international politics as an extension of domestic politics, manifests international cleavages as ethnic mobilization through the transmission belts that are the society's elites.

To what extent domestic leaders receive support from their foreign backers is unclear, and there is no means to fully track the material support that goes to domestic parties unofficially such as arms and money, given that states that support their allies internationally do not always openly announce the extent of that support. Intense inter-state competition and the presence of weak neighbouring states paves way for stronger states to penetrate societies through forging alliances with domestic actors (Miller 2007; Geukjian 2017). The frequency of foreign aid and support hinges on the intensity of competition between the foreign actor and other states, competition that may include rival penetrations into the divided society of interest, in this case Lebanon. These alterations of the international balance of threats between states (see Walt 1987) trigger further competition to win over the domestic elites of such weaker states. Amidst this international competition, domestic ethnic leaders choose sides; if they already have a tightly-knit alliance with a given foreign backer or camp, they will welcome, at the domestic level, new allies on the basis they, too, support the foreign ally. The lens of Constructivism allows the speeches of ethnic leaders to reveal their perspectives on their domestic and international allies and their criticism of rivals on both levels. These perspectives and criticisms manifest in ethnic appeals, discussions of policies of ethnic concern, and new historical narratives. Through scrutiny of these speeches, both international-domestic and domestic-domestic dynamics become apparent when ethnic leaders change behaviour in parallel to their foreign backers.

Ethnic Identities, Ethnic Parties, and Ethnic Groups

Ethnic identities, or at least their manifestations, are the pathways through which ethnic leaders, who head ethnic parties, succeed in garnering support. In the process of mobilizing support for a newly formed coalition, these ethnic leaders redefine relations between their supporters, who usually represent a significant percentage of a given sectarian or ethnic community. Through understanding the conceptual differences between ethnic identities, ethnic parties, and ethnic groups, the mechanics of politics in ethnopolitical environments become clearer. This section first defines ethnic identities and their characteristics; these definitions are followed by an exploration of the conditions that define membership and the importance of historical narratives to the types of identities to which ethnic leaders seek to appeal. It is through these historical narratives that ethnic leaders are able to reshape an ethnic identity, re-define relations between multiple ethnic groups, and link that new identity to the ethnic party. This section concludes by demonstrating how identity shifts manifest through appealing to two or more identities while excluding rivals.

All ethnic-based theories argue that ethnicity pertains to individuals' descent, and that descent can pull these individuals into action (Chandra 2011, 154; 2012, 70). Scholars of ethnicity have stressed that ethnic groups claim an identity based on myths of common descent (Horowitz 2000 [1985]) or illogical allegiance to a group (Connor 1994), forging in-group boundaries vis-à-vis other members of community. Chandra brushed aside myths of descent as the sole determinant of ethnic identifications (Chandra 2012, 73). Instead of descent, Chandra argues that individuals are born into multiple identities, and ethnic groups are not simply coloured by one ethnic identity. Her observations of ethnic groups frequently demonstrate that “ethnic groups can be fluid, internally fragmented, multi-dimensional, and endogenous to institutional structures and political competition” (Chandra 2005, 236). By “fluid,” she means there is no single ethnic group; instead, members of ethnic groups may identify with other groups if they share an identity. For instance, Catholics and Protestants may identify with each other using the shared identity of “Christian.” By “internally fragmented,” she means that group members may interpret the same identity differently, and in-group politics may suffer from intra-ethnic competition (see Wilkenson 2012 for example). “Multi-dimensional” implies that group members may have other salient identities with which they identify. Finally, circumstances, such as the nature of political competition and electoral systems, and in Chandra’s phrasing “institutional structures” more broadly, dictate which identities held by given individuals are active and which

are not. Since there are multiple identities into which individuals are born, and others are acquired throughout life (see Laitin 1998), there are several characteristics of identity that require further elaboration in order to comprehend identity shifts and ethnic polarization.

People inherit multiple identities from their parents; these identities range across religion, sect, language, accent, region, clanship, race, and colour. Identities qualify as “ethnic” if individuals who claim them judge others based on the identities they inherit or are themselves judged upon them. The terms “profess” and “assigned” are the key to the distinction between ethnic and non-ethnic identities. “Profess” indicates an action in which individuals willingly identify or interpret identities in a specific manner; “assigned” indicates identities that depend on how others have stereotyped these individuals based on the latter’s identities, irrespective of how individuals view themselves. Ethnic politics is salient when an individual cannot convince the one stereotyping them of their personal vision of the self and the world (Sen 2006, 6-8, 29-32). Individuals acquire ethnic identities in at least seven categories and may acquire even more identities depending on circumstances such as immigration (Chandra 2011, 154). The recognition of individuals’ membership in multiple ethnic identities does not automatically imply that all these identities are salient at the same time. To facilitate her approach to identity, Chandra splits these “ethnic” identities into two types: those that are dormant and hold no relevance in the context in which the actors are present, and those that are active and shape the choices made by individuals. The inactive set of ethnic identities is nominal identities, and individuals do not necessarily identify with them (Ibid), while “activated” ethnic identities are those identities “in which we actually profess, or to which we are assigned membership” (Ibid 154). Activated identities, then, are the ones that are salient within the society in which people use them to exclude others from membership in a given group.

Descent is not, within ethnic identities, the sole determinant of “boundaries” between groups. In the presence of choice, individuals may choose a set of identities that benefits them personally and socially and disregard others, depending on the circumstances (Chandra 2012, 17; Laitin 1998). In ethnically divided societies, ethnic leaders attempt to push for a unique identification with the party through a single identity in order to claim political representation and power over the historical narration of the ethnic group. The difference between nominal and activated ethnic identities paves the way for ethnic leaders to re-invent the history of identity and focus on other identities when changing alliances. In a sense, no individual has only one active identity, but

instead has a set of ethnic identities that are salient within society, along with their non-ethnic identities, for example: “African-American Socialist from the South.”

This choice of the most beneficial set of identities, according to circumstances, requires that ethnic leaders define the limitations and characteristics of ethnic identities as a category to appeal for support and exclude rivals. First, “it [*ethnic identities*] includes only identity categories based on the region, religion, sect, language, family, language, dialect, caste, clan, tribe, or nationality of one's parents or ancestors, or one's own physical features” (Chandra 2011, 154). Category, in this case, overcomes the difficulty of defining cultural differences (Fine 2001) and norms, and of the immeasurability of culture (Chandra 2011). Ethnic leaders choose multiple categories of ethnic identity to which to appeal depending on the circumstances. For example, an ethnic leader may speak to a group that belongs to a specific sect, speaks with a specific accent, and identifies with a region. Circumstances for identities change with relation to politics. For example, a national identity, such as “Canadian,” is non-ethnic since it encompasses memberships for all ethnic categories; however, in France, “Canadian” transforms into an ethnic identity, since the Canadian is a minority within a broader populace. Chandra (2011, 154) adds a condition that the group that claims an ethnic identity should be large enough that its members do not all know each other on a personal level, for identification on ethnic bases surpasses the personal ties.

Nominal identities, despite their absence, also play a role in ethno-politics. They present an opportunity for actors to activate them, depending on circumstances. For example, Josip Tito defeated Serb and Croat nationalists during World War II through appealing to a broad inclusive Slavic identity to unite the various Yugoslav communities to fight fascism (see Hoare 2007; Donia 2006). A Lebanese president stresses the Francophone historical ties with France to attract foreign investments to Lebanon from France. A similar logic applies to individuals seeking jobs. A French student may highlight their African identity when applying to scholarships dedicated to minorities. A merchant, upon discovering that she and her client share the same town as a point of origin, might stress that category of kinship to push her products. The nominal set of identities becomes a repertoire for individuals to use, as can ethnic leaders. For the latter, it is imperative to draw boundaries between the ethnic group they seek to represent and other parties appealing to the same or other, but overlapping, identities. Nominal identities, in this domain, can serve to unite supporters in a coalition, or to exclude rivals. For example, when two ethnic leaders engage in intra-ethnic competition, each leader may attempt

to activate other identities of their rivals that might resonate negatively among their constituents. For example, one ethnic leader may activate the town of the rival leader's origins in the North, a nominal category of family clanship or regionalism, while seeking party votes of constituents in the South. To activate or de-activate nominal identities, the ethnic leader must spin or re-narrate historical events that justify current objectives in order to vote-pool with allies or exclude rivals (Sen 2006, 24; Chandra 2012, 16-17).

A condition of ethnic identities' on-going salience is the identification of communities with a specific version of an ethnic identity, which has three objectives. The first serves to generate a natural continuity with the past, which creates a sensation of safety for its members during turbulent times. The third objective, with such an active ethnic community, brings forth "self-respect and personal authenticity to the modern world" (Eriksen 2002, 68). This continuity with the past and authenticity are the tools ethnic leaders use to market their party objectives, allies, and rivals, through historical narratives in such a way as to manipulate and persuade supporters into action (Ibid, see also "persuasion" in Van Dijk 2006, 362, 366, 368). Ethnic communities continuously rely on the past in terms of ancestry, common origins, and shared culture (Chandra 2012, 74-93). The purpose of these acts in the context of ethno-politics is not simply to gain legitimacy with respect to the past, but also with respect to the leader's ideological objectives when discussing identities and policy objectives with their constituents (see impact of public discourse in Wodak 2009, 6 - 9). This tactic is most evident when ethnic leaders, through interviews and speeches, and re-contextualize, "everyday politics in the media" (Ibid, 24). Through topic, occasion, and purpose, and given the power of a leader holds in public (Wodak 2009), leaders take this constructed continuity in the direction they want when reacting to an event (occasion), stratifying it in the community's repertoires and suggesting a logical pattern to events (Van Dijk 2006, 368, 371). Ethnic leaders, in the case of Lebanon, fit this description. They hold strong access to public discourse, through owning or sharing ideological media outlets, including televisions and newspapers, and they encourage their constituents to be convinced of their version of identities, and enact this interpretation in their day-to-day life in relation to others.

The key words for this dissertation, then, are not ethnic groups in conflict, but ethnic leaders who politicize these group differences. Brubaker (2002) suggests that "ethnic conflict – or what might better be called ethnicized or ethnically framed conflict – need not, and should not, be understood as conflict between ethnic groups..." (166). Instead, Brubaker suggests that

analysis must be focused on ethnopolitical entrepreneurs “who unlike nonspecialists, may live ‘off’ as well as ‘for’ ethnicity - often have what Pierre Bourdieu has called a performative character” (Ibid). They are the ones who trigger their salience, use them against other groups, and reinforce group boundaries (Ibid). The appeal to ethnic identities also has other objectives. The ethnic leaders who make these appeals not only mobilize supporters on the basis of past sacrifices and security, but they also use these identities as a means for control. For ethnic leaders, an active ethnic identity symbolizes the leader's political objectives via the association of the party with the identity. Ethnic leaders attempt to play on the normative dimension of these constructed identities in an attempt to impose and maintain control over their community through obligations (see “norms” in Shudson 2001, 166-167). Since norms are social constructions and often become standards for judging behaviour in society (Fine 2001, 160-161), the normative aspect of ethnic identities also encourages norm enforcers (see “norms” in Ellikson 2001, 37-39) to eliminate alternatives for constituent members who do not agree with the ethnic leaders. Ethnic tensions, including wars and violent blaming of defectors (Zarkov 2007; Gagnon Jr. 2004), marginalize in-group members, preventing them from seeking alternatives to these ethnic leaders (Gagnon Jr. 2004, Gordy 1999).

The task of controlling an ethnic community is not an easy task, especially in the presence of multiple nominal identities that can be activated and diminish an ethnic leader's grip on their community. This presence of multiple identities already poses a challenge for ethnic leaders. Appeals to ethnic identities, when successful, often target others who are not within the group; however, in-group challengers to ethnic leaders may prompt ethnic leaders to engage with ethnic violence toward out-group communities to consolidate in-group power (Wilkinson 2012). Using an identity as a group boundary against rival claims, however, poses multiple challenges for these leaders because their strengths rely on their constituents' identification with the marketed narratives and identities. Given that individuals interpret the same identity differently, based on personal experience (Sen 2006, 66-75) and in combination with other identities (Chandra and Boulet 2012), ethnic leaders must appeal frequently for support and be creative in producing those identities in a way that encourages supporters to enact them in terms of objective, support, and context. Ethnic leaders' creativity does not stop at the national scale or in-group competition; ethnic parties, within their own rank and file, also suffer turmoil over identity interpretation and policy objectives. For example, Chandra noted that different generations experience identities differently: an ethnic party can face a conceptual gap in the

understanding of their identity between an older generation and a younger one, often manifesting as a face-off within the party (Chandra 2000, 837-839).

The challenge for ethnic leaders, then, is to gain control of a community's historical narrative to maintain their production of identities that are marketed toward oneself, allies, and foes. Eriksen (2002) correctly noted that ethnic leaders must have knowledge of their communities' cultures, and historical events, to benefit from the constructed past for political and personal gains (71). Mearsheimer (2011, 22) and Van Evera (1994, 27 - 33) note that leaders are involved in mythmaking to achieve political objectives. As Van Evera noted: "Myth flourish most when elites need them most, when opposition to myths is weakest, and when publics are most myth-receptive" (Ibid, 30). Leaders, including ethnic leaders in the case of Lebanon, are like performers on stage, in that they must have the ability to project "cultural, traditional" meanings through their character (see performers and leaders in Wodak 2009, 8). Relying on press conferences, media coverage, interviews, and blogs, leaders can "generate and encourage rather unrealistic expectations among laypeople that politics or politicians are capable: of solving urgent problems in rational and efficient ways (Ibid 17-18). More importantly, such daily exposure in media outlets to "enact mythmaking on current events" (Van Evera 1994, 32) allows actors to "symbolize important events, and acquire the meaning of a 'turning point' in history while neglecting the socio-political and historical contexts" (Wodak 2009, 18).

Other challenges for ethnic leaders come from within the community they seek the power to steer ideologically. They often compete with other ethnic leaders, seeking to carve out ethnic support from a shared base, which manifests in ethnic outbidding (Horowitz 2000 [1985], 359-360; see also Chandra 2005, 236-238), which in turn encourages these two parties to seek alliances with parties of other ethnic groups (Horowitz 2000 [1985], 359-360). Recent studies similar to Horowitz's confirm that inter-group ethnic violence is the result of two parties competing for the primacy of representation of the same group (Wilkenson 2012; see also Horowitz 2000 [1985], 358). Inter-group ethnic violence is thus not about ancient hatred between two long-time rival ethnic groups but is the result of intra-ethnic competition within the same groups. Ethnic leaders involved in intra-ethnic competition politicize the other identities to which their rivals may belong (Horowitz 2000 [1985], 356).

For ethnopolitics to be salient, an ethnic leader must target other groups (Eriksen 2002); this process can manifest through stereotyping (Ibid, 24-29). In-group identification with positive

features, such as belonging and economic gain, is a situation in which an individual equates the positive gains of the ethnic group with their own (Brewer 2001, 22-23). Differentiations across the various communities occur through exclusion of members of other groups, who pose a risk for the ethnic group in question. Ethnic leaders then seek to equate the identity with the party through daily public exposure, especially during crises (Van Evera 1994, 32). In order to do so, an ethnic leader must revisit historical narratives, be they recent or ancient, to present decisions as natural and legitimate. The production of identities and the politicization of ethnic categories are flexible. Recent breakthroughs in Discourse Analysis demonstrates how public conversations about identities can “be produced and made relevant in the interaction” between participants (see D’hondt 2002 in Blommaert 2004, 210). The simple discussions of identities can polarize them. Thus, Identification with one narrative publicly about the past thus becomes, in itself, a form of ethnic identity, as long as it includes some members and excludes others (Ashworth et al. 2007, 4-5). Aggravated by media coverage, leaders benefit from presenting themselves in a specific way, a “dramatic realization” as the leaders perform to reach the audience they target (Wodak 2009 4, 8). Bringing forth ethnic parties into the mix,

Speeches, interviews, rallies, public statements, and media-covered debates are the most effect tools for leaders to directly reach out to their targeted supporters. Leaders in general use speeches as a form of persuasion and social domination (Van Dijk 2006, 362) while benefiting from the powers of groups an, media, and control. Strong leaders rely on the power of their group and “public discourse is at the same time a means of the social reproduction of such power” (Ibid, 362). Leaders and their institutions, such as communities, religious networks, media coverage, and private media outlets, can steer the understanding of information in a manner that suits their interests, and obstruct the flow of information that harms them (Ibid, 366). In case of Lebanon, ethnic leaders benefit from their ethnic parties as institutions that has its private media outlets, tightly or semi-tightly knit communities, to consolidate power or increase it. The power of words coming from the commanding heights of leaders as performers allows leaders to continue, “discursively manipulating how recipients understand one event, action, or discourse” (Ibid 371). Ethnic leaders in this case must treat the ‘reifying groups’ boundaries politics as “practice of politicized ethnicity (Brubaker 2002, 166). Thus, ethnic identities do not exist independently; they require actors to push for targeted audiences to identify and carryout these leaders’ purposes of polarizing them in the first place.

Ethnic parties do not equate ethnic communities they claim to represent (Brubaker 2002, 172). When ethnic tensions flare, Brubaker notes “organizations and not ethnic groups as such, are the chief protagonists of ethnic conflict and ethnic violence and that the relationship between organizations and the groups they claim to represent is often deeply ambiguous?” (Ibid, 173). The speakers, in this case the ethnic leaders provide goals and objectives and discuss ethnic and non-ethnic categories of identities. The more politicians appear through different media-contexts, such as rallies, interviews, and broadcasted town hall meetings, the more these leaders can reach their targeted audiences via different discursive approaches (Sakkitt and Paterson 2016, 158). Moreover, ethnicity is an interpretation of groups and individuals, “they include ethnically oriented frames, schemas, and narratives and the situational cues that activate them...” (Brubaker 2002, 175). This scope is vital for the dissertation, particularly in its exploration of when ethnic leaders shift in their public appearances from one theme to another, often discussing international and domestic issues of concern, and of how the ethnic leader positions their own and the community’s identity vis-à-vis rivals of their respective international backers. This dissertation observes who ethnic leaders of parties try to flag these situational cues and narratives and use them for their parties’ benefits, but in relations to the domestic - international alliances. For example, when an ethnic leader faces accusations of corruption, does that leader defend oneself on the basis of historical performance or do they invoke an international-led conspiracy against themselves and the foreign backer? In the latter case, an ethnic leader defends themselves through de-legitimizing accusations as “foreign” in origin, mobilizes allies and supporters against those who plotted such a conspiracy, and brings international politics into the domestic arena, sometimes inviting statements from the foreign backers directly.

In the case of Lebanon, relations with foreign backers also manifest in terms of ethnic cleavages, since ethnic parties dominate Lebanon’s politics. Furthermore, ethnic leaders usually dominate their respective ethnic parties. If one ethnic leader criticizes Iran, most likely the supporters of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah, and its allies, would mobilize against this “Lebanese traitor.” In light of the fact that many supporters of ethnic parties regard international politics and development as an extension of Lebanese politics (Marinov and Corstange 2012), Lebanon offers a rare opportunity to analyse the identity shifts that take place when ethnic leaders change international alliances. Lebanese parties, in this case, demonstrate sudden stereotyping, often depicted as threats due to allegiances with foreign actors that mobilize supporters against the “other.” This “other” requires both the breaking of ties between ethnic

and national or overlapping identities and a depiction of threat to polarize Lebanese communities. Foreign backers and the rivals of their international allies further become part of this domestic politics when ethnic leaders escalate their rhetoric against or in support of foreign backers, depending on whether there is an alliance between the international and domestic actor. The presence of the foreign backers in a country becomes not only part of domestic politics, but also a form of an identity used to marginalize rivals. When Hariri accuses Hezbollah of being Iranian, or the latter accuses the former of being Saudi, their supporters automatically view each other in light of these accusations, further straining the relations between ethnic party and national identity. This inclusion or exclusion, often accompanied by accusations of loyalty to foreign rather than national identities, also signals an identity shift between the accuser and the accused.

Identity shifts occur in general when relations between active identities, nominal identities, or both change. In some cases, people activate several identities in parallel to the salient one. For example, a Spanish Basque resident in the United States may have to add "European" to her identity to differentiate herself from Latin Americans. In other cases, communities recognize their active identity as a sub-category of another identity. For example, Christians in Lebanon considered the Lebanese identity a sub-category of the Arab identity after Prime Minister Rafic Hariri died (see Chapters Six and Seven). Similarly, the predominantly Sunni movement, Hariri's Future Movement, articulated Lebanon's identity as both Arab and Francophone, a rarity in Lebanon's politics (see Chapter Eight).

The role of speeches and activation of ethnic identities contributes to the treatment of identities as social constructs. Constructivist approaches, in general, take into consideration various "processes such as modernization, state collapse, institutional design, violence, and political and economic competition" mechanisms for defectors from within the ethnic group who do not identify with the group. Salience thus exists among a repertoire of activated and nominal identities (Chandra 2012, 140). This research, as this chapter will discuss in a different section, adds the identities of foreign backers into this repertoire of nominal and active identities ethnic leaders can apply to mobilize support through their speeches. The assumptions and traits of ethnic identities are vital to identifying identity shifts; therefore, they serve as the key indicators to identify the effects of electoral systems and international-local alliances on domestic actors.

Electoral Systems and Ethnic Groups

The electoral system can influence ethnic party behaviour and in turn shape ethnic identities because "ethnicity offers political leaders the promise of secure support. Politicians who can count have something they can count on" (Horowitz 2000 [1985], 294-295). The electoral system contains multiple characteristics that influence identities: The fundamental premise of the regulatory power of electoral systems is that ethnic leaders are bound by the identity of their ethnic group(s) when appealing for support. These ethnic parties are "also cemented by the incentives politicians have to organize along those lines where ethnic groups are a prominent part of the social landscape" (Ibid, 294). Through bringing into consideration the international influence on domestic alliances, the opposite situation becomes the focus: Do the boundaries of a given ethnic identity indeed bind ethnic leaders? Ethnic leaders in Lebanon seem to be able to traverse these boundaries when forging alliances, without fearing a loss of supporters. This section evaluates the multiple influences of the electoral system on the behaviour and identity construction of ethnic parties.

Electoral systems within divided societies require unique power-sharing formulas that cannot function within majority-based democratic parliaments (Lijphart 1969; 1985; 1985a; 2004; 2008; Wolff 2005). These types of systems can either be accommodative or integrative. Lijphart argues that leaders in divided societies can cooperate in elections and generate a grand coalition to manage the affairs of the state in recognition of the autonomies of its constituent ethnic groups. In this case, minority-based groups avoid the tyranny of the majority. Like Lijphart, Horowitz adds a normative dimension to the analysis of Consociational Democracy. Horowitz argues that electoral systems should encourage ethnic leaders to appeal for support from voters belonging to other ethnic groups in order to discourage ethnic leaders from appealing to strict ethnic identities that exclude other members (Wolff 2005, 59-61). Each perspective defines the objectives of ethnic parties and, in turn, the types of appeals they will make for voters' support. Horowitz advances the argument that ethnic leaders should rest their appeals on national issues that concern all communities, with a focus on the state itself (Wolff 2005, 60; see "centripetalism" in Horowitz 2000 [1985], 247). Lijphart insists instead on the autonomy of the groups and that power-sharing through grand coalitions triggers centrifugal effects; that is to say, the demands of the parties become more distant from each other and focus on the periphery, including regional autonomy (see Wolff 2005, 60). In the case of integrative policies like those Horowitz describes, party leaders focus on national and not solely

ethnic issues (Ibid). These centripetal effects are more frequently strategies of non-ethnic parties who appeal to non-ethnic identities, such as national or supra-national identities, or ideological objectives, such as liberal or Social Democratic approaches. Horowitz considers the centripetal effect a means by which to cement a fragmented society across ethnic lines.

Recent arguments stress the size of the coalition, instead of accommodation. Laitin and Van der Veen (2012) highlighted that coalition size and the need to win forces ethnic leaders to appeal to overlapping identities that are proportional to the coalition size. In this line of argument, if an ethnic party does not require any aid to win elections, then they can solely appeal to a rigid ethnic identity for support (Ibid). The minimum number of participants required maximizing the splitting of resources among actors after elections forms a coalition and wins elections. This emphasis omits Horowitz's concern for what type of a coalition forms, regardless of size. There are two types of multi-ethnic coalitions that exist: coalitions of convenience and coalitions of commitment. In the first category, coalitions form simply to attain a majority in elections without any agreement on general issues; these coalitions dissolve after the elections are over (Horowitz 2000 [1985], 369-378). On the other hand, coalitions of commitment are cemented through agreements on central issues, including post-election friendly ties and joint efforts in common policy making (Ibid, 379). These coalitions usually do not contain intra-ethnic competition, since they generate distancing centrifugal effects. In this case, Horowitz normatively encourages a "form of inter-ethnic competition that is not wholly centrifugal, so that ethnic parties find rewards in taking moderate positions on matters of interethnic relations, hence making themselves available for coalitions of commitment" (Ibid, 379).

Lebanon fits the coalitions of commitment model, as, in the wake of the 2005 Syrian withdrawal, the plethora of ethnic parties became active within two rival inter-ethnic grand coalitions, which compete against each other on a coalition/national level; coalition victory on that level translates into a victory for a given ethnic leader on the intra-ethnic competitive level. Horowitz placed the Lebanese coalitions in the category of Coalitions of Convenience (Horowitz 1999, 21-22), since they only worried about getting votes across group lines without any compromise on ethnic cleavages or problems (Ibid, 22). The rationale behind Horowitz's rhetoric is that Lebanon combines elements of both centripetal and centrifugal effects. The constituencies of Lebanon require ethnic parties vote-pool through coalition formation on a national scale to win elections; however, each constituency has sectarian quotas based on its ethnography. These quotas encourage ethnic parties to dominate Lebanese politics while entering coalitions. After Syria's

hegemony over Lebanese politics ended in 2005, two coalitions committed to achieving domestic and international objectives. The members of the 14th of March bloc and the 8th of March bloc, in an unprecedented first, respectively held shared policy objectives, foreign policies, and common identities, after the 2005 elections, and to some extent the 2009 elections took place.

This electoral system then regulates the extent to which an ethnic leader can speak on behalf of a community. Recall that ethnic politics in a divided society is a form of politics in which leaders "typically aim to speak for and advance the interests of their own ethno-national group or community rather than the electorate as a whole" (Morrow 2005, 46) and that power-sharing also requires vetoes on the part of certain actors to avoid the tyranny of an ethnic majority (Lijphart 2003; 2008). This power-sharing arrangement allows minority groups to protect their rights and encourages cooperation within grand coalitions; however, too many vetoes may render a state dysfunctional (Bieber 2000; see also Tsebelis 1992; Garrett 1998). These vetoes allow a smaller group to torpedo a majority-based decision to avert a crisis, but it is precisely these vetoes that may discourage actors from cooperating after elections. Bosnia-Herzegovina's post-civil war system contained so many vetoes that the institution became dysfunctional, as no one ethnic party accepted the decisions of or even entered negotiations with other ethnic parties (Bose 2002; Bieber 2000). Such institutional independence may also render identification with a given national identity non-existent (Deschouwer 2005), as linguistic autonomy in Belgium demonstrates in the cases of Dutch- and French-speaking citizens (Ibid, 104-105). Lebanon, on the other hand, encourages communities to identify with the state and with their communities, generating mixed centrifugal and centripetal effects, which in turn encourage appeals to ethnic and non-ethnic identities at the same time. Several parties appeal to the Lebanese or other supra-national identities due to their salience in inter-ethnic coalitions while simultaneously continuing to appeal to issues that concern their respective ethnic groups.

Finally, power-sharing formulas and electoral systems produce effects beyond the size of coalitions between ethnic leaders. Institutionalizing ethnic identities in the state, including the parliament, preserves the salience of ethnic identities and obstructs the entrance of non-ethnic or secular parties into resolutions of ethnic rivalry. Lebanon, for example, has sectarian quotas, depending on the constituency size and demography, reserved for candidates. This process restricts the ability of non-ethnic leaders to appeal to national-based policies and preserves ethnic parties, since the parliamentary quotas are reserved on an ethnic basis and do not allow

for non-ethnic platforms (O'Flynn 2005, 21). Worse, this process encourages ethnic mobilization for electoral success, since ethnopolitics flourishes through the targeting of non-group members (Ibid). Another unintended consequence is the fixing of the interpretation of the identity itself among the members of the ethnic group, even if such frozen interpretation of an identity does not fully represent the diversity of identity interpretation among the group's members (Ibid). As a result, "the danger, therefore, with institutionalizing group identities is that it may make it difficult for political leaders to remain responsive to, and hence effectively promote, the full diversity of members' interests" (Ibid). These institutionalized identities, as long as they are frozen within the state, do not offer an opportunity for new political challengers to appeal for support through new identity alternatives within ethnically divided societies and unite the fragmented groups under a national banner.

Electoral systems theories thus identify multiple issues in regard to identity: the salience of ethnic identities if they are institutionalized, the type of cooperation between ethnic leaders, and whether national issues or ethnic issues dominate the affairs of a divided society's political affairs. Further questions arise from arrangements in the wake of parliamentary elections: does a coalition continue to function as one, or will it dissolve? Does the electoral system and its power-sharing formulas, including veto power, encourage inter-ethnic co-operation between ethnic leaders? Would ethnic leaders push for further autonomy and more distancing from the state as a central power?

All these scholarly observations center on a single denominator: a relatively large coalition size, for winning elections is the crucial incentive for co-operation between ethnic leaders. Without such co-operation, a narrower interpretation of identities will be salient, since ethnic leaders have no incentive to appeal to voters from other groups, or even not to alienate them. Furthermore, if the electoral system institutionalizes ethnic identities, i.e., creates quotas in elections, executive positions, and recruitment in the public sector, non-ethnic identities cannot overcome the mobilization of supporters on an ethnic basis. Indicators from this collective body of literature centers on 1) institutionalization of identities in electoral law, 2) coalition formation to win elections and the extent to which a given coalition maintains its alliance after the elections, and 3) voter magnitude and its importance in shaping coalitions and ethnic identities.

The International Dimension, Ethnic Identities, and Ethnic Leaders

Recently, a plethora of literature has argued that divided societies are not immune to international developments or to rivalries and co-operation between states (Miller 2007; Jasinski 2011; McGarry and O'Leary 2006; 2009; Seaver 2000; Geukjian 2017). States meddle in the affairs of other states to further their own national security interests (Holsti 1991; 1996; 1998; Oakes 2012; Hughes 2012; Corstange and Marinov 2012; Miller 2007); weak states also become battlegrounds for international actors to secure proxy governments across borders, and strong states fund allies and coalitions to ensure the elections of friendly governments that suit their trade and strategic interests. Countries that experience civil wars particularly become hostages of international mediators often state actors, who bargain new power-sharing formulas between hostile parties in order to obtain peace (Geukjian 2017). Throughout the process of strong states expanding its influence or military presence within these divided countries, these states force their rival states to incur costs (Grieco 1988). Ethnic leaders of these societies are not expected to remain idle as international rivalry escalates between international state actors. If ethnic leaders join international coalitions to advance their interests domestically, then they become, as Cox (1986) called these elites, transmission belts that advance international alliances and regional alignments in the domestic politics of the country. Given that ethnic parties rely on ethnic polarization and appeals to attain support domestically, they need to develop new identities or re-conceptualize previously salient ones and advance new interpretations of historical narratives from the past. This innovation in interpreting identities is a tactic to justify ethnic leaders' alliances with foreign actors and domestic allies who share the same position relative to the international camp. Instead of electoral systems determining coalition sizes domestically, then, shared positions of ethnic leaders relative to international allies determine alliances without the need to focus on sizes. Irrespective of bad blood between the ethnic parties, and irrespective of if these ethnic parties seek to represent the polarized ethnic community, international-domestic alliances become the norm for inter-ethnic alliances within these weak societies. This section will discuss firstly types and tactics of state interference with other states, and then the geo-strategic reasons for which states seek such expansionary politics.

Beginning with Consociational democracy literature, scholars have failed to explain why several countries that enjoyed unique power-sharing formulas descended into war (Taylor 2009; Hudson 1984; Bieber 2000). Linking situations of peace and war in divided societies to

international developments, McGarry and O'Leary (2009) argued that peace could not materialize in such societies without bringing into the fold the international actors who have interests in these societies. McGarry and O'Leary (2006; 2009) argued that Northern Ireland could not enjoy peace until 1998 when the Irish Republic, Great Britain, and the Irish-American lobby in the United States shared an interest in peace. Without these actors, a peace treaty would not have been possible. Consociational democracy, in this view, is no longer a path toward a healthy democracy; it is instead a short-term, pact-forming arrangement between elites to regulate disagreements (see "elite pacts" in O'Donnell and Schmitter 1993, 42 - 54). As part of this arrangement, the actors do not bargain; instead, they rely on their foreign allies to advance their interests (Ibid). Indeed, disagreements between domestic ethnic leaders usually require international states and organizations as mediators to give credibility to arrangements and assurances that domestic actors will not renege on their agreements (Geukjian 2017). Consociational democracy thus merely reflects the domestic balances between ethnic parties, and domestic peace is often mediated with the help of international actors who back their domestic supporters. However, the interests of foreign actors change, and arrangements between domestic actors can change as a result (Ibid). Thus, the descent of a divided society into civil war is not necessarily related to domestic factors; instead, it relates to the interests of foreign actors who are no longer satisfied with the power-sharing arrangement within the divided society.

States find an opportunity to meddle in the affairs of other countries to serve their own long-term strategic interests, both directly and indirectly. Direct wars cross borders when states attack other states if they perceive that wars can be won swiftly without straining state resources (Mearsheimer 1985). Indirect interventions vary from proxy wars to funding ethnic leaders to gain ground in these divided societies. Proxy wars manifest when two international states support different actors within the same state and push them to war, achieving long-term strategic interests while cutting human and even military costs. Even though Hughes was adamant that domestic actors maintain their decision-making autonomy, it is clear that their victories serve the interests of their backers (see also Holsti 1991; 1996). Holsti referred to such wars as Wars of the Third Kind, in which states no longer go to war across borders openly, but instead one state supports allies with paramilitary troops, funds, and weapons in their waging of wars within the borders of a rival state (Ibid). Other states provide weapons and money to their domestic allies and increase their support with lucrative international trade agreements and loans if their domestic allies capture power electorally or through other means (see Corstange

and Marinov 2012, 655-659; Holsti 1991; 1996). This process is not limited to Lebanon; Corstange and Marinov argued that outside powers have tried, with some success, to influence the outcome of more than 120 national elections taking place in 66 countries between 1960 and 2006 – an average of over 2.5 interventions per year (Corstange and Marinov 2012, 655). Lebanon is no exception to this rule, as ethnic party supporters have no issue with allied foreign forces supporting their representatives, while decrying states that support their rivals as foreign meddlers (Ibid). The perspective of the Lebanese constituents cannot be separated from the influence of ethnic leaders (Van der Veen and Laitin 2012, 288-289; Van Dijk 2006; Wodak 2009) who are bending historical narratives and identities to justify international-local alliances (see “two-level alliances” in Geukjian 2017)

Despite these alliances, states do not stop other states from seeking their own interests, possibly at the expense of their allies in the long term (Copeland 2000; Glaser 1998). For every state, national security trumps all other concerns, and alliances only serve to safeguard that interest (Mearsheimer 2001). States do not only worry about military capability in the present, but they also think long-term about how economic gains can translate to funding advanced technology and military capabilities (Gilpin 1981; 1987; 2001; Strange 1988; Organski and Kugler 1980; Rasler and Thompson 2003). Gains in any technological or economical breakthroughs within one state factor into the calculations made by other states, which may consider pre-emptively disrupting the fortunes of the former state (Gilpin 1981; 2001; see “preventative motivations” in Fearon 1995). For example, the United States led a war against Iraq in 1991 to expel Saddam Hussein’s forces from Kuwait in order to avert in the long-term the rise of a regional hegemon through oil (Fearon 1995, 406).

These calculations also include expanding their influence on other states, mainly on divided societies with weak state institutions and military institutions (Miller 2007); states can include economic pressures and incentives as part of such endeavours (see “economic statecraft” in Baldwin 1985). Within ethnically divided societies, excluded ethnic groups that can effectively challenge the state may gain support from kin states that share similar ethnicities (Miller 2007). Interventions by these kin states are more frequent in regions that are unstable and always on the verge of war (Miller 2007; Jasinski 2011). Even in times of peace, states seek to replace other states with elites friendlier to their own policies (see Cox 1996 [1983]), or they simply bribe the present elites into cooperation (see “side payments” in Grieco 1988). However, in ethnically divided societies, states may become mediators and guarantors of agreement implementation

between domestic elites, especially if they have friendly relations with those elites (Geukjian 2017). This dissertation builds on these observations and argues that ethnically divided societies can reverberate with the impacts of the actions of international competitive blocs, which can result in additional or increased cleavage between ethnic elites. In this reading, ethnic leaders do not choose their allies domestically based on local policy, amicable relations, or the need to vote-pool, but on their position with respect to an international bloc that is relevant to their region. Hence, if there are international–domestic alliances between states and the ethnic leaders of divided societies, and then it is normal that the followers of foreign-backed leaders regard world affairs as extensions of their domestic policies (Geukjian 2017; Corstange and Marinov 2012).

Great powers rely on their economic power to influence weaker states into agreeing with their policies through trade pressures, trade agreements, and economic sanctions (Baldwin 1985; Mastundono 2006; Gilpin 1981; 2001). Indeed, as part of these pressures, regional and smaller states re-interpret regional identities as suits for foreign policy, as in relations to any perceived regional threats, including economic crises (Waever 1998). In some cases, such as economic crisis, states may re-politicize national identities over supra-national identities, such as the case of several European Union member-states and national identities during the 2008 global crisis (see for example Rosato 2011). Another example includes the significance of membership in the European community as an identity changed in light of the Soviet threat and the US-USSR détente, and, ultimately, has changed again in the post-Cold War era (Waever 1998). Economic power can wield the security and perspective of other states (Strange 1988; Mastanduno 2006; Gilpin 1981). Within these changing security circumstances of states seeking to revise an international status quo in warfare and economies, hegemonic powers, i.e. those that carry the world economy on their shoulders such as, currently, the United States, and previously the British Empire (Gilpin 1981; Strange 1988), can punish defectors who do not respect the established world order through economic sanctions, such as the United States continuously imposing sanctions on Iran (see Gilpin 2001; Gowa and Mansfield 1994). These sanctions are part of the international competition between states.

Smaller states are not completely helpless, either. Democracies within strong states are vulnerable to lobby groups, which includes international lobby groups seeking to influence elected officials. Israel, for example, has one of the strongest lobby groups in the United States, despite its size, and can influence American foreign policy in the Middle East (see Mearsheimer

and Walt 2008; Ikenberry 2001 on lobbying within great powers; “the Japanese lobby in the United States” in Huntington 1993). What has gone unexamined is the reverse, i.e., lobbying on behalf of more influential states by the elites of divided societies. Empirical cases, such as Lebanon, suggest that the United States and other international actors do support domestic actors that serve to advance their respective interests. For example, Hourani (2012) compared American support for the Phalange in the 1980s and the Future Movement in the 2000s in Lebanon. Boykin (2000) and Copeland (1968) document diplomatic ties between international actors and Lebanese ethnic leaders; in the cases they examined, sometimes support was not limited solely to vocal support, but grew to include funds, loans, military support, and direct military intervention. The supporters of ethnic leaders seem to regard this kind of international support and inter-state rivalry as an extension of their domestic parties (Corstange and Marinov 2012). Even though the interests of regional state actors and international or superpowers might differ, international checks between rival coalitions continue through international bloc formation and keeping a keen eye on military capabilities. Countries like Lebanon become battlegrounds on which states advance their interests and limit the expansionary politics of rival blocs (see, for example, “regional hegemons” in Mearsheimer 2001 and Fearon 1995; Buzan and Waever 2003).

States also seek international alliances to maximize their chances for survival or victory (Snyder 1997; Waltz 1979; Walt 1987; Morgenthau 1985 [1949]) and pool their military capabilities. The collective military capabilities form balances of power across coalitions of states. Balances of power shape state behaviour within the international system (Waltz 1979) given their position within their hierarchy as determined according to their individual military capabilities. Strong states are willing to incur costs to strengthen weaker allies who are geographically closer to their rivals; for example, the United States supported the European economy after World War II to deter Soviet encroachment (Gowa 1989; Grieco 1988; 1990). Clusters of alliances become camps or international alignments, and, with time, these allies form institutions around their clusters (Bull 1968). For example, the bipolar world, which centered on Western–Soviet competition, also involved the formation of institutions and diplomatic exchanges that traversed military alignments and also included cultural and economic organizations and organizations that facilitated collective action (Bull 1968; Lake 2000). The question, then, remains as to what happens to divided societies when these balances of power and international institutions become part of domestic politics. This question lies at the heart of this research project and its

aim to put ethnic leaders in the spotlight as they are realigned via these international alignments and alliances and steer politics toward further cleavage.

When international states compete for rival strategic dominance against rival states (Waltz 1979) and seek alliances internationally, divided states become targets for these international states as they seek to increase their geo-strategic and economic advantages, especially if these divisions are the results of pressures from ethnic divisions (Miller 2007; Geukjian 2017). Assuming that ethnic elites choose sides in this international rivalry, coalitions may then form around these international blocs within divided societies. In order for these coalitions to succeed, they require legitimacy, and ethnic leaders may therefore be obligated to revise salient identities or introduce new ones. In light of the above discussion, we move now to discuss to what extent the electoral system also influences the choices ethnic leaders make about their alliances and identities.

Ethnic leaders have various mechanisms at their disposal; primarily, leaders revisit historical events to justify current decision-making. Van Evera (1994, 32) and Mearsheimer (2011, 22) discussed various mechanisms used to mobilize supporters in defence of controversial choices, particularly myth-making and fear mongering. Nationalist myth-making (Mearsheimer 2011, 22; Van Evera 1994, 32) is the act of re-creating a history to explain why certain decisions are natural; in this case, ethnic leaders carefully choose some historical events and omit others in order to push national identification with these decisions. Fearmongering is the instigating of fear in order to push for decisions and support from supporters. Often, fearmongering predicts catastrophic outcomes in cases of decision-making where leaders perceive challenges from the opposition. Within an ethnic context, scapegoating dominates fearmongering tactics. Scapegoating is the process by which a leader or group is blamed for negative events or crises that take place (Mearsheimer 22- 23; Staub 2001). Scapegoating is the path, in an ethnopolitical context, by which ethnic leaders target other ethnic groups and mobilize supporters toward violence. Both myth-making and fearmongering go hand in hand with identity shifts. When a leader diverts the hatred or fear of one community toward another, they preserve the fear and the collective trauma of a community but re-direct it, via a new narrative. Weak states or semi-democratic regimes are at risk of elites subverting their entire population when they “control political agendas and shape the content of information media in ways that promote belligerent pressure-group lobbies or upwellings of militancy in the populace as a whole” (Mansfield and Snyder 1994-1995, 7). Lebanon fits this description of a weak democracy, dominated by

warlords from the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) era who control state institutions the political agendas of the state, often advancing their goals through myth-making around identities, applying fearmongering tactics against rivals, and continuously scapegoating rivals, as part of a diversionary war strategy, as pawns of Israel or of Syria (depending on the position of the actor or coalition).

Identity shifts thus rely on the creativity of ethnic leaders in the production of new myths and in steering the fear of their supporters toward rivals. In order to create such myths, ethnic leaders re-conceptualize the identities of their rivals as anti-ethnic and anti-national. Through downgrading the free will of their rivals as agents of foreign forces, the leaders' ethnic supporters regard these "agents" and their supporters as foreign and dangerous. They may bring forth new nominal identities or activate multiple identities simultaneously to include new allies and exclude new rivals. Within their speeches, these leaders discuss multiple policy objectives, bringing them under the umbrella of the community's ethnic identities or of the overlapping identities that cover multiple allies and simultaneously target their rivals. Sometimes, the ethnic leader will attempt to exclude the rival from non-ethnic identities, such as the national or supra-national identities, which are, in case of Lebanon, the Lebanese identity and the Arab identity respectively. When leaders use myth-making and fearmongering in their attempt to control historical narratives, they would appeal on several issues but "among all the issues a party mentions, it favours the interests of an ethnic category" (Chandra 2011, 160). They create an intersection between the identities of the self and the other and policy objectives and mobilization (see for example, "policy bundling" in Roemer 2009). The international identities of the foreign backers are one of many identities that ethnic leaders use in their speeches.

While it is nearly impossible to measure the support that ethnic leaders enjoy from international actors, that fact does not prevent the detection of such support. Most directly, foreign backers and ethnic leaders discuss the "unique" ties between them, along with the importance of the domestic coalition that supports the backer. Foreign backers announce new aids or supports for the leader or coalition, especially when the latter win elections. The ethnic leader would abstain from criticizing the foreign backer and continue to express support for the latter amidst international competition. For example, Hariri and Nasrallah always heap praise upon their respective foreign backers, Saudi Arabia and Iran, and not once in the corpus of speeches analysed in this research were they critical of them. Wealthy foreign backers also announce

foreign aid and military aid to a divided society when their allies are in power, without necessarily naming those domestic allies. Such manoeuvres signal that support will arrive through the victories of their domestic allies. Finally, foreign backers' speeches and voting in the United Nations discuss the internal affairs of Lebanon's development and seek resolutions that weaken rival foreign backers in Lebanon. Considering that the United Nations is a forum for great powers to discuss their politics (Mearsheimer 1994/1995), the voting on U.N. resolutions reveals the agreements between the Security Council members behind the scenes (see *Elite Pacts in Voeten 2005*) and the international political balances of power through vote-pooling in the General Assembly (Pape 2005; Stedman 2007).

Conclusion

The difficulty in tracking domestic-international relations and their influence on the salience of ethnic identities can be resolved through collecting the speeches of ethnic leaders, rebuilding the historical narrative before and after a critical juncture, in this case Hariri's death in 2005, and comparing the frequency of ethnic appeals on behalf of the party, foreign actors, and allies.

The appearance of foreign actors in the speeches of ethnic leaders, and the reaction of ethnic leaders to both domestic and international commentary on their foreign backers, is a significant part of ethno-politics. If all day-to-day politics carry an unusual weight of ethnic polarization and reconciliation, from simple public sector appointments to approval of governmental policies, then the international dimension, the international inter-state cleavages, becomes part of Lebanon's politics. The influence of international alliances with domestic actors appears evident when the ethnic leaders in the same coalition, discuss their joint foreign backers in the same manner, while targeting the rival parties and their respective foreign backers, again very similarly. Exclusion in this case is not ideological, within the diverse Lebanese communities, but ethnic and based on the position of the ethnic leaders within the rival coalition. Fearmongering, scapegoating, and stereotyping are tools for identity shifts. Lebanon, between 2005 and 2010, offers a unique opportunity to observe ethnic leaders' behaviour, as during this period the foreign backers of different coalitions sought de-escalation together, for the sake of Lebanon as a whole. The question remains if these speeches using ethnic polarization de-escalate when reconciliation processes occur at the international level.

Lebanon, between 2000 and 2005, enjoyed a rather political balance of power, despite Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000 and the U.S.-U.K. invasion of Iraq, landing on Syria and Iran's borders, in 2003. The presence of two blocs during Syria's hegemony over Lebanon and its subsequent withdrawal was accompanied by upheavals in Saudi-Syrian, Western-Syrian, and Arab-Iranian ties. Studying the collected speeches that ethnic leaders made and the historical narratives, that ethnic leaders deployed, allows for a comparison between the periods before and after alliances in Lebanon were made, and, simultaneously, relations between foreign backers reshuffled.

The coded speeches (Chapters Six through Nine) and their quantifications according to appeals to ethnic and non-ethnic identities and the positive and negative discussions of local parties before and after the reshuffling of 2005, offer a unique opportunity to analyse the extent to which foreign influence manifested in Lebanon. Before 2005, Lebanon was under Syrian hegemony, and international-domestic alliances were mostly manufactured in Damascus (El-Husseini 2012). The increase in appeals to ethnic identities during this period signals the intensity of competition in domestic politics. Furthermore, the focus on policies that often concern ethnic leaders, in addition to their identity shifts, provides further evidence for the concerns of the ethnic leaders, their coalition(s), and their foreign backers. The fact that Michel Aoun and Amin Gemayel, and Rafic Hariri and Hassan Nasrallah, shared loose alliances before 2005, and that those alliances changed after 2005, also reveals whether the members in the new coalitions came to share policy objectives in the second period that previously had not existed.

Most of the literature on Lebanon, aside from the work of Geukjian (2017), Hirst (2010), Traboulsi (2008), Najem (2012), Hanf (1994), and Hudson (1968), can be revisited through the lens of this two-level model. Scapegoating, diversionary wars, and stereotyping often appeared in these works; however, the focus on ethnic identities is missing. Chandra's model (2012) enables observers to track the relations of ethnic identities, and, at the same time, grants agency to domestic actors, further highlighting the creativity of ethnic leaders in re-interpreting historical events and historical ties with leaders of other ethnic groups. The addition of speeches on the changes in ethnic appeals, policies, and foreign backers, besides discursively tracking the salience of identities in party platforms, allows for a thorough tracking of the ethnic 'packages' that ethnic leaders deliver to their supporters, and a raising of alerts if ethnic leaders change anything in these packages.

Chapter 5: Methodology

“Lebanon’s political system will remain fractured between two relatively equal blocs, but ones divided along sectarian lines, aligned to different global players, and subscribing to different visions of Lebanon” ~ Tom Najem (Najem 2012, 82)

Introduction

This research applies mixed methods to demonstrate the impacts of international alignments and rivalry on the emergence of new types of identities within divided societies. At the same time, this research investigates the confounding effects of the electoral system on coalition formation and the salience of ethnic identities. Both investigations are carried out using aggregated data from the speeches of Lebanese ethnic leaders. The methods used are Pre-Post quantification of speeches before and after 2005 (see ‘longitudinal comparison’ in Gerring and McDermott 2007, 693-694) and process tracing (George and Bennett 2005; Pierson 2000; Mahoney 2000). These approaches are used together to quantify and analyse the speeches of four ethnic leaders and track changes in appeals to identity, policies, and foreign backers. The first approach involves the quantitative analysis of speeches made by ethnic leaders. Within this approach, the coding of this data focuses on the frequency of appearance of specific indicators that the ethnic leader invoked in public or official statements, including: ethnic identities, non-ethnic identities, description of foes and allies, international actors, and policies of concern. This approach supports the qualitative approach of process tracing, which this research uses to trace the chronology of events from 2000 until 2010 and to apply a discursive comparison to the themes coded in the first approach. Process tracing is used to track how ethnic leaders filter domestic and international developments in their speeches to their communities, revealing how international and domestic circumstances impact events at both levels. In specific, these two-level circumstances trigger a chain of events, usually a spiralling of accusations between ethnic leaders of rival coalitions and will continue to do so till the international circumstances change, triggering a new set of ethnic polarization. The qualitative approach identifies the international balances of power, the polarized identities, and the ideological narratives as a chain of events unfold between the ethnic leaders. The quantitative approach tracks the changes in ethnic appeals as ethnic leaders enter new domestic and international alliances through aggregating and comparing ethnic appeals to the earlier set of speeches.

With the combination of these methods, the research is able to quantify the frequency of ethnic identities appearing in speeches before and after Rafic Hariri's death, treated as a critical juncture that enforced a particular chronology of events in Lebanon, and the Middle East more generally. Rafic Hariri's assassination weakened Syria's grip on Lebanon, and several ethnic leaders swapped positions, sometimes more than once, based on their positioning against or for the Syrian-Iranian alliance. Through thus quantifying the speeches of Lebanon's leaders, this research is capable to track the commitment of ethnic leaders to new domestic and international coalitions. Through discourse analysis, new embedded ethnic appeals manifest through policy-making, along with identity formation and new historical narratives, the coding and quantification of ethnic appeals, the international actors, the domestic actors, and new policy objectives reflects the seriousness of international rivalry between blocs. This seriousness manifests in terms of intensified and increased ethnic appeals from supporters, creating new narratives that depict domestic foes as traitors, and react negatively, if not violently, to events that directly target the ethnic leaders themselves. Each empirical chapter tracks events to which ethnic leaders reacted and used historical narratives when addressing publicly their communities. The tracking of four ethnic parties ultimately presents a unique opportunity to compare their speeches after some of them, reacting to Hariri's death and international pressures, joined separate coalitions, backed by rival international blocs.

This chapter will commence with explaining the observed period of Lebanon from 2000 till 2010, focusing on how Rafic Hariri's death has become a critical juncture that has generated domestic and international imbalances between the Syrian – Iranian axis and their foes. The next section lists the various active ethnic and non-ethnic identities that appear in ethnic leaders' speeches and divulges the mechanics of speeches to create a plethora of identities for the Self, the Other, and the international actors. The chapter introduces indicators for the independent variable, i.e., the position of the ethnic leader from international alignments, and describe how changes in international balances of power between rival blocs influence ethnic leaders' behaviours and narratives. Afterwards, indicators for the outcome are introduced, along with tracking historical narratives, the quantification method applied to measure the need of ethnic leaders to appeal on ethnic appeals, and the method used to track identity shifts. This chapter concludes with sources used to collect the speeches of the ethnic leaders, the obstacles encountered while collecting the speeches, and finally, the solutions to overcome the challenges of data-collection.

Time Period of Analysis

This dissertation takes Lebanon as a case study from the year 2000 until the year 2010. These eleven years are divided into three categories:

Phase	Category	Type of Observation
January 1, 2000 to September 11, 2001	1	Equilibrium at the international-domestic level (since 1990)
September 12, 2001 to February 14, 2005	2	Control (ongoing): Gradual incursion of 9/11 ramifications into the Middle East and Lebanon
February 15, 2005 to December 31, 2010	3	Focus: Instability and new alliances at the international and domestic level

In terms of coding ethnic leaders' speeches, speeches made during Categories 1 and 2 are grouped quantitatively as one, since the domestic alliances that are of particular interest to this research did not change until Hariri's death on February 14, 2005. The split between Categories One and Two was made for the qualitative discursive approach in order to benchmark the ethnic leaders' speeches that contained ethnic appeals and mentioned international actors for Category Two, in aid of the comparison to those made in Category Three. This qualitative approach tracks the gradual manifestation of international upheaval that resulted from the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent American invasion of Iraq in 2003, during which Syria became part of President Bush's "Axis of Evil" (see Bush's full speech in Washington Post 2002). The indicator frequencies quantified for Categories One and Two were then aggregated and compared to the indicator frequencies of Category Three. The sections below further expand the explanation of the quantitative and qualitative approaches for the three categories.

Empirical Justification for the Observed Period (2000-2010)

Although each of the four parties under consideration reacted differently to international and domestic developments and crises, and may have a separate set of categories, these three categories serve as a means to standardize the systematic observations for all four ethnic parties.

Category One (January 1, 2000 to September 9, 2001) reflects the status quo of domestic Lebanese politics between different parties, stemming from the 1990s, and the balances of power and competition at the international level. The 1990s were marked by monolithic events in domestic politics because Syria dominated Lebanon's politics without any challenge to its grip either on the international or on the domestic level (Najem 2012, 55 - 59). The late Syrian President, Hafez Assad (r. 1971-2000), obtained full control over Lebanon with the blessing of the United States, France, and Saudi Arabia (Traboulsi 2008, 245-246), even though Syria was supposed to stay in Lebanon for only two years (Ibid, 245). Syria hijacked Lebanon's foreign policy and repressed any opposition to its reign through rewarding domestic allies with positions within the state (Al-Husseiny 2012; Rabil 2001; Najem 2012, 55-59; 65-66). Syria's primary purpose in retaining control, other than profiteering from Lebanon was to use the Lebanese Hezbollah to pressure Israel to return the Golan Heights, which Syria had lost during the 1967 war (Najem 2012, 52, 59). The situation in Lebanon didn't change much in the between 2000 and the 9/11 events.

Category Two's observations trace the gradual turmoil in the Middle East that resulted from the 9/11 attacks. The Bush administration (2001-2009) took a more aggressive approach internationally, as part of its War on Terror, and several states and non-state actors reacted to this approach. Bush's invasion of Iraq, and his close ties to right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, prompted Syria to maintain its grip over Lebanon (Najem 2012, 70; Hirst 2010, 285, 291, 293, 295, 299). Several Lebanese politicians, primarily the traditional Christian leaders, saw this change in U.S. foreign policy as an opportunity to escalate their criticism of Syria's mandate over Lebanon. Simultaneously, Syria's allies, Christian and Muslim alike, escalated their criticism of the anti-Syrian bloc and pushed the Lebanese security apparatus to further crack down on the opposition (see, for example, Ghattas 2001; Ziade 2001). The final nail in the coffin of Syria's near-undisputed control of Lebanon began when exiled Christian General, Michel Aoun, testified in front of the US Congress, requesting that the Americans include Syria as part of their war on terror and end Syrian tyranny over Lebanon (Boustani 2003). This testimony caused outrage in Lebanon from Syria's allies (Ibid). Subsequently, the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act came into existence, targeting Syria as a terrorist actor due to its involvement in Iraq and Lebanon (Congress 2003). The Act demanded Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon and the disarming of militias, primarily the Iranian-backed Hezbollah (Ibid). Reacting to this international pressure, Syrian President Bashar Assad

(2000-present) forced the Lebanese parliament to extend the term of the current Lebanese President, Emile Lahoud, for another three years, prompting the Sunni-dominated Future Movement and the Druze-based Progressive Socialist Party to shift allegiances. The re-election of Emile Lahoud came one day after the UNSC issued Resolution 1559, which mandated Syria's withdrawal (Hirst 2010, 302). Category Two ends with Future Movement head Rafic Hariri being assassinated, after his Future Movement joined the anti-Syrian forces in what became known as the Bristol Declaration (see Choucair 2005, 1-2).

Category Three continues with the ramifications of Rafic Hariri's assassination, and the formation of two domestic grand coalitions, the 14th of March bloc, which opposed the Syrian-Iranian axis, and the 8th of March bloc, which supported it (Najem 2012, 71-75). The withdrawal of Syria from Lebanon and Assad's international isolation, except from Iran, changed the regional balances of power between Israel and the Arab states, and the anti-Syrian bloc, fully backed by France, Saudi Arabia, the United States, gained political momentum in Lebanon (Ibid, 78). During the period between Hariri's assassination on February 14, 2005 and November 2009, Lebanon entered uncertain times as one crisis after another unfolded, sometimes with multiple crises manifesting at the same time. These crises include the 2006 war between Lebanon and Israel, a mini civil war in 2008, year-and-a-half-long protests, explosions, the War on Terror, and frequent 14th of March bloc figureheads' assassinations (Ibid, 80-81). In parallel, the United States and France cut diplomatic ties with Syria after Hariri's assassination in 2005. These frozen diplomatic ties did not last long. The U.S.'s and France's foreign policies changed after President Barack Obama and President Sarkozy took the helm of their respective states and decided to engage with Syria's Assad (Black 2008; Maher 2010), leaving the 14th of March bloc more vulnerable to the 8th of March bloc and their paramilitary arms. After much effort, in 2009 Syria and Saudi Arabia developed international agreements and calmed the ethnic mobilization in Lebanon (see Muir 2009, Chapter Eight for details).

Category Three marks the beginning of new domestic alliances; the election cycles in 2005 and 2009 acted as a test for the 14th of March and 8th of March coalitions. Category Three is also a phase of intensification between rival regional blocs, primarily between the Saudi monarchy and the Syrian Baathi regime (2005-2009), which deescalated toward the end of the category's time span (2009-2010). Because this decade experienced a shift in alliances among ethnic leaders with domestic and international actors, analysing the 2000-2010 periods provides a unique opportunity to track the international competition between states on three category bases and

by coding events as Pre- or Post-Rafic Hariri's assassination. The change in speeches, appeals, and narratives signals identity shifts occurring in the category both before the formation of the 14th and 8th of March blocs and after. Furthermore, Category Three allows for the observation of changes in ethnic leaders' behaviours as tensions escalated between the foreign backers of both countries, which directly affected the political stability Lebanon had enjoyed for fifteen years under Syria's hegemony (1990-2005). These inter-state tensions forced ethnic leaders to reshuffle alliances in Lebanon, and newly re-conceptualized identities dominated Lebanon's politics at the same time. As a result, the 14th of March bloc and the 8th of March bloc became symbolic representations for the West-Arab Monarchs alliance against the Syrian-Iranian axis (see, for example, Fisk 2008).

Justification for the Leaders' Speeches and Lists of Salient Ethnic Identities

The key source of data by which to measure the influence of the international-local alliances on the salience of domestic ethnic identities is the speeches made by the Lebanese ethnic leaders when they address party supporters and foreign backers during rallies, interviews, party statements, reactions to events, and memorials. Ethnic leaders act as gateways for identity shifts when addressing their supporters and are simultaneously the path by which international cleavages manifest domestically. In Lebanon, ethnic leaders address their supporters, almost daily in some cases, to discuss the developments that take place at both the international and the domestic levels. Within these speeches, ethnic leaders tend to focus firstly on the symbolism and historical events that resonate emotionally with their supporters. They then discuss current events, and sometimes they link these events to the sacrifices made by the party in the past. These attempts seek to equate the party with the community, while hailing allies, if there are any, and criticizing foes. Their speeches encourage supporters of coalitions to identify with a cross-group identity for the sake of collective action among the joint supporters of the coalition's constituent parties. Such overlapping identities may include the national (Lebanese) or supra-national (Arab) identities.

These ethnic leaders also discuss the politics of other states at the international level, often defending their foreign backers and criticizing states that seek to weaken these backers. These rival states gain an ethnic dimension if they also have their own protégés in the country. The coded speeches demonstrate that accusations concentrate on the targeted party's allegiance to Iran and Syria, or to the United States and Israel, rather than to Lebanon. At the same time,

leaders who rely on foreign backing, such as Hezbollah's Nasrallah or Future Movement's Hariri, will avoid criticizing their backers. For instance, neither Rafic Hariri's son and current Future Movement leader, Saad Hariri, or his aunt, MP Bahiya Hariri, has even hinted at negativity toward Riyadh or Paris. The same applies to Hezbollah's Nasrallah; he has never criticized Iran's policies internally or externally, including its repression of the 2009 protestors.

As discussed in Chapter 4, leaders have the commanding heights from which to project onto their followers' cultural and traditional interpretations within their speeches (Wodak 2009, 2-3, 6-7). They can persuade their targeted audience through their participation in politics, and tackle "issues of power, ideology, gatekeeping, legitimacy, and representation" (Ibid, 24). Van Dijk (2006) referred to their position as one of "social domination and its reproduction in everyday practices, including discourse" (362). Such domination occurs through "parliamentary debates, news, opinion, articles, textbooks, and scientific articles, novels, TV shows, advertising, the internet and so on" (Ibid). Through day-to-day politics, leaders can benefit from "a shared domain of interest, a community and practices. Membership implies a commitment to the domain" (Wodak 2009, 14). But in ethnically –charged politics, "subjective transmission of history, memory, and group narratives is often responsible for more than simply passing down information" (Tint 2010, 243). Such transmission includes distortion of events, building specific patterns of historical interpretation, "blaming the enemy or extraneous circumstances, and reframing contextual factors" (Ibid). Given that groups do not mobilize on their own, Brubaker warns that organizations, such as political parties, attempt to mobilize and speak on the behalf of their ethnic groups for personal gain (2002). Lebanon facilitates such interpretations because these large, dominant ethnic parties usually follow one of few ethnic leaders, enabling the tracking of speeches in a more simplistic manner.

The question remains of how to track the instances in which ethnic leaders shift identities in Lebanon. First, the nominal and activated identities as they appeared within the speeches before the observed years must be accounted for. There are a plethora of ethnic and non-ethnic identities to which ethnic leaders appealed or that they re-conceptualized frequently, depending on with whom they held alliances (Chandra and Boulet 2012a; Chandra 2011; 2012) and to which audiences they were appealing at the time. In Lebanon's case, the dominant identities within discourse are primarily sectarian, regional, and clanship; however, non-ethnic identities, such as the Lebanese and Arab, become sectarian when ethnic leaders couple their own ethnic identities with these non-ethnic ones. As Blommaert (2004, 144) argued, background

information and historical accounts “bring forth to the participants with sufficient instructions and background information for preparing their interventions in such a way to fit into the program.” These historical accounts offer “symbolic and other meanings” that provide for supporters present-day interpretations (Ibid, 145). Ethnic leaders, in this context, rely on the past (Maksić 2017); “ethno-nationalists do not draw on some external objective realities but on the socially constituted understandings that pre-exist them” (Ibid, 11). Yet, Maksić adds “more theoretical work needs to be done to understand how agents interact with these pre-existing realities to reproduce or create new levels of ethnic groupness” (Ibid). For this research, it is not sufficient to search the speeches for Chandra’s ethnic categories; it is imperative to compare also the historical interpretations that ethnic leaders provide when they change their alliances as the result of domestic and international developments. Through these speeches, historical narratives, identities, and policies emerge to the selected audience.

The process tracing dimension of the research tracks the historical narratives and ideologies used in the speeches in light of the circumstances and actions that led the ethnic leader to discuss them in the media. Through tracking the sequence of events unfolding in a domino-like manner at the international and domestic levels, Lebanon’s leaders are demonstrated to bring forth different narratives and ideologies in the moments when they are changing coalitions or foreign backers. Blommaert noted that world systems can affect language used in society (Blommaert 2004, 125-126); similarly, but instead of taking the globalized system as a structure, this research treats the prevailing international alliances as a structure that stretches all the way into the domestic arena through the leaders’ commitments (see “elites as transmission belts” in 1996 [1983]; also see “world orders and states” in Cox 1986).

The ethnic leaders’ speeches are quantified into identities of self, identities of other, non-ethnic identities, international actors, and policies. The historical narrative often appears when discussing the identities of the self and the other, as do overlapping non-ethnic identities, given that rival leaders would use them to exclude each other. The discussion of international actors sheds light on the perspectives of ethnic leaders on these international actors, the relations between the two levels, and whether allied parties share similar perspectives, especially if new actors have joined their coalition within Lebanon. In the “policies” section, this research coded and described the types of policies that ethnic leaders discussed frequently as a representation of ideology of the party and coalition, and analysed how such policies and objectives aimed to limit the rival coalition’s political power, along with that of its foreign backers.

Ethnic Identities

Lebanon's ethnic politics is dominated by sectarian polarization. To begin with sectarian identities, Lebanon has two main religions, Christianity and Islam, and each religion has many sects. Below is a list of religions, sects, and sub-sects.

Scope	Religion and Sects and Demographics ⁶				
Religion	Druze (5.2%)	Christianity (33.7%)		Islam (61.1%)	
Sect	N.A	Catholic (25.7%)	Orthodox (8%)	Shiite (30.5%)	Sunni (30.6%)
Sub-Sect	N.A	Roman-Catholic; Maronite (21%); Armenian Catholic; Greek Catholic, Syriac Catholic; Other	Greek Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox; Syriac Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox; Other	Alawite	Salafi, Wahhabi; Other

Ethnic leaders also rely on regional identities, especially during elections. Regional identities cover towns, districts, constituencies, villages, or streets. Based on the constituency in which their candidates are running, ethnic leaders usually appeal to a regional identity that represents all the ethnic members of that region. MP Bahiya Hariri, for instance, always appeals to Saida and the South (since Saida is part of the South, near Hezbollah- and AMAL-dominated constituencies) as identities under which her supporters mobilize. The location of Saida allows

⁶ The Druze (5.2%), even though constitutionally considered part of Islam, consider themselves an independent sect. Overall, the dominant Christian sect is the Maronite (CIA Library 2020; Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour 2012). Lebanese leaders appeal to the sect or/and religion to which they belong.

her to appeal to the history of resistance against Israel in the region while advocating for both the Future Movement and the coalition that opposes Hezbollah's ally, Syria. Similarly, during the 2009 elections the Phalange and the Free Patriotic Movement also relied on the towns' and districts' unique history, along with Christian symbolism, to construct a distinctive identity for voters.

Regionalism in this case can be considered ethnic because it excludes other territories, however much it overlaps across multiple identities. Regional identities also tend to have a specific ethnic attribute, such as an accent, histories and myths, or unique arts; these are physical attributes in the sense that they suggest a probability of membership in a sect, given the ethnography of the region from which individuals originally hail. For example, Lebanon's South takes pride in its resistance to Israel, and during the period considered became the standard for rejecting pro-American appeals; a Shiite Southerner would, in a typical Lebanese context, be lumped together with Hezbollah and AMAL. Regionalism is most salient in elections as politicians resurrect the histories and sacrifices of the town or village in wars and violence, as Nadim Gemayel did for Ashrafieh, the heartland of formerly Christian East Beirut, and his uncle, former President Amin Gemayel, did for Zahlé (see Chapter Six). Historically, the Gemayels faced off with Syria in both regions during the Lebanese Civil War, and the Phalange has several martyrs to remind residents of the party's sacrifices.

Family clanship has become an ethnic identity on its own used to mobilize supporters and sect members for the party. In a sense, the families that politically lead the ethnic communities become symbols of the communities that support them, and their historical sacrifices provide the speakers with legitimacy to rework historical narratives. For example, Saad Hariri and his aunt, Bahiya Hariri, always mentioned Rafic Hariri's martyrdom. Amin Gemayel, his son Sami Gemayel, and his nephew Nadim Gemayel rarely missed an opportunity to list the martyrs and the efforts of the Gemayel clan across the decades and, sometimes, the centuries. Family clanship not only represents allegiance to an individual but also becomes a symbol for the ideological mobilization of supporters, often on an ethnic basis. Family clanship thus becomes an ethnic identity for the leaders of the party, particularly if party leadership stayed within the family. In general, ethnic leaders remind their supporters and voters of their parties' sacrifices through listing martyrs. Family clanship, like regionalism and sectarianism, is also an ethnic identity and part of the "identities of the self" within the codebook.

Non-Ethnic Identities

Non-ethnic identities are the basis for establishing common ground with allies, and a means by which ethnic leaders win the supporters of other parties, including parties that represent other ethnic groups. The Lebanese identity, the home for all ethnic identities, and the Arab identity, a gateway to express solidarity for Arab-related causes within the Middle East, are used in speeches to advocate for international solidarity. However, because Syria and Saudi Arabia stand, on occasion, especially between 2006-2008, on opposite poles, Arab nationalism within Lebanese discourse split into loyalty to Syria and Palestine, or to Saudi Arabia and the Arab Peace Initiative (see Chapters Six through Nine). Both the Lebanese and Arab identities appeared in multiple forms, including:

- The Lebanese identity for Christians based on the Phoenician identity (See Chapter Two): this limited form of an identity stresses the uniqueness of Lebanon when compared to the rest of the Arab states, which are predominately Muslim.
- Arab Lebanon: the narrative of the battle for independence from the French mandate in 1943, which discusses the collaboration of Christian, Muslim, and Druze leaders in their struggle against the French mandate. This interpretation of the struggle enables identification with Arab Palestinians, Arab Syrians, and other Arabs.

Just as Christianity and Islam cross state borders across the world, so do supra-national identities. Supra-national identities are identities with which multiple states identify based on their region, or due to historical interactions, cultural exchange, trade, language, or a common myth of descent, among other possibilities (see Barnett and Adler 1998; Barnett and Gaus III, 1998 Acharya 2005; 1998; Mansfield 2006; Mansfield and Milner 1999; Solingen 2015; Bozan and Waever 2003). The following nominal identities appeared within the speeches of ethnic leaders, but were not necessarily politically activated: Middle Eastern, Western, and Rejectionist. Even though none of these identities held political weight, in terms of reactions between the 8th and 14th of March bloc members, the ethnic leaders re-conceptualized them to further support their narratives and the ideological implications of key salient identities, such as Lebanese, Arab, Muslim, and Christian.

Identifying Ethnic Shifts and Testing Identity Shifts Qualitatively

As Chandra argues, each individual is born into multiple identities (2012); however, each individual can also identify with several identities or be stereotyped with certain identities by others (Sen 2006). As a result, ethnic leaders have a plethora of identities to combine or break apart when appealing for support. The more identities appear to refer to a specific group within a speech, then the more likely the ethnic leaders are to become narrower in the scope of voters that they are addressing. The more attributes ethnic leaders use, the more specific the targeted group becomes. For example, there is a difference between when Hezbollah's Nasrallah speaks to "Shiites of Lebanon" and when he addresses "Arab Muslim Lebanese Shiites from the South." With the first identity, Hezbollah positioned itself as an extension of the Iranian Revolution, and, as such, disregarded the Lebanese, Muslim, and Arab identities. With the second, Hezbollah triggered an identity shift the moment they identified with the rest of the overlapping identities. As a part of this shift, Nasrallah acknowledged the existence and rights of various ethnic groups.

If during a speech an ethnic identity set was broken from or compounded with broader identities, then the ethnic leader triggered an identity shift through re-defining community ties and myths of descent. For example, the Lebanese Forces, Phalange, and the Free Patriotic Movement, all Christian parties, acknowledged Arab identity in 2005 and re-asserted that the Lebanese identity is a sub-category of the former. They abandoned, through this act, both Lebanese identity as the identity for Christians and the Phoenician narrative, which is associated with an exclusive identity reserved solely for Maronite Catholics. A similar process occurred when ethnic leaders targeted their rivals. These ethnic leaders constructed one or more identities for their rivals so that their supporters could identify the rival party and its supporters as a threat.

There is one added feature to identity shifts within the combinational sets to which Chandra refers. Identity shifts include the instances when ethnic leaders mobilize their supporters in support of foreign backers and domestically exclude ethnic parties that oppose the latter. These foreign backers, when they become part of domestic ethnic cleavages, appear in terms of praise of friendship or denunciation of others for treason, further indicating allegiances to ethnic parties and coalitions beyond the interpretation of the sect. As a matter of fact, the sect might indicate, as the case with the majority of Shiites and Sunnis, their affiliation to the ethnic leader and subsequently to the international bloc. For example: When an individual reveals their sect directly or indirectly and appears to be a Shiite, one might assume this individual supports

Hezbollah, AMAL, Syria, and Iran. Since this act excludes leaders of other ethnic communities, it fits into Chandra's qualification of ethnic politics as involving the exclusion of other ethnic identities (2012). The exiled Michel Aoun, of the Free Patriotic Movement, from 1989 until 2005 accused Hezbollah and AMAL of being non-Lebanese and instead being Iranian and Syrian respectively; beginning in 2005, he suddenly acknowledged their Lebanese identity during his speeches, and vast numbers of Christian supporters followed his rhetoric. This action, within months, enabled Aoun and Nasrallah, along with other pro-Syrian parties, to collectively mobilize against the 14th of March bloc who risked, in the former's narratives Lebanon to lose sovereignty for the United States, as Chapters Seven and Nine demonstrate. Similarly, Hassan Nasrallah, on multiple occasions, argued that an authentic Lebanese is a Lebanese who support Syria's President, Bashar al-Assad. Identifying as any other form of Lebanese, in Nasrallah's rhetoric, implies collaboration with the United States and its drive to expand its "empire." In making this equation, he reached out to Shiites and their Christian allies; however, he also accused the non-supporters of allegiance with the "enemies of Lebanon," such as Saudi Arabia, the United States, and either directly or indirectly, Israel. In this process, international actors become part of the ethnic tensions in Lebanon when ethnic party supporters regarded international politics as an extension of Lebanese politics.

In the presence of multiple nominal identities and their sudden activation within ethnic leaders' speeches, and depending on whom historical narratives, new, target or newly politicized identities emerge. Overlapping identities, such as Lebanese, Arab, and, depending on who is speaking, Christian or Muslim, become battlegrounds from which ethnic leaders expel rivals in the eyes of their supporters. Ethnic leaders become creative in constructing histories, find events or themes in those narratives to bring forth the passions of their supporters, and present the illusion that their decisions and alliances are natural steps given the chronology of events that they narrate.

