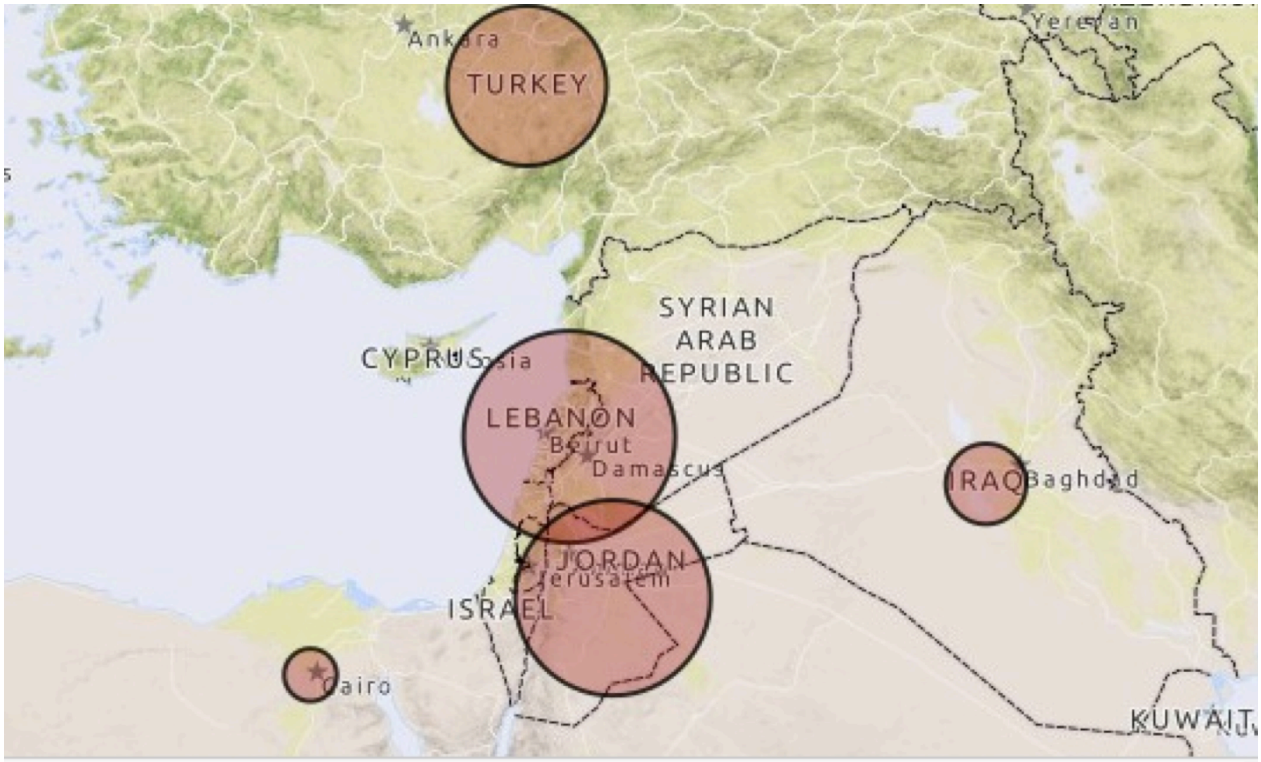
Lebanon's challenged stability in the wake of the Syrian refugee crisis



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Master Thesis, Global Refugee Studies, Spring 2015

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Abstract

The Syrian refugee crisis, a result of the Syrian civil war, has been in the center of political debates for more than four years and has become one of the longest humanitarian crises ever experienced in the contemporary world. This thesis seeks to examine the case of Lebanon, one of the most affected countries of the Syrian refugee crisis, as it has welcomed the largest amount of Syrian refugees in proportion to the size of the country. This thesis is a library-based research that makes use of various primary and secondary data as well as of two main theories: Arend Lijphart's theory of consociational democracy and Joel Migdal's state-in-society theory. Firstly, the thesis will argue that Lebanon has faced major socio-economic and political challenges. The thesis will highlight the fact that not only Lebanon's economy was affected, but that there has been growing sectarian tensions in an already fragile country and that Lebanon's social contract has faced difficulties. The theory of consociational democracy will be applied to the Lebanese political regime and conclusions about the difficulties to maintain a consociational system will be drawn. Secondly, the thesis will argue that Lebanon's sovereignty has been challenged by the presence of Syrian refugees. The state-in-society theory will be used to analyze the Lebanese state's ability to maintain social control over its population as well as to highlight Lebanon's main challenger, Hezbollah, which has made use of the Syrian refugee crisis to challenge the Lebanese state.

Keywords: Syrian refugees, Lebanese political regime, consociationalism, stability, state-in-society, Hezbollah

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List of Acronyms

HRW	Human Rights Watch
ILO	International Labor Organization
ICG	International Crisis Group
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
WB	World Bank

1. Introduction

Following the outbreak of the Arab Spring in North Africa in 2009, protests against the Syrian regime arose in Syria in March 2011. The initially peaceful demonstrations calling for political reforms turned into a violent and bloody civil war between the Syrian regime and the Syrian opposition (ICRtoP 2015).

One of the major humanitarian consequences of the civil war has been the great number of people fleeing the conflict inside Syria, as internally displaced people, as well as outside Syria, as refugees. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has counted approximately eight million internally displaced people inside Syria (OCHA 2015) and almost four million Syrian refugees outside (UNHCR 2015). The UNHCR has declared that the "Syrian situation is the most dramatic humanitarian crisis the world has faced in a very long time" (UNHCR 2014a) and that Syrian refugees now constitute one of the largest populations under the care of UNHCR (UNHCR 2014b).

Syria is not the only country that has suffered from the conflict. The whole region has been affected by the Syrian conflict, especially Syria's four neighboring countries – Turkey, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon – which have accepted the majority of the refugee influx by hosting Syrian refugees. The refugee flow has reached even further countries in the region such as Egypt, who also had a welcoming attitude towards Syrian refugees. While these five countries have hosted around 95% of all Syrian refugees, the international community has fallen short in evaluating the impacts of the crisis and providing humanitarian help (Amnesty International 2014). Even though the international community has reacted to the crisis through the Syrian Regional Refugee Response (UNHCR 2015), its support has not been equal compared to the five main host countries (Amnesty International 2014).

One host country that caught my attention was Lebanon, the small Mediterranean country of four million inhabitants located at the western border of its neighboring country Syria. Due to its geographical location, Lebanon has been influenced in the past by Syria with whom Lebanon has had a close and strong relationship of dependency. Lebanon's geopolitical proximity with Syria has been a determinant in the Syrian crisis, as many Syrians have fled to Lebanon.

What really interested me in the Lebanese case was the large number of refugees that Lebanon welcomed since the beginning of the Syrian crisis despite of the country's small size. Lebanon has welcomed one of the highest percentages of Syrian refugees of all host countries with around 25% of its population being Syrian refugees. In April 2013, the number of Syrian refugees registered in Lebanon had exceeded one million[1]. The UNHCR's High Commissioner Antonio Guterres has described this number as a "devastating milestone worsened by rapidly depleting resources and a host community stretched to breaking point" (UNHCR 2014c).

This massive refugee influx was a direct effect of the Syrian civil war and has obliged Lebanon to cope with this new situation and to accept its consequences. Their presence has had tremendous social, economic and political effects on Lebanese society, a society that was already fragile before the massive arrival of refugees. Lebanon is characterized by its plural society, its sectarian political regime and its fragile equilibrium that has been destabilized various times since its independence. The presence of Syrian refugees has therefore only increased the challenges for the country. Lebanon has not only faced socio-economic and political challenges with the influx of refugees, but its role as a sovereign and strong state has also been challenged. However, in the context of the crisis, other state actors rose in power, such as the political party Hezbollah, to impose itself and to gain in strength. All these points mentioned above have led to the following research question:

> *How has the presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon challenged the socio-economic and political stability of the country and how have the political debates around refugee policies affected Lebanon's role as a sovereign state?*

With this research question, my aim is to understand the problems and challenges Lebanon has encountered in the face of the influx of Syrian refugees, how Lebanon's internal stability has been shaken by the refugee crisis and how Lebanon's political decisions can reveal a strong or a weak state. I also want to understand the internal difficulties Lebanon has faced in the process of making and implementing decisions,

[1] This number only includes UNHCR officially registered Syrian refugees. It does not include Syrians in Lebanon who are not registered or Palestinian refugees, who are under the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) mandate.

notably through state challengers that have destabilize Lebanon's role as a strong state. My research question is divided into two parts that divide my thesis accordingly.

In the first part of my thesis, I will discuss the socio-economic and political challenges Lebanon has faced since the beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis. Firstly, I will start with an overview of the socio-economic implications of the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon in order to measure the seriousness of the crisis and to examine how Lebanon's social contract has been affected. Secondly, the specificities of the Lebanese political regime will be presented in a "consociational" perspective. This presentation is a necessary step in order to highlight how the presence of Syrian refugees has affected the Lebanese political regime. This descriptive part is relevant for my thesis as it provides the basic knowledge necessary to analyze the second part of my research question.

In the second part of my thesis, I will analyze Lebanon's ability to respond to the refugee crisis by testing its role as a strong and sovereign state. The state-in-society theory will be used for the analysis and three indicators that reflect the level of social control of a state – compliance, participation and legitimation – will be applied on the Lebanese state. For that, I will refer to different debates around the Syrian crisis that arose in Lebanon between March 2011 and December 2014. At the same time, Lebanon's influencing political party, Hezbollah, will be presented and analyzed in the same way as the Lebanese state in order to analyze its level of social control. Finally, I will end my thesis with a general conclusion about my research question, which will trigger further debates.

2. Methodological Framework

The general method that I have chosen for my thesis is library-based research. In order to answer my research question, I have selected various primary and secondary data and theories that I found relevant for my specific research question. I have decided to write about the latest evolution of the crisis and to limit myself to a timeframe between March 2011, which is the beginning of the Syrian conflict, and December 2014, the moment when Lebanon released its first official refugee strategy. Even though I will refer back to events before the beginning of the Syrian conflict, my main analysis will be based on events that happened during the mentioned timeframe. My aim is to explain a current and ongoing phenomenon, the problematic of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, by making a coherent analysis that combines different theories. As my topic is current, there is a lack of literature to draw from. This is why I saw a need to raise questions and to make an academic analysis about this problematic.