The Actors

This dissertation focuses on four ethnic parties in Lebanon, two of which are Christian and two of which are Muslim. Gemayel's Phalange Party and Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement are Christian parties. Hariri's Future Movement and Nasrallah's Hezbollah are Muslim. Two of these parties did not change their foreign backers, while the other two did; one of these allegiance-switching parties is Christian and the other Muslim. All four political parties qualify as within-

case studies for multiple reasons. Firstly, this research demonstrates how all-sectarian identities are fluid and dependent on the international-domestic interplay within Lebanon. Secondly, the Christian parties, before Rafic Hariri's death, were aligned with the West, and the Muslim parties with the Syrian-Iranian axis; afterward, the alliances reshuffled. Thirdly, each of the four parties joined a broader coalition after Hariri's death, offering a rare opportunity to compare the speeches before and after they reshuffled alliances. The 14th of March bloc and the 8th of March bloc dominated Lebanon's politics for five years, with the Phalange and the Future Movement in the former, and Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement in the latter. The shifts in coalitions and foreign backers offer the extent to which these ethnic leaders synchronize their speeches in regard to coalition-based identities, description of foreign backers and their respective state competitors, and policy objectives. This research has treated Hezbollah and the Phalange as control cases, since neither party switched alliances with international blocs. The Phalange remained with the pro-Western bloc and Hezbollah openly maintained its affiliation with the Syrian-Iranian axis. The remaining two parties became the experimental cases. The Future Movement and the Free Patriotic Movement both changed their positions relative to the international blocs within the Middle East during the observed period. Michel Aoun, who originally supported the American invasion of Iraq, changed his affiliation and became a close ally of the pro-Syrian bloc in Lebanon. Hariri's Future Movement, despite shaky ties with Damascus, initially defended the Syrian presence in Lebanon as a necessity in light of the Arab-Israeli conflict. After his death, the Future Movement fiercely opposed Syria and Iran and called for a halt to their meddling in Lebanese affairs. As a result, the Hariri Clan and the Gemayel Clan became close allies after Rafic Hariri's death, and Michel Aoun and Hassan Nasrallah also joined forces. Each of these new pairs belongs to a multi-ethnic grand coalition.

Controlled Elements

The research controls on-the-ground outreach strategies that ethnic parties use to obtain support, and for party organization and outreach (see Chandra 2005). The scope of this research is the final package of identities and policies that ethnic leaders give their supporters on a day-to-day basis. Since all four parties won in the 2005 and 2009 elections, and their members held positions as ministers in several governments, the party machinery and parties' organizations do not matter within this research. This research takes for granted, as the results of the elections demonstrate, that all four ethnic parties' speeches touching on identities, foreign backers, and policies efficiently reached their respective audiences. This assumption enables

the research to methodologically focus on the speeches of the ethnic leaders in parallel to international developments between the respective backers of the 14th and 8th of March blocs. Neither does this research analyse structural hierarchy, party rigidity or flexibility, or by-laws, among other elements that shape the choices of ethnic leaders. Exceptionally, this research does assess a particular moment in internal party politics of the Phalange, when Syria's Baathi Party imposed a leadership on the party that contradicted its traditional base, from 2000 to 2005, as this case represents an extreme form of international meddling and imposition of domestic allies.

Measuring the Independent Variable: Position of the Ethnic Leader Relative to International Actors

The international-domestic alliances between international states and domestic ethnic leaders define political coalitions in Lebanon, which in turn encourages ethnic leaders to choose identities to justify such alliances. Rival states usually attempt to establish hegemony over a region (Mearsheimer 2001), and states form alliances to safeguard their national security when they perceive threats emerging from stronger foes (Waltz 1979; Morgenthau 1985 [1949]; Walt 1987). Ethnic leaders who share alliances with a foreign backer or an international bloc will ally with each other, and their speeches will reflect such an alliance when they defend these foreign backers against domestic or even international actors. They will highlight the historical ties between the group and the foreign backer, and they will also cheer on and defend the foreign backer's actions in international forums and domestic debates. As long as the international-domestic alliance remains strong, the Lebanese ethnic leader will adjust behaviour domestically if their foreign backers change relations with other states. In the case of Lebanon, Syria and Saudi Arabia opened dialogue for an Arab-Arab understanding, which clearly manifested in the speeches of the ethnic leaders in Lebanon when discussing international events.

The independent variable, position of the ethnic leader from international coalitions requires no quantitative value. Instead, the position of the ethnic leader relative to the international actor or bloc is sufficient, due to its mere presence, to trigger coalition formation and the salience of domestic identities within the speeches of the ethnic leaders. The commitment of the ethnic leader to an international actor or bloc, whether out of opportunism or deep ideological conviction, sustains this international structure all the way down to the supporters. This transmission of an international bloc's ideologies and objectives penetrate a divided society

when ethnic leaders discuss these actors positively or negatively and mobilize supporters for or against them. If two or more international coalitions pool resources and political support to domestic allies, then the rivalry between the domestic coalitions becomes a reflection of international rivalry between blocs. In the case of Lebanon, the presence of 14th and 8th of March blocs, both backed by two rival blocs, polarized the supporters who view international politics as an extension to Lebanese politics. A strike against Syria might polarize the 8th of March bloc to protest in the street; a criticism against Saudi Arabia might bring Hariri's supporters to rally around the Saudi embassy in Lebanon. Variation in the independent variable appears as the international actor changes behaviour and strategies regarding rival states. This variation materializes when changes in balances of power between international actors or blocs take place, as ethnic leaders are either forced to defend these blocs, or simply jump ships, if they are not too deeply entrenched in their commitment to their foreign backers. Speeches of the ethnic leaders often include these international shifts in military capabilities or economic rivalry and target their domestic rivals as part of a greater international problem. All four cases in this research fit this phenomenon. The question remains whether ethnic leaders shift identities as they take on new allies or abandon one or more foreign backer.

Such international shifts in competitive rivalry manifest in several forms. Some situations include intense exchange of accusations between the heads of states; military manoeuvres that seek to weaken each other, and investment in technology to acquire new military capabilities (see Gilpin 1981). Other variations include the breakout of proxy wars in other states, and the breaking of diplomatic ties. These changes at the international level also appear in the speeches of the ethnic leader, and, often, that leader identifies their own domestic rivals as pawns of the rivals of their foreign backers, both depicted as national threats. More evidently, the behaviour of ethnic leader changes toward other international (and also domestic, if existent) actors the moment the foreign backer's attitude toward these other actors becomes more amicable or hostile. For example, Syria and Saudi Arabia attempted were able to overcome their differences in 2009 (Muir 2009), and that behaviour affected Saad Hariri's political discourse in Lebanon dramatically.

The most direct indicators on shifts of balances of powers are vocal declarations of intent and the breaking of diplomatic ties. Countries can simply announce their intentions with respect to potential collisions with rival states, which include wars (Organski and Kugler 1980), the maintenance of military and economic might (Mastundono 2006; Waltz 1979; Gilpin 1981;

Strange 1988), and the winning over of allies to weaken the political and economic influence of the rival (Mearsheimer 2001). Intensification may also include sanctions, and economic coercion of allies to follow suit (Baldwin 1985; Waltz 2000). Some Heads of states that do not have direct alliances or connections to Lebanon but have alliances with states that do, often vote in the United Nations Security Council resolutions, declare their intent to vote in specific manners, and often express their position from where they stand relative to the cleavage that dominates Lebanon's politics (see "behaviour" in Adler and Pouliot 2011). For example, Russia, a decades-long ally of Syria's Assad, did not use its veto against the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, in regard to Hariri's death, even though both President Assad and his Lebanese allies, including President Emile Lahoud, opposed it (see Chapter Eight). Such a move reflects that Russia held that President Assad's weakened grip over Lebanon had no strategic implications for them.

There are other means of signalling shifting strategic objectives toward other countries. Nullification of trade agreements and military support or a push for trade favouritism with other countries signals a shift in a country's intent to either escalate or de-escalate tensions with a rival state. Proxy wars, while they are not often clear at the time, also manifest as a form of policy shift with respect to a rival state. These international-domestic ties become clear when a state supports or arms a revolutionary party in another state, or when two states channel funds and arms into a divided country (Oakes 2011; Grant 2011). These activities signal a state's geo-strategic interest in either weakening rival states in their region or improving relations after a deadlock or crisis.

These new imbalances of international economic and military-based structures that forge the foundation of an international bloc shape the behaviour of ethnic leaders. Some react passionately to these changes, especially if their foreign backers are not in a positive position and fight off politically or militarily the possible encroachment of international/local rivals within the Lebanese sphere, which includes Hassan Nasrallah to Syria – Iran and Hariri to Saudi Arabia, and some jump ship when opportunity presents an opportunity to win politically, such as Michel Aoun abandoning the United States and joining Syria and Iran. Some join an international and domestic blocs that simply oppose a foreign backer (or 'meddler') in Lebanese affairs, this includes the Gemayel Clan and its five decades opposition to Syrian meddling into Lebanese affairs. The impact on the narratives and construction of identities, despite opportunism, introduces a set of re-conceptualized identities, and sometimes ideologies publicly

that become salient in Lebanese politics. The purpose is to match these international shifts in balances of power, and perspectives of relevant foreign backers to speeches of ethnic leaders.

Quantitative Coding and Testing for International-Domestic Alliances, Electoral Systems, and Salience of Identities

As discussed above, ethnic leaders publicly discuss historical event so as to justify present-day contexts of decision-making. These speeches often include the ethnic leader’s appeals to ethnic identities through discussing attributes with which their supporters alone can identify, including the sect, religion, regions, clanship, religious institutions, and martyrs of the party.

<u>Indicator (DV) per Party Leader</u>	<u>Value: 0,1, 2 descriptive</u>
New Historical Narratives	0,1: where 0 means no mention and 1 refers to discussing new interpretations
Elections Phase	0, 1: where 0 refers to no elections and 1 refers to mobilization for forthcoming elections
New Coalitions and Compositions	0, 1: where 0 refers to the ongoing status quo and 1 refers to coalition change, be it on the part of the party itself, or as a result of new parties joining/returning to their coalition
The Speakers Themselves	0, 1: where 0 means no mentioning of the self and 1 refers to the speaker or party whose speech or statement is coded
Ethnic Identity Politics Used for Self (including regional, clanship, sectarian, religious)	0, 1: where 0 refers to no usage of the identity and 1 refers to usage of the identity with reference to self and/or allies
Non-ethnic Identities Used for Self (including national, ideological, supra-national)	0, 1: where 0 refers to no usage of the identity and 1 refers to usage of the identity to self and/or allies
Criticizing or Praising Local Allies	0, 1, 2: where 0 refers to no mention; 1 refers to negatively mentioning the party;

	and 2 refers to praising the party/actor/coalition
Criticizing or Praising Rival Leaders	0, 1, 2: where 0 refers to no mention; 1 refers to negatively mentioning the party; and 2 refers to praising the party/actor/coalition
Identities of Rival Leaders	0, 1, 2: where 0 refers to no mention; 1 refers to negatively mentioning the identity of the rival; and 2 refers to praising the identity of the party/actor/coalition
If 1, list of identities and their type	
Intra-Ethnic Competition Saliency	0,1: where 0 refers to no intra-ethnic competition taking place and 1 refers to the targeting of a rival leader or their identity
International Actors (allies, foes, neutral actors, and international organizations)	0, 1: where 0 refers to no mention of the actor and 1 refers to mentioning the actor
Policies and Objectives	0, 1: where 0 refers to no mention of the policy and 1 refers to mentioning or discussing the policy
Key Word	Descriptive: For all speakers, identities, actors, and policies coded, key words are added to justify the assigned values.

The assigned values reflect the observations of party leaders in different contexts, primarily before and after Rafic Hariri's death in 2005. The coded period covers usage of identities from the year 2000 to 2010, in the three categories identified above. Category One is the benchmark to qualitatively compare historical narratives before foreign backers changed their behaviour as the result of Al-Qaeda's terrorist attacks on the United States. Quantitatively, the coded years, per party, are split into multiple indicators for the causal and dependent variables and into before and after Rafic Hariri's death. The purpose is to observe the frequency of appeals to ethnic identities, policies that reflect the international-domestic coalition line-ups, and perspective of the ethnic leaders on foreign backers of their coalitions and their rivals'.

The frequency of appeals to ethnic identities highlights the efforts that ethnic leaders make to polarize their supporters against their rivals. The more ethnic leaders appeal to identities for support, especially through historical accounts, the more likely these ethnic leaders are to face pressure to mobilize their supporters against their rivals. Given that historical narratives, as they emerge in the speeches made by ethnic leaders, their frequency flags the pressures that their rival coalitions, along with the latter's foreign backers, are employing to force the leaders to appeal to ethnicity for survival. Through their speeches, ethnic leaders can manipulate their followers with narratives that only resonate with them, while filtering out facts and events that might harm their grip on the community (Van Dijk 2006, 366).

The codebooks, for each party, are separated into eleven spreadsheets, each accounting for one of the years from 2000 until 2010. Each speech, within the spreadsheet commences with the following indicators to code: New Historical Narratives, Elections Phase, and New Coalitions. Each speech receives codes when the ethnic leader introduces new historical narratives and enters new coalitions. Furthermore, if ethnic leaders begin to introduce new historical narratives, different from those introduced in 2000 or before, then these speeches are also coded with special emphasis on tracing the circumstances that led to the changes in these speeches, and the events, be they international or domestic, that account for such changes. The Elections Phase, in specific, indicates whether the ethnic leader is under duress from campaigning to win an election. During elections, ethnic leaders are expected to increase their appeals to ethnic identities in order to win. Within this dissertation, ethnic leaders are expected to behave in a similar manner regardless of whether they are engaged in electoral campaigning, since the primary objective of the ethnic leaders is to weaken their rivals to strengthen their international-domestic coalition.

The identities of the self include ethnic identities that are either mentioned directly on the premises of sectarianism, or indirectly, through symbolism rather than direct mention. These identities differ from one ethnic party to another, as in some cases family clanship is salient, and in another regionalism. In parallel, the methodology tracks non-ethnic identities, those that cover large inter-ethnic coalitions. Given the emergence of two grand coalitions after Hariri's death, Lebanon's leaders are also expected to appeal to these non-ethnic identities to mobilize their supporters and the coalition's. In some cases, the non-ethnic identities become ethnic when they are appealed to along with ideologies that exclude ethnic parties of the rival coalition. Ideology is covered through mentions of public policies and national objectives, on the strength

of which Lebanon's ethnic leaders mobilize their supporters towards their rival coalition. This methodology also codes and documents the descriptions of local actors before and after Rafic Hariri's death, particularly whether the ethnic leader discusses these actors in a positive or negative manner. Tracking the same actors' behaviour and speeches for a Pre-Post Hariri's death longitudinal comparison, enables this research to track the change in the positive and negative speeches towards domestic and international actors, especially when discussing the 'other.' In Lebanon, international actors appear frequently in ethnic leaders', as part of a geo-strategic analysis, and should reflect whether the ethnic leader is part of or against a given domestic-international alliance. This stance is most often in defence of allied international actors and criticism of the domestic (or international) foe as the result of causing such defence to emerge in the first place.

There is another section that covers the international dimension within the datasets. The methodology codes for relevant actors who are involved in Lebanon's affairs or hold importance to Lebanon's politics as they appeared in the speeches of the ethnic leaders. The key dominant countries are Syria and Iran, given their direct and open involvement in Lebanon's politics through their allies in the country. Other countries include Saudi Arabia, France, and the United States, who were allies to the Phalange and the Free Patriotic Movement from 2005 to 2010. There are at least seven other countries that this approach targeted whenever mentioned in the leaders' speeches. The non-state actors include the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. The United Nations' resolutions always polarized the country's politics as one bloc accepted them passionately and the other refused them as threats to the country's sovereignty. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, given the vast debt that Lebanon incurred after the Lebanese Civil War ended in 1990; also hold political salience whenever ethnic leaders use them to mobilize their supporters. The foreign backers of the ethnic leaders, whether the backers of their allies or of their foes, receive a higher frequency within the leaders' speeches from 2005 to 2010, given the fact that the United States, France, and Saudi Arabia were at that time trying to weaken Syria's and Iran's grip over Lebanon.

One final indicator provides a test of the power of the electoral system other than the election phase indicator. The "Intra-ethnic Competition" indicator receives a value of 1 in the database whenever an ethnic leader criticizes another leader of the same community. Given that Lebanon has a plethora of ethnic parties, these ethnic leaders should be facing intense intra-ethnic competition, even if two leaders of the same ethnic community are present within two opposing

coalitions. To test the power of the electoral system in the country, this value should receive a higher frequency after Hariri's death because Syria withdrew from the country and can no longer enforce parliamentary lists (see Chapter Eight) for many key players, such as the Future Movement and the Progressive Socialist Party. Empirically, this research expects the opposite, i.e., that intra-ethnic competition will not be high because coalitions are formed not on the need of ethnic leaders for allies to overwhelm in-group rival leaders, but instead on the basis of shared positions relative to international actors or blocs. There will be no need for intra-ethnic competition if all parties of the same in-group community end up sharing the same international allies. Hezbollah and AMAL are a classic example of this phenomenon, since they both have support from Syria and Iran.

Evidence through Mixed Methods

Through applying process tracing, this research constructs first a narrative of specific sequential events, crises, and riots that escalate and de-escalate relations between the ethnic leaders of Lebanon. By keeping the analysed events the same for all four ethnic parties, this research systematically codes the themes that appear in the speeches of the ethnic leaders and tracks for divergence in regard to coalitions and foreign backers, be they allies or foes. These themes, which include ethnic identities taken on by the ethnic leader or assigned to allies, foes, and international actors, are coded as in the above table, with values assigned for positive and negative portrayals of these themes. The codification process also assigns a specific value to a given theme if the ethnic leader giving the speech is changing coalitions or is campaigning in an election. The elections especially in 2005 and 2009 were rather intense and, as they were free from Syria's hegemonic influence on almost pre-determined results, unlike the 2000 elections.

These topics are also compared in terms of their frequency from 2000 to 2005, and 2005 to 2010, to stress how the competition between ethnic leaders' foreign backers reflected as pressure on these domestic actors to appeal to ethnic identities and mobilize in support of these alliances. This process takes place in parallel to the international and domestic contexts that influence ethnic leaders' choices of historical narratives, ideologies, and support for their respective foreign backers. The influence of the foreign backers becomes clearer if the ethnic leaders of the same coalition share the same re-conceptualized overlapping identities, ideologies, and defence of their respective foreign backers. The same behaviour applies to these ethnic leaders of the same coalition when they criticize their domestic rivals and the

latter's foreign backers in the same manner, often translating into policy objectives articulated by parties when polarizing their supporters.

Each coded indicator within the dataset receives a descriptive justification for the value through re-writing key words or whole paragraphs from the speeches or interviews that the ethnic leaders mention publicly. This descriptive aspect empowers this research to construct the events chronologically from the words of the ethnic leaders to the public. The appearance of enemy foreign backers and identities, among other themes, highlights what concerns the ethnic leaders regard as vital to discuss with their followers, and how they use historical accounts and ideologies to mobilise supporters against their rivals. If a domestic or an international event does not appear in the speeches of these ethnic leaders, then the event holds no significance whatsoever in the politics of the ethnic leader.

Each empirical chapter concludes by comparing the quantified frequencies of coded indicators and the qualitative narratives discussed for each coded item. This process also includes a Pre-Post comparison, with Rafic Hariri's assassination in 2005 as the focal point of separation between the two time periods. The reshuffling of domestic coalitions, in correspondence to the alignments of international actors, results in convergence between members of the same coalition on international and domestic issues. This convergence, which includes shifts in public policy, foreign policy, and several domestic policies, demonstrates the influence of international backers on their domestic allies after the 2005 emergence of two grand coalitions.

The concluding section also explains the spike or decline in appeals to ethnic identities during the observed period, and the final product of these appeals as of December 31, 2010, i.e., the final day of coded observations. Finally, the concluding section of each chapter presents the results of the hypotheses (discussed in Chapter One) that address identities and coalitions and assesses whether it is international alliances that shape these identities, or the electoral system.

Sources:

For the pre-2000 period, there is a discrepancy between the information available on each party. In some cases, I relied on available televised interviews with the ethnic leaders, books the actors or their foreign backers authored, and the Factiva archives. In the Factiva archives, I relied mostly on the English-language local newspaper, The Daily Star, along with the BBC.

After 2005, a plethora of sources exist in English, as do records of all the relevant speeches in Arabic. For the 14th of March leaders, I acquired data from the Future Movement's newspaper, Future Newspaper (*Jareedat al-Moustaqbal*). This newspaper published the full speeches of the leaders of the 14th of March, as well as interviews.

For the 8th of March, information is also available on Future Newspaper's official website, including Hassan Nasrallah's complete speeches and the archiving of all news. Due to the international standing of Hezbollah as either a terrorist organization or part of the Arab-Israeli conflict, all the speeches of its heads are available on the BBC Monitoring Services on Factiva, both transcribed and translated. Often, Hezbollah's official Manar TV and its website moqawama.org ("resistance" in Arabic) almost instantly released transcriptions of the speeches made by its heads, Hassan Nasrallah and his deputy Na'em Qassem. Future Newspaper sometimes covered Hezbollah's statements; I relied on them for speeches that are not available via Factiva. I cross-referenced the above sources with the full archive on the Future Newspaper website to fully code the ideas of each speech. Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement also archived its leader's speeches; as they are not available on the party's official website, tayyar.org, I relied on Factiva to collect his speeches. Given Future Newspaper's bias against Michel Aoun, I preferred to preserve the consistency of the data accessed through Factiva.

I use other sources as well, especially for speeches made during the May Riots of 2008. The Syrian Social Nationalist Party burned down the main building housing the Future TV channel's offices, and with it, the Future Newspaper offices. There was a media blackout from May 8 until May 21, when Future TV was able to broadcast again from one of its secondary buildings and Future Newspaper returned to circulation. These other sources include the Associated Press, BBC, CNN, Agence France Presse, Al-Jazeera English and Arabic, and Al-Hayat.

Other Challenges for Data Collection

The Syrian hegemony over the country posed multiple challenges. Firstly, after Hariri was assassinated and the Syrian-controlled Lebanese police state disintegrated, the media and anti-Syrian politicians were free to criticize the pro-Syrian bloc, Syria, and Iran, and to praise the United States and its allies. The number of speeches per party proliferated as a result of this new freedom and absence of censorship on the media. The Syrian Mandate era also imposed a ban on the local Lebanese media with respect to issues that contradicted Syrian interests within

the country. Michel Aoun, and to a lesser extent Amin Gemayel, underwent media censorship, with Aoun almost completely avoiding interviews with local newspapers and television shows.

Rafic Hariri's support for Syria in his speeches in Category One poses another challenge. While his movement, Future Movement, later reframed his speeches as bringing sovereignty to Lebanon through his suggested reforms and economic policies, Hariri clearly defended the Syrian Forces' presence and policies in Lebanon for at least four years. It is unclear to what extent Hariri was coerced to appease the Syrian regime, and to what extent he actually meant what he stated. This research bypasses this problem through focusing on the final package delivered to the audience, which includes the identities used, the regional actors listed, the foes criticized, and the policies and objectives targeted. Through focusing on this final package, the actual intent is no longer relevant for Rafic Hariri's reign in the first half, but it does limit the accuracy of New Historical Narratives when Saad Hariri discusses how his movement has always opposed tyranny over the country. Future Movement speeches in Category Three involve a high level of re-writing narratives to accommodate Rafic Hariri's speeches in Category One.

The Phalange Party was literally split into two parties between the beginning of Category One and the end of Category Two. Syria imposed local allies on the party's institution, and the actual leaders of the party, the Gemayel clan, were expelled. They were forced to form a parallel movement to the Phalange party while the latter took the opposite position to that of the Gemayels with respect to Syria, Arab nationalism, Christian identities, relations to the United States, and Israel. It was impossible to code the party from 2000 to 2005, as a result, due to media censorship on the opposition, and also the lack of availability of speeches made by Amin Gemayel or his son, Pierre Gemayel, Jr. I focused on the narrative and coded for the Gemayel clan solely in the second phase, after the Party reunited under the leadership of Amin Gemayel. The Phalange is the only party that has been analysed using a qualitative Pre-Post comparison; however, the second phase has full quantifications, allowing comparisons with their allies, Hariri's Future Movement, and their rivals, Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement.

Finally, Hezbollah poses a different challenge than the other parties. Western media in general focused on Nasrallah's speeches against Israel, and his calls for *jihad*. These sources thus excluded most of the content of his speeches, especially when he spoke of reform and of eliminating the sectarian system in Lebanon. Simultaneously, my primary source of information

for Category Three speeches, Future Newspaper, was at odds with Hezbollah during this period and thus did not always fully document Nasrallah's speeches. To overcome this double problem, I relied on the BBC Monitor, which published transcriptions of Nasrallah's speeches as broadcast on Hezbollah's television station, Al-Manar, and on the now-defunct leftist newspaper Al-Safeer, which occasionally also published transcriptions.

Conclusion: Toward a New Model

This research tests for two causal variables that directly influence ethnic coalition formation, and subsequently, the leaders' choices of ethnic identities when addressing their constituents. Within ethnically divided societies, the electoral system forces ethnic leaders of the same group identity to compete against each other in terms of ethnic outbidding; however, the Lebanese system in specific also encourages these ethnic leaders to form inter-ethnic coalitions while competing against in-group leaders. The broader the coalition size, the broader the identities to which ethnic leaders appeal for support to ensure electoral victory. In general, systems-based theory stresses that coalitions need to be small to access state resources with maximum gain (Van der Veen and Laitin 2012). The theory's approach assumes that ethnic leaders will invoke ethnic identities and historical events mostly during elections. This systematic theory (see Van der Veen and Laitin 2012; Horowitz 2008 [1986]) accounts for one causal variable on the salience of ethnic identities.

The primary argument that this dissertation seeks to demonstrate is that ethnic leaders' positions relative to international actors encourage them to form domestic coalitions, irrespective of their minimum size coalition or electoral systems. Ethnic leaders, despite a bloody past against each other, forge alliances to ensure electoral victory and acquire the ability to mobilize supporters against rival parties and coalitions jointly. They can justify this process in daily discourse by re-conceptualizing salient identities and using them to introduce ideologies. They also use ethnic identities to target the rival parties and coalitions and exclude them from their ethnic and national identities.

Mixed methods approaches are applied to track and separate these confounding variables on the salience of identities. By choosing four ethnic parties, each pair shared a common backer; the methodology can apply longitudinal comparisons between Categories One and Two and Category Three. In the first phase, the two Christian parties (the Phalange; the Free Patriotic

Movement) shared foreign backers against Syria's hegemony, while the two Muslim parties (Hezbollah; the Future Movement) shared Syria a common backer, among others. After Rafic Hariri's death, the Future Movement joined the anti-Syrian bloc, and the Free Patriotic Movement, almost a half year later, joined Syria's allies. Qualitatively, the research tracks the changes in historical narratives that each party's ethnic leaders used before Hariri's death in 2005 and how they changed. Treating ethnic identities as social constructs (Chandra 2012) and relying on discourse analysis as a powerful tool to change societies' identities, this methodology focused on the leaders' public speeches, statements, and interviews and coded quantitatively for the leaders' descriptions of the self, the other, and foreign backers. Considering that historical accounts and ethnic appeals present a set of instructions for audiences to follow (Blommaert 2004, 144-145), ethnic leaders link past interpretations and symbols to advance policies that resonate with their interests. Domestically, Ethnic parties introduce another set of instructions, public policy objectives that gives primacy for their targeted audiences' interests (Chandra 2011, 160) or indirectly (Ibid, 162), for example camouflaged appeals on non-ethnic bases, but resonates clearly as ethnic for their supporters. The collection of policies, as they appear next to polarizing themes for identities, become part of foreign policy. Some of these policies, including foreign alignment, resonate externally in countries like Lebanon when they view international politics as an extension to domestic politics (ex. see Marinov and Corstange 2012). In these speeches, these leaders weaken their rivals and their foreign backers through preaching a specific set of policies. The quantitative approach quantifies the frequencies of the identities to which ethnic leaders appeal as events unfold at the domestic and international levels. Through aggregating the frequencies of these appeals, high frequencies demonstrate the need for ethnic leaders, under pressure, to maintain pressure since they "seek to evoke them, summon them, call them into being" (Brubaker 2002, 166).

This research also introduces a series of quantitative indicators that target international actors' invocation frequencies and a descriptive follow-up indicating how the ethnic leaders describe their foreign backers and the latter's international rivals. This approach compares the frequencies of public policies that the allies use on domestic and international relations and anticipates that ethnic leaders, within the same coalition, share a minimum base of policies and objectives when addressing the public. The qualitative approach further asks whether there are instances in which the Lebanese leaders criticize their foreign backers and domestic allies. For the latter, the quantitative approach also identifies whether the ethnic leaders criticize them when sharing a coalition or after they abandon the coalition. In this sense, the research treats

the international-domestic alliances, as a constraint on what ethnic leaders cannot criticize: the foreign backers and their domestic allies. The same applies when discussing the foreign backers' rivals at the international level: ethnic leaders are not expected to praise or hold positive ties with the rivals of their foreign backers, primarily if the former support their domestic rivals. These ties are most evident when the backers of each coalition in Lebanon clash militarily or politically in the international arena, revealing tensions manifesting in the country itself. The sudden increase in frequency of foreign backers' mention in the speeches of Lebanon's ethnic leaders is further evidence of the international-domestic interplay. Lebanon's multiple domestic crises between 2005 and 2008 were taking place in parallel to French-American-Saudi efforts to weaken the Syrian-Iranian hold on Lebanon. This spike in tensions, coupled with the emergence of two new grand coalitions, is reflected in synchronized frequencies of identity appeals and mentions particular policy objectives. Members of each coalition, qualitatively, are expected to share a standard narrative to justify their alliance against domestic or domestic-international foes.

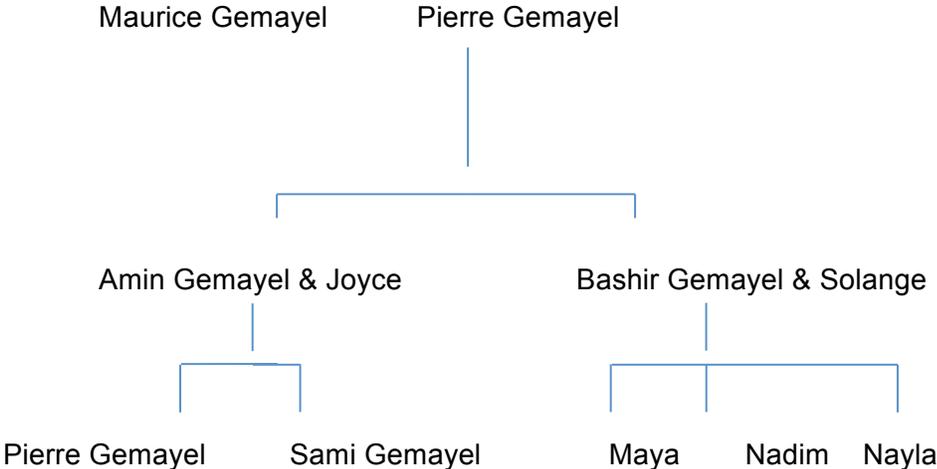
Chapter 6: The Phalange and the Gemayels

In response to his party’s historical alliance with Israel: *“No one would make us feel ashamed for defending ourselves when the knife was put at our throats [...] When the Syrian army and Palestinian [gunmen] were at one side and the [Christian] resistance on the other and massacres were committed in Christian villages, no one blamed us for taking arms from the devil to defend ourselves [...] This ended in 1990 with the end of the Lebanese [civil] war”* - Sami Gemayel (Naharnet Newsdesk 2010)

“Bashir [Gemayel], when he was not murdering people, was a likable man. He had great boyish charm” - Robert Dillon, US Ambassador to Lebanon, 1982 (as cited in Boykin 2000, 74)

“This house I live in was constructed in 1540 exclusively for the Gemayel family. It is a manifestation of our roots and presentation of our rich heritage [...] My great-uncle Antoine Gemayel accompanied Patriarch Huwayek to the Peace Conference in Paris in 1919 as a political representative of the Maronite community. My father’s history runs parallel with that of Lebanon from 1936 until his passing in 1984, both my brother and I were presidents of Lebanon, and my son Pierre today is a deputy in parliament. We are the true representatives of this country” - Amin Gemayel (Washington Report on Middle East Affairs 2001).

Gemayel Family Tree (20th-21st Century)



Introduction

The Phalange was traditionally an anti-Syrian party that had been fighting Syria since 1977. After President Amin Gemayel's term ended in 1988, he travelled to France and briefly to the United States. He visited Lebanon in 1992 but fled back to France out of fear of prosecution due to earlier engagements with Israel (AP 2000). This move left the Phalange party without a Gemayel to lead it, unprecedented in the party's history since its inception in 1937. Throughout the 1990s, the remaining Phalange leadership moved closer to the pro-Syrian camp, realizing that the only means of political survival was playing by the rules of the game that Syria set in Lebanon. The year 2000 marked the return of the Gemayels into the political arena. Amin Gemayel returned from his self-imposed exile in France after he announced from Paris that he was willing to cooperate with Syrian president Bashar Assad (Moubayed 2002). His son, Pierre Gemayel Jr., entered the 2000 parliamentary elections in the Metn constituency, running against a pro-Syrian coalition that included the Phalange head, Mounir Hajj. Pierre Gemayel Jr. defeated Mounir Hajj, but the Phalange, as an establishment, announced the Party's alliance to Syria. In dubious internal elections in 2001, Phalange veteran Karim Pakradouni took the helm of the party (Daily Star 2001a; Darrous 2002). Pakradouni announced that the Phalange would no longer represent the Christian parties. Instead, the party would offer its support to Syria and to the Arab cause (Daily Star 2001b). Amin Gemayel, along with his vast network of supporters, was expelled, splitting the party into two, the Phalange and the Phalange-Base; the latter led by Amin Gemayel (Ghattas 2002). The divisions between factions of the Phalange represent the highest form of intervention by Syria into the party's internal affairs. The Pakradouni-Assad alliance, which rewarded the Phalange leader with a post in Rafic Hariri's final government (2004), attempted to repress the Gemayels and to depict their followers as a minority. Pakradouni became part of the pro-Syrian coalition, and forged unlikely alliances with the Syrian Social Nationalist Party,⁷ Hezbollah, and the Lebanese Baath Party. The Gemayels, meanwhile, maintained their relations with the American administration, and joined the anti-Syrian coalition of Qornet Shahwan Gathering.

After laying out the identities within the Phalange repertoire, and taking the interplay of international-local alliances to be a causal factor in the salience of identities as they emerged from the mouths of Phalange leaders to the public, this chapter first traces the activities of both Phalange leaders, Karim Pakradouni and Amin Gemayel. The focus is primarily on their

⁷ The SSNP took credit for assassinating Bashir Gemayel in 1982 (Reuters 2017)

speeches, amidst both pro- and anti-Syrian alliances, and their interpretations of historical events. After Rafic Hariri's assassination, the two branches of the Phalange united under Amin Gemayel's leadership, and it became one of the foundational members of the 14th of March bloc, which received support from the United States, France, and the oil-rich Arab monarchs. The chapter then traces the impacts of this new alliance, the shared identities Phalange leaders devised to vote-pool with former foes, the new historical narratives used to baptize these new allies, and the policy objectives of the party in the post-Syria era.

The Phalange, the Gemayels, and the Plethora of Identities in their Repertoire

The Phalange had a vast repertoire of dormant and active identities to which they could appeal, depending on the circumstances. These identities begin with clanship, related to the symbolism for their supporters of the presence of the Gemayel family whenever their family name appeared in the public, often invoked by a Phalangist official or the Gemayel themselves. The Gemayels also appealed to Christian and Maronite identities, given that the Gemayels were Maronite Catholics. Several sectarian symbolisms or identities appeared within the speeches of the Gemayel clan, especially when they were visiting the Maronite Church headquarters, Bkirki, and when they were campaigning during elections. Given the rich history of the Gemayel family and the Phalange, the Gemayels also appealed to regional identities, often those of Christian-majority districts, neighbourhoods, and towns where the Phalange, or the Lebanese Forces during Bashir Gemayel's leadership of the latter, had fought during the Lebanese Civil Wars of 1958 and 1975-1990. Historical accounts of the sacrifices made by Phalange militants often resonated with and provided legitimacy for present-day claims whenever a Gemayel reacted to a domestic or international development. Among the other avenues to which they appeal for support are the Lebanese identity, often independent from Arab nationalism; their Western affiliations; and, after 2005, Arabism, following the 14th of March bloc.

The party had, from its inception, been a party that represented Christians, despite several efforts to pull the party from that large ethnic Christian ghetto over the course of its history. There were so many Maronite Christians that "there was a Muslim hesitation to join [the party]" (Pakradouni in NBN 2002 20:58-21:12). In response to the Phalange's inability to recruit Muslims into its rank-and-file, Pierre Gemayel Sr. decided to keep the party Christian but to focus on national issues that concerned all of Lebanon's sects (Ibid). The Phalange's main slogan was "Lebanon First," which was a strong echo of slogans used during the protests for

independence in 1943 but was nevertheless often conflated with “Maronite Christians First” (Hudson 1968, 142).

Pierre Gemayel’s significant organizational skills were influenced by the discipline in youth organizations such as the scouts (NBN 15:32; 15:02), or even by the structure of Nazi Germany when he was in Berlin for the Olympics (Hirst 91, 2010). The party increased in membership from 600 in 1936 to 40,000 members in 1949 (Hudson 1968,143). It presented itself as a modern, Euro-style democratic party, but also combined sectarian interests and clanish nobility, especially during riots. For example, during the Counter-Revolution of 1958, Phalange members openly used sectarian slurs that confirmed the accusation that it was a party for Christians only (Hudson 1968, 143). This rigid party hierarchy, coupled with national and sectarian slogans, enabled the Phalange to be among the most significant Christian parties both before and during the Lebanese Civil War on a national scale.

While the Phalange’s roots went back to the 1930s, the Gemayel clan’s political legacy traced back to the sixteenth century, which offered Phalange members centuries of history to bolster claims of representing their constituents in the face of rival Christian parties. Amin Gemayel’s first identity articulated through his public speeches thus centered on clanishness. He was a member of the Gemayels, a prominent Christian family that had played a part in several historical events (NBN 2002); Amin’s great uncle, for example, had been among the delegates that accompanied the Maronite Cardinal, Al-Huwayek, to finalize the arrangements for the French arrival in Lebanon during the Versailles negotiations (1918-1919) (Amin Gemayel as cited in Moubayed 2001). The Gemayels preserved the semi-feudal title “Shaikh,” a sign of respect within the Lebanese community, usually marking descent from some noble feudal family from the Ottoman era (Hottinger 1961, 137). The legacy of the Gemayels, throughout the centuries, enabled them to challenge any rival Christian party when citing their sacrifices to their communities, often equating the name “Gemayel” with the Phalange’s visions for Lebanon and the ideological orientations of the Christian communities.

Due to their history, the Gemayels considered themselves the legitimate representatives of Lebanese Christians due to the sheer number of Gemayels in the state apparatus across the decades. Both Amin and his brother Bashir had held the highest position a Christian Maronite could hold, the Lebanese Presidency (1982-1988). His father and assassinated son, Pierre Jr., were ministers as well (Hottinger 1961, 137), and his uncle Maurice; his father; both his children, Sami and Pierre; his late brother’s son, Nadim; and his sister-in-law, Solange, were

members of parliament at various points. It was Pierre Gemayel, Sr. who had pushed the Phalange militants to fight side by side with President Chamoun's forces during the 1958 crisis, with the intention of halting Jamal Abdul Nasser's plan for greater Pan-Arab state in which plan Lebanon's Christians would have become a minority in a majority-based Muslim world, in the name of Lebanese sovereignty (Najem 2012, 23; Hirst 2010, 69-71). The Gemayels' heroism was not limited to Pierre Sr. Bashir Gemayel withstood one hundred days of Syrian bombardment in East Beirut in 1978 (Hanf 1993, 237-240), and later faced off with the Syrians in Zahlé, the largest Christian city in Lebanon, in 1981 (Boykin 2000, 44-47). The security apparatus beat Nadim Gemayel and Sami Gemayel when they were protesting Syrian military presence in the early 2000s with the rhetoric of Lebanon First. All these sacrifices contributed to bringing forth support through invoking the family clanship and thereby igniting passion for the Gemayels' interpretations of history.

Among the long list of Gemayels, perhaps Bashir Gemayel came the closest to achieving the status of sainthood among Phalange supporters. The boyish martyr gained unprecedented popularity and passionate adoration from right-wing Christians after eliminating rivals for ethnic dominance, and his assassination was interpreted as martyrdom for the sake of Lebanon's 10452KM², the square area of Lebanon without any occupying foreign forces (Hirst 2010, 121-122). Every year, on the anniversary of Bashir Gemayel's assassination, a national-scale mass was usually held to honor his martyrdom in Beirut's Maronite Church, making use of heavy Phalange and Christian symbolism. For example, Bishop Matar, in 2007, compared the death of Bashir Gemayel to that of Jesus Christ, calling his martyrdom on the Day of the Cross a "victory of the strength of love over the hateful, and good over evil, and truth over vagueness, and prayers for resurrection against the helplessness of extinction" (Matar as cited in FN 2007). Matar's speech came amidst intense competition between the Phalange and the Free Patriotic Movement, a reminder for the pro-Syrian Christians that they had abandoned their traditional ideals, for which Bashir Gemayel had paid with his life.

Christianity was one of the broader ethnic identities claimed by the Phalange. The Gemayel family members were Catholics, a broader sect of which the Maronites are a sub-sect. Because of their Catholicism, they frequently visited the Vatican or met the Holy See's ambassadors in Lebanon (e.g., FN 2010c; 2010d, 2008b), and the Gemayels also cited the Pope frequently, particularly in reference to the Pope's depiction of Lebanon as a Message of Peace to the world (e.g. FN 2009b; 2010d). Amin used this depiction to criticize Hezbollah, the pro-Syrian allies, and the Maronite Catholic leadership within the pro-Syrian camp. The purpose of Amin

Gemayel's citation of the Pope was two-fold: to depict the Phalange and their allies, the 14th of March, as following the Pope's objectives for Lebanon, and to depict the Christians of the 8th of March as not Christian enough.

The Gemayels often stated that Christianity and Western-style democracy went hand in hand (FN 2009c), noting that their rivals in the 8th of March bloc had abandoned these ideals through their alliances with dictatorships, such as the Assad regime. In the Phalange narrative, their martyrs had died for the "Free Christians" of Lebanon and its sovereignty. It was through this rhetoric, that the Christians of the Middle East were the builders of democracies, that the Phalange expressed solidarity with Christian minorities in Iraq, Egypt, and Jerusalem. Such statements provided the Phalange with further claims for legitimacy as the defenders of Christian communities across the Arab world, in contrast to their rivals, Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement, who was not. It was also important to note that President Mubarak was a close ally of the 14th of March bloc, whose military regime the Phalange therefore overlooked when discussing the situation of the Copts in Egypt. Between 2007 and 2010, the Christians of the Middle East appeared 27 times in the Gemayels' speeches, usually following a terrorist attack in these locations. Amin Gemayel's Phalange had also been active in the European Christian Democrats' International (Future News 2008c), and the Phalange chief said that the goals of the Christian Democrats of Europe were the same as the Phalange's (Ibid). Christianity appeared 295 times (42.94% of 687 speeches), clearly indicating the rivalry with Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement, as the latter sought to claim sole representation of Lebanon's Christians in alliance with the pro-Syrian backers.

The Gemayels had close ties with the Maronite Church and other Christian institutions. They visited Bkirki, the headquarters of the Maronite Church, frequently, and defended Cardinal Sfair whenever the latter was criticized. The term "Maronite" appeared 116 times in the coded speeches, and "the Maronite Church" 112 times (15.72%). While these terms were not as common as "Christianity" in terms of frequency, the percentage was still high enough for them to battle Michel Aoun, who was also a Maronite, over the ideological interpretations of the Maronites' historical accounts. To legitimate themselves as the true representatives of Maronite Christians when seeking support, the Phalange leadership continuously sought Cardinal Sfair's blessings for and guidance in crucial decision-making (see FN 2007a; 2009d; 2010f). More importantly, they gave credit to Bkirki in general, and the cardinal in specific, for the presence of free Christians in Lebanon, and for the spark in 2000 that triggered the Cedar Revolution of 2005 (see Refei 2005, FN 2007a; 2007b; 2008d; 2009e; 2009f; 2009g).

Lebanese nationalism was the counter-balance of Arab nationalism, or any other form of pan-nationalism that risked reducing the Christians of Lebanon to a minority (Hanf 1993, 139). From the Phalange came the Lebanese identity that remains the golden mean between Western Phoenicianism and Arab Nationalism. Lebanese nationalism often targeted Palestinian militias that dragged Lebanon into confrontations with Israel. Usually, Lebanon First manifested also in defiance of Syria's hegemony over Lebanon. After Rafic Hariri's death, his son, Saad Hariri, and the Future Movement moved closer to the Phalange perspective on Lebanese Nationalism vis-à-vis Syria and Arab nationalism and named his parliamentary list "Lebanon First." This event marked for the first time a Lebanese Sunni leader raising such a slogan, instead of one of Arab unity. According to Amin Gemayel, it was his father, Pierre, who had first raised this slogan while protesting the French Mandate (see Amin Gemayel in FN 2010g).

The Phalange had mixed reactions to Arab nationalism. Amin Gemayel always referred to himself as a Lebanese first and Arab second. His father and brother, on the other hand, viewed Arab nationalism as a threat to Lebanon's sovereignty. The Christian elites often accused their Muslim counterparts of having a double allegiance, one to Lebanon and another to the Arab cause (Hanf 1993, 133). The Arab cause and its inclusion of the Palestinians became a bridge for other communities to express solidarity and mobilization separate from Lebanese nationalism. Lebanon First, and Lebanese nationalism, were more sacred than any other topic to the Phalange, to the extent that they were willing to clash with the Maronite Church during the 1958 Civil War when the religious establishment exonerated Egypt's Jamal Abdul Nasser of any meddling within the crisis (Baroudi 2006, 23). This nationalism continued to remain a primary headline and a counter-balance to Arab nationalism for the Phalange until the 14th of March came into existence. Often, neutrality as a foreign policy was demanded with Lebanese nationalism, with the aim of keeping Lebanon out of the Arab-Israeli conflict, a demand that has continued to be re-iterated into the present due to Hezbollah's wars or readiness for war with Israel, breaking Lebanon's neutrality, and subverting Lebanon's capability to manage its foreign affairs.

Phoenicianism was another identity to which the Phalange occasionally resorted, but not as frequently as Bashir Gemayel had during the Civil War. Bashir Gemayel's appeals to Phoenicianism involved claiming that the Christian community's presence in Lebanon dated back thousands of years (Gemayel 1978). Several followers accepted that rhetoric through renouncing Arab Nationalism or directly criticizing Islam and the latter's intolerance for the Maronites or Christians (e.g. Hagopian 1984, 324-326). The myth of Phoenician descent often

described the Christians as non-Arabs and descendants of a civilization that predated the Islamic conquests, rendering them the true natives of the land. Indeed, the myth of Lebanon as a homeland for Christians required, according to an associate close to Amin Gemayel in the 1980s, “the acceptance of the non-Christians the finality of Lebanon as a homeland for the Christians while the non-Christians enjoy equal rights” (Hagopian 1984, 327-328). The Phalange distanced itself from the Phoenician rhetoric after the Civil War ended, especially to avert attention from its alliance with Israel in 1980-1983, and to not jeopardize its ties with its non-Christian allies; however, from time to time, the later Phalange continued to trace Lebanese Christians back at least two millennia. The Phoenician identity made a minor comeback in the 2009 elections when, for example, MP Sami Gemayel, Amin’s son, in response to Hezbollah’s accusation of treason, snapped: “We are a two-thousand-year-old resistance for the presence of free Christians” (Sami Gemayel as cited in FN 2010).

Pre-1975 Policies that Reappeared after Hariri’s Assassination

In absence of quantitative data to compare appeals before and after Hariri’s death in 2005, this chapter relies extensively on policies and objectives that the Phalange and Gemayels insisted upon across the decades and identifies how they remained salient after Hariri’s death. The Hariri chapter (Chapter Eight) demonstrates how Saad Hariri and the 14th of March bloc adopted several of these objectives. The party’s policies from the 1950s into the present have remained the same. In the 1960s, for instance, they had opposed the granting of citizenship to Arabs (mostly Muslims) from Syria and Iraq (Hudson 1968, 145); in the period under consideration, the Phalange had an obsession with opposing the granting of any civil rights to Palestinian refugees (also mostly Muslims) in Lebanon. Since the 1950s, the Phalange had also expended considerable effort on keeping Lebanese emigrants “in close touch with the homeland. The *Kataeb [Phalange in Arabic]* helped to organize the emigrants, who were mostly Christian, on behalf of an independent and prosperous Lebanese entity and has always insisted that if a new census is taken, the overseas Lebanese must be counted” (Hudson 1968, 144). Their rationale for such a demand was the belief that the Lebanese diaspora, which outnumbers Lebanon’s residents, were mostly Christians who would probably vote Phalange (Ibid).

The Phalange, past and present, have continued to claim modernity, with a mix of Western-style organization, in terms of democratic and cultural values, and have camouflaged their demands with policies that in part oppose the abolishment of the sectarian system, a direct contradiction to their Western standards of secularization. Even though Pierre Gemayel, Sr. argued that the

party was secular, that Lebanon was “neither Church nor Mosque” (Hudson 1968, 144), the party never succeeded in convincing other Lebanese actors of this assertion. Fearing that they would be at a disadvantage if the Christian quotas from the parliament were replaced with a simple majority democracy, the Phalange camouflaged their fears of being Christians dependent on Muslim votes by stating that Lebanese society needed to be secular first (Ibid, 145). For example, when the Lebanese Left, before the Lebanese Civil War of 1975 erupted, demanded the secularization of the Lebanese state, Pierre Gemayel, Sr. instituted a rule that the Muslims must secularize first (Hanf 1993, 135), while being certain that the Muslim leaders would refuse to do so. In 2010, Sami Gemayel similarly opposed the abolishment of the confessional system, arguing that in a full democracy, the majority’s sect would win (FN 2010b). The Phalange and its offshoots, the Free Patriotic Movement and the Lebanese Forces, all opposed the abolition of the sectarian system in 2010 (see Aoun’s similar rhetoric in Chapter Seven). This mix of sectarianism with the Lebanese identity, until Rafic Hariri’s death in 2005, equated the “Lebanon First” and “Christians First” slogans, and the Phalange could not transcend their image as an ethnic, instead of secular, party (Hudson 1968, 146).

There was one final sacred pillar within the Phalange objectives: the monopolizing of arms in the hands of the Lebanese army and the state’s legitimate relevant institutions. The weakening of the Lebanese army, especially in the 1960s when the PLO began their cross-border operations, demonstrated how a weak army enabled Lebanon’s Palestinian refugees to challenge the state itself. The chaos that followed from a weak Lebanese army also meant that foreign states could arm their domestic allies in Lebanon. The Phalange always stood with the Lebanese army and strong state institutions, especially against the paramilitary organizations. During the confrontations with PLO militants, the Phalange historically supported the Lebanese Army in defending sovereignty, and the latter was viewed as an instrument of control for the Christian elites (Traboulsi 2008 174-175); the Phalange continued to support the Lebanese Army even after the Syrian military withdrawal. In their speeches, the Phalange and the Gemayels in particular referred to the need for the Lebanese Army to monopolize weapons and disarm other actors 220 times, calling the Army the sole wielder of legitimate arms, and calling for Hezbollah to disarm and integrate into the Army.

All the aforementioned policies survived across the decades, maintaining political niches for the Phalange to safeguard their communities’ interests without necessarily polarizing non-Christians, primarily their allies in the 14th of March, such as the Sunnis and the Druze. These examples included traditional Phalange priorities, including the preserving of the electoral

system's confessional quotas, the neutrality policy, diaspora voting, and the strengthening of the Lebanese army. All these policy objectives found a listening ear from their allies in the 14th of March bloc. The Palestinian militias, after 2005, were rhetorically replaced by Hezbollah; Syria's influence as an actor within Lebanese politics had not ceased since the 1960s. The fact that major non-Christian parties in the 14th of March bloc shared the Phalange's hatred for Syria's Baathi regime and Hezbollah made it easier to maintain these goals; however, the Phalange were not accused of being traditionally isolationists, but were instead referred to as patriots (see Chapter Eight).

A Brief History of the Gemayels: Pre-1990

The party announced its foundation in 1936 during the French mandate. There were two political trends supported by the founders of the party. The first trend was a belief in a "Petit Liban," which identified with Emile Eddé's political logic of Phoenicianism and Maronite lineage. The term "small(er) Lebanon" refers to Prince Shehab-era Lebanon, or a territory in which Christians were the majority; the term was a response to the current borders of Lebanon to which France had attached pieces carved out from Syria under the name "Grand Liban" (Salibi 1988, 26-27). The other trend was influenced by Bshara Khoury's Arab Nationalist narrative, which focused on Grand Liban and the acceptance of Christians and Muslims as part of this nascent state. Amid the escalations between the two trends, and the ensuing risk of party collapse, the fast-growing party pushed for the election of a neutral founding member, Pierre Gemayel, into its leadership as a middle ground between the positions, in the same year as its founding (Sharaf 2001, 8:31-9:22; Pakradouni 2001, 9:23-9:40 in National Broadcasting Network 2003). Pierre Gemayel, Sr. remained the leader of the Phalange until he passed away in 1984 (see AP 1984).

For the Phalange, the arrival of Palestinian refugees in 1948, most of them from Galilee, and the official election of Egypt's Nasser as president in 1956, posed a threat to Lebanon's sovereignty. In 1958, the crisis for Pierre Gemayel was not internal, but rather Nasser's orchestrated attempt to absorb Lebanon, which would have rendered Lebanon's Christians a minority. Even though the Phalange sided with President Chamoun during the 1958 Civil War, their true strength came after the war ended. When President Chehab⁸ was elected (1958), the

⁸ President Fouad Chehab (1958-1964) was the first Army head to become a Prime Minister, after President Chamoun resigned during the 1958 crisis, and later to be elected President of the Republic.

opponents of previous President Chamoun, such as Kamal Jumblatt and Saeb Salam, proclaimed victory. The Phalange responded by laying siege to Beirut's entry points and cutting it off from the rest of Lebanon, demonstrating unmatched organization in paramilitary deployment and bulldozing their way into obtaining a ministry position within Karami's cabinet (Hottinger 1961, 137-138). Similarly, Pierre Gemayel mobilized his extensive and highly structured party as a militia to face off with the Palestinian militia as the latter eroded the state's control over its territory in 1975.

The Phalange hated Arab nationalism from its outset and preferred not to involve Lebanon in the full liberation of Palestine. Diplomatically, Pierre Gemayel set rules for endorsing Arab nationalism and the Palestinian cause: "We are the Arabs, if they are unified, neutral, if they disagreed" (Pakradouni, 45:02-45:01 in National Broadcasting Network 2003), indicating a belief that the Arab states would never be united. The rationale was to avoid dragging Lebanon into a confrontation with Israel and, furthermore, to avoid rising tensions in the Arab world, especially as the result of the rise of Jamal Abdul Nasser (Ibid). The purpose of neutrality was to push Lebanon away from the political swamp of the Arab-Israeli conflict and enforce Lebanese nationalist identity (Hanf 1993, 112). While the Arab world was in shock at the speed of Israel's defeat of Nasser and Syria in the humiliating Six-Day War, the Christians of the right-wing parties celebrated in the streets of Beirut (Hirst 2010, 73).

The tensions between the Phalange and the PLO go back to 1970, when the PLO kidnapped Bashir Gemayel and whisked him away to the Tel Zaatar refugee camp for eight hours (Hanf 1993, 168). His daughter, Maya, was killed in 1981, in a car explosion that was intended for Bashir (Al-Jazeera 2006). The bad blood between the Phalange and the PLO triggered the Lebanese Civil War on April 13th, 1975, when the Phalange massacred twenty-one Palestinians on a bus from the Tel al-Zaatar refugee camp in retaliation for a shootout at a congregation in which Pierre Gemayel had been present (Trabousli 2008, 183). When the Palestinians and their Lebanese allies, the left-wing Lebanese National Movement, gained momentum in the first two years of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1976), the Phalange were among the first to invite the

Jamal Abdul Nasser supported his candidacy and so did the United States. President Chehab was not involved in the 1958 Civil War and represented the Statist line whose objective is to strengthen the Lebanese state vis-à-vis the ethnic parties (Hanf 1994, 119 – 120; Presidency of the Republic of Lebanon 2021)

Syrian Army to intervene and disarm the PLO (Ibid, 196), and later the Israeli forces to expel the Syrian Army in 1982 (Boykin 2000, 45, 52- 53).

When the Syrian Army turned tail after Egypt's President Sadat visited the Israeli Knesset in 1977, Bashir Gemayel rose to prominence as he faced the Syrian forces in Ashrafieh during the Hundred-Day War (Traboulsi 2008, 209). After Bashir pulled Israeli forces to confront Syria in Zahlé in 1981, the Phalange and Camille Chamoun again sought the help of the Israeli military (See the Zahlé Crisis in Boykin 2000, 45, and secret meeting between Israeli Defence Minister, Ariel Sharon and Pierre Gemayel Sr., Bashir Gemayel, and Camille Chamoun in Boykin, 52-53) in 1982. The culmination of the Israeli invasion was the election of their ally, Bashir Gemayel, as president. Despite this relationship, Bashir Gemayel hesitated to sign a peace treaty with Israel (Traboulsi 2008, 216). After Bashir's assassination, Amin Gemayel, suddenly succeeding his brother Bashir Gemayel, was pressured by the Israelis to sign a peace treaty, despite American objectives due to unrealistic Israeli demands of a weakened Lebanese president (see negotiations for the peace accords in Boykin 2000, 279 – 290) which was approved by Parliament, but Amin, fearing Arab, Syrian, and domestic repercussions, refused to sign it as well (Traboulsi 2008, 222 – 223; Hourani 2013, 42). After his presidency ended in 1988, amidst deeply divided mini-cantons, Amin Gemayel travelled to France and the United States in self-exile after appointing the head of the army and future leader of the Free Patriotic Movement, Michel Aoun, prime minister (Al-Jazeera 2006).

Amin Gemayel: 1990-2005

By the time the Lebanese Civil War ended in 1990, the Phalange, like all the anti-Syrian Christian movements, had lost influence due to Syrian repression. Amin Gemayel lived in self-imposed exile in France from 1990 until 2000 (Middle East Intelligence Bulletin 2000). He never visited Lebanon during this time out of fear of being arrested by the pro-Syrian regime for collaborating with Israel in 1982-83 (Ibid)

A brief recap of the political situation in Lebanon is required in terms of Syrian hegemony over Lebanon between 1990 and 2000. Syria received multiple benefits for staying in Lebanon. First, the Lebanese-Israeli borders are not far from Syria's capital, Damascus, where Syria had historically expressed defensive concerns against a possible land invasion, and Israel's Air Force could hit the Syrian capital through flying above Lebanese territory (see Boykin 2000).

Second, Syria benefited from Hezbollah's operations against Israeli targets in occupied Southern Lebanon without suffering any military backlash within its borders, since all operations were coming out of Lebanese territory (Rabil 2001, 27); furthermore, Syria was in a position to use Lebanon as a bargaining chip with Israel for the Golan Heights, in terms of halting all violence on Israel's northern borders (Najm 2012, 103; 107-108). Third, Syria rewarded regime loyalists in client-patron relations; these loyalists benefited from its commanding political heights in Lebanon or from access to its black markets (Rabil 2001, 27). Syria also benefited from blue-collar Syrian labourers who worked in Lebanon and generated around one billion dollars for the Syrian economy, while cutting down on unemployment rates for the Syrian regime. The anticipated number of workers in Lebanon ranged between 300,000 and 900,000, not counting naturalized Syrians (estimated at around 72,000, but minors were not counted) (Hourani and Sensing-Dabbous 2012, 188-189; Rabil 2001, 29), along with 40,000 soldiers (Rabil 2001, 30). Lastly, Syria exerted complete control over Lebanon's foreign policy and directed its leaders to address international issues or strike deals according to Syria's interests (Najem 2012, 66, 107-109).

From 1990 until 2000, the traditional Gemayel clan did not participate much in politics; however, the Phalange in Lebanon did challenge the renewal of Syrian-allied President Elias Harawi's term (Rabil 2001, 33-34). By 1999, Syria had co-opted Phalange leadership. Amin Gemayel's protégé, Georges Saadeh, was replaced by Mounir el-Hajj through party elections. The latter campaigned in favour of the Syrian presence in Lebanon, tried to mend fences with the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, and did not run on the Phalange's ticket, but a pro-Syrian one (Moubayed 2002, 32). Later, Karim Pakradouni became the president of the Phalange, and his bloc succeeded in blocking the nomination of Amin Gemayel after the latter returned in 2000. Worse, Pakradouni even had Amin Gemayel threatened with arrest for using the Phalange's name during a celebration of Lebanon's independence anniversary; the former accused him of playing into Syrian hands as well (Ibid).

It was during this period of hegemonic propaganda and pro-Syrian mobilization that Amin Gemayel returned to Lebanon in July 2000. Before his return, Amin Gemayel had continued to criticize Syria's hegemony over Lebanon. He had attempted to return a few times, but time and again, he received warnings that he risked arrest for establishing contacts with Israel during the Civil War. He returned after Hafez el Assad passed away (el-Husseiny 2012, 46), which the media considered a surprise. Media speculation centered on how Michel Aoun's stance on

Syria's presence and regard for Hezbollah as a terrorist group had convinced Syria to allow Amin Gemayel to return as the "died Christian" in order to split the Christian opposition between a more radical General Aoun and the rest. A condition for his return was that his son, Pierre Gemayel, Jr., would not run on a favourite anti-Syria list spearheaded by Nassib Lahoud in Metn (Middle East Intelligence Bulletin 2000).

2000-2005: Intra-Ethnic Competition between the Gemayel Clan and Pakradouni's Phalange

Within the interplay of international-local alliances, Amin Gemayel's return was surprisingly in line with Syria's discourse, skillfully keeping the subject of sovereignty and resistance as a common theme. He praised Hezbollah and their sacrifices in liberating the South from Israeli occupation and equated Hezbollah's martyrs to those of the Phalange who had given their lives for the sake of sovereignty and independence of the country (Amin Gemayel as cited in AP Press 2000). Even though Amin Gemayel was signaling compliance with the pro-Syrian parties, he did not abandon the sacrifices of the Phalange, equating Israel to Syria, a taboo in Lebanese politics, during his first returned speech at the Beirut Airport. Of course, Syria would not have allowed Gemayel to return if not to attempt to marginalize him, and with him, indirectly, the popular anti-Syrian protests within the Christian community. Syrian-backed Phalange leader, Mounir el-Hajj, was running against Pierre Gemayel, Jr. in the 2000 elections, which Pierre won (Middle East Intelligence Bulletin 2000).

The year 2000 marked the end of the Israeli occupation in the South, and the official anti-Syrian Bkirki Declaration of Cardinal Sfair, which called upon the Syrian forces to leave Lebanon. Gemayel was swift to show his fangs on the topic of Syria's presence and expressed support for Cardinal Sfair's statement. His attention focused on two demands in regard to Sfair's calls for Syrian withdrawal: the deployment of the Lebanese Army in the South, and the withdrawal of the Syrian Military (see Daily Star 2000; Goodman 2000). Gemayel initially feared that the Israeli withdrawal had paved the way for a further Syrian proxy war on Israel via Lebanon, especially as Syria banned the Lebanese Army from deploying at the borders and placed Hezbollah directly on Israel's frontiers (Reuters 2000). Fearing a new regional war, with Lebanon at the center of it, the former president questioned why Syria had never fired a bullet into the Golan Heights from its territory since the 1973 war (Goodman 2000).

In the meantime, the new head of the Phalange Party, Pakradouni, sought to absorb the traditional anti-Syrian Phalange base through pushing for Phalange unification under his leadership (Darrous 2000). Except for Hezbollah, the Phalange Party's alliance perhaps best embodies the impact of a strong alliance between a local party and a regional actor. By 2001, Pakradouni won the Phalange election with a landslide, and Amin Gemayel accused him of leading an internal coup within the party (Al Azar 2001; Daily Star 2001a; 2001b). Gemayel further argued that no elections had taken place within the Phalange and that the victory had come as appointed from Damascus (Daily Star 2001a). This accusation was no surprise, as Pakradouni had given perhaps the most pro-Syrian speech in the history of the Phalange Party. Indeed, Pakradouni had argued that the Phalange no longer represented the Christians of Lebanon and decided to turn away from its history as a vital participant of the Lebanese Front that had been led by Bashir Gemayel and Pierre Gemayel, Sr.; he further declared that Christians could no longer live in isolation (Daily Star 2001b). The Lebanese Left had traditionally used the term "isolation" as an accusation against the Christian leadership for calling for neutrality on the subjects of containing PLO activities within Lebanese territory in the pre-Civil War era and extracting Lebanon out of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Pakradouni aligned the Phalange with Syria and criticized Amin Gemayel directly, and the Gemayels overall indirectly, by stating that the Phalange's democracy prevailed over personalities (Ibid).

Indeed, Pakradouni had chosen identities, international and local alliances, and policies that completely contradicted the history of the Phalange, dating back to its foundation in 1936. Pakradouni stressed the importance of siding with Syria, supported the Palestinian cause through arms, and endorsed Hezbollah as a legitimate Lebanese resistance movement. The Gemayels had traditionally opposed all such stances. Pakradouni called upon Lebanese Christians to abandon isolationism and join hands with Syria, the same actor that had pounded East Beirut (1979, 1988) and Zahlé (1980) during the Civil War; the same regime that was suspected of assassinating Bashir Gemayel, the scion of the Maronites. Furthermore, unlike Amin Gemayel's policy to keep doors open to all regional actors, Pakradouni considered the United States, due to its support for Israel, the enemy of the Arabs, one of the greatest deviations from the traditional Phalange's pro-Western vision (Al Azar 2001; Matta 2001). He also, unlike Amin Gemayel, stood blindly with Syria's allies, including the reigning President, Emile Lahoud (Ibid).

Furthermore, Pakradouni relied on the Syrian-dominated security apparatus to crack down on the Gemayels' anti-Syrian activities through sending a pro-Syrian dominated police force to enforce the cancelation of a Phalange celebration of independence, and legally banned the Gemayels from using the Phalange name and symbols (Daily Star 2001). He eventually expelled Amin Gemayel from the Phalange (Ghattas 2002), despite Cardinal Sfair's attempted mediations to keep Gemayel in the party (Darrous 2002). Although he had initially stated that the Phalange would no longer be a Christian party in 2001, he changed his mind ten months later, after a two-hour meeting with Bashar Assad in Damascus in which he announced the formation of a pro-Arab Christian coalition (Darrous 2002b) to counter the rising anti-Syrian tide resulting from the Qornet Shahwan Gathering's mobilization and General Aoun's supporters (Ibid). On the anniversary of the party's foundation in 2002, Pakradouni organized a celebration attended by multiple Syrian figures, at which Jumblatt spoke in criticism of Amin Gemayel (Darrous 2002b). A year later, Pakradouni argued that "patriotic Christians" were those who endorsed the Arab cause, or at least Syria's interpretation of the cause (Daily Star 2003c).

Regional dynamics mixed with Syria's Arab nationalism had forced Pakradouni to bring the Phalange back into the Christian fold. This phenomenon took place as the United States reacted to 9/11. By 2002, the United States started to escalate its propaganda against Iraq and to link Hezbollah to al-Qaeda (Hirst 2010, 290-291). In early January of that year, President Bush identified an "Axis of Evil" that included Iraq, Iran, and North Korea (Washington Post 2002). Syria feared it was next, after Afghanistan, due to its ongoing clash with Israel, its alliance with Iran, support for Hezbollah, and dominance over Lebanon itself. For the American administration, "Lebanon, and its hegemony over it was the most important component of Syria's regional power and prestige. So getting Syria out of Lebanon was not just a matter of 'getting Hezbollah too'" (Hirst 2010, 295). For Syria, then, getting its Lebanese house in order became a priority, especially after Michel Aoun testified in Congress (2003) and requested the U.S. link Syria and Hezbollah to its War on Terror (see Chapter Seven for details; Al-Azar 2003a; Boustany 2003; LCCC 2003). Fearing an American invasion of Lebanon, Cardinal Sfair and Amin Gemayel briefly rallied behind Hezbollah in their quest to clarify to the American administration that Hezbollah was not al-Qaeda (Hirst 2010, 294; Daily Star 2002). Despite Gemayel's defence of Hezbollah, he remained steadfast about opposing Syria's presence in the country. In reaction to the rising opposition to its presence in Lebanon, Syria offered its security apparatus to its local allies in order to facilitate lawsuits against Amin Gemayel and fabricated a report that Gemayel had offered condolences to Israel on Rabin's assassination, which

Gemayel vehemently denied. Later, the former president faced harassment in the form of roadblocks that “emerged spontaneously” to block his visits to supporters (see Hourani 2002; Darrous 2002c). Pakradouni also accused Amin Gemayel of seeking American help against Syria, gambling on Amin Gemayel’s strong relations with George Bush’s administration to market the rumours and highlighting the former president’s ties with Israel after 1983 (Darrous 2002d).

Meanwhile, Gemayel described the phenomenon of Pax Syriana within the Phalange as “prostitution” (Darrous 2002). He stood precisely opposite the official party leadership on all topics. He joined a Lebanese coalition composed of Christian independents, the Qornet Shahwan Gathering, although he did not join the Aoun-Geagea-Chamoun bloc, which equated Syria’s occupation to Israel’s. Due to Amin Gemayel’s presence within Qornet Shahwan Gathering, the coalition received accusations of resurrecting Bashir Gemayel’s Lebanese Front movement (Daily Star 2001c). To counter this accusation, Amin Gemayel marketed himself as a moderate leader who defended Hezbollah against Donald Rumsfeld’s comparison of the Islamic party to al-Qaeda while simultaneously demanding the withdrawal of Syria (Darrous 2002). Refusing to abandon the Phalange name after his expulsion from the party, he declared the establishment of the Phalange-Base as a counter-movement to Pakradouni’s Phalange, which was legally registered within Lebanon’s Ministry of Interior as the official party. At the same time, he ignored Pakradouni’s existence, as the latter continued to level slanderous accusations against him (e.g. Daily Star 2002a). Gemayel remained a close ally of the United States despite his fallout with the Phalange. He was sent as a mediator to convince Saddam Hussein to step down, and he described the forthcoming invasion as opening possibilities for improving the region (Daily Star 2003d; Dakroub 2003) while also denying accusations that he was gambling on the United States to oust Syria from Lebanon (Ibrahim 2003).

In the meantime, there were several other Gemayels who were highly active within the political arena. Amin’s son, Sami, and his cousin, Nadim, Bashir’s son, were either rallying against Syrian hegemony or protesting the possibility of granting the Palestinians citizenship. Pierre Gemayel, Jr., when outside the parliament, also criticized Pakradouni and Syria’s hegemony, including the partial rigging of the 2000 elections (Daily Star 2000a; 2003e; Darrous 2003). Sami Gemayel focused on the Lebanese detainees in Syrian prisons (Assaf 2003), while Pierre Gemayel criticized the Syrians for rigging Lebanon’s elections (2000a). The demand for Aoun’s return, or the release of Lebanese Forces leader, Samir Geagea, were considered a taboo

during Syria's mandate over Lebanon (Abdul Hussain 2003). Thus, nearly the entire Gemayel clan was active on specific issues, which made Pakradouni's task of marginalizing them more difficult.

2004-2005: The Cedar Revolution and the End of Pax Syriana

On the regional level, pressure on Syria to withdraw from Lebanon escalated to UN Resolution 1559, which the United Nations Security Council approved. The resolution officially demanded the withdrawal of the Syrian presence in Lebanon and the disarming of Hezbollah. Syria, fearing the loss of its grip over Lebanon, pushed for constitutional amendments to allow for the re-election of Emile Lahoud for another three years (Najem 2012, 71). Among those pressured was Rafic Hariri, who visited Damascus, where it was rumoured by Walid Jumblatt that the Assad regime threatened Hariri and forced him to renew President Emile Lahoud's tenure by half a term (Hirst 2010, 301 – 305). While the United States started sinking in the muddy waters of Iraq, especially with the emergence of al-Zarqawi, the al-Qaeda chief in Iraq, Saudi Arabia was also dragged into the War on Terror due to series of explosions on its soil. After Hariri's resignation, President Lahoud tasked Omar Karamah to form a National Unity government (see Chapter Eight for details; Choucair 2005, 1-2). Gemayel's Phalange-Base, like their growing anti-Syrian allies, were fully aware that UN Resolution 1559 was a gateway for international actors to exert pressure upon Syria to withdraw from Lebanon. They refused to participate in the National Unity government, and the Qornet Shahwan Gathering escalated tensions by warning that they would not form a government with pro-Syrian parties and that Syria was drawing the wrath of the international community (El-Ghoul 2004). Henceforth, Qornet Shahwan Gathering, Phalange included, refused to give a Pro-Syrian government the legitimacy of representing all the Lebanese communities and political groups. The Gemayels found new allies in December, after President Lahoud's forced three years extension in Hariri's Future Movement, Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party, and left-wing movements, together declaring the need for Syria to withdraw from Lebanon (Choucair 2005, 2). After Rafic Hariri died on February 14th 2005, this Bristol Gathering became the 14th of March bloc with Pierre Gemayel Jr. as one of the key faces of the uprising. Due to increasing international pressure on Syria to withdraw from Lebanon, the anti-Syrian bloc saw no reason to reach a compromise with the Syrian regime and stressed that parliamentary elections will take place, after the last Syrian soldier departs from Lebanon (Choucair 2005, 3).

The 14th of March: A Bundle of Historical Complexities

The conflict between the 8th of March bloc and the 14th of March bloc⁹ in the post-Hariri assassination era was tricky as party leaders from other sects were joining Qornet Shahwan Gathering in opposing Syria and demanding the implementation of UN Resolution 1559. Be it “Sunni Hariri” or “Druze Jumblatt” or “Communist Hawi,” Amin Gemayel had in the past clashed with all these leaders at one point or another. For Amin Gemayel to criticize the pro-Syrian parties, he had to navigate carefully in his choice of words in order to avoid giving the pro-Syrian bloc ammunition to use his War-era past to drive a wedge with the Bristol Gathering parties, and later the parties in the 14th of March bloc, especially as he was the most prominent Christian leader in the latter’s early days. Indeed, the pro-Syrian blocs always resurrected his past with Israel and with the Lebanese Front, and identified him to the United States (see, for example, M. Hatoum 2005). Perhaps his most straightforward move, post-Bristol Gathering coalition, was to immediately accuse the pro-Syrian bloc of imposing hegemony in their demand for a national referendum on Syria’s presence. His words were: “How can submissive people, who obey external orders, take part in a referendum?” (Daily Star January 2005). His solution was that the Lebanese Army should be deployed all over Lebanon after the Syrian Army withdrew (Ibid). The deployment of the army South indirectly targeted Hezbollah, who controlled the South undisputedly, although the Lebanese Army would not be deployed in the frontline liberated areas until 2006.

Pierre Gemayel, Jr., Amin’s son, continued his ascension in the Lebanese arena after Rafic Hariri’s death and became one of the pillars of the protests that shut down Karami’s government (The Lebanese Phalange 2018). Unlike the rest of the 14th of March, Pierre Jr. and his family had been protesting Syria’s presence in Lebanon from the beginning. He was among the first politicians to enter Martyr’s Square when the protestors broke through on February 27th, 2005. He was also with the 14th of March coalition inside the parliament when Karami surprisingly resigned. He became a close friend of Saad el-Dean Hariri, Rafic Hariri’s son, since they were of similar age, and Hariri referred to him as “Brother” (see Chapter Eight).