2.1 Presentation of Data

For the presentation of the historical background, I have referred to various authors who have a deep knowledge in Lebanon's history such as Associate Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at the Lebanese American University Imad Salamey (2009, 2014), Imad Salamey and Rhys Payne (2008), Senior Associate at the Carnegie Middle East Center Muhammad A. Faour (2007), Professor of International Relations and Anthropology at Boston University Richard August Norton (2000, 2007a, 2007b), Lecturer of Political and International relations at the University of Edinburgh Adham Saouli (2006), Assistant Professor at Sultan Qaboos University Leon Goldsmith (2012) and sociologist Daniel Meier (2013).

For the presentation of the socio-economic challenges in the first part of my thesis, I have used reports from the World Bank (WB), the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the International Crisis Group (ICG) as well as articles from the think-tank in international affairs, *Atlantic Council*. As the report of the World Bank has been drafted in close collaboration with various United Nations agencies and with the

Lebanese government, I have considered it a pertinent and reliable source to measure the importance of the economic challenges. My main source to understand the Lebanese political regime is Imad Salamey. Not only did he give a broad description of the government and politics of Lebanon, but also applied a consociational perspective on the Lebanese political system, a perspective that I have decided to use for this part. While initially Salamey has adopted the theory of consociational democracies for the Lebanese political regime, later on, he became more doubtful on Lebanon's capacity to adapt the theoretical framework into real life and argued that Lebanon had failed in becoming a consociational democracy. In order to understand the political challenges that Lebanon has faced since the Syrian refugee crisis, I have used reports from the UNHCR, newspaper articles from Lebanese newspapers such as the *Daily Star* and *Now* as well as various articles from the global think-tank of policy research, the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.* I have also referred directly to Lebanese law by using the latest version of the Lebanese Constitution, the Lebanon Taef Constitution of 1989. For the analysis of sectarianism in Lebanon's politics and its dynamic of mutual spillover, I have referred to Joseph Bahout, professor of Middle Eastern Studies at Sciences Po, Paris. For references to the social contract I have used articles from the pan-Arab international newspaper *Asharq Al-Awsat*.

One of the main authors who inspired me for the second part of my thesis was Assistant Professor in Political Science at the University at Albany Bryan Early (2006) who has applied Joel Migdal's state-in-society theory on Hezbollah. For the presentation of the Lebanese state and Hezbollah, I have used several authors such as Richard August Norton (2000, 2007a, 2007b), Imad Salamey (2014), Adham Saouli (2003) as well as official US and EU statements. In order to test the state-in-society theory on Lebanon and Hezbollah, I have mainly referred to reports from the ICG, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (HRW), official documents such as the Baabda Declaration, newspaper articles from Lebanese newspapers such as the *Daily Star* and *Now* as well as various articles from think-tanks such as the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* and the *Atlantic Council.* In order to analyze the weakness of the Lebanese state, I have referred to Associate Professor of the American University in Washington Boaz Atzili (2010). While I have based my knowledge on articles from the Heinrich Böll Foundation to analyze Lebanon's

legitimacy, I have used postdoctoral research fellow Eric Lob's (2014) analysis to test Hezbollah's legitimacy. The main document to understand a concrete action of the Lebanon's state in bringing stability to the state is the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan (LCRP).

2.2 Theoretical Approach

In order to get a theoretical stance on the Lebanese political regime, I will make use of political scientist Arend Lijphart's concept of *consociational democracies.* Despite of having received critics from various authors, I have still decided to make use of this theory because, on the one hand, as many authors have applied consociationalism to the Lebanese case, I considered it appropriate for Lebanon, and on the other hand, I wanted to apply the theory to the latest context of the Syrian refugee crisis, which is a new perspective on the theory. I will supplement consociationalism with Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *theory of social contract* in order to understand why the fragmented Lebanese society agrees to cooperate by forming political agreements and what the social contract in Lebanon means. In order to evaluate the Lebanese state's role and influence in the Lebanese society, I will draw on Joel Migdal's state-in-society theory. The same theory will also give the ability to locate Hezbollah's position within the Lebanese state and society, and to understand its influential role in decision-making on refugee policies. I am aware that Hezbollah does not represent a state in itself but as Hezbollah's influential role in Lebanese politics represents an internal challenge for the state, I found this theory appropriate for the analysis.

2.3 Limitations

Not being able to speak or read the Arabic language was a major limitation for my library-based study, as I could not access a large amount of relevant material that was in Arabic. I am aware that my thesis would have been different if I would have had access to Arabic material. Despite this limitation, the ongoing events in the region captivated my interest and I wanted to develop my understanding about it by analyzing it deeply through my thesis. Regarding my data collection, I am aware that primary and secondary data never totally provide accurate or reliable information.

Behind every primary and secondary data is an author with their personal view or approach on the topic that might have biased the information in this way. It is not only the different author's perspective that might have biased my thesis, but my own perspective on the topic has also influenced it. I have tried to keep this in mind during my whole thesis and to make pertinent choices with a critical eye on the material.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Consociational Democracies

In comparative political science, one of the most influential theories is the consociational theory. Political scientist Arend Lijphart was one of the first to develop this theory even though other authors (Kerr 2005; McGarry &O'Leary 2006, 2007; Salamey 2008, 2009, 2014, Taylor 2006) have also adopted consociational thinking (McGarry &O'Leary 2006: 43-44). Lijphart's concept of consociational democracies tried to challenge theories linking cultural homogeneity with political stability and cultural heterogeneity with political instability in democracies. Consociational democracies refer to a political system found in democracies that have a fragmented political culture but are nevertheless stable (Lijphart 1969: 211). The fragmented political culture results from a plural society that is divided by religions, ideologies, languages, regions, cultures, races or ethnics. Lijphart refers to these divisions as "segmental cleavages" and to the different groups in the society as the "segments" of a plural society (Lijphart 1977: 3-4).

Some authors highlight that Lijphart's "segmental cleavages" form an ethnic-based consociational democracy that has generated a corporate form of power-sharing, the "corporate consociationalism" (McGarry &O'Leary 2007, Salamey 2009). While corporate consociationalism, or "pre-determination" in Lijphart's words (Lijphart 2006: 285), gives privilege to the distribution of power positions among sectarian or ethnic groups, liberal consociationalism, or "self-determination" (Lijphart 2006: 285), focuses on a distribution that favors political identities, whether they are based on ethnic or religious group or on subgroups (McGarry &O'Leary 2007: 675). These two approaches have been discussed by various authors (McCulloch 2014; McGarry &O'Leary 2007, Salamey 2014), Lijphart included (Lijphart 2006).

Lijphart sees democratic political stability as a multidimensional concept characterized by four ideas. Firstly, *system maintenance* means that there is a high probability for the state to remain democratic; secondly, the idea of *civil order* is that there is a low level of actual and potential civil violence in the state; thirdly,

legitimacy of the regime means that the state's population respects the regime; and finally, *effectiveness* of the regime in doing politics. If these four ideas are not fulfilled, there is the probability that the regime will lose its democratic stance and be confronted with potential civil violence (Lijphart 1977: 4). While social homogeneity and political consensus are often regarded as a prerequisite for a stable democracy, political differences and social divisions are considered to be responsible for instability in democracies (Lijphart 1977: 1). Political stability is therefore not only related to the political culture of a state but also to its social structure (Lijphart 1969: 208).

Lijphart highlights four characteristics that define a consociational democracy: a grand coalition, a mutual veto, proportional political representation and a high degree of segmental autonomy.

Firstly, the grand coalition is characterized by the participation of political leaders of each significant "segment" in governing a plural society. The grand coalition can take the form of a grand coalition cabinet in a parliamentary system, a grand coalition in the council or a grand coalition of a president (Lijphart 1977: 25). The institutional form of the grand coalition is less important than the participation of all significant elites (Lijphart 1977: 31). According to Lijphart, a grand coalition pattern – that follows the principles of consensus and majority rule – is more appropriate for a plural society characterized by political differences than a government vs. opposition one (Lijphart 1977: 27-28). However, if a political system strictly follows the majority rule without taking into account the minority on crucial questions concerning it, the stability of the system is at risk (Lijphart 1977: 28).

The second characteristic, the mutual veto, can be seen as political protection of the minorities' interests. Even if the minorities are participating in a grand coalition, decisions are still made by the majority. But when a decision affects vital interests of a minority group, this group must be able to determine its position on it by holding the veto right. However, Lijphart highlights that there is a risk that the minority veto could negatively affect cooperation in the grand coalition and that it gives the minority over-proportional power (Lijphart 1977: 36).

Thirdly, the principal of proportional representation can be seen as a neutral and impartial way of allocating political power among the different groups in proportion to their numerical strength. However, in a decision-making process, there

will always be either the use of majority rule or of minority veto. Nevertheless, Lijphart highlights two ways of having a partial solution: Firstly, the parties can decide on making reciprocal concessions. Secondly, the parties decide that the top leaders of each segment make the most difficult and important decisions. Like the mutual veto, the principal of proportionality represents a deviation from majority rule because of a deliberate overrepresentation of small segments and parity of representation (Lijphart 1977: 38-40).

Fourthly, segmental autonomy means that on all matters of common interest, decisions should be made by all of the segments together with roughly proportional degrees of influence but that on all other matters decisions can be left to the separate segments. A society that is characterized by its plurality becomes even more divided through the autonomy of the different segments (Lijphart 1977: 41-42).

Lijphart's concept of consociational democracies has received critiques stating that in many cases, consociationalism has not achieved political stability and therefore has failed. Lijphart himself acknowledged, almost three decades after his first presentation of the consociational democracies, that the power-sharing model has not always worked but he underlines that no other viable alternative has been proposed and that power-sharing appears to be the only democratic model that has a chance of being adopted in divided societies (Lijphart 2004: 98-99). Furthermore, some authors argued that the failure of consociationalism in certain countries was not a reason of questioning the entire consociational theory. While the corporate form of power-sharing, corporate consociationalism, is more likely to weaken countries, liberal consociationalism could offer a viable alternative for consociational democracies (McGarry &O'Leary 2007; Wolff 2011).