⁹ A Brief Reminder: The 8th of March bloc is Pro-Syrian, the bloc got its name for the mass rally on March 8th, 2005 in which an estimate of hundreds of thousands (New York Times 2005) Lebanese gathered to thank Syria for its services in Lebanon. The 14th of March bloc is the Anti-Syrian bloc which gathered on March 14th, 2005 to demand Syria’s withdrawal, and assembled over a million protestor to demonstrate to the world that the majority of the Lebanese do not want Syria to stay in the country (Al-Jazeera 2005a)

The 14th of March bloc cadres had to revise Lebanon's history in accordance with that anti-Syrian perspective. The main 14th of March leaders had considerable conflict between them. Gemayel's Phalange had historically had tensions with almost all of main parties. Rafic Hariri's governments had oppressed Gemayel's supporters; as Lebanese president, Amin Gemayel had fought both George Hawi and Walid Jumblatt; the Gemayels had bombed West "Muslim" Beirut with Israeli help during the Civil War in 1982 (Traboulsi 2008, 220 -231); and West Beirut had voted for Rafic Hariri's lists after the Civil War ended in 1990. What allowed the 14th of March's members to enter this shaky alliance was their opposition to Syria's hegemony over Lebanon. The 14th of March bloc reinterpreted history as divided between those who opposed Syria and those who didn't, irrespective of their activities during the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990). For example, Bashir Gemayel, in this new narrative, no longer invited the Israeli forces to invade Lebanon; instead, he fought the Syrians for Lebanese sovereignty. Kamal Jumblatt, who fought the Gemayel clan during the first two years of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1976), was also a patriot whom Syrian intelligence had killed. Rafic Hariri, like Kamal Jumblatt and Bashir Gemayel, also paid with his life for his ideals of a sovereign Lebanon in opposition meddling (see, for example, FN 2007d). This narrative united the diverse followers of the 14th of March bloc across the sects, built inter-sectarian solidarity, and reduced Lebanon's complex history to simply a question of opposing Syria.

There were three common building blocks for the 14th of March bloc:

- 1) Hatred of Syria's meddling in Lebanese Affairs
- 2) Disarming Hezbollah, and, in turn, the pro-Syrian bloc
- 3) Demanding a Special Tribunal for Lebanon to investigate Rafic Hariri's death, and the subsequent assassinations of 14th of March figureheads

It is no surprise that Nadim Gemayel compared the death of Rafic Hariri to that of his father Bashir Gemayel (FN 2010h), and, during several governmental crises, Amin compared the opposition to the 14th of March to that facing his father's push against the Syrian forces, neglecting the fact that it had been his father and brother who had invited the Syrians to enter Lebanon as a deterrent force (FN 2007d). Nadim Gemayel also lamented the assassination of Kamal Jumblatt, the arch-nemesis of the Gemayels, at the hands of the Syrians, comparing it to the assassinations of Hariri and his father (FN September 2010c). It was also no surprise that Phalange slogans spread across the members of the 14th of March, given the extent of

bitterness the bloc collectively held toward Syria. For example, Saad Hariri's Parliamentary bloc named itself "Lebanon First," a saying that Bashir Gemayel and Pierre Gemayel, Sr. had used extensively (FN 2010g). These slogans demonstrated that Bashir Gemayel and his history with Lebanese Christian isolationism had become a rallying point for Christians and Sunni Muslims, bending the history of Lebanon to collectively mobilize Christians, Sunni Muslims, and Druze as a single movement, altering historical grievances between the communities. The assignation of Pierre Gemayel, Jr. further invited the sympathy of Hariri's supporters toward the Phalange's cause of opposing Syria's meddling in Lebanese affairs (see the 14th of March bloc's protest in memory of Pierre Gemayel, Jr. in AFP 2006e). Calls for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon gained further passion, triggering warm solidarity between Saad Hariri's supporters and those of the Gemayels. These calls enabled the Gemayels to revisit controversial histories that had angered Arab nationalists in the past and claim that the Phalange since 1975 had fought for Lebanon's sovereignty (FN 2008f). The Phalange's members were no longer traitors in the eyes of Hariri or Jumblatt's supporters, and instead acknowledged the Phalange's narratives.

The 14th of March rewarded the Gemayels for their historical efforts against Syria by allotting them more parliamentary constituencies in which to campaign for seats. For example, Saad Hariri withdrew his candidature in East Beirut in favour of Solange Gemayel, wife of Bashir Gemayel. She was the first candidate to win her parliamentary seat in the 2005 elections, since no one ran against her. This concession sent a confirmation to the Phalange's audience that the 14th of March and Hariri were willing to work with all forces that focused on sovereignty, including the wife of the President who had brought in the Israelis and bombarded Hariri's constituency in Ras Beirut. While Walid Jumblatt joked about Solange walking in Sunni areas within her Beirut constituency, he confirmed that she and he together would walk in the areas (Khoury 2005; AFP 2005; Liquid Africa 2005). This overnight burial of conflict made decades of war and bloodshed no longer significant; instead, opposition to Syria unified former opponents. The 2005 parliamentary elections demonstrated that alliances with the Western-Saudi bloc against Syria had erased decades-long sectarian tensions between the Sunnis, Druze, and Christian supporters of the parties in the anti-Syrian bloc.

In terms of day-to-day media speeches, Gemayel directed his ire either against Syria or its domestic allies. Syria's meddling in the Phalange party as an institution came to an end in the mid-summer of 2005. By September, Pakradouni had lost the leadership of the Phalange in court, and Pierre Gemayel, Jr. called for a reunification of the Phalange and the Phalange-Base,

which Pakradouni welcomed (Chahin 2005). However, the reunification of the Phalange did not mean turning a new page with Syria. When discussing any topic, Gemayel did not hesitate to depict his 14th of March bloc as democratic and Syria as opposed to Lebanon's sovereignty. For example, reconciliation, across Lebanon's main parties, became the goal of the Phalange internally, while externally they demanded a new arrangement with Syria. For every speech in which Amin Gemayel criticized his opponents, Syria, or Iran, he almost always concluded that the Phalange stood for reconciliation with everyone or encouraged peaceful talks. Out of 750 speeches, 260 mentioned reconciliation and dialogue. For example, he praised Lebanon's historical ties with Syria, hoped for excellent relations, and reached out to Hezbollah, although with the caveat that the "age of diplomacy has commenced" (Ghoul 2005), in reference to Hezbollah's military operations in Southern Lebanon. This "new age" also sent a message to Syria that the Lebanese leaders would no longer head to Damascus to receive instructions. This "dialogue" strategy was intended to depict to their supporters that the bloc was interested in national unity, while also implying that the 8th of March wanted solely to serve Syria.

After the 2006 July War between Lebanon and Israel, Amin Gemayel and his family focused his speeches on disarming Hezbollah, stressing the necessity for a National Defence Strategy to discuss the future of Hezbollah's arms, and continuously criticized Hezbollah for making the decisions of war and peace unilaterally on behalf of all Lebanon. For example, in the 46.72% of his speeches between 2005 and 2010 in which Gemayel mentioned Hezbollah (321 times), he frequently repeated such statements as "Nasrallah has no right to take unilateral decisions of war, and the Opposition is not interested in Dialogue" (February 2008g). Over the years, the Gemayel clan repackaged that criticism in multiple, and sometimes severe forms: "If Hassan Nasrallah is the President tell us! These are unilateral decisions of war. Hezbollah needs to disarm, and its militants must join the Lebanese Army" (Pierre Gemayel as cited in Daily Star 2006). He also considered the deployment of the army in the South, during the July War, a historic victory for the 14th of March. The war finished with increased UN forces, UNIFIL, acting as peacekeepers in Lebanon, with up to 15,000 soldiers, and a UN resolution that called for the disarming of Hezbollah. Amin Gemayel and the Phalange welcomed the resolution. The Lebanese Army, a pivotal pillar in the Phalange's vision of itself as the sole wielder of weapons in Lebanon, became more central in their speeches as Hezbollah's counterbalance after the former deployed in the South during the July War. The army appeared in Phalange speeches 216 times (31.44%) in their public discourse. The difference between Pre- and Post-Rafic

Hariri's assassination was that the Phalange demand was no longer seen as a Christian demand, but a national demand, at least in the eyes of the 14th of March bloc.

The assassination of Pierre Gemayel, Jr. had a devastating effect on the Phalange. Pierre had been groomed to carry the mantle of the Phalange after Amin Gemayel, while both Nadim and Sami were too inexperienced to lead the party. The assassination of Pierre Gemayel led the majority-Christian area Ashrafieh, in what was formerly known as East Beirut, to go on a rampage and burn pictures of Michel Aoun, demanding that Aoun leave Lebanon and go to Syria (AFP,2006b). Amin requested his supporters remain calm (AFP 2006a), despite the fact that Pierre Gemayel's assassination was somewhat suspicious. While most 14th of March officials were assassinated through explosions, Pierre Gemayel was shot with a gun at point-blank range in broad daylight (Ibid). His supporters accused Syria of the assassination, especially because his death came one week before the government was to approve a UN Tribunal (Ibid). Nadim Gemayel, after the funeral, accused the Assad regime (AFP 2006c), while Amin also hinted that it was Damascus that had killed his son (November 2006d). As was the case with all assassinated figures, hundreds of thousands attended the rally to protest the assassination, during which Amin Gemayel declared that the size of the crowd was "sending a message to the killers of Pierre" (Ibid). Most obnoxiously to the Gemayels, the Syrian newspapers hinted that it was a 14th of March party that had killed Amin's son because the 14th of March was allegedly losing its momentum, especially in the face of a planned pro-Syrian open-ended protest in downtown Beirut to demand the resignation of the Siniora government (Daily Star 2006a; AFP 2006d). Just as the Hariri clan proclaimed the Sainthood of Rafic Hariri among his supporters (see Chapter Eight), Pierre Gemayel, Jr. became a symbolic martyr, and his name often appeared in Amin Gemayel's speeches. For example, Gemayel linked his son's death to the destiny of the Gemayels in specific, and the Phalange in general, to produce martyrs for the cause of Lebanon's sovereignty (Atwi 2007). Syria remained the suspect in all assassinations (FN 2008h). The Phalange reminded their audiences in 21.1% of their speeches about the sacrifices of the Gemayel clan, along with mentioning Phalange martyrs 29.4% of the time, when igniting passions against the 8th of March bloc and their foreign backers.

The Pakradouni-Gemayel cleavage was replaced with the Aoun-Gemayel cleavage amid high intra-ethnic competition after Aoun joined the 8th of March bloc in 2006. Gemayel continuously criticized Aoun for not being Christian enough for the country (FN 2008e), as Aoun ended up in the camp that received support from Syria and Iran, and for every incident occurring in Lebanon,

Amin Gemayel pointed the finger at Syria. For example, every time Cardinal Sfair was criticized by the 8th of March, Gemayel did not hesitate to directly accuse Syria of orchestrating its local allies to criticize the Maronite cardinal. This tactic aimed to reduce the free will of General Aoun and reduce him to being a pawn of Hezbollah. In defending Cardinal Sfair against Aoun and Suleiman Franjeh Jr. (the two top Christian figureheads in the 8th of March), Gemayel once declared that “Syria always attacks Christians, Bkirki is a patriotic entity not only representative of the Christians but Lebanon [...] Will Hezbollah allow us to have a 1/3 veto on its unilateral decisions for war if we give them the 1/3 Veto in the government?” (FN 2008d). The veto on the governmental level was a key objective of the 8th of March bloc, in the name of healthy representation, and became the main trigger for the downtown Beirut protests, which lasted from November 2006 until May 2008. The war of words against Aoun’s party also continued with the newer Gemayel generations. Nadim Gemayel, Bashir’s son, took several shots at Aoun, with oblique accusations like: “Some of those Christians who claim to defend their existence and free will in Lebanon do not relate to the foundations of Christianity at all, if anything they are scattering the Christians here” (FN 2009m).

In 2007, Amin Gemayel ran by-elections to fill his deceased son’s seat. He campaigned with the rhetoric that any vote for Aoun’s candidate would be a vote for the murderers of his martyred son (FN,2007f; Hodeib,2007). Furthermore, Gemayel claimed that Aoun was not representing the Christians of Lebanon or their interests and was in fact seeking on purpose to divide them (FN 2007; 2007e). If anything, Aoun was defending the interests of Syria (FN 2007g). Gemayel lost by a slim margin, but he translated it as a victory in his speech since he got most of the Maronite votes, whereas Aoun’s candidate won with Armenian votes and through potential electoral fraud (FN 2007g; August 2007k). A month later, another high-ranking Phalange official, Antoine Ghanem, was assassinated, making the Phalange the party with the largest number of martyrs, a point of which Gemayel never failed to remind Hariri during their consultations to form a government (FN 2007c).

The open-ended 8th of March bloc’s protests in downtown Beirut lasted from November 2006 until May 2008, during which Nabih Berri, speaker of the house, shut down the parliament, and the Shiite ministers of Hezbollah and AMAL left Hariri’s government. The 8th of March demanded a 1/3 veto on governmental executive decisions (Najem 2012, 80), including the International Tribunal’s establishment (Stack and Rafei 2006). The Gemayels and the 14th of March regarded the parliamentary shutdown a violation of state sovereignty, and Gemayel’s

speeches at this time also focused on fortifying state institutions. “Institutional vacuum” was mentioned in 300 out of 750 speeches made by the Gemayels and other Phalange leaders. The Doha Accords, spearheaded by Qatar, won for the opposition the 1/3 veto power, but also gave the 14th of March Michel Suleiman, head of the army, as President (Ibid, 80-81), against Aoun’s wishes.

In 2009, the 14th of March won elections again. This time, as in the 2005 elections, two Gemayels won elections within their respective constituencies. Sami Gemayel won the elections in Metn Constituency, restoring the Maronite parliamentary seat back to the family, and Nadim Gemayel won the elections in Beirut District 1, replacing Solange Gemayel. After the elections, it took months for the government to form. Both Sami and Nadim escalated their rhetoric, both pro-Christian, and anti- Syria, Iran, or their local allies. Often, these escalations went with the 14th of March narrative, while simultaneously preserving the Gemayels’ unique history. Nadim said, for instance, “The Christians do not take their protection from Iran and Syria, why do they attack the martyrs and today their children, such as the children of Bashir Gemayel, Kamal Jumblatt, and Gebran Tueini, is it forbidden to us to carry our fathers' causes? I believe in the cause that Bashir died for” (FN, 2009a). In the first half of his speech, Nadim listed the children of assassinated politicians, who were allegedly killed by Syrian intelligence; in the second half, he highlighted his father’s ideals from the 1980s as a direct contradiction of the beliefs of Kamal Jumblatt. Such a tactic enabled Nadim to appeal to the Christian identification with his father and allowed for vote-pooling from other sects in the 14th of March bloc, forever changing Bashir Gemayel’s historical narrative into one in which he was the arch-nemesis of the Jumblatt clan.

By 2010, the Tribunal, the electoral system, and the Palestinian refugees had all become significant points of friction. For the Opposition, the Tribunal sought to serve American-Israeli interests through indicting Hezbollah for Hariri’s assassination. The Palestinian refugee topic involved a conversation about granting them some civil rights, which the Phalange, like the Lebanese Forces and Free Patriotic Movement, opposed out of fear that such rights would become a gateway for granting the refugees the Lebanese nationality, a fear that haunted the Christian parties to the end of the period under consideration: the Palestinian-Israeli peace finalized at the expense of Lebanon. It is worth noting that tensions between Hariri and the Gemayels were high as the result of the Saudi-Syrian rapprochement in 2009 (Black 2010; FN 2009). Gemayel disagreed with Hariri’s attempt to legitimize Hezbollah’s weapons.

Identity Politics and Foreign Actors: Findings

The Gemayels and the Phalange emphasized national identities in their speeches, but there is a difference between their versions of these identities and those of earlier Lebanese narratives. Since the 14th of March had come into existence, multiple identities were being shaped and reshaped. The Phalange considered the 14th of March to be a continuation of the Phalange project, especially from 1975 onward, which contradicts the perspectives of many 14th of March members who had opposed the Lebanese Front during the Lebanese Civil War. The Gemayels had to innovate in order to address these contradictions, and often resorted to historical accounts, highlighting their sacrifices, in order to interpret current-day events. For example, Walid Jumblatt, whose party ethnically cleansed whole Christian villages in 1983, was re-baptized as the son of Kamal Jumblatt, murdered by Syria in 1977 like Bashir Gemayel had been in 1982. To retell the ethnic cleansing of vast Christian villages in Mt. Lebanon at the hands of Walid Jumblatt was a challenge (see Traboulsi 2008, 224 on the 1983 War of the Mountains); the Gemayels had to stress the martyrdom of Kamal and overlook Walid's atrocities during the Civil War. The Gemayels shared with their allies common identities, including the Lebanese First identity; Hariri's interpretation of Arab nationalism, which opposed Syria's hegemony; and adherence to the Culture of "I Love Life" campaign, which depicted the 8th of March as followers of a Culture of Death. These shared identities also included shared international allies, whose track record on concerns of sovereignty and democracy was not that good. For example, the Gemayels defended Fatah as a Palestinian representative, never criticized Saudi Arabia's bad record on human rights, and continued to advocate exceptional ties with the West.

Syria occupied the bulk of the Phalange speeches after the two factions of the party reunited. The Gemayels centered their criticism on Syria and its local allies; this tactic had also been popular in the 1950s during the 1958 Civil War against the United Arab Republic (1957-1960), during the Lebanese Civil War (with a zenith momentum between 1975-1983), and after Amin Gemayel returned from exile. The Phalange mentioned Syria in 45% of their speeches and Hezbollah in 46.72%. This close frequency reflects the need of the Gemayels to mobilize their supporters, and those of the 14th of March, against a traditional threat in Lebanon: Syria and its strongest ally, Hezbollah, while depicting the 8th of March as serving foreign interests. They mentioned a Syrian ally or the entire pro-Syrian coalition in 449 out of 687 speeches. This high percentage (65% of total speeches between 2005 and 2010) reflects the efforts that the

Gemayels made in their attempt to describe the 8th of March bloc, Aoun included, as non-Lebanese. Syria, due to the strong presence of its allies, and Hezbollah's arms that could overwhelm the Lebanese state itself, was given special attention within the Gemayels' criticism of foreign meddling. The Phalange associated the pro-Syrian actors, such as Aoun or Nasrallah, with risks to Lebanon's sovereignty and Lebanon's identity; each appeared with a high frequency of 75.4% and 93.04% respectively, reflecting the threat the 8th of March posed for Lebanon in the Phalange narrative. It is worth mentioning that the criticism of Hezbollah did not translate solely to secular policy discussions but was also included in speeches mentioning the sectarian intensification between the Shiites that support the Hezbollah-AMAL alliance, and the Phalange-Lebanese Forces Christians.

While Syria occupied the bulk of criticism as a foreign actor, after the July War Iran received its share as well, reflecting Iran's openly growing influence in Lebanon and the Middle East. While Iran barely appeared in earlier speeches, Iran became a target of criticism for the Phalange, and the 14th of March bloc after the July war of 2006. For example, out of 589 speeches from 2007 to 2010, Iran was mentioned in 15.28%, reflecting the perceived threat that the latter posed to the 14th of March and their foreign backers. This sudden spotlight on Iran did not remove Syria, a historic foe of the Phalange since 1958, from the center of criticism for the Phalange. Confronting Syria, the Lebanese identity, relations to the Arab League, and the international community were pushed forward as counter-balance to the heavily-armed 8th of March bloc. Syria's allies, such as Aoun and the 8th of March, were lumped together, following the logic expressed by Nadim Gemayel during the 2009 elections: "There are those who refuse to give up their weapons and insist on placing Lebanon in the Iranian-Syrian bus, and citizens lose their confidence in the state" (FN 2009i).

Like their allies, the Future Movement, the Phalange believed in two cultures dominant in Lebanon: Hezbollah, and to lesser extent Syria and Iran, with their beliefs in a Culture of Death, and the Culture of "I Love Life" advocated by the Phalange. As Amin Gemayel once stated on this subject: "if we have given martyrs across the decades, does not mean we preach the culture of death, but the dream of Green Lebanon, or Lebanon of love, of the future" (FN 2008i). This joint campaign of the 14th of March targeted the culture of sacrifice and war that Hezbollah promoted against Israel and promoted instead the sacrifices of assassinated 14th of March figureheads at the hands of Syria or pro-Syrian allies. The latter's grouping of martyrs was often described as dying out of a love for life.

The tactic used by the Phalange had been identity politics and a battle for the legitimacy of resistance. They attempted to exclude rivals from the Lebanese identity first, and fellow Christian-Maronites were not exempted. As Mearsheimer stressed, leaders choose specific events to justify their decisions (2011,22 - 23); for the Phalange, these justifications involved constantly honouring the martyrs of the Gemayels, the Phalange, and the Lebanese Front, often calling this last the Lebanese Resistance. The term “resistance” is rather controversial in the case of the Gemayels. “Resistance” in mainstream Lebanese politics refers to the resistance against Israel; however, the Phalange expressed theirs against the Palestinians and the Syrians, often disregarding that the Phalange had invited both Syria and Israel to invade Lebanon (in 1976 and 1982, respectively). The topics of Lebanese resistance, clanship, and martyrdom were rather personal for the Gemayels, especially due to the fact that they had lost Bashir in 1982 and Pierre Jr. in 2006, allegedly to Syria. For example, Sami Gemayel, Amin’s younger son, once lost his temper when Nasrallah wondered what resistance the Phalange were preaching, saying, “enough of talking about level 1 and level 2 martyrs or as if there is one resistance in Lebanon, ours kicked off in 1975 and gave 10,000 martyrs, preserved Lebanon and its independence” (FN 2009j). When narrating their sacrifices in the 1980s, the Gemayels omitted Michel Aoun, who, as head of army, had defended Amin Gemayel when the latter was president (1982-1988). The Phalange mentioned their family’s sacrifices in 21.1% of speeches, the Lebanese Resistance 19%, and the resistance’s martyrs 29.7%.

The discussion of sovereignty also spawned discussions of other relevant policies that the Phalange politicized continuously, including the ability of the state to be the sole wielder of arms. Often, “sovereignty” appeared when the Gemayels criticized the legitimacy of Hezbollah’s arms. The Phalange wondered whether these weapons had any role in liberating the Sheba’a farms or deterring Israel. Within that theme, the Phalange usually discussed the National Defence Strategy, which directly focused on Hezbollah’s arms with the possibility of their integration into the Lebanese Army (35.8% of speeches between 2005 and 2010). Sovereignty was the topic that brought the 14th of March, their international allies, and the Phalange together against Syria, Iran, and their Lebanese allies. The Phalange had used the term “sovereignty” first against France in 1939 and continued to use it across the decades. Sovereignty requires a strong Lebanese Army to protect it; the latter was regularly praised as the sole legitimate wielder of arms in the country. It is no coincidence that the Lebanese Army held a similar frequency (31.44%) to Hezbollah’s arsenal (35.8%), because the Lebanese Army was the

Phalange's proposed substitute for Hezbollah's anti-Israel deterrent force. The Phalange always called for the army to be deployed all over Lebanon, including areas beyond its reach, such as parts of Hezbollah's stronghold in Dahieh and the South. The security zones did not exclude pro-Syrian Palestinian militias' refugee camps that continued to organize militias after Syria withdrew in their respective Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. The Pro-Syrian Palestinian militias were criticized 66 times. This tactic provided Phalange supporters with continuity from the era of the pre-Lebanese Civil War era (pre-1975), when Pierre Gemayel, Sr. and his two sons criticized Palestinian arms outside the Lebanese state and described their existence as a threat to sovereignty.

Similarly, sovereignty speeches focused on the state's ability to function despite political disagreements. Sovereignty held the highest frequency among policies and objectives (75.4%) for the 2005 – 2010 phase. The reasons are plenty. Syria and Iran continued to meddle in Lebanese affairs and assassinated several 14th of March figureheads, including Pierre Gemayel Jr. The 8th of March bloc served as an extension to Syria and Iran and held communal and military power to block the state from deploying its influence across Lebanese lands, bureaucratically, or militarily. The Opposition's ability, which is a parliamentary minority, to shut down the parliament for almost a year and a half (2006-2008), obstruct the election of the President in 2007, risk dissolving the government, and obstruct public sector hiring all boiled down to the sovereignty of the state taken away by political squabbles, with criticism directed at Syria and 8th of March; "institutional vacuum" was mentioned 283 times (41.19%). Invoking this vacuum was also a tactic that Syria employed through its allies to subvert the "independent" 14th of March government, at least in 14th of March logic. Such vacuum also protected Syria's corrupt allies, and left-over public sector employees, who were looting the state and hollowing its institutions, [9.31%). The Phalange used this term to target leftover Syrian corruption and weak state institutions that required dramatic reforms. In using it, the Gemayels committed two errors. Through focusing on the 8th of March bloc and Syria's earlier activities in Lebanon, they overlooked Rafic Hariri's corruption during his multiple terms as a Prime Minister (see Hourani 2012). The other error was that the Gemayels joined the chorus advocating for an implementation of the equal Christian-Muslim sectarian quotas in the public sector, worried that the Christians' presence within the state was dwindling. Through that demand, the Phalange reinforced the sectarian system, which often enabled a few leaders to dominate the political landscape (see Gilmour 1983, 42-43).

The Gemayels sought to delegitimize the opposition and link the latter’s activities to the interests of Iran, Syria, or others. The obstructions from the opposition eventually led Amin Gemayel to proclaim that there was an internal revolt against the state institutions, led from the outside, occasionally identifying Syria or Iran or both as these outside leaders, to change the political system (2009-2010). Given that international support aligned behind the 14th of March bloc from several international and regional actors without resorting to political appeasement, the Gemayels did not hesitate to accuse the 8th of March bloc as a barrier to the state’s ability to spread its control on its land as a sovereign country. In regard to international support, Gemayel always discussed how the United Nations, Western States, and Arabs (Syria excluded) were keen in preserving Lebanon’s sovereignty and stability. Below is a table of the frequency of some of these terms for the 2005 – 2010 period:

Policy/Objective 2005 - 2010	Frequency	Relative Frequency
Lebanese Army	216	31.44%
Freedom	376	54.73%
Sovereignty	518	75.4%
Institutional Vacuum	283	41.19%
Corruption	64	9.31%
Total	687	100%

Other objectives and policies also used similar rhetoric. Any mobilization of the 8th of March or assassinations of 14th of March members was viewed as repression. The activities of the 8th of March and the Syrian mandate’s police state were considered to be the same within the speeches of the Gemayels, since the former continued indirectly to serve the interests of President Assad. “Repression” was mentioned with a high frequency, as it was a term through which the Phalange polarized their supporters in defence of Lebanon. “Corruption,” similarly, had a decent frequency of 79 times (9.31%) within the speeches.

By November 2005, President Lahoud had still not resigned, despite initially high hopes that he would. Earlier in 2005, Aoun had claimed that Lahoud would resign if Aoun were the candidate to replace him (Rafei 2005), to which Amin Gemayel responded frequently that Aoun walked as Hezbollah Chief Nasrallah decided (FN 2008e). The presidency was one key battle for the Phalange and was mentioned with a high frequency (37.85%). The key Phalange speeches for

2005 involved criticizing Emile Lahoud and how he was rendering the Presidency, the highest position a Maronite could reach, meaningless. For example, since no alternative candidate had been confirmed to replace or succeed Lahoud, the presidency occupied 59% of Phalange speeches between 2005 and 2007, while ethnic value, indirectly, appeared almost every two days. It is no surprise that the presidency was essential for the Phalange because President Lahoud's loyalty to Syria remained an obstacle to ridding the system of Pro-Syrian loyalists. Critical of Aoun's ambition to capture the presidency, and his own ties close to Syria, the Phalange fought him politically with the desire to discredit him and steal some of his vast Christian base (FN 2008f). Lahoud's ongoing presence, Phalange speeches declared, was a shot against the aspirations of the Lebanese and Christians, another theme frequently repeated when calls for electing a new president took place: "We need a president who will restore the role of the Christians in the country" (Ibid).

Lastly, violence in Lebanon tended to manifest itself in terms of sectarian mobilization, from which tensions rose and escalations between the 14th of March and 8th of March became a form of bargaining (Traboulsi and Kfoury 2008 [2006]). The Gemayels and the Phalange warned against sectarian strife 106 times (15.42%), while keeping dialogue and the need for discussion in 36.5% of their speeches. It is no surprise that "dialogue" is present in around one third of the coded speeches. This tactic, calling for dialogue while criticizing the other, was popular among the 14th of March parties in order to demonstrate that the 8th of March were not interested in holding dialogues and resolving the country's accumulating crises.

The problem lay, again, in sectarianism itself. The Gemayels and their allies mobilized support on the basis of sectarian rhetoric, and they never shied away from appealing to it with their respective audience. From this angle, the Gemayels played a role in the sectarian mobilization that swept through Lebanon's politics. The calls for dialogue also involved criticism of Syria. The Gemayels always promoted a Lebanese-Lebanese dialogue or insisted that no international initiative or actor could fix domestic problems; in the end, they argued, it is up to the Lebanese to do so. Such arguments again returned to the theme of Syria's and Iran's meddling in domestic politics, and thereby depicted the 8th of March bloc as unable to break away from their foreign backers' interests in destabilizing the country. However, they never accused any of the vast international supporters to their part and coalition of meddling, including the United States, Germany, France, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait.

Policies that interested Christian voters were also mentioned appeared in earlier decades with Pierre Gemayel Sr. and Bashir Gemayel but continued to hold an attraction to the Christian community. These policies and objectives remained the same as they were first suggested decades ago, or repacked to target current day events, and in specific Syria and its domestic allies. These policies and objectives include: Lebanese detainees in Syrian prison (8%), compensation for the displaced (2%), disarming Hezbollah (35.8%), neutrality (9.6%) and the Lebanese diaspora being able to vote from abroad (2.76% times). As mentioned earlier, all activities of the 8th of March bloc were viewed as continuation of Syrian repressive tactics in Lebanon, including riots, rallies, and speeches from Syrian/Iranian diplomats. In other cases, repression appeared frequently when a Gemayel remembered Syria's repressive tactics against the Phalange or the Gemayel clan, including assassinations (ex. Bashir Gemayel, Pierre Gemayel Jr.). Disarming Hezbollah resonates with Phalange calls in the 1960s and 1970s for the Palestinian Liberation Organization to disarm in Lebanon, under the banner that the Lebanese Army is the sole legitimate wielder of arms. They repackaged it to fit Hezbollah's arms, and such theme brings back painful memories to the Christian communities from the early 1970s when the PLO had a strong military presence in the country. The compensation for the displaced file was a sensitive file, often refers to the Christians displaced from Walid Jumblatt's War of the Mountains in 1983, when his warriors ethnically cleansed scores of Christian villages. The Gemayels rarely brought the file due to their alliance with Walid Jumblatt in the 14th of March and started appearing more frequently after the latter abandoned the coalition. The Diaspora voting in parliamentary elections, a popular objective for the Phalange for over six decades, continued to make appearances, usually when Amin Gemayel travelled abroad and held talks with the Lebanese. The table below summarizes these relevant policies:

Policy/Objective 2005 - 2010	Frequency	Relative Frequency
Displaced	14	2%
Disarming Hezbollah	246	35.87%
Detainees in Syria	518	8%
Repression	393	54.43%
Diaspora Voting	19	2.76%
Total	687	100%

Neutrality had been the heart of the Phalange rhetoric ever since Israel came into existence. The purpose of neutrality as a policy was to disengage Lebanon from the Arab-Israeli conflict, especially given that Lebanon had no strong military to counter-balance Israel's capabilities. During the 1960s, neutrality became a primary point of cleavage between Pierre Gemayel, Sr. and Kamal Jumblatt, with the latter often accusing the former of isolationism in regard to the Arab causes. After the Phalange co-founded the 14th of March, the Gemayels had to reconcile Saad Hariri and Walid Jumblatt's Arab nationalism for their supporters. The strong presence of the Arab League, a rarity in its history, as mediator between the 14th of March and the 8th of March required the Gemayels to again be innovative in regard to Arabism. Luckily, the 14th of March held similar view to the Gemayels in regard to neutrality as a foreign policy, especially after Hezbollah triggered the July War in 2006. Gemayel argued that the Lebanese, like the rest of the Arab world, should support the Palestinians' right of return and the Arab Peace Initiative, but should also halt the armed conflict or risk being part of a broader regional confrontation. As such, 67 speeches for the Gemayels or the Phalange discussed positive neutrality, which translated to the diplomatic power to engage Israel in the international arena instead of on Lebanon's battlefield. Of more immediate concern, and ongoing from Pierre Gemayel Sr.'s era, was the obsession with not granting the Palestinian refugees citizenship and the existence of pro-Syrian Palestinian security zones beyond the reach of the state. The non-ethnic identity sub-section further revisits neutrality in relations to the Arab identity through alliance with Saad Hariri, and the Saudi-led Arab states.

In a clear gesture of respect for the foreign backers of the 14th of March, not once did the Gemayels criticize American, Saudi, or French foreign policy on Lebanon. Indeed, Amin Gemayel spoke favourably of them when discussing local politics, and referred to them as allies. Such praise was also directed at Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Kuwait when discussing Lebanese ties with them. The only time Gemayel criticized the United States was when discussing its foreign policy on Israel and the Palestinians, where he only argued that the United States should do more toward establishing a two-state solution. Even amidst fears about granting Palestinian refugees Lebanese citizenship as part of a peace deal between the Palestinians and Israel, Gemayel was careful not to criticize either the United States or the United Nations.

The United Nations, its resolutions, its peacekeeping force at the Southern border, and the International Tribunal were also spoken of positively, with the UN reaffirming its support of Lebanon's sovereignty after its 2004 Resolution 1559. France sometimes made an appearance

in Amin Gemayel’s speeches in positive manner, except when he discussed Pierre Gemayel, Sr.’s activism against the French mandate. Gemayel spoke of his father’s activism against the French frequently to demonstrate how the Phalange had opposed all foreign forces on Lebanese soil long before any of the 8th of March parties ever came into existence. The table below lists the frequency of these international actors between 2005 & 2010:

International Actor	Relative Frequency
USA	8.6%
France	5.68%
UN	27.94%
Saudi Arabia	5.39%
Qatar	2.18%
Egypt	2.32%

Other countries mentioned include Kuwait, the Vatican, Italy, and Russia. Interestingly, with the exception of the United States’ ties with Israel, the Phalange did not criticize Hariri’s allies, such as France, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, and also, they continuously defended the United Nations’ resolutions on Lebanon, such as UN 1559 and UN 1701.

The UN-based International Tribunal was perhaps the aspect of the UN most discussed by the Phalange, partly because it was tasked with investigating Amin Gemayel’s son’s assassination, and that of another Phalange member of parliament in 2007, Antoine Ghanem. Two reasons are possible for such a high frequency. First, the Tribunal increased the chances of weakening Hezbollah and their allies through indicting a member or more of 8th of March bloc vis-à-vis Hariri and other 14th of March bloc figureheads, and second, it may potentially have ended Syria’s involvement in Lebanon if the International Tribunal indicted Bashar Assad for Rafic Hariri’s assassination. The Tribunal, especially after the May 8, 2008 events, became the sole promise for supporters to bring justice to the assassinated figureheads and exaggerated the power of the Tribunal to end foreign meddling and assassinations in Lebanon (see the same pattern in Chapter Eight as well with the Hariri Clan). The Tribunal appeared 146 times (21.25%) in their public speeches, and in all cases, the Phalange or Gemayels defended its legitimacy against Hezbollah and their allies.

Regional cleavages in the Iranian-Syrian axis versus the Arab League/West also translated into another unlikely alliance: The Phalange with Fatah and the Palestinian Authority in the face of Hamas and the 8th of March. Fatah, as part of the regional cleavage, stood with the Gemayels' 14th of March bloc, the Arab monarchs, and the West. Frequently, Gemayel argued that all non-Fatah militias in the Palestinian Refugees Camps needed to disarm and let Fatah, a 14th of March ally through positioning in the same international camp, manage the internal affairs of the Camps, as the PA represented them in the homeland, i.e. the West Bank. Gemayel expressed his support for the Palestinian Authority and Fatah 28 times (4.07%), a rarity in Phalange history as the party had criticized Fatah since the 1960s..More interestingly, with sponsorship from Walid Jumblatt, Fatah and the Phalange participated in a historic reconciliation, wherein Amin Gemayel reiterated the traditional support for the Palestinian people and the excellent historical ties between the Phalange and the Palestinians (Atwi 2008) and with Fatah. To appease Hariri's constituents without losing his own, Gemayel spoke about the Lebanese Civil War as a war to halt the rise of an alternative state in Lebanon, a conspiracy in which the Palestinians attempted to displace the Lebanese, without mentioning Fatah (e.g. Matar 2008). This reconciliation and revision of history was a result of the regional splits metamorphosing in Lebanon and in Palestinian territories. The reconciliation sought to further limit any attempts by the Opposition to divert Christians away from the 14th of March. In order not to lose supporters, though, Gemayel criticized pro-Syrian Palestinian allies in Lebanon, and their arms, 66 times (9.6%), and opposed the granting of Palestinian citizenship to the refugees in Lebanon 7.3% times, to maintain the tradition from the 1960 of criticizing arms outside of those held by the Lebanese state.

Arab Nationalism & Neutrality

With the clear influence of the international backers and the domestic allies on the Gemayels, Arab nationalism underwent dramatic changes. Before Hariri's death, Amin Gemayel and the Phalange had been on a collision course with Arab nationalism in terms of identities and arenas for other Arab states to meddle in Lebanese affairs. Syria imposed its version of Arab nationalism on Lebanon, which included war with Israel and the liberation of Palestine. Traditionally, Lebanese Christians regarded Arab nationalism as a means by which to bring back Islamic rule and "turned to a purely Lebanese nationalism" (Hanf 1993, 132). Lebanon was split between the Lebanese and Arab nationalists (Ibid), especially because the latter expressed solidarity with the Palestinians, including with their cross-border operations from Lebanese

territories. Against this ideal, the Phalange and others preached neutrality for Lebanon from the Arab-Israeli conflict while the Arab nationalists regarded neutrality as stemming from non-authentic Arab identity, given Western support for Israel (Ibid, 110-111). It has to be noted that the Arab League in 1969 had trespassed Lebanon's sovereignty when it legitimized Palestinian arms within Lebanon's refugee camps, which became training camps and bore the brunt of PLO operations (Traboulsi 2008, 154; Hanf 1993, 177).

Excluding Syria's meddling in the affairs of the Phalange through Pakradouni, the Gemayels changed the party's relations with Arab nationalism and the Arab League after the 14th of March came into existence in 2005. Instead of opposing any form of intervention from Arab states and the Arab League, Amin Gemayel and his party now supported it. Hariri's connection with Gulf translated into a new Arab nationalism: solidarity with Fatah, opposing Syria's meddling in Lebanese affairs, and respecting Lebanon's sovereignty. Gemayel continuously highlighted the excellent relations with the Arab world, excluding Syria, and how the Arab states expressed solidarity with the Lebanese state (FN2007i, see also 2007j). He also called, in a deviation from the history of his party, for the Lebanese to endorse Arab initiatives for the country and proclaimed trust in the Arab organization (FN 2008a; 2008j). When the Saudi King Abdullah launched the Arab-Arab understanding, Gemayel was among the first to declare his support for Abdullah to lead the unification of the Arab Front (FN 2009k). These Arab slogans and solidarity with the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories did not mean that Gemayel became in an overnight Arab nationalist due to the 14th of March and their shared alliance with Saudi Arabia, but, in a sense, Saudi Arabia spearheaded Arab unity to close the gap between the Syrian-Iranian axis and the rest of the Arab world. Moreover, the Arab League moved closer to the perspective of the Phalange in regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, since it launched the Arab Peace Initiative from Beirut.

Intra-Ethnic Competition

If the Phalange was attempting to depict the Opposition as serving foreign interests, intra-ethnic competition with Michel Aoun in specific, and other junior Pro-Syrian figureheads in general, included demonstrating that Aoun was not only deviating from serving Lebanon's interests but was also contributing to marginalizing Christians and Maronites. Indeed, the Phalange considered Aoun's sudden shift from 14th of March to joining the Syrian-Iranian bloc as a threat to the free Christians of Lebanon. Criticism of Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement and

defending of Bkirki increased the frequency of intra-ethnic competition in the public speeches of the Phalange. Pro-Syrian Christians were criticized 216 times, with Aoun and his Free Patriotic Movement holding a frequency of 136 speeches after the latter's transition from the 14th of March to the 8th of March. Such a high frequency of the deployment of frequently ethnic identities relevant to the Christians of Lebanon demonstrates the intense competition that Michel Aoun forced upon the Phalange.

Ethnic Appeal Category	Relative Frequency
Maronite	15.72%
Christian	42.94%
Regionalism	25.32%
Maronite Church	14.55%

Frequently, the Gemayels spoke in Christian-dominated areas, or listed Christian regions as part of their ethno-politics, including East Beirut, Metn, and Southern Christian villages (25.32%). In discussing these locations, they selected historical accounts of the Phalange facing off with Syrian or Palestinian forces. For example, Amin Gemayel, while visiting Zahlé and campaigning for his party's candidates, said: "Zahlé, hundreds of martyrs from Zahlé sacrificed their lives [...] their blood watered this city, this city represents the essence of the Phalange! My son Pierre Gemayel always believed that the martyrs of Zahlé saved Lebanon" (FN 2009I). This speech was given while attending a mass in St. Elias Church in honor of the hundreds of martyrs of Zahlé who had died in 1980 fighting against the Syrian army (see Chapter Four for details). There are countless identities manifesting in this short passage from a larger speech. Amin Gemayel invoked the history of Zahlé, a Christian-majority town in the Beka'a valley, closer to Syria. Zahlé's history not just any history, but one related to the Phalange and the 1980 crisis that Bashir Gemayel triggered and that caused Israeli warplanes to engage the Syrian military. This speech also highlighted the sacrifices of residents of Zahlé; suddenly, all the deceased became Phalange members, and Zahlé was directly linked to the sacrifice of another recently-deceased Gemayel, Pierre Jr. Given that Syria or its allies were direct suspects of both Gemayels, and caused the death of many constituents, who were predominantly Christian, Syria and its current allies represented the deaths of Phalangists past and present.

“The displaced” appeared after the July war of 2006 14 times between 2006 and 2010, often with reference to the War of the Mountains in 1983, where Walid Jumblatt ethnically cleansed Christian villages after Israel withdrew to Southern Lebanon. This file became salient because one million Lebanese were displaced during the July War of 2006 with Israel (Human Rights Watch 2007), most of them Shiites, For Amin Gemayel, he was rather surprised why this file was salient politically while the displaced file for the 1983 War of the Mountains was nowhere close to finish in bringing back the displaced and offer reparations. The Displaced file appeared also after the 2009 elections when Walid Jumblatt abandoned the 14th of March bloc by declaring a new page with Syria; Amin Gemayel reminded him of how his family had tried to isolate the Christians during the Civil War (Future News 2009n). This narrative fit better with the rhetoric of the traditional Phalange Pre-2005, in which Kamal Jumblatt no longer died for Lebanon’s sovereignty. This sudden reminder of the Jumblatt clan’s atrocities against the Christians was an indicator of the strength of collective narratives orchestrated by coalitions. When Walid Jumblatt left the 14th of March bloc, directly after the 2009 elections, the Phalange were free to highlight his family’s history against the Christians during the Lebanese Civil War.

“Federation” had been a critical issue or the Phalange during the Lebanese Civil War, and the 8th of March often accused the Phalange of resurrecting Bashir Gemayel and Antoine Najm’s Federal project, which included the division of Lebanon into five statelets sharing a common international border (Traboulsi 2008, 212). Amin Gemayel never spoke of the Civil War-era federalism on which Bashir Gemayel had focused during the Lebanese Civil War. Instead, the Phalange focused on decentralization, i.e., giving municipalities and local town councils more power instead of relying on the state. This demand came as a reaction to the institutional vacuum and the Opposition’s ease in crippling legislative, executive, and judiciary activities during their 1.5 years of protest when the parliament was shut down. Decentralization was discussed only 34 times (4.95%); however, each time, it spurred accusations from the opposition about reviving the sectarian federation project of his brother Bashir (see Federation Project of Bashir Gemayel in Traboulsi 2008, 211-212). Such claims against the Gemayels were often accompanied by references to their dark history with the Israeli invasion of 1982, and accusations that they were serving American-Israeli interests in the country.

Conclusion

While the Gemayels did not have close relations to Saudi Arabia or the United States like Hariri had with the Saudi monarchy, or Hezbollah with Tehran, or AMAL with Damascus, the party did demonstrate concern for the backers of their allies. In several cases, the Gemayels defended these international allies passionately, while criticizing the foreign backers of the 8th of March. Occasionally, the Gemayels and the Phalange acknowledged how the region's turmoil threatened Lebanon's stability, and how Saudi-Syrian talks might alleviate local tensions (e.g. in 2009 and 2010).

The Phalange's speeches appealed to Lebanese, Christian, Maronite, and clanship identities, reinforcing them with policies and objectives that resonated with Christians for decades. Each Gemayel, when speaking, spoke on behalf of the Phalange party, its legacy, its martyrs, and in the name of Christians. It is no surprise that while Amin's and his party's weekly statement came out as moderate; when Nadim and Sami spoke, ethnic identities become more salient and more intense, particularly when levelling criticism at Hezbollah and their allies. Sami, within his logic and in his supporters' eyes, did not exaggerate, when he said that it was the Phalange that was the real resistance, and neither did Nadim when he accused any follower of the Wilayat al-Faqih of being an agent against Lebanon's interests.

The 14th of March bloc, which included the Phalange, formed on the basis of opposing Syria and Iran's influence in Lebanon. Internationally, the bloc received support from many key countries, such as the members of the European Union, the United States, the Arab Gulf, and Egypt. The policies to which the Phalange traditionally appealed became more than salient for the rest of the 14th of March. The 14th of March also called upon policies that the Phalange had for decades held in high esteem but reshuffled them for twenty-first-century Lebanon. The ideas of empowering the Lebanese Army, dismantling militias, and neutrality often appeared in the speeches of other 14th of March leaders (see Chapter Eight). All these policies further contributed to healing the rift between the members of the 14th of March that had been witnessed during the Civil Wars (1958, 1975-1990) and the Syrian mandate. The Phalange ultimately endorsed Hariri's Arab nationalism, which revoked Syria's traditional rejectionist interpretations, and adhered to the Lebanese identity as a bridge between the West and the East, something to which the Future Movement also appealed (Ibid).

This phenomenon entailed an old-new Phalange: The Phalange that consistently defended Christian interests through opposing Syria's meddling in Lebanon, and newly defended an Arab Lebanon whose ties were strong with the West, particularly through the Arab Peace Initiative. To see a Hariri and a Gemayel run on the same ticket in 2005 was rather bizarre, given the historical tensions between Rafic Hariri being pro-Syrian, and Amin Gemayel anti-Syrian. The Gemayels skillfully maintained their identity as a Christian party, a Lebanese party, and an Arab nationalist party, all without losing supporters. These relations between the 14th of March's Druze, Christians, and Sunnis, and to a lesser extent some minor left-wing organizations, were based on their mutual hatred of Syria and Iran. The Phalange maintained its appeals on Christianity, but also appealed to the legacies of Rafic Hariri, the Jumblatts, Bashir Gemayel, and Pierre Gemayel, Jr. as one and the same, erasing the tensions between the political parties. To the audience of the 14th of March, the Gemayels spoke of all identities, altering relations between Jumblatt's Druze, Hariri's Sunnis, and their Christian supporters dramatically, since martyrdoms of prominent figures triggers the passions of supporter. When Hariri became Prime Minister in the end of 2009, he only gave the Gemayels one ministerial position in his government, while the other parties in the bloc held two or more. This marginalization of the Phalange in 2010 was the result of Amin Gemayel's refusal to turn a new page with Syria, and to legitimize Hezbollah's arms, while Saad Hariri, applying Saudi Arabia's Arab-Arab Understanding initiative, sought to develop a new relationship with Damascus. Nevertheless, in the period before 2010, Phalange supporters accepted Hariri's supporters as true Lebanese nationalists, and in return, the Phalange endorsed Hariri's Arab nationalism, which fit their Lebanese nationalism: peace with Israel, opposing Syria, opening to the West, and preserving Lebanon as a final entity. In return, Hariri baptized Bashir Gemayel as a Lebanese and Arab hero, and pushed his supporters to accept the legacy of the Gemayels as one of sacrifice and heroism (see Chapter Eight for details). These drastic identity shifts would not have been possible had it not been for their common hatred of the Syrian-Iranian axis, and their acceptance of joint allies, such as the United States, France, and Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 7: Michel Aoun and the Free Patriotic Movement

“Hezbollah is not a separate entity from the Syrian or Iranian regime. It depends on Iran for financing but all of its operations are controlled by the Syrians.” ~ Michel Aoun (as cited in Fife 2003)

“Hezbollah is part of the Lebanese resistance; as long as the land is occupied and the prisoners are detained, Hezbollah will continue to perform its role as resistance [...] Hezbollah is a 'decent' group; this is a point of both strength and weakness, which make them respectable in the way they deal with people.” ~ Michel Aoun (as cited in BBC, 2006).

Theoretical Framework

Michel Aoun represents the case of an ethnic leader switching foreign backers from one extreme to another. He initially supported the American invasion of Iraq and hoped that President Bush would include Syria and Hezbollah in his war on terror. He appealed to national and patriotic identities in his opposition to Syria’s hegemony over Lebanon and hoped that the increased American military presence in the region would democratize the Middle East. Aoun’s exile in France for 15 years, and the banning of his movement, the Free Patriotic Movement in Lebanon, meant that Aoun did not hold political calculations in regard to the unique Lebanese electoral system. After his return in 2005, Aoun entered the 2005 and 2009 elections, forcing Aoun to appeal upon Christian-based identities to win elections. In regard to the theme of the electoral system’s influential power, Michel Aoun and the Free Patriotic Movement present a rare opportunity to theoretically test the influence of the electoral system on ethnic parties. This test compares the power of an ethnic leader’s positioning from international alignments when designing or repackaging ethnic identities.

This chapter first will discuss the background of Michel Aoun during the Lebanese Civil War because Aoun often refers to his past to justify his decisions. Afterwards, the chapter discusses Michel Aoun in exile (1990 – 2005) and his hatred towards Syria and Hezbollah, along with his hopes for democracy spreading across the Arab world after the American invasion of Iraq in 2003. This section includes his speeches on multiple domestic and international actors who opposed or collaborated with Syria. The next section focuses on Michel Aoun’s sudden jump into the Pro-Syrian Camp and tracks how Aoun has re-conceptualized the Christian identity in

order not to lose supporters to his rival groups, such as the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces. The final section compares and contrasts Aoun's positions on the domestic and international actors before and after Rafic Hariri's death in 2005, including the types of identities he appealed upon, and the policies he has marketed in order to ideologically steer his supporters against domestic and international enemies. In a summary, this section demonstrates how Aoun have been able to market a Pro-Syrian narrative, similar to Hezbollah, without losing many of his supporters who have endured severe repression at Pro-Syrian domestic actors.

Background

Aoun was the last of the warlords to raise the white flag in 1990. He initially refused the Taef Accord and considered all agreements that maintained the presence of foreign armies within Lebanon illegitimate (Hanf 1993, 590-591). He was the staunchest opponent to the Syrian presence in Lebanon, calling it the "Occupation" (Traboulsi 2008, 242). Aoun declared a War of Liberation against Syria in 1989, which he lost. By the time the Syrian and Lebanese combined forces evicted him from the Presidential Palace, the surviving members of the Lebanese Parliament, the Arab League, had acknowledged the Taef Accord. Aoun's exile to France established complete Syrian control over Lebanon, except for the country's South, which remained under Israeli occupation until 2000 (Ibid; Hanf 1993, 589).

Smuggled to France by the French embassy, Aoun spent his fifteen years in exile criticizing Syria's presence and its local allies. By then, the United States had given Syria carte blanche to rule over Lebanon in return for the former's help against Saddam Hussein's forces in Kuwait (Hirst 2010, 213 – 215). Aoun was relentless in his criticism of Syria, resulting in his nascent movement, the Free Patriotic Movement, being blacklisted by the security apparatus. The pro-Syrian Lebanese regime suppressed his supporters in Lebanon to the extent that one could be arrested for merely belonging to Aoun's movement. The Lebanese security apparatus, along with the Lebanese Forces, orchestrated mass arrests of over one hundred of his supporters in a single night (Ghattas 2001). In Paris, Aoun's apartment was a fortress with bodyguards, unlike that of his neighbour, Amin Gemayel, who lived the quiet life for ten years in self-imposed exile (Heneghan 2000). While the pro-Syrian regime considered Amin Gemayel light opposition, Lebanese lawmakers issued multiple arrest warrants for Michel Aoun. In return, Aoun insulted those that issued them (Hourani 2003).

Like many major Christian figures in Lebanon's grand Civil War (1975-1990), Michel Aoun was initially part of Bashir Gemayel's group and was simultaneously in the Lebanese army. He was part of the military brigades that sided with the Christian Lebanese Front in 1975. He played an essential role during the Two Years' War (1975-1976), especially in successfully laying siege to the Palestinian refugee camp of Tel Zaatar, and in its subsequent destruction (al-Jazeera Documentary 2001). In 1980, he co-authored a plan called "Study for Seizure of Power by Bashir" with Phalange ideologue Antoine Najm, in anticipation of the end of President Sarkis' term in office (Traboulsi 2008, 211-212). By then, Aoun was the brigadier general of the 8th Brigade, stationed in Mt. Lebanon. The Phalange expected that a political vacuum would hit Lebanon at the end of President Sarkis' term and feared that this vacuum would give the Syrians and their allies, the Palestinians, an opportunity to reign over Lebanon (Ibid). The plan thus included an immediate alliance with Israel and the forging of a mutual defence strategy. This document became the foundation for the Lebanese Forces' and Israeli Defence Forces' coordination (Ibid). After the assassination of President-elect Bashir Gemayel, Aoun became the commander-in-chief of the Lebanese Army under President Amin Gemayel (Hanf 1993, 296).

In his final days as president, in 1988, Amin Gemayel (1982-1988) appointed Michel Aoun prime minister. Aoun's promotion from army chief to prime minister came when Prime Minister Hoss resigned and refused to resume his position despite the fact that President Gemayel refused to accept his resignation. Hoss ultimately retracted his resignation and a crisis of two governments resulted (Traboulsi 2008, 240). Aoun's star rose in the Christian enclaves, even though he had never resorted to Phoenicianism or the Christian style of Lebanese nationalism. Nonetheless, the General often equated a free Lebanon with the Christian regions being un-controlled by the Syrian military and its allies. He became something of a cult leader, defining himself and his faction of the Lebanese Army as "the People" (Ibid, 243). When he commenced his daily speeches with 'O Glorious Lebanese People!' it was in front of Christian supporters carrying his posters (Ibid). He refused to acknowledge either the government of Salim Hoss in West Beirut or the President-elect, René Mouawad. Mouawad was the first president to be elected after the remaining members of the 1972 parliament signed the Taef Accord. He was also the first president to be assassinated in the post-Taef era. Aoun received the blame for the assassination, since he had refused to leave the Presidential Palace (see Hanf 1993, 594-595).

His final two wars were against Syria: The War of Liberation, and, internally, a war in East Beirut against Samir Geagea, head of the Lebanese Forces, after the militia became autonomous (Hanf 1993, 598 – 602). Aoun lacked the military capability to defeat Syria and lost the War of Liberation. In the war against Geagea in the Christian enclave of Beirut, he destroyed the last remaining Christian power by attacking the Lebanese Forces in what became called the War of Cancellation. His wars cost Lebanon “1,500 killed, and 3,500 wounded, 25,000 destroyed apartments, the decline of the Lebanese pound from LL 550 to LL 1100 against the U.S. Dollar, and the emigration of more than 100,000 Lebanese, mostly Christians, to Canada, the USA, and Australia” (Traboulsi 2008, 243). It was after Syria’s support for the U.S.’ Operation Shield against Saddam Hussein in 1991 that Syria was able to, swiftly, along with a Lebanese Army faction loyal to it under the leadership of Emile Lahoud, storm the Presidential Palace and slaughter every remaining soldier loyal to Aoun, a day that his supporters continue to commemorate (October 13th) (Hanf 1993, 611).

In Paris (1992-2005), Aoun remained steadfast in his refusal to acknowledge the Taef Accord, the election of President Elias Hrawi, or Syria’s presence as a mandate. His rhetoric against Syrian hegemony over Lebanon was widespread among his Christian supporters in Lebanon (Traboulsi 2008, 240 – 243), but not at the international level (Hanf 1994, 608 – 609). In his view, Syria had occupied Lebanon, and he appealed to the international community to pressure Syria to leave. His pleas fell on deaf ears, and Western powers distanced themselves from him. For example, in 2000, Aoun was twice denied a visa for the U.S., despite pressure from Congressman Engels (Edinger 2000). His speeches resonated negatively with the pro-Syrian government. On one fateful evening, the Lebanese security apparatus arrested over 140 of his supporters and continued arrests for several days afterward (see Ziade 2001). The crackdowns were routine; however, this instance was the first time mass arrests took place in a single night. These arrests led to a cyclical wave of crackdowns and counter-protests: the apparatus would arrest some of Aoun’s supporters, and other supporters would protest in response, which got them arrested and flagged in their turn.

In the year 2000, two significant developments occurred that broke a decade-long political stalemate in the country. The first was a statement by Cardinal Sfair, the head of the Maronite Church, that the Syrians had overstayed their welcome and needed to leave; the second was that Israel pulled out of Lebanon, sparking fear that Lebanon might become the next Kosovo (see Heneghan 2000). However, Syria’s allies quickly argued that the war would not be over

until both the Americans and the Zionists were defeated (Mansour 2000). They declared that anyone who demanded the withdrawal of Syria's forces served Israeli interests (see Ziade 2000; Rabil 2001). This discourse was used to target anyone who opposed Syria's military presence in Lebanon, primarily Qornet Shahwan Gathering and Aoun's various movements: Syria was still needed to face Israeli threats to Lebanon's sovereignty, in this rhetoric, which was tantamount to an open-ended invitation for Syria to remain in the country. Even though Syria was supposed to stay in Lebanon for two years after the Lebanese Civil War ended in 1990 (Traboulsi 2008, 245)¹⁰, it overextended its stay without any international repercussions for a decade. The brokers of the Taef Accord, the Arab League, had no problem with Syria's repressive tactics in Lebanon (AFP2000a). The judiciary did not fare well under Syrian hegemony, either. The Public Prosecutor, Adnan Addoum, constantly threatened to arrest Aoun or anyone else who threatened relations with a sisterly state. Agreeing with Addoum, the Lebanese Army indirectly compared Aoun and other anti-Syrian figures to agents seeking to threaten national interests (Ziadeh 2001; Ghattas 2001).

By 2003, Aoun's isolation ended internationally when he gained an audience in the United States. Aoun was invited to the U.S. Congress to give a speech on Syria's occupation of Lebanon. In the speech, he described Syria as a sponsor of terror. Without fearing any backlash from Syria, he called upon the U.S. Congress to incorporate the war on Syria into the war on terror (LCCC 2003). He described Hezbollah as a terrorist organization that was a Syrian proxy and called for assistance to have the party disarmed (Ibid). He added that if any war were to break out between Lebanon and Israel, one could be certain that Syria had triggered it, due to its control over Hezbollah (Ibid).

Just as he was alone in 1989 in Lebanon, he was alone again within the Lebanese political context when the entire anti-Syrian opposition condemned his speech as dangerous; meanwhile, he scoffed at the mounting accusations and charges of treason from Syrian loyalists (see for example Hourani 2003; Assaf 2003b; Al-Azar 2003a, Mroue 2003; Tele-liban 2003). Aoun kept celebrating the American invasion of Iraq, hoping that it would bring democracy to the region (Daifallah 2003), and welcomed any means of liberating Lebanon from Syria's clutches (Fife, 2003; Enman 2003). Indeed, at one point, he linked the success of the American mission

¹⁰ In 1992, Syria was supposed to withdraw its troops to the bordering Biq'a Valley as a first step for withdrawal, this process did not materialize till 2005 as a result of domestic and international pressures (see Traboulsi 2008, 245; Ladki 2005)

in Iraq to the overthrow of the Assad regime and talked about Hezbollah as a non-Lebanese party, an extension of Iran and Syria on Lebanese soil (Fife 2003; Enman 2003). By the end of 2003, Aoun's party, the Free Patriotic Movement, was able to participate in a by-election in Alley-Baada, where his candidate ran against both the opposition and the pro-Syrian bloc and lost with a small margin. That performance convinced Aoun that he was ready for the national elections (AFP 2003).

By 2004, Saudi Arabia's and the U.S.' main political actor, Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, refused the renewal of President Emile Lahoud's term. The United Nations Security Council issued UN Resolution 1559, also called the Syrian Accountability Act. To demonstrate to the international community that the Lebanese wanted the Syrian mandate over them, Assad decided to renew Lahoud's term, a grave mistake that pushed Rafiq Hariri and Walid Jumblatt toward the Qornet Shahwan Gathering (Hirst 2010, 300-305). Syria had miscalculated; the Lebanese opposition was no longer confined to a gathering of Christian politicians, but had developed into a full inter-sectarian opposition, in what became known as the Bristol Conference Gathering. Aoun already hated Emile Lahoud; the latter was the general who had replaced him, and also the army head who had received the orders from President Hrawi to charge the Presidential Palace and slaughter Aoun's soldiers (Hanf 1993, 611 – 613). It was not until Hariri's assassination, however, that Aoun's supporters marched side-by-side with the Bristol Conference (Choucair 2005, 2); they later participated extensively in the counter-Syrian protests led by the 14th of March. After Syria's withdrawal, Michel Aoun returned to Lebanon after fifteen years of exile (BBC 2005s).

Aoun's Speeches, 2000 to Mid-2005

In his exile, Aoun's speeches focused on sovereignty and freedom. The same applied to speeches made by members of his Free Patriotic Movement active in Lebanon. Interestingly, despite his high popularity with Christians, Aoun rarely resorted to appealing to ethnic identities. Out of 213 speeches, the terms "Christian" or "Maronite" appeared only 18 times. Even within these 18 speeches/interviews, he did not refer to himself as Christian. Instead, he either praised Cardinal Sfair's stance on the Syrian "Occupation" or criticized him for not doing enough. The other instance in which he mentioned religion was in a speech in which he warned that Syria was attempting to create sectarian strife and marginalize the Opposition as a Christian movement instead of a national one (ex. see Daily Star 2000b). The only instances, in which

Aoun appealed to Christian-related identities, without mentioning them directly, were during periods of war, when Christian supporters cheered for him. In his appeals for support from his base, at least 5.6% of the time he stressed his 'heroics' against Syria, especially during his failed War of Liberation (1988-1990). In parallel, his supporters demonstrated a closer affiliation with the Christian identity, due to Aoun's indirect appeals to his wartime era, and the fact that the Lebanon of which he spoke from that era represented primarily Christians under his direct rule (Traboulsi 2008 242-2430. For example, his supporters held masses or prayers for the fallen soldiers of October 13, 1990, the day Aoun had been expelled from the Presidential Palace, which were followed with security crackdowns and arrests (see Daily Star 2000d).

Aoun appealed mostly to non-ethnic identities for support. For example, he used the Lebanese identity in 88.26% of his speeches. In contrast, Arab identities were not very important within his speeches, as he held the Arab League responsible for Lebanon's situation. The Arab identity appeared in only 5.16% of his speeches, often in a negative light. The Western identity appeared when he was making appeals for help against Syria's occupation of Lebanon (4.2%), and the Middle Eastern identity appeared only when he was discussing regional developments (1.8%). Aoun despised the Arab identity, and he urged his supporters to steer away from it. In one interview, Aoun showed his loathing of Arab nationalism by calling it a tool for foreign intervention into local affairs. He said: "Some political parties are lost between their Lebanese nationhood and the Arab sisterhood, therefore facilitating the foreign interference here through weakening social ties" (Raad 2005). He added that Arab nationalism was the antithesis of democracy, since the former only offered dictatorship models instead of actual unity (Ibid).

Syria, in contrast, occupied the bulk of his speeches; indeed, Syria was used as the antithesis of the Lebanese identity and appeared negatively in 75.12% of his speeches and interviews. For Aoun, Syria was a foreign country that had no business being in Lebanon. He called upon the world to intervene in Lebanon in the same way interventions had occurred in East Timur, Kuwait, and Kosovo (Edinger 2000). Aoun and his followers constantly compared Syria to Israel, calling it an occupying force in Lebanon (Reuters 2000a). More interestingly, the retired general always saw any war between Lebanon and Israel, during his exile, as Syrian-hatched, a ploy by which Syria could justify its presence in Lebanon, even though he considered Syria, the United States, and Israel to have collaborated to bring about his downfall in 1990 (Daily Star 2001d). Indeed, Aoun's fears, similar to Gemayel's, were that Syria would create carnage in Southern Lebanon to justify its presence in Lebanon (Heneghan 2000), a fear that became justified when

the Lebanese government decided not to deploy the Lebanese Army in the South after the Israeli Defence Forces' withdrawal (Daily Star 2000c). Sometimes, Aoun described Syria as worse than Israel, a taboo in Lebanese politics due to Israel's 1982 invasion and its treatment of the Palestinians. His rhetoric was that Israel was releasing Lebanese detainees while Syria, through its Lebanese security apparatus, was arresting its opponents on Lebanese territory (Yehia 2000). These statements provoked accusations of treason from pro-Syrians, a charge that Aoun constantly denied (Daily Star 2002e), complaining that "any free movement in Lebanon against Syrian forces is falsely accused of collaboration with Israel" (Daily Star 2002c). For Aoun, Syria's ultimate goal was the annexation of Lebanon, a recurrent theme in his speeches. For example, in one instance he said: "We are being pursued because national rights in Lebanon have been cancelled and because we have been subjugated by a regime that does not recognize Lebanese citizenship and that wants to annex Lebanon to Syria through coercion, not free choice" (BBC 2002).

Aoun's hatred for the Syrian occupation led him to testify in front of the U.S. Congress, during which testimony he described Syria as a sponsor of terror and declared that Hezbollah and Hamas were Syrian and Iranian extensions, and that the Middle East peace process required a military offensive against Syria. He stressed that "any perceived war on terror must include Syria; it was Syria's proxies that attacked the American Embassy and US Marines compound," referring to the bombardment of the American Embassy and U.S. Marines' barracks during the Israeli invasion of 1982 (LCCC 2003).

He similarly showed no mercy to Syria's local ally, Hezbollah, stating that "[t]he restoration of Lebanese sovereignty is an absolute necessity if terrorism is to be defeated. With Syria's withdrawal, it is instrumental that all armed units are disarmed, so they won't cause destruction" (ibid). Indeed, for Aoun, Syria had only entered Lebanon to protect its Palestinian militia proxies (ibid). The general regarded Hezbollah as a terrorist group (LCCC 2003; M. Hatoum 2004), and its arms as illegal (Boustany 2004). He considered Hezbollah to not even be Lebanese, but merely a tool to serve Syria's military interests and to create chaos to justify the latter's presence in Lebanon (Raad 2004a). He considered Hezbollah to be "not a separate entity from the Syrian or Iranian regime. It depends on Iran for financing, but all of its operations are controlled by the Syrians" (Fife 2003). For Aoun, Hezbollah was thus not a local party, but a

proxy for Syria (LCCC 2003). As Hezbollah claimed the Sheba'a Farms¹¹ as Lebanese, Aoun considered the claim a Syrian game to blackmail Lebanon and an excuse for Hezbollah to keep its resistance arms (Raad 2004). Out of his 213 speeches, Aoun tackled Hezbollah 40 times, out of which 28 times he severely criticized it, which means that he criticized Hezbollah in 17.84% of all his speeches. Iran, which was not yet regionally involved in expansionary politics (at least, the Gulf-Persian cold war had not yet publicly begun), was only mentioned 6 times, 5 of which were simply to identify Iran as the financier of Hezbollah (2.35% of the speeches).

Syria's other Lebanese allies received their fair share of criticism. They appeared 147 times, in 22.44% of Aoun's speeches, and he was relentless against them. His popularity continued as he used comical derogatory terms to portray them as brainless politicians who receive their orders from Damascus. Some of terms he used include "Party of Clappers" (Mansour 2000) and "Laughing Stock within the international community" (Ibid). He argued that Damascus decides the winners of Lebanon's parliamentary elections (AF 2000b), called politicians "rubber-stampers" instead of "voters" (Kawas 2000), "retarded people" (Daily Star 2000d), "puppets" and "appointees" (BBC 2001a; Reuters 2004; Dakroub 2004), "boot-licking employees" (Daily Star 2001e), "vile people" (Boustani 2002), "corrupt, Syria's political vassals" (Daifallah 2003), and "supporters" or "listeners with no questions asked" (LCCC 2003). Several speeches particularly addressed the security officers indirectly appointed by Syria. He remained adamant about repeatedly decrying all arrest warrants against him by the Lebanese judiciary as fabricated. The Lebanese President particularly was criticized as a puppet who received his orders from Damascus in 6.1% of the speeches. Lahoud's activities and speeches throughout his first term as Lebanese president provoked further wrath from Aoun, who hated him, as discussed above.

International actors, excluding Syria, Iran, and Israel, were mentioned in 70 speeches, i.e., 32.86%. The lion's share of mentions went to the United States, which was named in 31.25% of the speeches that tackled international actors, and the United Nations, which was mentioned in 19.05% of these speeches. In all cases, the speeches focused on the importance of implementing UN resolutions, or declared that the United States was not doing enough for Lebanon. Before the anticipated invasion of Iraq, Aoun considered the presence of the U.S.

¹¹ The Sheba'a Farms are disputed territories between Lebanon, Syria, and Israel. The United Nations recognizes the Sheba'a Farms as part of Syria's Golan Heights. Currently, the Farms are under Israeli occupation from the 1967 war. Hezbollah argued that the Sheba'a Farms are Lebanese and considered their 2000 liberation from Israel incomplete. Israel stated that if Syria produced documents to prove that the Farms are Lebanese, they would withdraw (see Kauffman 2010 for details).

Military in the Middle East in an extremely positive light, calling the U.S. a bringer of democracy and destroyer of dictatorships. One can say that Aoun, despite the United States abandoning him for over a decade, had a listening ear in the U.S. Congress. Strangely, France, his home of exile, only appeared in 3.69% of his speeches, and references usually appeared only when he was discussing francophone events or thanking the state for hosting him during his period of exile.

It is noteworthy that Aoun lumped Rafic Hariri with the pro-Syrian camp, since the latter's newspaper followed the same "resistance" discourse against Aoun and the opposition, dubbing Aoun's ally, MP Nayla Mouawad, wife of the assassinated President-elect René Mouawad, the "Lebanese Golda Meir," and claiming that Aoun was a dangerous man (Ibrahim 2002). In another example, the Hariri "Future" Newspaper's Editor-in-Chief opposed even the very suggestion of Syrian withdrawal. In his exact words: "In the past, they were lined up beside the agents of Israel against their fellow citizens during the Israeli invasion in 1982. Then they took part in the war with Michel Aoun against Syria and most of the Lebanese" (AFP 2000c). Aoun was no stranger to this kind of criticism; Hariri's cabinet continuously referred to him, in its official statements, as serving American interests, while paying tribute to Syria for helping to liberate Southern Lebanon (Kaldawi and Kawas 2003). Perhaps Aoun's aggressive tone in his statements against Rafic Hariri explains why Hariri's son did not collaborate with him after Rafic was assassinated. In one typical instance, Aoun said: "Corrupt politicians, in power with Syria's support, have divided up the various offices under cover of a fake conflict" between President Emile Lahoud and Prime Minister Rafic Hariri. He said that such officials "throw themselves in the arms of Syrian occupation, which blackmails everybody and uses up the economic and human resources of the Lebanese society" (AFP 2004b; Boustani 2004b).

In terms of intra-ethnic competition, Aoun was adamant in criticizing the anti-Syrian opposition in 17.37% of the speeches. Qornet Shahwan Gathering, the Phalange, and Cardinal Sfair, among others, were criticized frequently for not doing enough against Syria. They fell from grace with him especially when they opposed an American invasion of Syria (Al Azar 2003; Boustany 2004c). The Qornet Shahwan Gathering feared that Aoun's calls for a war on Syria would get them lumped with him as "traitors," allied with Israel in the eyes of Syria, an accusation often reserved for Aoun. When describing his allies, he either referred to them as "the Opposition," declared that they were simply not practicing their rights or decried their reticence in speaking against the Syrian mandate, including their opposition of an American invasion of Syria (Al-Azar

2003a). Cardinal Sfair, despite igniting the Christian street to demand Syrian withdrawal in 2000 and occasionally earning Aoun's respect (BBC 2002; Matta 2001a), also received his share of criticism from Aoun, particularly that he was not doing enough to safeguard the latter's return to Lebanon (BBC 2002), an accusation also leveled against the Qornet Shahwan Gathering (Abu Rizk 2001).

As for Israel, Aoun exonerated it of the charge of triggering wars against Lebanon. He considered Lebanon's open-ended war with Israel a Syrian fabrication to suppress the Opposition. He severely criticized the Lebanese government when Israel offered to withdraw from Lebanon in 2000, because the pro-Syrian cabinet refused unless Syria was participating in the negotiations (see Reuters 2000a). He did, however, consider the Israeli presence, like the Syrian, a foreign occupation of Lebanon (Ibid). Aoun brushed off the accusations of the judiciary that he served Israeli interests by stating that the Lebanese judiciary itself should be placed on trial (e.g., Daily Star 2000e) and that it needed to stop these senseless fabrications (E. Hatoum 2005). When Shimon Peres praised Aoun's efforts to liberate Lebanon, Aoun said that he "should shut up!" (L. Hatoum 2005b). Aoun blamed Israel for the Palestinian refugee crisis in Lebanon, a topic that he mentioned 6.57% of the time. As for Israel, he criticized it 11.74% of the time within his speeches.

It is no surprise, then, that "Freedom" (127 times, 59.62%), "Sovereignty" (143 times, 67.14%), and "Independence" (99 times, 46.48%) topped Aoun's and the Free Patriotic Movement's demands. They were also used as chants when the Free Patriot Movement's supporters were protesting or suffering brutal arrests. In parallel, "Repression," "Justice," and "Security" were most often used to reflect the harsh situation that Lebanon, and Aoun's supporters, experienced. In the coding, "repression" included mentions of arrests, censorship, and threats. The fact that Aoun discussed such repressive mechanisms 128 times (60.09%) reflects the extent to which his party supporters were suffering at the hands of the local security apparatus.

Mid-2005 to 2010: A String of Unholy Alliances

Aoun returned from exile on May 7, 2005, amidst a vast number of supporters. His return and electoral breakaway from the 14th of March bloc, despite his supporters' participation on that day, signalled that he was paving a new pathway, away from corruption. He allied with Syria's junior partners for the 2005 parliamentary elections, while targeting the rampant corruption of

Syria's leftovers, embodied by Hariri's Future Movement and Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party, both held shaky tie with Damascus. He did not target Syria's closest allies, such as AMAL's Speaker of Parliament, Nabih Berri, or President Emile Lahoud. He called for a new page with Syria and succeeded in capturing most of the Christian constituencies in 2005. In 2006, he cemented a deal with Hezbollah in a jointly issued Memorandum of Understanding between the two groups.

Aoun's relationship with Hezbollah is bizarre. In justifying their alliance, Aoun commences by saying that Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement are the only two parties that did not commit mass atrocities during the Civil War (Bakri 2006). This assertion is inaccurate; Hezbollah was involved in a fierce and destructive struggle against AMAL during the Civil War, a battle to capture the Shiite territories in Beirut's suburbs, and actions in the South (Hirst 2010, 235-237). On paper, the Free Patriotic Movement emerged after the Civil War ended and thus, on a technicality, the Free Patriotic Movement cannot have been responsible for any mass atrocities that ex-general Aoun committed during the Civil War. If, however, we consider the historical narrative of the Free Patriotic Movement to reflect a continuation of Aoun's activities from his army days, then there are plenty of atrocities for which to hold the movement accountable. The first would be the Tel Zaatar massacre in 1976, where the Lebanese Army, along with the Christian-dominated Lebanese Front, ended the siege of the Palestinian refugee camp with displacement and massacre (Traboulsi 2008, 196, 200-201). In 2003, in an interview for Al-Jazeera's "War for Lebanon" documentary, Aoun took credit for the successful siege of the refugee camp, where hundreds of Palestinians and Lebanese were massacred, but insisted the militias were responsible for the atrocities. He argued that he had contacted the Red Cross to assist the casualties and overlooked that it was the army that had formed the siege force (Al-Jazeera "War for Lebanon" Part V, 28:50-29:42; Traboulsi 2008, 201). The general's amnesia about controversial events included his War of Cancellation against Samir Geagea in 1989 wherein Aoun's Lebanese Army, a power of 15,000 soldiers, clashed with Samir Geagea's Lebanese Forces, a power of 10,000 militants, in East Beirut (Hanf 1993, 572-573). The other war that escaped his memory was the War of Liberation against Syria in 1988, despite the fact that every year, his supporters celebrated the commencement of this War of Liberation, at times running the risk of security brutality and arrests (AFP 2004c; 2004d; AP 2004a). The estimated number of casualties from Aoun's wars is 1500 Lebanese dead and 3500 wounded (Traboulsi 2008, 243).