3.1.1 Social Contract Theory

As other authors have done before[2], Lijphart's theory of consociational theory can be related to Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's social contract theory. In the *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes exposes two premises about the human condition. Firstly,

[2] Timothy Sisk, Professor in International Studies, has put in relation social contract theory and consociationalism in order to explain the political regime after the Apartheid in South Africa (*Democratization in South Africa – The Elusive Social Contract*).

the natural state of men, the State of Nature, is brutal and risky for every man's life. Secondly, men are naturally self-interested and rational. Following these two premises, in order to survive, men are expected to construct two social contracts, one between themselves to form a society and one towards an assembly of persons who will get the authority on the society. In this way, the social contract, or the submission to a sovereign, is a solution to escape from the misery of the State of Nature (Hobbes 2007). What Jean-Jacques Rousseau adds to the theory of social contract in *The Social Contract,* is that the social contract does not only have a protection function for the people but also for their property and the distribution of economic goods (Rousseau 1762). Consociational democracy's goal to ensure stability and social contract's goal to provide protection and survival for the society follow a similar premise. Therefore, I argue that consociational theory is building on an idea of social contract.

Having presented Lijphart's theory of consociational democracies and the social contract by Hobbes and Rousseau to examine the stability of the Lebanese socio-economic and political system, the theory of state-in-society will be introduced in order to analyze Lebanon's ability to maintain its role as a strong and sovereign state.

3.2 State-in-Society

In the contemporary world, the state is usually considered to be the most natural entity that forms the world's political landscape. The idea that a state is a homogenous and powerful entity seems to have been widely accepted (Migdal 1988: 15). This view has been reinforced with the creation of the United Nations in which states are the *raison d'être* of the international organization. In international law, the state is a person of international law who "should possess the following qualifications: a) a permanent population; b) a defined territory; c) government; and d) capacity to enter into relations with the other states" (art. 1 Montevideo Convention 1933). According to Weber, a state can be seen as a "human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical* force within a given territory" (Weber 1946).

Both definitions of the state are strongly contested by Joel Migdal. According to him, such a homogenous definition of the state does not represent the reality but is an "ideal-type" of a state. Migdal challenges this definition by considering the state as one organization among many in the society (Migdal 2001: 14-15, Migdal 1988: 28). According to Migdal, the society is not a uniform entity but is seen as a "mélange of social organizations" composed of heterogeneous groups exercising power (Migdal 1988: 28). The objective of every social organization, state included, is to make people adhere to their organization by either offering them rewards or by sanctioning them. While rewards usually take the form of material needs such as food, housing or social security, sanctions are linked to potential violence from the state that individuals might face (Migdal 1988: 29). The choices individuals make in favor of one organization or another can be defined as the *strategies of survival*. Such decisions will not only provide a basis for personal survival but will also link the individual's personal identity to a group identity (Migdal 1988: 29).

By providing strategies of survival to individuals, states can increase their level of social control. Migdal defines state social control as "the subordination of people's own inclination of social behavior or behavior sought by other social organizations in favor of the behavior prescribed by state rules" (Migdal 1988: 22). There are three indicators that reflect the level of social control: compliance, participation and legitimation. Firstly, compliance means that the population respects and acts conforming to the state's demands and in case of non-compliance, the state can make use of sanctions. The ability to sanction will determine the degree to which a state can demand compliance. Secondly, participation of the population in the state organization is sought by states. Participation reflects the acceptance of the population of the state-authorized institutions. Thirdly, legitimation is the acceptance and approbation of the state's rules of the game as true and right (Migdal 1988: 32).

The more social control a state can enact, the more *capabilities* it can develop (Migdal 1988: 22). Migdal defines *capabilities* as "the capacities to *penetrate* society, *regulate* social relationships, *extract* resources, and *appropriate* or use resources in determined ways" (Migdal 1988: 4). Capabilities are a central aspect to designate a state as weak or strong, as it depends on whether a state has high capabilities to complete its tasks or not (Migdal 1988: 4). Increased capabilities of the state is closely related to increased state social control which will enable the state to mobilize the population, politically as well as military (Migdal 1988: 23). Migdal does not take

state capabilities as given but considers them deeply dependent on the struggle for social control (Migdal 1988: 261). Just like states cannot be considered as a fixed entities, neither can societies. “Societies are constantly *becoming* as a result of these struggles over social control” (Migdal 2001: 50, 57). A society should not only be seen as it is “but as it becomes, has become in the past, is becoming in the present and may become in the future” (Migdal 2001: 23).

The state-in-society theory will be helpful in analyzing the second part of the research question, namely the ability or not of the state to keep control over its society and the growing influence of other organizations within the state as internal challengers of the state. After this theoretical presentation, I will give an insight to Lebanon’s historical background, a necessary step to go through before turning to the analysis.

4. Historical Background

4.1 Lebanon's Post-Independence

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the end of World War I, the territory delimiting today's Lebanon fell under French Mandate as a result of negotiations in the League of Nations. To maximize their supervision of the area, France reinforced existing sectarian divisions on the territory and favored political dominance of their Christian allies. In 1926, the French drafted the first Lebanese Constitution, an example of a secular regime that did not refer to a sectarian state (Salamey 2014: 24). In 1932, the French carried out the one and only population census Lebanon ever witnessed. Six major religious groupings were found, the largest being Christian Maronites followed by Sunni- and Shi'a Muslims. After the independence from France in 1943, the census became the basis for political representation in Lebanese politics as the number of seats and powerful political positions allocated to each religious group depended on the numerical size of the groups (Faour 2007: 909-910). The National Pact 1943, a verbal agreement between Lebanese political and sectarian elites, formalized the sectarian power-sharing system for the Lebanese state and allocated the three highest political positions to the three main sects: the presidential position for a Christian Maronite, the position of Prime Minister for a Sunni Muslim and the Speaker of Parliament position for a Shi'a Muslim (Salamey 2014: 30). The political power distribution in the government was based on the census and allocated a 6:5 ratio in favor of Christians over Muslims (Faour 2007: 909-910).

4.2 Growing Changes and Tensions

Between the 1950s-1970s, Lebanon experienced significant demographic changes within its society. The changes were associated with increased emigration of Lebanese Christians and immigration of Muslims to Lebanon, especially of Palestinian refugees displaced after the declaration of the state of Israel in 1948. While the number of Christians in Lebanon were decreasing, the number of Muslims

were constantly increasing. With this new demographic balance in a fixed political sectarian power-sharing division, Lebanese Muslims began to claim an updated redistribution of political power according to a new demographic reality (Salamey 2014: 31-35). The most affected sectarian group was the Shi'a community whose number had increased significantly but still remained without proportional representation. The politically "deprived" sectarian groups and the politically "advantaged" one was a direct consequence of the deep sectarian division (Salamey 2009: 88). The internal power configuration of Lebanon was also closely dependent on the regional balance of power and any change of relations was to affect Lebanon's stability (Saouli 2006: 707). The Arab-Israeli war in 1967 and the shift of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) from Jordan to Lebanon are such examples of external factors that have affected Lebanon's stability by dividing Muslim and Christian communities. The context of Cold War and the Arab nationalism against Western powers also divided Lebanon between Lebanese nationalists, the Christians and Arabs, the Muslims. The outcome of these influences was a deeply divided society in a weak and rigid state that eventually led to fifteen years of civil war from 1975-1990 (Salamey 2014: 31-35).

4.3 Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990)

The civil war was not only a complex conflict between internal groups, but was fuelled by the involvement of external powers. In 1976, Suleiman Frangieh the former Lebanese President, called for Syrian intervention in order to support Lebanon in ending the civil war. While the civil war in Lebanon was far from an end, Syrian military and political influence was growing as the war progressed. It was not until 2005 that Syrian troops had withdrawn from Lebanon (Salamey 2014: 97).

After a first attempt of invading southern Lebanon in 1978, Israel launched a second invasion in 1982 with the objectives to install a pro-Israel Lebanese government and to destroy the PLO that had established itself in Lebanon. Even though Israeli attacks were targeted at PLO members, Israel paid little attention to the Shi'a community living in the region of combat. The permanent conflict of the region in the 1980s formed the background for the radicalization of the Shi'a community. The first Shi'a

group that emerged was Amal, a movement that was not only directed against Israel but against Palestinians as well, who they considered to be responsible for provoking the Israeli attacks. In 1982, Amal began to welcome Israeli troops in the south and had adopted the idea of a *pax americana*, peace with Israel and the United States (Norton 2000: 24, Norton 2007a: 476). This shift away from Islamic identity toward a more pragmatic approach to religion and politics was a triggering factor in the creation of a more radical Shi'a group in southern Lebanon, Hezbollah. In 1985, when Israel withdrew its troops to an occupation zone, the "security zone", along the border, which compromised ten percent of Lebanese territory, the instability and insecurity in the region was increasing, as it became a new battlefield for resistance fights (Norton 2000: 26). Amal's fight in the Palestinian refugee camps led to clashes between Amal and Hezbollah who supported Palestinians. The conflicts escalated in the late 1980s and turned to a fight over the Shi'a leadership in southern Lebanon (Norton 2007a: 477).

In the late 1980s, the Lebanese society began to express its exhaustion of civil war and its desire to find a non-violent solution. This internal view coincided with the aspiration for peace of regional and international actors. External developments such as a decline of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the end of the Cold War facilitated negotiations of the Taef Agreement held in Saudi Arabia in 1989. The agreement provided the basis for officially ending civil war and notably reconfigured the old Lebanese political power-sharing system by redistributing political power between various political affiliations. One of the major changes was the redistribution of the power between Christians and Muslims in all public posts from a 6:5 ratio in favor of Christians to an equal 1:1 ratio (Salamey 2014: 54-56). External actors played an important role in the stabilization of Lebanon's post civil war situation. As only two-thirds of the parliamentarians had survived the civil war, parliamentary elections and the implementation of a new political system was necessary. The first parliamentary elections after the civil war were held in 1992 (Norton 2007b: 97-100).