The second theme for Michel Aoun in justifying his alliance with Hezbollah focused on fighting corruption in the state. Neither the Free Patriotic Movement nor Hezbollah had ever been part of the government. Hezbollah had held parliamentary seats in the past, but never a cabinet position until Syria withdrew (Traboulsi and Khoury 2008 [2006], 355). This issue of corruption raises the question of 1988 when Aoun, as head of the military, became a controversial Prime Minister after President Amin Gemayel's term ended. Does the history of the Free Patriotic Movement intertwine with those events? Aoun's government deposited tax funds in personal accounts due to the location of the central bank in West Beirut, outside his army's jurisdiction in East Beirut.¹² His MoU with Hezbollah in 2006 was not a public alliance at first, although all party activities demonstrated there was a dedicated alliance between the two parties. However, Aoun, in order to not lose his popular base, insisted that his relationship with Hezbollah was merely an understanding on national affairs. This MoU became the foundation of an alliance that would parachute him, eleven years later, to the Lebanese Presidency in 2016. Within the same year, Aoun became the spearhead of the 8th of March and its spokesperson. The Free Patriotic Movement was in perfect synchronization with the 8th of March in political demands and mass mobilizations. When asked if he would lose the support of the Christian street because of this new alignment, Aoun's response was that "Christians are 'mature enough,' and their choice is clear, 'a patriotic line within the framework of dialogue and understanding. Christians are smart to choose a patriotic line; our MOU concerns all Lebanese and not just the Christians'" (BBC 2006; 2006a; Bakri 2006a; Daily Star 2006b)

In line with the "Freedom, Sovereignty, and Independence" protest chant, the Free Patriotic Movement argued, as its third justification, the MoU came into being in defence of Lebanon's sovereignty (Daily Star 2006c). Aoun expanded upon the idea that through comprehension and dialogue Hezbollah would disarm. He also insisted that he had no relations whatsoever to Syria or Iran, as the MoU stopped at the Lebanese border (Ibid). More surprisingly, Aoun said that specific conditions had forced Hezbollah to carry arms, and that until those conditions changed, Hezbollah would be within its legal rights to carry arms and resist the Israeli occupation of the Sheba'a Farms (el-Ghoul 2006). This rhetoric conflicted with Aoun's earlier rhetoric, that Sheba'a Farms was a Syrian fabrication so that Hezbollah could maintain its arms and Syria

¹² Beirut was split into West Beirut and East Beirut. The West Beirut held a majority of left-wing and Muslim militants, and East Beirut had a rump Lebanese Army, and Christian militias, with the Phalange and their military successor, the Lebanese Forces, dominated. The Central Bank was located in Ras Beirut, West Beirut.

justified its presence in Lebanon for security purposes (ex. see Raad 2004). Sheba'a would become the primary justification for Aoun's defence of Hezbollah's arms. Before his return, Aoun considered the Sheba'a Farms to be Syrian, a fabrication allowing Damascus to hold Lebanon hostage to its foreign policy. After his return, Sheba'a was mentioned 26 times between 2006 and 2010: 13 times in 2006 and 8 times in 2007. The sovereignty topic shifted in emphasis from the Eastern borders to the Southern borders of Lebanon. By 2009, Aoun simply stopped using the Sheba'a Farms as a political appeal and bluntly took up the pro-Syrian rhetoric that had been used to suppress his followers during his years of exile: Hezbollah was armed for the purpose of resisting Israel, and the weapons were considered God-sent.

For Aoun, Hezbollah became a Lebanese party, whose loyalty was solely to Lebanon and no one else. There remained no trace of his former argument that Hezbollah was a terrorist organization or an extension to Syria (i.e. not a national product). Aoun argued now that Hezbollah needed to integrate into the social life of Lebanon gradually, disregarding that its fighters were already Lebanese, and his narrative stressed that the liberation of Sheba'a would lead to dialogue on the national defence strategy (M. Hatoum 2006). He downgraded his earlier position that Iran financed Hezbollah and that the party received orders from Damascus; instead, he stated that Hezbollah had solely spiritual links with Iran, saying that "we should not put obstacles before religious and cultural ties; Hizbullah has the right to be linked to the authorities of Najaf in Iraq, and Qom in Iran" (Daily Star 2006d). Despite the religious dimension of Hezbollah, secular dialogue for national interests was the objective of their MoU (Zaatari 2006).

Aoun's alliance with Hezbollah held steady amidst an international and Arab blackout of reports of Israeli atrocities against the Lebanese people. Aoun, in the past, had condemned Hezbollah's cross-border military operations against Israel, but this time, he stood with Hezbollah against the 14th of March, the United Nations, and the Arab League. The Arab League in specific, fearing Iranian expansion, had remained mostly silent throughout the war against Israel until a massacre mid-way throughout the war forced it to condemn Israel's attack on Lebanon's infrastructure. Aoun's alliance with Hezbollah demonstrated that the largest parliamentary Christian bloc stood behind the "Islamic" party, and thus that the Israeli war on Lebanon was not solely against Hezbollah; rather, it was against Lebanon as a whole. Aoun now blamed many actors for the war, but no longer Hezbollah. He blamed the silence of the Arab states, which had accused Hezbollah of launching an uncalculated, wild adventure, for not immediately

demanding a ceasefire, saying “they [Arab states] are firmly required to at least call for a ceasefire immediately, so that we can visualize a comprehensive solution to the issue, not a partial solution” (BBC2006c). He accused Israel of waging war in violation of the Geneva Conventions by bombing the state’s infrastructure (Raad 2006). He expressed solidarity with Hezbollah and added that “there is no one in Lebanon that effectively makes decisions of peace and war; only Israel [...] Israel will fail to destroy Hezbollah” (Raad 2006b). The United Nations also came under his harsh criticism, because “the United Nations condemned the capture of two Israeli soldiers whereas it did not condemn the Israeli war crimes committed against children and women in Lebanon” (BBC 2006d).

Aoun capitalized on Hezbollah’s performance in the July War and criticized the United States for backing Israel. This criticism was the second step in re-defining Christians in Lebanon as anti-Israeli and pro-Hezbollah. Not only was Hezbollah no longer described as a terrorist organization, but also Aoun referred to the party as a local resistance army against invaders, since no mere terrorist group could organize militarily and face off with the most potent military force in the region (BBC 2006e). Furthermore, Aoun argued, Hezbollah was not fighting outside Lebanon during the July War, but within its borders, which confirmed the organization’s “resistance” title. He concluded that his movement had already proposed a solution to Hezbollah’s arms, and that “we would not have had got to this war had they adopted those solutions. We have two simple rights: 40 square kilometres in the Shab'a Farms and three prisoners in Israel” (Ibid). Aoun exonerated Hezbollah of any wrongdoing; it was Israel that held the keys to the Lebanese-Israeli conflict, and the United States had chosen to ignore Israel’s massacres.

Aoun thus baptized Hezbollah as the national resistance and re-wrote their history, and his speeches henceforth centered on using his bloc, as a Christian bloc, to give Hasan Nasrallah a national flavor. He blindly accepted Hezbollah’s statements, including, for example, Nasrallah’s promise that Hezbollah’s weapons would never point inwards into Lebanon. The ex-general reaffirmed that “Hasan Nasrallah, whose credibility has been tested by both the Lebanese and the world, has offered the best reassurance through Hezbollah’s behaviour since 1982” (BBC 2006f). The recurrent theme, a dramatic departure from his stances before his return, was that Hezbollah’s operations no longer threatened the Lebanese state and their weapons were no longer gateways for Syria to hold the country hostage. The target of blame shifted completely; Aoun now spoke against Israel. In one representative speech, Aoun stated: “Hasan Nasrallah

wanted an exchange, nothing more. But Israel changed the ground rules by responding with total war. Hezbollah made a mistake, but Israel made war: it is not the same thing! (BBC 2006g).” He added: “This war was pointless and absurd: Hezbollah cannot be destroyed. It is not an armed group but a people” (Ibid).

This alliance with Hezbollah also forced Aoun appeal to Christian identities in order to demonstrate that the majority of Christians supported the 8th of March. These appeals increased when Aoun demanded a share of the government on the grounds that the Christians were not represented. After the resignation of Hezbollah and AMAL ministers from the Siniora government, along with an Orthodox minister who represented President Lahoud in 2006, Aoun added his voice to Nasrallah’s to say that the government was unconstitutional since neither the Shiites nor the Christians were represented in the cabinet, despite the fact that the 14th of March bloc held a parliamentary majority (BBC 2006i). The Christian appeals also had other purposes. Firstly, he needed to reassure his supporters that he did not take orders from Hezbollah, but that, on the contrary, the two parties were on equal ground, each holding a majority within their respective community. He described the relationship thusly: “They are political power, and we are a political power and we coordinate matters with each other [...] Originally, they did not demand such a change or expansion of the government, but they now demand this because of our demand” (BBC 2006h). Second, with President Emile Lahoud’s term coming to a close, Aoun marketed himself as a candidate for presidency since he held the largest Christian bloc, even though the 8th of March bloc were a parliamentary minority at the time.

As Siniora¹³ refused to resign amidst 8th of March-led mass protests (December 2006-May 2008), and in parallel to the formation of the international tribunal for investigating Rafic Hariri’s death, Aoun continued to frame his relations with Hezbollah and the 8th of March more positively, despite his insistence that he had no alliance with either, simply an understanding. Furthermore, he used the MoU to discuss the multiple UN resolutions calling for Hezbollah to disarm, arguing that no one had offered a mechanism for how that disarmament should proceed. His suggestion was dialogue, once Sheba’a was liberated, and he argued that the dialogue needed to be shaped similarly to his MoU with Hezbollah. For the ex-general,

¹³ Fouad Siniora was the Prime Minister of the 14th of March-led governments from 2005 until 2009. He was a member of the Future Bloc, a former minister of Finance, and Rafic Hariri’s close friend and advisor. The First Siniora government (2005-2008) held a majority of 14th of March members with symbolic participation by Hezbollah and AMAL, who did not hold any veto power over executive affairs.

disarming Hezbollah through other means would lead to a civil war (BBC 2007a; 2007b; 2007c; 2008a). This theme left Hezbollah's arms untouchable, without a timetable for disarmament, since neither Israel nor the UN recognized the Sheba'a Farms as Lebanese (BBC 2007d). Frequently, Aoun stated that his MoU had saved the country from a civil war, despite the alleged fact that the United States and the 14th of March had indirectly given him offers to abandon Hezbollah, according to Aoun's allegations (BBC 2007e). He also defended the person of Hassan Nasrallah, when asked if Iran's Imam Khamenei or Nasrallah made decisions about Hezbollah's activities, declaring, "I challenge you to prove that the decision is not made in Harat Hurayk [in Dahhieh] with regard to all that is related to Lebanon. I challenge anyone to have the freedom of decision Al-Sayyid Nasrallah has" (Ibid).

More importantly, Aoun opposed any governmental decision that would weaken Hezbollah. For example, when the communication network near Beirut's airport was supposed to be dismantled, Aoun objected passionately. He argued that Hezbollah had earned a "certificate of good conduct" to keep this network operational; furthermore, he diverted attention by claiming that other parties had similar networks. He also added that the group faced security threats and needed to maintain the network (Xinhua News 2008). When the 2008 mini-civil war broke out, he also blamed the government for the war, as he took for granted that Hezbollah's weapons and intentions had been aimed solely toward Israel, but warned that the 14th of March was trying to lure them inward (Daily Star 2008). By the time Hezbollah and its pro-Syrian allies overran Beirut, Aoun was celebrating this victory as a victory for Lebanon, equating Hezbollah and its allies with Lebanon's own identity (BBC, 2008b).

Later, between 2009 and 2010, he completely abandoned any call to disarm Hezbollah. He blatantly demanded "Lebanese parties to halt discussions on the resistance's weapons given Israel's clear military advantage" (Sakr 2009). Whereas before his return from Paris Aoun's main argument had been that the only legitimate weapons are those of the state's army and security apparatus, by 2009, he was following the pro-Syrian discourse, more openly after his visit to Damascus, that the resistance and the army complete each other. Aoun said that "the resistance's role was to support the Lebanese Army in case Lebanese territories fell under Israeli aggression" (Sakr 2009b). Through such proclamations, Aoun completed the cycle of Nasrallah's speeches on the trinity of Lebanon's power: "The People, The Army, and the Resistance."

Aoun, Syria, Iran, and Syria's Allies, 2005-2010

Syria

From promoter of terrorism, Syria became a sisterly state. The pro-Syrian parties usually used the term "sisterly relations" or "our sister" to stress the unique relationship between Lebanon and Syria. This vocabulary distinguished relations between the two countries as unique from relationships between the rest of the Arab states, who used "Arab brotherhood" to describe their relationship to each other. In the past, Aoun had broken multiple taboos that were unspoken during Syria's mandate, primarily comparing Syria to Israel, accusing Hezbollah with terrorism, and exonerating Israel of any wars taking place in the 1990s. The transition of Syria from the arch-nemesis, the "promoter of terrorism" to a sisterly state, required grand-scale engineering of the narrative of Aoun's personal history, the Free Patriotic Movement's history, and the larger historical events as they unfolded. Aoun and his party's historians pulled the re-narrativization of a lifetime, transferring his alliance from the West to Syria and from the 14th of March to the 8th of March, the latter of whom he had described, on that very 8th of March 2005, as lacking any commitment to Lebanese sovereignty. More dramatically, he ignored the anti-Syrian efforts of several actors during the Syrian mandate, such as Gemayel's Phalange, Cardinal Sfair, and Geagea's Lebanese Forces (see Chapter Six for details), depicting himself as the sole actor who had demanded Syria leave Lebanon during the Syrian mandate. This historical omission marketed Aoun as the only politician who dared to speak truth to power in the past and continued to do so after his return from exile.

Aoun's approach was a masterpiece. He linked the era of the Syrian mandate to the leaders of the 14th of March. When he was criticized in 2005 for his pro-Syrian alliances, although the 14th of March had allied with Hezbollah and AMAL during the final phase of the 2005 elections¹⁴, Aoun responded: "Everyone in the opposition today was part of the Syrian regime in Lebanon, and they all had turns visiting Anjar [former headquarters of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon]. They do not have the right to judge others now" (M. Hatoum 2005a). When Samir Qassir, a 14th of March journalist, was assassinated and the 14th of March accused Syria's intelligence

¹⁴ Reminder: the 2005 elections took place in different stages, usually multiple groupings of constituencies, per regions (ex. South, North, Beirut...etc) held parliamentary elections. Michel Aoun dominated the third round, which took place in several Christian-majority constituencies. For further details on how the parliamentary elections took place, in multiple phases, till the 2009 elections are well-documented in the European Union Election Observation Mission (2005) for the 2005 elections.

agency, Aoun responded that there was no evidence of Syrian intelligence activity. He added that the blame for the assassination should fall on the anti-Syrian bloc, since they were in power and the Minister of the Interior belonged to Hariri's coalition (Mroue 2005); he also declared that the "the Syrian presence is a rumor" (Tohme 2005). For Aoun after his return, the paranoia about the Syrian presence was a fabrication made by 14th of March to mobilize support. During his transition phase from anti-Syrian to pro-Syrian, he had to maintain some of his anti-Syrian self: for example, he criticized Assad for calling Siniora a slave to the Americans, but he considered the call for the Lebanese to rise up against the UN inquiry into Hariri's assassination an invitation transgression of Lebanon's sovereignty through placing judiciary affairs under the thumb of international judges, and not domestic (el-Ghoul 2005b). He also reiterated that Syria bore responsibility for Hariri's assassination, since its intelligence units were active everywhere in Lebanon (AFP 2006f). Despite these stances, while he at first kept his distance from Syria, he was no longer aggressive in the way he had been during his exile, and he focused his negativity in regard to Syria primarily on the Lebanese detainees in Syria's prisons, in concert with the Phalange, and even there for a brief period of time.

After the MoU with Hezbollah, much more dramatic changes took place in Aoun's discourse. He stressed that the Hariri investigation "does not mean that we should have bad relations with Syria. Syria is a fraternal Arab country with whom we have economic and political relations. Otherwise, we should halt all our economic and political relations with Syria. Is this what is required?" (Noueihed 2006). He added that it was too early to accuse Syria of 14th of March figureheads' assassinations without proper evidence (Ibid). In another speech, he scolded the 14th of March, saying, "Syria left the country on April 26, 2005, and now we have to resolve the weak points in the government instead of recalling the slogans of the past [...] We cannot attack Syria and call for the establishment of good relations with the country at the same time," (Daily Star 2006d).

Syria also helped Aoun, in the early days of his alliance with Hezbollah, to appear as a hero. One of the files that dominated the Christian parties' agenda was the case of Lebanese detainees in Syrian prisons from during and after the Civil War era. Syria had denied, in 2000, that there were any Lebanese prisoners left in its prisons. The regime nevertheless released over 40 prisoners over the Lebanese border in 2006 (BBC 2006j), giving Aoun credit and thereby the power to fulfil his supporters' interests. The release took place immediately after the MoU between Aoun and Hezbollah became public. Facing criticism from the 14th of March bloc

for his MoU, and his newly-established ties with Syria, Aoun snapped, “Syria [is] releasing 40 more prisoners, look at things positively rather than [in terms of] disagreements; we agreed with Hezbollah, but they focused on negative issues that do not exist with Iran and Syria” (Ibid).

In Aoun’s new narrative, Syria had formerly been a proxy to the United States, and, hence, he shifted the blame of approving the Syrian mandate over Lebanon on the United States and other Western states for selling Lebanon to Syria in return for the latter’s support in the Gulf War (Daily Star 2007). The assertion that Syria was an American proxy shifted blame from Syria to the backers of Aoun’s rivals, the 14th of March: “the Syrians were the agents of the Americans and the EU. Who gave Syria trusteeship over Lebanon?” (BBC 2007e). Despite denying an alliance with Hezbollah’s international allies, Aoun nevertheless lashed out that “I am presented as an ally of Syria or Iran. I am pro-Lebanese and seek to disengage Lebanon from all exterior influences” (AFP 2007). The only time Syria appeared negatively in his speeches after the February MoU of 2006 was when Aoun revisited his history during the Lebanese Civil War, discussing the fall of his headquarters at the end of the Lebanese Civil War, since many families of the army supporters continued to support Aoun in the 1990s. In order not to anger Syria or his newly acquired Pro-Syrian friends, he depicted Syria as an American proxy, again depicting Syria as a victim and the enemy of Hezbollah as the real enemy. Often, he accused other Christian leaders, in the 14th of March, of also being agents of the United States (BBC 2007c).

By the end of 2008, Aoun and President Assad’s ties were solid; each actor was helping the other. When he finally visited Syria in December 2008, Aoun insisted that he was not going there as a follower, but as a friend, emphasizing that “I am going to Syria with my head held high.” He added: “They are welcoming me [...] In my talks [...] tomorrow in Syria or yesterday in Iran or any country in the world [...] the issue was and will be Lebanon, not Michel Aoun” (BBC 2008d). Aoun entered Damascus as a hero, indicating how swiftly decades of bad blood could be replaced.

After the visit, the cycle became complete; whatever restrictions the pro-Syrians had placed upon him in the past in terms of arresting his supporters during the Syrian mandate, he now demanded the same for anyone who jeopardized relations with Syria. Specifically, he demanded, “politicians working on complicating Lebanese-Syrian ties should be arrested and tried” (Abdul Hussain 2009a; Daily Star 2009a). Such a demand was no surprise, as parliamentary elections were looming that year; Aoun began to work nationally to outbid his

allies in his allegiance to Syria. The historic visit to Syria had many sequels, during which Aoun continued to appreciate Assad's keenness to preserve Lebanon's national unity and sovereignty (Syria Arab News Agency 2009; BBC2009a). Such visits serve as a reminder of when Lebanese officials, between 1990 and 2005, used to frequently visit Damascus for 'advice.'

Iran

Iran at first remained in the background of Aoun's discourse; the retired general insisted that his movement followed neither Iran nor Syria (BBC 2007e). However, Aoun began to mention Iran more frequently after the July War of 2006. Due to his two-year-old alliance with Hezbollah, Aoun received an invitation from Tehran to visit Iran. In Tehran, Aoun stressed that "Iran is especially helping Lebanon today in confronting its problems and achieving national unity [...] Iran never helped one Lebanese party against the others" (AFP 2008). A few days later, he added in another statement: "the Iranians wished to honour me for my stand during the war on Lebanon [2006], my attitude towards the [armed] resistance and my political 'understanding', which I follow in my political life" (BBC 2008e).

By 2009, Aoun had started to repeat themes that usually appeared in Hezbollah's speeches. For example, Aoun praised Iran's military as the "greatest in the region" (Thai News 2009). It was Iranian president Ahmadinejad's visit in 2010, however, that angered all the countries that supported Israel. Aoun responded to this widespread upset by saying that "in response to many countries which support Israel, Iran will undoubtedly endorse Lebanon against atrocities of the Zionist regime [...] the positive outcomes of the visit will go beyond the Middle East" (Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agency 2010; BBC 2010a). More importantly, he was willing to gamble on Iran in issues of defence and of Lebanon's economy, whereby Iran's success brings prosperity to Lebanon (Ibid). This rhetoric aligned with Hezbollah's geo-strategic view of the Middle East.

Ethnic Identities: Christian Outbidding for the Syrian-Iranian Axis

Before his return to Lebanon, Aoun rarely used the terms "Christian" or "Maronite" in his speeches, as detailed above. The only time he did was to mention Cardinal Sfair and Bkirki, the headquarters of the Maronite Bishops. Overall, only 8.5% of his speeches included a reference to Christianity or Maronitism, and none to himself as a Christian. In these instances, he tended

to talk about the Qornet Shahwan Gathering, the coalition of independent anti-Syrian figures and the Phalange, or about how his movement participated in masses and candlelight vigils to honor the fallen soldiers killed by the Syrian military when they stormed the Baabda Presidential Palace. Aoun, unlike most political actors in Lebanon, was in exile, and did not participate in parliamentary elections, rendering his actions and speeches immune to the influential power of the electoral system before 2005. After his return, Aoun gradually appealed on Christian identities, and re-branded himself explicitly as the strongest Christian figure in Lebanon, signalling Lebanon’s unique quota system to the parliament and presidency finally reached Michel Aoun’s political calculations.

On the few occasions when he spoke of his supporters’ sects, he was insistent that his movement was secular. In his exile, he provided a two-part explanation for why his base appeared to be Christian. The first element was that his rhetoric was patriotic and not sectarian, which meant that he had support from both the Christians and the Muslims of Lebanon. The second was that the Syrians did not tolerate Muslims opposing its presence in Lebanon and threatened them with the accusation of treason; hence, publicly, it was only Christians who were allowed to protest the Syrian presence in Lebanon (Assaf 2002). In 2003, one of Aoun’s officials, Ziad Abs, acknowledged the massive presence of Christian supporters among Aoun’s rank and file, but argued that “people have to judge us based on our rhetoric, which has never been Christian-oriented” (Daily Star 2003f). Indeed, Aoun insisted at least 6 times throughout the early 2000s that his movement was secular and not sectarian. After his return from France, Aoun’s reliance on Christian identities skyrocketed tremendously (by 20.36%), a difference summarized by the following table:

Ethnic Identity or Related Topic	2000 to mid-2005 (%)	mid-2005 to 2010 (%)
Maronite	1 (0.47%)	23 (5.2%)
Christian	18 (8.45%)	90 (20.36%)
Maronite Church	9 (4.23%)	42 (9.5%)
War Era narratives	12 (5.63%)	22 (4.98%)
Regionalism	2 (0.94%)	24 (5.43%)
Total Speeches	213 (100%)	442 (100%)

Notes:	More than one ethnic category can exist in parallel with other identities
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In his years of exile, there were reasons for not using Christian identities and, when doing so, for not tying them to himself or to his supporters. The first was Syria's accusation that Aoun was a right-wing Christian fanatic, and that all members of the Opposition were basically Christian extremists who had collaborated with Israel during the Civil War, and still did, along with collaboration with the United States, when opposing Syrian presence. Secondly, Aoun's rhetoric was nationally focused, hence, he avoided as much as possible stating a religious or sectarian identity in his interviews or official statements. Indeed, he insisted that upon his return to Lebanon, the Free Patriotic Movement would register its party as secular (L. Hatoum, 2005a). Thirdly, Aoun's movement did not participate in elections on a national scale. While the Christians under the Syrian mandate had decided to run as an opposition in 2000, under Pierre Gemayel Jr, the Free Patriotic Movement only supported a Qornet Shahwan Gathering candidate starting in 2002, and a Free Patriotic Movement candidate ran in a by-election the year after. The Free Patriotic Movement was thus relatively immune to the impact of the electoral system, and thereby of the incentives to appeal to ethnic identities.

After his return in time for the parliamentary election of 2005, the Free Patriotic Movement entered these elections on a national scale, meaning that Aoun had to compete for parliamentary seats solely reserved for Christians. With the Free Patriotic Movement's winning of 21 of the 23 seats in the third round of parliamentary elections (Pan 2005), which took place primarily in Mt. Lebanon's constituencies and Zahlé, Aoun set his sights on the Lebanese Presidency. In that election, his battle was against the traditional Christian parties that belonged in the 14th of March bloc, such as the Phalange, the Lebanese Forces, and several independent figureheads. The Lebanese Forces did threaten Aoun's votes because their leader, Geagea, was the sole leader who had been arrested by the pro-Syrian regime, and had been locked up for eleven years, a fate worse than Aoun's exile (Al-Jazeera 2005). The Phalange had also taken the lead in opposing Syria's hegemony after Amin Gemayel's return in 2000 (Moubayed 2002). More importantly, the Phalange inherited the sacrifices of the Gemayel family and became a solid challenge to Aoun's popularity after Amin Gemayel took back the leadership of the Phalange from its pro-Syrian members in 2005. Aoun at first continued his patriotic rhetoric and focused on the national angle; for example, he said during his campaigning that "they insist on calling me Christian [...] I refuse to act as a Christian leader [...] I'm a Lebanese

citizen” (AFP 2005a). This election took place in less than three months after his return, which meant that he had not had the opportunity to forge alliances with Syria’s larger parties, such as AMAL or Hezbollah.

Instead of targeting the remaining allies of the 8th of March bloc, in his pre-election rhetoric he targeted the figureheads of the 14th of March, primarily Rafic Hariri’s legacy, and the Sunni community in a clear indicator that he no longer held his anti-Syrian stances or Western alliances as priorities. Aoun instead targeted the foreign backers of the 14th of March bloc, like Saudi Arabia, and kept referring to their movement as corrupt, declaring that he was fighting Saudi “petrodollars” during the 2005 elections (M. Hatoum 2005a; AFP 2005a; BBC 2005). More interestingly, he did not consider the 14th of March bloc as actual defenders of Lebanon’s sovereignty; on the contrary, he argued that they used to report to Anjar, the headquarters for Syria’s command in Lebanon; that they had stayed in power for over fifteen years; and that they had wrecked the Lebanese economy with debt (M. Hatoum 2005a; BBC 2005). This rhetoric, like stated earlier in the Chapter, omitted the activities of the Gemayel clan, the Lebanese Forces, and other actors. He suggested that Hariri’s “petrodollars” had financed vote-buying in several constituencies in Mt. Lebanon (BBC 2005). After his victory, Aoun similarly connected Saad Hariri and his family to American interests in the country (AFP 2005b). Thus, Aoun focused on the two leaders who were least dedicated to Syria’s Baath Party, among the Pro-Syrian, and blamed them for the woes incurred during the Syrian mandate, while exonerating the actual perpetrators, such as President Lahoud, and the judiciary, that repressed his followers for 15 years.

By the time the MoU was signed with Hezbollah’s Hasan Nasrallah, Aoun’s dream of seeking the presidency had become reality. In his mind, he owned 70% of the Lebanese votes (M. Hatoum 2006a), which qualified him to become the Lebanese president, speaking on the behalf of the Lebanese Christian community, a shift from his earlier patriotic rhetoric. He started to defend the size of his support base, saying that “Christians are mature enough to choose a patriotic line within the framework of dialogue and understanding” (BBC 2006; 2006a; Daily Star 2006b). He frequently reiterated this own identity as “the one who is entrusted by the Christians to represent them, and I am the one who is present to compete in their arena” (BBC 2006d). He continued to brush off the Lebanese Forces and the Phalange when asked if his alliances divided the Christians in Lebanon. On many occasions, Aoun noted that that already 75-80% of Lebanon’s Christians entrusted him to lead them, an exaggerated number given the fact the 14th

of March held Christian seats in other constituencies (BBC 2006). This ambition, paired with his alliance with Hezbollah, led him to revamp his party as Christian and national, rather than simply the latter (Bakri 2006), leading him to market himself as the sole candidate for presidency (Ibid).

To increase his chances of being elected to the presidency in the lead-up to the 2009 elections, Aoun continued to appeal to the 8th of March's audience. He used the same rhetoric that the 8th of March bloc had used against him during the Syrian mandate: he accused the Christians of the 14th of March of serving American interests and claimed that they were not representative of the Christian community. The same strategy was applied to the 14th of March as a whole, especially in the era of Siniora's government. Aoun kept criticizing Prime Minister Siniora, and the 14th of March as a whole, for being loyal to the United States, accusing them of serving American interests, and, afterward, of provoking the establishment of the International Tribunal to disarm Hezbollah and settle the Palestinians¹⁵. Aoun commenced his attacks by accusing the 14th of March of indirectly giving cover for the July War of 2006, stating that it "would not have happened had it not been for the international and local cover," adding that, at that time, a large international alliance had been formed to liberate Kuwait and "a green light was given for the occupation of Lebanon" (Daily Star 2006e). When the 14th of March accused Syria of mobilizing the 8th of March and Aoun, Aoun diverted attention by accusing the United States of meddling in Lebanese affairs, declaring, "the Americans are the ones who are bringing the idea of Syrian and Iranian interference into Lebanon's affairs [...] Syria and Iran are not present in Lebanon. The desire to change the government is ours" (BBC 2006l). He disregarded the fact that his pro-Syrian allies owned arms and accused the United States and its allies of smuggling arms into Lebanon for the purpose of inciting a civil war, stating that "we have no intention of a war" (BBC 2006k).

As the 14th of March Siniora government did not resign between November 2006 and May 2008 despite 8th of March open protests, Aoun continued to steer his supporters' rage about their Syrian-era repression toward Hariri and his allies, instead of AMAL or Hezbollah (November 2006-May 2008). He depicted the 14th of March leaders as corrupt and opportunistic; for example, he joked: "when the Syrians departed, these individuals changed the side directing them. Now we are in a crisis; are we actually opposing the Al-Sanyurah Government, Bush

¹⁵ The settlement of the Palestinian refugees, who were predominantly Muslim Sunnis, had been rejected by all Christian parties of the country, out of fear of increasing the demographic gap between Christians and Muslims in the country.

Administration, Jacques Chirac personally, or other individuals behind Al-Sanyurah who has become a front for other policies?" (BBC 2007a). He considered his party to be a challenge to American foreign policy. Vocal American support for the Siniora government was a taboo that Syria had established a few years earlier, and Aoun followed that line of thought by declaring that "the measures taken by President Bush were obvious, considering those that infringe on and oppose the Lebanese Government as if they were encroaching on US national security" (Ibid).

Aoun thus established a link between the United States, Saudi Arabia, and the 14th of March to demonstrate that there was an international-local coalition against his Christian base and the 8th of March. According to Aoun, the United States and the 14th of March were doing their best to crack the Free Patriotic Movement-Hezbollah alliance in order for the United States to be able to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks, which hinged on settling over half a million Palestinian refugee in Lebanon. He declared that "The stronger the opposition, the more unlikely it is to impose the Palestinians' settlement solution on the Lebanese. Therefore, we are not afraid of the war unless the majority wins because Israel considers it more cooperative or more ready to accept what is being imposed on it" (BBC 2009). He summarized the history of Lebanon's wars as conflicts over the settlement of the Palestinians; for Aoun, a civil war had been needed to shatter the country and pave the way for the Palestinians. Whether the 1958 mini-civil war or the Civil War of 1975-1990, the purpose of the Americans and the Israelis was always to assassinate the moderates in order to avoid national unity. He lumped Bashir Gemayel and René Mouawad in the moderate category and considered the Civil War to have broken out between the Lebanese and the Palestinians, a narrative to which Amin Gemayel also adhered (see Chapter Six). He added that the purpose of the Palestinians' guerrilla warfare, after the 1967 War, was to destabilize the Middle East through marginalizing the Lebanese Christians themselves. The same states that supported the Israeli invasion then, a period, during which he was active with the Lebanese Front despite his failure to discuss that activity, now supported the 14th of March (BBC 2008f). Despite the Lebanese Civil War having ended, in Aoun's narrative the United States continued to attempt to break the Free Patriotic Movement-Hezbollah alliance in order to break the 'Free' Christians and settle the Palestinians in Lebanon, thereby advancing its vision of an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is no surprise, then, that the frequency with which Aoun mentioned Israel increased from 11.74% (2000-2005) to 19.23%, often with statements linking the 14th of March to them and to the United States,

while simultaneously justifying the importance of Hezbollah's arms to protect Lebanon's sovereignty.

Aoun also used Palestinian refugees and Lebanon's high debt to scapegoat Rafic Hariri. Indeed, in one criticism against the assassinated Prime Minister, Aoun stated that he had been in the habit of taking on debts and even stole money, anticipating that the United States would cancel the debt in return for settling the Palestinians in Lebanon (Zeineddine 2006). Corruption was a primary theme for Aoun, especially against the Hariri family, and he disregarded the fact that Rafiq Hariri's assassination triggered Syria's withdrawal. He exonerated Syria for its role in establishing weak state institutions and the judiciary and focused exclusively on Hariri in the wake of the economic crisis that hit Lebanon, making statements like, "take the 40bn-dollar debt bill. Whose bill is it? It is the bill of corruption because the entire work on reconstruction did not cost 4.5bn dollars. Why are the debts so huge?" (BBC 2007f). Depicting Iran and Syria as defenders of Lebanese Christian, Aoun usually responded to critics by saying that unlike the Hariri clan and the 14th of March, he followed no external forces (BBC 2007b). Reflecting how Aoun targeted the Hariri family and its domination of Lebanon's government, "corruption" appeared 205 times (in 46.38% of speeches) between mid-2005 and 2010, despite the fact that Aoun's party only started participating in the government in 2008.

After he marginalized the 14th of March, including its Christian parties, in the eyes of his supporters, he needed to de-legitimize the Maronite Church politically, since the latter opposed both Hezbollah and Syria's meddling in Lebanese affairs. The Maronite Church historically was a powerful institution with strong networks across the country, and it was close to the 14th of March bloc. Aoun's focus included Cardinal Sfair and his Bkirki Maronite Church network; Aoun in several instances demanded that Bkirki must not be involved in politics, only in issues of spirituality. In the past, an exiled Aoun had praised Cardinal Sfair for his activism against Syria but had also complained that the Cardinal did not escalate enough. After Aoun returned, he collided with Cardinal Sfair because the latter continued to criticize Syria. Aoun's scheme to marginalize the Maronite Church's political influence was to argue that the Cardinal could not be both a spiritual leader and a political leader; furthermore, he declared that Bkirki's bishops could not speak to politics because they never won votes in elections (BBC 2007g; 2007b). By stating these ideas, Aoun overlooked the fact that his strongest ally, Hezbollah, was also led by a religious cleric, who wore a turban. To complete his turn against Sfair and symbolically justify his more open alliance with Syria, in 2010, Aoun went to Syria's Aleppo and sat side-by-side

with former president Emile Lahoud in a Maronite Church to celebrate St. Maroun's 1600th death anniversary. When Cardinal Sfair and the 14th of March complained about this participation, Aoun responded that St. Maroun was originally Syrian, thereby shifting his interpretation of the Maronite Sect to align it with Syria (Sakr 2010).

Aoun avoided criticizing 14th of March Christian leaders directly. In half of the 26.7% of speeches involving intra-ethnic competition, he referred to them overall as the Christians in the 14th of March, adding that they were "non-representative." He avoided naming them as a general rule. The exception was Amin Gemayel and his Phalange party. Amin Gemayel had run against one of Aoun's candidates in a 2007 by-election in the Metn constituency, and the Gemayels had indirectly accused Aoun of being responsible for Pierre Gemayel Jr.'s assassination in November 2006. The animosity between Aoun and Gemayel became personal when Aoun lost his temper on television, amidst reports of fistfights breaking out between the Phalange and the Free Patriotic Movement supporters in the Metn constituency in Mt. Lebanon. His words on the occasion were: "Mind your tongue, adhere to speech codes and respect your position as a former president [...] Not you [Gemayel] or anything you boast of can reach below my waist level" (Hodeib 2007). He was responding to a comment by Amin Gemayel about his alliances with the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and the Lebanese Baath party. As a result, the Phalange appeared in 5.43% of his speeches, the Lebanese Forces 5.88%, and the Maronite Church 2.49% between 2005 and 2010, always discussed negatively.

There were policies and priorities of Aoun that appealed to his traditional Christian base, besides the question of the Palestinian refugees, and that overlapped with positions taken by the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces. One policy had to do with the displaced from the Civil War era. Both Aoun and Gemayel politicized the file of Christians displaced during the era of the Civil War on Jumblatt's turf. Whereas Gemayel could not attack his ally, especially after the 2000 reconciliation between the Maronite Church and Jumblatt, Aoun lashed out without any such restrictions. Aoun bluntly criticized Walid Jumblatt, and the 14th of March, decrying how the displaced from the Civil War era had been handled (Zeineddine 2006; BBC 2007h). When Walid Jumblatt switched alliances from the West to Syria, the displaced in Mt. Lebanon continued to be at the heart of their "reconciliation," and summits between the two leaders took place on the subject.

Aoun maintained other issues of traditionally Christian concern, which included preserving the confessional electoral system. Using a similar rhetoric to that employed by Amin Gemayel and Samir Geagea, Aoun feared that the abolition of the sectarian system would lift the final guarantee for keeping Christians politically relevant. He regarded a parliamentary proposal issued toward the end of 2009 immature, since in it the presidency itself would be trespassed upon despite constitutional safeguards (BBC 2010b). He agreed with Cardinal Sfair and the Gemayels, reiterating a statement that Pierre Gemayel, Sr. had made in the 1960s, that the sectarian system could not be abolished without secularizing Lebanese society (Sakr 2010a). The other traditionally Christian issue Aoun continued to address was the Lebanese diaspora obtaining voting rights. In 2005-2010, almost 3%, an increase from 1.41% in 2000-2005, of his speeches and interviews included the reforming of the electoral law to enable the Lebanese diaspora, and people of Lebanese descent, to vote.

Policies & Objectives

Most of Aoun's policies and objectives were geared towards domestic actors and their respective foreign backers. When in exile, he targeted Syria, Hezbollah, and other pro-Syrian Lebanese parties. After his return, he abandoned the United States as an ally and went all-in with the 8th of March bloc and the Syrian-Iranian axis. In this second stage (2005 -2010), he directed all policies and objectives against the United States, France, Saudi Arabia, and the 14th of March bloc. It was only natural that discussions of "corruption" topped his public articulation of his policies, jointly with "reconciliation/dialogue" and "security." In Aoun's new, post-2005 narrative, the withdrawal of Syria had not resolved the economic and political problems plaguing Lebanon, since the same leaders remained in power, particularly Hariri and Jumblatt. From 2005 until 2009, Future Movement's Siniora was the prime minister, and from 2009 to 2011, the position that the Future Movement's leader, Saad Hariri, held. During the days of Rafic Hariri's prime ministerial tenure (1993-1998, 2000-2004), Siniora had been Minister of Finance, and hence it was easy to scapegoat him for all the country's economic woes. Combining this criticism with rhetoric about the petrodollar and Siniora and Saad Hariri's visits to Riyadh, weekly talks with President Chirac, and meetings with officials from the United States and the Arab League, Aoun's narrative that the 14th of March, along with their foreign backers, sought to destroy the "free Christians" of Lebanon to settle the Palestinians became complete.

Security was a natural point of discourse due to the high number of assassinations, mainly of members of the 14th of March; sectarian riots; Israeli war-making and subsequent border skirmishes; and the rumours that the 14th of March was building armaments. “Security” and related terms occupied 43.67% of Aoun’s speeches. “Dialogue” and “reconciliation” appeared in discussions of his gradual alliances with pro-Syrian figures and parties, his “historic” visits to Damascus and Tehran, and the Mt. Lebanon Aoun-Jumblatt reconciliation after the latter switched sides. “Dialogue” and “reconciliation,” due to the MoU with Hezbollah, held a high frequency (almost once every two speech) because Aoun marketed his relationship with Hezbollah as a national partnership based on dialogue. Aoun also participated in the National Dialogue roundtables that Speaker of Parliament, Berri, held in 2006 and President Michel Suleiman (2008-2014) continued throughout his tenure. Aoun used his MoU with Hezbollah to demand that other parties, primarily those from the 14th of March, join or form a new MoU with him or with him and Hezbollah. Aoun mentioned these connected topics in 42.53% of his speeches in the second phase. This high frequency, meaning that “security” and “reconciliation/dialogue” appeared in almost one of every two speeches, demonstrated that the 14th of March were concerned neither with the Israeli threat nor with dialogue.

Where the Free Patriotic Movement's “Freedom, Sovereignty, and Independence” protest chant in pre-2005 had been against Syria in specific, and to a much lesser extent Israel, the slogans now became directed against the backers of the 14th of March, primarily the United States and Israel, and the United Nations, France, Saudi Arabia, and to a lesser extent the Arab League. “Sovereignty” dominated 34.62% of Aoun’s speeches, “freedom” 22.62%, and “independence” 16.29%. These percentages represent a sharp decline from the frequencies of these concepts in his speeches prior to mid-2005, since Aoun now considered Syria to have withdrawn and directed his attention to the 14th of March, and to a lesser extent Cardinal Sfair. The appearance of these three objectives became steered towards the 14th of March bloc and their respective backers, often comparing them as tools for the United States or France. The difference is stark between the two periods:

Policy	Mentions 2000 to Mid-2005		Mentions Mid-2005 to 2010		Change
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Sovereignty	143	67.14%	153	34.62%	(32.52%)
Freedom	127	59.62%	100	22.62%	(37%)
Independence	99	46.48%	72	16.29%	(30.19%)
Total Speeches	213	100%	442	100%	

Other policies of interest are related to the Sheba'a Farms, especially in the first two years after the MoU with Hezbollah was signed, at 5.88%. Aoun and his movement defended the use of arms by Hezbollah on the grounds that resistance is a right; Sheba'a had shifted from being a Syrian fabrication to being Lebanese land under Israeli occupation.

Foreign intervention in Lebanese affairs was mentioned in 9.86% of speeches made before Aoun's return, usually with Aoun demanding the immediate implementation of UN Resolution 1559, and the U.S. Congress "Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act." All these demands were directed toward Syria. The reason why "foreign intervention" occurred with such low frequencies because Aoun considered that Syria already occupied militarily Lebanon, and henceforth, did not really need to meddle internally. After the MoU, Aoun regarded the United States, 14th of March, the United Nations, the West generally, to a lesser extent the Arab League, and Israel as intervening in Lebanese affair and triggering sectarian strife. Before his return, he had blamed this same sectarian strife on Syria, who needed a justification for remaining in Lebanon. As of mid-2005, both "foreign intervention" and "sectarian strife" were mentioned more than twice as often:

Policy	2000 – Mid 2005		Mid 2005 – 2010		Change
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Foreign Intervention	21	9.86%	113	25.57%	15.71%
Sectarian Strife	12	5.63%	56	12.67%	7.04%
Total Speeches	213	100%	442	100%	

The Presidency was a bizarre topic. Aoun continued to deny for a year that he was seeking the presidency, while simultaneously opposing the resignation of Emile Lahoud. While the 14th of March considered Lahoud's forced extended term to be a continuation of Syrian control in Lebanon, Aoun considered Lahoud's ongoing term a secondary concern. His logic was that a new parliament must be elected, and he opposed Lahoud's resignation since the elections took place under Syrian general Ghazi Kenaan's Electoral Law, which marginalized Christian representation. As a result, Aoun guaranteed that Lahoud would remain in office until a new parliament was elected through new electoral laws. Eyebrows were raised when Aoun, who had spent 17.37% of his speeches, statements, and interviews severely criticizing Lahoud in the past, suddenly switched gears and treated the president as a legitimate head of state, and even threatened the 14th of March with counter-protests if they tried to oust Lahoud by force (M. Hatoum 2006b). From marketing himself as the future president to defending Emile Lahoud's extended term, to the election of President Suleiman and their subsequent confrontations, the presidency's frequency of mention in Aoun's speeches and interviews jumped from 17.37% in 2000 to mid-2005 to 27.6% in mid-2005 to 2010.

Other frequently recurring themes include: "repression," "justice," and the Lebanese Army. In the past, Aoun had criticized Syria's hegemony in the Lebanese judiciary and its repressive tactics against his supporters. After his return, the 14th of March, the United States, and the Special Tribunal replaced Syria and its hegemony as his target in these as in the other matters discussed above. Similarly, the Lebanese military was in the first phase either a tool of repression, when his supporters got detained, or the sole legitimate wielder of weapons, when criticizing Hezbollah. After the MoU in 2006, the Lebanese Army became a long-term solution that eventually would absorb Hezbollah's army, once Sheba'a was liberated. After Aoun visited Damascus in December 2008, he wholly abandoned the discourse of disarming the resistance in his day-to-day speeches. Other instances in which Aoun mentioned the army included calling upon them to deal swiftly with rioters, and mirroring Nasrallah's trinity of People, Army, and Resistance. This formula was used to invoke the three forces in Lebanon that could defeat Israel. Finally, there is the topic of "governmental vacuum." While in exile, Aoun had accused the government, the state, and the judiciary of being "clappers" and "vassals of Damascus," and suggested the existence of a state vacuum as a result, whether on the levels of the government, parliament, or any other form of state institutions. The "vacuum" after mid-2005 referred in contrast to the 14th of March destroying state institutions, refusing reforms, and seeking to install its own personnel.

Policy	Mentions 2000 to Mid-2005		Mentions mid-2005 to 2010		Change %
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Justice	51	23.94%	126	28.51%	4.57%
Repression	128	60.09%	116	26.24%	(33.85%)
Governmental/State Vacuum	25	11.74%	124	28.05%	16.31%
Lebanese Army	36	16.90%	83	18.78%	1.88
Total Speeches	213	100%	442	100%	

The majority of Aoun's speeches when he was in exile had targeted Syria and its allies. Syria's hegemony, in his narrative, literally stretched throughout the country, and sometimes into political parties that opposed it, such as the Phalange. There remains the issue of repression whose frequency within his speeches dramatically declined from 60.09% to 26.24%. This decline reveals the extent to which Aoun had initially regarded the Syrian mandate as a ruthless occupying force that repressed his supporters. The 26.24%, in the second phase, represents the 14th of March bloc's oppressive nature, given the fact that the frequency of mention spiked during the 8th of March's open protests from 2006 to 2008. The oppression, this time, was the refusal to dissolve the government and give the 8th of March a veto power at the executive level.

International Actors, Excluding Syria & Iran

Aoun often appealed to the United Nations to call for a halt to Syria's occupation of Lebanon before his return from exile; after his return, he added Syria's treatment to his list of criticisms of the UN. Turning to the pro-Syrian side meant that the UN was to be considered to be serving American interests in Lebanon. The UN became more involved in Lebanon between 2005 and 2010 through multiple mechanisms: 1) Security Council resolutions, 2) sending regular envoys to mediate between Lebanese coalitions during crises, 3) increasing the number of its peace-keepers in the South, 4) American vetoes to protect Israel, 5) the Security Council's constant attacks on Syria and Iran, and 6) the international probe that developed into the controversial International Tribunal. The frequency with which the United Nations was mentioned in Aoun's speeches jumped from 11.27% during his exile to 23.07% after his return, often criticizing it the same way as his pro-Syrian allies, calling it an American tool. Similarly, the UN-sanctioned

Special Tribunal appeared almost entirely negatively in 13.12% of his speeches, statements, and interviews, while the Security Council was criticized at least 23.07% of the time, a sharp increase from his 2000-2005 appeals for intervention (11.27%).

There was no drastic change in the frequency of Aoun's mentioning the United States. The difference was the context: in the earlier phase, Aoun demanded the United States do more, even calling for an invasion of Syria, whereas in the post-exile phase it was deemed the enemy seeking to sacrifice Lebanon for its own geo-strategic interests. The US was mentioned in 18.78% of the speeches and interviews before Aoun returned to Lebanon, and 19.9% after his exile ended, always negatively in the latter case and often associated with the 14th of March and Israel.

The frequency of France, its support for the Siniora government, Chirac's close ties to Rafic Hariri, and its mediation attempts after Sarkozy was elected doubled in frequency in Aoun's speeches (from 4.69% to 8.14%), and were at first negative, then, in the second phase, positive after President Sarkozy replaced Chirac and toned down France's blind support for the 14th of March. Saudi Arabia and its alliance with Hariri saw an increase in frequency of mention as well, from 0.94% to 5.88%, and were often discussed negatively, unless there were Syrian or Iranian summits with the King. Usually, Hariri or Siniora's visits to Saudi Arabia were mentioned negatively in Aoun's discourse, not counting the discussion of the utilization of petrodollars during elections.

Non-ethnic identities

Regional alignments played a role in defining the non-ethnic identities after Aoun's return from exile. The Lebanese narrative, before his return, centered on branding Lebanon as closer to the West than the Middle East. After his return, a Lebanese patriot was a Lebanese citizen who opposed Western meddling into Lebanese affairs and stood with Syria and Iran. The following table demonstrates the frequencies of mention of the following identities:

Identity	2000 to Mid-2005		Mid-2005 to 2010		Change %
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Lebanese	188	88.26%	367	83.03%	(5.23%)
Arab	11	5.16%	42	9.50%	4.34%
Middle East	4	1.88%	18	4.07%	2.19%
Secular	6	2.82%	43	9.73%	6.91%
Total Speeches	213	100%	442	100%	

Lebanon, as an identity, appeared in most of Aoun's speeches; however, other supra-national or non-ethnic identities also occurred with significant frequency. Among them was the Arab identity, which, in most cases, was presented negatively. During his exile, the Arab League legitimized Syria's presence, and Aoun associated Arabism with dictatorship. After his return, he criticized the Arab League for its support of the Siniora government and for the Arab silence when Israel attacked Lebanon; nevertheless, he expressed support for the Arab League after the shooting in May of 2008.¹⁶

"Middle Eastern" appeared, in general, when referring to the Christians of the Middle East (1.5%), or when providing a geo-strategic analysis of the region. Aoun took for granted Lebanon's identity as Middle Eastern, and due to the perceived relationship with Syria, referred to some Middle Eastern countries as Arab brethren. Regional alignments played a role in this case, especially with Syria's old school of anti-Israeli Arab nationalism, as did his alliance with Hezbollah, which adhered to both Arab nationalism and Islam.

The secular identity, reference to the party as secular, and talking about patriotic goals beyond the sects tripled in frequency from appearing in 2.82% of his speeches to 9.73%. About his own identities, Aoun largely focused on the size of his Christian bloc, but in his presidential bid he marketed himself as a representative for all Lebanese sects. Often secularism and Christianity appeared together as part of his bid for the presidency, either as a representative of all Lebanese or of the Christians with the strongest parliamentary bloc.

¹⁶ Aoun's support for the Arab League dramatically changed after the 8th of March took over most of Lebanon militarily in May 2008. The reasons are manifold. Prince Hamad bin Khalifa of Qatar, chaired the negotiations between the 8th and the 14th of March, and secured the veto for the 8th of March, along with re-drawing several constituencies.

Conclusion

Regional alignments after 9/11 gave Aoun the unique opportunity to ally with his former archenemies, and in specific, Hezbollah. Aoun played a role in bringing into existence the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act when he testified in U.S. Congress. However, the Hariri Clan won the United States' full support after Syria withdrew, prompting Aoun to shift regional camps after returning from exile.

The electoral systems theory explains why Aoun needed to appeal to his Christian and Maronite roots, especially in a bid for the Presidential seat reserved to the Maronites. However, it fails to explain the direction that these activated identities took in the second phase: pro-Syrian, pro-Iranian. Indeed, Aoun's narrative divided the Christians, and disputes, such as fistfights in university, emerged between students accusing each other of being pro-Syrian traitors or pro-American agents. More interestingly, no need for vote-pooling is sufficient to bring Hassan Nasrallah or Emile Lahoud together with Michel Aoun. After fifteen years of campaigning against Syria and Iran, including demanding the inclusion of Syria in the U.S. war on terror, a simple switch of regional alignments washed away all that bitter hatred in less than two years from Pro-American encouraging the U.S. Congress to include Syria and Hezbollah in its war against terror to depicting the United States as the destroyer of the Free Christians of Lebanon. Moreover, the Free Patriotic Movement's supporters often clashed with the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces' supporters on the subject of Syria. Adding his vast supporters to the 8th of March mix, Aoun polarized them in support of the Syrian-Iranian axis against the Christians of the 14th of March, and their traditional allies, such as France and the United States.

Aoun and the Free Patriotic Movement represents a case study of an ethnic party that jumped from one extreme to another in its positioning relative to international alliances. In the previous fifteen years (1990-2005), Aoun had done his best to separate Lebanon from Syria and Hezbollah, only to completely reverse his position and endorse their narratives on Arab nationalism and Lebanon's position relative thereunto. This transition entailed that Aoun's Christians no longer separated Lebanon's fate from Syria's, and instead, he chose to push his supporters away from the West. Before Hariri's death, Aoun's supporters had regarded the supporters of Syria, including Hezbollah and AMAL's vast Shiite supporters, with suspicion, as the latter's leaders denounced Aoun as a traitor for his testifying at the U.S. Congress in 2003 and equating Syria's mandate over Lebanon with an occupation that was the same as Israel's of

Southern Lebanon. Relations changed dramatically after the MoU with Hezbollah: Syria and Hezbollah became the Free Christians' defenders, overlooking post-Civil War repression years. Aoun endorsed Syria's foreign policy, treated Hezbollah's Nasrallah as a credible national hero, and denounced the West as the real threat to Lebanon. This shift in these domestic-international alliances, along with new narratives about Lebanon's history, would not have been possible without Aoun's positioning himself with Syria and Iran and the latter's Lebanese allies repaying him with the acknowledgment that he held the highest representation of Christians in parliament.

Chapter 8: The Future Movement – Might of the Hariri Clan

"Syria isn't the problem in this country. Israel is. Syria played a major role in restoring consensus. It helped build the Lebanese army. If Syria wanted to control Lebanon, it wouldn't have allowed the building of such an army, which is the basis for any country's independence."

~ **Rafic Hariri**, November 4, 2000 (Jraissaty 2000)

"The Syrian regime says that it has no hand in [Rafic] Hariri's assassination; if this is the case, why are they afraid [of] the setting up [of] the International Tribunal? They say Israel has killed Rafic Hariri; if this is the case, will the Syrians be angry if Israel will pay the price [for] such an act? [...] Let the Syrians liberate the 1800 KM² from Israel, which was held by the latter for over 40 years, then talk to us about sovereignty." ~ **Saad Hariri**, May 31, 2007 (FN 2007i)

"At a certain stage, we made mistakes. We accused Syria of assassinating the martyred premier [Rafic Hariri] and this was a political accusation... the steps which he [King Abdullah] undertook contributed significantly to the stability of the region. This wise policy which we refer to constitutes a security network for the Lebanese and Arab world... not to mention the kindness of the Kingdom in Lebanon, in contributing to reconstructing what was damaged during the war."

~ **Saad Hariri**, Sept. 6, 2010 (Asharq al-Awsat 2010)

Introduction

While Aoun's transition from Pro-American to Pro-Syrian was drastic within the Christian parties, Hariri represents the opposite direction, the switching from the Pro-Syrian alliance to the Pro-American and French. Rafic Hariri's movement received support from the Sunni-majority communities and the business elites across the communities (Hanf 1993, 634 - 635). Not participating in the bloodbath that dominated the Lebanese Civil War, Hariri rose to prominence as a Saudi-backed wealthy politician who built an empire in the construction business at the international level (Najem 2012, 67) and charities in Lebanon (Salloum 2005, 20 – 21, 23, Hariri Foundation 2017). In fact, part of Rafic Hariri's popularity comes from spending private money to encourage the rebuilding the country, instead of public money (Waldman 1994). Throughout his reign as a prime minister throughout the 1990s till 2004 (Nizameddin 2006, 98), Hariri supported Syria's presence in Lebanon and maintained a tough defence supporting Syria's hegemonic power. Saudi Arabia and Syria already reached a census on Hariri's capture of the

Prime Minister position: Hariri would re-construct the country and bring funds into the country while Syria manages everything else politically. Throughout that phase, Hariri maintained his perspective on Arab unity; however, his perspective on the Arab-Israeli conflict differed dramatically from Syria's full liberation of Palestine and supported the Oslo Accords. This position was the same as Saudi Arabia, which set Hariri on a collision course with Damascus. After Rafic Hariri moved towards the opposition, he was assassinated (Hirst 2010, 304 - 305).

His son, Saad, took a reverse role to Rafic. He allied with those openly with the Christian parties whose father turned a blind eye on their repression and openly defended the United States, France, and the Arab states. All perspectives on expelling Syria and disarming Hezbollah converged through Hariri's 14th of March bloc. Like Aoun re-conceptualizing multiple identities, Hariri did the same. He fought Syria, and its domestic allies on Arab nationalism, re-writing the movement as that of economic prosperity and peace. He bickered with Hezbollah and tried to re-define Arabism and Islam as respect for Lebanese sovereignty. The Future Movement's most extraordinary transition was the Lebanese identity, whereby the Future Movement fully supported a Lebanese identity closer to the Phalange vis-à-vis Syria and the Arab-Israeli conflict. In 2009, He named the 14th of March's parliamentary bloc as 'Lebanon First,' (see Lebanese News Agency 2009).¹⁷ This chapter compares and contrasts Rafic Hariri's Future Movement to Saad Hariri's, emphasizing this transition parallel to international development. This development became clear when Saudi Arabia sought to ease tensions with Syria in 2009, through the Arab-Arab understanding, resulting in a complete change of behaviour in Saad Hariri's perspective, yet again, on Lebanese, Arab, and Islamic identities.

A List of Identities that the Hariri Clan Appealed Upon

The Hariri clan, and thus the Future Movement, had more venues to appeal ethnically and a wider audience than either Michel Aoun or Amin Gemayel. They had at least four supranational identities to which they could appeal for domestic and international support. Given that the Christian leaders' venues were limited to Lebanon and, somewhat, to Christian communities, their speeches addressed the Lebanese in general. In contrast, the Hariri clan shared Islam with the vast Islamic and Arab worlds that had interests in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Furthermore, the Hariri clan's Sunni background placed them as a counterbalance for Iranian expansion in

¹⁷ Lebanese a Phalange slogan, and appealed on policies that the Gemayels traditionally demanded to weaken Syria and Iran's influence over Lebanon

Lebanon from the Western powers' perspective (Hourani 2013, 46). Finally, the Hariri-Chirac connection encouraged the Future Movement to also appeal to Lebanon's Francophone dimension, a rarity for Muslims, when attending the World Francophone summits.

Locally, the Hariri family was Sunni and Muslim. They shared Islam with Hezbollah as a religion and could appeal to Islamic unity for de-escalation when tensions rose with the Islamic resistance. Unlike Hezbollah, they are Muslim Sunnis and share the sect with most Arabs in the Middle East, that too played in appeals for support internally to mobilize support, and externally, to bring investments from the Arab and Islamic world. Furthermore, they also were able to claim the Arab nationalist heritage of their predecessors in Lebanon and the Arab world due to earlier prime ministers' activities. They, themselves, were also Arab nationalists, and this Arab nationalism was an arena in which to de-claw Syria's version of Arabism, which was solely limited to Arab unity against Israel, and to re-define Arab nationalism as Arab common markets, peace in the Middle East, and respecting Arab states' sovereignty.

The Hariri family also had a double regional identity upon which to mobilize, and each of their speakers addressed a different audience. The Hariri clan and Fouad Siniora were from Saida, but both Rafic and Saad Hariri ran for the Muslim Sunni seats in Beirut instead, and in all three elections between 2000 and 2010, their bloc won all of Beirut's parliamentary seats. Bahiya Hariri won the elections in Saida, which she dubbed the "Capital of the South." Throughout their speeches, Bahiya focused on Saida while Saad or Rafic focused on Beirut when campaigning. Saad Hariri also never hesitated to appeal to Sunni majority regions, such as Akkar or Tripoli, as well, without the need to refer to his sect as "Sunni Muslim." Instead, Saad Hariri replaced Sunni Islam with his father's memory, historical events, and specific economic woes to mobilize his constituents.

With its attendant symbolism, clanship has already been discussed in the Gemayel chapter; recall that clanship, even the mere utterance of a family name, resonates within an ethnic community and becomes its symbol. Rafic Hariri's death pushed clanship, as an identity, to the fore when the clan appealed for support from the Sunni community in specific or sought to marginalize opponents. Indeed, the phrase "we walk in the footsteps of Rafic Hariri," and support for a given policy with the descriptor "as Rafic Hariri would have wanted it," were used in many speeches, interviews, and rallies, winning over community support and exerting

pressure on opponents to risk refusing 'Rafic's ideals' and polarize the Future Movement's supporters.

From a non-ethnic perspective, the Hariri family held an advantage that no other ethnic party in terms of advanced economics, trade, and finance. Rafic Hariri became the godfather of the Taef Accord and he played a role to ensure that this Accord is reached (ex. see Hanf 1993, 592). In the 1990s, his government was ambitious in rebuilding Lebanon's devastated infrastructure and economy subsequently, for the post-civil war era in the 1990s (see Najem 2012, 67 - 68). His neoliberal policies and the laissez-faire economic policies further attracted merchant and trade elites beyond his ethnic turf and Lebanese borders. Furthermore, Hariri had invested part of his wealth in welfare, including education, and medical services, which brought him support from beneficiaries of all sects (Ibid). In parliament and the government, Hariri's technocrat ministers held experiences, when discussing policies, those other members could not comprehend when discussing taxes, the balance of payments, and investments. For example, an anti-Syrian opposition figure, MP Boutros Harb, expressed willingness to vote on a privatization policy if someone could explain in plain Arabic what Fouad Siniora, then minister of finance, had discussed a few minutes earlier in parliament (Abu Risk 2002). The reconstruction of post-war Lebanon, the new economic policies, and Hariri's personal wealth earned his economic liberalism movement as an identity within Lebanon's context. Syria played a role in giving Hariri free rein over the economy, but not security affairs. This move also contributed to Syria's strategic calculations to appease Hariri's closest allies, Saudi Arabia, and the latter's allied Sunni-majority Arab states (Bahout 2016). Most of the Future Movement discussed their history as that of reformists who have raised Beirut from the ashes. This tactic, other than bringing forth investments to the country, stoves away sectarian polarization accusations from the 8th of March bloc leaders. It is no surprise that they took pride in their accomplishments as reformists and marketed themselves as a cross-sectarian national party.

The Difficulty of Approaching Rafic Hariri's Speeches

Reading Rafic Hariri's speeches and interpreting his policies is problematic and challenging, especially for the period of Syrian hegemony. During that phase, at first impression, Hariri may appear to be a "Syrian pawn," an accusation Aoun frequently made, while at other times, he seems to be a light "Pro-Syrian", and at others a realist, returning the state to Lebanon but within the approval of Syria. Hariri often defended the state and its role, and "lightly" opposed

Hezbollah's activities in the South, but in the face of the Israeli occupation gave his stamp of approval to the resistance. For example, in the Arab League, Hariri said that "not once we were with the politics of the Katyusha, but we balance between the national interest and the right of defence of the land" (Assafir 1993 as cited in Salloum 2006, 96). This research argues that part of the reason for this hesitation to take a decisive position was to attract foreign investments and loans; another was to avoid the wrath of Syria and its allies. To what extent Hariri played the Lebanese "game" remains unclear, as do his true objectives. Many of his speeches, lectures, and interviews from the 1990s were revisited after his assassination. As one scholar noted: "Hariri as a political actor therefore became pro-Western and pro-Syrian and pro-regime and pro-opposition all at the same time (Nizameddin 2006, 98). His assassination and his involvement in the vast anti-Syrian coalition prompted several Future Movement officials to revisit Rafic Hariri's actions as those of a victim doing his best to serve the country under Syria's pressure. Handling Rafic Hariri's speeches, this research took the face value of his speeches since the primary scope of observation is the final narrative delivered to the supporters publicly.

Key figures in the Future Movement 2000 – 2005

Before becoming a prime minister in 1992, Rafic Hariri was already famous in Lebanon. He was from a humble family in Saida (Salloum 2005, 19, 37-38), and he was a self-made Sunni billionaire, who developed close ties with the Saudi monarchy (Hirst 2010, 246; Najem 2012, 67). He made his wealth as a construction contractor during the oil boom in Saudi Arabia and became known as one of the world's billionaires (Hirst 2010, 247). He held close ties also with France and the United States as well, and Saudi Arabia, in the 1980s, granted Rafic Hariri the Saudi citizenship (Nizameddin 2006, 97). The Lebanese also knew him through his charities and development projects coming off from his fortune (Salloum 2005, 20 – 21). For example, he established the Hariri Foundation, 1983, which covered Lebanese student scholarships across the world and spent annually 80 million dollars (Ibid). He also opened schools in Saida, Tripoli, and Beirut during the civil war (Ibid, 20). The Hariri foundation expanded to cover hospitals and opening accessible clinics (Hariri Foundation 2017). Politically, Hariri became involved in resolving the Lebanese Civil War (1975 – 1990). He participated in two peace conferences, a failed one in 1984, and the famous Taef conference in Saudi Arabia, which ended the Lebanese Civil War and became known as the Taef Accord (Salloum 2005, 20). He was famous for flying Pre-Civil War members of parliament to ratify the Taef Accord (Hanf 1993, 592). There is one final reason why Hariri was also favourable to capture the position of prime minister. Of all the

politicians in 1992, Hariri was the sole famous figure who did not participate in the Lebanese Civil War (Najem 2012, 67). Adding his skilful business management, international connections, development projects, and charities, Hariri held a base that no Lebanese ethnic leader could claim it .For these reasons, Hariri became a prime minister in 1992, after two pro-Syrian governments that failed to manage the economy (Ibid, 65).

Key Events 1992 – 2005

Syria originally rejected Rafic Hariri's nomination as a prime minister because he held an independent base, which might create problems for them in the future (Najem 2012, 66). Furthermore, Rafic Hariri expressed frequently pride in both of his citizenships: Saudi and Lebanese (Salloum 2005, 20-21). He was not an actor that could be completely subjugated to the Syrian Baathi regime and become another proxy politician for Damascus. Nevertheless, Hariri was a pragmatist in dealing with Syria because he was aware that Syria's hegemony was blessed internationally after the First Iraqi war in 1991 and his international business connections included members of Syria's regime (Najem 2012, 67). Syria welcomed Hariri's ascension to become the prime minister on the condition of granting his governments some economic independence, but not in the affairs of foreign policy, national security, among others (Ibid, 66) and Hariri had no problem with Syria's hegemonic rule over Lebanon's politics as long as proceeded with his economic, developmental, and reconstruction projects in Lebanon (Ibid, 67).

When the Oslo Accord was announced between Israel and the Palestinians, Hariri gambled his reconstruction projects on that forthcoming peace treaty that would end the Arab-Israeli conflict and stabilize the region (Hirst 2010, 246; Nizameddin 2006, 97). Such a perspective placed him on a collision course with Hezbollah and Syria. Hezbollah's Nasrallah frequently denounced the Oslo Accords as treacherous and his party's operations increased in frequency and quality. These border skirmishes against the Israeli forces in Southern Lebanon undermined confidence in business and discouraged foreign investment into the country (Hirst 2010, 246-247). His position of the Oslo Accords forced Syria's proxies to challenge Hariri; such proxies included AMAL's Berri, and President Lahoud (Najem 2012, 68). Lahoud's presidential election in 1998 came against Hariri, under the banner of fighting corruption, amidst rising national debts (Ibid, 68 – 69). While Hariri doesn't take completely the blame for the rising debt (Ibid, 68, see also Siniora 2005), the Pro-Syrians credited him for the mounting national debts. Saudi Arabia did

not rush to defend Hariri politically, but did support him economically through loans and investments (Nizameddin 2006, 103). The rationale behind Saudi logic is that Syria controlled Hezbollah; therefore, Damascus was a barrier to Iran's expansionary influence into the Middle East (Nizameddin 2006, 103). Hariri resigned in protest to President Lahoud and the latter appointed Salim Hoss as a prime minister to reverse Hariri's neo-liberal policies. In the 2000 parliamentary elections, Hariri's Future bloc won all of Beirut's parliamentary seats, and Salim Hoss announced his retirement from politics (Najem 2012, 69). Syria's influence never disappeared despite Hariri's victory. A list of Hariri's forthcoming ministers was leaked to newspapers, leading some actors to accuse Syria of meddling because the list held the names of ministers before Hariri commenced parliamentary consultation (Middle East News Online 2000). Hariri emerged as the strongest Sunni figure with the largest parliamentary bloc (Ibid). Hezbollah opposed Hariri's appointment (Assafir Newspaper 2000); however, Hariri acquired 91 out of 108 votes of confidence (Middle East News Online 2000). The bickering with Syria's loyalists continued, and Syria, as a mediator often ruled in favour of its ally President Lahoud and its allies (Najem 2012, 68-69; Nizameddin 2006, 97). This dynamic continued till Syria imposed an additional three years of President Lahoud, which was followed with Rafic Hariri's resignation (Choucair 2005, 1 – 2).

His relations and affiliation with Saudi monarchy continued throughout his time in power (1992 – 1998; 2000 – 2004). Hariri constantly visited Saudi Arabia, and the latter also visited Lebanon. Hariri's close affiliation with Saudi Arabia also forced him to defend his backer locally. For example, Hariri, in 2000, halted the satellite broadcasting of New TV, an anti-Hariri television station, because it had depicted Saudi Arabia negatively and "threatened bilateral ties between the two countries" (Chayban 2000). His ties with Saudi Arabia's monarchs cannot be underestimated, despite the passiveness of the Saudi monarchy, which then held good ties with Syria (Nizameddin 2006, 103). This relation, along with France, brought funds to Lebanon in terms of soft loans, mounting to 2.5 billion dollars, through the Paris II donors' conference (Ibid). This arrangement of supporting Hariri's reforms, while at the same time, Syria's presence, including partial coverage of Syria's military costs in Lebanon, gave Syria a carte blanche to halt reforms in Lebanon in terms of political and economic policies and processes, that Lebanon desperately needed to stand on its feet as a sovereign nation (Ibid).

Several domestic and international events forced Syria to tighten its grip over Lebanon. The withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Southern Lebanon pushed the anti-Syrian opposition,

spearheaded by Maronite Cardinal Sfair, to call upon the Syrians to withdraw from the country (Reuters 2019). Various protests broke out in Lebanon, primarily led by the traditional Christian parties; however, they yielded no results. Hariri turned a blind eye on these repressive tactics, and instead defended Syria and Hezbollah's operations in the South, Christian opposition against Syria did not calm during Hariri's reign (see Chapter 8), either prior to 9/11 or after it, with Cardinal Sfair spearheading the opposition. Rafic Hariri simply brushed away the problems with Syria as minor. He responded to criticism by announcing his support for the Syrian presence in the country (AFP 2001); similarly, his sister Bahiya Hariri warned against treating the Syrian forces as an occupying force, on the grounds that they were responsible for Lebanon's current status (Boustany 2001). He even reiterated his support for the Syrian presence in Lebanon to the Pope in Rome during a visit to the Vatican (Kawas 2001a). Hariri also assured investors that the struggle over Syria's presence would not affect their investments (Habib 2001). By August 2001, Syria's tolerance for activists against its presence had reached its limit. Army forces arrested over 200 activists in one night, mostly members of the Lebanese Forces and the Free Patriotic Movement. Hariri simply expressed disgruntlement that he had not been informed of this operation, which he viewed as definitely pre-planned (Panossian 2001). Hariri also announced further support for an amendment to the criminal law that would allow the security apparatus to detain someone for four days without pressing charges, giving more powers to the state, after President Lahoud supported the crackdowns in 2001 and hailed the army's efforts in protecting Lebanon's national interests (AP 2001). This blind support for Syria continued till his resignation in 2004, which also manifested in his newspaper, Future Newspaper, often responding to Syria's critics with similar praises (ex. see the denial of Lebanese detainees in Syrian prisons in AFP 2000d; or celebrating Israel's withdrawal as celebration for both Lebanon and Syria in Daily Star 2000f). Yet, this lip-service tactics did not entail that Syria was satisfied with Hariri's behaviour. For example, Hariri complained constantly that his telephone line was wired, and he was being spied upon, indirectly hinting towards Syria or its allies (AFP 2000e).

The second obstacle manifested in the near death of the Oslo Accords, which shattered Hariri's hopes for stability, and lesser extent, the excuse for Syria to withdraw from Lebanon. The cross-border skirmishes that Hezbollah and Israel exchanged in Shebaa farms, the return of Ariel Sharon and his actions that sparked the Second Palestinian Intifada, and the American – British invasion of Iraq, gave leverage for Syria and its allies locally to advocate to oppose peace with Israel and move closer to Syria politically. For example, Hariri's newspaper one time only

criticized Hezbollah's skirmishes in Sheba'a farms and deemed it risky on the political and economic levels. The Newspaper added: "No group has the right to decide, for the Lebanese, actions that risk damaging the national Consensus" (AFP 2001a). This theme will reappear, with a higher frequency after the July War of 2006 kicked off between Hezbollah and Israel. Returning the gradual death of the peace process between the Palestinians and Israel, Hariri continued to stress the importance of resuming the peace process through returning the Occupied Territories to the Palestinian Authority (Xinhua News Agency 2001; AFP 2001b; 2001c). He always directed the blame toward Israel rather than Hezbollah or Hamas, using statements like: "Israel's threats to retaliate against any Hezbollah attacks are meant only to instil fear in the Arabs [...] The Israeli threats have as their sole goal putting the Arabs in a situation of fear of war" (AFP 2001d). He criticised Europe and the United States for not exerting pressure sufficient to halt Israeli military actions in the Occupied Territories (Kawas 2001b). The United States' full support for Israel further weakened any hopes that Hariri had to opening to the West.

When 9/11 took place, Hariri was the first Arab leader to severely condemn the terrorist attack against the United States; however, he added that Lebanon fought all types of terrorism on its land as well. It was unclear if in this statement he was referring to actual terrorist attacks, the Israeli invasion, or the civil war (Xinhua News Agency 2001a; St Petersburg Times 2001). Terrorism, in Hariri's rhetoric, usually included Israel, due to its violations of UN resolutions (Ziadeh 2001a). He continued to push for peace negotiations with Israel after 9/11, using his close contact with the United States to include both Syria and Lebanon in the peace talks (AP 2001a; Abu Rizk 2001a). In Hariri's talks with the West, the Arabs were ready to sign peace with Israel, but the latter was not (AP 2001a). This statement became concrete when Hariri's government organized a round for the Arab League in Beirut to declare the Arab Peace initiative, which was reiterated the Oslo Accords, Land for Peace, and reinforced his statements that Arabs do want peace (Costello and Sadler 2002; Lin and Amanpour 2002; Kagan 2002). Syria and Hezbollah naturally rejected the Arab Peace Initiative, and Israeli Prime Minister's raid into Arafat's compound, in the West Bank, further proved Assad's perspective, that Israel seeks no peace (Kagan 2002). The Arab Peace Initiative, which was introduced on March 2002, became the primary source of cleavage between Damascus and Riyadh. Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, after he was accused of playing a pivotal role in Bush's Axis of Evil (Nizameddin 2006, 104), switched gear and launched the Initiative, and played an integral part in getting its realization (Teitelbaum 2011).