4.4 Israeli's Withdrawal

Based on a campaign promise from 1999, Israeli ex-Prime Minister Ehud Barak decided to withdraw Israeli troops from Lebanon in July 2000. The Israeli withdrawal, certified by the United Nations, provoked significant celebrations in southern Lebanon. However, after the withdrawal questions arose about Shebaa farms, located in the Golan Heights of Lebanon, which were still occupied by Israeli force. Hezbollah, who was pro-Syrian and was backed by Syria, declared that as long as Israel is still occupying the farms, its task of liberation is incomplete (Norton 2007a: 478-479). Syria had a large influence on Lebanese politics and was even accused of manipulation of parliamentary elections in 2000 and 2004, when Syria pressured the Lebanese government to draft a new decree extending the then current Lebanon's Syrian loyalist's President mandate. After these events, a large opposition, led by the anti-Syrian ex-Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, an important Sunni leader, voiced in favor of Syrian withdrawal (Salamey and Payne 2008: 457-458).

In the same year, the opposition leader Rafik Hariri got assassinated. This event spilt Lebanese politics into two camps: pro-Syrians and anti-Syrians. Massive anti-Syrian demonstrations were held in Beirut and were followed by the victory of the majority in the 2005 parliamentary elections by the anti-Syrian coalition, victory known as "Cedar Revolution". Under wide national and international pressure, Syrian forces left Lebanon in the same year (Norton 2007a: 482). In March 2006, two significant demonstrations took place in Beirut, the first was held on March 8th by Shi'a supporters of Hezbollah to express gratitude to Syria and the second on March 14th by the anti-Syrian coalition to commemorate the anniversary of Hariri's assassination one year before[3]. Between 2005 and 2008, the pro-Syrian opposition, known as March 8, organized massive demonstrations against the new government (Salamey and Payne 2008: 457-458).

In spring 2006, tensions between Israel and Hezbollah started to grow as Israel suspected close relations between Hezbollah and Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic group. These tensions escalated in a short but very destructive war of thirty-four days

[3] The two dates were taken as new name by the two coalitions in Lebanon: the pro-Syrian March 8 led by the Shi'a group Hezbollah and the anti-Syrian March 14, led by the Sunni group Future Movement.

(Norton 2007b: 133-142). The hostilities ended with UN Resolution 1701 in August 2006, which called for the disarmament of non-state armed groups and the withdrawal of Israel. March 8 supporters who disagreed with the conditions of the Resolution showed their disapproval by supporting the resignation of key Shi'a members of the Cabinet, which blocked the functioning of political institutions in Lebanon, especially the election of a new President. This political crisis was alleviated by the involvement of regional powers that called for negotiations on a settlement. The Doha Agreement in 2008 managed to bring together the two political coalitions and to prepare new parliamentary elections (Salamey 2014: 69-71). Once again, Lebanese stability had been dependent on external forces.

4.5 Arab Spring

When the Arab Spring broke out in North Africa in 2010, Lebanon was not directly affected by the revolts. It was only when the uprising emerged in Syria in March 2011 between the Alawites[4] regime and the Sunni-led armed opposition that Lebanon was implicated in the turmoil of the Arab Spring (Meier 2013: 2). The Syrian crisis divided Lebanon on a sectarian basis between the Sunnis-Shiites that was represented by the political division between March 8 and March 14 (Meier 2013: 12). The Syrian crisis did not affect Lebanon strongly at the beginning. However, the evolution of the crisis, notably due to the large number of Syrian refugees, affected Lebanon greatly. Having only a few thousand Syrian refugees in Lebanon one year after the beginning of the outbreak of the Syrian civil war, the number increased exponentially and reached 1 million three years later (UNCHR 2015). This number correlated with an escalation of violence in Syria, the use of chemical weapons and the severe human rights violations (ICRtoP 2015).

[4] The Alawites are a branch of Shi'a Islam that split from it in the 9th century. The Alawites compromise roughly 13 percent of the population in Syria currently (Goldsmith 2012).

5. Analysis

PART I: Syrian Refugees – a Challenge for Lebanon

In the first part of the analysis, I will focus on the first part of my research question by presenting and analyzing the challenges Lebanon has faced due to the Syrian refugee crisis. Firstly, I will expose the socio-economic challenges that Lebanon has experienced and that have disrupted the country's stability and social contract. Secondly, I will present the Lebanese political regime from a consociational perspective, analyze the political challenges Lebanon has faced since the Syrian refugee crisis and relate them to the breakdown of the Lebanese social contract.

5.1 Lebanon's Socio-Economic Challenges

According to Rousseau, the social contract does not only have a political stance but also a socio-economic one (Rousseau 1762). It is on this aspect of the social contract that the World Bank (WB), at the request of the Lebanese government, had undertaken an Economic and Social Impact Assessment in order to analyze the economic evolution in the Middle East and North Africa after the Arab Spring[5] (World Bank 2013: 1-2). The WB team drafted the report in collaboration with various UN agencies as well as with different Ministries of the Lebanese government (World Bank 2013). The WB's prospects for the mentioned geographical region are not very positive as the recovery from the Arab Spring is expected to be slow (Devarajan and Mottaghi 2015: 2). With an economy that has been highly exposed to the general turmoil in the region, especially after the Syrian conflict and the Syrian refugee crisis, Lebanon seems to be one of the most vulnerable countries in the region (Devarajan and Mottaghi 2015: 34).

[5] The Arab Spring was a sign that the social contract had not been delivered in many countries in the Middle East and in North Africa (Devarajan and Mottaghi 2015: 16).

5.1.1 Lebanon's Pre-Crisis Economy

After the civil war in 1990, Lebanon experienced economic growth through its open economy with free movement of goods, capital and educated workforce (Itani 2013: 1). Under ex-Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, an important program of infrastructural development was implemented, including the construction of a new airport, a coastal highway and the rehabilitation of the telecommunication network. Hariri's aim was to make Lebanon a regional economic and financial power (Perthes 2006: 17). However, Lebanon's economy was determined by Syria as, historically, the two neighboring countries have had close economic relations, mainly intervened through trade, migrant labor and tourism (Itani 2013: 2). The cross-border relations between the two countries was not only based on economic interests and trade but also on similar values, customs and habits, intra-tribal intermarriage, reciprocal social events as well as education (ICG 2012: 2). In order to implement Hariri's major projects, Lebanon had to borrow money in the international and domestic markets, which raised public debts. Before the Syrian crisis, Lebanon had already experienced serious economic challenges with high unemployment, high debt-to-GDP ratio and weak public finance (Itani 2013: 1).

5.1.2 Spillovers onto Lebanon

According to the WB, the exact date of the start of the spillover of the Syrian crisis is difficult to set, as Lebanon did not experience a direct shock but rather a growing socio-economic crisis (World Bank 2013: 30). However, the main material spillover from the Syrian crisis in Lebanon started in July 2012, around one year after the outbreak of the civil war (World Bank 2013: 33). Initially, being mainly a humanitarian crisis through hosting a large number of Syrian refugees, the spillover went further into the economic and social spheres of Lebanon and affected the various sectors differently (World Bank 2013: 1, 30).

On the macro-economic level, the WB calculated that during 2012-2014, Lebanese GDP growth had dropped by 2.9% each year and created a significant lost in economic activities (World Bank 2013: 2, 34). The trade sector of merchandise, services or food has also been highly affected by the Syrian crisis. With the drop in

food imports on the one hand, and on increase of food consumption one the other hand, due to the growing number of Syrian refugees, the prices of the goods have increased considerably (World Bank 2013: 38, 46). While the tourism sector was relatively stable before the Syrian conflict, it got hit severely by the Syrian crisis. Due to the neighboring civil war and the growing insecurity in Lebanon, the number of international visitors fell considerably (World Bank 2013: 53). The real estate sector was affected tow-fold by the large influx of refugees, as on the one hand it boosted the demand for housing, and on the other hand it increased the rental prices considerably (World Bank 2013: 53). The Syrian conflict had harsh effects on the banking sector as the national bank, the Banque du Liban, lost around 400 million USD in the seven Lebanese banks operating in Syria only in 2012. Furthermore, as economic activity decreased in Lebanon, the banks in Lebanon were also indirectly affected (World Bank 2013: 55). After having experienced a decrease in public debts between 2006 and 2011, Lebanon's public debts increased again for the first time since 2006 as a result of all sectors affected by the Syrian conflict (World Bank 2013: 58). According to Khatib, Lebanon's economy was strongly pressured by the presence of Syrian refugees, which has strained the Lebanese social contract (Khatib 2014a).

5.1.3 Lebanon's Challenged Social Welfare System

The influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon has a destabilizing effect on the Lebanese social welfare system (Itani 2013: 4). The provision of social welfare, that includes housing, infrastructure, employment, health care and education, is usually considered to fall under the responsibility of the state, as a requirement of the social contract that the state has toward its society (Grynkewich 2010: 352).

Housing

Since the civil war, Lebanon has experienced a housing crisis with many low- and middle-income Lebanese people having difficulties in finding affordable housing. These houses were characterized by poor housing conditions with limited access to urban services and infrastructures (World Bank 2013: 116). Since the beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis, Lebanon has adopted a "no refugee camp" policy leaving Syrian

refugees to find accommodation within the Lebanese community. According to the UNHRC, around 65% of Syrian refugees were living in rented accommodation in 2013 (World Bank 2013: 121). The increased demand in the housing market has put upward pressure on rent prices (World Bank 2013: 46, 54). The housing problem has not only affected Syrian refugees but also Lebanese citizens (World Bank 2013: 122).

Infrastructure

According to the WB, the infrastructure sector, which includes water and sanitation, solid waste management, electricity and transport sub-sectors, were already suffering before the refugee crisis (World Bank 2013: 104). Access to potable water and the continuity of water supply that was already low, became worse (World Bank 2013: 108). Same as the water and sanitation supply, the management of solid waste declined in its level and quality (World Bank 2013: 115). The electricity sector suffered in the same way, as before the crisis, there was already insufficient installed capacity, low efficiency, high loss and inadequate infrastructure (World Bank 2013: 125). Same as above, the transport sector was characterized by its poor and over-saturated infrastructure already before the crisis (World Bank 2013: 131).

Employment

Prior to the Syrian crisis, the Lebanese labor market was already dire with a high unemployment rate and many low skilled jobs (World Bank 2013: 3). A significant amount of the low skilled workers were Syrians employed in construction, agriculture and services (World Bank 2013: 83). The labor exchange between the two countries was a product of the historically and geographically close relationship between Lebanon and Syria (Itani 2013: 2). According to the WB, the presence of Syrian refugees increased labor supply and therefore, competition, over jobs (World Bank 2013: 83). As stated by Itani, unemployment in Lebanon and decreased wages were affected by Syrian willingness to work for low pay (Itani 2013: 4). According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), the generally high rate of employment among Syrian refugees can be attributed to their need to sustain themselves and their willingness to take any available job in order to survive (ILO 2014: 22, 24).

Furthermore, the Syrian crisis has reinforced the informal labor market that usually lack access to social insurance and labor regulations and facilitate labor exploitation (World Bank 2013: 83).

Health Care

The Lebanese health system has been characterized as pluralist and fragmented with multiple sources of financing such as households, employers or non-governmental organizations (World Bank 2013: 68). Prior to the Syrian crisis, Lebanon's health indicators were constantly improving. For example, life expectancy was increasing over the last years. With the arrival of Syrian refugees, the health sector in Lebanon was challenged as the demand for health services has increased considerably, while Lebanon's spending on health was declining (World Bank 2013: 67). Thus, the health sector is characterized by overcrowded institutions, a shortage in health care workers, medication pressure and the emergence of new diseases (World Bank 2013: 66).

Education

Before the Syrian crisis, basic education enrollment was stable at over 90% with gender parity achieved. Since the Syrian conflict, Lebanese public schools, which have remained open for the children of Syrian refugees, have experienced a drastically increased demand for education services, which in turn led to an increase in costs (World Bank 2013: 76). Even though there is no lack of teachers at the national level, the under qualification of the teaching force has raised concerns about the quality of the public school system (World Bank 2013: 77). Furthermore, Syrian refugee children have faced indirect obstacles such as transportation costs that have hindered the access to education as well as education language (French and English) that has prevented Syrian refugee children from studying in school (ILO 2014: 17).

At the beginning of the crisis, Syrian refugees were mostly welcomed by Lebanese host communities. However, as the number of refugees increased and the social welfare system became overwhelmed, tensions began to rise between refugees and the host population. The above-mentioned social impacts, such as unemployment and

saturation of public services such as housing, health, education or infrastructures, were the root causes for these tensions (World Bank 2013: 100-101). Lebanon, who already failed to provide the basic services to its own citizens before the Syrian refugee crisis, has faced enormous difficulties in coping with the large refugee influx. Not only has the refugee population suffered from this situation but the Lebanese host community has also been dragged into poverty (Itani and Grebowski 2013: 4). Prior the Syrian crisis, 1 million Lebanese were estimated to live with less than 4 USD per day. With the Syrian refugee crisis, the WB estimated that around 170'000 additional Lebanese will fall under this level (World Bank 2013: 93). As Syrian refugees were initially the main beneficiaries of international and government assistance, resentment towards this preferential treatment grew (World Bank 2013: 29).

In this chapter, we have seen that prior to the Syrian conflict, Lebanon's economy had already been characterized by a relative weakness and that Lebanon's social welfare system had faced difficulties in providing adequate public services. The Syrian refugee crisis has had tremendous effects on the socio-economic stability of the country. On the one hand, since the beginning of the Syrian conflict Lebanon's GDP growth has dropped to a level that it had not reached in many years and on the other hand, Lebanon's social welfare system became saturated with the large number of Syrian refugees. The presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon has put pressure on Lebanon's economy and social welfare. The inability of the Lebanese state to provide social welfare exposed the difficulties for the social contract, contract between the state and the society, in the wake of the Syrian refugee crisis.

5.2 Lebanon's Political Challenges

Thomas Hobbes looks at the social contract from a political point of view. He considers it as a way for society to escape from the State of Nature, a state that everyone should fear as it is characterized by brutality and mercilessness. As humans are rational and self-interested at the same time, society agrees upon a political contract between themselves and a sovereign who has the responsibility to govern the society and maintain peace and stability (Hobbes 2007). The Lebanese society has agreed upon such a social contract since its independence by distributing political

power to an authority that has been in charge of governing the country. However, as the historical background has shown, the Lebanese social contract is a fragile one that was challenged in the past, notably during the Lebanese civil war. The Syrian refugee crisis was a new challenge for Lebanon to keep the social contract intact. Before analyzing the political impacts of the Syrian refugees crisis in Lebanon, I will give a brief overview of the Lebanese political regime from a consociational perspective.

5.2.1 Lebanese Consociational Democracy

Lebanon, a Plural Society

With only 10'452 square kilometers of surface area, Lebanon is a small and densely populated Mediterranean country that accounts four millions inhabitants. Its population is divided into 18 officially recognized sectarian groups who live side-by-side (Salamey 2014: 10). With such a diversity of sects, Lebanese society can be referred to as a plural society that is characterized by Arend Lijphart's "segmental cleavages" (Lijphart 1977: 3-4). As religious identity of each group prevails over national identity, Lebanese society is highly divided on a sectarian basis. This division reinforces a fragmentation of the political culture of the country, as the different groups are also divided in terms of political affiliations (Salamey 2014: 10). In order to maintain cohesion and stability in the country despite of these political differences and social divisions, Lebanese politics have adopted an arrangement similar to Lijphart's consociational democracy (Lijphart 1969: 211).

Lebanon's political arrangement's main characteristic is that it is based on a sectarian power-sharing system in which sectarian competition for socioeconomic and political power is managed (Salamey 2014: 10, 14). As Lebanon gives privilege to the distribution of power positions among sectarian groups, Lebanon's power-sharing arrangement can be referred to as the "corporate consociationalism" (McGarry &O'Leary 2007) or Lijphart's "predetermination" of power-sharing (Lijphart 2006). The management of the power-sharing, which has the main goal of maintaining stability in society, is based on Hobbes and Rousseau's idea of a society submitting to social contract in order to survive. Consociational democracies goal of ensuring

stability coincides with social contract's goal of protection and survival of the individual in the society.

Lebanon's power-sharing arrangement

Lebanon's power-sharing arrangement builds on the four characteristics that define a consociational democracy according to Lijphart. Political power-sharing is conducted along sectarian lines and includes the participation of political leaders of all significant "segments" in a grand coalition.

The grand coalition in Lebanon is based around the presidency, which is linked to other top posts such as the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Parliament (Lijphart 1977: 33-34). The three posts are distributed accordingly to the three main sects: the President of the Republic's position for a Christian Maronite, the Prime Minister's (or President of the Council) position for a Sunni Muslim and the Speaker of Parliament's position (or President of Parliament) for a Shia Muslim (Salamey 2014: 11).

Furthermore, since the Taef Agreement in 1989, all government positions are distributed equally on a 1:1 ratio between Christians and Muslims (Salamey 2014: 54-56). For example, the 128 parliamentary seats are distributed along sectarian lines with a proportional representation among confessional groups within each religious community (Art. 24 of the Constitution). The principle of proportionality in the Parliament is crucial for an equitable power-sharing and for the ability to rely on neutrality in decision-making in a consociational democracy (Lijphart 1977: 39).

Each of the three main groups have a veto power, or as Salamey defines it, "the power or right vested in a group or a branch of government to cancel or postpone the political decisions" (Salamey 2014: 223). Veto power is allocated through key public posts such as the Presidential veto or the indirect Speaker of Parliament's veto, or through the allocation of a number of ministerial posts to every group giving them the ability to block political decisions (Salamey 2014: 139). However, Salamey underlines that the veto power for each sectarian group makes it impossible to make political decisions without the full consensus of all parties, undermining the development of a functional and strong governmental system (Salamey 2014: 76-77).

In Lebanon, the government permits a sectarian autonomy in questions relating to family and personal status law such as marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance (International Religious Freedom Report 2011).

5.2.2 The Presence of Syrian Refugees, a Political Challenge

A Fragmented Political Culture

In December 2014, UNHCR had registered 1'146'405 Syrian refugees in Lebanon, a number that represents around 25% of the total population of the country (UNHCR 2015). Syrian refugees have considerably affected the demographic and sectarian balance of the country due to the fact that 95% of Syrian refugees are Sunni Muslims (ICG 2013: 3). The Syrian refugee crisis follows a scenario from past experiences that have lead to a protracted refugee situation in Lebanon and thereby affected the Lebanese plural society. The example of Palestinian refugees, mainly Sunni Muslims as well, have lived in a protracted situation in Lebanon for over 60 years (Hanafi 2012: 67). Based on Lijphart's argument, we can argue that the even more plural and divided society of Lebanon since the Syrian refugee crisis could constitute a risk for its political system.

The fragmentation of political culture in Lebanon did not arise with the refugee crisis in 2011 but was already deeply embedded in the Lebanese political environment since the assassination of ex-Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in 2005. The two major camps in Lebanese politics were the anti-Syrian coalition March 14 and the pro-Syrian coalition March 8 (Salamey and Payne 2008: 457-458). However, the Syrian refugee crisis has reinforced the political division of the country. It is not only the presence in itself of Syrian refugees that caused division between the two coalitions, but also the debates about the role and involvement of Lebanon in the Syria crisis. The Syrian refugees are the consequence of the Syrian civil war and therefore their presence in the country open these political debates.

Political Stability of a Consociational Democracy

a) System Maintenance and Effectiveness

As mentioned above, one form of grand coalition in Lebanon is around the presidency and power-sharing of the top posts. Ex-President Michel Suleiman ended his mandate in May 2014. Due to political instability and internal divisions no other president has been elected since then, leaving a political vacuum in the Lebanese political regime. As the question of presidential vacancy is clearly regulated in the Constitution, such a vacuum is not supposed to come up. In case of presidential vacancy, the Chamber (or Parliament) should meet immediately in order to elect a successor (art. 74 Constitution). However, between May 2014 and February 2015 there were 18 calls to parliament to meet in presidential election session without any success. This parliamentary blockage puts the Constitution doubly at risk. Firstly it does not respect art. 74 Constitution and secondly, it prevents the election of the President who is responsible for guaranteeing the application of the Constitution (Zeid 2015).