Between 2003 and 2005, Syria faced international pressures to withdraw from Lebanon. The Bush Administration deemed Syria as an enemy state in the Middle East, and President Assad feared that his country was next after Iraq (Hirst 2010, 288); however, as the invasion of Iraq started to falter in terms of instability and terrorist retaliations, and both, the Syrian-Iranian axis, and the US administration stopped short on political pressures to each other (Ibid). The US administration launched the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act in 2003, and the United Nations launched in 2004 issued UN Resolution 1559, both demanded the withdrawal of Syria from Lebanon and disarming all militias outside the Lebanese Army (Hirst 2010, 302-303). Syria's allies targeted Rafic Hariri, despite his defence of Syria's presence in Lebanon, and considered international calls for Syrian withdrawal as internal meddling, dubbed him as a traitor and an American agent (Ibid). Some of the lip service he offered to Syria in face of the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Act were equivalent to Syria's traditional allies. Hariri had no alternative but to reject the Act. "The so-called Syria Accountability Act," he said, proved "the US Congress' bias toward Israel and its indifference toward the sentiments and rights of the Arabs, pointing to disproportionality of who has the right of self-defence" (Ziadeh 2003). He regarded the Act as dangerous not only to Lebanon and Syria; but to all the Arab states (Xinhua 2003). Hariri instead called for dialogue between the international community and Syria. Syria decided to send a message to the world that Lebanon's majority stood with Damascus, and President Emile Lahoud announced his unconstitutional candidacy to renew his term for an additional three years.

In the summer of 2004, Emile Lahoud made his candidature for a semi-term official. After visiting multiple Syrian officials, including President Assad, Hariri maintained silence on the question of Lahoud's term, after publicly opposing it, and ultimately voted for the extension (Kifner 2004; Ghattas 2004). On September 4, 2004, Lahoud's term was extended amidst protests from Walid Jumblatt and the Qornet Shahwan Gathering MPs. Of Hariri's bloc, MP Ghattas Khoury broke silence during the vote, and stated "I object," causing nearby MPs to gasp (Assaf 2004). Later, his Future bloc colleague, MP De Freij, described the vote for Lahoud as "a sad masquerade" (Ibid). The vote was immediately followed by the resignation of four ministers from Hariri's cabinet, including three ministers for Walid Jumblatt. Later, Hariri himself resigned and resorted to months of silence. By December 2004, Hariri's Future Movement cadres, along with Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party, started to hold joint meetings with the anti-Syrian opposition, including the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces, causing the opposition

to become multi-ethnic in face of Syria, dubbed as the Bristol Gathering (Hirst 2010, 304-305). On February 14, 2005, 12:56 PM, Hariri was killed in a huge explosion that rocked all Beirut, “gouging a three meter deep and ten abroad, tossing vehicles into the air, hurling bodies and body parts far and wide...” (Hirst 2010, 305). Along with Rafic Hariri, 54 people were also killed, and some of the injured passed away later, including Future Movement member, MP Bassel Fleihan (AFP 2005c).

Key Future Movement Figureheads: 2005 - 2010

Saad Hariri, Rafic Hariri’s son, became the youngest prime minister in Lebanon’s history at the age of 39. After Rafic Hariri’s assassination, it was his older brother, Baha’, who was expected to take up the mantle of the political and corporate empire of the Hariri family and the Future Movement. Nevertheless, the family agreed to push for Saad, who lacked any political experience. As a matter of fact, two year earlier, in a business interview, Saad Hariri had been adamant that he had no interest in Lebanon’s politics and his attention was restricted to investments in Eastern Europe (Swibel 2003). Just like many politicians unexpectedly inheriting their family leadership, Saad Hariri became the head of the Future Movement a few months after his father’s death. Hariri was not alone. He received support from his stepmother, Nazek Hariri, his aunt, MP Bahiya Hariri, and the minister of finance, Fouad Siniora. Saad Hariri became the leader of the 14th of March, and his coalition won a majority unprecedented in Lebanon’s history during both the 2005 and 2009 elections, although he did not become prime minister until 2009. Upon his ascension to lead the Future Movement, Hariri linked national unity, the Future Movement, and their backers, Saudi Arabia, into a single theme: “You saw during my father’s funeral, the Christians and Muslims were united, unlike what others warned [...] that this [anti-Syrian] Movement will descend into sectarian violence [...] Saudi Arabia understands, the Arab world understands, and so does the Muslim world” (FN 2005).

Fouad Siniora had been Rafic Hariri’s childhood friend from Saida who became his close confidant and most trusted economist. Influenced by neo-liberal economics, Siniora handled the Ministry of Finance as part of Rafic Hariri’s drive to rebuild the republic and reform the economy. Like Hariri, Siniora believed in the power of the market, except if there was a chance to create an Arab economic bloc or an Arab Common Market. For Siniora and Rafic, the might of the private sector and its prosperity could resolve all the state’s economic problems. It was with this rhetoric that Siniora frequently spoke of privatization of state institutions as a form of a reform.

His goal was to cut down the burden of the national debt, but as the rebuilding of the state continued, no budget met its goal due to unexpected costs or revenue waste. Siniora became dubbed “Mr. Tax” due to his introduction of, among other measures, the Value Added Tax (Habib 2001a; 2001b), and was mocked by other politicians. When Siniora was blacklisted by the US administration as supporter of terrorism in 2003 for donating, during an Iftar (the time of the day during Ramadan when Muslims breakfast), to a charity owned by cleric Sheikh Fadlallah, who was a spiritual leader to Hezbollah, Speaker of the House Nabih Berri joked that the accusation was false because it was impossible that Siniora would give money; he only took money (Farha 2003).

MP Bahiya Hariri was Rafic’s sister and was among the first women to become members of the Lebanese parliament. Traditionally, she focused on education reform, and she led the Parliamentary Committee for Education. She briefly led the Future Movement, a tenure that was crucial in the overthrowing of the Karameh government in 2005 and later; she received credit for a successful rallying of anti-Syrian groups and movements on March 14th, 2005. She became Minister of Education in PM Siniora’s Second Government (2008-2009). She won her parliamentary seat in Saida, the hometown of the Hariri family. She successfully had been re-elected as Saida’s MP since the 1992 elections. She started wearing the Islamic hijab after her brother was killed in 2005.

The Key Events: February 2005 – December 2010

During the second phase (2005 – 2010), the Future Movement did not only abandon the Syrian-Iranian axis but fought it politically as fiercely as the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces. They sided openly with the United States, France, and Saudi Arabia and hoped to steer all their polarizing speeches into weakening the Syria’s influence in Lebanon and the 8th of March bloc. The Future Movement’s new leader, Saad Hariri, became a close friend to the Phalange’s Pierre Gemayel Jr. Just as Michel Aoun re-conceptualized the history of his Christian movement in order not to lose his supporters, Saad Hariri and the Future Movement machinery did the same. They re-wrote Lebanon’s history as a victim of Syria’s meddling and occupation, and blamed it, just as pre-2005 Aoun did, for the 2006 Lebanese – Israeli war. Arab nationalism became the respect for Lebanon’s sovereignty and the quest for peace. The traditional Christian parties, such as the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces, became Lebanese patriots who defended Lebanon’s sovereignty, and by 2009, the Future Movement was preaching policies

and appealing upon identities that the Phalange across the decades appealed upon, such as weapons in the hands of the army solely, opposing Syrian meddling, Lebanese detainees in Syrian prisons, and neutrality of Lebanon from the Arab-Israeli conflict. Saad Hariri toned down his aggression on Syria and its domestic allies, after the elections of 2009, in support of Saudi king Abdullah's Arab-Arab initiative, which sought to de-escalate tensions across the Arab world.

The death of Hariri immediately spelled the downfall of Syria's hegemony over Lebanon. In less than few hours of Hariri's death, almost the entire Future Movement cadres accused Syria of the assassination. Future Movement MP Walid Eido warned the pro-Syrian figureheads to stay away from the forthcoming funeral. The anti-Syrian opposition were not alone; many world leaders also blamed Syria for the assassination (UN 2005). Exiting from the Hariri mansion in Beirut after offering his condolences, the Druze leader Walid Jumblatt told the media that Rafic Hariri had recently warned him that either one of them would be killed by the Syrian regime through a car bomb (Hirst 2010, 304-305). At the site of the explosion, a journalist asked Saad Hariri who assassinated his father. He responded: "Can you guess the reason for such an assassination, and who stands behind it? It is clear, correct?" (FN 2005a). Protestors, in a precedent since 1990, stormed Baathi offices in Lebanon (AFP 2005). Fouad Siniora also argued that Hariri was under the protection of the Security apparatus, which was dominated by Pro-Syrians, when he was killed (FN, 2005b). The Future Movement's official statement after March 14, 2005 also blamed Syria for Rafic Hariri's death, and called for its withdrawal (FN 2005c). Two days later, all the anti-Syrian parties met at the Democratic Left Party headquarters to announce the unification of the opposition until Syria withdrew (FN 2005d).

After much pressure from the street and the international actors, Speaker of the House Nabih Berri called for a parliamentary meeting on February 28th, 2005. With loud protests in Martyrs' Square, MP Bahiya Hariri scolded PM Omar Karami, Rafic's successor, and stated that his government was: government of disappointment and failure; it must yield to the will of the people. The Lebanese deserve to know their enemy, the enemy that killed Rafic Hariri, and shouldn't the government move the entire world to stand with it in finding the assassins?" (FN 2005e). After the Parliamentary break, the same day, PM Karami interrupted Nabih Berri to announce his resignation amidst cheers from the nearby Martyrs' Square protestors (Ibid). MP Bahiya Hariri called for an International Tribunal due to lack of trust in the domestic security and judiciary branches, both dominated by Pro-Syrian loyalists who already started pointing fingers

on Israel as the assassins (see Chapter 9 for details, also see Naem 2005; FN 2005f). Second, on-scene crime investigators mismanaged the crime scene, leading the Hariri family to refuse any form of domestically led investigation's results (FN 2005f). Finally, a shady unknown group, 'the Nusra and Jihad in the Land of Damascus' took credit for the assassination, to which analysts dubbed it as a Syrian intelligence move to deflect accusations (Whitaker 2005).

Hariri's death became a rallying point for Sunnis in specific, and anti-Syrians in general. His family and supporters depicted Rafic Hariri as a saint whose family would continue in his footsteps to achieve his beliefs. Baha' Dean, Hariri's oldest son, told the thousands of supporters in front of the Hariri mansion that they must not cry, for "[Rafic] Hariri is still with them" and the family was also for them (FN 2005g). Similarly, the mournful Bahiya Hariri stated: "Hariri is somewhere above us, a giant and he can see us, he is with us, he won't leave us, he is one of you, Rafik Hariri" (Naem 2005). This theme continued to be utilized by the Hariri clan and Rafic Hariri became a symbol for Sunni mobilization. For example, Saad Hariri said on the one-year anniversary of his father's assassination that "Rafic Hariri will never leave us. Here he is, today! With Us! In the Freedom Square! The Spirit of Rafic Hariri is with you today! His soul is hugging the rest of the martyrs of Freedom!" (FN 2006). This theme continued to repeat itself with anti-Syrian rhetoric for example, on the third anniversary of the assassination, Saad Hariri recalled that "three years ago, the criminal and terrorist hands tried to assassinate Lebanon through assassinating Rafic Hariri, you came to say that Lebanon will not kneel, and Rafic Hariri remains in each and every one of us" (FN 2008f). This rhetoric continued through the election cycles and appeared in more than 40% of the Future Movement's speeches between 2005 and 2010. The clanship section offers further details on the symbolism and implications of reconstructing Rafic Hariri's martyrdom to achieve political goals and marginalize opponents.

Foreign policy, after Syria's withdrawal, was unheard of in Lebanon. While the United States cut diplomatic ties with Syria two days after Hariri's assassination (Maher 2010) and continued to target Syria and Iran (CNN 2005; Bush 2005; 2008), Lebanon could not afford to be as aggressive. The reasons are many. First, Lebanon has no diplomatic or any form of relations with Israel, and the rest of its land border is shared with Syria, which is the sole country that allows Lebanon to connect by land with the rest of Asia. After Syria withdrew from the country in May 2005, Syria instigated a major border crisis by over-searching trucks entering Syrian territories and almost crippled the Lebanese economy, prompting Prime Minister Siniora to call

on Syria's officials to resolve the crisis (see FN 2005h). This message served to inform the 14th of March leaders that Syria could cut off Lebanon from the rest of the Asian continent.

The second reason pertains to the military capabilities that Hezbollah, and lesser extent, AMAL hold within the country, the 14th of March bloc was not confident that the Lebanese state could not forcefully disarm Hezbollah by force. . Bahiya Hariri was clear, out of pragmatism, on one side, and conviction against Israel's threat to Lebanon, to invite the two Shiite parties to join the 14th of March. Raising boos from several protestors, Bahiya Hariri addressed the million attendees: "We will stay loyal to you, and to our resistance, and to Saida, capital of the South, and to all those who resist, I am here to represent Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and Nabih Berri" (FN, March 15, 2005). She redefined the Future Movement as a resistance movement whose objective was to rebuild the country. She added in the same speech: "We have two resistances: resisting the occupier and resisting those who oppose building the country" (FN 2005i). This invitation stopped beyond the two powerful Shiite parties. Bahiya Hariri boycotted President Emile Lahoud and demanded that his top security officers be arrested (FN 2005j, see the officers' arrests in FN 2005k). As for the rest of the Pro-Syrian parties, the Hariri family sought to split them from the 8th of March bloc and Siniora often reiterated that "those damaged by the [UN] report will seek to plant chaos and sectarian strife" (Naem 2005a). The 14th of March won the elections and Hezbollah and AMAL allied with the bloc and participated in the government. The UN Fact finding mission though, approved by the UNSC, was damaging to Hezbollah's foreign backers, and pointed fingers at Syria. They opposed it and announced boycott of the government after the PM Siniora's government voted the need for an international tribunal to investigate Rafic Hariri's assassination, and the subsequent deaths of the 14th of March bloc's figures (FN 2005l). The boycott lasted from December 2005 till February 2, 2006, when Saudi Arabia and the foreign backers of Hezbollah and AMAL mediated to resolve the crisis. They returned to the government after Siniora stressed that Hezbollah was not a militia but a Lebanese resistance movement, and its weapons are internal affairs, henceforth UN Resolution 1559 did not apply (FN 2006).

This powersharing formula on the executive level fell apart when Hezbollah pulled a cross border military operation on July 12, 2006 and kidnapped two Israeli soldiers and killed seven more (Hirst 2010, 328 – 329). Israel targeted the entire country under the pretext that Hezbollah held ministers in Siniora's government. Prime Minister Siniora found himself in a difficult situation. He had to disengage the country by stating that the government did not approve

Hezbollah's operations, while at the same time sought a cease fire. Their international allies, the United States, despite all lip service for the 14th of March government, supported Israel's bombardment of the country (Ibid, 321 – 369). The war ended with massive destruction to Lebanon's infrastructure, and over two hundred villages and towns destroyed. He relied on "Arab brothers" and international friends to assist the government. With the war over, the United States was able to support the Siniora government again and donated one billion dollars to help rebuilding Lebanon. French President Chirac organized the Paris III conference for donors, and over seven billion in donations was raised (Balmer and Mohammed 2007). The Future Movement's international alliances clearly manifested during the conference, which President Chirac chaired. Saudi Arabia provided 1.1 billion dollars in terms of loans and grants, the United States followed with "\$770 million, and Arab Monetary Fund and the World Bank each offered funding of around \$700 million" (Ibid; also see Appendix 1 for a list of Saudi donations to Lebanon during and after the July War).

The war's outcome intensified the tensions in Lebanon and the Middle East, between the 8th and 14th of March blocs domestically, and the Arabs against the Syrian – Iranian axis internationally. . Hariri and Siniora demanded assurances that the decisions of war and peace were in the hands of the state and not of Hezbollah. They criticized Syria, especially after Bashar Assad gave a victory speech as if his country had won the war. One month after the war ended in September 2006, the Siniora government voted on the establishment of the international tribunal against the objections of Hezbollah and AMAL. The Shiite ministers resigned from the Siniora government over the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and demanded 1/3 of the government cabinet to ensure a veto over disarming Hezbollah (Najem 2012, 80) and the international tribunal (Stack and Rafei 2006). The 8th of March shut down the parliament and launched the open protests to pressure the government to resign, often describing it as an American satellite (see Chapters 7, 9 for details). The protests lasted till May 2008 and brought forth a Sunni-Shiite showdown in the country. Hariri's support base perceived these open protests, despite Aoun's participation in them, as "not only a clear form of intimidation, but also a sign that the opposition was trying to bring down a Sunni-led government" (Najem 2012, 80).

From November 2006 till the parliamentary elections of 2009, the Future Movement interpreted all events as Syrian or Iranian ploy to disarm the Lebanese parties whose allegiance lie with Lebanon and not any outside force. These perceptions also included betrayal to Rafic Hariri's ideals, opposing the International Tribunal for Rafic Hariri's murder, protecting Syria's Baathi

regime, and igniting a Sunni-Shiite rifts. Their suspicions were further confirmed after Pierre Gemayel Jr. was killed, just when the 8th of March bloc was about to launch its open protests in Downtown in demand of an executive veto.

Amidst the Downtown open protests, the war on terror took place with a Qa'eda-affiliated group, known as Fatah Islam (BBC 2010d). Siniora and Hariri accused Syria of creating Fatah Islam, a shady group that took over the Northern Nahr Bared Camp in a bizarre manner (see for example, FN 2007I). Fatah Intifada, a heavily-armed and Pro-Syrian Palestinian faction, controlled the refugee camp and they surrendered their military sites to this group. Hariri stressed that Syria sent their leader, Shaker Absi, into Lebanon because he was a wanted criminal in Jordan, but captured in Syria, then released (FN 2007I). Saad Hariri rejected the notion that Absi escaped Syrian prisons because the Syrian regime was highly militarized and held a strong secret intelligence network (FN 2007I). When the country was on the verge of civil war in 2008, Hariri again accused Nasrallah and Assad of importing a Sunni-Shiite rift into the country, even though his government attempted to dismantle Hezbollah's telecommunication network (FN 2008I). The conflict ended with the Arab League's mediation in Doha, Qatar, and resulted in the Doha Accords, which gave the 8th of March the veto at the governmental level (France 24, 2008a). Prime Minister Siniora formed a second government in June 2008, whose sole purpose was to prepare for new elections in 2009. Bahiya Hariri became, for the first time, Minister of education. By 2009, Saad Hariri led the 'Lebanon First' bloc (Lebanese National News Agency 2009) and the 14th of March coalition into a parliamentary victory, capturing 72 seats against the 8th of March bloc's 57 seats (Chambers 2009, 4).¹⁸

Internationally and regionally, relations changed between the foreign backers of the 14th of March and the 8th of March blocs. The United States and France resumed diplomatic talks with Syria in 2010 and 2008 respectively. U.S President Obama, and French President Sarkozy reversed their predecessors' policies and restored diplomatic ties with Damascus, despite their ongoing support for the 14th of March bloc. President Sarkozy became the first Western leader to visit Damascus in 2008 since Rafic Hariri's assassination (Black 2008). President Obama, another key backer of the 14th of March, decided to send a U.S. ambassador for the first time since Hariri was killed in 2005 (Maher 2010). The Arab states also agreed to amend ties with

¹⁸ The Lebanon First bloc is the parliamentary coalition that has Members of Parliament from the Future Bloc, and members from the 14th of March bloc (see the Lebanese National News Agency 2009 for details).

Syria as well, following a new bloody confrontation in Gaza between Israel and Hamas (Hirst 2010, 398 – 406). Saudi Arabia launched the Arab-Arab understanding to coordinate Arab response to Israel's war, and alleviate tensions between Riyadh and Damascus in the Middle East, Hamas and Fatah in the Occupied Territories, and the 14th and 8th of March blocs in Lebanon (Muir 2009). Both, the 8th and the 14th of March leaders hailed the rapprochement, which was followed by the election of Saad Hariri as a prime minister in November 2009. Hariri, much displeasure to his Christian allies such as the Phalange, turned a new leaf with Syria and opened a new page with the Assad regime. By September 2010, Saad Hariri apologized for accusing Bashar Assad for assassinating his father (France Presse 2010).

Longitudinal Comparisons on Pre-Post Rafic Hariri Assassination

From 2000 till November 2004, the Future Movement fully accepted Syria's presence in Lebanon, under the pretext of creating stability in face of sectarianism, Israeli threats from the South, and Arab solidarity. Arab nationalism of Rafic Hariri deferred dramatically from the rest of Arab nationalists, mostly present in the Pro-Syrian camp because he envisioned practical steps beyond empty slogans of Arab unity. His version focused on a Common Arab Market scheme that included enabled Arab states collectively to rise within the international system (AFP 2004). His rationale from this Arab nationalism was to destroy trade and investment barriers between Arab states, which generated prosperity for the region. In turn, this prosperity would stabilize the entire Middle East (Ibid). His vision on Arabism also centered on regional peace and resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict; however, he always blamed Israel for its activities against the Palestinians. Due to a strong relationship between Saudi Arabia and Syria, Hariri often defended Syria's presence in Lebanon without any negative criticism directed towards either its bias towards President Lahoud or its repressive tactics in Lebanon (Nizameddin 2006, 103 – 104). This bias led the main Christian parties to regard Hariri and Saudi Arabia as part of their opposition of Syria's presence in the country (Ibid, 104).

After his death, the Future Movement directed all its propaganda against Syria, Iran, and their local allies in the country. With European, American, and Saudi backing to Hariri and the 14th of March bloc, the Future Movement shifted closer to the Phalange in its opposition to Syria. They shifted their focus from economical and infrastructural developments in Lebanon to blunt criticism of the 8th of March bloc and their foreign backers. They stressed on Arabism and Islamic unity to avoid being lumped with the 1980s right-wing Christian isolationists who invited

Israel in 1982 to invade Lebanon. Yet, they allied with these parties at the same time and re-wrote their histories as Lebanese patriots, and re-conceptualized Arab nationalism as the very opposition of Syria's war against Israel. They appealed upon family clanship, Sunni-based polarization, Islamic unity, Lebanese nationalism, and Western identities to distinguish Lebanon as a separate entity from the 8th of March and Syria. These four years of intense criticism came to an end, when the Saudi monarchy launched its Arab-Arab Understanding initiative, which caused a rapprochement between Riyadh and Damascus (FN 2009; Muir 2009; Black 2010). This rapprochement also influenced Saad Hariri and the Future Movement's speeches towards the Syria and Iran. This section will compare and contrast the overall aggregated themes pertaining to international actors, domestic alliances and rivalries, and policies.

Arab and Lebanese Identities vis-à-vis Relations with the Syrian – Iranian Axis

Whereas Rafic Hariri had barely criticized Syria, later Future Movement leaders criticized Syria immensely, especially between 2005 and 2009, demonstrating a breakdown in Syrian hegemony. From 2000 till 2004, Rafic Hariri praised Syria in 14.62% of his speeches often defending its presence in the country as legitimate in face of anti-Syrian calls for Damascus to withdraw its troops from the country. He referred to its presence as “Lebanese necessity” (Kawas 2001), rehabilitators of Lebanon (Darrous 2002e), “a need to ensure peace” (Middle East and North Africa Today 2002), and “privileged ties with Syria, with which it shared common interests and problems” (Athens News Agency 2003). After the US Congress passed the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act in December 2003, Hariri found himself defending Syria on even more, with statements such as pushing for economic integration between the two countries (Kawas 2004), “the last bastion that stands against what is being plotted against the Arab world and its people” (AFP 2004a) and opposed possible US embargos on Syria (AP 2004; BBC 2004; Xinhua News Agency 2004). All these statements, in 2004, took place while bickering with President Lahoud and before his resignation as a Prime Minister on September 3, 2004 (Najem 2012, 70 – 71). He often discussed Syria in his travels, often linking Lebanese and Syrian interests, almost as one, to the extent that Jumblatt referred to him sarcastically as “Syria's Unofficial Foreign Minister” (Hirst 2010, 299). Even though Rafic Hariri became a central figure in the 14th of March bloc to oppose Syria, Hariri didn't oppose Syria because he was “Arab nationalist” (Hirst 2010, 299) and partly because he was aware of the political reality of the country during their mandate. Henceforth, “he bent every effort to accommodate them, and so assiduously used his international standing to promote Lebanon's

interests, besides Lebanon” (Ibid). His speeches’ frequency, when discussing Syria centered on economic integration, joint interests, common defence against Israel, and domestic stability. After his resignation, he maintained silence on the Lebanese – Syrian ties, but politely hinted in January 2005, after a visit from the Syrian ‘viceroy’ General Ghazali, through a joint statement with Jumblatt that they held their personal opinion on the relations with Syria amidst praises to its rulers.

Syria, after Hariri’s death, received the brunt of blame for assassinating Rafic Hariri. From February 14th, 2005 till Saad Hariri’s election as Prime Minister on November 9, 2009 (FN 2009l). The Hariri clan and the Future Movement criticized Syria at least 560 times publicly (19.26% of 2265 speeches), and only praised the Assad regime 73 times (2.51%), and most of those praises appeared after Saudi King Abdullah launched the Arab-Arab Understanding Initiative in 2009. The Future Movement, amidst their criticisms, usually ended their criticisms of Syria with the need of good relations with the country (FN 2005m). They interpreted almost every chaotic event in Lebanon as orchestrated by Syria through its domestic allies, the 8th of March bloc. The objective of such meddling was to obstruct the formation of the UN sanctioned Special Tribunal for Lebanon, which sought to investigate Hariri’s murder, and the assassinations of 14th of March figures that followed (see for example FN 2007m), In order to do so, Syria encouraged its 8th of March allies, such as Hezbollah, to launch open protests in November 2006, at least in the eyes of the 14th of March bloc (FN 2006a), while stressing that the 8th of March bloc lacked any free will (Ibid). The Future Movement also accused Syria of instigating sectarian strife and splitting the Muslims into Sunnis and Shiites (FN 2007n; 2007o), monopolizing Lebanon’s foreign policy (Borji 2006); sending the terrorist group Fatah Islam into Lebanon (FN 2007p), refusing Lebanon’s democracy (FN 2007q); and subverting it through imposing a loyalist president (FN 2007r), giving the 8th of March bloc veto in the government (FN 2007s; 2006b), and shutting down the parliament (FN 2007r).

The Future Movement used Syria and its domestic allies to re-conceptualize the Lebanese, Arab, and Islamic identities. The movement started to define Lebanon in terms of what Syria is not: a democracy (FN 2005m). This tactic served to exclude the 8th of March bloc from the Lebanese identity through stressing on the nature of Syria as a police state that repressed Lebanon (FN 2005m; 2005n). Basing his strategies on his father’s legacy for regional peace, Saad Hariri linked the crisis of Syria’s meddling into Lebanese affairs to the Arab-Israeli conflict, advancing the notion that the two are linked and peace in Lebanon’s Southern borders leaves

no room for Syria to meddle through its allies, such as Hezbollah (FN 2006c). This rhetoric became the mainstream to revamp the nature of Arab nationalism as seeking peace, while Syria remained stuck in marketing Arab nationalism and destruction of Israel, but at the expense of Lebanon. In this context, Saad Hariri noted, during the July war of 2006: “If Syria loves war, they have borders and land for 30 years with Israel, let them resolve their own borders” (Ibid).” He also wondered why Syria never fired a bullet into its Israeli occupied Golan Heights since 1973 (FN 2007l), and his answer came with the logic that Syria wants to sacrifice the children of Lebanon to liberate the Golan Heights (FN 2006d). In order to be able to criticize Syria in such a manner, the Future Movement relied on its legacy of its founder, Rafic, as Arab nationalists, and fought Syria politically through re-defining Arab nationalism as a) respect for Lebanon’s sovereignty (FN 2006d), b) highlighting how Syria opposed the policies of the Arab League and bickered with all Arab states (FN 2006e), and c) Accusing Syria of fake Arab nationalism which stresses on tyranny and terrorism instead of construction (FN 2006f; 2007t). To that end, he compared his version of Arabism to that of his father and Egypt’s Abdul Nasser, overlooking the fact that Nasser’s nationalism is close to Assad’s (FN 2006f).

After Hariri formed the government as a prime minister in 2009, he visited Syria in January 2010 in support of the Saudi – Syrian rapprochement. The meetings with the Syrian president were positive, and Hariri expression optimism that despite “many tense relations [...] I believe we found common grounds” (FN 2010i). Saudi reconciliation with Syria, after years of tensions, manifested in Lebanon, and both leaders, in August 2010, met with Lebanese president Suleiman to reaffirm the reconciliation process (Black 2010). Hariri stated that such rapprochement spelled tensions for Lebanon (Ibid). By September 7, 2010, Saudi – Syrian relations and Hariri – Assad relations reached their climax. Saad Hariri apologized for accusing Syria of assassinating his (France Presse 2010). In terms of identities, his focus steered Arab nationalism against Israel and in solidarity with the Palestinians.

Iran was rarely mentioned before the July War of 2006. Iran appeared in only 0.78% of Rafic Hariri’s speeches. Rafic Hariri openly gave Iran and Syria credit for their support for Hezbollah (BBC 2001), but Iran appeared in Rafic’s speeches when meeting with an Iranian official. Syria held a higher frequency in Rafic’s speeches because Lebanon was under its mandate. Iran was rather more distant geographically, and solely supported Hezbollah. It was till the July War of 2006 that Iran’s frequency increased within the Future Movement’s speeches, due to its unique ties with Hezbollah, with the latter accused of serving Iranian and Syrian interests. The

frequency of Iran increased 4.24% of the later Hariri and Siniora speeches, with 80% of those mentions criticizing the Iranian influence on Lebanon through Hezbollah. Although President Bush included Iran as part of the “Axis of Evil” in 2002, however, its political weight was not apparent in day-to-day Lebanese politics. For example, Iran appeared just 3 times in 2005 out of 417 coded speeches after Hariri’s assassination. Syria, in contrast, was criticized 118 times in the same year. During the July War of 2006, Iran was mentioned 30 times, and afterwards maintained a frequency of 16-19 mentions per year. The rationale was simple, the Future Movement focused on the religious allegiance to Iran’s Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, and the financial and military support they received from Tehran (see Chapter 9 for details). Depicting Hezbollah as shoving Lebanon into a Syrian – Iranian axis, Hariri always stressed that loyalties should be for Lebanon (Borji 2006). This tactic sought to depict to the 14th of March bloc that neither Hezbollah nor the rest of the 8th of March lack a free will to serve Lebanon’s interests (FN 2008k). For Hariri, Iran could have demonstrated its interest in safeguarding Lebanon by channelling money and weapons to the Lebanese state instead to Hezbollah (FN 2008k).

Identities played a critical role to exclude the Iranian-Syrian axis and their allies from the Lebanese identity. For starters, the Iranians are not Arab, but historically Persians. Prime Minister Siniora took the Primordial approach and argued that Iran and the Arabs have had problems for ten centuries, disregarding Iran’s close alliance with both Syria and Hamas, who were also Arabs (FN 2007u). PM Siniora also depicted the Iranian-Syrian axis, along with Israel, as a threat to Lebanon, angering the Shiite supporters of Hezbollah and AMAL (FN 2007v). Thirdly, almost all the key actors, relevant to Lebanon, are Shiites, against a Saudi-backed and Sunni-led Lebanese government. The Assad family, the Ayatollahs of Iran, AMAL and Hezbollah are all Shiites, with strong Shiite allies in Iraq as well, leading to the Shiite Crescent (see Eksi 2017). With Hariri spearheading the 14th of March bloc, and Hezbollah spearheading the 8th of March bloc, some scholars regarded Lebanon as a proxy war between the two foreign backs (Ibid). For Hariri, it was easy to accuse Hezbollah, AMAL, and their foreign backers of seeking to import a Sunni-Shiite bloodbath from Iraq, since Iraq geographically lay between Syria and Iran (see Galbraith 2009 for more details on Iraq’s ethnic wars; see FN 2008l; 2009o; Borji 2006). Henceforth, Iran and Syria sought to ignite sectarian tensions to keep the Lebanese state weak and manipulate Lebanon’s decisions of peace and war through Hezbollah (FN 2009o). As the Syrian-Hariri détente continued in 2010, Hariri’s criticism of Iran was toned

down as her stressed the desire to improve relations between the two countries (France Presse 2010a).

Hezbollah and the 8th of March

Hezbollah and the 8th of March bloc had already appeared extensively in earlier sections; this section, built on earlier statements in regard to Hezbollah and its domestic allies, vis-à-vis day-to-day politics. Aware that Hezbollah and AMAL could not be disarmed by force, the Future Movement tried to win over Hezbollah and AMAL politically. Addressing the Bush administration's demand for fully implementing UN Resolution 1559, the Future Movement stressed that Hezbollah's weapons were an internal issue and only dialogue could disarm them (FN 2005m). Similarly, Prime Minister Siniora reiterated the theme to President Bush in 2005 and added that dialogue and liberation of Sheba'a farms could disarm Hezbollah (FN 2005j). Hezbollah refused to debate their weapons and stressed that the Sheba'a farms required liberation. Hence, Sheba'a Farms became a key objective for the government in their desire to de-claw Hezbollah. Syria was blamed for the lack of liberation of Sheba'a farms due to its hesitation to provide maps, so that Hezbollah could maintain its arms (FN 2006jg; 2006h).

The tit-of-tat jabs between Hezbollah and the Future Movement should not be taken at face value, political. On the street, the supporters of Hezbollah-AMAL, on one side, and the Future Movement, on the other, reacted passionately to insults for their respective leaders. Adding that the Future Movement always invoked the memory of Rafic Hariri's sacrifices within the same speech, on one side, and Hezbollah honored their martyrs on the other, Sunni-Shiite polarizations manifested as part of these jabs ever since Rafic Hariri's death. The weapons of Hezbollah became more politicized after the July War of 2006. Hariri and Prime Minister Siniora the Future Movement criticized them for unilaterally making the decision to go to war and criticized Israel for bombing the entire country even though there was no governmental decision for or knowledge of the war (FN 2006i). Prime Minister Siniora also cast doubt on the effects of Hezbollah's weapons in protecting Lebanon since it was the Lebanese collectively taking care of the displaced from the South (FN 2006j). Like the Phalange traditionally opposing weapons outside the Lebanese state throughout the decades, Hariri and Siniora followed the same tactic of the Gemayel clan (see for example FN 2006k). When the army deployed in the South, for the first time since 1982 in 2006, the Future Movement considered such an act as an achievement for the state spreading its sovereignty throughout its land (FN 2006k). This celebration was a

direct criticism of the 8th of March bloc's insistence that Hezbollah is the practical defender of the Lebanese South against Israel.

The weapons, the insults leveled on Syria, and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon all caused accusations of treason between Hariri and Nasrallah. For example, Hariri sought to exclude Nasrallah from Arabism when he said that Nasrallah had problems with all the Arab states, except Syria, which happens to be Iran's ally (FN 2006i) and took it one more step by wondering whether Nasrallah was truly Islamic or Arab since none of the Arabs, except Syria's leaders, share their vision on the Middle East (FN 2006m). To add insult to injury, Hariri also accused Nasrallah of serving Israeli interests in dividing the country, arguing what Israeli militarily failed to do in Lebanon, Nasrallah did it for them for free (The Arab-Arab Understanding Initiative between Syria and Saudi Arabia did not alleviate tensions between Hariri and Nasrallah since the latter continued to treat the Special Tribunal for Hariri as an American tool to strike Hezbollah's ability to protect Lebanon from Israel (see Chapter 9 for details).

Arab Nationalism and the Israeli-Palestinian Peace

When Future Movement speakers mentioned the Palestinians, Arab nationalism and criticism of Israel often followed. Palestinian solidarity focused on the suffering of the Palestinians in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza, outside Lebanon. Palestinian solidarity also included the Palestinian refugees of Lebanon and resolving security issues that hovered between military factions in refugee camps and its surroundings. For example, Saida was the site of the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon, which hosted over 300,000 Palestinian refugees. Palestinian support meant genuine Arab solidarity with 'Palestinian brothers.' The Ain Hilwi camp, with its various militant factions, posed security issues for Saida. Nevertheless, Bahiya Hariri was adamant on many occasions in calling Saida the role model of coexistence, due to its close collaboration with Fatah, the PLO, and Hamas. Bahiya Hariri always contacted the Camp's leaderships when security deteriorated in Saida (FN 2005i). Hence, for the Hariri Clan, the humanitarian dimension of the Palestinian refugees must be taken into consideration within the Lebanese government, as part of Rafic Hariri's vision, a contradiction to the Phalange and the Free Patriotic Movement (FN 2005o)

More importantly, solidarity with the Palestinians included Arab nationalism, and it became a means to deflect 8th of March bloc's accusations of treason or serving Israeli interests. The

Future Movement, instead, repaid Syria and its domestic allies' accusations by claiming that Syria had no interest in the liberation of Palestine in the name of Arab unity. The Palestinian cause, as part of Arab nationalism, excluded Syria and its allies even though Damascus was one of the last Arab countries to recognize the Oslo Accords. For example, Fouad Siniora constantly flagged the attempts of Syria to appropriate the Palestinian cause for personal interests and called upon the international community to bypass Syria when discussing Palestinian solidarity (Naem 2005).

Discussions of the Palestinian cause and the repression of the Palestinians in their territories also occasionally invoked Islamic solidarity. The siege of the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, in February 2007, caused Future Movement speakers to merge Islam with Arab nationalism when they declared that "Israel's hostile takeover of Islamic sacred sites and distorting the features of Jerusalem must be halted so that it remains Arab" (FN 2007w), although sometimes appeals to the West involved appeals to Christians as well, since Jerusalem is the capital of all three monotheist religions, and the Future Movement made calls for "the widest Islamic and Christian organizations to mobilize, along with Arab and Islamic communities collectively, since all are concerned in this sacred place" (FN 2007w).

Taking sides within an international camp entailed that members of that camp internationally supported each other. In case of the Palestinian factions, Hariri bluntly sided with Fatah and the PLO, just as the Phalange did. Just as Syria and Iran supported Hamas, Hariri, the 14th of March bloc (including the Phalange), and their foreign backers supported Fatah. When the terrorist organization Fatah Islam spawned in Nahr el Bared refugee camp in the North, Hariri swiftly accused Syria and Iran for trying to discredit the real Palestinian resistance, which was Arafat's Fatah (FN 2007x). Throughout the showdown between the Lebanese Army and Fatah Islam, Hariri was clear that this group held no relations to neither Fatah nor Islam, completely omitting Hamas, which is also an Islamic militant group (FN 2007x). Solidarity with Fatah and the Palestinians also meant the full implementation of a two state solution between Israel and the Occupied territories, with Jerusalem as the latter's' capital (FN 2009p; 2009q). This vision falls in line with Arafat's Oslo Accord and the Saudi Arab Peace initiative, often heaping praise on the deceased Fatah leader, Yasser Arafat, and traditionally, also his father, Rafic Hariri (FN 2009q). Hariri's supporters also adhered to that respective of peace, in the name of Arab nationalism, further increasing riots between Hariri and Nasrallah's supporters throughout the 8th

of March bloc's open protests (November 2006 – May 2008; see Traboulsi and Kfoury 2008 [2006]).

Israel appeared more frequently than the Palestinians in Future Movement rhetoric. Solidarity with the Palestinians dominated 17.26% of the speeches, while Israel was criticized in 34.35% of overall speeches because of its history in Lebanon, its breaching of Lebanese space daily with planes, its maintaining a presence in Sheba'a farms, and its ongoing repressive activities in Gaza, Jerusalem, and the West Bank. The July War of 2006, which caused death and destruction in Lebanon, occasioned even further frequency. Israel always appeared negatively as part of the solidarity with the Arab cause and condemnation of its repressive tactics in Gaza and the West Bank in the speeches of the Future Movement. Criticism of Israel also was an attempt to disperse 8th of March accusations towards the Future Movement of serving American – Israeli interests.] Saad Hariri even accused Nasrallah of serving Israeli interests during and before the events of May 2008 (FN2008i).

Relations with 14th of March Allies

The 14th of March were treated as a Lebanese movement; Hariri constantly highlighted its democratic nature, as a coalition, and how its supporters raised only the Lebanese flag. All of its components, with some, such as the Phalange, having controversial relations with Arab identities, were erased as “the 14th of March are the basis of this country, defender of Independence, Freedom, and Arabism” (for example, see Siniora FN 2006n). In the face of the culture of martyrdom and death that the 8th of March preached, Hariri and Siniora preached a culture of love and life and considered alternatives to martyrdom. Hariri cited UN Resolution 1701 as a success for Lebanon in defiance of Israel and stressed “I simply want to continue my father's project, build national unity, strong economy, we can fight Israel diplomatically and we have a wide array of relational networks; if we used them wisely, no one could attack Lebanon” (FN 2007y). The 14th of March, especially Hariri and Gemayel, promoted the 14th of March through the ‘I love Life’ campaign, which pre-supposed that the 8th of March bloc only knows death, wars, and destruction (see FN 2007n). Henceforth, the 14th of March was not only the embodiment of Lebanese loyalty, construction, and economics, in this rhetoric; they also believe “in Human rights and Freedom and wanted to establish our economic and political interests with Europe, we both believe that the human must live in dignity, away from poverty, that the woman and child deserve life, we believe in peace” (FN 2007n). The 14th of March also wanted to

establish strong state institutions and bring justice to the assassinated figureheads whom Syria had been assassinating since Kamal Jumblatt's death in 1977. As such, it was no surprise that Justice appeared 29.18% in their speeches between 2005 and 2010, while the International Tribunal for Hariri's murder held a solid frequency of 21.28%.

The Christian Parties and the New Narrative

The most complex relations involve the Christian Parties within 14th of March, since they had been in direct confrontation with Rafic Hariri during the Syrian era. The presence of the Phalange, Lebanese Forces, and National Partisans in the coalition presents a riddle in justifying alliances, especially given that the last had been involved in the Siege of West Beirut and Saida during the 1982 Israeli invasion. For fifteen years, Syria had depicted these parties as isolationist, and parties like the Lebanese Forces were banned during the Syrian mandate under Rafic Hariri's watch as a prime minister. Hatred of the Syrian regime was the foundation of the coalition for the supporters of these parties. Nonetheless, a narrative was needed to explain away the history of bloodbaths, arrests, and alliances with Israel.

In a sense, the Future Movement needed the Christian parties to revisit the history of Lebanon, and to deflect the accusations made by the 8th of March that Saad Hariri was playing the Sunni sectarian card. The Christian parties allowed Future Movement to revamp their history, and vice versa, on themes of sovereignty, the monopoly of arms in the hands of the Lebanese army, and opposing Syria. In response to accusations that he was utilizing sectarianism to mobilize Sunni voters, Saad Hariri answered, "Those who went to the Martyr's Square and Hariri's tomb, were they only Muslims, or they were Muslims and Christians? ... Our list included Gebran Tueni, Ms. Solange Gemayel, and other allies whom we will ally with" (FN 2005p). Hariri demonstrated goodwill to his allies by paving way for national unity for the 2005 parliamentary elections when he withdrew Ghattas Khoury, the only Future bloc MP to object to President Lahoud's renewal in parliament and allowed Solange Gemayel to run. Solange Gemayel was the wife of Bashir Gemayel, the preferred and assassinated presidential candidate of the Israeli forces, and the head of the Lebanese Forces during the Civil War (Boykin 2000). He held the highest position of betrayal in Arab nationalist narratives for bringing the Israeli forces to Beirut. A year before, it would have not been imaginable to hear a Gemayel running with a Hariri in the same list.

The presence of Christian parties also served to deflect accusations that Saad Hariri was appealing to his supporters on a sectarian basis. Hariri declared that he was “surprised that I am accused of sectarianism while our allies are the Lebanese Forces; how can I speak of sectarianism and escalate it, along with my allies who are the Lebanese Forces, Qornet Shahwan Gathering, and the Phalange Base [*Gemayels*], and others of the Christians” (FN 2005q). National unity for the sake of Lebanon’s sovereignty was clearer the year after. Saad Hariri openly praised Bashir Gemayel in front of a million participants on the one-year anniversary of Rafic Hariri’s assassination (FN 2006). The common theme for all these parties, bound together in the 14th of March, was not the history of the parties in the Civil War, but the present: “We are a single heart for Lebanon in face of the plotters to plant the seeds of sectarian strife in the country” (Ibid).

Neither was Saad Hariri hesitant to give credit where it was due to his Christian allies. When Pierre Gemayel, Jr. was assassinated during a conference, Hariri called him the ‘Groom of the Lebanese Intifada’ (FN 2006o). Hariri skilfully merged the history of the Phalange and the Future Movement by recalling that “Rafik Hariri, a Sunni Muslim, and Pierre Gemayel, a Maronite Christian, died for the sake of Lebanon. Today their blood will unite for the sake of Lebanon's freedom, sovereignty and Arabism” (Daily Star 2006a). Even though the Phalange had historically accused Arab Nationalists of having a double loyalty and thus of being against Lebanon, Pierre Gemayel, Jr. was baptized a comrade of Rafic Hariri for the sake of Arabism and opposition to Syria.

Hariri also defended Cardinal Sfair in alignment with his commitment to the Lebanese Forces and Phalange. Long gone were the disagreements that Rafic Hariri had with Cardinal Sfair’s calls for Syria to withdraw from Lebanon. Saad Hariri frequently visited the Cardinal to seek his opinion (FN 2005r) and he frequently defended the head of the Maronite Church (FN 2006q). Indeed, the frictions between Cardinal Sfair and Rafic Hariri over the Syrian presence simply vanished. Saad Hariri praised his patriotism and his Future bloc “challenge[d] anyone in Lebanon to have patriotism that exceeds Cardinal Sfair's, who stood across all the stages to unite the Lebanese; he is a patriotic man who considers all the Lebanese as his sons” (FN 2006r). Cardinal Sfair became so prominent in Saad Hariri’s rhetoric to the extent that he stated of a presidential candidate that “My allies and myself will accept whatever Cardinal Sfair blesses without any argument” (FN 2007y). More importantly, the Future Movement aligned with the Maronite Church on the defence of sovereignty, independence, and freedom, especially against

Syria, in the name of Arab nationalism (FN 2008k). These slogans re-defined relations between Hariri's vast Sunni supporters with their former foes, the Lebanese Forces and the Phalange, but also excluded Michel Aoun as patriotic, since the latter lost the free will to take decisions due to allegiances to Hezbollah and Syria (FN 2006p)

Relations with International Actors

Local-international alliances, as well as regional balances of power, dominated Future Movement speeches. The international actors that were mentioned with the highest frequency before 2005 were the United States (19.75%), United Nations (13.84%), France (12.13%), and Europe (10.42%). The frequency with which these international actors were mentioned reflected the immediate security interests of the Future Movement, be they on the local or international level.

United States

Most of Rafic Hariri's speeches that mentioned the United States also involved the Arab-Israeli conflict. After 9/11, Rafic Hariri found himself justifying to the United States and Europe why Hezbollah was not a terrorist organization, why he would not deploy the army in the South, and why he was calling for a resumption of the peace process. While Hariri blamed Israel for the instability of the Middle East, the United States treated Syria as an occupying force, and demanded the deployment of the Lebanese Army in the South in response to "evict all terrorists and foreign forces, including Hezbollah and the Iranian Revolutionary guards" (Hirst 2010, 300). By 2003, the United States had invaded Iraq, and on December 3, 2003, the US Congress overwhelmingly approved the Syria Accountability Act. President Bush, with much hesitation, approved it in May 2004, demanding Syria indirectly reverse its earlier gains made in Lebanon (Ibid, 300). Rafic Hariri's perspective on the United States' foreign policy went from balanced (Kaldawi 2001) to believing that it was hindering progress (Karam 2003). Indeed, Hariri expressed disappointment in American and European sanctions on Syria where "Arabs felt they were being 'targeted' by the Westerners" (AP 2004). The United States regularly flagged Rafic Hariri's right-hand man, Fouad Siniora as a supporter of terrorism in the aftermath of his donation at a charity event hosted by Sheikh Fadlallah in 2003. The United States immediately cancelled Siniora's planned visit (Reuters 2003). Ironically, a year earlier, Siniora had been the key guest speaker at an event at the US Embassy in Beirut commemorating the 9/11 victims

(Ibid). Two years later, Siniora received President Bush's full support on August 18, 2005 (Fleihan 2005).

On the eve of March 14, 2005, Bush addressed the Lebanese and expressed solidarity with them. He predicted that "once democracy had taken root in their country, it would 'ring the doors of every Arab regime'" (Hirst 2010, 307). More accurately, he named the movement to expel Syria from Lebanon without the use of American force the 'Cedar Revolution' (Ibid). The Bush administration also sought to market this Cedar Revolution as a movement inspired by the sight of Iraqis voting in the Post-Saddam era (Ibid).

The tribunal's defence and Future Movement's relations with the American administration and with France continued to be the center of disputes. While the 8th of March sought to politicize the tribunal, the Future Movement leadership defended its ties with the US and France and sought to depoliticize the tribunal (FN 2005s). Sometimes, collaboration with the United States was justified as part of the global war against terrorism, and the need for collaboration on the international level to halt the explosions in Lebanon (FN 2005k). In other cases, the United States was brought up in relation to the tribunal, along with allies of Syria and Iran, such as Russia, as when the UNSC approved the tribunal (FN 2007y). Hariri also had to defend his autonomy from American decision makers (FN 2006t) given the US' close ties with and favouritism toward Israel.

The United States was criticized only in regard to its constant usage of the veto at the UNSC when protecting Israel in its aggressive policies against the Palestinians, a pattern that continued after Rafic Hariri's era. The usage of the American veto, at the UNSC, was regarded as an invitation for Israel to continue its aggressive policies in the occupied territories, settlement expansion in the West Bank, hostile arrests, expulsion of Palestinians from Jerusalem, bombardment of Gaza, and later the imposition of the siege on the Gaza district (see, for example FN 2006n). In a sense, the failure of the United States to pressure Israel to commit to the peace accords indirectly affected the 14th of March bloc's leverage in the White House. Since the United States fully supported the Siniora government, the latter held a bull's-eye to the 8th of March and their foreign backers of accusations serving Israeli interests. Forced to defend their friendship with the United States, the latter overwhelmingly supported Israel in times of war, be it in Gaza or Lebanon, which placed the 14th of March in an awkward position. For example, both Hariri and Siniora lamented that the drive for the Arab Peace Initiative had

been weakened due to the erosion of American credibility and its usage of veto (FN 2006u). This credibility hit bottom when Hezbollah and the 8th of March bloc overran Beirut and dominated it militarily, while the United States limited its solidarity vocally. By the time President Obama was elected, Hariri instead shifted towards the international community to pressure Israel's expansionary projects in the West Bank (see FN 2010j).

France

While Lebanon held close ties with France historically, the Hariri – Chirac ties pushed the Lebanese – French relations to a whole new level. President Chirac had a more intimate relationship with the Hariri family on a personal level. President Chirac was very close to the Hariri family, and both, Rafic and Saad, spoke with him directly at least twice a week. It was Nazek Hariri who divulged the close ties between Rafic Hariri and Jacques Chirac that goes back at least 30 years, and how Hariri played a critical role in assisting Chirac to understand the mazes of the Arab world (FN 2007z). Chirac's close relations with Hariri became a legal issue in France when both Chirac and Hariri were dragged into a controversy in France that involved Chirac's campaign finances (Daily Star 2002f). More importantly, Rafic Hariri also helped Chirac to establish good relations with the Arab leaders, especially Saudi Arabia (Ibid). As world leaders converged on pressuring Syria to withdraw from Lebanon in 2003, it was Chirac, at the advice of Rafic Hariri, broke away with the international trend and attempted to assist the young Bashar Assad into world politics with the hope that the latter would ease his grip on Lebanon; however, Chirac "had got worse than nothing – just snubs and discourtesy" (Hirst 2010, 301).

When Rafic Hariri was assassinated, President Chirac was the first world leader to arrive to Lebanon three days later and stayed in the Hariri Mansion in Beirut. Commenting on his visit, Saad Hariri described president Chirac as: "President Chirac always considered us as his children, and we consider him as a father, President Chirac knows the meaning of friendship, and for this reason he came to bid our father farewell..." (FN 2005u). On February 4, 2006, France minted 14,000 coins in honor of Rafic Hariri, and also opened a special wing for him in the French museum as a man who changed history (FN 2006v). President Chirac announced in 2007 that he would temporarily move to a Hariri-owned apartment, in Paris, after his term second presidential term ended (Reuters 2007).

What does this close relation mean to the Hariri family, especially in the wake of Rafic Hariri's death and the hostility that broke out between the 14th of March and Syria's local allies? France fully supported the Siniora government and condemned frequently Syrian meddling in Lebanese affairs. France also played a crucial role in bringing forth the UN Resolution 1701. Furthermore, France, like the United States, pushed for the international fact finding mission into Rafic Hariri's assassination, and later the establishment of the International Tribunal under Chapter 7 despite Syrian objections. France also bickered with the United States during the July war and caused frictions, in a similar manner, like the case of Iraq. France wanted an immediate cease fire, while the United States and Blair's Britain wanted the war to continue, hence France "found itself as the counterweight to and chief interlocutor of the Americans" (Hirst 2010, 367). Indeed, France was backing Beirut's demands, whereas the United States was backing Tel Aviv's (Hirst 367, 370-371).

France also helped Lebanon domestically in terms of mediations and finance. The country organized Paris I; II, and III, all were international fundraising conferences, with Rafic Hariri or Fouad Siniora, to assist the country in reforms, recovery from war, and national debt management. The timing of the Paris III conference, in January 2007, was no coincidence as it kicked off almost 2 months into the 8th of March protests demanding the resignation of Siniora as a Prime Minister and the formation of a national unity government. By the time Sarkozy was elected French president, Chirac organized a 45 minute long meeting between Saad Hariri and newly elected President Sarkozy to ensure that his successor will continue his foreign policy towards the Hariri family and Lebanon (FN 2007aa). To that end, Sarkozy continued his support for the Siniora government and Lebanon. He even spearheaded an initiative to break the deadlock between the 8th and 14th of March, and hosted the entire major parties, including Hezbollah's MPs, in France (FN 2007ab). Despite the French initiative and opening of talks with Syria to resolve the Lebanese crisis, Sarkozy continued to support the International Tribunal as well.

Culturally, the Hariri-Chirac link also shaped how the Future Movement themselves and their country, a hub of coexistence of multiple cultures. Frequently, the term Francophone culture was praised as part of Lebanon's culture, and a bridge between the East and the West. For example, PM Siniora, while hosting a dinner for the Francophone states' Ministers of Sports, stated: "Beirut, the hybrid between Arab and Francophone cultures.... A prosperous future, the land of dialogue and culture, freedom, role of the youth, be it Lebanese, Arab, or

Mediterranean... to forge the future” (FN 2006w). Nevertheless, the frequency of France in the Future Movement’s speeches went down from 12.31% to 8.52%. Part of the reason for such decline was the end of Chirac’s term in 2008, and Sarkozy’s decision to re-open talks with the Assad regime.

Saudi Arabia

Syria’s exit also meant that the Hariri clan was free to pursue openly their ties with Saudi Arabia. It is no surprise that the frequency of Saudi Arabia in the speeches increased from a 3.73% to a solid 9.36%. Unlike with other international actors, Rafic and Saad Hariri are also citizens of Saudi Arabia, a nationality rarely given to outsiders. Yet, King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz rewarded Rafic Hariri with the Saudi nationality. The Saudi impact on Hariri’s speech is evident. Prior to the assassination of Rafic Hariri, Bahiya Hariri, and Fouad Siniora mentioned Saudi Arabia only 3.73% of the overall speeches. In all coded speeches from 2000 till 2010, there has not been a single criticism towards the country, not even indirect comments to mend an issue or a policy. In a sense, Saudi Arabia to the Hariri clan in specific, and Lebanon in general is the counter-balance of Iran to Hezbollah in Lebanon. The assassination of Rafic Hariri, a very close friend to King Fahd, also pushed the Saudi monarchy to throw its weight behind the international tribunal (see for example FN 2005w).

While Syria originally attempted to monopolize the peace talks with the United States and Israel over the Golan Heights, Crown Prince Abdullah brought the entire Arab League into the table and officially, for the first time in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, a recognition of Israel’s existence and conditions for peace entered the negotiations formula (Sevareid 2002). Since that historic day, both Hariri members used the Arab Peace Initiative to argue that the Arabs want peace, but it is Israel who refutes them and violates UN resolutions (AP 2002).

The ties between the Saudi monarchy and the Hariri family are also strong, if not stronger than the Chirac – Hariri relations. When King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz passed away, Siniora declared a three-day national morning and ordered the TV channels not to broadcast any entertainment shows in parallel (Kuwait News Agency 2005). Perhaps Saad Hariri’s words, in the wake of Rafic Hariri’s assassination, summarize the relationship: “Saudi Arabia, leadership and people, stood by our family. The King and the Crown Prince both came to our house. Rafic Hariri was a loyal citizen of Saudi Arabia, and Saudi Arabia was loyal to him” (FN 2005v). He also added:

“Saudi Arabia is our country, and we went to offer our condolences to Saudi Arabia” (FN 2005v). Locally, Saudi Arabia took credit for the aid, and also for halting the Lebanese Civil War due to the signing of the Peace Accords in Taef when the Hariri clan discussed Saudi monarchs (FN 2005w), without intervening its affairs (FN 2006x), and seeks the welfare of all Lebanese citizens (FN 2006x).

The Saudis, nevertheless, have direct influence on the Hariri clan, and donations to Lebanon were visible, due to the presence of a Future Movement-led government, despite criticism of Hezbollah and the latter’s presence in government after 2005 (see Appendix 1 for details in donations and aid). It was no surprise that the Hariri clan fiercely escalated its rhetoric against Syria between 2006 and 2008, in parallel of tensions between the Arab League and the Syrian – Iranian axis (see Eski 2017 for details). Other examples of direct influence over the Hariri clan included a change in Saad Hariri’s behaviour in parallel to a change in the Saudi monarchy’s foreign policy. For example, when the Saudis and Iranians launched a dialogue initiative to resolve the protests deadlock in 2007, the Hariri clan avoided criticizing Iran; however, they continued to focus on Syrian meddling. When the Saudis launched the Arab-Arab initiative, Hariri was the first to support it and hailed frequently the King Abdullah for the initiative. As a matter of fact, Saad Hariri, through his speeches, re-integrated Syria into the Arab fold after he became Prime Minister.

The United Nations and other Non-State actors

Of all the International actors, the United Nations, with its various branches, dominated most speeches. Almost 30% of the speeches of the designated actors have mentioned the United Nations for the 2005 - 2010. The 30% frequency also included The Special Tribunal for Lebanon and the UNIFIL forces. The Tribunal, and the path towards the Tribunal, dominated Hariri family’s rhetoric, and was mentioned at least 21.28% in the Hariri clan’s rhetoric. During the Rafic Hariri era, the United Nations received calls to be a fair arbitrator on the Palestinian – Israeli issue. After February 2005, the United Nations became the defender of Lebanon’s sovereignty, guarantee of justice, and received praise. In several cases, Hezbollah’s arms were often associated with UN 1559, however, they stressed that the topic requires internal dialogue. From 2005 till 2010, over 8 UN resolutions were issued in the UNSC, a rare phenomenon that reflects Lebanon’s return as a central stage within the Middle East.

International actors, pertaining to economic affairs, declined dramatically as an indicator of another sign of the downfall of the police state in Lebanon; the Future Movement was no longer focused on either criticizing Israel or speak national economics, two topics that were most acceptable during the Syrian mandate. Whereas the era of Rafic Hariri, the World Bank and the IMF had 2.03% frequency of actors' speeches during the 2000 – 2005 period, especially due to loans and national debt management, the frequency fell from 5.91% to 0.93%, as other topics became liberated for discussion. Similarly, Neo-Liberal policies, those that include globalization, liberalization of economy, eliminating tariffs, support for free markets, and privatization, were pushed to the backside. Neo-Liberalism, in terms of policies and identity, declined from 18.20% to 2.91% between 2005 and 2009.

Policies & Objectives

Policies, before and after Rafic Hariri's death provide a shocking difference in terms of appeals, the targeting of others, primarily Syria and its allies in Lebanon, mobilizations of supporters. Given that the Future Movement led the country through many governments, they held sway in implementations of policies and party objectives. Furthermore, these objectives became part of ethnic mobilizations and appeals for inter-ethnic support.

For example, Sovereignty changed Arab nationalism and Arab unity, beyond combating Israel and bringing forth Arab Common Markets in the traditional sense of Rafic Hariri. It also targeted Syria, rebranding Sovereignty as respect of borders of neighbouring Arab states, and solely focused on the theme of Lebanon against Israel. Post Hariri – assassination, it became lumped with Sovereignty independence, and freedom against Syria and Israel together. Sovereignty also was invoked for every activity that the 8th of March conducted on the street or on the parliamentary level, often deemed as Syrian calculations. The fact that Israel continued to be targeted, especially after the July war of 2006, along with Syria, in regard to Sovereignty, it increased from 17.57% before February 14th, 2005, to 40.18%. Freedom and Independence took a similar direction as well, each increasing by 17.69% and 21.37% respectively, often directed at Syria. These vast increases in sovereignty focused on, along with Israel, the 8th of March bloc and the Syrian – Iranian axis.

Speeches 00-10	% 00 - Feb 05	% Feb 05-10	Variation
Sovereignty	17.57%	40.18%	22.61%
Freedom	9.95%	27.64%	17.69%
Independence	1.09%	21.37%	20.28%

Repression, like earlier indicators, changed directions in a similar direction. While Rafic Hariri ignored the repressive nature of the Syrian mandate and focused solely on Israel's repression of the Lebanese and Palestinians, Saad Hariri and his comrades lumped the Opposition and Syria together when discussing the repression of the Lebanese, in most speeches. As a matter of fact, he defined his movement, and the 14th of March coalition, as the anti-thesis of the 8th of March and Syria. These factors, along with solidarity with the Palestinians and remembering the Syrian era-police state, pushed the theme of repression from 11.51% Pre-2005 to 37.26% afterwards.

Security, and related headlines, Sheba'a Farms, Lebanese detainees, the Lebanese army and the displaced also increased tremendously even though security during Rafic Hariri's era was second most discussed topic (45.26%) after Economic policies and projects (50.39%). During Rafic Hariri's era, the focus of Future Movement in regard to Security, was primarily Israel and later the need of Syria's forces to safeguard Lebanon's post-civil war peace. On the other hand, the Future Movement added Syria and its local allies to the mix of security threats, including the lumping of sectarian riots, explosions, and assassinations to the state actor. These security breaches included Israel's threats, violations of Lebanon's air space. These issues increase the frequency of Security from 45.26% to 63.8%. Sheba'a farms, being a sub-category for security and sovereignty, also increased from 4.67% to 8.12%. Often, the 14th of March accused of Syria deliberately not providing maps to prove Lebanon's ownership, or else the 14th of March would have liberated it 'diplomatically' since Israel declared intention to withdraw if proven to be Lebanese (see FN 2006z). Henceforth, this topic was just an alibi for Hezbollah to maintain arms. The Lebanese army, often coded with sovereignty and security, as the counter-balance to Hezbollah and the legitimate sole wielder of arms, received increased from a mere 3.42% to 22.08%. The issue of the Lebanese army and disarming militias had traditionally been a demand by the Christian parties for decades, since the 1960s (see Chapter 6).

Other files that are traditionally demanded by Christian parties also gained momentum against Syria. These include the Lebanese detainees and Neutrality. Historically, Rafic Hariri only focused on the Lebanese detainees in Israeli prisons, the Future Movement, instead focused on Lebanese detainees, some who have been missing since the Lebanese Civil War, in Syrian prisons. As such the frequency of Lebanese Detainees abroad jumped from 0.62% to 4.9%. Similarly, Neutrality of Lebanon maintained its significance from Rafic Hariri's era. In the past, Rafic Hariri waged all bets, during reconstructing Lebanon from the Civil War's destruction, on the Oslo Accord, and continued to advocate for peace. Peace brings forth foreign investments and economic stability. However, Saad Hariri and his comrades took neutrality with a similar logic of the Phalange's rhetoric of Positive Neutrality. They rebranded it as the Political resistance and criticized Syria and Iran for waging wars at the expense of Lebanese blood. Hence, neutrality was a key issue in criticizing the 8th of March's rhetoric of armed resistance and their foreign backers. Nevertheless, there is no dramatic change in the frequency of neutrality, and its frequency simply moved from 3.27% to 4.19%. This change accounts for criticisms of Syria between 2005 and 2009. The table below sums up the increase of frequency in regard to Security, Sheba'a Farms, and the Lebanese Army:

Speeches 00-10	% 00 - Feb - 05	% Feb 05 - 10	Variation
Security	45.26%	63.8%	18.54%
Sheba'a Farms	4.67%	8.12%	3.45%
Lebanese Army	3.42%	22.08%	18.66%
Lebanese Detainees	0.62%	4.9%	4.28%

In issues of sectarian violence, reconciliation and dialogue, and coexistence of sects, there had been an immense spike in the frequency, in all three categories. Unable to benefit from their position as the majority in the government and mobilize the Army, the Hariri family and Future Movement, like the Phalange, focused on Dialogue and reconciliation, especially when riots broke out. The more the 8th of March criticized them, the more they called their opponents to avoid polarizing slogans and slander and focus on dialogue in a bid to demonstrate to their supporters that neither the 8th of March bloc nor their foreign backers are interested in dialogue. Sectarian tensions and riots, or Fitna (in Arabic) between Muslims, increased due to the protests, and riots. Frequently, Saad Hariri or Fouad Siniora accused the opposition of triggering sectarian violence in their rhetoric, for sometimes simply targeting the Future leaders, and

occasionally refuse to import the Sunni-Shiite divisions from Iraq. The calls for dialogue and reconciliation also were accompanied with calls to protect national unity and coexistence. Future Movement always depicted itself as the party of dialogue and coexistence in this regards, and cited Rafic Hariri's skilled diplomacy in keeping all parties satisfied, a brand that the Future Movement desperately attempted to uphold after Rafic Hariri's death. These themes accelerated in frequency after the Doha accord of 2008 and in preparation for the 2009 elections.

Speeches 00-10	% 00 – Feb 05	% Feb 05 -10	Variation
Dialogue and Reconciliation	11.04%	40.49%	29.44%
Coexistence	4.51%	41.37%	36.86%
Sectarian Tensions/Strife	3.73%	17.17%	13.44%

As for state related issues, Justice, the Presidency, and Governmental void increased dramatically in terms of frequency; however, Corruption and the electoral law had a slight increase. Justice had increased from 11.2% to 29.18%. There is one major reason for such an increase, which is the assassination of Rafic Hariri, and the subsequent assassinations of 8 figures identified as 14th of March during the 2005 – 2008. The demand for justice was the perhaps the sole purpose for the disintegration of the government, a concept both Saad Hariri and Siniora reiterated frequently. They often cited how government decisions were taken unanimously; however, when the Tribunal's draft was agreed upon, the 8th of March ministers withdrew. The frequency for justice jumped from 11.2% to 29.18%, with the Tribunal and its earlier stages, scored a frequency of 21.28% of the speeches. The Hariri clan and Siniora, in this topic, re-wrote history of assassinated politicians, and aimed accusations on Syria, justifying that the Special Tribunal will put a halt to these assassinations. As a matter of fact, the 14th of March launched an entire campaign under the banner 'for the sake of truth.'

As such, other topics also followed similar patterns: The Presidency and Institutional Vacuum. The Future Movement accused the 8th of March of seeking governmental vacuum, during their protests and riots; often lumped with a desire to bring back Syria. Henceforth, Vacuum spiked from 0.93% to 16.25%, mostly cited during the protests and the elections of 2009 and against President Lahoud when he refused to resign. The Presidency also had a large increase after Rafic Hariri died. Whereas the era of Rafic Hariri is summarized with bickering between Emile

Lahoud and himself, the era of Saad Hariri focused on forcing President Lahoud to resign as an illegitimate president. Prior to the finish of the term of Emile Lahoud, the Presidency was criticized 124 times in the coded actors' speeches. Saad Hariri explained that he did not become a prime minister in 2005 in order to avoid President Lahoud as a Hariri (FN 2005x). On the other hand, President Suleiman was never criticized at all since he held no loyalty to Syria. Another aspect of the presidency is discussing its authority, and who can be elected as the president, especially after fears rose that Michel Aoun sought to capture the presidency. As such the presidency's frequency increased from 4.51% to 16.07% and often contributed to the earlier indicator.

Lastly, regional meddling, a topic often reserved briefly against the US Congress's Bill of the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act, during Rafic Hariri's era, increased in frequency because the Future Movement interpreted activities of the 8th of March, Syria, and Iran as foreign meddling into Lebanese affairs. The reason for such a spike is due to the fact that the 14th of March spent a lot of time attempting to prove that they follow no one, and their foreign backers do not meddle in Lebanese affairs. The frequency increased from 0.16% to 12.94%, a clear reflection of the escalations between the regional actors as well. The table below sums the policies:

Speeches 00-10	% 00 – Feb 05	% Feb 05-10	Variation
Justice	11.2%	29.18%	17.99%
International Tribunal	0	21.28%	21.28%
State Vacuum	0.93%	16.25%	15.31%
Presidency	4.51%	16.07%	11.56%%
Foreign Meddling	0.16%	12.94%	12.94%

The last section of policies and objectives relate to Economy and Development, which also includes the Public Debt, the Youth, Charity, and Welfares. While economic policies and topics dominated 50.39% of Rafic Hariri and Fouad Siniora, during his Finance Minister days, the frequency declined during the era of Saad Hariri to 33.16%. This decline doesn't indicate that the Future Movement's interest in economy declined; however, it indicates, as earlier policies and objectives demonstrate, a spike in other political issues, such as the Tribunal and Independence from Syria and Israel. The bulk of Rafic Hariri's economic speeches focused on

bringing economic investments, especially concentrated towards development and reform, opening the markets, and the push for Arab Common Markets. He used his charisma to attract investments; however, he steered away from the political problems that Syria and its local allies posed. Siniora quotes the assassinated journalist, Samir Kassir, telling Rafic Hariri that his charisma has limits in bringing in Arab and international funds since foreign policy is in the hands of Syria (Kassir Quoted in Siniora 2005).

For Saad Hariri, the economy exists in the first place due to his father's efforts; and that the identity of Future Movement is that of Building and Construction. Often, the Hariri clan and Siniora attribute to Rafic Hariri the building of Beirut and all of Lebanon after the civil war. Furthermore, the Future Movement continued to support and discuss plenty of liberalization projects frequently. Often, the economic objectives are part of building the state of Lebanon and referred to as the Rafic Hariri project or dream (FN 2009r). Often, Hariri's assassination is correlated with the death of economy, coexistence, and the country within their speeches (FN 2009s.) During elections, Saad Hariri frequently and proudly stated that the Future Movement and 14th of March are the only party to hold an economic plan for Lebanon's economy, infrastructure, agriculture, education, and free craftsmanship, unlike Syria's allies" (see FN 2009o). Discussing the economy often includes other categories, such as development and managing the Public Debt. The public debt's frequency declined from Rafic Hariri's reign (19.6%) to Saad Hariri's leadership of Future Movement (1.9%) as Syria and its domestic allies became greater threat to Lebanon. There is a reason for such a decline. Rafic Hariri, and his finance and economics ministers tried to bring down the national debt and focused on the route of open markets and investments to bring forth the money. Neo-Classical liberal economies, such as downsizing, privatizations of state institutions, institutional reforms, and investments were key factors in bringing the debt down in their speeches.

The frequency in Development also held a similar decline, often coded with Economics; however, it remains to hold a high rate of frequency. The Development policies decreased from 37.17% to 30.77%. Siniora and Bahiya Hariri receive an extensive credit for keeping the frequency high. Bahiya Hariri, being the chair of the Parliamentary Education Committee and Minister of Education (2008-2009) often discusses educational projects, school renovations, teachers' contracts, and the justice in accessibility to education. For Bahiya Hariri, following her brother's footsteps, she regarded the youth as the greatest human resource for resources to invest, since the youth are the future of the country. Hence, investment in the quality of

education and schools were also often coded with the Youth and Development (see FN 2007w). She also often, like her nephew, Saad, and Siniora, referred to the Future Movement as the movement of Resistance and Construction (see for example, FN 2005i). Through this rhetoric, the Future Movement depicted itself as a resistance movement through construction and development, which was an indirect response to its critics as serving American interests.

As for the Youth, the frequency increased vastly from 4.67% to 25.74%. There are two reasons why the Youth received high frequency, and both pool-in in Future Movement's appeals to non-sectarian audiences. Bahiya Hariri, given her position as the Parliamentary Education Committee chair, and also briefly Minister of Education during Siniora's transition government (2008 – 2009), has constantly spoke on educational affairs, campaigned for justice in accessing education, upgrading the schools, and the importance of the youth for the future. Bahiya Hariri would often correlate the youth as the path for coexistence and equate their education to a long-term national strategic goal (for example, see FN 2007ac). Bahiya Hariri also worked closely with UN organizations to support the Palestinian children studying in Lebanon as well and encouraged frequently close collaboration with the Lebanese institutions (FN 2007ad). All of her activities increased the frequency of youth and education as part of reform and convinced the Future Movement's supporters that their party worked for their communities, within the domain of Arabism.

The other reason relates to Rafic Hariri himself and the name of the movement. This topic boosted clanship, as an indicator, whenever education and the youth were discussed. Rafic Hariri deliberately chose the name Future for his movement out of his faith that the youth will be the solution for Lebanon's sectarian problems and the security for the long run. Nazek Hariri called her husband as "Teacher of Generations" (FN 2007ae). Education became a response to the 8th of March accusations that Future Movement is building a militia. In response, Saad Hariri responded that their movement is a militia of teachers and students that seek to build the future, instead of violence (FN 2006p). The Hariri's foundation for scholarships also included donations for development projects and opening clinics. Charity became a trademark of Rafic Hariri's activities since the late 1970s. As such, Charity and Welfare's frequency increased from 6.07% to 20%, and played an important role in appealing for support from ethnic and non-ethnic supporters, after Rafic Hariri was killed. These activities also contributed to boosting the frequency clanship, as well as extensive donations to religious Islamic charity organizations.

Speeches 00-10	% 00 – Feb 05	% Feb 05-10	Variation
Economy	50.39%	33.16%	(17.23%)
National Debt	19.60%	1.90%	(17.70%)
Development Policies	37.17%	30.77%	(6.40%)
State Vacuum	0.93%	16.25%	15.31%
Youth	4.67%	25.75	21.07%
Welfare/Charity	6.07%	20%	13.93%

Ethnic Identities and Narratives 2000 – 2010

Rafic Hariri and his colleagues rarely appealed upon ethnic identities; Hariri preferred to appeal through economic projects, interests of the commercial class, development, and charity. Rafic Hariri has for 25 years been involved in charity, opening accessible schools for the masses, open Downtown in Beirut, establish sophisticated stadiums, and catering for the children whose parents were killed from Israeli bombardment. Similarly, his sister Bahiya, has modernized the educational system, launched dozens of educational campaigns, and focused on enhancing the quality of education.

Religious appeals were rare, and no more than 1.71% in terms of total speeches during Rafic's era. Lebanon and the Middle East enjoyed almost 13 years of stability (till 2003), and Syria squashed ethnic appeals, unless Hezbollah relied on its multiple ethnic propaganda. Part of the reason lies in Syria's repressive regime to block any appeals on Sects, and partly for Rafic Hariri's interests to capture all Beirut's three districts, that are vastly diverse. Rafic Hariri would mention a parliamentary seat of contention that requires mentioning the Sect of the seat (Abdullah 2000); however, he would never utilize his sect to bring forth support. If anything, he would pray to God give him the wisdom to achieve the people's goals (Razzouk 2000). Islam also never appeared in forms of appeals; instead, it appears to condemn terrorist attacks or sectarian riots and stresses that they have no relations to Islam (Daily Star 2000e). Sometimes, the Sunni term appears when Hariri warns Sunni clerics to steer away from fanaticism and extremism, especially during the US attack on Afghanistan (AFP 2001e). Similarly, when terrorist attacks strike anywhere on the planet, Hariri is the first to condemn it and adds that: "These attacks were against all of us, especially Muslims because they are against our religion and our values" (Interfax 2001). Sometimes, Islam or Sunni appears in speeches when Hariri is

giving donations, such as to the Construction of the Mohammad Al-Amin Mosque, which ironically became his tomb (Abdul Hussain 2002a). The only occasion Hariri would identify himself, from a distance as a Muslim is when speaking in Islamic related conferences, and speaks on the need for reform for Institutions instead of discussing his faith (El-Ghoul 2003). Finally, I coded for frequencies that Hariri met with the Grand Mufti of the Republic, or Sunni institutions, they also held a low frequency whenever they were mentioned (0.93% and 2.18% respectively).