The president is elected by the Parliament for a six-year non-renewable mandate following a two-round process. In the first round, the candidate must win by two-thirds of the votes and in the second round, a simple majority of the votes is needed (Art. 49 (2) Constitution). Even though art. 34 Constitution states that the votes of the Parliament are only valid if the majority of total members of Parliaments is present (Art. 34 Constitution). In order to hold legal presidential elections, legal scholars have argued that two-thirds of parliament must attend the session (Nash 2013). By boycotting parliamentary sessions, March 8 Members of Parliament have prevented the parliament of achieving the quorum of two-thirds and thereby have hindered the presidential elections. While March 8 is backing the Free Patriotic Movement's leader Michel Aoun for the presidency, March 14 supports Lebanese Forces chief Samir Geagea (Lakkis and Dakroubl 2015). In case of a presidential vacuum, the powers of the president are moved to the cabinet and the decisions need to be made unanimously by all members (Zeid 2015). This shift of power does not favor the Christian-Maronite community, as it cannot employ its attributed power. By not having a president, the grand coalition, which is based on the sharing of the top posts, does not anymore coincide with Lijphart's power-sharing arrangement of the consociational

democracy. Furthermore, the violation of the Constitution does not respect the maintenance of the Lebanese political system, which means that one of the main ideas that characterizes Lijpharts' concept of political stability, *system maintenance*, is not respect in the Lebanese case. According to ex-President Amine Gemayel, the presidential vacuum presents a risk for Lebanon's social contract. By not having a Christian Maronite in power, the basis of political power-sharing which represents the concept of national contract is being destroyed (Gemayel Amine in Asharq Al-Awsat).

In 2013, Prime Minister Tammam Salam formed the most recent cabinet in which he insisted on being neutral and not dominated by one political party (Itani and Grebowski 2013: 2). This "consensus government" was based on a 8-8-8 formula, which means that the power was supposed to be shared between the two main coalitions March 14 and March 8, each of them having 8 seats. The last 8 seats were distributed by the Prime Minister and the President and were considered to be part of a "neutral bloc". However, within this bloc, two ministers were affiliated within each coalition, meaning that each coalition had 9 seats, giving them both a veto power. A veto power in the cabinet means a possibility to block any political decisions (Lefèvre 2014a). However, the veto power in Lebanon does not follow Lijphart's idea that each minority should have a veto power but favors the two coalitions March 14 and March 8 in control of the government. Furthermore, with the shift of presidential power from the president to the cabinet, the Christian-Maronite community no longer has the veto power that was attributed to the president by art. 57 Constitution. The Parliament is elected by popular vote for four-year terms on the basis of proportional representation for the various confessional groups (Salamey 2014: 130). After the general parliamentary elections that were held in 2005 and 2009, the last elections were supposed to be held in 2013. However, due to the Syrian conflict the 2013 elections were postponed to November 2014. In 2014, as it was not possible to convene elections, the Parliament voted to extend again its mandate until 2017. While this decision was considered a necessity to preserve Lebanese political stability, others viewed the extension as a "holdup of Parliament" (Lakkis and Mrouehl 2014).

The failure to elect a new president and to convene parliamentary elections exposes an ineffective government that struggles to maintain its system. Lijphart's first two

concepts characterizing democratic political stability – system maintenance and effectiveness – failed in the Lebanese political regime. With the first two ideas of political stability not being fulfilled, the probability of the Lebanese regime facing potential civil violence and losing its democratic stance increases.

b) Civil Order and Legitimacy

The Syrian crisis, crisis between the Alawites regime and the Sunni-led opposition, has not only reinforced political division in Lebanon but has also split two sectarian communities, each of them supporting one party. The Shi'a community represented by March 8 is a strong ally of the Syrian regime and the Sunni community represented by March 14 is supporting the Syrian opposition (Farrell 2012). The division of the two main sectarian groups has polarized Lebanese politics. The political division in Lebanon between the two coalitions has shifted from pro-Syrian vs. anti-Syrian to Sunni vs. Shi'a, or from an interest-based political mode to an identity-based one (Bahout 2013: 2).

Political and social divisions take the form of religious tensions between religious minorities and have resulted in the use of violence in northern Lebanon. The clashes between two neighborhoods of Tripoli, the Sunni-dominated area Bab al-Tabbaneh and the Alawite stronghold Jabal Mohsen, are examples of social and political tensions that escalated into violent actions (Farrell 2012). Tensions are not only rising between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, but the Christian and the Druze communities have also raised their concerns over the massive presence of Syrian refugees. Christians fear a growing marginalization and the loss or predominance in Lebanon (Bahout 2013: 3). According to Bahout, both coalitions fear the outcome of the Syrian war for the survival of their respective communities. On the one hand, as a close ally of Assad's regime, March 8 fears a fall of the Assad regime, which would prevent the continuity of the resistance axis linking to Iran. On the other hand, March 14 fears a shift of power to the Shi'a community if the Assad regime survives (Bahout 2013: 3).

The political division in Lebanon shows a general cleavage between the two major segments, Shi'a and Sunni, in Lebanon and in the whole Arab world after the Arab

Spring[6]. With the presence of Syrian refugees, there is a risk that sectarianism is reinforced and that the Lebanese society's opinion on the future of the country is, once again, divided. Due to the reinforcement of internal divisions in Lebanese politics, democratic political negotiations between the different parties have been more difficult to implement. According to Khatib, the growing social tensions are a result of the deteriorating economic and security situation. Since the Syrian refugee crisis, Lebanon's social contract and therefore, its stability, has been at risk (Khatib 2014b). Gemayel, warns that the Syrian refugee crisis poses a danger for Lebanon's future in terms of national character and of coexistence as it threatens the political social contract in Lebanon on the one hand, and on the other hand, has effects on the societal and economic front (Gemayel Amine in Asharq Al-Awsat). In order to prevent the government from collapsing, bilateral dialogues among major political parties have replaced the usual political negotiations (Zeid 2015). Having just a few major political actors deciding on the politics, one can question if the government can still be seen as legitimate for the different segments in the society.

With the sporadic fights in northern Lebanon and the risk of an escalation of civil violence we can argue that civil order in Lebanon is missing at the moment. Furthermore, the government is currently lacking legitimacy. Lijphart's two remaining concepts characterizing democratic political stability – civil order and legitimacy – also failed in the Lebanese political regime. Lijphart's two second ideas of the definition of political stability are neither fulfilled, which means that the probability for the Lebanese regime to lose its democratic stance increases again.

In this chapter, we have seen that the preservation of a peaceful and coexisting plural society in Lebanon has failed. Lijphart's four ideas characterizing political stability – system maintenance, effectiveness, civil order and legitimacy – have been challenged by the presence of Syrian refugees. According to Lijphart, the stability of Lebanon may be at risk when the burdens on the system increase (Lijphart 1969: 219). The Syrian refugee crisis can be considered as such a burden for the state as it has prevented Lebanon to follow its politics of consociational democracy. From above, we have not only seen that the political stability in Lebanon is fragile but that

[6] Lebanon is not the only country in the Middle East that has experienced religious cleavages after the Arab Spring. However, in my thesis I will not expend the analysis to other regions.

consociationalism that is based on sectarian groups, or "corporate consociationalism", seems to have found its limits in the Lebanese political system. In the Lebanese case, consociationalism has led to conflict and has reinforced national fragmentation instead of bringing stability and peace.

Eventually, one can summarize PART I on socio-economic and political challenges with the following findings. Lebanon's socio-economic stability has been strongly affected by the influx of Syrian refugees. Lebanon's instable economy and weak social welfare before the Syrian crisis has made it only more difficult for the country to cope with the situation and to fulfill the requirements of the social contract. The challenges that Lebanon's political system has faced since the Syrian refugee crisis can be highlighted by the difficulty for the country to ensure its stability. The presidential vacuum and the postponement of the parliamentary elections have shown that the political system in Lebanon has had difficulties in maintaining itself. With a blocked government, the Lebanese political regime has faced a lack of effective and legitimate administration. The growing division among the Lebanese about the Syrian refugee crisis and the beginning of clashes between Sunni and Shiite communities have shown that civil order is at risk in Lebanon. Based on Lijphart's definition of political stability, Lebanon has had difficulties in maintaining political stability since the Syrian crisis. Therefore, the idea of Lebanon being a consociational democracy is challenged. Furthermore, the Lebanese case has shown that the social contract – based on a power-sharing arrangement – is a fragile one has been at stake since the Syrian refugee crisis. As we have seen in the historical background, Lebanon's internal relations have been shaped and influenced by external powers since its independence. Once again, Lebanon's internal stability has been affected by external events, in this case, the Syrian crisis.

PART II: The Syrian Refugee Crisis's Effects on the Lebanese State

In the second part of the analysis, I will focus on the second part of my research question and study the effects of the political debates on Syrian refugees on the role of Lebanon as a strong state. Joel Migdal's state-in-society theory will enable us to determine the Lebanese state's role in the Syrian refugee crisis and its ability to cope with the situation. I will determine its level of social control over its population by applying Migdal's three indicators of social control – compliance, participation and legitimation. In order to do so, I will refer to different political debates around the Syrian crisis that came out between March 2011 and December 2014 in Lebanese politics. At the same time, I will apply Migdal's state-in-society theory to the main challenger of the state, Hezbollah, after having presented the organization. I will analyze to which extent the political party has influenced debates on refugee policies and highlight its predominant role in Lebanon.

5.3 Lebanese State vs. Hezbollah

Lebanon has been a member of the United Nations since 1945 (UN 2015) and is considered to be a sovereign state by the international community. However, the homogeneity of the Lebanese state can be challenged with Migdal's view that a state is one organization among many in the society. Lebanese plural society that is divided on a sectarian basis can be seen as a "mélange of social organizations" (Migdal 1988: 28). The different organizations in Lebanon are mainly divided into the two coalitions – March 14, the anti-Syrian coalition led by the Future Movement and March 8, the pro-Syrian coalition led by Hezbollah – and each of them with their own interests and political agenda.