Ethnic identity, as a whole, also spiked for multiple reasons after Rafic Hariri's death in 2005. The first pertains to a new variable, Family Clanship. Clanship was introduced into the codebook after Rafic Hariri was assassinated, and his name was used to rally Future supporters, and the 14th of March for support. The Hariri family also relied on clanship to express how Saad Hariri, even though not the oldest son, walked in the footsteps of his father. Indeed, frequently, Future Movement official statements, Bahiya Hariri, Nazek Hariri, and Fouad Siniora constantly praised Saad Hariri as carrying the family mantle. The process was accompanied with visits from delegates representing Beirut and Lebanese families, primarily Sunnis primarily acknowledging the succession and offering fidelity to Saad. Throughout 2005, the succession was reinforced with Saad Hariri welcoming the Lebanese delegates, accompanied by Nazek Hariri. In all of her interviews, Nazek Hariri expressed pride in Saad Hariri, and how he rose up to the responsibility of walking in his father's footsteps. The same applies to Bahiya Hariri, who across the 5 years, mentioned Saad Hariri, and praised him as the true successor of Rafic Hariri. More importantly, all the actors always cited Rafic Hariri's vision, plan, or faith when speaking of alliances, delegitimizing the foes of 14th of March, and reforms. As such, Rafic Hariri's name was mentioned at least 43.13% times of the speeches, always associated with Lebanon. Rafic Hariri's name was also accompanied to push voters to elect Future Movement and 14th of March's candidates.

Despite their attempts to continue with Rafic Hariri's rhetoric to deflecting accusations of sectarian mobilization, they sometimes used their sect and religion as a base to not completely alienate their Sunni majority base. They often warned their opponents that the polarization on the street risked a Sunni – Shiite Sectarian strife; however, sectarianism in their rhetoric was the Shiites who sided with Nasrallah's Hezbollah. For example, on the eve of the May events, Saad Hariri lashed on Hassan Nasrallah: "Sayyed Nasrallah says he doesn't want a Sunni-Shiite Fitna, and here I say that containing a Sunni-Shiite Fitna is more important than any weapon in

the world, Sayyed Hassan” (FN 2008l). Siniora often quoted the Quran, the Prophet, and Imam Ali when responding to Pro-Syrian Hezbollah and AMAL movement’s open protests and speeches, depicting them as non-Quranic. For example, one time Siniora criticized the protests as attempts to trigger sectarian violence and Fitna, by citing the Quran frequently, for example, he stated in reference to Hezbollah: "A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim and doesn't do him injustice, doesn't let him down, doesn't accuse him of lies, and doesn't humiliate him" (FN 2008m). In other times, they opposed the threats against Muslim unity, in defecto placing themselves as Sunnis and Hezbollah as Shiites “The downfall of the Muslim Unity is the downfall of Lebanon” (FN 2008l). From this type of propaganda, the Future Movement transformed the battle of Pro and Anti-Syrian to the defence of Islam, while claiming secularism at the same time.

There are also other forms of expressing their religious faith without mentioning it directly. Saad Hariri, Bahiya Hariri, and Fouad Siniora often visited the Rafic Hariri tomb, and read the Fatiha prayer. The pictures of the family always appeared in the Future Newspaper as doing the prayer. Bahiya Hariri few months after her brother’s death, decided to replace the Business suit with the veil. Saad Hariri, after the Doha Accord of 2008, when the threats against his life declined dramatically, had his picture taken praying randomly in a Sunni mosque on Fridays, often kneeling. Reporters waited for Fouad Siniora to finish his Friday prayers to ask him politics related questions. Saad Hariri and Fouad Siniora always visited the Grand Mufti of the Republic, Mufti Rashid Qabbani, and paid their respects. Saad Hariri every year held Iftar, on daily basis, to relevant actors and families representative of allied regions, and used it to launch speeches against foes for 5 years in a row. Bahiya Hariri, as part of her daily meetings with teachers and students, would address the future Islamic scholars and studies “the importance of the role that Islamic studies teachers play in guiding the generations on the concepts and human values coming from the Islamic religion...” (FN 2008n). Also, Saad Hariri and Fouad Siniora often condemned Islamic-based terrorism, be it al-Qaeda abroad or Fatah Islam locally as having no relations to Islam, and reiterate how Islam is the religion of openness and moderation (see for example FN July 17, 2007)¹⁹.

Yet, Saad Hariri worked hard, in parallel of accusing his opponents of triggering a Sunni-Shiite rift, to insist that the dispute is not sectarian but political, furthermore, the rift is about Rafic

¹⁹ A theme that targets yet again Syria for manufacturing Fatah Islam, and Hamas, in Gaza, since it is an ally to the Syrian – Iranian axis, and to the threat of the 8th of March bloc that Islam is at risk.

Hariri's project for Lebanon versus the Opposition's (FN 2007ag). They would use their sect's background to stress that there is no sectarian mobilization, only Lebanese. When answering accusations of mobilizing the Sunnis, as part of America's tactics to split the Muslims into Sunnis and Shiites, Saad Hariri responded that he was Lebanese and Muslim Sunni who focused on coexistence (FN 2007n). Since the Future Movement did not seek to replace the confessional system, Secularism was only discussed at least 1.99% of the Future Movement's speeches, but coexistence increased to 41.37%, straight from 4.5%.

Regionalism perhaps played the biggest role in mobilization. The Future Movement ran in many areas, in the Bekaa, Akkar, Tripoli, Minnieh and Dinnieh, Beirut, Saida, Rashaya, and others. Saad Hariri always appealed on the regional pride and its history in patriotism depending on whom he was talking to. Bahiya Hariri, on the other hand, focused more on Saida, as she held on weekly basis, multiple meetings with Saida's committees, including unions, personalities, delegates from the Ain Hilweh Camp, and celebrated how Saida is a role model for coexistence. Saad Hariri praised Beirut as loyal to the Hariri family and always criticized the Opposition, during their open protests, as attacking Beirut itself. Tripoli and Akkar were also mentioned frequently as sectarian riots broke out sporadically in Tripoli, after the May events. The region or town's history is often linked to either its resistance to Israel or how Rafic Hariri loved the region. As such the frequency of Regionalism spiked from 6.07% in Rafic Hariri's era to 26.58% during Saad Hariri's reign.

Below is the difference in percentage of appeals, out of total speeches:

Speeches 00-10	% 00 – Feb 05	% Feb 05-10	Variation
Sunni	1.56%	3.80%	2.24%
Muslim	0.47%	23.44%	22.97%
Sunni Institutions	2.18%	7.06%	10.73%
Meeting the Mufti	0.93%	1.77%	4.88%
Regionalism	6.07%	26.58%	20.51%
Clanship	0	43.13%	43.13%
Identity on Self*	11.20%	61.41%	50.21%

- Frequency of at least one ethnic identity appearing in a speech, out of total speeches for the designated period.

Non-Ethnic Identities

Finally, Non-ethnic identities experienced a spike in regard to the Lebanese and Arab identities. The downfall of Syrian hegemony paved and the competition with the 8th of March on the vision of Lebanese vision triggered National and Supra-National outbidding. The Lebanese identity was already high during Rafic Hariri's era (90.67%), it spiked to 94.44%. Arab nationalism, previously limited to Arab solidarity with Palestine, or as means to bring forth aid from Arab brethren to Lebanon. After Hariri's death, Arab nationalism shifted in trajectory. It became a tool to de-legitimize Syria's Arabism, baptize Christian figures, such as the Phalange, the Lebanese Forces, and Cardinal Sfair, as Arabs. Furthermore, Arab nationalism for the Future Movement called for peace with Israel and support for the two state solutions. Finally, it was a call for Arabs against Iran and Hezbollah between 2005 and 2009. The battle for Arab Nationalism and its interpretation shifted from 30.17% to 41.28%, often linked to Lebanese sovereignty and criticism of the Pro-Syrian opposition. The increase in ethnic appeals also revealed negative correlation with Neo-liberalism as a non-ethnic identity. The Future Movement declined in discussing Neo-liberal policies, such as privatization and free trade, from 18.2% to 2.91%.

Conclusion

The Future Movement experienced a major identity shift within itself and regards to other allies. The party relied on its identity as Sunni, Islamic, and Arab to battle Syria and Iran's influence in Lebanon, along with their allies. In the process, the Movement's perspective of Arab nationalism shifted dramatically and neared the view that Pierre Gemayel Sr. demanded: an Arabism that respected Lebanon's borders, and diplomatic, instead of military warfare against Israel. The Movement also borrowed several policies and slogans from the Phalange and used them as their own. Reiterations of Lebanon First, Weapons in the hands of the Army Solely, Lebanon's Sovereignty, Anti-Syrian rhetoric, disarming Palestinian militias, and demands of Lebanese detainees in Syrian prisons were traditionally demands that the Phalange called for publicly. As a matter of fact, the Future Movement's Arab nationalism, Islam, and Sunni doctrine welcomed anyone into the fold as members or brothers as long as the Syrian – Iranian axis was the enemy. Having Hezbollah and AMAL movement on the other side, with Syria, whose leadership is Alawite (an offshoot sect of the Shiites), and Iran, who is Shiite, gave the polarization of ethnic tensions between the Sunnis and Shiite. In a twist of irony, the Gemayels, who invited Israel in 1982 to invade Beirut, became Arab while Hezbollah, who liberated Lebanon from Israel,

became the traitors of the Arab cause within Saad Hariri's public speeches. This process fitted clearly the international dynamics between Saudi Arabia and its allies against the Syrian – Iranian axis. Tensions flared in Lebanon as tensions internationally escalated, and dramatically cooled down, as the Arab-Arab Understanding initiative materialized between Syria and the Saudi monarchs (Muir 2009; Black 2010).

These anti-Syrian slogans and 'Lebanon First' themes dramatically reshaped Hariri's vast Sunni supporters' perspectives with the supporters of the rest of the 14th of March bloc. Before Rafic Hariri's death, the Future Newspaper, the mouthpiece of Hariri's Future Movement, and Future TV, televised pro-Syrian slogans since their leader, Rafic supported Syria's presence. This process meant that Hariri's Sunnis regarded the anti-Syrian movement in Lebanon, predominately Christian, with the traditional lens that Hezbollah viewed them. The relations changed dramatically between the Future Movement's supporters and the Christian anti-Syrian opposition. The Future Movement took the lead in opposing Syria, re-vamping Rafic Hariri as a victim of Syria's nepotism, and opening a new page with the Phalange, the Lebanese Forces, and Qornet Shahwan Gathering. The heroes of the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces became the heroes of the Future Movement. They became, in Saad Hariri's rhetoric, Arab nationalists who opposed Syria and supported the Arab Peace Initiative. Saad Hariri welcomed President Bush's outrage to the death of his father and added accusations to the U.S. President's against Syria in killing Rafic Hariri. The United States, Israel's closest ally, became also a friend of Lebanon, and France, through President Chirac, became part of Hariri's family, and Saudi Arabia was given the credit of halting the Lebanese Civil War, and not Syria. Hariri's allies, like the Phalange, followed a similar narrative. The strongest symbolism when Saad Hariri compared Pierre Gemayel Jr.'s assassination to his father's, describing it that their blood mixed in defence of Lebanon, breaking all barriers between the Christian right, and their controversial history with Israel, and the Future Movement, an Arab nationalist liberal movement.

Chapter 9 Hezbollah and Hassan Nasrallah's Charisma

"Some people are trying to scare us and the Lebanese, the Syrian, the Palestinian and Iranian peoples, saying that Sharon is a crazy person, his friend Bush is a crazy person [...] Yes. Sharon can do whatever he wants if there is nobody [to confront him]. But if there is somebody, he should take this somebody into his consideration." ~ **Hassan Nasrallah** – Oct 11, 2003 (BBC 2003)

"At a minimum, the Arab rulers must stop besieging the Palestinians [...] Part of the siege from which the Palestinian people are suffering is being imposed by some of the Arab regimes. This siege must be lifted. Assistance must be extended." ~ **Hassan Nasrallah** – Oct 6, 2007 (BBC 2007i)

Introduction

From its inception in the early 1980s, Hezbollah remained loyal to Iran's Supreme Leaders Ayatollah Khomeini and later Ayatollah Khamanei. In Lebanon, Hezbollah commenced as an extension of the Iranian revolution, which had ousted the Western-backed monarchs, the Shahs of Iran, in 1979 (Hirst 2010, 174). Bound by Khomeini's unique interpretation of Islam, the *Wilayat el-Faqih*, Hezbollah spread throughout Lebanon's Shiite communities and waged a never-ending war on Israel's forces in Lebanon until they proclaimed liberation in 2000. Throughout the 1990s, Hezbollah became more Lebanese-oriented, entered Lebanon's politics, and merged the Lebanese and Arab identities with its unique adherence to *Wilayat el-Faqih*. The Syrian- Iranian alliance, forged through common hatred for Iraq's Saddam Hussein in the 1980s and Israel (Ibid, 180 – 181), influenced Hezbollah's decisions in Lebanon, and the secular Baathi regime became a close friend of the religious party.

This empirical chapter tracks Hezbollah as a case study that never deviated from its international allies' allegiances, and eventually accepted its former arch-nemesis in Lebanon, Michel Aoun, as an ally after the death of Hariri in 2005. Hezbollah had to face, for the first time since its inception in the 1980s, challenges within Lebanon from the 14th of March coalition in 2005, and the latter's plethora of foreign backers that stretched from North America to Europe, the Arab Gulf, and even as far as Japan and Malaysia. This chapter tracks Hezbollah's speeches about themselves, their domestic and international allies, and their foes, along with

the policies and narratives used to polarize their supporters to mobilize and fight against Israel and the 14th of March. Hezbollah is a case where an ethnic leader did not change the allegiance to a foreign backer; instead, that leader experienced both domestic changes, in terms of alliances, and international pressures due to its persistent connection with the Iranian-Syrian axis. Hezbollah's narratives can be expected to accommodate their new domestic allies and foes, and increase ethnic appeals, perhaps using the same historical narratives, in the face of new domestic foes. This internal and external precedent pressure on Hezbollah to disarm, accompanied with hostile international diplomacy against the Syrian – Iranian alliance (2005 – 2010) forced Hezbollah to be politically and militarily on the defensive in Lebanon. Because the 14th of March bloc and the international community accused Syria's President Assad of assassinating Rafic Hariri, Nasrallah had to increase ethnic appeals on key ethnic and national identities, while integrating Michel Aoun, a former arch-nemesis, into the narrative of an American – Israeli attempts to capture Lebanon. This narrative played a crucial role of importing Sunni – Shiite cleavages from Iraq, and polarized the Sunni – Shiite Street in Lebanon, in an unheard manner. Nasrallah could not avoid such a cleavage since his party, and his foreign backers, are all technically Shiites²⁰, clashing with Saad Hariri, whose key primary backers are the Sunni Arab monarchs. In a summary, Nasrallah's strong narrative triggered identity shifts when several Pro-Syrian actors shifted allegiances into the Western camp, such as Saad Hariri's Future Movement and Walid Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party, against his international allies. At the same time, Michel Aoun's transition into the Pro-Syrian camp also changed Shiite – Christian dynamics within Lebanon, spinning a narrative of Aoun's patriotism against the expanding American empire.

Nasrallah's speeches are rather unique to the Lebanese arena, especially his train of associating events to describe domestic and international politics as an American-led ploy against all forms of resistance. Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, is known for his charisma, charm, and excellent command of the Arabic language. He reached the highest level of respect when his son died in a military operation against the Israeli occupying forces, in Southern Lebanon, and he appeared strong without tears to the public. He became Hezbollah General Secretary in 1992 at a very young age, after the Israeli forces assassinated his mentor and

²⁰ While Iran and Hezbollah are Shiites, Bashar Assad is Alawite, a minority in Syria. The Alawites are a sub-category of Shiitism and started as a dissident to the Shiite sect (see Hirst 2010, 321). The Assad family takes pride in their secularism. Hamas, the military-wing of the Sunni-based Muslim Brotherhood in Gaza, and an ally to the Syrian – Iranian axis demonstrates that this axis is not interested in advancing pan Shiitism (Ibid).

former Hezbollah General Secretary, Sheikh Abbass Mousawi (Norton 2008, 78, 99). He was only 32 when he took the helm of the party in 1992 and 40, when he led his party to victory against Israel and its local allies, the Southern Lebanese Army (hereafter SLA), in 2000. Nasrallah's victories, according to his narrative, never stopped. Hezbollah was the sole actor, be it state or non-state, that pushed Israel out in 2000, and also took credit for the full 'liberation' of all remaining Lebanese prisoners in Israeli prisons, the last to be released in 2008 (France 24, 2008).

Nasrallah's speeches pose a challenge, as the complete Manar TV transcription is not present to code, because Western media overlooked many aspects of his statements. Western media, in general, focused on Nasrallah's speeches on Israel or the United States; however, the same media sources ignored the rest of the contents on several occasions. Nasrallah himself noted this phenomenon during the negotiations for the 2004 prisoners' exchange with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. He noted that if he spoke for two hours on the problems of Lebanon, the international media would only pick up his discussions on Israel (BBC 2003a). He added that this phenomenon was humiliating. The BBC, after 9/11, preserved his speeches online, partly due to the fact that Manar TV, Hezbollah's official TV channel, uploaded Nasrallah's transcribed speeches to its Website. Before that, data primarily came from multiple outlet sources, found on Factiva, such as the Lebanese-based Daily Star, and Western outlets such as Agence France Presse, and Associated Press.

A Brief History

Before discussing Hezbollah's political moves between 2000 and 2010, Hezbollah's relations to Iran and Syria require further exploration, since both nations played an integral role in its politics and its capacity militarily to face off with Israel in the South, and politically to leverage its weight within Lebanon. Hezbollah's history is somewhat complicated because it held a segment of support in AMAL Movement (hereafter AMAL), meaning that it is a bit difficult to separate the commencement of Hezbollah as a separate movement from AMAL as a whole. Both movements were popular in the Shiite community; however, Hezbollah's military achievements and Iranian funds gave them the upper hand in warfare and propaganda (Norton 2008).

Before the rise of Hezbollah and AMAL, Shiite communities mobilized either through traditional Shiite clans or progressive left-wing movements (Traboulsi 2008, 177). The speeches of

Lebanese Communists against poverty and for welfare resonated with the youth, including the Shiites of the South, whose regions were economically and politically marginalized (Norton 2008, 15). Imam Moussa Sadr, Lebanese by nationality but born in Iran, arrived at Tyre and attempted to become a third way in contrast to those offered by the Communists and the clans (Traboulsi 2008, 177-179). A cleric and a politician, Sadr was among the first Shiite clergymen to achieve national popularity, and he was the first to politicize the conditions of the South as an identity for the oppressed (Ibid, 179). He was also pragmatic in regard to the realities in the country and region. He never hesitated, for example, to reach out of the Shiite community and give “sermons in Christian churches, an act that Shi’a clerics before him would never have contemplated” (Shanahan 2011, 161). Regionally, he recognized the Alawites, a sect of which President Assad is a member, as part of the Shiite community, i.e., believers in Twelver Shi’ism. This step, in 1973, brought him closer to Hafez Assad as the latter consolidated his power in Syria (Ibid).

For Hassan Nasrallah, Sadr played multiple roles that acted as enablers. To begin with, Nasrallah claimed as the lineage of Hezbollah the popular thought of Moussa Sadr and joined AMAL in its hostility against Libya due to Sadr’s disappearance while visiting Gazzafi in 1978. This disappearance created a power vacuum in the Shiite community, which paved way for Hezbollah’s rise when the clerics abandoned AMAL to form a more religious movement (Hanf 1993, 190). Nasrallah, nevertheless, was aware of the AMAL supporters’ love for their founder and praised the founder himself. Sadr’s disappearance made him something of a modern hidden Imam, similar to Imam Mehdi, the Twelfth Imam who vanished without a trace, which was distinct historical and religious event in which only Shiites believe (Hanf 1993, 190). For Nasrallah, Moussa Sadr was the very embodiment of charisma, with the capability to mobilize supporters while wearing a religious cloak. He was he first Shiite cleric and politician to win this national level of respect (Ibid). Nasrallah succeeded, as a speech giver, in replicating if not exceeding Imam Sadr’s power to inspire his followers, and even shape the opinion of his Christian allies in regard to himself, his party, and Iran (see the Chapter 8 for example).

Hezbollah’s presence became known during the Israeli invasion of 1982. On Nov 11, 1982, Ahmad Qassir, a young Shiite from the South, drove a car loaded with car bombs into an Israeli Defence Forces headquarters in Tyre, killing over 141 people, mostly Israeli soldiers, and to a lesser extent Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners detained there (Hirst 2010, 196). Qassir’s operation was retaliation for the death of several family members whom Israel had killed during

its 1978 invasion (Ibid). Several devastating Hezbollah operations followed, including the bombing of the American Embassy where 63 personnel died on April 18, 1983 (Boykin 2000, 302-304). The attacks on the Multi-National Forces took place simultaneously on Oct 23, 1983. The blast killed 241 US Marines and 58 French soldiers, forcing both armies to withdraw as peacekeepers and leaving the arena for Syria (Boykin 2000, 310-311). Hezbollah initially did not openly take credit for bombing the Multi-National Forces, but they openly took pride in the Tyre operation. The Tyre operation marked the beginning of Hezbollah's ascension, to which Nasrallah frequently refers to in his annual Martyrs' Day speeches, based on the same day as the Tyre operation (Hirst 2010, 196-197).

Hezbollah's International Allies

Neither Iran nor Hezbollah hid their relations with each other publicly. Hirst noted that it was Khomeini himself who gave them the name Hezbollah, i.e., the Party of God, with the hope of unifying the Muslims and encouraging them to rally behind the party (Hirst 2010, 189). The name comes from the Quran and a Quranic verse appeared on their yellow-and-green flag, declaring, "The Party of God, they are victorious" (Ibid). More importantly, Norton (2008) notes that Tehran influenced their 1985 'Open Declaration', and Hezbollah completely aligned their objectives with those of Iran's (36-37), openly associating itself with Khomeini's *Wilayat el-Faqih*, and not recognizing the Lebanese state due to Phalange dominance at the time (Khatib 2014, 24). They would directly quote Khomeini on several issues: "Imam Khomeini, the leader, has repeatedly stressed that America is the reason for all catastrophes and the source of all malice. By fighting it, we are only exercising our legitimate right to defend our Islam and the dignity of our Nation" (as cited in Norton 2008, 37). To Khomeini, the *Wali* of the Islamic order of the Iranian revolution, they gave complete obedience. This obedience is also due to all *Walīs*, including the current Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who took over after Khomeini, as Supreme Leader in Iran (Hirst 2010, 188). The Lebanese state, for Hezbollah, was corrupt, and they considered leaders who collaborated with Western imperialists to be "traitors to Islam" (Norton 2008, 37-38). Finally, the Declaration calls Sunni religious scholars to rally behind Hezbollah as a duty to fight imperialism while advocating an Islamic system chosen directly and freely by the people (Ibid, 40). Hezbollah's kidnappings of Westerners be they journalists, soldiers, or diplomats, also were factored into Iranian interests when it came to bargaining on regional politics or prisoners (Norton 2008, 41-42).

Syria also sponsored Hezbollah, and shared common interests with Iran geo-strategically in the early 1980s, which benefited both due to regional crises. Iran was suffering from the war with Saddam's Iraq; Syria was recovering from a humiliating defeat against Israel in Lebanon (see Boykin 2000, 305-306; Norton 2008, 34). While such circumstances were the cause for a secular Syrian Baathi regime to ally with an Islamic religious one in Tehran, Iran, one day after the Israeli invasion of 1982, signalled to Assad its readiness to send 40,000 troops to participate in an all-out war against Israel (Hurst 2010, 185). Assad, though supportive of Hezbollah, had a mixed reaction: he was aware of the religious dimension of Hezbollah rising in his backyard; however, Hezbollah was a party that was ready to ally with him and play a part in his divide and conquer scheme for Lebanon (Norton 200, 34-35; Traboulsi 2008, 220- 239; Hirst 2010, 214). True to this scheme, Assad funded AMAL as a counter-balance to Hezbollah even though the Syrian president held close ties with Iran (Hirst 2010, 232-233). AMAL, not benefitting from the American-sponsored talks during the Israeli invasion placed its bets on Syria's patronage.

The Syrian-Iranian alliance united the Shiites in Lebanon. The rise of Hezbollah originally led the two Shiite parties into a showdown during the Civil War. The intra-Shiite war commenced over AMAL containing Hezbollah's operations in the South in 1988 (Norton 2008, 43-44). The battles raged in the South and Beirut's Dahhieh, i.e., suburbs, and while AMAL held the high ground against Hezbollah at first, Hezbollah overcame its losses and almost decimated AMAL's forces. The outcome was Syria's forces entering Dahhieh with 3500 soldiers to maintain the peace (Hirst 2010, 235-236). Assad invited Hezbollah's leaders into his summerhouse to resolve the crisis (Ibid, 235). Hezbollah maintained its position in Dahhieh and agreed with Assad that it should resume its resistance operations in the South (Ibid 2010, 235).

Hezbollah in the 1990s: Impact of the Electoral System

Syria was given an international role in rebuilding Lebanon by the Arab League. The United States and Europe acknowledged Syria's role to Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia was also a patron of the peace accords (Traboulsi 2008, 245); however, all practical decisions for Lebanese internal affairs came out of Damascus (Ibid). More importantly, Assad captured Lebanon's foreign policy, through his Lebanese domestic allies in power, and the newly Pro-Syrian government was swift to sign a treaty of Brotherhood and Cooperation with Damascus. These steps, along with giving Hezbollah carte blanche in the South, were all multiple means by which to pressure Israel to restore control of the Golan Heights to Syria (Hirst 2010, 223).

Furthermore, the pro-Syrian government, the presence of Syrian forces on the ground, and a strong Hezbollah in the South ensured that Lebanon would not sign a separate peace treaty with Israel, and that Syria would not be in danger of losing the Golan Heights (Ibid). Indeed, Hanf correctly notes that “From Syria’s point of view, any strengthening of its influence in Lebanon was an improvement in its negotiating position” with Israel (Hanf 1993, 623).

On the other hand, Hezbollah had to revamp its image from that of a simplistic Iranian extension of the revolution in Lebanon to that of a national resistance in order to justify its retention of arms (Matar et al. 2014, 57). On the propaganda front, Hezbollah invested in its media and communication to harness domestic support for its operation, de-legitimize opposition to its arms, and terrorize the enemy’s soldiers, be they SLA or Israeli (see Matar et al. 2014; Khatib 2014, Matar 2014). By the time the Lebanese government called for the disarming of all militias, Hezbollah was able to respond that the Party was not a militia, but a resistance movement that worked for the national security of the entire country, across the sects (Matar et al. 2014, 57). Such rhetoric, while it subverted the implementation of the Taef Accord for disarming all militias, provided carte blanche to the Islamic resistance to liberate the South, under Syria and Iran’s approval, while participating in local politics (Ibid). By the time they entered elections in 1992, they needed to appeal to Christians and non-Shiites who would not necessarily agree with their vision on the Islamic state. After reinterpreting Khomeini’s *Wilayat el-Faqih*, Hezbollah campaigned in the elections as a ‘moderate’ party, preaching inter-sectarian coexistence, and arguing that an Islamic state was infeasible in the short-term (Matar et al. 2014, 58). In line with the vision of coexistence of Lebanon’s diverse sects, Hezbollah allied with non-Islamic parties that had candidates that were not Shiite or even Muslim, and spoke on, along with security and liberation, education and development (Matar et al. 2014, 58-59; Norton 2008, 101-102). By the 2000 elections, no Hezbollah candidate was a cleric; they were mostly Shiite, wearing suits except for a tie. Such an attempt built upon earlier attempts to present the Party as a modern party that was political and militant for the welfare of the country (Shanahan 2011, 122). Hezbollah and its non-Shiite MPs who were members of the bloc always captured about 10% of overall parliamentary seats in Lebanon’s elections (Ibid 101-102).

Militarily, Hezbollah indirectly struck out at the unwritten rules of the game with Israel. The rules dictated that Hezbollah confine its operations to the occupied territories of Lebanon, and Israel's retaliation to the former’s guerrilla warfare would not stretch beyond that same region. Nevertheless, Israel almost always broke these rules if Hezbollah inflicted massive damage on

its soldiers. They would punish Hezbollah by attacking civilians in their villages through artillery and aircraft bombing (Hirst 2010, 248-249). These rules collapsed twice on a national scale, the first time in July 1993, with the Israeli Operation Accountability, and the second in April 1996, with Operation Grapes of Wrath. Both operations sought to end Hezbollah, and both failed. Their bombardments in both cases were intended to force the Lebanese state to abandon Hezbollah, and to force Syria to move forward with the peace process (Ibid, 249). In 1996, however, the Qana massacre rocked Lebanon and tarnished Israel's reputation globally. The Qana massacre amidst the 1996 clashes, when Israel bombed a UN Safe Haven, filled with refugees, and killed over a hundred Lebanese citizens, with journalists, foreign included, nearby. What worsened the situation is that evidence indicated that Israel had known what it was bombing, rather than merely retaliating, as it had claimed, against launched terrorist rockets (Hirst 2010, 258-259; Norton 2008, 83-85). The Qana massacre became an incident that Nasrallah compared to the battle of Karbala and the martyrdom of Hussein (Norton 2008, 85).

Nasrallah won the sympathy of the Lebanese, across the sects, when on Sep 12, 1997, his eldest son, Hadi, was martyred during an operation against the Israeli forces in the South (Matar 2014, 160). Nasrallah's response to his son's death was 'stoic,' merged with footage of Nasrallah visiting the families of the other martyrs. The event became national (Matar 2014, 160), and Nasrallah proclaimed, "I used to feel ashamed when visiting the fathers, mothers, wives, and children of a martyr, and I will stay humble in front of them" (Nasrallah 1997 as quoted in Matar et al. 2014). Years later, he admitted that he resisted crying "and I preferred not to give the enemy an image of a grieving father breaking out in public over the death of his eldest son while asking others to become martyrs" (Ibid, 160). This event, particularly the way Nasrallah managed it, earned the sympathy of Arab commentators who "constructed Nasrallah as a selfless leader with deep organic roots in culture, and 'a man among equals,' an example of ultimate dedication and sacrifice that should be emulated by Arab leaders and nationals" (Ibid, 160). Hadi Nasrallah's corpse was returned during the 1998 prisoner exchange between the Israeli forces and Hezbollah (Norton 2008, 88).

In terms of relations internal to Lebanon, Hezbollah bickered intensely with Rafic Hariri's governments. It is no surprise that Hezbollah opposed Hariri. While Hezbollah advocated reform, investments, Hariri was pushing for a tense liberalization of the markets, which would affect the agricultural sector in the South and Bekaa. Politically, Hariri was not entirely loyal to Syria, and he supported the Oslo Accords, which Syria opposed (Nizameddin 2006). He often

spoke of general peace, which contradicted Hezbollah's obligation to the full liberation of Palestine. Hezbollah thus remained in the opposition and never joined a government, despite the doors being open, in order not to give Hariri's governments legitimacy. They associated a 'culture of corruption' with Rafic Hariri's reign, which they described as authoritarian (Shanahan 2011, 124). They withheld a vote of confidence in 1992 and 1995, and also opposed his 1996 budget. If there were labour strikes, Hezbollah sometimes even supported those (Ibid).

Hezbollah 2000-2005

In anticipation of Israeli withdrawal partly due to Hezbollah's operations in the South, Nasrallah also began to prepare the argument of Sheba'a Farms to retain his party's arms for liberation after the withdrawal, declaring that "If a single inch or a single meter of Lebanese territory remains under occupation, we will continue the operations strongly until we achieve full liberation" (Kabara and Mallet 2000). He added the condition of releasing all Lebanese prisoners in Israeli prisons if they were interested in practical peace (Karam 2000; BBC 2000a). In the end, Nasrallah considered the 2000 Israeli withdrawal a victory against Israel because PM Barak had not obtained any security assurances from any party; instead, the withdrawal was merely a forced implementation of UN Resolution 425 on Israel by Hezbollah (BBC 2000b).²¹ The Southern Lebanese Army collapsed on its own overnight, as the result of Hezbollah's ongoing threats against them, demanding that the entire SLA either surrender to the Lebanese judiciary or go to Israel with the retreating soldiers (see Reuters 2000c; AP 2000a; Daily Star 2000i).

Nasrallah dedicated the victory to Lebanon and the Arab and Muslim world. He reserved special appreciation for Syria and Iran. In regard to Syria, he stated: "when we talk about victory, we cannot ignore Syria" (BBC 2000c; Saadi 2000). As for Iran, the religious dimension prevailed as well, as Nasrallah attributed the resistance's achievements to Ayatollah Khomeini: "it was a form of religious and divine resistance which was made possible thanks to the blessings, instructions, prayers, and kindness of Imam Khomeyni. The strugglers who were members of the resistance had total confidence in God" (BBC 2000d). Nasrallah also praised Imam Khamanei and Iran's

²¹ UN Resolution 425 established in 1978, following Israel's Operation Litani in Southern Lebanon, the first of three invasions. The Resolution called upon Israel to withdraw from Lebanon, and brought forth an interim peacekeeping force on the borders (see UNSC 1978 for details). In 2006, the peacekeeping force was beefed up from few hundred soldiers to 15,000 to create a buffer zone between Lebanon and Israel (UN 2006).

officials and people (Ibid). Without pausing to enjoy the victory, he again stressed his demands that Sheba'a Farms be returned to Lebanon and that Lebanese prisoners be repatriated (Ibid).

In parallel, Nasrallah did not attribute the victory solely to the Lebanese or to Islam; he also appealed to the Arab world and aligned his party's victory within the Arab-Israeli conflict, saying that "the Zionist withdrawal from Lebanon represents the first Arab victory in the conflict with Israel [...] the first such day in more than 50 years of Arab-Israeli conflict" (BBC 2000e), and that "the era of Arab defeats is gone, and the era of victories has begun, and that the era of Zionist victories is gone and the era of defeats has begun" (Ibid). He often reminded other Arab leaders not to gamble on the peace negotiations, because "from the facts on the ground, we tell you: Yes, we can restore the Golan [...] We can regain Jerusalem, we can regain entire Palestine, and we can send the Zionist invaders back to where they came from" (BBC 2000f). As the Second Intifada spiraled, Nasrallah used it as a launching pad to criticize Arab countries that either normalized relations with Israel²² or retained diplomatic ties with the country while praising Syria and Iran's ongoing war against Israel (Jayoush 2000; 2000a; Daily Star 2000k; Ibrahim 2000). This criticism against Arab leaders, mostly those with close relations to the United States, continued throughout the observed periods until the present.

Defending Syria came naturally to Hezbollah on multiple levels. Hassan Nasrallah had had a close personal relationship with the deceased President Hafez Assad. He mourned Assad and praised his Arab stances that led him to "spen[d] most of his life supporting the Palestinian cause and its people and in making the dearest sacrifices for the liberation of Jerusalem and Palestine to assure the return of its sons, without ever accepting any concession" (AFP 2000f). After Hafez Assad's burial in his hometown, Qardaha, Hezbollah guerrillas paraded in black uniforms while carrying the Hezbollah yellow flags in front his tomb before they headed, along with Hassan Nasrallah, to Damascus to offer their condolences (Reuters 2000d). His relationship with Bashar Assad was also close-knit; Nasrallah acknowledged Bashar Assad as the true successor of the Syrian presidency (AFP 2000f) as a speaker during Bashar Assad's presidential inauguration in July 2000 (Hamza 2000). In his speech during the inauguration, Nasrallah pledged his loyalty to Bashar Assad by stating the unity of the paths and fates of the

²² Almost all Arab countries, except for Jordan and Egypt, do not hold officially any relations with Israel, including cultural ties and recognition of Israel's right to existence. The 2002 Arab Peace Initiative included a 'normalize relations' offer with Israel, a precedent at the Arab level, in return for returning East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza to the Palestinians in order to establish peace (see Ahren 2013 for details).

Lebanese and Syrians in the face of Israel. He promised Hafez Assad's "great soul" that "we will continue the march with your dear son president Bashar until we regain every inch of the Lebanese²³ and Syrian occupied lands" (Ibid).

Locally, Nasrallah intensified his praise of the Baathi regime as political criticisms began to gain momentum in Lebanon after Cardinal Sfair called for the Syrian forces to leave in 2000. His rhetoric lay in linking the fate of Lebanon with Syria and Palestine; in parallel, he criticized the rest of the Arab leaders in the face of Israeli onslaught on the Palestinians during the Intifada. For example, Nasrallah criticized an Arab League summit pertaining to the Second Intifada, proclaiming that all the Arab leaders, except for President Lahoud and President Assad, had made the Arab cause hit its lowest point (Jayoush 2001; BBC 2001b). He also told the Palestinians to continue their fight against Israel just as Lebanon did (ibid). Internally, Nasrallah stressed that those who demanded Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon were a minority and did not speak on behalf of the Lebanese. Indeed, he warned the Anti-Syrian bloc to speak on behalf of themselves only instead of the Lebanese as a whole, since "we, as the majority political current, have another view and another vision" (AFP 2001f; Dakroub 2001; BBC 2001d). The Palestinian-Israeli conflict became more prominent in his rhetoric when criticizing Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Arab heads of states after Ariel Sharon became Israel's Prime Minister. This criticism centered on the Arab states' inactivity with respect to Palestine, and marketed Hezbollah's model of resistance and guerrilla warfare across the Arab world.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict advanced his geo-strategic perspective after Ariel Sharon took power and the United States announced its New Middle East. In parallel, the Arab League, spearheaded by then-Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, launched the Arab Peace Initiative, offering the land in exchange for peace, with Rafic Hariri, then Lebanese Prime Minister, throwing his weight behind the Initiative. Nasrallah frequently sought in his speeches to undermine the Arab Peace Initiative, as he did with Fatah's Yasser Arafat. He always criticized Yasser Arafat and Fatah for even agreeing to launch the peace talks, because he was confident that Israel would take everything and would give nothing in return. Hezbollah also stressed that they would continue to oppose any normalization with Israel even if the Arab states signed a treaty (AFP 2000g; 2000e). As for the risk of settling Palestinians in Lebanon, Nasrallah never hesitated to blame Fatah head, Yasser Arafat, and accused him of treason for abandoning most Palestinians outside the Occupied territories and their right for return. The heart of Arafat's

²³ In reference to Sheba'a farms

problem was that he recognized Israel and agreed to enter peace talks with a country that expelled the Palestinians historically (see Nasrallah's criticisms on regards to peace with Israel in Reuters 2000f; Ghattas 2000; BBC 2000g; 2000e). The Arab leaders, most of them dictators, also received unprecedented criticisms from the Hezbollah chief, who accused them of being servants to the United States (BBC 2001m; Dakroub 2000a; 200b; Oweis 2000). Nasrallah's perceived 2000 victory against Israel demonstrated that armed struggle against a superior military force could be achieved without collaboration with the United States or Israel at the expense of Arabs.

9/11-2005: The American Invasion of Iraq, Al-Qa'eda, and Terrorism

9/11 put international pressure on the Middle East. Already "mesmerized" by Ariel Sharon, Bush took a hawkish turn after Bin Laden's suicidal Jihadis attacked the United States (Hirst 2010, 280-281). Bush and Sharon envisioned a New Middle East, one that would push democracy, in place of existing dictatorships; socio-economic change; and political metamorphosis that would serve American interests (Ibid, 281). This freedom and economic reform hypothetically would push Muslims away from fundamentalism, which encouraged them to lend a listening ear to Bin Laden's messages (Ibid, 281). Additionally, Syria and Iran were sponsors of terror for the Bush administration. President Bush had already placed Iran in the so-called "Axis of Evil," along with Iraq and North Korea. Syria also began to suffer diplomatic isolation amidst Bush's post-9/11 hawkish foreign policy (Ibid, 280-281).

The United States lumped Hezbollah with Bin Laden in its war against terror. Before the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Nasrallah defended the suicide bombings against Israel during the Second Intifada on the grounds that the "main character of a '*mujahid*' is his strong belief in God and his will to die in his name [...] This belief creates inside of him an unimaginable ability to tolerate pain" (Dakroub 2002a; BBC 2002a; Ibrahim 2002). More dangerously, the United States proclaimed that Hezbollah was cooperating with Al-Qaeda, which was improbable because of Bin Ladin's Sunni fundamentalism and Hezbollah's acceptance of fellow Christians in Lebanon. Nasrallah was also swift to denounce the 9/11 attacks, calling them "truly terrorist acts, while the 'resistance' in Lebanon seeks to liberate the country from the occupation, release prisoners, and halt Israeli attacks on the country" (BBC 2002b; 2002c). If anything, Nasrallah accused the United States and Israel of practicing terrorism, arguing that both held weapons of mass destructions (BBC 2002d). Hezbollah thus became a target in this war of terror, prompting

Nasrallah to warn the Arab and Muslim worlds that “wherever there is American influence, there is no democracy, but simply occupation; Bush doesn't speak of democratic values, he wants to spread the culture of corruption and not only to the Islamic world” (FN 2003).

After the invasion of Iraq, Hezbollah considered al-Qaeda an American product used to serve American interests and opposed al-Qaeda's *jihadi* suicide bombings, especially against other Muslims. He reminded his listeners that it was the United States who supported terrorism, since “the American administration has always exercised terrorist and aggressive policies and backed terrorist groups and regimes” (Blanford 2003). He also linked Saddam Hussein to earlier American foreign policy; given that “everyone knows the level of backing Saddam Hussein received from the Americans [...] The chemical weapons used by the Iraqis against Iranian forces in the Faw Peninsula and Halabja were provided by the Americans” (Ibid). He concluded that “The American administration is a sponsor of terrorism, so ethically and legally it is not qualified to categorize terrorism” (Ibid). He also reminded his listeners that the CIA had trained Bin Laden during its war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan (Ibid). The purpose of al-Qa'eda's spawning in Iraq, followed with explosions all through country, was to trigger a Sunni-Shiite rift to split the entire Islamic nation, to the benefit of Israel (Future News 2004a; 2004b; 2004c; 2004d; BBC 2004a; 2004b; Karam 2003a).

2005-2010: From Hariri's Assassination to War on the Tribunal

The death of Rafic Hariri created a national shock that put Hezbollah on the defensive, especially when almost all the Bristol Gathering²⁴ figureheads accused Syria of assassinating Hariri. Nasrallah showered praise on the martyr Prime Minister, calling him a bridge between the Syrian loyalists and the Opposition (FN 2005y). To ease possible Sunni-Shiite sectarian tensions, Nasrallah offered his Party's condolences to the Hariri families and vast quantities of supporters, claiming that the Party understood how they felt, since Hezbollah had also lost their leader, Sheikh Abbass Mousawi (FN 2005y).

²⁴ The Bristol Gathering, named after the Bristol Hotel, refers to a conference, amongst anti-Syrian, which brought for the first time to the Christian fold, such as the Phalange, the Lebanese Forces, and the Free Patriotic Movement, other major non-Christian and left-wing activists, such as Hariri's Future Movement, Walid Jumblat's Progressive Socialist Party, and other personalities. The Bristol Gathering became the backbone for the 14th of March bloc three months later (see Choucair 2005, 2 for details on the Bristol Conference and Bristol Gathering)

Over the following days, he began to steer blame toward Israel instead of Syria. He stressed a theme that he would frequently repeat against the United States and Israel: "Perhaps what took place a few days ago [the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafic al-Hariri] is a big trap for Lebanon, the Lebanese people, Syria, and the nation" (BBC 2005a). He considered the assassination an attempt to trigger sedition in the country after Israel had failed to do so militarily in 2000, particularly given that "Sharon, who destroyed our country and perpetrated the massacres of 1982, especially Sabra and Chatila, set a condition for resuming talks with Syria. This condition is the withdrawal of the Syrian forces from Lebanon. Now, does not this call for contemplation?" (BBC 2005a; Hamdan 2005). He criticized the Bristol Gathering for not considering that Israel's advanced intelligence could have been behind Rafic Hariri's assassination and instead allowing Hezbollah and Syria to be accused, noting that the media against them had been broadcasting in an orchestrated manner (Hamdan 2005).

After Prime Minister Karami's government resigned and Assad declared a two-stage withdrawal from the country, Nasrallah called upon his supporters to reject UN Resolution 1559 and thank Syria. The purpose of this call was to prove to the international community that the majority of the Lebanese considered UN Resolution 1559 a blatant intervention into Lebanese internal affairs that only served Israeli interests (BBC 2005b; 2005c; 2005d; 2005e; 2005f; 2005g). A day after calling upon the Pro-Syrian bloc to assemble in Riyad Solh Square in downtown Beirut, a million supporters showed up. Nasrallah rhetorically, and mockingly, asked the Bristol Gathering, "Are all these crowds collaborators with the Syrian and Lebanese Intelligence? It is shameful for anyone to speak about his people and partners in the homeland in the language of accusation, disdain, and insults" (BBC 2005h). To shake off Shiite isolation, he praised particularly his supporters from smaller parties who come from other sects, such as Prince Arslan's Druze, Suleiman Franjijh (Jr.)'s Maronites, or secular parties, such as the secular Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP), declaring that "we have come to this place from all areas and from all sects, ethnicities, and parties to stress our stand, vision, and position" (BBC 2005h).

The parliamentary elections, a multiple phase elections per region, maintained a similar status quo between the Shiite parties and the 14th of March bloc until Michel Aoun's victory in the Christian constituencies pushed AMAL and Hezbollah to ally with the 14th of March. This short-lived alliance aimed to break the political isolation imposed on Hezbollah and AMAL and provided Hezbollah with a chance to keep a close eye on the 14th of March-led government in regard to its arms. Shockingly, at least to the Christian parties of the 14th of March, Nasrallah

used Bashir Gemayel's famous slogan, "sovereignty over the entire 10452 KM2," to appeal to the 14th of March voters, a slogan that Gemayel used when he invited Israel to invade in 1982. This type of appeal provides strength to the power of the electoral system in regulating alliances and coalitions during elections. Throughout the remainder of the 2005 elections, he justified his alliance with his former enemies, especially Gemayel's Phalange and Geagea's Lebanese Forces, with the rhetoric: "We stand here today in unity with the Mountain list to call on all Lebanese parties to unite and reconcile their disputes and differences through dialogue and forgive each other while preserving every party's dignity and self-esteem" (El-Ghoul 2005c; FN 2005z). However, collisions continued with the 14th of March bloc over the latter's stance against Syria, and so did Hezbollah's retaliations of accusations of US interventions, all the while cautioning the Lebanese against foreign intervention through domestic divisions (BBC 2005o; FN 2005x). He would remind them constantly that serving UN interests was the same as serving those of the United States and Israel (BBC 3005i; 2005k).

Hezbollah's initial confrontation with the 14th of March leadership was over the latter's support for the International Tribunal²⁵. Hezbollah deemed the Tribunal an American tool that would target the Resistance. Both AMAL and Hezbollah ministers suspended their membership in the government²⁶ when the 14th of March placed the Tribunal on the table of the Council of Ministers. When Syria refused to send its officers to Beirut for interrogation by the International Investigation Committee, Nasrallah was swift to defend its decision by stating Lebanon was not interested in cornering Syria (BBC 2005l). The 14th of March warned that AMAL and Hezbollah risked triggering a *Fitna*, or charge of sedition, if they continued to boycott the government. The assassination of MP Gebran Tueini²⁷ toward the end of 2005, again, allegedly by Syria, along

²⁵ Reminder: The Special Tribunal for Lebanon, or simply the International Tribunal, was a UN-sanctioned Tribunal, formed to originally investigate Hariri's assassination, and later the rest of the 14th of March bloc's assassinated figureheads, including Pierre Gemayel Jr. The Tribunal became a source of contention as Hezbollah and its allies refused it, warning that it was both: already politicized against them and their allies, and it was a tool for the United States to strike against the anti-Israeli forces in the Middle East (see El-Masri 2008 for details).

²⁶ Future Movement, PM Fouad Siniora, invited Hezbollah and AMAL to participate in his government, allocating them 5 ministers. While Hezbollah and AMAL remained as members of the 8th of March bloc, they originally joined the government, but held no veto powers. As discussed in Chapter 8, the 14th of March bloc sought to split the 8th of March bloc through such a move.

²⁷ MP Gebran Tueini, son of veteran journalist and editor-in-chief, Ghassan Tueini, was a prominent anti-Syrian figure during the Syrian mandate (1990 – 2005). He was also the editor-in-chief of the leading Lebanese newspaper, Annahar. During the event of the 14th of March protest in 2005, he wrote an oath, which became the oath of the 14th of March, which literally translates to "I swear, in the name of the

with the sudden push of the government to accelerate the establishment of the International Tribunal, led some 14th of March leaders to pressure Hezbollah to cut ties with Syria. Nasrallah mockingly retorted that he would be willing to condemn Syria if there were evidence to prove that Assad was behind the assassinations of 14th of March figures (FN 2006ac). He would link 14th of March activities to American interests, especially after the United States increased its aid to the Pro-Western government (FN 2006ab). AMAL and Hezbollah ministers declared boycott for the government, after PM Siniora discussed the cabinet, creating a governmental crisis. Hezbollah's also accused PM Siniora of calling Hezbollah a militia and not resistance, which signalled that the 14th of March bloc was seeking to enforce UN Resolution 1559. This resolution, issued in 2004, called upon Syria's withdrawal, and the disarming of all Lebanon's militias, targeting Hezbollah (see Choucair 2006, Bassam 2006 for details on the crisis). Both AMAL and Hezbollah returned to the government after Israel killed a Lebanese teenager, and Prime Minister Siniora announced that Hezbollah would always be Lebanon's resistance (BBC 2006m).

What broke Hezbollah's and AMAL's isolation from the main Sunni, Druze, and Christian parties was the open February 2006 MoU (memorandum of understanding) between Hezbollah and Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement, two former arch-enemies who now agreed on different points, such as the Lebanese prisoners in Syria and Israel, the issue of the former SLA agents, resistance, and Sheba'a Farms. Nasrallah stated the justification for such an MoU as "our goal is to [safeguard] Lebanon's sovereignty; to protect Lebanon, its independence and freedom; and to build the state that protects all sides, looks after all sides, and solves the problems of the country" (Atwi 2006; BBC 2006a). This MoU proved most effective for Hezbollah as it broke the isolation of the two biggest Shiite parties, despite the presence of junior pro-Syrian parties, due to Aoun's command of a strong national party. Aoun held the largest Christian parliamentary bloc by then and provided Hezbollah with the required non-Shiite political cover to maintain the legitimacy of Hezbollah weaponry; Aoun and his movement also stood behind Hezbollah during the July War and maintained a solid alliance, which eventually got Aoun elected president in 2016 (Al-Jazeera 2006a). Thus, the 8th of March bloc was no longer formed of two large Shiite

Glorious God, Christians and Muslims, to remain united in the defence of Lebanon." The Oath appeared on the top of the front page of the Annahar newspaper for over a decade. The Oath, in Arabic, is still present in the Gebran Tueini Foundation (<https://www.gebrantueini.com/>). Gebran Tueini was the fifth 14th of March bloc figurehead to be assassinated in 2005, after Rafic Hariri, MP Bassil Fleihan, Samir Kassir, and George Hawi.

parties, and junior parties from other sect. Instead, Nasrallah can claim that the majority of the Christians are with the 8th of March bloc, to avert accusations of Sunni-Shiite polarizations.

Nasrallah also was keen to avoid a Sunni-Shiite rift through criticizing the 14th of March coalition, which was spearheaded by Rafic Hariri's son, Saad Hariri. Nasrallah and Hariri met privately during the National Dialogue Series (First round – March – July 2006), more than once (M. Hatoum 2006c), and their pictures were front-cover material across the news media. The National Dialogue series commenced in March 2006 to overcome political deadlocks between major political parties (Wählich 2017, 7 - 9; see also Najem 2012, 78 – 79). Such acts symbolized national unity, particularly Muslim unity that incorporated both Shiites and Sunnis, and that any disagreements were political. Like Hariri, Nasrallah stressed that the clash between the two groups was not a Sunni-Shiite confrontation, since both coalitions are multi-sectarian. However, none of the hard topics were resolved at these meetings, including the Lebanese presidency²⁸, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, and the weapons of Hezbollah. These topics continuously ignited mutual accusations of sectarianism. When Hariri accused the 8th of March bloc of igniting sectarianism, Nasrallah repaid him with the same accusation, and added in his bloc's defence that the 8th of March held Christians, Shiites, Sunnis, and Druze. He also wondered why the pro-Western, 14th of March bloc, focused on the Shiites of the bloc and attempted to depict the crisis as Shiites against a Sunni government bloc instead of a political and ideological disagreement during the parliamentary shutdown crisis (BBC 2007j).

The July War of 2006 kicked off when Hezbollah militants crossed borders, killed seven IDF soldiers, destroyed a tank, and captured two Israeli soldiers whose fate remained unknown until 2008 (Hirst 2010, 328-330). The goal was the release of Samir Kuntar, the longest-serving Lebanese prisoner, in Israel since 1978, whom Israel insisted on not including in the 2004 Prisoner Swap (Ibid, 329). The operation did not happen suddenly: it was preplanned and well prepared. Nasrallah had begun promising Kuntar his freedom in April 2006 (BBC 2006af); at the time, this statement was considered a slogan to whip up support, and not an actual warning that Hezbollah would actually attempt such an operation in a bid for Kuntar's freedom.

²⁸ March 14th bloc wanted President Emile Lahoud removed since Syria imposed his three-year extension in 2004. The 8th of March bloc refused his removal since he was Pro-Syrian and an ally (see Wählich 2017, 8).

Israel was already engaged in a bloody war with Gaza. Hamas had kidnapped Gilad Shalit, an IDF soldier, and hidden him in Gaza. Israel's response was to bomb Gaza as a punishment. Hezbollah's timing, amidst the bloodshed in Gaza, was terrible: the kidnapping of the two IDF soldiers shifted Israel's full military attention onto Lebanon. The strategic bombardment of over two hundred bridges, Lebanon's infrastructure, airport, and ports, and imposing a siege, choked the country and its people. The Israeli government pledged that the "Second Lebanese War" (Sixth by the Lebanese count) would destroy Hezbollah once and for all. The 14th of March bloc accused Nasrallah followed Iran's orders to trigger a war with Israel. Nasrallah, in response, stressed that his party did not seek escalation through the operation; furthermore, he considered the kidnapping of the Israeli soldiers a domestic issue to release the last Lebanese prisoner, Samir Kuntar, from Israeli prisons, with Iran having no influence whatsoever on the decision (BBC 2006a; FN 2006aa). Throughout the war, he constantly addressed the Lebanese people, the Arabs, and the Israelis, calling the July War the hour of truth about the Arab-American-Israeli collaboration that sought to force Lebanon into obedience to American interests (BBC 2006o; Dow Jones News Wire 2006; FN 2006ad). Nasrallah declared that the military advantage that Israel historically held was no more and promised the Lebanese people a victory (FN 2006ad), pointing his finger to the sea and telling the Israelis, "The surprises I promised you will begin as of now. Now, at sea, the Israeli warship off the coast of Beirut, which attacked our infrastructure, people's homes and civilians - look at it burning, and it will sink, along with dozens of Israeli Zionist soldiers on board. This is the beginning" (CBS 2006). As Nasrallah finished this final sentence, a newsflash appeared across the Lebanese channels stating that an Israeli warship was on fire.

The July War of 2006 demonstrated that Hezbollah was capable and prepared to confront Israeli forces. These impressive operations boosted Hezbollah's claims that only its arsenal could safeguard Lebanon from another Israeli invasion. The tunnels, the Iranian-manufactured rockets, the guerrilla warfare operations, the enhanced surprising anti-tank missiles, and their ability to pinpoint specific targets in Israel's Haifa shocked the Israeli army (Hirst 2010, 346-247). Until the end of the war, Israel failed to capture any town or village; however, Israel was successful in displacing one million Lebanese, littering the South with hundreds of millions of cluster bombs, and inflicting damage on many Shiite-majority regions. Many Israeli-led massacres took place in Lebanon, most prominently the Second Qana massacre and the Marwaheen Massacre. Indeed, Israel failed to achieve any military accomplishment that could provide the impetus for a settlement; Nasrallah was swift to say, "The destruction of the

infrastructure, the killing of civilians, the expulsion of people, and the demolition of houses do not constitute a military achievement in the military sense of the word” (BBC 2006p).

For Nasrallah, Israel lacked autonomy over the decision of war and peace, a step away from traditional Arab accusations that Israel controlled the American foreign policy. He stressed that Israel was a tool for the Bush administration; furthermore, he blamed Bush for the deaths of so many Lebanese (BBC 2006q). He also lashed out against the Arabs for limiting their support for Lebanon to humanitarian aid, decrying that “some deal with Lebanon as if this is some bad case of humanity that receives some medicine, stocks, and money” (BBC 2006q). In his rhetoric, both Israel and Arab leaders lost any free will in decision-making, especially amidst mounting field losses. When Condoleezza Rice visited the Middle East, Nasrallah declared that “it is the US Administration that insists on continuing the aggression on Lebanon. Israel seems today more than ever that it is an obedient tool to execute a US scheme and decision” (BBC 2006p). When UN Security Council Resolution 1701 was ratified, Nasrallah condemned it for not mentioning Israeli atrocities in Lebanon (BBC 2006r; 2006s; 2006t), accusing the resolution of favouring Israel.

The end of the July War spelled all sorts of intensified frictions, among them, the topic of whether Hezbollah had defeated Israel or vice versa. Assad’s victory speech further aggravated the tensions domestically as accusations of foreign tutelage to the Iranian-Syrian axis and American – Israeli alliance were hurled daily by the 14th and 8th of March blocs respectively. Saad Hariri harshly criticized Assad for claiming victory on the blood of Lebanon’s children. Nasrallah criticized the 14th of March for serving American interests and defended Syria on the grounds that “today Syria stood by us in the media, support, and tendering the displaced, so yes, it can say it is a partner in victory” (FN 2006ae). He blamed the current and historical absence of the state²⁹ for the rise of the resistance, noting that the state had failed to defend the South and to offer any health services in predominantly Shiite regions (2006ae). Nasrallah stressed that Hezbollah had risen to meet humanitarian needs and not sectarian objectives

²⁹ The Lebanese state, before the Lebanese Civil War (1975 – 1990) barely invested in the South, rendering its infrastructure under-developed (see Norton 1987). The Lebanese Army failed to halt the Israeli incursion of 1978, and the Israeli invasion of 1982, which led several paramilitary parties to take arms to resist Israel. The invasion also took place during which the Lebanese Army was fragmented into the SLA, Baabda HQ, and party militias. Even though Israel withdrew in 2000, Hezbollah took over the liberated regions. The Lebanese army did not deploy till 2006, during the July War (see Al-Jazeera 2006a for Chronology of Events).

(2006ae). As for the 14th of March, he escalated his rhetoric, especially when they harshly criticized Hezbollah's arms and the unilateral decisions about peace and war that Hezbollah made outside the state, calling the bloc "hostages for the American project," and declaring that "he will not allow those who gamble on the American project to cover the victories of the resistance" (FN 2006af).

When Nasrallah announced his divine victory over Israel in a mass rally in late September 2006, he issued a stern warning to the 14th of March that the topic of disarming the resistance was futile, linking their activities to their serving of American-Israeli interests. He argued that "No army in the world can make us lay down our arms [...] If the state and government fail to carry out their responsibility toward protecting the land and citizens, the Lebanese people will assume this responsibility as they have done since 1982" (BBC 2006u). The next week, he raised the issue of the presidency, accusing then-president WHOM of being "subject to them and [carrying] out American orders, with Feltman (the American ambassador) sitting down with him two or three times a week" (BBC 2006v). He even accused some 14th of March leaders of begging the United States to unleash Israel on Hezbollah (BBC 2006ac). This theme continued during the open protests in downtown Beirut (e.g. BBC 2007l). This polarization was a dangerous escalation, given that the July War, which had devastated hundreds of Shiite-majority villages, towns, and neighbourhoods, had taken place only five months earlier, and Hezbollah's supporters were still reeling from the psychological and material costs of the war. Nasrallah took that rage and told his supporters that the 14th of March bloc had demanded such a destruction, steering dangerous polarization and using it to pressure the 14th of March bloc to give the 8th of March bloc veto power in the government (BBC 2006ac).

After a year and a half of open protests in downtown Beirut, the 8th of March failed to force the 14th of March government to resign. By May 5, 2008, the May Events began. The Siniora government escalated by deciding to eliminate Hezbollah's illegal telecommunication network and to transfer an officer, Shukair, from being head of Beirut's international airport, due to ties with Hezbollah. For Nasrallah, that was a declaration of war "and not a declaration of intentions - and the start of the war by the government of Walid Jumblatt on the resistance and its arms in the interest of America and Israel, and on their behalf" (BBC 2008f). He added that the government was seeking to destroy the resistance's capabilities, a plot that Israel had failed to do through warfare. On this issue, Nasrallah declared that "there is a team which is a subservient and a committed servant to the Americans, implementing a project that the United

States and Israel could not implement; namely, disarming the resistance” (BBC 2008f). He also considered the communication network to have been the backbone of the resistance, a very reliable source for Hezbollah’s coordinated military action against Israel, which had proven essential during the July War (BBC 2008f). He further mocked the 14th of March for having “toured the entire Arab world to tell the people there that Hezbollah is so and so, Hezbollah is Iranian, Syrian, Shi’i, Italian, and so on but they said nothing about Israel” (BBC 2008f). He declared war on the government of Condoleezza Rice and David Welch (BBC 2008f) and thereby justified the usage of arms inwards against the 14th of March bloc, since they were doing Israel’s and American’s bidding in the country.

From 2008 till 2010, the 8th of March bloc, including Hezbollah, participated in Prime Minister Siniora’s second government (2008 – 2009), and Saad Hariri’s government (2009 – 2010). The difference between these two governments and PM Siniora’s First Government (2005 – 2008) is that the 8th of March bloc held the power of veto at the governmental level. The 8th of March bloc failed to obtain majority in the 2009 elections, partially due to the Christian parties of the 14th of March bloc reversing Michel Aoun’s 2005 impressive victory (Bayoumi 2009). Tensions between the 14th and 8th of March bloc continued due to the Special Tribunal’s anticipated verdict to indict Hezbollah for Rafic Hariri’s death. While other sources of tensions, such as the Lebanese presidency and relations to Syria died out in 2010, Hezbollah and its allies continued to criticize the 14th of March bloc for supporting the Special Tribunal, which again, in Nasrallah’s rhetoric, is not an objective institution but a political tool in service of the United States.

Ethnic Identities and Narratives 2000-2010

Overall, ethnic identities dominated 79.48% of Nasrallah’s speeches. While his alliances with Syria and Iran remained the same, the 8th of March bloc faced unprecedented pressure both domestically and internationally to disarm, while Syria and Iran also faced increased pressure from the Western and Arab worlds after Hariri’s death. Before 2005, rarely would a Lebanese politician criticize Hezbollah out of fear of being accused of treason (Rabil 2001). After Hariri’s death, however, many leaders from the 14th of March bloc openly discussed Hezbollah’s weapons, and traditional Phalange slogans from the era of Pierre Gemayel, Sr. returned to re-politicize their arsenal and to de-legitimize Iran and Syria as true partners of Lebanon. The frequency of ethnic appeals increased between the two phases as the result of this pressure. Ethnic appeals, in Hezbollah’s speeches, had already been made at a high frequency (74.28%)

before Rafic Hariri's assassination, due to the fact they were an Islamic resistance; however, after Hariri's death, that percentage jumped to 84.74% as the 14th of March and their vast array of international actors and organizations supported the anti-Syrian bloc.

Shiism, *Wilayat el-Faqih*, Iran, and Moussa el-Sadr

Hezbollah relied on direct and indirect ethnic appeals to mobilize their supporters. Because Hezbollah is a religious party, Nasrallah and Qassem always appeared publicly wearing Shiite specific religious cloths and turbans. Such a physical feature combined with politics, granted Hezbollah leadership an advantage over other politicians: the leadership spoke as a religious and political representative of the Shiite community. When someone criticizes Hassan Nasrallah's political speeches, the critic risks igniting sectarian polarization to one of the most popular Shiite clergy, successful militant, and politician at the same time. For example, thousands of Hezbollah supporters rioted in Beirut, when a television satire mocked Hassan Nasrallah; the latter was swift to blame the show for instigating sectarianism over sensitive issues (El-Ghoul 2006a). Indirect appeals include other forms of symbolism that their audience identifies with, but there is no need for the speaker to state the ethnic identity. These symbols and historical events include Nasrallah's talks about his mujahidean, martyrs, and weapons. Returning to the political satire event in 2006, Nasrallah directly brought forth a red line on political parody shows to mock him, but at the same time he argued that Hezbollah had many martyrs who died for the sake of freedom (El-Ghoul 2006a; FN 2006ak). The key term in this public appearance for Nasrallah is martyrs, to which Nasrallah adds as a second ethnic appeal, albeit a passionate one, equating the mockery of his personality to igniting sectarianism and targeting Hezbollah's martyrs who died for Lebanon's liberation in the South. One final symbolism, which also boasts appeals to the Shiite community, is Nasrallah's discussion of the Islamic resistance. There were different political parties involved in resisting Israel's invasion, primarily the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, the Lebanese Communist Party, the Organization for Communist Action, and AMAL, the term "Islamic resistance" separates Hezbollah from the secular parties, and within the Shiite community, from AMAL as well. Nasrallah's rhetorical articulation of *jihād* as equivalent to a duty to resist Israel further distinguished the Islamic resistance from the rest.

In terms of speeches, "Shiism" was directly mentioned with varying frequency. Between 2000 and 2005, Hezbollah only mentioned Shiism, or symbols relating to Shiism, in 13.83% of its

speeches, often when discussing the ten-day mourning of Imam Hussein's martyrdom, the *Ashura*, or warning Iraqis not to fall for the Bush administration's tactic of splitting the Muslims into Sunnis and Shiites. Nasrallah's sect traditionally appeared within his speeches in terms of religious ceremonies, such as the *Ashura*, or in praising Ayatollahs Khomeini and Khamenei. It was during the annual *Ashura*³⁰ when Nasrallah spoke most due to its high emotional symbolism within the Shiite community (see Norton 2008), sometimes mentioning "Shiism" every day or two. As assassinations and terrorism spiraled in Iraq in 2003, Nasrallah began to urge Sunnis and Shiites to form a unified Islamic front against the American invasion and Israeli threats (Karam 2003a; Reuters 2003a). He always reminded the Iraqis that it was the Americans and the Israelis who benefited from an Iraq that they wanted "splintered" (Karam 2003a; Reuters 2003a). Thus, with mounting pressures on the 8th of March bloc, the July War of 2006, and the mini-civil war of 2008, "Shiism" increased in frequency from 13.83% to 40.26%.

It was after the American - British invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the beginning of the terrorist explosions that Nasrallah increased his speeches on Shiite symbolism, especially when top Shiite clerics died as victims of terror there (see BBC 2003b; Karouny 2003; AP 2003). In general, he compared the martyrdom of Imam Ali (the Prophet's son-in-law and Fourth Caliph) and Imam Hussein (the Prophet's grandson and Imam Ali's son) to inspire Hezbollah's *mujahideen* (FN 2004d; FN 2004d; FN 2004; 2004a; Jan 14, 2008; Jan 15, 2008; BBC 2005m). He also linked the revered Imams' deaths to Hezbollah's response to the Second Palestinian Intifada, and the necessity of defending Syria and Iran (FN 2004b; 2004c; BBC May 2004a; 2004b)

The *Wilayat el-Faqih* and ties to Iran also contributed to an increase in frequency of the appearance of the Shiite identity to 13.84% in that phase. This category is also a sub-category of Iran's appearance in Hezbollah's speeches. Nasrallah often linked Shiite majority regions to Khomeini's rhetoric in a bid to attract support (BBC 2000d). After the liberation of Southern Lebanon in 2000 from the Israeli forces, Nasrallah visited Tehran to congratulate its Supreme

³⁰ The Ashura Procession is a ten-day mourning for the martyrdom of Imam Hassan and Imam Hussein, the children of Imam Ali bin Abi Taleb, the fourth caliphate, and the grandchildren of Prophet Mohammad (see Norton 2008, 52-53). The Ashura holds a special emotional and symbolic value among the Shiite community, especially the fact that Imam Ali's children martyred for a cause in Iraq's Karbala in 680 AD, knowing that they stood no chance of winning (see Norton 2008, 49 – 50). This type of martyrdom became the base for Hezbollah's speeches to fire up their supporters, often comparing the will of Imam Hassan and Imam Hussein to the members of their party, and sometimes the circumstances that surround Hezbollah to that of Karbala.

leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, on the 'Joint Victory' (Daily Star 2000h; AFP 2000h). He also congratulated the Iranians more generally, using the liberation to justify Iran's support for Hezbollah while speaking in Iranian television interviews in perfect Farsi (Daily Star 2000h; AFP 2000h). He also told the *mujahideen* of the Second Intifada to learn from Khomeini's perspective, including while speaking at a rally marking Ayatollah Khomeini's death (Logan 2001). Lastly, Imam Khomeini and Imam Khamenei's names would appear in mentions of "Jerusalem Day," the last Friday of Ramadan whose observance Ayatollah Khomeini had announced (BBC 2004d). All in all, though, issues with *Wilayat el-Faqih*, including with the supreme leaders of Iran, were only mentioned in 3.54% of speeches between 2000 and 2005. These frequencies increased as Hezbollah found itself defending its autonomy from Iran; Nasrallah referred to their relationship as one of guidance with freedom to accept (BBC 2005n). Nasrallah also defended Iran's domestic politics and foreign policy in the Middle East and Arab world (BBC 2007i), including with respect to Lebanon (BBC 2008c) and the Palestinian Occupied territories (BBC 2007i). For example, every year when Hezbollah held "Jerusalem Day," they honored the late Ayatollah Khomeini's calls for solidarity with Palestine while depicting the deposed Shah of Iran as an American-Israeli collaborator (BBC 2007i).

Islam and appeals to Islam occurred with a higher frequency. Nasrallah, or his deputy Qassem, frequently commenced their interviews or speeches with the Quranic verse: "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate" (e.g. BBC 2000f; 2000g). Second, many of his speeches included appeals or warnings to the Arab and Islamic worlds, be the subject war against Israel or solidarity with Palestine (e.g. BBC 2000i). Third, Nasrallah always dubbed his resistance *jihad* and considered war or *jihad* against Israel was the proper way to liberate Palestine and Lebanon (2000i). Fourth, Nasrallah always called for the defence of Jerusalem, and especially the Aqsa Mosque (BBC 2002e), and he called upon or criticized Islamic or Arab leaders for not doing enough, while appealing to the people for support (BBC 2000k). Fifth, he encouraged martyrdom-based operations during the Second Intifada and criticized the calls of Arab or Islamic leaders who said that these operations were against the *shari'a* (BBC 2001d). Finally, after the American invasion of Iraq, Nasrallah consistently called for Islamic unity and called upon Sunnis and Shiites to avoid sedition. As such, Islam was mentioned in 45.98% of his speeches during the 2000-2005 phase.

After Rafic Hariri's assassination, mentions of Islam and Shiism spiked as result of domestic and international pressures on Hezbollah to disarm and calls for Islamic unity in face of an

American conspiracy to split the Lebanese Muslims as Shiites and Sunnis, as seen in Iraq. The appeals to Shiitism had rarely appeared explicitly in his speeches before 2005, but that changed dramatically after Syria's withdrawal. Before Hariri's death, in general, he mentioned the term when responding to Israel's accusations that Hezbollah sought to establish a Shiite state. For example, in one speech he mocked Israeli media and stressed Hezbollah's objective to have a republic where all Lebanese could coexist equally in the name of partnership and citizenship (BBC 2000l; Daily Star 2000k). Nasrallah also stressed that the Shiites did not think as a single entity, highlighting how some Shiite circles agreed with him, and others didn't; the same applied to Sunni circles. He also noted that Hezbollah had opposed the American invasion of Iraq, while some Gulf countries, which were Sunni in leadership, had argued that Saddam Hussein was despotic and a tyrant and "let anyone rid them from him" (BBC 2005n).

More importantly, Nasrallah regarded the ongoing criticism of the 14th of March that Hezbollah was preaching sectarianism and prompting American-led sedition between the Sunnis and the Shiites. Nasrallah warned that the United States sought to import into Lebanon the Sunni-Shiite bloodbath that had unfolded in Iran: (FN 2006ai). Just as Hariri accused the 8th of March of igniting a Sunni-Shiite conflict, so did Nasrallah the 14th of March. Indeed, the more the 14th of March criticized Hezbollah, the more the latter lashed back at them, with statements like "the 14th of March are trying to scare the Christians and the non-Shiite Muslims [...] the country cannot be governed by an Islamic, Christian, Sunni, or Shiite approach, we want a conciliatory state where all sects express itself, this is our rhetoric, culture and vision" (FN 2006ae; see also BBC 2006w). As the 8th of March fought back, Nasrallah again was accused of bringing a Shiite protest to topple a Sunni (Siniora's) government, and responded by lamenting "these days, the sectarian incitement is yet more dangerous. They stopped talking about Christians and Muslims in Lebanon. Now they are only talking about Sunnis and Shi'is in Lebanon" (BBC 2006x).

Ethnic Identities	Speeches 00-05	%00-05	Speeches 05-10	% Feb 2005-2010	Variation
Shiite	43	13.83%	124	40.26%	26.43%
Muslim	143	45.98%	180	58.44%	12.46%
Ayatollah Khamenei/Khomei ni	11	3.54%	39	12.66%	9.12%

Hezbollah also appealed for support from their Shiite community first, and allies in general, when they spoke of their martyrs, arms, irregular warfare operations, and often Israeli repression, all taking place in Shiite majority areas, such as Baalbeck-Hermel, Bekaa, the South, and Beirut's suburbs, the Dahhieh. Shiites of their party carried almost all the military operations against Israel, with the exception of the Resistance Brigades, which were smaller brigades formed mainly of non-Shiites who were interested in fighting Israel (Zambelis 2014, 9 - 12). Nasrallah's speeches mostly centered on their martyrs and sacrifices, often for the welfare of the country. Nasrallah activated regionalism, without the need to mention his sect, when he criticized the absence of the state, which was under the leadership of the Future Movement, and how the resistance filled the gap in Shiite-majority regions. These regions and their security, as well as that of the country, were also linked to the fate of Hezbollah's military capability and arms, and often linked as a deterrent force for Israel to invade the country again. Nasrallah correlated Hezbollah's weapons with the safety of the residents in the South, often the frontline villages facing Israel. Whether the liberation of 2000, the martyrs, the infliction of damage on Israel and its local militia, the SLA, the prisoners' exchange, or the July War, all acted as evidence for the need for Hezbollah to confront the enemy in Nasrallah's speeches. As such, regionalism, the martyrs, the weapons, the operations, and resistance in itself are all intertwined with the Lebanese identity, Islam, Arab nationalism, and Hezbollah as an Islamic/Shiite resistance, especially during the *Ashura's* ten days of mourning.

The table below also demonstrates the impact of international and local pressures on Hezbollah to utilize symbolism specific to their party's supporters, or more frequently to whose visible attributes pertain to regions or Hezbollah-related themes:

Comparing 00-05 & 05 - 10	Speeches 00-05	%00-05	Speeches 05-10	% Feb 2005 - 2010	Variation
Regionalism	25	8.04%	78	25.32%	17.28%
Hezbollah Martyrs	41	13.18%	106	34.42%	21.24%
Hezbollah Arms	22	7.07%	108	35.06%	27.99%
Hezbollah Operations	47	15.11%	54	17.53%	2.42%
Resistance	128	41.16%	203	65.91%	24.75%

Hezbollah's appeals on ethnic identities indirectly increased for various reasons. Nasrallah, in public, always discussed at minimum two of these themes, and at maximum, all of them. Due to the internal pressure, coming from the 14th of March bloc (see Chapters 6 and 8 for example), and international pressure, Nasrallah frequently discussed his foreign backers, Hezbollah as an anti-American force, and his domestic allies as a single front. The above indirect appeals often add further intensity to the audience in order to mobilize against the rivals. For example, resistance and Hezbollah's arms are accompanied (at least one in every four speeches) with regionalism, when Nasrallah is discussing the liberation of Southern Lebanon. He doesn't hesitate to invoke martyrdom and Hezbollah's arms as well whenever the United States diplomats call for disarming his party. The absence of the resistance and the weapons implies, in Nasrallah's rhetoric, an open invitation for Israel to invade Lebanon and subjugate the South. The same applies when Nasrallah responds to Saad Hariri, himself a Sunni, whenever the latter accuses him of not serving Lebanese interests. Nasrallah utilizes symbolism when defending Iran or Hezbollah, and risks igniting Sunni-Shiite strife in Lebanon. Saad Hariri reciprocates with similar Sunni-based indirect appeals (such as again regionalism, Rafic Hariri's martyrdom) to polarize his respective audience (see Chapter 8 for details). As a matter of fact, Nasrallah's responses, as two sections below demonstrates, hold the same frequency, in regards of mentioning Syria and Iran are very close (38.31% for Syria, 34.09% for Iran), both appearing at least once for every 2.5 speeches, indicating that the defence of Syria and Iran came naturally when narrating the anti-American front, further associating these two foreign backers with Hezbollah's heroics and sacrifices.