One of the most important organizations in Lebanon is Hezbollah, an official political party and important social organization. Even though Hezbollah has a long political history, some countries such as the United States or the European Union have designated Hezbollah, or at least its military wing, as a terrorist group (EU 2015, US

2015). The Shi'a group grew out of the Lebanese civil war and was highly influenced by the Iranian Revolution of 1979, which offered them a "model of change" that aimed at establishing an Islamic Revolution in the community. It was only in 1985 that Hezbollah officially started to exist and openly declared a political agenda (Saouli 2003: 72). Initially, the movement defended the repressed Shi'a community in southern Lebanon and was publicly a violent movement against the West (Open Letter 1988). In 1992, the first parliamentary elections since the civil war took place in Lebanon. For Hezbollah, the question was whether it was legitimate for an Islamic organization to participate in a non-Islamic government and whether the organization should participate or not in the elections. After long discussions between Hezbollah's leading members, the decision to participate in the elections was made. The decision to become a political party was widely popular within Shi'a community (Norton 2007b: 97-100).

5.4. Lebanon's Social Control

In the following chapter, Lebanon's role as a sovereign state in the middle of the Syrian conflict will be analyzed by looking at the evolution of the political debates around refugee policies in Lebanon. Lebanon's description as a strong or weak state depends on its level of social control and amount of *capabilities*. The more social control, the more *capabilities* it can develop and the stronger the state (Migdal 1988: 22, 32). State social control, as defined by Migdal, means that a state enjoys the inclination of its population in favor of the behavior prescribed by the rules of the state notwithstanding behaviors sought by other social organizations. The current context of the Syrian crisis is the general context for looking at how the Lebanese state's social control has evolved since the beginning of the crisis. The level of social control is reflected by three indicators – compliance, participation and legitimation (Migdal 1988: 22) – useful tools that I will analyze in relation to the current debates around the Syrian conflict. By applying the three indicators on the Lebanese state, I want to grasp its strength in the wake of the Syrian refugee crisis in order to see to which extent Lebanon has been affected by the crisis. At the same time as analyzing the Lebanese state's social control, the same analysis of social control will be done for

Hezbollah, one of the main challengers of the Lebanese state. Eventually, the two cases will be compared and will open up for broader conclusions.

5.4.1 Compliance to the State

Compliance is Migdal's first indicator of social control. It means that the population respects and acts conforming to the state's demands and that, in case of non-compliance, the state is able to sanction the transgressor of the rules (Migdal 1988: 32). In the early stage of the Syrian crisis, Lebanese people showed their support to the Syrian opposition mainly through speeches and demonstrations. With the intensification of the conflicts, many Lebanese started to host Syrian refugees who fled to Lebanon and as the conflict went on, the support of Sunni Lebanese groups took on a political and paramilitary character such as weapon smuggling or providing sanctuaries for Syrian rebels (ICG 2012: 1-2). The Shi'a political party Hezbollah highly criticized these interventions, considering them as a threat to Lebanon's stability. However, by mid-2012 the first rumors of Hezbollah's military support of the Syria's Shi'a community came up (ICG 2014: 1).

In order to discuss issues concerning the national defense strategy, the National Dialogue Committee led by ex-President Michel Suleiman met in June 2012 and agreed on the Baabda Declaration (Presidency of Lebanon 2012). The document formalized for the first time a "dissociation policy" from the Syrian conflict in which the parties agreed on maintaining neutrality towards the Syrian crisis by avoiding any intervention in the conflict for the sake of Lebanon's stability and civil order (ICG 2012: 24). The main points of the Declaration were the importance of political solutions and national dialogue between the different political parties; the neutrality of the country from regional and international conflicts to avoid negative repercussion of regional tensions and crisis and the support of the Lebanese Army in its national defense strategy (Baabda Declaration 2012).

Hezbollah's involvement at the Syrian borders after the Baabda Declaration was highly criticized by the signatories of the Baabda Declaration. However, Hezbollah legitimized its intervention as a self-defense action against an existential threat for the

Lebanese Shi'a living on the Syrian side of the border and that its sole purpose was the well-being and safety of the Shi'a community (ICG 2014: 3-4). In May 2013, Hezbollah's involvement took another dimension when it officially announced it would be fighting along with the Syrian regime against the Syrian rebels in the Syrian border town of Qusary (ICG 2014: i, Mroueh and El-Bashal 2013).

By not respecting the Baabda Declaration, Hezbollah clearly violated Lebanese law and did not act conforming to the demands of the Lebanese state. In Migdal's word, Hezbollah did not comply with the state, as it did not respect the state's demands. Furthermore, the non-compliance of Hezbollah revealed the inability of the Lebanese state to make use of sanctions against the organization. A major problem for Lebanon is that it has never managed to monopolize the legitimate use of force over its territory and that its army has remained weak and ineffective, unable to exert its authority over other segments of the society. In this case, Lebanon's weak army does not only reveal a weak state in the eyes of Migdal but also according to Weber's definition of the state.

Compared to other militia groups, the Lebanese Army is small in size, has poor weaponry and is ethnically and political divided over its role (Atzili 2010: 761). In the case of Hezbollah's involvement, the Lebanese Army has showed its limited ability to respond to the militants fighting at the Lebanese border. As the Lebanese Army was unable to take over the fights, the government did not seem in position to pressure Hezbollah to stop its fights. In other words, Lebanon could not demand compliance to Hezbollah, as it did not have the ability to make use of sanctions, which are fundamental in Migdal's argument. Based on Migdal's definition of state capabilities (Migdal 1988: 22), the weakness of the Lebanese Army reveals low capabilities of the Lebanese state in *penetrating the society and regulating social relationships* which is reflected in the employment of force in order to provide security and in *extracting and appropriating resources*, which is reflected in the difficulty in mobilizing the population for military purpose. The fewer capabilities for Lebanon, the less social control it enjoys over its population. The lack of enforcement capabilities of the state enabled militant organizations to infiltrate into the state and to fill the "vacuum of power" (Atzili 2010: 757). The military vacuum in Lebanon can be related to the presidential vacuum in Lebanon that prevails since May 2014 as the absence of the president means the absence of the commander in chief of the armed forces. As the

president's power is moved to the cabinet, the cabinet enjoys all presidential powers, military power included (Zeid 2015). This vacuum created space for other organizations present in the cabinet, in this case Hezbollah, to decide upon military questions and in this way, to take over the state's responsibilities. Lebanon's inability to respond to Hezbollah's military involvement highlights its low level of social control and therefore its difficulty in maintaining the role of a sovereign and strong state. Lebanon has shown its weakness in front of the Syrian refugee crisis, as it was not in position to ask compliance to all organizations.

5.4.2 Compliance to Hezbollah

Since the Israeli invasion in 1982, Hezbollah has succeeded in making the population respect and act conforming to its demands as well as in assuming the imposition of sanctions in case of non-compliance. Hezbollah had proven its military superiority in southern Lebanon where it acted as a de facto ruler (Early 2006: 124). The Israeli withdrawal in 2000 marked Hezbollah's military peak and legitimized the presence of its strong and powerful army in Lebanon (Lob 2014: 2). Since its creation, Hezbollah's army was obtaining training, material and financial assistance from Iran. The United States estimates the Iranian financial assistance to be tens of millions of dollars each year (Atzili 2010: 771, Wiegand 2009: 671). Hezbollah's military superiority over the state gives the organization the ability to make use of force and puts the state in a situation that it is not sure to be able to challenge Hezbollah's military militia (Early 2006: 124).

Since the Syrian crisis, Hezbollah has enjoyed military superiority at the Syrian border, out of Hezbollah's traditional controlled territory, the southern part of Lebanon. Hezbollah seems to be the only Lebanese party able to significantly shape events in Syria due to its military strength (Itani and Grebowski 2013: 5). In the case of the dissociation policy, Hezbollah's overwhelming military power compared to the weak national army has given the organization the possibility to disobey the state's demand. According to Migdal, when a population does not act conforming the state's demands, the state can make use of sanctions (Migdal 1988: 32). As Hezbollah has a strong ability in using sanctions, the organization expects the population to act

conforming to its demands. Hezbollah can even expect the state to comply with Hezbollah by tolerating its military involvement in Syria. The capacities to regulate social relationships (Migdal 1988: 4) through its military force have been proven effective and have revealed high capabilities of Hezbollah, not only in *extracting resources* by mobilizing the Shi'a community but as well in *regulating social relationships* by ensuring security at the Lebanese border. Hezbollah's ability to disobey the state and even to make the state tolerate its military involvement argues in favor of a strong organization in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis.

5.4.3 Participation in the State

According to Migdal, participation means that the population participates in the state's institutions and accepts the state-authorized institutions (Migdal 1988: 32). Lebanon's regime political division that prevailed since 2005 has been reinforced since the Syrian crisis in March 2011. The first institution that has been neglected by the Lebanese population is the presidency. As discussed in chapter 2, Lebanese presidency has been vacant since May 2014 and the parliament was not able to elect a new one because of boycotts by members of the March 8 coalition. By refusing to elect a new president, March 8 has shown its clear disapproval of the state's institutions. As one of the most central institutions of the Lebanese state is lacking the acceptance and the participation of the population, Migdal's second indicator of social control, participation (Migdal 1988: 32) is not fulfilled. Furthermore, by boycotting the parliamentary elections, March 8 has shown that the coalition does not want to participate anymore in the state's institutions – the Parliament – and does not agree to obey to it. The presidential vacuum and the boycott of parliamentary elections are two examples of a deeply divided regime with weak political institutions that face difficulties in ensuring the participation of its population. Lebanese institutional weaknesses reveal difficulties for the Lebanese state to *penetrate the society* and highlight the low capabilities, and therefore the low social control of the state. The Syrian conflict has reinforced the Lebanese state's institutional weakness that was already present before the conflict, as the state had faced difficulties in keeping the participation of the population since the beginning of the crisis.