Non-Ethnic Identities

The research focused on and coded four non-ethnic identities that Hezbollah utilized in their rhetoric. The first is the Lebanese identity, which is the national identity for all sects. Then, there is Arab nationalism, which includes, lineage-wise, all the sects except Lebanese Armenian Orthodox and Armenian Catholics; however, Arab nationalism as a culture and ideology does not exclude them. Arab nationalism is a supra-national identity that also includes the rest of the Arabs in the Arab world regardless of religious affiliation, but not the Non-Arab Muslims. “Middle Eastern” is also a supra-national identity, which refers to usually Lebanon and its neighbours, including Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, and Sudan. Finally, the coding focused on “secular” as an ideological identity to which Hezbollah adheres from time to time, including in demands for secular electoral laws, or public goods, or political mobilization. The table below compares and contrasts the frequencies of appeals on non-ethnic identities:

00 – Feb 05	Speeches	%00-05	Speeches	Feb 2005-2010	Variation %
Non-Ethnic Identities	280	90.03%	295	95.78%	5.75%
Lebanese	265	85.21%	290	94.16%	8.95%
Arab	122	39.23%	138	44.81%	5.58%
Middle Eastern	29	9.32%	60	19.48%	10.16%

The 1985 Open Declaration, discussed earlier in the chapter, was ruthless toward the Lebanese identity; however, with the disarming of the militias, Hezbollah’s propaganda to justify its arms, and entering elections, Hezbollah became more Lebanese than merely an extension of Iran. The 2009 manifesto confirms that Hezbollah focused less on Islam and the demand for an Islamic republic and more on coexistence (see Resistance 2009). In contrast to the 1985 manifesto, Lebanon by 2009 had become “our homeland and the homeland of our fathers and ancestors. It is also the homeland of our children, and future generations. It is the country to which we have given our most precious sacrifices for its independence and pride, dignity, and freedom. We want a unified Lebanon and for all Lebanese alike” (Ibid). Even though the manifesto was only updated in 2009, by the late 1990s, many Hezbollah officials already found the 1985 manifesto out-dated (Norton 2008, 44-46).

Nasrallah did not settle to dedicate his victories to the Lebanese or Muslim people solely; instead Nasrallah dedicated his party's achievements also to the Arabs. For example, Nasrallah dedicated the 2000 liberation of Southern Lebanon to the Arabs, the first Arab victory in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict; furthermore, he declared that the party would not consider the liberation complete until Israeli forces withdrew from Lebanon (BBC 2000e). Nasrallah often mentioned the Lebanese identity in one of three ways: either vis-à-vis Israel and the Israeli threats to Lebanon; vis-à-vis Syria and Iran, i.e., the rejectionist front to American-Israeli imperialism (see FN 2003); or by appeal to the presence of Hezbollah solely in Lebanon and not anywhere else. The American-Israeli project, and occasionally the United Nations, dominated Nasrallah's criticism of bias toward Israel while overlooking the southern neighbour's daily violations in Lebanon's airspace and occupation of the Palestinians (Ex. BBC 2001e). By 2004, especially in the face of the Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act and UN Resolution 1559, Nasrallah began to re-define "Lebanese" as an identity that supported American rejectionism, and accused the anti-Syrian camp, which started growing to include Hariri's Future Movement and Walid Jumblatt's Druze of mortgaging the country to foreign tutelage (FN 2004e). All criticisms of Syria domestically and internationally, he argued, served only to isolate Syria from Lebanon, and Hezbollah opposed them on the grounds that Syria was the last bastion of true Arab nationalism (AFP 2003; Karouny 2003; AP 2003; BBC 2004b). Thus, the Lebanese identity becomes synchronic with Assad's Syria.

By the time Rafic Hariri was assassinated in an explosion, Lebanon was linked to the Syrian-Arab nationalist style of rejectionism. Indeed, the Lebanese patriotic line is linked to support of resistance, sacrifices, and Lebanese unity (BBC 2005h). This line goes hand in hand with *jihad* in service of the Lebanese people in the face of Israel; Nasrallah declared that "the jihad of our martyrs and *mujahidin* is a legitimate, moral and national duty to the Lebanese people" (BBC 2005o). Hence, Arab nationalism, at least Hezbollah's and Syria's Arab nationalism, was opposed to American imperialism and Israel, and supported Syria, their resistance, and assistance to the Palestinians. Those who opposed this line were neither true Arabs nor friends of the Palestinians; mostly, they were collaborators with Israel and the United States.

With this rhetoric, Nasrallah addressed two types of Arabs: those who were not true Arabs but would do anything to stay in power, and the people who supported Palestine. For the most part, almost all Arab leaders were collaborators. Nasrallah ridiculed the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative,

although he was careful to never criticize his ally, Assad, when peace talks were taking place between Syria and Israel. Nasrallah, during the July War, accused the Arab leaders, Assad excluded, of providing Arab cover for Israel to bomb Lebanon during the July war of 2006 (BBC 2006p). Even before the Hariri assassination, Nasrallah never hesitated to criticize Arab leaders and praise Assad's stance on Palestine (ex. see BBC 2004c; FN 2004f). He also criticized the Arab League, before 2005, for its inability or unwillingness to offer the Palestinians any significant aid during the Second Intifada (Daily 2001f; BBC 2001f). Furthermore, several Arab rulers began the normalization phase with Israel, which amounted to treason for Nasrallah (2001g; 2001i; Reuters 2001). This rhetoric has continued until the present day, with the exception that the 14th of March bloc, often associated with Saudi Arabia and the United States, opened an internal front against Hezbollah, further polarizing ties between Saad Hariri's Sunnis and his Shiite supporters. The table below demonstrates the variations on the usage of non-ethnic identities:

The Foreign Backers: Syria and Iran

Syria was already part of Nasrallah's speeches frequently, partly due to the geographic proximity to Lebanon, Syria's decades-long presence in Lebanon, and Syria's close alliance to Iran. Nasrallah occasionally mentioned Iran, and that is due to the historical, ideological, and military connections with Iran's Supreme leader, only to double in (from 16.72% to 34.09%), indicating the international pressures exerted on Hezbollah, Syria, and Iran simultaneously. The table below compares and contrasts the frequency on both international actors before and after Rafic Hariri's death in February 2005:

Country	Speeches 00-05	% 00-05	Speeches 05-10	% 05-10	Variation
Syria	102	32.80%	118	38.31%	5.51%
Iran	52	16.72%	105	34.09%	21.59%
Total 00-10	311	100%	308	100%	

Before Rafic Hariri's death, Nasrallah praised Syria's military presence in Lebanon because it safeguarded Lebanon's security against Israel and ensured Lebanon's civil peace (AFP 2000i; BBC 2004d). He opposed UN Resolution 1559 and considered it an attempt to disarm the

resistance and harm Syria (BBC 2004e). After Hariri's assassination, Nasrallah found himself, along with his Pro-Syrian allies, defending the Assad regime, arguing that Israel had killed Hariri and not Syria. He asserted, in an interview, that Israel was the primary suspect of killing Hariri: "It became clear that the main beneficiaries are the enemies of Lebanon and those who want the implementation of [UN] Resolution 1559 [...] Lebanon's geographic reality says that it has one neighbour (Syria), one enemy (Israel) and the sea" (BBC 2005n). Nasrallah frequently articulated that Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon would expose the country to foreign meddling, without considering Syria itself is a meddler. In all cases, despite some mistakes, Syria was to be thanked for all its efforts in protecting the country, halting the war, and rebuilding the state (BBC 2005n). Nasrallah's call to thank Syria on March 8, 2005 assembled one million Lebanese. A week later, Nasrallah linked the pressures on Syria to withdraw to Assad's refusal to disarm Hezbollah (BBC 2005p; 2005q; FN 2005y).

Between 2000 and 2004, Nasrallah praised Iran's support for Hezbollah; however, he never said that the support was in terms of weapons. Instead, it was "moral, political, and material support" (BBC 2000a; see also BBC 2000b; 2000g). Only one time, after the May events, did Nasrallah admit, with pride during Khomeini's "Jerusalem Day in Lebanon" on September 18, 2009, that Hezbollah received weapons from Iran (BBC 2009c). Like Damascus, Tehran's leaders were never willing to compromise with Israel, the source of all problems in the Middle East (Daily Star 2005h; AFP 2000h). Nasrallah also travelled frequently to Tehran before the July War, and the leaders of Iran, including the soft-liner President Khatami, stressed on the continuity of the resistance (Xinhua News Agency 2000; BBC 2000m). Iran was also part of the regional resistance axis that included Hezbollah, Syria, and Hamas. Nasrallah often criticized the American-Israeli policies that pressured the members of this axis but concluded that this pressure was "fruitless" (AFP 2000j; BBC 2000n).

During all this time (2000 – 2010), and despite American – Western – Arab pressures on Iran, the latter never hesitated to express its close ties with Hezbollah but denied ever sending arms to the resistance party. They continued to argue until the end of the decade that they only supported Hezbollah spiritually. Politically, Tehran welcomed Nasrallah as a hero, and they celebrated the 'joint victory' in the Iranian capital after Israel's withdrawal from Southern Lebanon in 2000 (Daily Star 2000h; AFP 2000h). The meetings between Nasrallah and Iranian officials were frequent, and sometimes Nasrallah travelled to Damascus to meet top Iranian officials, such as Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref, in the Iranian Embassy of Damascus

(BBC 2002f). The visit of Iranian presidents was also a large event for Hezbollah and their supporters, given the ideological and financial connection between Iran and Hezbollah. When President Khatami visited Beirut in 2003, he gave a speech to 50,000 people at the Sportsville Stadium and met with Nasrallah (BBC 2003c). President Ahmadinejad also received a hero's welcome in Lebanon with massive celebrations honouring him in 2010 (Worth 2010; Al-Jazeera 2010c). Hezbollah also inherited Iran's enemies. Saddam Hussein, according to Nasrallah, was a former US-imposed dictator who had waged a destructive war on Iran; Nasrallah argued that Iraq would have been a better place without Saddam Hussein in the first place (Karam 2003a; Reuters 2003a; FN 2003a). Neither Iran nor Hezbollah forgot the atrocities that Saddam Hussein committed against the Iranian people during the Iraq – Iran (1980 – 1988) war, both welcomed his execution with celebrations (Tehran Times 2006; Al-Jazeera 2007).

After Hariri's assassination and Syria's withdrawal, Nasrallah had to defend the Party's independence from Syria and Iran, whom the 14th of March and their international allies regarded as the primary suspects in assassinating Rafic Hariri, and subsequently the rest of the 14th of March bloc's assassinated figureheads. He stressed that relations with his international backers held the theme of partnership. In one interview, Nasrallah said that "Hezbollah and the resistance in Lebanon never worked according to a Syrian agenda, an Iranian agenda, or an Arab agenda. They worked according to the agenda of their Islamic and Lebanese resistance" (BBC March 2005p; 2005q; FN 2005y). Nasrallah also added that Iran's money, used to support Hezbollah and Shiite majority regions affected by the July War, came without conditions (FN 2006ae). Nasrallah's ties with Iran's leaders continued after Hariri's death, when he travelled to Tehran to congratulate Ahmadinejad on his victory in the presidential elections (FN 2005t; Aug 3, 2005), and he praised Iran's democracy without commenting on state repression (Ibid). Nasrallah also supported Iran's nuclear program, calling it legal within the international law (Ibid; see also BBC May 4, 2006). Other than throwing a hero's rally for Ahmadinejad in the South in 2009, Nasrallah and Ahmadinejad had a symbolic banquet at Assad's Palace, in Damascus, physically reaffirming the regional alignment and its strength in the face of Israel and the United States (Ynet 2010).

Even though the increase is 5.51%, the mentions of Syria should have decreased after its withdrawal; however, the increase in 5.51% from an already large percentage signals the extent to which regional politics and domestic cleavages intertwined between the Syrian-Iran axis and the 8th of March on one side, and the Western – Arab alliance and the 14th of March bloc.

Nasrallah often defended his relations with Syria or expressed concerns that the Rafic Hariri tribunal sought to shoot down the Assad regime. Both Iran's and Syria's increased appearances in Nasrallah's speeches, and Iran receiving the same frequency as Syria, indicates the extent Hezbollah's foreign backers, themselves, faced international pressures; Hezbollah also received unprecedented criticism of its arms from the 14th of March as well, a topic that was never serious before Hariri's death. After the July War of 2006, the 14th of March no longer solely criticized Syria's meddling in Lebanon, but also Iran, forcing Hezbollah's hand to associate direct and indirect appeals on ethnic identities, symbolism, while attaching virtues to the foreign backers.

Christianity

Before Hariri's assassination, Hezbollah re-defined Christianity as Pro-Syrian and anti-Israeli; this form of Shiite-Christian relations politically defined the Hezbollah and AMAL supporters' perspective of the Christians in Lebanon. Syria tried to play this card as well through splitting the Phalange party and pushing Kareem Pakradouni, a pro-Syrian loyalist, to its helm (see Chapter 6). Nasrallah avoided using the term "Christian opposition" when criticizing the Anti-Syrian camp, be it Michel Aoun, Amin Gemayel, or others, in order not to give them legitimacy as anti-Syrian opposition. When the term 'Christian' appeared, it was to reinforce the party's vision of treating all religions equally. Following some riots in the year 2000, Nasrallah warned the media not to ignite sectarianism on the basis of its being a dangerous tool (Daily Star Jan 2000m). He accused the Lebanese who exaggerated riots for sectarian purposes of being "not real followers of Islam or Christianity" (Ibid). He followed the same rhetoric when speaking of liberating detainees from Israeli prisons; for him, it did not matter if they were Christians or Muslims (AFP 2000j; BBC 2000nw). The Islamic resistance party was "committed to Islamic-Christian coexistence" (AFP 2001f; Dakroub 2001; BBC 2001c), which was the Lebanese model of power-sharing. This mode, however, sought to isolate the traditional Christian parties, such as the Phalange, or figureheads, such as Maronite Cardinal Sfair, who opposed Syria. He did call for fighting corruption in Lebanon, beyond sectarian considerations, be it Christian or Muslim, but the timing of such a call came as the Christian parties helmed by Rafic Hariri, and Jumblatt opposed President Emile Lahoud's extension, which Syria coerced Hariri's parliamentary bloc to extend and drove the Future Movement head towards the opposition (BBC 2004f; see Chapter 8 for details).

Following 9/11, and after Israel linked its war on Hamas and Hezbollah with the American war on terror, Nasrallah continued to build on the theme of how Israel and the United States were a threat to the Christians of the Middle East. Nasrallah warned of a clash of civilizations provoked by the Zionists, despite the fact that “many Christians and Muslims reject terrorism whatever its source might be” (BBC 2001j). In opposition to Sharon’s extreme policies and settlement-building in Jerusalem and the West Bank, Nasrallah called for a democratic state in the land of Palestine, where the “Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Palestinians would live together” (AFP 2002f). At the outset of an American-British war on Iraq, he also expressed solidarity with the Christians of Iraq: “I propose [...] Muslims [...] stop using expressions [...] that can harm many Christians hostile to war (in Iraq)” (Daily Star 2003g). This rhetoric argued that Arab Christians even outside of Lebanon opposed the American empire. He also mentioned Christian holy sites at risk from Israel in Jerusalem when violence broke out or when speaking on the liberation of Palestine: “Israel's removal is inevitable, and that Muslims will pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque and Christians will pray at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher” (BBC 2001i).

After Hariri’s assassination in 2005, Christianity’s frequency in Nasrallah’s speeches increased to 17.21%. Syria’s rigid control over Lebanon ended with its departure, leaving Hezbollah’s fate as an organized military party, along with its arsenal, to an unknown future. After the anti-Syrian protests on March 14th, 2005, he answered Bahiya Hariri’s call to ally with the 14th of March bloc, and thus with the Gemayels’ Phalange and the Lebanese Forces. He resurrected Bashir Gemayel’s famous 10452 KM²³¹ (Lebanon’s area) when appealing for votes from the 14th of March bloc’s Christians (El-Ghoul 2005c) but used it to call for restoring Sheba’a Farms from Israeli domination instead of against Syria, not against the Syrian forces as Bashir Gemayel had originally intended. After the brief short-lived partnership with the 14th of March bloc, Nasrallah allied with Michel Aoun, the leader of the largest Christian parliamentary bloc, who offered him a solid MoU, which encouraged close coordination between the 8th of March and the Free Patriotic Movement, especially Aoun after the latter joined the Pro-Syrian bloc. The short-lived electoral coordination with the 14th of March bloc, and the solid alliance with Aoun increased

³¹ Bashir Gemayel: He is the son of Pierre Gemayel Sr., and the brother of Amin Gemayel. He was famous for his hatred towards Syrian and Palestinian military presence on Lebanese soil and considered it as a threat to Lebanon’s sovereignty, and sometimes, its very existence. He reiterated the slogan 10452 KM², which symbolized the square area, and a Lebanon free of Palestinian and Syrian forces (see Chapter 6 for details). The Pro-Syrian parties did not look positively at all on any issue pertaining to Bashir Gemayel since he is considered, according to their narrative, as the man who invited Israel to invade Lebanon in 1982, and secure his presidency. He was assassinated in 1982 as President-Elect, and Amin Gemayel succeeded him (see Boykin 2000).

Nasrallah's appeals on defining Hezbollah as the defender of all Lebanese, including the Christians, and pushed to advocate Aoun's interpretation of the Christian identity, as anti-Western and for the Syrian-Iranian axis.

The usage of the Christian term increased after Hezbollah signed the MoU with General Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement. Aoun's bloc, Reform and Change, was the largest Christian parliamentary bloc in the 2005 elections. Nasrallah increased cross-sectarian demands, and increased the usage of Christian symbols, in support of Aoun against the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces, and their 14th of March bloc who questioned the legitimacy of Hezbollah's weapons. After the open downtown Beirut protests kicked off, Nasrallah used Aoun's involvement in them to reject the 14th of March bloc's accusation that the Shiites were rallying against the Sunnis, including naming small-time Sunni politicians such as Saad, Hoss, and Karameh, along with Michel Aoun (BBC 2006z; Sep 13, 2006; FN 2006ag). Indeed, Nasrallah accused the 14th of March and the West of seeking to ignite sectarianism by saying "although there are Christians and Muslims in the opposition and the government, [t]hey try to direct all discourse in the country towards Shi'is and Sunnis" (BBC 2006w). Similarly, he targeted the Christians of the 14th of March, primarily the Phalange and Lebanese Forces, to bring further support for Aoun, asking, "Has the United States been able to be the protector of the Christians in Iraq? Where is the Christian in Iraq today? Has the United States been able to be the protector of the Shi'is or the Sunnis? Where are the Shi'is and the Sunnis today?" (BBC 2007b; BBC 2007c). These multiple factors led Nasrallah to discuss relations with Christianity as a religion and Lebanon's Christians more frequently, increasing from 5.47% before Hariri's death to 17.21% and always stressing that there were two types of Christians: those who were part of the American-Israeli project, and those who opposed it. It was Aoun's presence in the 8th of March that allowed Hezbollah to confidently state that the division of Lebanese politics is not Shiite-Sunni or Christian-Muslim, but a national division, since all the sects were present in each coalition (BBC 2006u). This alliance continued till present day (January 2021), and Hezbollah continuously remarked that Aoun represented over 50% of Lebanese Christians, based on the 2005 and 2009 election results (BBC 2009f). Hezbollah praised Aoun or mentioned him positively at least 15.91% of speeches, after not mentioning him at all, at least on the leadership level, publicly.³²

³² While Nasrallah and Qassem never mentioned Aoun, in their public appearances from 2000 to 2005, their members of parliament might have mentioned him; however, this research coded only Hezbollah official statements, Hassan Nasrallah, and Naem Qassem.

Future Movement and Sunni Islam

Future Movement posed the greatest challenge for Hezbollah; they spearheaded the 14th of March, and controlled the largest parliamentary bloc, the Future bloc, and overall 67% of the Lebanese Parliamentary seats. Benefiting from the Hariri assassination, the Future Movement also had the highest Sunni mobilization at the street level since 1958. Nasrallah often tried to separate Rafic Hariri from Saad Hariri and recalled discussions with the father that went against Saad's policy objectives of criticizing Syria. Nasrallah fought hard to first de-legitimize the Western-backed Siniora government, and later he sought to discredit their allies. Throughout 2005, Nasrallah spoke on how he valued the Hariris, especially the martyred Prime Minister, despite political disagreements. Before 2005, Nasrallah focused on the corruption of the government and the under-development taking place. Afterward, Nasrallah continued to attack Prime Minister Siniora, depicting him and his allies as American pawns who were taking Lebanon in the direction of Iraq's Sunni-Shiite bloodbaths (BBC 2007l; 2007m). He identified the Special Tribunal for Lebanon as a means to intensify these Sunni-Shiite rifts. For example, he accused Hariri and Siniora of smuggling the Tribunal through the government without consulting Hezbollah and AMAL, polarizing the supporters of the 8th and the 14th of March blocs (BBC 2006ab) and dragging the 'noble' Sunni sect into their sectarian fight to serve foreign interests (BBC 2006w; see also BBC 2007k). When the May 2008 events broke out, he also stressed that the clashes were not Sunni-Shiite confrontations, but resistance against an American project (BBC 2006g). This tactic was an attempt to target the Western-Saudi backed 14th of March bloc without severely polarizing Hariri's supporters.

Hariri or Future Movement received praise when they called for de-escalation or physically mediated violence between groups of different sects. Sometimes, the Future Movement's leaders received praise if they had previously praised the resistance or Syria's Assad. The variation, be it in praise or criticism of the Future Movement, including Prime Minister Siniora, reflects the intense polarization of the cleavages in the region:

<u>Future/Hariri</u> <u>/Siniora</u>	Speeches 00-05	% 00 – 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05-10	Variation
<u>Pro/Against</u> <u>total</u>	20	6.43%	133	43.18%	36.75%
Anti-Future	15	4.82%	81	26.30%	21.48%
Pro-Future	5	1.61%	52	16.88%	15.27%
Total	311	100%	308	100%	

As for Sunni Islam, the polarization witnessed in Iraq, and later Yemen, and the Hariri-Nasrallah rift also influenced Nasrallah's increased use of the Sunni identity, from 2.25% before 2005 to 17.21% afterwards, notably in the context of accusations that the Hariri clan was appropriating the sect for political purposes.

AMAL: The Other Shiite Party

Hezbollah never criticized Syria's allies in their speeches; if anything, they defended them passionately. AMAL, Hezbollah's primary competitor in recruiting Shiite members was never criticized at all by the Party. Nasrallah often praised AMAL as complementary to Hezbollah, as well as its leader, Speaker of the House Nabih Berri, and its founder, Imam Moussa Sadr. Nabih Berri's role in crippling the parliament also brought praise from Hassan Nasrallah because, without Berri, the 14th of March bloc, the parliamentary majority, could not hold sessions to legislate in the country from December 2006 until May 2008 to advance its own policies. The absence of intra-ethnic competition or criticism lay in the fact that Berri was close to Syria, while Nasrallah was close to both Iran and Syria. Nasrallah completely omitted the AMAL-Hezbollah bloody clashes from his narrative during the late 1980s; hence, the AMAL-Hezbollah clashes never happened as Nasrallah insists that the Party only ever used its weapons against Israel. The increase in mentions of AMAL, its current leader, Berri, or its founder, also indicates the intensity generated by the 14th of March pressures and the withdrawal of the Syrian forces, giving the Movement an increase in frequency from 4.82% for the first period to 22.08% in the second. This rare alliance also reflects the extent to which both AMAL and Hezbollah respected the alliance between their respective foreign backers, and Hezbollah simply erased the late 1980s bloodbath with AMAL (Hirst 2010, 235 – 237) but continuously bragging that Hezbollah

was the sole party that never aimed its weapons against other Lebanese people (at least till the May events).

Israel, Zionism, and Judaism

The perspective of Hezbollah on Israel is central to its very existence and core identity as a national liberation and Islamic resistance movement. The Israeli invasion of 1982, and absence of the Lebanese state in the South, gave birth to Hezbollah, according to Nasrallah's narrative (BBC 2009d). The party also left no room to recognize Israel despite the fact that the West had offered 'bribes' for the party, as Nasrallah alleged. On this topic, he claimed the American position was "Let us forget the past, but please recognize Israel. That is the whole story. Is there a US policy in the region? There is only Israel in the region" (BBC 2009e; 2009f). Israel's central role in Nasrallah's speeches reflects its important role in defining Hezbollah's identity, and those of its allies and its foes. In almost every speech, Nasrallah discusses Israeli politics and its plans to damage the Middle East, and de-legitimizes his opponents as agents of Israel. Israel appeared in 84.89% of his speeches, competing with the Lebanese identity in frequency (above 82% in all four ethnic parties), during the 2000-Feb 2005 period, and 78.57% from Feb 2005 to 2010. Israel, for Nasrallah, is not merely limited to Sheba'a Farms; the threat that Israel poses exceeds its borders through intelligence spy networks, American support, triggering ethnic sedition, and even bringing al-Qaeda to Iraq (see Karam 2003a). In regard to accusing of the 14th of March bloc and others, be it the United Nations or the Arab leaders, Syria excluded, appeared one for every four speeches, sustaining the high frequency in Nasrallah's discourse.

The common denominator between the two phases analysed is that Israel is presented as an illegal entity that had displaced the Palestinians and continued to do so. Many of Nasrallah's speeches highlighted the Palestinian suffering, especially during the Second Intifada, or Jerusalem riots over sacred sites. Religiously, Nasrallah followed Ayatollah Khomeini's rhetoric, that "Israel is a cancerous cell that must no longer exist" (BBC 2009c). Hezbollah considered Israel representative of the Jews as a whole; however, Hezbollah frequency announced that their war is against Israel's occupation of Southern Lebanon and not globally against Judaism/ Thus, they distanced themselves from the 1994 Buenos Aires' terrorist acts in 1994 in Argentina. As Deputy General Secretary Sheikh Qassem said, "The proof is that Hizbullah did not carry out any operations against Jews and Israelis dispersed around the world [...] Our military activities took place against the occupation wherever it existed on our land" (Nasser

2001). Frequently, Nasrallah and Qassem spoke of solidarity with the Palestinians, praised the historic defeat of Israel in 2000, its expulsion to the South in 1982-1983, and the prisoner exchanges such as the swaps in 1998, 2004, and 2008. His speeches also included mentions of military operations carried out against Israel in the South, especially in Sheba'a Farms, and threats of retaliation when Israel threatened either Hezbollah or the Lebanese state, to use past and current achievements as testaments to Hezbollah's will for Lebanon, in contrast to that of their foes.

"Serving Israeli interests" and "demanding Hezbollah disarm" went hand-in-hand in their speeches. After 2005, Israel, and the United States, became the most common tool to de-legitimize opponents and praise allies. Iran, Syria, and Hamas were often praised for their stands against Israel; on the other hand, any criticism of Hezbollah's arms, military operations, or allies served American-Israeli interests. Israel became the gateway to de-legitimize rivals through scapegoating and diversionary wars. Whenever the 14th of March raised the issue of arms, Nasrallah diverted attention to Israel, arguing that it was the weapons that had expelled the Israelis and not the UN Resolutions. Nasrallah often accused the United Nations of serving the Zionist-American scheme in its demand that Hezbollah be disarmed (BBC 2005i; 2005k; 2005l). He also accused the UN of exercising "international tutelage" over Lebanon (BBC 2005i; 2005k; 2005l). Nasrallah said that while the UN Security Council was implementing resolutions on Lebanon, it was not implementing resolutions related to Israel and halting the latter's expansionary projects (BBC 2005i; 2005k; 2005l). He reiterated the same bias of the UNSC against the Palestinians whenever they resisted Israel's expansionary politics (BBC 2005i; 2005k; 2005l). The issue of relations between Lebanon and the international community centers on the issue of resistance; only the weapons of the resistance and its foreign backers could protect the country, especially in regard to liberating Sheba'a Farms and the Al-Ghajjar towns in the disputed territories within Southern Lebanon (BBC 2006ac). This increase in frequency was partially due to the fact that the 14th of March did not back away from their demands to disarm Hezbollah or their criticism of Syria, Nasrallah accused parts of the coalition of collaborating with the Americans to bring about the devastating July War (BBC 2006ac). By 2009, this theme reached its zenith when Nasrallah proclaimed that the 8th of March bloc is not running against the 14th of March bloc, but instead against Israel's greatest ally, the United States. This tactic polarized his supporters that the Israeli occupation indirectly will return through the 14th of March bloc's parliamentary victory (FN 2009t).

In regard to US-Israeli ties, Nasrallah focused on Christian Zionism and how their support stemmed from biblical interpretations and did not fall into the fallacy of blaming the entire Christian world for their support of Israel. Nasrallah recalled that the Neo-Christians believed in gathering all the Jews of the world in Israel and rebuilding the Temple that the Romans had destroyed in 70 AD over the al-Aqsa Mosque, joking afterward that “if they (Jews) all gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide” (Chayban 2002; BBC 2002g). After Hariri’s death, Nasrallah focused his rhetoric specifically on Zionism and steered away from slogans referencing Jewish extermination. He articulated his openness to Judaism but not Zionism, confirming that the war was not with Judaism. For example, the resistance leader welcomed Noam Chomsky, a Jewish left-wing academic, along with his wife Carol, as a guest of honor in 2006, and had lunch with him. Nasrallah sought Chomsky’s opinion as to how he could deliver his resistance message to an American audience (Khoury 2006). Overall, he separated Zionism from Judaism, at least when discussing the twentieth century. For example, he claimed that the Zionist movement had committed terrorist attacks against the Jews in Europe to force them to emigrate to Palestine during the British mandate to establish Israel (BBC 2005r; FN 2005ac; see also BBC 2007i), a major evolution in thought from the 1980s.

Domestic pressures on Hezbollah also reflected a slight decline in the frequency of speeches against Israel due to Nasrallah focusing more on the United States and the 14th of March alliance. As such, Israel and the SLA appeared 84.89% before 2005, and 78.57% after. Almost the same percentage remained in terms of frequency of accusing domestic actors or events serving Israeli interests. The change is not vast due to the extent to which Israel plays a role in Hezbollah’s politics, marginalization of opponents, and mobilizing supporters. Similarly, “Israeli interests” as an indicator was present in 25.4% of the speeches made before Rafic Hariri was killed, and 27.6% afterwards.

The Palestinians: The People, Fatah, and Hamas

Most speeches that criticized Israel also included full solidarity with the Palestinian people, and, to a lesser extent, the Palestinian resistance, primarily Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Solidarity with the Palestinian people, be they the refugees in Lebanon or the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, was mentioned with a frequency of 47.17% in the speeches from 2000-2005, reaching 53.38% in the second phase. Part of the reason for such a high frequency centered on the Second Intifada (2000 – 2004) and Nasrallah throwing his full weight, at least vocally,

behind the Palestinian resistance and people. He also often criticized the Palestinian-Israeli talks, particularly Fatah, with a frequency of 7.59%. Regional cleavages manifested in Nasrallah's rhetoric, as he criticized Arafat and Fatah, along with his Arab allies, for their peace rhetoric, while praising Hamas in 13.09% of his speeches overall. He always praised the resistance in Palestine and considered them his equals. In parallel, Nasrallah often argued, especially during the Second Intifada, that Hezbollah was not carrying out operations in Palestine, stressing that "we cannot take the place of the Palestinian people and factions" (AFP 2001g; Suleiman 2001; BBC 2001k).

The resistance in Palestine had a religious dimension as well, in terms of *jihad* and martyrdom (BBC 2001d), including listing threats against the demolition of the al-Aqsa mosque (e.g. AFP 2000j). Just as Lebanon was split between the 8th and 14th of March blocs, so the Palestinians were split between Hamas, Hezbollah's ally, and Fatah, the 14th of March bloc's ally. Even though Hamas's military capability was much smaller than Hezbollah's, Nasrallah often praised them for achieving victories. Between 2000 and 2003, Nasrallah considered the Intifada to be on the path of destroying Israel. He often described Hamas as resistance and grouped it in the same category as his own party, using the terms "resistance" and "Islamic" for both (e.g. Moody 2002). Often, Nasrallah also cited Israeli repression of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, describing the misery of the people there and declared, in 2006, that the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza was the second Arab victory, following the liberation of Lebanon in 2000 (BBC 3008). Fatah, the rival of Hamas within the Palestinian arena, received mostly negative comments. The only time Fatah received support from Nasrallah was during the Second Intifada, when Israel entered the West Bank and laid siege to Arafat's compound (Xinhua News Agency 2002), and when Arafat passed away (BBC 2004d).

The domestic pressures on Hezbollah are clearly reflected in Hezbollah's decreasing appeals to solidarity with Palestine, even though the frequency remained at 40.91% for the 2005-2010 period. The regional pressures on the Syrian-Iranian axis, the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, and the 2006 and 2008-09 bombardments of Gaza, increased the frequency of mentions of Hamas, under either the banner of resistance, or of the Syrian-Iranian axis in opposition to the American-Israeli project, from 6.43% pre-2005 to 19.91% after.

The United States

The frequency with which the United States was mentioned increased from an impressive 46.6% in the first period to 59.42% in the second, partially for Hezbollah's narrative that the 14th of March bloc enabled the United States to seek to achieve its goals against Hezbollah and in service of Israel. The United States never received any positive praise in Hezbollah's rhetoric. For Nasrallah, the United States used Israel as a tool to further its interests, and he did not exclude the Christian Zionists' support for Israel within the White House. The Israeli-US close ties were the launching pad for Nasrallah to link all opponents of the resistance against Israel, internationally or domestically. Whether Arab League member states or anti-Syrian camps, they all had close ties with the United States, which used Israel as its sword in the Middle East. Nasrallah's audience always chanted "Death to America" in reacting to Nasrallah's speeches (Dandash 2000; BBC 2000n). The foreign policy of any country that supported Israel was said to resemble that of the United States (BBC 2000o). The US-Israeli link also served to demonstrate the strength of the resistance in the face of two powerful military and economic players (BBC 2000d).

Locally, Hezbollah scapegoated any party that objected to their weapons or military operations as Israeli-American agents. For example, the Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act was a disguise for direct foreign meddling into Lebanese affairs. The same applied to UN Resolution 1559. For Nasrallah, the United Nations itself was irrelevant when it came to American and Israeli interests. For example, one time he wondered, "What has the United States done to help Lebanon when Israel attacked with American airplanes and tanks? It vetoed the condemnation" (FN 2004f). Similarly, UN Resolution 1559 served American interests, for neither the UN nor the US cared for Lebanon in truth (BBC 2004e); in contrast, domestic cooperation, sacrifices, and relations with Syria brought stability (Ibid). Hezbollah cited UN Resolution 1559 and American support for Israel to demonstrate its strength against both countries.

After Hariri's assassination, Hezbollah became more sophisticated in criticizing the United States. Nasrallah separated his war against the United States from the war against the American people. His statement came at a time when al-Qaeda was beheading foreigners merely because they were foreigners. Unlike al-Qaeda, Nasrallah was clear: "Behind Israel comes the US Administration. When I say America, I must explain that we do not mean the

American people, most of whom are ignorant of what is taking place and what their governments, administrations, and armies are doing in the world” (BBC 2005m). Nasrallah would also analyse internal lobbying within the White House. For example, he argued that three factions within Washington agreed to open wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He considered the first to be one that sought Israeli interests, such as the Christian Zionists. The second faction was the oil lobby, led by the Bush and Cheney families, and the third, the arms dealers, led by the Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz families (BBC 2006ad; 2006ae; Atwi 2006a). The Arab monarchs’ and the 14th of March bloc’s ties with the United States also served to de-legitimize their adherence to any national, Arab, or Islamic identity, given that “thousands of billions of dollars are being kept as Arab deposits in US banks [...] They are there. But in Palestine, people are dying of hunger, of siege, and injuries because there are no hospitals” (BBC 2007i).³³

France and Germany

Even though France was a close ally of Saad Hariri, Nasrallah criticized France as part of the Western world’s attempt to isolate the resistance. The Hezbollah leader mentioned France before Hariri’s assassination only 14 times (4.5%), mostly in relation to then-French Prime Minister Jospin’s pro-Israel statement in 2000. France post-2005 became an advocate for UN Resolution 1559, and the International Tribunal for Lebanon thereafter. France’s frequency more than doubled, to 10.71%, after 2005 because of its ties with the Hariri family, involvement in UN resolutions 1559 and 1701, and its mediation efforts within the Lebanese arena. Germany, on the other hand, escaped Hassan Nasrallah’s wrath, being mentioned only 7.72% of the time before 2005, despite its complete support of Israel and of Prime Minister Siniora, and despite sending its warships to protect Israel as part of the UNIFIL forces. The reason for this absence of criticism was that Germany had been the mediator in prisoners’ exchanges, including the ones that took place in 1998 and 2004 upon which they claimed victory over Israel; as a result, Germany was barely mentioned after 2005 (3.9%).

³³ Like ‘Serving Israeli interests, a specific indicator was introduced for Hezbollah, for similar reasons to the earlier indicator, titled US interests. The frequency doubled, indicating the threat that the 14th of March and the United States forcing them to demonize their domestic rivals with almost double frequency that the earlier phase. From 2000 till 2005, 15.43% of his speeches, Nasrallah accused others of serving American interests. After Rafic Hariri’s death, the frequency increased to 52.27%

The United Nations and the International Community

Hezbollah often described the United Nations as either ineffective or serving American-Israeli interests. As such, the United Nations frequently appeared in Nasrallah's speeches, mostly in a negative sense. Similarly, Nasrallah criticized the ineffectiveness of the International Community in protecting Lebanon from Israeli aggression or being protective of Lebanon's southern neighbour. As a result, the United Nations dominated 18.65% of Nasrallah's speeches before Hariri's assassination. The category of criticism was the inability of the United Nations to protect the country and force Israel to implement its resolutions. For example, Nasrallah argued that in UN Resolution 425, it was not the United Nations that had forced Israel to withdraw, but the resistance had "forced it to recognize Resolution 425 and make the decision to withdraw from southern Lebanon and the Western Biqa'a" (BBC 2000a). The UNSC was also ineffective in resolving problems of the Israeli-Arab conflict because the United States vetoed any resolution condemning Israeli aggression or mandating Palestinian civilian protection (Jayoush 2001; BBC 2001a; 2001c; Dakroub 2001; AFP 2001f). Furthermore, the United Nations itself often sided with Israel, especially when UN General Secretary Annan confirmed that the Israeli forces had fulfilled UN Resolution 425, neglecting Hezbollah's claim of Sheba'a Farms for Lebanon (Reuters 2000c; AP 2000a; Ladki 2000; BBC 2000p; AFP 2000k).

After Hariri's assassination, the United Nations' and the international community's frequency increased from 18.65% to 38.96%. Criticism of the ineffectiveness of the international community or assertions of pro-Israel bias increased from 5.79% to 11.69%. The UN was no longer merely serving US-Israeli interests or being ineffective; on the contrary, after 2005 it was waging war on Lebanon through the International Tribunal for Lebanon, multiple UN resolutions, and pro-Israeli bias on Lebanese territory. Some features of the UN resolutions were linked to the United States in particular to de-legitimize the 14th of March on the grounds that they served foreign goals. UN Resolution 1559 was another focal point in Nasrallah's speeches, primarily to divert 14th of March calls for Hezbollah to disarm (FN 2005z; 2005c). Nevertheless, Hezbollah was willing to cooperate with the reinforced UNIFIL forces in Southern Lebanon (BBC 2007m). The International Tribunal for Lebanon was already biased, in Hezbollah's opinion, for not considering Israel a suspect in Rafic Hariri's assassination. Nasrallah gave a lengthy speech in 2010, attempting to demonstrate why Israel was a suspect, which included published testimonies of captured spies and hacked information from Israeli drones to prove that Israel

should also be a suspect (BBC 2010c). The Tribunal for Hariri's death dominated 21% of Nasrallah's speeches, and he frequently lumped it in with the 14th of March bloc and the American-Israeli scheme to strike Hezbollah's weapons. The Tribunal dominated 21% of his speeches.

The Other Arabs

Nasrallah had already criticized Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan before 2005 for launching and endorsing the Arab Peace Initiative in 2002; however, most Arab states were criticized for not doing enough for the Palestinians or for collaborating with the United States. Most of his speeches mentioned Arabs, without listing these specific countries; other times he criticized the Arab Peace Initiative endorsers specifically. Before Hariri's assassination, the Hezbollah chief criticized Jordan for capturing a Hezbollah operative smuggling Palestinians rockets in the West Bank; Saudi Arabia for the Arab Peace Initiative, opening its country for US military bases, and not performing any sufficient action for the Palestinians. Egypt and Jordan were usually criticized for the failed summits that they had held with the Arab world or the United States and that had not provided any progress for Palestinians.

After the Hariri assassination, most Arab states stood by the 14th of March, primarily Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, and Egypt. However, Egypt's support was limited to political lip service whenever President Mubarak met with Saad Hariri (see Chapter 8). Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, on the other hand, invested significantly in Lebanon, and in support for the 14th of March government. Both countries, for example, deposited 1.5 billion dollars into the Lebanese Central Bank during the July War to protect the Lebanese currency from collapsing as the result of Israeli bombardment and the two-month-long siege. Nasrallah often criticized them without naming them; for example, in response to Arab leaders warning that Lebanon would descend into civil war upon the open protests: "What some Arab kings regretfully promise us of civil wars in Lebanon, Iraq, and Palestine is a loss to all of us. The net profit shall go to Israel, America, the neoconservatives and proponents of the constructive chaos theory" (BBC 2006x). However, Nasrallah praised Saudi Arabia when attempting to mediate with its foreign backers to end the 1.5-year-long deadlock between the 14th and 8th of March blocs (BBC 2007m). Like Hariri and his allies avoiding criticizing their rivals' foreign backers when the latter met with their international allies, Hezbollah did the same.

Egypt and Kuwait had a problematic relationship with Hezbollah as well. Nasrallah rarely criticized Egypt when Mubarak dispatched Amr Moussa, General Secretary of the Arab League, to mediate between the 14th of March and 8th of March; however, the Gaza War of December 2008-January 2009 pushed Hezbollah and Egypt toward a collision course. When Israel imposed a siege on Gaza, Egypt refused to open the Rafah corridor to break the siege. Nasrallah frequently accused Egypt of being part of the Israeli scheme against Hamas and the Palestinians (BBC 2008e; 2008f; 2009f); he further accused the Egyptian government of being a dictatorship, asking the Egyptian authorities to allow its citizens to protest in solidarity with the Palestinians (2009f). Toward the end of January 2009, Hezbollah's media and Egypt's were accusing each other of Arab treason while the 14th of March bloc defended Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's Arabism. While Egypt continued to accuse Nasrallah of serving Iran's interests, Nasrallah was condemning Egypt for closing the Rafah Corridor, Gaza's outlet through Egypt (BBC 2009g; 2009h; 2009i FN 2009u). Relations hit bottom when a Hezbollah operative, who was providing Hamas logistical support, was captured in Egypt. Hezbollah and Cairo thereafter continued to exchange accusations without a halt. However, the 14th of March also used the incident to accuse Nasrallah of jeopardizing Lebanese interests through unilaterally meddling in allied states' affairs (see Chapter 8 for details).

Iraq, on the other hand, was a crucial state in Nasrallah's speeches and an example of what the United States, in Nasrallah's logic, planned to trigger in terms of wars of sedition in Lebanon. Calling for resistance against the American invader of Iraq, and afterward, calling for Iraqis to rise above the Shiite-Sunni cleavage, Nasrallah frequently cited Iraq as part of Bush's New Middle East map. He often warned the 14th of March not to wager on the Americans, and cited Iraq as an example of Sunni-Shiite strife, a project that the Americans sought to transport to Lebanon. Nasrallah also condemned the terrorist attacks in Iraq, and al-Qaeda, considering them American and made to divide the region. Iraq increased from 15.76% in the first period to 29.22%.

Policies and Objectives

All policies and objectives of Hezbollah were directed against anti-Syrian opponents and sought to marginalize them. "Sovereignty" and "security" had already dominated more than 50% of Nasrallah's speeches, and increased from 55.51% and 85.53%, respectively to 76.62% and 89.61%, indicating accounting not solely for Israeli threats and international meddling, but on

gaining grounds in Lebanon itself through the 14th of March bloc. Other objectives and indicators also experienced fluctuations. Sheba'a Farms, including the demand that it be recognized as Lebanese during Rafic Hariri's term and its use to legitimate the resistance's retaining their arms and to defend Syria's inability to map the borders while there was an occupation in the second phase. As a result of the 14th of March's challenge and their quest to liberate Sheba'a Farms diplomatically, the usage of "Sheba'a Farms" maintained a similar frequency, dropping slightly from 21.22% to 20.45%.

Policy/Objective	2000 – 2005	2005 – 2010	Variance %
Sovereignty	55.31%	76.62%	21.32%
Security	85.53%	89.61%	4.08%
Sheba'a Farms	21.22%	20.45%	(0.77%)

In parallel to security and sovereignty, the frequency of foreign intervention, US interests in Lebanon, repression, sectarian strife, and calls for reconciliation and coexistence also increased. "Repression" in the past had focused on Israel, and to a lesser extent the United States; however, Nasrallah's attempts to depict the 14th of March as a dictatorship regime, especially for refusing to resign amidst the protests of December 2006-May 2008, increased the frequency of "repression" from 50.80% in 2000-2005 to 57.14%. Since the 14th of March; UN resolutions, especially 1559; the Tribunal; and Israeli spy networks were all active within the country, in parallel to a higher concentration of American interest in Lebanon, Syria, and the Middle East, Nasrallah regarded all of them as foreign intervention; in particular, the Hezbollah chief depicted the 14th of March as American employees who sought to protect Israel. "Foreign intervention" increased from 10.93% during the 2000-2005 phase to an impressive 61.36% in the 2005- 2010 phase, reflecting the extent of 14th of March alliance, and its parties excluded from Arab, Islamic, and Lebanese identities.

"Freedom" sustained almost the same frequency between the two observed phases, remaining high with not much difference since Nasrallah either referred to the freemen of the resistance, the pro-Syrians, and their refusal of American hegemony and submission to Israel. Furthermore, the talks about prisoners' exchanges between Hezbollah and Israel also allowed "freedom" to hold such a high level of frequency (52.41% and 53.57%). "Independence," on the other hand, was rarely used, 0.64% in the pre-Hariri assassination era; however, it increased to 11.69% in

the face of challenges from the 14th of March, and the alliance with General Aoun, whose slogan was Freedom, Sovereignty, and Independence.

Similarly, “American interests in Lebanon,” a coded indicator for Nasrallah’s accusations of American interests in Lebanon and the region, was often mentioned when accusing anti-Syrian activists of serving US interests and increased from 15.43% for the 2000-2005 phase to a highly impressive 52.27%, indicating Nasrallah’s seriousness in depicting the other team as serving foreign forces. Hezbollah also accused the 14th of March of serving as a gateway for the New Middle East Project, which was to split the region into warring ethnic ghettos. Nasrallah warned that 14th of March’s mobilizations against the 8th of March triggered sectarianism, and their demands for Hezbollah to disarm also polarized the 8th of March bloc because the supporters would interpret disarmament as an invitation for Israel to invade without any available deterrence. As a result, accusations that the other sought “sectarian strife” increased from 7.40%, often reserved for mention of the American plans for the Middle East and the anti-Syrian camp, to 38.96%. Aware that his criticisms of Saad Hariri and his 14th of March bloc risked Sunni polarization, especially when objecting to the International Tribunal for Lebanon, Nasrallah de-escalated frequently through discussing “co-existence,” which spiked in frequency from 14.475 to 57.47%, and “dialogue,” which escalated from 6.75% to 55.84%. The Table below summarizes the differences in frequency between the two periods:

Policies/Objectives	2000 – 2005	2005 – 2010	Variance
Foreign Meddling	10.93%	61.36%	50.43%
Freedom	52.41%	53.57%	1.16%
Serving American Interests	15.43%	52.27%	36.84%
Sectarian Strife	7.40%	38.96%	31.57%
Coexistence	14.47%	57.47%	43.00%
Reconciliation and Dialogue	6.75%	55.84%	49.09%

Other indicators increased as well, often directed at Prime Minister Siniora and Saad Hariri. Before Rafic Hariri’s assassination, Nasrallah called for economic reform, alleviation of taxes, fighting corruption, and taking corrupt politicians to prison, all positions against Rafic Hariri’s policies. After Hariri’s assassination, mention of all these objectives also increased, especially

after Rafic Hariri's Minister of Finance, Fouad Siniora, became the prime minister from 2005 to 2009 in a government in which Hezbollah also took part. "Justice" became a topic of discussion whenever riots broke out, especially when Nasrallah appealed to Hezbollah's supporters to be calm during ethnic riots with 14th of March bloc supporters. Discussions of justice also included the discussions of the Tribunal and its politicization, often with Nasrallah calling for justice for Rafic Hariri, just not through the Tribunal. "Corruption" remained linked to the Future Movement, but now included the entire 14th of March coalition, who sought to capture the state and install its personnel. The table below summarizes the variances in frequencies between the two periods:

Policy/Objective	2000 – 2005	2005 – 2010	Variance %
Economic Reform	13.5%	27.27%	13.77%
Justice	6.75%	33.12%	26.36%
Corruption	5.79%	17.86%	12.07%

The presidency and the Lebanese Army also increased as well in terms of frequency of mention. Hezbollah often defended their ally, Emile Lahoud, and refused to allow the 14th of March to have a president who was loyal to them, out of a fear of becoming a conduit for US foreign policy. Mentions of the Lebanese Army were more complicated than those of the presidency. The 14th of March had always asserted that the Lebanese Army should replace the resistance. Before Hariri's assassination, Nasrallah often argued that the army could not deploy at the villages on the border with Israel, although he defended the army and praised its efforts during the July War and after its deployment in the South. He sometimes wondered why the Arab states and the United States were interested in arming the army after the July War, but always defended the army as "brothers" and included it in his tri-partite equation for facing Israel, the "People, Army, Resistance" formula. In 2009, Hezbollah militants shot an army officer driving a helicopter. In reaction, Hezbollah instantly handed over the murderer to the military police and apologized to the army and the officer's family (Daily Star Sep 4, 2008; BBC Sep 5, 2008). Discussions of the Lebanese presidency increased from 11.47% in the pre-Hariri assassination phase to 18.18% in the post-Syrian withdrawal phase. In parallel, the Lebanese Army was only mentioned 7.72% in the 2000-Feb 2005 phase, moving to 29.87% after 2005, often in conjunction with accusing the 14th of March trying to push the resistance and the army into a collision course.

“Governmental vacuum” and “the displaced” also increased between the two periods. Governmental vacuum increased from 1.61% to 15.67% in the post-Syrian withdrawal phase. Nasrallah often blamed the 14th of March for the length of the downtown Beirut open protests; arguing that the 14th of March could have ended the protests through practicing real partnership with the opposition. The displaced, most of them Shiites during the July War of 2006, were often praised for their sacrifices in either confronting Israeli aggression, especially after the July War, or suffering from it. It is important to note that Israel displaced one million Lebanese, mostly coming from Shiite regions, for a month in 2006. “The displaced” increased from a mere 1.29% to 10.39% in the second phase. Often, Hezbollah praised the displaced while criticizing 14th of March as servants of the United States. The youth were also highly praised; whether as the young militants of Hezbollah; the youth of the South, especially the martyrs; or the youth of the 8th of March bloc collectively protesting, their praises increased from 5.79% to 17.53% in the second phase, indicating their importance in the 8th of March bloc’s protests to protect the weapons of Hezbollah and relations with the Syrian-Iranian axis. The Table below summarizes the aforementioned policies and objectives and compares the variance between the two periods:

Policies/Objectives	2000 – 2005	2005 – 2010	Variance %
Presidency	4.82%	18.18%	13.35%
Lebanese Army	7.72%	29.87%	22.15%
Governmental vacuum	1.61%	15.26%	13.65%
The Displaced	1.29%	10.39%	9.10%
The Youth	5.79%	17.53%	11.74%

Conclusion

Hezbollah thought in terms of geo-strategic dimensions, especially concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict. While conventional wisdom would have Hezbollah and AMAL at each other's necks, the Syrian-Iranian axis cemented the alliance between the two parties. This axis also encouraged their supporters to treat Nabih Berri, head of AMAL, and Hassan Nasrallah as Shiite heroes of the community equally. While the electoral system did change Hezbollah's perspective from a mere extension of the Iranian revolution in Lebanon into becoming a Lebanese party, there

were missing explanatory power for the bizarre choices for allies. The electoral system's regulatory power did not explain why Nasrallah allied with Michel Aoun and revamped the Lebanese identity to integrate the former general into his narrative. Since Michel Aoun jumped ship into the 8th of March bloc, Nasrallah focused on how Aoun and Hezbollah had the same objectives after the MoU. Describing Aoun as a patriotic man and a friend of the resistance, who was at the same time representative of the largest segment of Christians, broke barriers between the Shiites and Aoun's Maronites. The downtown Beirut protests that lasted for almost a year and a half were evidence of their solid alliance because no altercations manifested between Hezbollah and Aoun's supporters. Hezbollah represents a case study that did not change foreign allegiances and remained steadfast, openly expressing its relationship with Iran and Syria. There was a difference, though, between Hariri's supporters and Nasrallah's. The identity shift as Hariri spearheaded the 14th of March bloc, and Nasrallah spearheaded the 8th of March bloc, triggering sectarian tensions between their respective communities as they exchanged accusations of serving foreign interests. In addition to martyr-honouring, such accusations intensified Sunni-Shiite tensions, which had not been present during Rafic Hariri's reign due to his diplomatic character and Syria's repressive regime. For Hezbollah's supporters, Nasrallah successfully linked criticism to his party with disrespect of the party's martyrs. The high level of accusations directed at the 14th of March bloc and Hariri's movement escalated to the extent that the Lebanese regarded international politics and the Iranian-Saudi rivalry in the Middle East as part of their domestic politics (Corstange and Marinov 2012, 659-660, 664-665).

The intense geo-strategic outlook on Lebanon and the rest of the world, fighting the American empire and Israel, meant that Nasrallah left his supporters in fear of a rival domestic faction winning against them and the Syrian – Iranian axis. This filter of supporting or opposing the Iranian – Syrian axis defined ethnic relations between Lebanon's communities and Hezbollah. If the ethnic leaders supported this anti-American front, Hezbollah's supporters automatically regarded these leaders and their respective supporters and communities as good Lebanese. Aoun brokered new relations between Hezbollah and the Christian communities, while the Hariri clan broke those ties, igniting Sunni-Shiite tensions. While Nasrallah shared Iran and Syria's stance on all issues, even privately when debating the Iranian relations with Chomsky (see Khoury 2006), Lebanese ethnic leaders position from Hezbollah's foreign backers and their weapons set the grounds for alliances. Those leaders, who opposed Hezbollah's weapons or foreign backers, became part of the American empire. The transition from extreme negativity to a patriotic man in Lebanon, aka Michel Aoun, depicts this international – domestic filter that

hovers over Nasrallah's geo-political filter of politics. The denunciation of rivals of treason meant that his supporters, most of them living through the Israeli occupation and displacement, would react out of fear of a new repressive rule over them. Nasrallah would resort to indirect symbolism, such as martyrdom, and weapons, to polarize his supporters. Given Nasrallah's position as party leader, militant, and a cleric, who lost a son in the name of freedom, Hezbollah successfully merges religion, politics, and warfare into a single speech. The continued resurrection of Karbala and the sacrifices of Imam Hassan and Imam Hussein shed light on the ferocity that Hezbollah is willing to defend itself, and its weapons, and its foreign backers. This determination that Imam Hussein to sacrifice himself is the same, at least in Nasrallah's speeches, to his party and community because every Hezbollah critic risks, with his rhetoric, Israel's return.

Hezbollah is a case of an ethnic party that remains committed to its foreign backer, Iran, since its inception. Hezbollah's identity re-conceptualization changed due to multiple reasons. First, Iran changed its worldly outlook from a global Islamic revolution to forming alliances based on the opposition to the American empire and peace with Israel. This changed view includes cooperation with anti-American seculars, such as the Syrian Baathi party. This same perspective has Hezbollah to ally with secular parties in Lebanon, such as the Lebanese Baathi party and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party. Second, the shared allies to Iran and Syria have become the standard for Hezbollah's alliances, irrespective of earlier histories of bloodbaths. Pakradouni's Phalange (see Chapter 6) and the Free Patriotic Movement. If the electoral system-based theories encourage coalition formations and appeals on non-ethnic identities, then there is a failure to explain allies' choice. Coalition sizes truly encourage ethnic leaders to steer away from appeals on sectarian or ethnic identities but does not account how the Free Patriotic Movement and AMAL are also Hezbollah's partners. Since Hezbollah remains fully committed to Iran, then the Syrian - Iranian axis seems to structure alliances for Hezbollah, especially many speeches of Hezbollah center on world-politics about the American - Iranian rivalry over the Middle East.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

“Several states, from inside the region and beyond, have impinged on Lebanon – wooed, bullied or sought to subvert it from within, attacked, invaded, occupied, or otherwise maltreated it – in its nearly ninety-year existence in its modern form.” (Hirst 2010, 4).

“The weakness of the state, the absence of a strong military, and perhaps above all, the fragmented character of Lebanon’s national identity laid the Lebanese political process open not only to active interference by external actors with transnational agendas, but also to periodic eruptions of internal ideological tension.” (Najem 2012, 19 - 20).

“At this exceptional assembly we wish to declare before the world the importance of Lebanon, its historical mission, accomplished down the centuries [...] A country of many religious faiths, Lebanon has shown that these different faiths can live together in peace, brotherhood, and cooperation.” Pope John Paul II, May 12, 1997 (as cited in Bohlen 1997).

Introduction

Pope John Paul II’s statement on Lebanon as the message of peace between the faiths of Christianity and Islam was made during the Syrian mandate over Lebanon (1920-2005). In the 1990s, Lebanon enjoyed unprecedented internal peace and stability after 15 years of bloodshed. During this time, Syria coerced domestic actors to respect its vision of Lebanon as an Arab state that shared the same fate as Syria in their collective war on Israel and quest to fully liberate Palestine (see Traboulsi 2008, 245-246; Rabil 2001; Hanf 1993, 617-618); in fact, the Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination that Lebanon signed with Syria in 1991 required that “both countries will seek axiom coordination in formulating Arab and foreign policies and coordinate their stands and positions in Arab and International Organizations” (Hanf 1993, 618).

Then Security Chief of Syrian forces in Lebanon, General Ghazi Kenaan, told the Lebanese bluntly in 1992 to “indulge in light media, which does not affect security [...] Each his domain in Lebanon: Yours is trade; ours, politics and security” (as cited in Traboulsi 2008, 246). In other words, Syria granted the Lebanese some limited autonomy, provided it did not contradict Syria’s

political interests. For this rhetoric to succeed, Damascus co-opted many Lebanese elites who were willing to achieve Syria's objectives in Lebanon and give the Assad regime the final say on Lebanese affairs (Najem 2012, 59). This process included, as Chapters Eight and Nine have demonstrated, Syria's allies praising the Arab nationalism that singled out Syria as a true Arab country, and excluding from this nationalism their opponents, primarily Lebanese Christian figureheads, who refused to play Syria's symphony in the country. These 1990s identities entrenched Syria's political positions into Lebanese affairs, especially their opposition to the Oslo Peace Accords between Israel and the Palestinians and to Western intervention in Lebanon. It was not until Rafic Hariri's death in 2005, following on a French-American convergence to expel Syria a year earlier (Dakhlallah 2012, 58-59), that doors opened for new and revived pre-1975 Lebanese nationalist appeals whose theme was Syria had repressed the Lebanese throughout its fifteen years in Lebanon.

Hariri's death in 2005 paved the way for free speech, at least in regard to criticizing other leaders and their foreign backers, and for new coalitions to emerge on the basis of opposing versus supporting the Syrian-Iranian axis's meddling in the country. Some political parties, such as Hezbollah and AMAL, maintained their position as Syria's allies after this pivotal event, while others, such as the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces, maintained their pro-Western stance and opposition to Syria. Still others changed their international and domestic alliances with foreign backers and switched camps: Hariri's Future Movement sided openly with the United States, France, and Saudi Arabia by joining the Christian opposition, and Michel Aoun of the Free Patriotic Movement abandoned the United States and the 14th of March bloc to lead the pro-Syrian camp in the downtown Beirut protests from November 2006 until May 2008. Those that never changed international allies, the Phalange with the United States or Hezbollah with the Syrian-Iranian axis, maintained some of their discourse in terms of identity appeals, historical narratives, and justifications for allying with these foreign backers. Those who did change their position in international camps had to join new domestic allies who shared their international alignments. Ethnic party thus got creative to justify new alliances, whether with domestic and international actors. In this vein, Michel Aoun and Saad Hariri selectively choose historical events and reinterpreted them to justify their new alliances in order not to lose supporters. The Phalange and Hezbollah also created narratives to accept any new domestic and international allies.

Thus, new identity-based appeals emerged from the ethnic parties participating in the 14th of March (anti-Syrian) and the 8th of March (pro-Syrian) blocs. These new appeals engaged with salient identities previously imposed by the Syrian mandate, either clashing with them or reinforcing them. These post-Syrian mandate identity appeals operated on three levels that also centered on foreign policy positions: 1) sectarian identity, in which Nasrallah positioned himself against Hariri with respect to their shared religion (Islam) and Gemayel against Aoun (Christianity), in aligning themselves with their respective foreign backers; 2) Lebanese identity, with Aoun and Nasrallah positioning Lebanon with Syria and Iran, against the West and the Arab monarchs, while Hariri and Gemayel advocated the reverse; and 3) Arabism as a supranational identity, where each leader's position depended on whether they preferred Saudi Arabia's Arab Peace Initiative or Syria's Resistance to the American empire and its ally, Israel. Each bloc generated their own particular interpretation of historical events to provide legitimacy for their alliances through re-conceptualized identities, positioning Lebanon in either international camp and advancing policies and objectives to actualize such positioning in the Lebanese parliament.

For the 8th and the 14th of March blocs, "domestic affairs" also included the discussion of the activities of their foreign backers, with leaders targeting the international camp that supported their rivals. Ethnic party discourse required foreign enemies that threatened the respective ethnic communities in particular and Lebanon as whole. The denunciation of one's rival for serving foreign rather than domestic interests facilitated each ethnic leader's rhetorical expulsion of that rival from the active identities of concern, including sectarian, national, and supranational. Describing the self through targeting the other (see Blommaert 2004, 129, 158; Eriksen 2002, 23-27, 66-67), the ethnic leaders whose speeches I analysed in the preceding pages use narratives to provide "sufficient instructions" and "background information" in order to prepare their supporters for mobilization that fit their perspectives (Blommaert 2004, 144-145). In these speeches, the ethnic leaders also described who they were and who the other was, describing the latter as lacking free will because they only served foreign actors, and presented arguments and ideologies that include "discourses, terms arguments, images, and stereotypes" (Ibid, 158-160, 163). These "intertextualized" categorizations of the other and the self, articulated through identities and moral comparison, define the relations between ethnic communities (Ibid, 171). Through re-defining relations between multiple identities, ethnic leaders trigger identity shifts, which manifest new ties, for the better or worse, between different communities (see Chandra 2012).

Lebanon's leaders, like all leaders, are performers (Wodak 2009). Identities, in their speeches, become "shared domains of interest" (Ibid, 14) that encourage members of that ethnic community to engage in collective activities, discussions, and shared data (Ibid). These performers then engage in day-to-day politics and re-contextualize "politics in the media" (Ibid, 24). Thus, leaders discursively manipulate historical narratives to ensure their supporters filter details of, and interpret, events in a particular way (see selective history in Tint 2010, 242-243). The fact that actors discuss identities openly allows them to reinforce their perspectives and their ideological interpretations, adding a moral element to distinctions between the self and the other that act as a filter for interpreting contemporary and historical events in a specific way. This research observed the frequencies of Lebanese leaders' appeals to identities before and after Rafic Hariri's death in order to track the narratives and ideologies expressed not only in relation to domestic actors, but to international ones as well. It sought to demonstrate that this two-level interplay is a primary cause of identity re-conceptualization and polarization in Lebanon, which is observable in the ways ethnic leaders frame and-reframe historical narratives and contemporary events in order to continuously justify their political positions and alliances. The more intense the rivalries are, both international and domestic, the more frequently ethnic parties in Lebanon perform these ethnic appeals to maintain control of their groups.

Qualitative Findings: Identity Shifts and the International Domain

All four ethnic parties discussed in this dissertation—Hezbollah, the Free Patriotic Movement, the Future Movement, and the Phalange—had to adjust their narratives to accept as domestic allies those to whom they had historically been opposed: The Free Patriotic Movement with Hezbollah, and the Future Movement with the Phalange. The Free Patriotic Movement, in particular, had to re-visit historical events so as to justify an alliance with the same forces that had oppressed its supporters when the Movement had called Syria an occupying force.

Historically, the Free Patriotic Movement and the Phalange have a shared history; after all, Michel Aoun had worked closely with both Amin and Bashir Gemayel during the Lebanese Civil War (1976-1988). Toward the end of the Lebanese Civil War (1975- 1990), as Chapter Seven demonstrated, to accommodate his alliance with Hezbollah, Aoun needed to identify the United States as a danger for the Christians of Lebanon. He gambled on traditional Christian fears about the confrontations between the Christian right-wing militias, the Lebanese Front, and the

Palestinian Liberation Organization, to drive home the narrative that The United States was the driving force behind the Lebanese Civil War with the aim to destroy the Free Christians in order to settle Palestinian refugees, nearing half a million (UNRWA 2019), in Lebanon. Syria, here a victim of the United States, opposed such a move, and thus was the hero, according to Aoun's narrative. He selectively disregarded the past, including often-violent repression of his supporters by Syria's allies, including AMAL and Hezbollah, during the first phase (1990-2005), and targeted Hariri and Jumblatt for abandoning Syria, often blaming them for the corruption in the country (see BBC 2007e; 2006e; 2006u). For example, he argued that Lebanon's high debt was due to Rafic Hariri suspiciously borrowing money on the belief that that the United States would cancel the forty-billion-dollar debt when the latter settled Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (BBC 2007b; see Chapter 7 for details). His testimony in the U.S. Congress, back in 2003, was omitted after 2005, and his history of closeness to the Phalange two decades prior was forgotten. Instead, the 14th of March bloc was accused of serving the Americans, the French, and the Saudis. Ideologically, Aoun became aligned with the identities imposed by Syria during its mandate over Lebanon and declared that the West and the Arab countries, excluding Syria, were a threat to the Christians of Lebanon. His supporters and Hezbollah's thus became close, around the subject of Syria, and defended each other during the joint rallies of the 8th of March bloc.

Saad Hariri and Amin Gemayel also had to be creative in their narratives. In justifying their new allegiance, they revisited the history of Lebanon and connected to each other by praising figureheads whom Syria had allegedly assassinated. The very different political figures Kamal Jumblatt, Rafic Hariri, and Bashir Gemayel had, according to this new narrative, all died protesting Syrian meddling; the new narrative erased the context of each actor, their personal beliefs at the time, and the bloody confrontations that had taken place between the Jumblatts and the Gemayels across the decades. According to this frame, Lebanon's true stability would come from halting Syria's meddling in the affairs of Lebanon. The 8th of March bloc and Michel Aoun, in this narrative, were the actors who had enabled Syria to meddle in Lebanese affairs even after their withdrawal in 2005 and were thus valid domestic rivals. Both Saad Hariri and Gemayel described their coalition as part of an "I Love Life" campaign, in direct criticism of the 8th of March bloc's support for wars of attrition against Israel, in which Lebanon had incurred heavy losses. As for Arab nationalism, Hariri adjusted his interpretation of Arab nationalism so that it matched that of the Gemayel's "Lebanon first" ideology. The Phalange, as well, were never Arab nationalists and came to adopt a version of it after their alliance with Saad Hariri.

This version was similar to Rafic Hariri's version of Arab nationalism, which centered on Arab common markets and solidarity with the Palestinians (which was unthinkable in the past). Both forms of Arab Nationalism (Saad Hariri's and the Phalange's) called for Lebanon's neutrality in the Arab-Israeli conflict and re-directed criticism from Israel to Syria, which was in stark contrast to the central pillars of Arab nationalism in the past. They redefined this neutrality in the Arab-Israeli to avoid the Christian-Israeli ties to the term from the early 1980s and called it instead "Positive Neutrality" or "Political Resistance to Israel," insisting that Lebanon could only face Israel through diplomatic channel, not through warfare. As such, both parties considered the army the sole legitimate wielder of arms in Lebanon, rather than the militias, rebranding support for this position as Lebanese and Arab, whereas in 1975 the position had been limited to the Christian parties.

Hezbollah required the least effort to re-conceptualize its narrative to accommodate its alliance with Michel Aoun. Nasrallah simply baptized Aoun as a patriotic man who supported Lebanon's sovereignty against the American empire and its ally, Israel. The reason for this minimum effort to re-write history lay in the strength of Nasrallah's popularity with the Shiite community. After all, he had delivered on most of his promises to his community. In his narrative, Nasrallah did the impossible and liberated Southern Lebanon from Israel in 2000, secured the release of all Lebanese prisoners in Israel in 2004 and 2008, performed admirably in the 2006 July War, proving to critics that Hezbollah was a deterrent force, and foiled the Bush administration's plans for Lebanon in 2008 when the 8th of March bloc overran Beirut in less than twenty-four hours. The evidence of Hezbollah's hard work for the Shiites and the Lebanese also publicly included the charity organizations and social services that Hezbollah ran in the Shiite communities, and sometimes outside of it (see Cammett 2014), and the thousands of martyrs that Hezbollah had given for the sake of Lebanon, including the highly symbolic death of Nasrallah's son, Hadi, at Israeli hands in the late 1990s. He had to push for Aoun to be seen as the strongest Christian leader in the country, such that he could argue that the majority of Lebanon's Christians supported Syria, Iran, and Hezbollah's military operations. The Shiite leadership, who often regarded Christian opposition to Syria as tantamount to treason (Rabil 2001), then welcomed Michel Aoun into the fold. Hezbollah re-directed their selective reading of historical events to vilify Saad Hariri and the Phalange and their ties with the United States, in order to justify mobilizations against the Future Movement, entrenching Sunni-Shiite cleavages for their supporters.

Quantitative Findings: The Domestic-International Interplay

All four political parties appealed to ethnic identities, and there was an increase in ethnic appeals when comparing the phases before and after Rafic Hariri's death. Syria had opposed ethnic appeals in Lebanon, Hezbollah excluded, to ensure stability, and ethnic appeals clearly increased after Syria's departure as the 14th and the 8th of March blocs vied for political power and control over Lebanon's foreign policy.

Hariri's Future Movement and Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement increased their ethnic appeals after changing their positioning relative to international actors. Such drastic switches, for both domestic actors, required re-conceptualized identities to justify alliances with new allies and opposition to the rival international-domestic camp in Lebanon. Given that the United States-Saudi Arabia bloc regarded the Syrian-Iranian axis as a threat to their interests in the Middle East (Eksi 2017; Dalton 2017; Bush 2008; Dickey et al. 2005; Khashan 2011), this showdown manifested domestically in several countries, including Lebanon, Iraq, and the Palestinian territories (Eksi 2017). The dispute in Lebanon centered on Lebanon's positioning within international alignments, such as relations with international actors, position on war or peace with Israel, endorsement, or opposition of positions taken by the Arab League, and acceptance or refusal of UNSC resolutions.

The table below compares ethnic appeals made before and after Hariri's death in 2005 between the Free Patriotic Movement (*hereafter* FPM) and the Future Movement (*hereafter* FM):

Ethnic Appeals	2000-Feb 2005 (%f)	Feb 2005-2010 (%f)	Variation (%f)
Aoun's FPM	15.96%	28.96%	13.00%
Hariri's FM	11.37%	61.41%	50.06%

At first glance, Aoun's appeals appear to only slightly increase, but closer scrutiny demonstrates that his *indirect* Christian appeals, such as in discussing his participation in the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) or in criticizing the 14th of March Christians' opposition to Syria, increased dramatically after his return to Lebanon and often stressed how the Christian parties in the 14th of March bloc were either minorities in Lebanon or pawns for the United States and its allies. The other reason for such an increase in discussing his movement's Christian base was to

market himself as the strongest Christian candidate for the presidency. In his speeches, the Maronite and Christian identities increased as follows:

FPM Appeals	Ethnic	2000-Feb 2005 (%f)	Feb 2005-2010 (%f)	Variation (%f)
	Maronite	0.47%	5.20%	4.73%
	Christian	8.45%	20.36%	11.91%
	Maronite Church	4.23%	9.50%	5.28%
	War-Era	5.63%	4.98%	(0.66%)
	Regionalism	0.94%	5.43%	4.49%

This increase can be attributed to the power of the electoral system in Lebanon in regard to institutionalized ethnic quotas in the elections. The presidency is reserved for a Roman Catholic Maronite, and even though Aoun's Reform and Change parliamentary block included members from a variety of different sects, the majority of them were Christian and thus campaigned on parliamentary seats reserved for Christians. Furthermore, Aoun forced the concept of Christian shares at the governmental level, back in 2006, demanding in 2008 a higher share from Prime Minister Siniora than any other political party demanded. These ethnic appeals, for the most part, rarely appeared before Aoun's return from exile. Aoun appealed on Christianity, at a higher frequency than the rest of the ethnic identities, after 2005, because he also steered his position as the leader of the largest Christian parliamentary bloc, to support Syria and Iran, often arguing that the majority of the Christians have no problem with either foreign backer (see Chapter 7).

The Future Movement dramatically increased their ethnic appeals to both sectarianism and family clanship. The death of Rafic reverberated across many Sunni communities throughout Lebanon, and the Future Movement continuously appealed to Hariri's memory to depict the 8th of March bloc and their backers as opposing his ideals. Given that Saad Hariri was his father's successor, it was easier for the latter to mention his father's sacrifices for a free Lebanon, causing his supporters to become passionately mobilized whenever Aoun or Nasrallah criticized the Future Movement's international ties and internal policies. While family clanship played an indirect role in mobilizing the Sunni communities, Saad Hariri shifted the battle from Sunni-Shiite cleavage to defining Islam, i.e. oscillating between claiming that Islam was anti-Syria and anti-Iran, or claiming it was message for peace, thus excluding Hezbollah from the definition. To avoid risking a Sunni-Shiite cleavage, and to appeal to Muslims across the Arab world,

especially the wealthy Arab monarchs, Saad Hariri and his movement often preached that Hezbollah's aggressive attitudes towards the 14th of March bloc risked splitting the Muslims into Sunni and Shiite groups. (Hassan Nasrallah used a similar strategy in his appeals to his Shiite base). Saad Hariri's strategy was simple: To challenge Saad Hariri and the 14th of March bloc's projects for Lebanon meant that Hezbollah wanted to split the Lebanese. Hariri did not focus on the rest of the 8th of March bloc leaders, flagging instead the threat of Hezbollah, Syria, and Iran on Lebanon's sovereignty.

The table below demonstrates the increase in ethnic appeals after Rafic Hariri's death:

FM Ethnic Appeals	2000-Feb 2005 (%f)	Feb 2005-2010 (%f)	Variation (%f)
Sunni	1.71%	3.80%	2.09%
Muslim	0.47%	23.44%	22.98%
Sunni Institutions	2.18%	7.06%	4.89%
Meeting the Mufti	0.93%	1.77%	0.83%
Regionalism	6.07%	26.58%	20.51%
Clanship	0	43.13%	43.13%

Clanship, regionalism, and Islam were the bridge between Saad Hariri and the Sunni communities. Family Clanship and Islam also were a bridge to the Arab monarchs, due to Rafic Hariri's close ties with the Saudi and other Arab monarchs. Regionalism, also, was an indirect identifier for the Hariri clan's identities. Saad Hariri appealed for support, especially during elections, to specific regions or towns that were predominately Sunni. He often linked the residents' sufferings and poverty to Syria's era of repression, noting how these regions had always been loyal to Rafic Hariri.

Hezbollah, on the other hand, made ethnic appeals with a high frequency (as the result of in the first place being an Islamic resistance which included a lot of martyrs), engaged in an open war with Israel, and openly announced loyalty to Syria and Iran. Direct and indirect religious ethnic appeals increased from 74.6% to 84.7% between the two phases due to the challenge emerging internally from the 14th of March bloc and their respective Western – Arab bloc. Even though Israel withdrew in 2000, Hezbollah continued to focus on its martyrs, weapons, and operations. All three themes also held a religious meaning as part of their interpretation of *jihad*, and Nasrallah's rhetoric associated the absence of weapons with direct threats against Shiite

communities, especially in Southern Lebanon. The war with Israel in 2006 and Hezbollah's sophisticated military operations against the latter's ground forces refreshed Hezbollah's victory claims and arguments as to how Hezbollah would not leave the South vulnerable to a new Israeli invasion.

Hezbollah Appeals	Ethnic	2000-Feb 2005 (%f)	Feb 2005-2010 (%f)	Variation (%f)
	Shiite	13.83%	40.26%	26.43%
	Muslim	45.98%	58.44%	12.46%
	Ayatollah Khamenei/Khomeini	3.54%	12.66%	9.13%
	Imam Moussa Sadr	3.54%	4.87%	1.33%
	Regionalism	8.04%	25.32%	17.29%
	Hezbollah Martyrs	13.18%	34.42%	21.23%
	Hezbollah Arms	7.07%	35.06%	27.99%
	Hezbollah Operations	15.11%	17.53%	2.42%
	Resistance	41.16%	65.91%	24.75%

The increase in all frequencies is an indication of the pressures that the 14th of March bloc and the West exerted on Hezbollah to disarm its weapons after 2005. The 2004's UN Resolution 1559 had not only targeted Syria's presence in Lebanon but also Hezbollah's weapons. Hezbollah's increase of ethnic appeals is attributable to the 14th of March bloc specifically since no other domestic coalition had challenged the legitimacy of Hezbollah's weapons after the Lebanese Civil War ended in 1990. With the exception of the July War of 2006, Hezbollah did not engage Israel in any warfare, except for a few skirmishes after the latter's withdrawal in 2000. In theory, the appeals to Hezbollah's martyrs, weapons resistance, and operations should have declined, since the quantity of their operations declined; however, they increased instead due to opposition from the 14th of March bloc and their respective foreign backers. Hezbollah likewise increased public usage of Shiite symbolism, such as the sacrifices of Imam Ali and Imam Hussein or tried to steer the definition of Islam toward their perspective of resistance to the American empire. Such symbolism also included an increase in discussion of Iran's Supreme Leaders, Ayatollah Khomeini, and Ayatollah Khamenei, who in theory were also

Hezbollah’s leaders, usually in conjunction with discussion of US-European-Arab attempts to weaken Iran and its nuclear program.

Due to hegemonic Syrian repression over Lebanon (1990 – 2005), there is insufficient data available on the Phalange to quantify for a pre/post-2005 comparison due to Syria specifically cracking down on the traditional Christian leaders, such as Gemayel, Aoun, and Geagea, from the Civil War era (1975 – 1990). Such censorship meant minimal public appearances for these leaders, when compared to other political actors. Syria also split the Phalange party through imposing the leadership of Karim Pakradouni on the party, who made the questionable decisions of supporting Syria and Hezbollah, in direct contradiction to the traditional and decades-long position of the Gemayel clan and the party’s history. Nevertheless, a summary of the ethnic appeals from 2005 to 2010 also demonstrates a high level of appeals to ethnic identities from which we can infer a significant frequency of ethnic appeals for support, similar to the other cases:

Phalange Appeals	Number of appeals Feb 2005-2010	Feb 2005-2010 (%f)
Maronite	108	15.72%
Maronite Church	100	14.55%
Christian	295	42.940%
Clanship (Family)	145	21.10%
Lebanese Resistance	131	19.06%
Phalange Martyrs	204	29.69%
Regionalism	174	25.32%

Like Saad Hariri, Gemayel’s appeals on his Sect (the Maronites) did not exceed those of the broader religion (Catholicism and Christianity), but he did equally defend the Maronite Church in his speeches while supporting Cardinal Sfair’s anti – Syrian stance (15.72% to the Maronites, 14.55% to the Maronite Church). The true ethnic appeal lay in the Gemayel’s history as a political family and the sacrifices of the Phalange past and present, which evokes historical affinity that the Christian communities had with the Gemayel’s over 70-year clan leadership, be

it in times of peace or war. Related to the history of the Gemayels, when spinning public narratives, is the history of the party in vast Lebanese areas. Regionalism was often associated with Phalange activities during the Lebanese Civil War, primarily against Syria and Palestinian militias, with the Phalange paying with their blood for the welfare of their community and country. At the end of such narratives, the Gemayels would steer that historic animosity towards Syria, Iran, or the 8th of March bloc, and Hezbollah's weapons. Hezbollah's arsenal reminded their supporters of the days when the PLO was challenging the Lebanese army. Using Syria's repressive history in Lebanon and the trauma of illegal arms, the Gemayels used other forms of ethnic appeals to bridge the past with the present. Thus, clanship, martyrdom, and regionalism occupy a prominent frequency, above 20%, in their overall public appearances when linking the past with the present. All of these indirect appeals spill into Christianity. Like Nasrallah and Hariri's appeals on Islam, a broader category that includes Sunnis and Shiites, Christianity as an identity became the true battleground for the Phalange against Aoun's FPM, with an impressive near 40% of frequency (double that of Aoun's 20%), in a bid to de-legitimize Aoun through the latter's ties with Syria. In summary, the Gemayels tried to depict Aoun and the 8th of March bloc as a threat to Christians.

Quantitative Findings: Foreign Backers

International-domestic alignments clearly manifested in Lebanese politics in the period under consideration. The United States and Syria took the lion's share of criticism from the 8th of March and the 14th of March blocs, respectively. The United States and Israel, in the eyes of the 8th of March bloc, were in the same camp, and both were responsible for Israel's killings of Lebanese and Palestinians. For the 14th of March, Iran was included in their public rhetoric after Hezbollah's war against Israel in 2006, and they considered Hezbollah's operation on July 12th, 2006, to be a Syrian-Iranian decision, rather than one made internally by Hezbollah. As for non-state actors, the United Nations was at the center of disputes between the 14th and 8th of March blocs; the former considered it a legitimate institution whose resolutions must be obeyed, while the latter considered it an imperial tool intended to quash the Islamic resistance and subdue Syria and Iran. Three topics of dispute emerged between the two blocs related to the UN: 1) whether the UNSC was truly independent or an American tool; 2) whether the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, which the 14th of March passionately defended as objective and the 8th of March considered a politicized tool to indict them for Hariri's death, was legitimate; and 3) what the role of the UNIFIL forces was in the South of Lebanon.

Syria and Iran

Below are the frequencies of positive and negative mentions of Syria and Iran for each political party:

Ethnic Party	Attitude	Syria 2000 – Feb 2010	Syria Feb 2005-2010	Iran 2000-Feb 2005	Iran Feb 2005-2010	Syria Variation (%f)	Iran Variation (%f)
FPM	Positive	0.47%	19.26%	0.47%	7.47%	19.44%	7.00%
	Negative	75.12%	2.51%	2.35%	0	(65.62%)	(2.35%)
FM	Positive	14.62%	2.51%	0	1.96%	(12.11%)	0.28%
	Negative	0.62%	19.26%	0.78%	4.24%	18.64%	4.24%
Hezbollah	Positive	32.80%	38.31%	16.72%	34.09%	5.51%	17.37%
	Negative	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phalange*	-	N.A.	N.A	45.71%	15.28%	45.71%	15.28%

*Due to an absence of data for 2000-2005, and the split leadership of Pakradouni and Gemayel between 2001 and 2005, the data available is coded only for frequency, although it is mostly negative toward these actors.

International cleavages and the ethnic leaders’ positioning clearly shaped their discourse. Before 2005, Michel Aoun’s Free Patriotic Movement’s focused on Syria as the root of all Lebanon’s problems: 75.12% of their speeches identified Syria’s regime as an occupying force and called for international action to liberate Lebanon. After his return in July 2005, his rhetoric toward Syria changed when he allied with Syria’s smaller actors, such as Suleiman Franjeh Jr. from the North, the Armenian Tashnag Party, and Michel Murr in Matn, and Talal Arslan in Mt. Lebanon. The frequency of positive mentions also increased after his MoU with Hezbollah in 2006. 19.26% of his speeches thereafter defended Syria while criticizing the 14th of March bloc, accusing them of fabricating Syrian activities after the Syrian military withdrew from the country

in April 2005. Aoun's defence of Iran came after the July War as the 14th of March politicized Iran's meddling in the conflict. The Future Movement, similarly, although to a lesser extent, targeted Syria negatively in 19.26% of their speeches in the second phase, after having defended them in 14.62% of their pre-Hariri assassination era-speeches. Hezbollah, from the beginning of the observed period, maintained close ties with Syria and Iran, and not once even hinted toward a negative perspective on their foreign backers' policies in Lebanon in specific and the Middle East in general. The high percentage of Iran's mentions in Nasrallah's speeches showed the extent to which Hezbollah had to defend their foreign backers internationally in the pre-Hariri assassination era and domestically in the post-Hariri assassination era. It is worth noting that when anti-Syrian actors, in both phases, discussed Syria, they discursively described what Lebanon was through identifying what Syria was not: a democracy, a civic state, non-corrupt, and just.

Israel, the United States, and other Actors

The Arab-Israeli conflict played a crucial role in Lebanon's foreign policy. Disputes over maintaining neutrality in the war against Israel and whether Lebanon should engage Israel in armed conflict continued to dominate the debates in Lebanon politically throughout the observed period. The Christian parties in general favoured neutrality with Israel and the disarming of Palestinian militias in Lebanon (see Chapters Two and Six for details). The issue of solidarity with the Palestinians extended to Arab nationalism, and after the Oslo Accords, new questions emerged in the Arab world as to what type of Arab nationalism they should endorse: peace and Arab Common Markets, or war against the Western empires. In Lebanon, Israel's 1978 Litani Operation in Southern Lebanon and the invasion of 1982, which reached Beirut, came at a high human and material cost, leaving bad blood between the two neighbours. The Arab-Israeli conflict also took on a religious dimension, since the Palestinians, be they the refugees in Lebanon or in the Occupied Territories, were predominantly Muslims, and Jerusalem held a special religious place in Islam. Israel, despite its withdrawal from Lebanese territory in 2000, continued to play a role in Lebanese politics, often used to delegitimize anti-Syrian and anti-Hezbollah parties with claims that they served Israeli interests by rendering Lebanon vulnerable to Israel's superior army. Below is the chart for Israel's frequency in the analysed speeches:

Ethnic Party	Attitude to Israel	2000-Feb 2005	Feb 2005-2010	Variation (%f)
FPM	Positive	1.88%	0	(1.88%)
	Negative	11.74%	19.23%	7.49%
FM	Positive	1.56%	0	(1.56)
	Negative	30.33%	34.35%	4.02%
Hezbollah³⁴	Positive	0	0	0
	Negative	84.89%	78.57%	(6.32%)
Phalange	-	N.A.	16.17%	N.A.

As mentioned above, Michel Aoun's new, post-2005 alliance meant that for every four speeches without a mention of Israel, Israel needed to be criticized in the fifth. His alliance with Hezbollah also meant that he followed a similar tactic in ascribing to the 14h of March parties the feature of seeking Israeli interests. The narratives used by Aoun differed between the two phases: at first, Israel was criticized for its past adventure in Lebanon in 1982, which had provided an excuse for the Syrian forces to maintain a presence to supposedly defend Lebanon's security and for Hezbollah to maintain its arms. After 2005, Aoun joined the 8th of March bloc in describing anti-Syrian actors as agents of the United States and Israel. The Phalange also criticized Israel while demanding positive neutrality in the post-Hariri phase, as they were invested in opposing the issue of settling Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and demanded that the peace talks resume between the Palestinian Authority and Israel. Hezbollah already mentioned Israel with a high frequency, due to its wars and the many martyrs who had fought in them. Nasrallah never changed his approach toward Israel as the enemy and discussed this point at every occasion in order to legitimize his retention of weapons. The Future Movement originally held high hopes for the Oslo Accords and hoped that peace would manifest; afterward, they lost hope and blamed Israel for the failure of the peace talks. After Rafic Hariri's death, they criticized Israel for its 2006 war on Lebanon and its treatment of the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories.

³⁴ Due to the interest of Hezbollah in the United States and Israel, and the extent to which Nasrallah accused his domestic rivals of being Israel's pawns, I introduced two indicators that tracked the rates of Hezbollah's accusations of serving these interests. In the code "serving Israeli interests", Nasrallah accused his Lebanese opponents of being thus servile in 25.4% of his speeches before Hariri's death, and 27.6% after.

Sometimes, they leveled similar accusations against the 8th of March bloc, i.e. that the latter sought to split Lebanon in half, which served Israeli interests.

Palestine was also mentioned with significant frequency. In general, criticism of Israel was either followed or preceded with mentions of solidarity with the Palestinian people. All four parties opposed the settlement of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, but they disagreed on two issues: the 14th of March sided with Fatah and supported the peace talks, the 8th of March bloc sided with Hamas and opposed the peace talks. The Phalange, like the Future Movement, supported the latter's statements to the effect that they supported peace, but that Lebanon would be the last Arab country to sign a peace treaty with Israel (FN 2007v; FN 2008o). The Phalange, aware of their allies, such as Jumblatt and Hariri, committing to the cause, were careful not to criticize the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon as a whole. Instead, they criticized pro-Syrian Palestinian militias in Lebanon (9.6%) while expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people in Lebanon and Palestinian territories (10.62%).

For Aoun, the issue of Palestine was marginal; the frequency with which he criticized Palestinians in Lebanon did not change much between the two phases, moving from 5.16% to 9.73%. Before his return to Lebanon in 2005, Aoun considered the Palestinian factions a tool used to destabilize Lebanon during the Syrian mandate. After his return, he praised the Palestinians but opposed settlement and demanded that the Lebanese government take no responsibility toward them, shifting the conspiracy from Syria's domination to the United States, Israel, and the United Nations. Hezbollah, true to their cause against Israel, expressed solidarity with the Palestinians in 53.38% of their speeches in the first phase, and 40.91% in the second phase. The decline was the result of the pressures of the 14th of March bloc on them to disarm, which shifted the focus of Nasrallah's political battles and propaganda internally, primarily linking the 14th of March bloc as employees to the United States.

The United States, often blamed for Lebanon's woes by the 8th of March, and for the woes of the Palestinians by the 14th of March, was mentioned by all leaders with significant frequency. The 14th of March bloc defended their relations with the United States, calling them friends of Lebanon. Aoun, in particular, held a contradictory vision of the United States. Before Hariri's death, Aoun was celebrating that the United States would bring democracy to the Middle East through invading Iraq, and he called upon them to liberate Lebanon from Hezbollah and Syria as part of their war on terror. Afterwards, he accepted the Syrian narrative of the United States

and completely criticized them, blaming them, as did Nasrallah, for the woes of the country. The Phalange's sole criticism was that the United States was not doing enough to pressure Israel into respecting the international resolutions of the UNSC. The table below summarizes the frequency with which each actor mentions the United States:

Ethnic Party	2000-Feb 2005	Feb 2005-2010	Variation (%f)
FPM	18.78%	19.9%	1.12%
FM	19.75%	7.20%	(12.55%)
Hezbollah³⁵	46.30%	59.42%	13.12%
Phalange	N.A.	8.5%	N.A.

It is worth noting that the 14th of March bloc in general avoided talking about their international allies, unlike Nasrallah who spoke with pride about his ties to Iran and Syria. The 14th of March bloc avoided such discussions in order to send a message to their supporters that they were independent. The United States, in specific, held such low frequency with the Future Movement and Phalange because its leaders were aware that every praise to this superpower meant that Nasrallah and Aoun would use it to further advance their respective identity re-conceptualized narratives against them: that the 14th of March bloc were neither Lebanese nor Arab.

Finally, the United Nations, which was controversial in Lebanese politics, held a high frequency in the speeches of all four parties. For Hezbollah, the level of criticism of the United Nations increased from 18% to 38.96%, always accompanied with an accusation that they were serving American-Israeli interests. With Hariri, the frequency doubled in defence of UN resolutions against Hezbollah, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, and the UNIFIL forces in Southern Lebanon. In the absence of any ability to disarm Hezbollah, confront Israel militarily, or stand up to Syria, Saad Hariri appealed to the legitimacy of his Lebanon First project in citing the United Nations as a friend of Lebanon, since its resolutions targeted Hezbollah and Syria in the past. Thus, the frequency of mentions of the United Nations in his speeches increased from 13.84% to 29.98%. In the second phase, Aoun followed Nasrallah's rhetoric against the United Nations after he continuously called upon the UNSC to liberate Lebanon from Syria. Given the pressure

³⁵ Nasrallah accused his opponents of serving American interests in 15.43% of his speeches before 2005, and 52.27% after Hariri's death. This high frequency of criticism indicates the extent to which Hezbollah, Syria, and Iran, were targeted by the 14th of March within Lebanese politics, and by the United States internationally.

exerted on Hezbollah, Syria, and Iran, the frequency with which Aoun mentioned the UN increased from 11.27% to 23.07%. The Phalange shared similar stakes to the Future Movement in regard to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon after the deaths of MP Pierre Gemayel Jr. and MP Antoine Ghanem; their speeches held a frequency similar to Hariri's in the second phase for similar reasons (27.94%). Other actors, such as France and Saudi Arabia, were mentioned with percentages below 14%, but they were mentioned with increased frequency within the speeches of the 14th and 8th of March blocs after 2005, often with the latter criticizing these actors and the former defending them.

There are over fifteen public policies and objectives per ethnic party that the empirical chapters (Six through Nine) demonstrated were used by the ethnic leaders to manifest their interpretations of identities. Here, I will highlight Foreign Meddling as a topic appearing in the speeches of each ethnic leader, demonstrating the extent to which each bloc sought to scapegoat the other as agents of allegiances outside the country. The 14th of March accused the 8th of March bloc's foreign backers, Iran and Syria, of either directly meddling in Lebanese affairs or doing so indirectly through the 8th of March bloc. The 8th of March bloc repaid them with accusations that the 14th of March were with the United States, Israel, France, Saudi Arabia, among others. Given that these rival blocs clashed in Lebanon and their foreign backers clashed with each other indirectly over the Middle East, including Lebanon, the topic of foreign meddling was clear in accusing the backers of the 'other bloc' as meddlers and their respective allies as friends. The table below flags Foreign Meddling as a topic that appeared in their speeches:

Ethnic Party	Foreign Meddling 2000-Feb 2005	Foreign Meddling Feb 2005-2010	Variation (%f)
FPM	9.86%	25.57%	15.71%
FM	0.93%	12.94%	12.78%
Hezbollah	10.93%	61.36%	50.43%

The Phalange, since they lacked data from before Hariri's assassination, was excluded from the table. However, qualitatively, they were in alignment with Saad Hariri's Future Movement. Foreign Meddling was low in Aoun's speeches in the first phase because he considered Syria in Lebanon to be an occupying force that built a proxy state and not a meddling foreign force. After July 2005, Aoun's speeches synchronized with the 8th of March bloc with respect to the United

States and the United Nations as foreign meddlers. Hariri's Future Movement initially feared that the Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act was internal meddling, and so they accused the US Congress briefly of foreign meddling; in the second phase, all such accusations were directed toward Syria and Iran. As for Hezbollah, the anti-Syrian opposition was weak during Rafic Hariri's era, and Michel Aoun was in exile. They targeted the United Nations and to a lesser extent the United States for meddling in Lebanese affairs during the first phase; their rhetorical attacks increased six-fold as the 14th of March bloc, backed by the United States, the United Nations, almost all Arab states, except for Syria and Qatar, and the West. Thus, Hezbollah faced unprecedented pressure on the legitimacy of its arms, and ties with Syria and Iran, which forced them to de-legitimize their domestic and international accusers as foreign meddlers.

Quantitative Findings: Non-Ethnic Identities

The Lebanese and Arab identities were central in the disputes between the blocs, often indicating policies and positions relative to international alignments by simply discussing them openly in the name of the 14th of March and the 8th of March blocs. At least one of these two identities appeared in the speeches of the ethnic leaders when they addressed their supporters and criticized their opponents. Arabism appeared when discussing Arab solidarity, the Arab League, and whether Arabism as an ideology sought peace with Israel and open trade with the West or war. The Lebanese identity maintained a frequency between 83% and 94%, often in the context of redefining Lebanon ideologically, vis-à-vis the ethnic identity and foreign policy, and with it, the identities of the ethnic supporters of each party, in what Lebanon they should defend. Arabism was used in fierce clashes between Hariri and Nasrallah, each claiming that their interpretation of Arabism was the one true ideological interpretation while the other was betraying that identity. Hariri went as far as reversing Jamal Abdul Nasser's Arab nationalism, which had centered on war against Israel and Arab unity against the West, redefining it to mean pro-peace, Lebanon First, and economic prosperity (FN 2006aj). For Nasrallah and to a lesser extent Aoun, Arab leaders abused the term "Arab nationalism" while serving the United States' interests in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Aoun consistently disparaged Arab nationalism and considered it a tool for oppression (see Chapter Seven), but on some occasions paid lip service to Syria's Arabism. After the Arab-Arab Understanding Initiative, Nasrallah toned down his criticism of Saudi Arabia. Arab unity also played an integral part in Saad Hariri's rhetoric when targeting Hezbollah's backer, Iran, reminding the Lebanese that the Iranians were not Arabs.

Anti-Iranian Arab nationalism vanished from his speeches in 2010, following the Saudi initiative to break the ice with Syria. The table below lists the frequencies of Arabism appearing in the speeches of the ethnic leaders:

Ethnic Party	Arabism 2000-Feb 2005	Arabism Feb 2005- 2010	Variation (%f)
FPM	5.16%	9.50%	4.34%
FN	30.17%	41.28%	11.11%
Hezbollah	39.23%	44.81%	5.58%
Phalange	N.A.	26.78%	N.A.

It is worth noting that the Phalange throughout the second phase held a similar interpretation of Hariri's Arab nationalism, often reiterating speeches from Prime Minister Fouad Siniora. This interpretation is not surprising given the fact that the 14th and 8th of March blocs respectively had coordinated joint propaganda slogans and narratives in order not to alienate supporters from other sects or junior parties, such as the Democratic Left Movement for the 14th of March bloc and the Lebanese Communist Party for the 8th of March bloc.

Hypotheses: Coalitions and International-Local Alliances.

In the Introduction, I outlined two sets of hypotheses to test ethnic leaders' appeals to identities. The first set, which I discuss below, sought to test electoral systems' influence on ethnic leaders' appeals. Almost all hypotheses in this set passed, with the exception of the influence of electoral systems; those that failed did so because of the confounding effects of the ethnic leader's position on international alliances and commitment to them.

Electoral Systems

H1: Party leaders appeal to the salient ethnic identities institutionalized in electoral law.

Fail. Not all parties appealed to ethnic identities that are institutionalized in electoral law. The Free Patriotic Movement, before 2005, never appealed to sectarianism (which is enshrined in electoral law), even when they entered a parliamentary by-election, in 2003, for a seat in the Druze heartland against the pro- and anti-Syrian blocs (AFP 2003). The FPM stressed that they

acquired an impressive number of votes by politicizing the dire economic situation, and not because of sectarianism (Assaf 2003a). After his return to Lebanon, Aoun appealed to Christian symbolism, in 2009, promoting the idea that Christians were the majority, supporting the FPM, and opposing Western meddling in Lebanese affairs. However, he avoided appealing directly to Christian values, partially because he had several pro-Syrian junior allies and preferred to market the FPM as a secular alternative to the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces. The Phalange, on the contrary and from the beginning, appealed to Christian identities, whether directly or indirectly, throughout the parliamentary elections of 2000, 2005, and 2009. The Future Movement, on the other hand, avoided appeals to ethnic identities during the 2000 elections and appealed solely to clanship and regionalism (ethnic identities not institutionalized in electoral law), using anti-Syrian rhetoric, in 2005 elections. In 2009, they intensified their rhetoric on these three indicators but occasionally also spoke on Islamic unity. Hezbollah, from the beginning, continually appealed to Shiite and Islamic-related identities irrespective of who their allies were in the 2000, 2005, and 2009 elections.

Ethnic appeals, in this sense, were depended on international and domestic tensions and not on the electoral system. All four ethnic parties, after Syria's withdrawal, focused on indirect ethnic appeals, often linking their parties' project to an international bloc. This tension was not solely originating from international blocs' rivalry against each other but also their push into Lebanese affairs to weaken the allies of the other's domestic protégés. In their ethnic appeals, Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement reacted against Israeli, French, and American statements. The same findings applied the 14th of March bloc leaders against Iran and Syria. The Special Tribunal for Lebanon, which the United States, the Arab monarchs, and France defended, along with the 14th of March bloc, was also seen as an international attempt, by the 8th of March bloc, to disarm the Islamic resistance. Finally, the 2006 July war, and the May 2008 mini-civil war were both seen, by the 8th of March bloc, as American attempts to weaken Hezbollah and its international allies.

H2: Ethnic leaders appeal to identities more frequently during parliamentary elections.

Pass, with reservations. Ethnic leaders made slightly more ethnic appeals during parliamentary elections, but not to the extent that ethnic appeals dominated their speeches for support. For example, keeping in mind that Lebanon entered a fierce election phase in 2009, the table below compares the frequency per year for ethnic appeals per party:

Party	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Average (06 – 10)
FPM	24.44%	36.90%	22.36%	35.21%	33.33%	30.45%
FM	53.33%	59.06%	58.33%	61.63%	60.5%	58.57%
Hezbollah	84.05%	87.1%	90%	84.78%	77.77%	84.74%
Phalange	35%	68.90%	48.70%	67.96%	79.09%	59.93%

The Free Patriotic Movement appealed to ethnic identities to mobilize their supporters most in 2007. 2007 was deadlocked by the downtown Beirut protests, which the FPM played a crucial role in organizing with the aim of shutting down Prime Minister Siniora's government. That same year, there was a by-election in the Metn constituency to elect Pierre Gemayel Jr.'s successor to the Maronite seat. The FPM ran a candidate against Amin Gemayel, and Aoun was personally campaigning as if he, himself, was running for that seat. 2009, which was the elections year, saw the FPM make ethnic appeals in 35.21% of speeches, followed by 2010, 33.33%. The FPM in 2010 had a crisis in Lebanon when one of their veteran cadres, retired general Fayez Karam, was arrested for collaborating with Israel (BBC 2010). The FPM certainly appealed to ethnic identities during elections, but also during crises, whether the 2007 downtown Beirut protests, which held an international dimension due to the showdown between Hariri and Nasrallah, or domestic crises pertaining specifically to the ethnic party, such as the case of Fayez Karam's arrest. This arrest forced the FPM to appeal on a higher than average frequency (30.45% average, 33.33% for 2010) to defend their credibility and commitment to their domestic and international allies, especially how the latter despises Israel and Arab collaborators.

The Phalange party, when compared to the FPM, had a significantly higher ratio during the 2007 by-elections and the 2009 actions. The surprise was 2010, which held a relatively higher frequency (59.93% average, 79.09% for 2010), because there were no parliamentary elections, domestic riots, or crises. The cause for ethnic appeals at this high frequency again was two-fold, pertaining to both domestic and international factors. In 2010, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon was expected to issue indictments concerning Rafic Hariri and Pierre Gemayel Jr.'s assassinations, indictments which the Phalange passionately defended. The other reason pertains to the Arab-Arab Understanding Initiative, which pushed Saad Hariri to re-vitalize relations with Syria's Assad and exonerate them of any implication in the assassinations of the

14th of March bloc's figureheads, which included Pierre Gemayel Jr., who was Amin Gemayel's (a 14th of March figurehead) son. As a result, the Gemayels severely criticized Prime Minister Hariri, and their ties with the bloc as a whole became strained, especially as Hariri's government endorsed Hezbollah's weapons as national resistance. The Gemayels ended up with one minister in Hariri's government, while Aoun's parliamentary bloc, Reform and Change, held five Christian seats (IFES 2009).³⁶ The results from the Phalange indicate that, like the FPM, the Phalange appealed to identity during domestic crises, partially as a result of international crises, and elections. Hezbollah and the FPM's continuous criticisms of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon further forced the Phalange to defend the objectivity of that judiciary body and resurrected the sacrifices of Pierre Gemayel Jr. in specific, and the Phalange in general.

The Future Movement also made a high number of ethnic appeals, exceeding 50% frequency in their speeches (58,57% average, 60.50% for 2010). Like Hezbollah, the Future Movement was in constant crisis. They led the Lebanese government in the second phase, under Prime Ministers Fouad Siniora (2005-2009) and Saad Hariri (2009-2011). They faced constant calls for their resignations from the FPM and the 8th of March bloc, and Syria criticized the Future Movement frequently. The source of these tensions, perhaps, was the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, which Hezbollah and the FPM sought to delegitimize, while the 14th of March bloc passionately defended it. In theory, 2010 should have witnessed the lowest frequency of ethnic speeches in the media, since it was not an election year, but instead, ethnic appeals were made with a frequency close to that of the 2009 elections phase (60.5% and 61.63%, respectively) despite Saad Hariri turning a new page with Syria and Iran in 2010. The UN-sanctioned Special Tribunal for Lebanon was viewed as a threat to Hezbollah, and they escalated their criticisms against the 14th of March, forcing the FM, like the Phalange and the rest of the 14th of March bloc, to defend it, bringing forth Rafic Hariri's sacrifices in specific, and the rest of the 14th of March bloc's martyrs in general. These appeals also included another international dimension, Saad Hariri's commitment to the Saudi-led Arab-Arab understanding. When Hariri opened a new page with the Assad regime, he had to increase his appeals on his father's memory to the Sunni street so that he won't lose his supporters, especially they protested against Syria and Iran for almost four years.

³⁶ The Reform and Change bloc, spearheaded by Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement, included three ministers from the FPM, a minister from the Armenian Tashnag party, and one from Franjeh's Marada. The Tashnag and the Marada were members of the Reform and Change bloc.

The collective results of the data on ethnic appeals during elections are mixed. Elections do motivate leaders to ethnically appeal for support, but so do crises, specifically, crises pertaining directly to the ethnic party, instead of the coalition. The FPM, the Phalange, and the FM all made ethnic appeals with high frequencies in 2010, a non-election year, relating directly to each ethnic party's direct interests, in particular about the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and Karam's arrest. The domestic – international interplay, the ethnic leaders' international commitments to their foreign backers, played a role for these three parties. The Arab-Arab understanding aimed to de-escalate tensions between the 14th and 8th of March blocs, especially in face of Israel's threats of war against Lebanon. Saad Hariri, committed to Saudi Arabia, opened a new page with Syria, risking cleavages within the 14th of March bloc (which was the case in his brief conflict with the Phalange). But all these international *détentes* between the Arab players did not ease the Special Tribunal for Lebanon's impact on possible indictments against Hezbollah. Neither Hariri nor Gemayel was willing to abandon the Tribunal for political and personal reasons; furthermore, many of the international actors, including the United States and France, would weaken Hezbollah's political influence if Hezbollah's militants received indictments.

Hezbollah, in contrast to the other parties under consideration, appealed to ethnic identity at high frequencies through the second phase, with the lowest at 77.77% in 2010. There are multiple compounding factors that explain these appeals. Since its inception, Hezbollah had operated its politics in constant state of war (with Israel) and used Islamic slogans (such as *jihad*, martyrdom, Islam, Shiitism, and *Wilayat el-Faqih*) continuously. For starters, Hezbollah's leadership are always at risk of assassination at the hands of Israel. Ever since the 2006 war ended, Nasrallah rarely appeared publicly in person and usually addressed his supporters through a giant TV screen live (ex. see Bassamet al. 2013). Second, they continuously faced international pressure to disarm ever since the Lebanese Civil War (1975 – 1990) finished. After Rafic Hariri's death, domestic pressures joined calls for Hezbollah's disarmament. The readiness of Hezbollah to confront Israel in 2006 and its swift paramilitary victory against the 14th of March bloc showed the war-like state that the party as a whole operated on daily basis. The electoral system held a confounding factor in increasing its frequency, but Hezbollah continuously reacted to international statements, primarily Israel and the United States, but also any other international actor that condemns Hezbollah as a terrorist group.

H3: Ethnic parties in Lebanon enter inter-ethnic coalitions to maximize their chances of victory against rival parties within the intra-ethnic competition.

Fail. Given Horowitz's description of Lebanon's electoral system as encouraging both intra- and inter-ethnic competition (2000[1985], 633-635), this hypothesis fails. After Syria withdrew, and took with it censorship and meddling in elections, Lebanese politics was dominated by two grand coalitions. The members of each coalition did not join their respective blocs to maximize chances for victory against rivals within the same ethnic community; Horowitz's observations stand true, that two grand coalitions formed, but their members were not necessarily involved in intra-ethnic competition, unless we consider Islam as cleavage between Saad Hariri and Hassan Nasrallah. This dissertation did not consider it as such, since their supporters were divided according to a sub-category (sect) of Islam, Sunnis and Shiites, making the competition between the parties inter-ethnic rather than intra-ethnic. Furthermore, Lebanon's parties break traditional political theories on ethno-politics. Horowitz, for example, predicted that two ethnic parties seeking representation of the same ethnic community will engage in ethnic outbidding. In the case of Lebanon, Horowitz's observations fail to explain why AMAL and Hezbollah, as of 1990, were part of a strong alliance in the 8th of March, and why the Phalange and the Lebanese Forces were in the 14th of March bloc. The most bizarre event was when Walid Jumblatt quit the 14th of March bloc and resolved his grievances with the 8th of March bloc and their foreign backers, which included his nemesis, Prince Talal Arslan, his sole challenger in the Druz community (Kechician 2013).

H4: The bigger the grand coalition, the more national identities and issues, i.e., those that concern all ethnic groups in Lebanon, will be politically salient.

Pass. Across all the observed years, Lebanon's ethnic leaders appealed to the Lebanese identity at a higher frequency than their ethnic appeals. Michel Aoun is an excellent case for this hypothesis; because before 2005, he was in exile and outside the influence of the Lebanese electoral system, and after 2005, he was back in Lebanon forming alliances, the shifts in his identity rhetoric are very telling. For example, Arab nationalism was not as present with Michel Aoun (9.5%) but held a significant frequency that exceeded 20% with the rest of the ethnic parties (Phalange 26%, Hezbollah 44.81%, FM 41.28%). It is worth noting that Aoun and Arabism were rarely associated, and the rise of Arabism in his speeches to 9.5% is significant given that in the first phase of observations (2000-2005), Arabism was mentioned in only 5.16% of speeches, often appearing negatively. This can be attributed to the inter-ethnic coalition that

he entered into. As for policies and objectives, ethnic leaders who participated in inter-ethnic coalitions

usually discussed issues that mattered to all the Lebanese communities as a means of transforming the objectives of their identity appeals into concrete goals to achieve. Topics such as Dialogue and Reconciliation, Sovereignty, and Corruption appeared frequently in the speeches of these ethnic leaders. Nevertheless, the end-goal of how to achieve these objectives differed from one grand-coalition to another, often taking sectarian lines as the result to the set of sectarian leaders preaching them and their supporters.

Interplay of Local and International Actors

While coalition size does affect the types of identities that ethnic leaders appeal upon for support, one question remains to be answered: To what extent do international – domestic relations shape domestic identities? To answer this question, we must understand whether it is the electoral system that encourages leaders to form coalitions or their shared positions vis-à-vis international alignments that cause these domestic alliances to materialize. The following set of hypotheses answer these questions:

H5: Grand coalitions form around allegiances to an international camp.

Pass. During the Syrian mandate, politicians who succeeded in Lebanon's politics were those who paid lip-service to Syria and Iran; this phenomenon included Rafic Hariri (Nizameddin 2006, 98). The opposition, pre-2005, was affiliated with the West and included key Christian parties such as the Gemayel's Phalange, the Lebanese Forces, and Maronite Cardinal Sfair. After Hariri's death, membership in the 14th of March and the 8th of March blocs was on the basis of opposing the Syrian-Iranian axis or opposing the Western-Arab alignment, respectively. The alignment in opposition to or support for the Syrian-Iranian axis meant that all history preceding the coalitions' formations did not matter. Michel Aoun allied with Hezbollah and with President Lahoud, who had been the head of the Lebanese Army when he stormed, with Syria's forces, Aoun's stronghold in 1990 and forced the latter to flee to the French embassy (Hanf 1993, 611-612). The unlikely alliance between Jumblatt, Hariri, Gemayel, and Geagea was also baffling, at the time, but held for four years due to their opposition to Syria and Iran and support from the United States, the West, and most of the Arab states. The alliance between AMAL and Hezbollah, the two largest Shiite parties, without any open ethnic outbidding, reflects the strong

ties of AMAL with Damascus and Hezbollah with Tehran. Thus, we can see that domestic coalitions were shaped by international alignments.

H6: Ethnic leaders will defend their foreign backers and react to events that concern their foreign backers.

Pass: As the empirical chapters demonstrate, no ethnic party criticized its foreign backer, with the exception of the 14th of March with the United States. By 2009, ties between the 14th of March bloc and the United States were shaky, due to the latter's ongoing support for Israel's war efforts. Even then, the Phalange continued to consider the United States a friend of Lebanon throughout their speeches. Aoun and Nasrallah spent every effort in defending Syria after 2005, and Hariri defended Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Egypt in the face of criticisms from the 8th of March bloc. Nasrallah also defended Iran's internal politics in several occasions (see Chapter Nine), and Rafic Hariri even took journalists to court for defaming Saudi Arabia (see Chapter Eight). The 8th and the 14th of March blocs also de-escalated inter-bloc tensions whenever their foreign backers held joint meetings or reached agreements. The foreign policies of the Phalange and the Future Movement overlapped with American, French, and Saudi objectives in the country; the same could be said of the Free Patriotic Movement and Hezbollah with the Syrian-Iranian axis. These defences and two-level alliances appeared clearly in the ethnic leaders' speeches as they revisited historical narratives and re-conceptualized identities to come to the defence of their foreign and domestic allies.

H7: Foreign backers will react positively or negatively to incidents that respectively benefit or harm their domestic allies.

Pass. The foreign backers, at least those with money, were generous to their protégés. Whenever a Future Movement member became a prime minister, low-interest loans and investments followed. Rafic Hariri and Fouad Siniora, as prime ministers, received billions of dollars in Paris II and III from the rich Arab states, such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, from France, and from the United States. The July War of 2006 demonstrated Hezbollah's military capabilities, and both Syria and Iran considered the Israeli withdrawal in 2000, and July War of 2006, as victories for them to claim as well. These observations show that there is a reciprocity between the domestic actors and their foreign backers with regards to Lebanese and regional

affairs. These positive and negative reactions on behalf of international allies reinforce the historical narratives and identity conceptualizations of the ethnic leaders within the country.

Aggregating the Results

At first glance, the electoral system theory appears to explain the speeches of the ethnic leaders. All of the ethnic leaders appealed to the Lebanese identity and, to a lesser, extent the Arab identity. However, the Lebanese leaders did escalate their ethnic appeals during the 2005 and 2009 elections to mobilize supporters despite the large size of their coalitions. Throughout 2005-2010, the topic of foreign allegiance remained salient between the 14th of March bloc and the 8th of March bloc, forcing the ethnic leaders to defend their respective foreign backers and criticize those of their rivals. This dynamic also included the ethnic leaders showering praise on their foreign backers and on how they managed their respective countries, e.g. the Hariri clan with Saudi Arabia and France and Nasrallah with Iran and Syria. Each ethnic leader demonstrated with ease that they could amend alliances and form new ones with former foes, even at the international level, as the case of Aoun and Syria demonstrates, as long as their supporters bought the strong historical narrative that re-conceptualized ethnic identities. The two-level analysis provides a better explanation of these dynamics since the domestic political rivalry was not limited to the electoral system. The alliances within the 14th of March and the 8th of March blocs had two things in common: opposing the foreign backers of the other bloc and supporting the foreign backers of their own bloc. The policies and announced objectives further confirmed how these ethnic leaders used their version of identities to advance policies that sought to weaken their rivals and advance both their interests and those of their foreign backers. The Arab Peace Initiative (2002) and Lebanon's neutrality were at the heart of conflict, in regard to Lebanon's foreign policy in 2005, between the 14th and 8th of March blocs. Within this division, the 14th of March bloc marketed their coalition as part of the 'I Love Life' campaign, while the 8th of March bloc stressed on resisting the American empire.

This dissertation took four cases from Lebanon: two Christian parties and two Muslim parties. One Christian and one Muslim party abandoned their foreign backers and joined a grand coalition for the purpose of opposing that former international ally. The Phalange, the second Christian party, maintained their ties with the West throughout the period observed, and Hezbollah, the second Muslim party, maintained their ties with Syria and Iran. Each ethnic party introduced a narrative, often in coherence with their bloc, to justify retaining or newly-making

these alliances, reshaping the ties between their ethnic supporters and those of other parties, for the better if allies, and for the worse if foes. This phenomenon became evident when members of each coalition omitted or re-conceptualized the historical events that had shaped their respective parties in relation to their former allies and former foes. Convergence on historical narratives, foreign backers, foreign policy, and domestic policies within each coalition demonstrated the extent to which the positioning of each ethnic leader relative to foreign backers shaped domestic identities, and in turn, relations among ethnic party supporters.

Conclusion

The influence of the international dimension on divided societies depends on the willingness of ethnic leaders to take part in the inter-state coalitions. Ethnic leaders, according to their positions vis-à-vis these international blocs, forge alliances at the domestic level based on shared international allies. The foundations of these domestic-international alliances vary from opportunism to ideological conviction, and we can see this variance in the Lebanese parties. Michel Aoun represents an extreme case of the former case as he transitioned from being the sole Lebanese supporter of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 to a die-hard pro-Syrian – Iranian axis in 2010. On the other hand, since its inception in the early 1980s, Hezbollah remained loyal to Iran for ideological, financial, and religious reasons. The Gemayel Clan represents commitment to the United States and its international allies, such as Saudi Arabia, leaning more towards ideological motivation, due to its decades-long opposition to Syria's expansionary politics. And, although like Nasrallah with Iran, the Hariri Clan holds a strong allegiance to Saudi Arabia, they also inherited Rafic Hariri's network of strong relations with other international actors, such as France and the United States, implying a mix of ideological and opportunistic incentive.

This interplay between the international and domestic levels manifests as long as ethnic leaders forge alliances based on their international bloc's position. The polarization of communities on an ethnic basis is thus not limited to domestic circumstances, such as accessing state resources and the electoral system's regulatory power. Whereas electoral systems-based theories may explain electoral coalitions and the salience of institutionalized identities, such as the Lebanese and sectarian identities, it fails to explain why communities interpret these identities differently, be it across communities or within communities, which can be explained by different domestic-international alliances and priorities within communities, i.e. on the behalf of

their leaders. Moreover, electoral systems-based theories fail to explain why power-sharing communities break down into war or enjoy peace, which can also be explained by international interests converging with domestic aspirations. For example, French, Saudi, and American alignment of interests after Rafic Hariri's assignment facilitated the convergence of the Phalange and the Future Movement, whose alliance was most unlikely before 2005, even though the Lebanese electoral system was left untouched.

As they emerge from the mouths of these ethnic leaders, identities shed light on the interplay between the international and domestic levels. When the ethnic leader is not praising the foreign backers, the ethnic leader is criticizing his rivals' backers. These identities include the interpretation of multiple identities at the communal, national, and international levels. The ethnic leaders interpret the Lebanese identity in terms of the country's foreign policy and international alignments. They depict their domestic rivals as non-Lebanese to polarize their communities against these actors as foreign, causing ethnic clashes between both leaders' supporters. These vocal strategies have materialized between the leaders of the 8th and the 14th of March blocs after Rafic Hariri's death in 2005. Each grand coalition has attempted to depict the rival bloc as foreign or traitorous, a danger to the community and the country. Based on historical contexts as a foundation, narratives emerge in speeches, providing supporters with an ideological orientation towards domestic and international allies. This research aims to capture the change in historical narratives and identities and highlight the international - domestic circumstances for triggering new historical narratives.

The sheer amount of speeches reflects the need of these ethnic leaders to maintain their supporters' passions, or even maintain their presence, as a result of not only domestic but also inter-state rivalries. The Aoun – Gemayel cleavage was a demonstration of why each ethnic leader had to give so many speeches, because the loss of one supporter risks the probability of joining the Phalange (and vice versa). Hezbollah and the Future Movement had to clash on multiple identities, including Sunnism, Shiitism, and Christianity, at the domestic level, and the Lebanese, Arab, and Islamic identities, at the international level. One accusation from an actor against another invites allies to defend the speaker, reiterate slogans, and encourages the other camp to retaliate verbally, and this all results in an avalanche of speech-giving. These tit-for-tat speeches took place in parallel with intensified pressures on Syria and Iran and a growing rift between the Arab gulf and the Syrian-Iranian axis. To justify their decisions in parallel with these international developments, in these speeches, leaders draw on historical contexts to legitimate

continuity in the present while discussing domestic and foreign affairs. Some ethnic leaders went back millennia, such as the Gemayel clan and the Phoenicians, or Hezbollah and Imam Hussein's martyrdom in Karbala. These historical contexts become especially important when domestic leaders make dramatic shifts in their international alliances and end up allying with former domestic foes. After 2005, Aoun resorted to the Christians-at-risk card, re-writing a new narrative for his supporters. He reinterpreted Syria's role in the Lebanese Civil War and depicted the country as a victim of US foreign policy bent on destroying Lebanon's Christians, now re-casting Hezbollah as a final frontier for the Christians' safety of Lebanon (see Chapter 7 for details). Hariri's alliance with the Gemayels also required historical re-interpretation from both actors, omitting key historical events and focusing on details. Between 2005 and 2010, Saad Hariri stressed how the Gemayels sacrificed their lives in defence of Lebanon's sovereignty and omitted the Israeli alliance in 1982. The Gemayels omitted Rafic Hariri's defence of Syria and stressed on the final few months of his life, when he opposed Syria.

Committing to an international bloc thus also means a convergence of domestic allies on specific policies and narratives, specifically re-conceptualizing their historical frameworks in conjunction with their domestic allies. After the MoU with Hezbollah, Michel Aoun started preaching Syria's Arab nationalism as a necessity for Christian survival; a few years earlier, he was calling upon the United States to include Syria and Hezbollah in its war on terror. Hezbollah in return depicted Aoun as an honest patriot who had clean hands and courageously stood up to the American empire. The Gemayel and Hariri clans also influenced each other dramatically. Amin Gemayel discussed Rafic Hariri's vision of Arab relations with the rest of the Arab world, and Saad Hariri took on many of the Phalange's visions on the domestic and international levels, such as the role of weapons outside the army, Lebanon's neutrality, Lebanon's sovereignty, and Lebanon's ties to Syria. On some occasions, Gemayel started to defend the Arab League (which he hadn't before), due to its connection with the 14th of March, and requested further involvement in Lebanese affairs (unlike the 1980s), while Saad Hariri redefined Arab Nationalism as more simply opposing Syria, unlike his father, who defended Syria for twelve years in the name of Arab Nationalism.

Finally, by themselves, electoral systems-based theories may explain some aspects of coalition formation in Lebanon, but they fail to account for coalition size, ethnic polarized politics, and most importantly, the role of international actors in de-escalating or escalating tensions. As Geukjian (2017) noted, it is the international actors who mediate between aggrieved ethnic

leaders, and it is the same actors who offer guarantees to domestic actors against the 'other's' possible defection from agreements for power sharing. But international actors' interests change, and with enough committed domestic actors, the international actors can de-stabilize divided countries for whom they had previously brokered peace (Ibid). Thus, the speeches of ethnic leaders, on a day-to-day basis, offer insight on the extent to which ethnic leaders rely on international politics to mobilize their supporters against domestic foes, leading to instability. In Hezbollah's supporters' eyes, they are not facing off with the 14th of March bloc, but with the United States, deeming Saad Hariri, the strongest Sunni leader, an American agent. This accusation lays the foundation for sectarian violence between supporters, and hence Saad Hariri repaid his accusers with accusations that their allegiances were to Syria and Iran instead of Lebanon, further spiralling Lebanon into a wave of Sunni – Shiite polarization. Thus, it is of vital importance to analyse not only the international penetration of a divided society but, more importantly, its ramifications on identity re-conceptualization as leaders decide to maintain or shift their international commitments.

Final Thoughts: Identities

All ethnic identities are social constructs, and as such, they enable ethnic leaders to have the freedom shift them in order to justify political decisions and form alliances. Lebanon's leaders' behaviour prove that ethnic identities can either steer polarization or de-escalate tensions. Former enemies can become close allies, despite a history of bloodshed. Michael Young, an expert on Lebanese affairs, commented on such alliances that the "dizzying duplicity of Lebanese politics could yield the bizarrest of bedfellows, and it did not fail to do so now" (Young as cited in Hirst, 2010, 312). However, this 'dizzying duplicity' may not be so bizarre when the shared positions of ethnic leaders from international actors become the primal cause for alliances. Ethnic leaders do not regard their ethnic group's history as providing a limit to the types of alliances they seek with domestic and international actors. The Hariri clan's and Michel Aoun's transition to supporting the international camps of their former foes, without losing support, provide clear evidence of historical narratives in redefining ethnic identities to suit the leaders' interests.

Thus, countries in hot zones, such as the Middle East, are not immune to international developments. No country is immune from international lobbying (see *The Israeli Lobby in Mearsheimer and Walt 2008*, and the Japanese Lobby in Huntington 1993); however,

Lebanon demonstrates that these international alignments can become ethnic cleavages within a society whose parties mobilize support on an ethnic basis. The topics of treason, collaboration with foreign forces, and loyalty to other countries, among others, are used to re-conceptualize ethnic identities and direct attention from newly-allied parties' historical interactions. The two domestic alliances studied in this dissertation—The Future Movement's alliance with the Phalange, and the Free Patriotic Movement's alliance with Hezbollah—offer empirical evidence of such malleability.

Within Lebanon

This dissertation also sought to shed light on ethnic identities as a “final package” delivered to a targeted audience, starting from the balances of power between international stakeholders in the country, all the way to domestic alliances as a reflection of this international balance. Instead of reading Lebanon's history as a story of actors and militias fighting with each other, this research's focus was on these final packages that ethnic supporters hear, straight from the mouths of their leaders, and act upon. As I collected the speeches of each ethnic party's prominent figures and created a database for each party, except the Phalange for logistical reasons, I coded these politicians' reactions to daily events. This coding used a minimum set of 20 indicators per speech, forming a database of identities, domestic actors, foreign policy, charities, and policies. Originally, each chapter exceeded one hundred pages due to the sheer amount of data coming out of these speeches, with the overwhelming objective of fitting day-to-day politics entirely into each empirical chapter. Topics such as public-school tuition, forest fires, riots, affairs of syndicates and unions, dinners, and even marathons were not included in the final chapter analyses, but they are given space in the database for future studies. In almost every speech, multiple topics appeared while the ethnic leaders smoothly used the event, as it occurred, as a launching pad for other topics, including marketing oneself and criticizing the other.

Even with its constrained length, this dissertation is a foundational bloc for a greater research on Lebanon. The next step for this research is to expand on the collected speeches of all ethnic parties to include other speakers, such as these parties' Members of Parliament and Ministers, to increase the number of observations and add further legitimacy to the phenomenon's explanatory power (see King et al. 1994). Afterward, it can expand to include other ethnic parties, such as Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party, AMAL, the Armenian Tashnag party,

and the Lebanese Forces. A comparison can be drawn with non-ethnic parties that also choose alliances with domestic blocs based on shared positions, such as the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and the Lebanese Communist Party, to monitor how they survive, as secular organizations, within a highly-charged ethnic environment.

Beyond Lebanon

The conclusions and methodology of this research can be applied to any divided society. Bosnia-Herzegovina was initially part of the research project. Bosnia-Herzegovina has similar conditions to those in Lebanon. Both countries have multiple ethnic groups where no group can claim a majority; two stronger countries surround both; and at least two of the three main groups in each hold ties to external allies. Relations between Croatia and Serbia and their co-ethnic groups have frequently changed across the decades and even centuries (Velikonja 2004), as in Lebanon. Both countries had multiple countries intervening in their foreign affairs, and both emerged from a civil war with a constitution that was tailored by the international community to halt the war. More interestingly, ethnic identities in both countries manifest in terms of sect, religion, and race. There is no Bosnian Catholic Serb, and a Catholic is always a Croat in the country. Like the Lebanese ethnic leaders' appeals to Middle Eastern and Arab identities, there are at least two supranational identities to which leaders can appeal: the Yugoslav and the European. Bosnia as national identity is almost exclusively identified by the Bosniak Muslims, similar to pre-Civil War Lebanon and the Phalange's Lebanese identity (see Bose 2002; Donia 2006; Velikonja 2004).

There are also other cases. Kosovo remains split between Kosovar Serbs and Kosovar Albanian Muslims, with neighbouring Serbia and Albania still maintaining some influence over the country. Ukraine's recent civil war is a testament to the tension between Russian interference and rivalry with the West. The sudden downfall of pro-Russian allies in Ukraine spelled all sorts of direct and indirect military and political interventions. For a long while, ethnopolitics dominated Northern Ireland's politics; however, it was not until recently that neighbouring London and Dublin's interests factored in as part of the peace (McGarry and O'Leary 2009a). Iraq, another country trapped between Syria and Iran, suffered from an American invasion and had its entire ethnic demography reshaped. A single Iraqi identity broke into a three-way inter-ethnic hostilities, materializing in Sunni, Kurdish, and Shiite competition, with intra-ethnic competition looming within each community (Galbraith 2009). These cases

stand as potential testing to further increase the testing of this research and increase the usage of ethnic appeals and communal polarization regarding geo-political shifts among international actors.

Toward a new model of two-level analysis on ethno-politics

This research sought to demonstrate that the salience and choice of ethnic identities hinge on factors beyond the domestic. The interplay of international competition and domestic actors results in the forging of new alliances domestically and causes new identities to emerge or already-salient ones to be revisited. Lebanon's grand coalitions, the 14th of March and the 8th of March, became new identities, replacing the decades-long arguments of Lebanese versus Arab identities with re-conceptualized Arab-against-Arab identities. Lebanon was the test case for analysing how positions of ethnic leaders vis-à-vis international actors shape their construction of ethnic identities. This observation is not possible without a) analysing the international level in regard to actors relevant to Lebanon, b) comparing the Lebanese leaders' behaviour before and after these international shifts took place c) tracking new domestic alliances that emerged as a result of such alliances, and d) documenting the speeches of ethnic leaders pertaining ethnic identities, domestic players, and international actors. This model does not solely focus on divided societies with multiple parties. The mere presence of at least two rival international actors and at least two local parties can shed light on the interplay between these levels. Western countries are part of such dynamics. The Trump administration, plagued with alt-right politics and racial tensions, held close ties with Russia's Putin. This positive tie changed perspectives among the Republican base. Before Trump's election, only 22% viewed Russia as friendly or an ally; after Trump's election, 40%, almost double, regarded Russia as a friend or ally (Reinhart 2018). The question remains to what extent Trump's supporters mobilize ethnically when criticizing Democrats and defending Russia. The United States, being a superpower, may require a slight tweak to the model, but international - domestic structures may fit such a country.

The idea that ethnic identities and ethnic conflict are productions of domestic conditions and cultural productions is far from the truth. Where there are divisions across ethnic lines, there lay foreign meddling, or the possibility of foreign meddling. Recent cases continue to enter this spectrum, be it Yemen, Libya, or Bolivia. The emergence of populist right-wing movements in the West accompanied cross border solidarity. Syria, reduced to a junior player after the Arab

spring, also became a battleground for Russia, the United States, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran, and several other actors (ex. see Isachenkov 2015). Given that Chandra's approach (2012) considers race, religion, sects, languages (even accents), and colour as part of ethnic politics, ethnopolitics seems to be more rampant across the globe, and not just in developing countries, than scholars tend to account for.

Appendix 1: A glimpse into Saudi Donations from the July war till end of 2007

Saudi support from the monarchy also yielded important returns to the Siniora government and the Hariri Clan during and after the July War:

Date	Donation/Aid	Destination	Source
19-July-06	50 million US\$	Lebanese State for Immediate relief	Saudi Embassy ³⁷
26-July-06	1 billion US\$	Lebanese Central Bank: Deposit to protect the Lebanese Currency during the July War	Saudi Embassy
31-Aug-06	500 Million \$	Reconstruction of Lebanon	Saudi Embassy
07-Sep-06	20 Million US\$	Full Public School Tuition Coverage	Rebuilding Lebanon – Bahiya Hariri September 7, 2006 Future Newspaper ³⁸
26-Jan-07	1.1 billion US\$	Lebanese Government – multiple projects – Pledged in Paris III Conference	Paris III International Donors' Conference – Future Newspaper ³⁹

It is worth to note that Saudi Arabia covered for the next consecutive years the tuitions in public school, and in 2009, also covered the costs of the Schoolbooks of all students enrolled in public schools for 44 million dollars.

³⁷ Saudi Embassy. 2006. "Saudi Arabia Announces Massive Aid Package to Lebanon, Palestine to Help Relief Efforts." *Saudi Embassy* 26 July 2006: <https://www.saudiembassy.net/press-release/saudi-arabia-announces-massive-aid-package-lebanon-palestine-help-relief-efforts> (Accessed on September 03, 2018).

³⁸ Future Newspaper. "By the Directions of the Saudi King, to Cover Tuition Fees of the Students in Public School – Hariri: A Generous Act Shows the Kingdom stands with all Lebanese." *Future Newspaper* 07 September 2006: <http://almustaqbal.com/article/193166/%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%AC%D8%A9-%D9%8A%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%BA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A9> (Accessed on June 15, 2018).

³⁹ Ministry of Finance. 2007. "International Conference for Support to Lebanon – Paris III: First Progress Report." *Ministry of Finance* 2007: <http://www.finance.gov.lb/en-us/Finance/DC/AC/Documents/Paris%20III%20First%20Progress%20Report.pdf> (Accessed on January 10, 2020).

Appendix 2: Future Movement's Aggregated Speeches

Section 1: The Speakers

Speakers	Total	% Total	No. of Speeches 00- Feb 12, 05	% 00 – 05	No. of Speeches 05-10	%
Rafic Hariri	506	17.40%	506	78.69%	0	0.00%
Bahiya Hariri	757	26.03%	52	8.09%	705	31.13%
Saad Hariri	796	27.37%	1	0.16%	795	35.10%
Fouad Siniora	728	25.03%	90	14.00%	638	28.17%
Nazik Hariri	66	2.27%	2	0.31%	64	2.83%
Other Hariris	39	1.34%	0	0.00%	39	1.72%
Future Movement	82	2.82%	2	0.31%	80	3.53%
Future Movement Editorial:	4	0.14%	4	0.62%	0	0.00%
Total*	2908		657		2265	

Numbers do not match with total as in some events, more than one speaker was present

Section 2: Identity on Self

Ethnic Identities: Nominal and Active

Speeches 00-05	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	05-10	% 05- 10	% Variation
Identity on Self	73	11.35%	1391	61.41%	50.06%
Sunni	11	1.71%	86	3.80%	2.09%
Muslim	3	0.47%	531	23.44%	22.97%
Sunni Institutions	14	2.18%	160	7.06%	4.88%
Meeting the Mufti	6	0.93%	40	1.77%	0.847%
Regionalism	39	6.07%	602	20.51%	26.58%
Clanship	0	0	977	43.13%	43.13%
Total	657	100%	2265	100%	100%

Non-Ethnic Identities: Nominal and Active

Speeches 00-05	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	%05-10	% Variation
Non-Ethnic Identities	635	98.76%	2243	99.03%	0.27%
Lebanese	583	90.67%	2139	94.44%	3.77%
Arab	194	30.17%	935	41.28%	11.11%
Middle Eastern	94	14.62%	161	7.11%	(7.51)%
Western	10	1.56%	26	1.15%	(0.41)%
Secular	2	0.31%	45	1.99%	1.68%
Neo-Liberalism and Economics	117	18.20%	66	2.91%	15.29%
Total	657	100%	2265	100%	100%

Section 3: Domestic Actors, Relevant Neighbours

	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
Syria					
<u>Category</u> Total	98	15.24%	633	21.77%	6.53%
Anti-Syria	4	0.62%	560	19.26%	18.64%
Pro-Syrian	94	14.62%	73	2.51%	(12.11)%

	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
Iran					
<u>Category</u> Total	5	0.78%	120	5.30%	4.52%
Anti-Iran	0	0.00%	96	4.24%	4.24%
Pro-Iran	5	0.78%	24	1.06%	0.28%

	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
Hezbollah					
<u>Category</u> Total	38	5.91%	350	15.45%	9.54%
Anti-Hezbollah	3	0.47%	233	10.29%	9.82%
Pro-Hezbollah	35	5.44%	117	5.17%	(0.28)%

	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
Hezbollah Weapons					
<u>Category</u> Total	4	0.62%	350	15.45%	4.15%
Anti-Hezbollah	0	0.00%	233	10.29%	3.36%
Pro-Hezbollah	4	0.62%	117	5.17%	0.79%

	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
AMAL					
<u>Category</u> Total	15	2.33%	226	9.98%	7.65%
Anti-AMAL	5	0.78%	73	3.22%	2.45%
Pro-AMAL	10	1.56%	153	6.75%	5.20%

	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
Shiites					
<u>Category</u> Total	1	0.16%	54	2.38%	2.23%
Anti-Shiites	0	0.00%	12	0.53%	0.53%
Pro-Shiites	1	0.16%	42	1.85%	1.70%

	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
Aoun/FPM					
<u>Category</u> Total	7	1.09%	114	5.03%	3.94%
Anti-Aoun	4	0.62%	96	4.24%	3.62%
Pro-Aoun	3	0.47%	18	0.79%	0.33%

	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
Phalange					
<u>Category</u> Total	1	0.16%	87	3.84%	3.69%
Anti-Phalange	0	0.00%	4	0.18%	0.18%
Pro-Phalange	1	0.16%	83	3.66%	3.51%

	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
Lebanese Forces					
<u>Category</u> Total	3	0.47%	37	1.63%	1.16%
Anti-LF	3	0.47%	3	0.13%	(0.33)%
Pro-LF	0	0.00%	34	1.50%	1.50%

Jumblatt/PSP*	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
<u>Category Total</u>	9	1.40%	83	3.66%	2.26%
Anti-PSP	4	0.62%	4	0.18%	(0.45)%
Pro-PSP	5	0.78%	79	3.49%	2.71%

- **Progressive Socialist Party**

Palestinians	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
<u>Category Total</u>	121	18.82%	482	21.28%	2.46%
Anti-Palestine	18	2.80%	48	2.12%	(0.68)%
Pro-Palestine	103	16.02%	391	17.26%	1.24%

Israel/SLA	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
<u>Category Total</u>	205	31.88%	778	34.35%	2.47%
Anti-Israel	195	30.33%	778	34.35%	4.02%
Pro-Israel	10	1.56%	0	0.00%	(1.56)%

Cardinal Sfair	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
<u>Category Total</u>	12	1.87%	63	2.78%	0.92%
Anti-Sfair	8	1.24%	0	0.00%	(1.24)%
Pro-Sfair	4	0.62%	63	2.78%	2.16%

President Lahoud/Suleiman	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
<u>Category Total</u>	47	7.31%	260	11.48%	4.17%
Anti-L & S	35	5.44%	124	5.47%	0.03%
Pro-L & S	12	1.87%	136	6.00%	4.14%

Religious Terrorism	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
Category Total	46	7.15%	137	6.05%	(1.11)%
Anti-Terrorism	45	7.00%	137	6.05%	(0.95)%
Pro-Terrorism	1	0.16%	0	0.00%	(0.16)%

Overall Syria's Camp/8th of March*	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05 - 10	% Variation
Category Total	25	3.89%	632	27.90%	24.01%
Anti-Loyalists	22	3.42%	618	27.28%	23.86%
Pro-Loyalists	3	0.47%	14	0.62%	0.15%

- **Syria's Camp became the 8th of March bloc in 05-10**

Section 4: Other International Actors

Speeches 00-05	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	% Var
Int. Actors Total	358	55.68%	1112	49.09%	(6.58)%
United States	127	19.75%	163	7.20%	(12.55)%
France	78	12.13%	193	8.52%	(3.61)%
Saudi Arabia	24	3.73%	212	9.36%	5.63%
Kuwait	13	2.02%	63	2.78%	0.76%
Qatar	2	0.31%	43	1.90%	1.59%
Turkey	10	1.56%	28	1.24%	(0.32)%
Egypt	12	1.87%	91	4.02%	2.15%
Vatican	5	0.78%	31	1.37%	0.59%
United Nations	89	13.84%	679	29.98%	16.14%
International Community	26	4.04%	133	5.87%	1.83%
Europe	67	10.42%	73	3.22%	(7.20)%
Russia	17	2.64%	51	2.25%	(0.39)%
World Bank/IMF	38	5.91%	21	0.93%	(4.98)%
Germany	5	0.78%	32	1.41%	0.64%
Iraq	53	8.24%	68	3.00%	(5.24)%
Others	111	17.26%	195	8.61%	(8.65)%
Total	657	100%	2265	100%	

Section 5: Policies and Objectives

Speeches 00-05	Speeches 00-05	% 00 - 05	Speeches 05-10	% 05-10	%Variation
Policies	619	96.27%	2184	96.42%	0.16%
Sovereignty	113	17.57%	910	40.18%	22.60%
Economic	324	50.39%	751	33.16%	(17.23)%
Corruption	43	6.69%	167	7.37%	0.69%
Presidency	29	4.51%	364	16.07%	11.56%
Security	291	45.26%	1445	63.80%	18.54%
Freedom	64	9.95%	626	27.64%	17.68%
Independence	7	1.09%	484	21.37%	20.28%
Justice	72	11.20%	661	29.18%	17.99%
Lebanese Army	22	3.42%	500	22.08%	18.65%
Repression	74	11.51%	844	37.26%	25.75%
Lebanese Detainees	4	0.62%	111	4.90%	4.28%
Foreign Intervention	1	0.16%	293	12.94%	12.78%
Governmental Void	6	0.93%	368	16.25%	15.31%
Reconciliation / Dialogue	71	11.04%	917	40.49%	29.44%
Diaspora	5	0.78%	79	3.49%	2.71%
Sectarian Strife	24	3.73%	389	17.17%	13.44%
Neutrality	21	3.27%	95	4.19%	0.93%
Electoral Law	13	2.02%	100	4.42%	2.39%
Displaced	5	0.78%	158	6.98%	6.20%
Sheba'a Farms	30	4.67%	184	8.12%	3.46%
Solidaire	4	0.62%	3	0.13%	(0.49)%
National Debt	126	19.60%	43	1.90%	(17.70)%
Coexistence	29	4.51%	937	41.37%	36.86%
Development Policies	239	37.17%	697	30.77%	(6.40)%
Welfare	39	6.07%	453	20.00%	13.93%
Youth	30	4.67%	583	25.74%	21.07%
Tribunal/International Inquiry	0	0	482	21.28%	21.28%
Total	657	100%	2321	96.42%	

Appendix 3: Hezbollah's Overall Coded Speeches

Section 1: The Speakers

Speakers 00 – 10	No. of events	%
Hassan Nasrallah	469	75.77%
Naem Qassem	45	7.27%
Hezbollah Official Statement	70	11.31%
Other Hezbollah	35	5.65%
Total	619	100.00%

Speakers	00 -04	%	05-10	%
Hassan Nasrallah	261	83.92%	208	67.53%
Naem Qassem	17	5.47%	28	9.09%
Hezbollah Official Statement	26	8.36%	44	14.29%
Other Hezbollah	7	2.25%	28	9.09%
Total	311	100%	308	100%

Section 2: Nominal and Active Ethnic and Non-Ethnic Identities

Ethnic Identities on Self

Ethnic Identity	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	Variance
Shiite	43	13.83%	124	40.26%	26.43%
Muslim	143	45.98%	180	58.44%	12.46%
Ayatollah Khamenei/Khomeini	11	3.54%	39	12.66%	9.13%
Imam Moussa Sadr	11	3.54%	15	4.87%	1.33%
Regionalism	25	8.04%	78	25.32%	17.29%
Hezbollah Martyrs	41	13.18%	106	34.42%	21.23%
Hezbollah Arms	22	7.07%	108	35.06%	27.99%
Hezbollah Operations	47	15.11%	54	17.53%	2.42%
Resistance	128	41.16%	203	65.91%	24.75%
Total	311	100%	308	100%	100%

Appeals on ethnic identities, whereby at least one or more ethnic identity appearing in a single speech, increased from 74.6% to 84.74%, with a variation of 10.14%

Non-Ethnic Identities

Non-Ethnic Identities	No. of speeches 00 - 10	% (f)
Lebanese	555	89.66%
Arab	260	42.00%
Middle Eastern	89	14.38%
Secular	35	5.65%
Total	575	92.89%

Non-Ethnic Identities	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Lebanese	265	85.21%	290	94.16%	8.95%
Arab	122	39.23%	138	44.81%	5.58%
Middle Eastern	29	9.32%	60	19.48%	10.16%
Secular	7	2.25%	28	9.09%	6.84%
Non-Ethnic Identities	280	90.03%	295	95.78%	5.75%

Actors

Syria	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-Syria	0	0.00%	Anti-Syria	Anti-Syria	0.00%
Pro-Syrian	220	35.54%	0	0.00%	5.51%
Total	220	35.54%	118	38.31%	5.51%

Iran	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-Iran	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.00%
Pro-Iran	52	16.72%	105	34.09%	17.37%
Total	52	16.72%	105	34.09	17.37%

Future/Hariri /Siniora	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-Future	15	4.82%	81	26.30%	21.48%
Pro-Future	5	1.61%	52	16.88%	15.28%
Total	20	6.43%	133	43.18%	36.75%

Sunnis	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-Sunni	1	0.32%	2	0.65%	0.33%
Pro-Sunni	6	1.93%	51	16.56%	14.63%
Total	7	2.25%	53	17.21%	14.96%

Christians	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti	2	0.64%	1	0.32%	(0.32)%
Pro	15	4.82%	52	16.88%	12.06%
Total	17	5.47%	53	17.21%	11.74%

AMAL	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-AMAL	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.00%
Pro-AMAL	15	4.82%	68	22.08%	17.25%
Total	15	4.82%	68	22.08%	17.25%

Michel Aoun/FPM	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-FPM	0	0.00%	4	1.30%	1.30%
Pro-FPM	0	0.00%	49	15.91%	15.91%
Total	0	0%	53	17.21%	17.21%

Phalange	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-Phalange	0	0.00%	18	5.84%	5.84%
Pro-Phalange	0	0.00%	5	1.62%	1.62%
Total	0	0%	23	7.47%	7.47%

Jumblatt/PSP	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-PSP	6	1.93%	28	9.09%	7.16%
Pro-PSP	3	0.96%	25	8.12%	7.15%
Total	9	2.89%	53	17.21%	14.31%

Lebanese Forces	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-LF	0	0.00%	13	4.22%	4.22%
Pro-LF	0	0.00%	5	1.62%	1.62%
Total	0	0%	18	5.84%	5.84%

Fatah/Arafat /PA/PLO	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-Fatah	20	6.43%	15	4.87%	(1.56)%
Pro-Fatah	6	1.93%	6	1.95%	(0.02)%
Total	26	8.36%	21	6.82%	(1.54)%

Hamis	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-Hamis	0	0.00%	2	0.65%	0.65%
Pro-Hamis	20	6.43%	59	19.16 %	12.72%
Total	20	6.43%	61	19.81 %	13.37%

Israel/SLA	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-Israel	264	84.89 %	242	78.57 %	(6.32)%
Pro-Israel	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.00%
Total	264	84.89 %	242	78.57 %	(6.32)%

Serving Israeli interests	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Accusing Others	79	25.40 %	85	27.60 %	2.2%

Cardinal Sfair	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti- Sfair	4	1.29%	7	2.27%	0.99%
Pro - Sfair	2	0.64%	4	1.30%	0.66%
Total	6	1.93%	11	3.57%	1.64%

President Lahoud/Suleiman	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti-President	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.00%
Pro President	20	6.43%	43	13.96%	7.53%
Total	20	6.43%	43	13.96%	7.53%

Pro-Syria/8th of March	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti- 8 th of March	0	0.00%	6	1.95%	1.95%
Pro – 8 th of March	3	0.96%	84	27.27%	26.31%
Total	3	0.96%	90	29.22%	28.26%

Anti-Syria/14th of March	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti- 14 th of March	7	2.25%	162	52.60%	50.35%
Pro – 14th of March	7	2.25%	12	3.90%	3.90%
Total	0	0.00%	174	56.49%	54.24%

Religious Terrorism	No. of Speeches 00 - 04	% (f)	No. of Speeches 05-10	% (f)	Variance
Anti- 14 th of March	39	12.54%	21	6.82%	(5.72)%
Pro – 14th of March	1	0.32%	0	0.00%	(0.32)%
Total	40	12.86%	21	6.82%	(6.04)%

Section 4: Other International Actors

2000-2004	Total 00 - 04	% 00 - 04	% 00 - 04	% 05-10	Variance
United States	144	46.30%	183	59.42%	13.11%
France	14	4.50%	33	10.71%	6.21%
Saudi Arabia	8	2.57%	37	12.01%	9.44%
Kuwait	3	0.96%	9	2.92%	1.96%
Qatar	2	0.64%	5	1.62%	0.98%
Turkey	1	0.32%	8	2.60%	2.28%
Egypt	11	3.54%	28	9.09%	5.55%
Vatican	0	0.00%	1	0.32%	0.32%
United Nations	58	18.65%	120	38.96%	20.31%
International Community	18	5.79%	36	11.69%	5.90%
Europe	14	4.50%	24	7.79%	3.29%
Russia	6	1.93%	8	2.60%	0.67%
World Bank/IMF	0	0.00%	2	0.65%	0.65%
Germany	24	7.72%	12	3.90%	(3.82)%
Iraq	49	15.76%	67	21.75%	6.00%
Others	41	13.18%	62	20.13%	6.95%
Total	211	67.85%	226	73.38%	5.53%

Section 5: Policies, Themes, and Objectives

00-05	00-04	% 00-04	% 05-10	% 05-10	% 00-05
Sovereignty	172	55.31%	236	76.62%	21.32%
Economic	42	13.50%	84	27.27%	13.77%
Corruption	18	5.79%	55	17.86%	12.07%
Presidency	15	4.82%	56	18.18%	13.36%
Security	266	85.53%	276	89.61%	4.08%
Freedom	163	52.41%	165	53.57%	1.16%
Independence	2	0.64%	36	11.69%	11.05%
Justice	21	6.75%	102	33.12%	26.36%
Lebanese Army	24	7.72%	92	29.87%	22.15%
Repression	158	50.80%	176	57.14%	6.34%
Lebanese Detainees	94	30.23%	61	19.81%	(10.42)%
Foreign Intervention	34	10.93%	189	61.36%	50.43%
Governmental Void	5	1.61%	47	15.26%	13.65%
Reconciliation / Dialogue	21	6.75%	172	55.84%	49.09%
Diaspora	2	0.64%	6	1.95%	1.30%
US Interests	48	15.43%	161	52.27%	36.84%
Sectarian Strife	23	7.40%	120	38.96%	31.57%
Neutrality	0	0.00%	16	5.19%	5.19%
Electoral Law	9	2.89%	20	6.49%	3.60%
Displaced	4	1.29%	32	10.39%	9.10%
Sheba'a Farms	66	21.22%	63	20.45%	(0.77)%
National Debt	2	0.64%	8	2.60%	1.95%
Coexistence	45	14.47%	177	57.47%	43.00%
Development Policies	28	9.00%	33	10.71%	1.71%
Welfare	11	3.54%	37	12.01%	8.48%
Youth	18	5.79%	54	17.53%	11.74%
Tribunal/International Inquiry	0	0.00%	65	21.10%	21.10%
Total	308	99.04%	307	99.68%	21.32%

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