5.4.4 Participation in Hezbollah

Before the Syrian crisis started, Hezbollah was one of the largest organizations active within the parliament and was composed of one of Lebanon's most numerous communities, the Shi'a community (Early 2006: 124). Hezbollah has been the leader party of the pro-Syrian March 8 coalition and since 2006 has organized massive anti-government demonstrations. Several times, March 8 has used its power to block the government by having Shi'a members resigning from the cabinet (Norton 2007a: 487), or by Speaker of Parliament's Shi'a member Nahib Berry, refusing to convene the parliament in order to hold new parliamentary elections. These examples show a strong participation and support to Hezbollah that grants the organization a large source of political and military support. The strong support to the organization reveals a high capacity of Hezbollah to *penetrate the society* and to *regulate social relationships* (Migdal 1988: 32).

5.4.5. State's Legitimation

Migdal's third indicator for social control is legitimation, the approbation of the state's rules of the game (Migdal 1988: 32). After the Israeli withdrawal in 2000, the Lebanese state had difficulties in assuming its responsibility as a sovereign state and was not able to take over the military and political control over the territory (Atzili 2010: 766). Another difficulty for Lebanon to increase its legitimacy was that Lebanon's plural society did not identify with the state or relate to a global national identity but rather to sectarian loyalties (Salamey 2014: 10). The legitimacy of the Lebanese state was already weak before the Syrian crisis but with the influx of Syrian refugees into the country, the increase of political and socio-economic challenges, the situation became more difficult for the state.

Lack of Refugee Policies

Since the beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2011, Lebanon had not adopted a clear strategy to manage Syrian refugees in Lebanon. There was a long absence of any initiative to organize the presence of Syrians in Lebanon even though the number was constantly growing (Saghieh and Frangieh 2014). The number was growing so fast

that in April 2013 Lebanon received its one-millionth Syrian refugee, a moment that UNHCR called a "devastating milestone" (UNHCR 2014c). The first time Lebanon reacted to the refugee crisis by elaborating a refugee policy was in 2014, more than three years after the beginning of the crisis (Saghieh and Frangieh 2014). According to Saghieh and Frangieh, Lebanon was denying the problem and had adopted a policy of "hiding its head in the sand" (Saghieh and Frangieh 2014). For example, since the beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis, Lebanon carefully chose its terminology when talking about the Syrian refugees. Lebanon has never called Syrian refugees *refugees* but has always called them *displaced persons* (Saghieh and Frangieh 2014). By not having a special category of *refugees,* everyone was treated in the same way in Lebanon when it came to entry visa, residence or accommodation, and Lebanon was in a certain way denying the refugee issue.

This lack of refugee policy was a consequence of the government's political inability to make decisions, its blocked cabinet and its general lack of legitimacy (Saghieh and Frangieh 2014). The inability to implement refugee policies underlines the incapacity of the state to *regulate social relationships* (Migdal 1988: 4), which shows a low degree of Migdal's capabilities for the state. Due to the government's failure in managing the presence of Syrian refugees, the local municipalities started to take different measures overreaching their legal power and leaving behind a fragmentation of the authority (Saghieh and Frangieh 2014). One of the major measures was the imposition of night curfews on Syrian refugees by local municipalities not carried out under any Lebanese law and in violation to international human rights law such as the right to free movement (HRW 2014). The Lebanese state's inability to stop these local measures and to take control over the municipalities reveals a weak state that lacks legitimacy over its population.

Debates Around Refugee Camps

This "denial" of the Syrian refugee crisis explains the fact that Lebanon has refused to manage Syrian refugees by installing refugee camps. Among all Syrian neighboring countries, Lebanon was the only one that has refused to establish any formal refugee camps for Syrian refugees (Thibos 2014). The question of establishing refugee camps

or not has brought major debates to the government since the Syrian refugee crisis began (Zeid 2014). At the beginning of the crisis in 2011, some politicians called for the establishment of refugee camps in order to manage the ongoing refugee flow (Chahine 2011). The major benefits for the government of having refugee camps were said to be to facilitate humanitarian support and reduce costs but as well to monitor and manage the presence of Syrian refugees within Lebanon (ICG 2013: 17). However, the majority of the government under the lead of Hezbollah had adopted a clear position towards the refusal of any camps. The main argument against the refugee camps was that they could constitute safe havens for Syrian rebels and use humanitarian activities for military purposes (ICG 2013: 17). Lebanon's foreign minister Gebran Bassil warned against Syrian refugee camps as they could an "incubator for terrorism" in Lebanon (NOW 2014). This argument was usually backed by the comparison of Syrian refugees with Palestinian refugees, whose initially peaceful presence turned into a massive, long-lasting and militarized one that brought civil war to Lebanon (ICG 2013: 15). The refugee camps became the center of the PLO, the Palestinian armed resistance (Hanafi 2012: 67). However, some authors argue that the refusal to set up refugee camps comes from pro-Syrian coalition March 8 that want to avoid strain on the Assad-regime, as refugee camps would be a clear sign that the Assad-regime is having a problem in its country (Hala Naufal 2012: 7, Faddoul in IRIN).

However, knowing that at least 40% of Syrian refugees lived without adequate accommodation (Amnesty International 2014), it can be questioned whether the fact of not having refugee camps would really be preventing refugees from falling into terrorism or if their poor living conditions out of the camps would not rather be seen a potential factor for increasing tensions. Raphaël Lefèvre argues that by perceiving the refugee issue as a threat to national security, the Lebanese government had set up an environment that is actually fuelling radicalization of Syrian refugees. Furthermore, the bad public infrastructure and the marginalized economy are also factors that influence the growing extremism (Lefèvre 2014b). There is a general fear that the Syrian refugee influx will have the same outcomes as the Palestinian refugee influx, namely the outbreak of civil war (ICG 2013: 15).

The political division in Lebanon highlights the inability of the government to follow a clear refugee policy that enables the coherent management of the Syrian refugee

crisis. The example of the refugee camps and the inability of the state in managing the presence of Syrian refugees show that the Lebanese state did not have the capacity to regulate social relationships and therefore did not enjoy Migdal's capabilities (Migdal 1988: 4). With limited capacities to complete its tasks, Lebanon can be referred to what Migdal describes as a weak government (Migdal 1988: 4).

Shift in the Government

Despite of signing the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (UN 1951), Lebanon has maintained an open border with Syria and has received a large number of Syrian refugees since the beginning of the Syrian crisis. This position has gradually changed since the formation of the new government by Prime Minister Salam Tamman in 2013. The government announced for the first time that it would take steps to reduce the number of Syrian refugees on Lebanese territory (Saghieh and Frangieh 2014). In October 2014, the cabinet voted on a refugee policy to stop the refugee flow into Lebanon, expect those with an exceptional humanitarian case. Furthermore, the UNHCR would need the approval of the Ministry of Social Affairs in the future to register Syrian citizens as refugees. However, the question of refugee camps did not change with the new government, as the counter-arguments were too significant (Lakkis 2014). This shift in the government could be interpreted as a shift towards a more powerful and organized state willing to manage the refugee crisis. The new government also could be seen as a new opportunity in strengthening the political institutions and eventually in taking over more social control.

Since the involvement of Syrian refugees in the battles in Arsal, northern Lebanon in August 2014, security concerns in Lebanon have risen. Indeed, a few hundred Syrian refugees, backed by local Sunni Lebanese fought along the Islamic militia, Nusra Front against the Lebanese Army (Zeid 2014). This event has strongly contributed to a change in the refugee policies notably by enhancing of the control of the entry of Syrian refugees into Lebanon, by distinguishing between Syrians who are fleeing the conflict and Syrians who seek economic opportunities, and by deregistering those who cross the border back and forth (Kullab 2014). The decision not to allow Syrian refugees to commute between Syria and Lebanon has been defended by Interior

Minister that "If [a refugee] feels safe enough to return home, then he is no longer a refugee" (Elali 2014). It can be argued that since the new government is in place, Lebanon has been trying to develop its capabilities by penetrating and regulating society (Migdal 1988: 4) through the elaboration of refugee policies. By elaborating and implementing new state rules, Lebanon seems to be willing to gain more of Migdal's third indicator of social control, legitimacy, and therefore, more social control over its population. The new government hopes not only to gain social control over its own population but as well as over the Syrian refugees, which is a necessity as Syrian refugees constitute around 25% of the total population in Lebanon and could threaten the fragile national unity.

Lebanese Crisis Response Plan

After the Israeli withdrawal in 2000 from southern Lebanon, a power vacuum that needed to be filled prevailed over the territory. The capacity of the Lebanese state to provide public goods and essential services such as electricity, infrastructures, schools, hospitals has also been extremely limited not only in southern Lebanon but in the whole country (Atzili 2010: 762).

In December 2014, Prime Minister Tammam Salam launched the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), a government plan in collaboration with the United Nations that seeks to address the effect of the Syrian crisis in Lebanon (Osseiran 2014). The goal of achieving stability in Lebanon is strongly supported by the international community as the LCRP represents the contribution and plans of 77 organizations including ministries, national and international organizations (LCRP 2014: 19). The LCRP is an integrated humanitarian and stabilization strategy that aims to address three main priorities: (1) ensuring humanitarian assistance and protection to the most vulnerable among the displaced from Syria and poorest Lebanese; (2) strengthening the capacity of national and local service delivery systems; and (3) reinforcing Lebanon's economic, social, environmental, and institutional stability (LCRP 2014: 4). The main components of the first priority are the provision of material and legal assistance such as food, shelter and protection (LCRP 2014: 21). The sectorial responses of the second priorities are education, health, protection for women and

children, water and sanitation (LCRP 2014: 22). The third priority aims at supporting national institutions to preserve social stability by offering livelihood, shelter, and food responses (LCRP 2014: 23). Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis in March 2011, the LCRP has been the first strategy to manage the Syrian refugees crisis in Lebanon. It does not only focus on solutions to alleviate Lebanese social welfare system but aims to restore economic and political stability in the country. The LCRP is considered as a major achievement of the Lebanese government in the political debates around the refugee issue in Lebanon and shows that the state is trying to fulfill its responsibilities as a sovereign state.

The LCRP seems to be a good opportunity for the Lebanese state to fulfill what Migdal's considers as the objective of every organization, "the objective of making people adhere its organization" (Migdal 1988: 29) as the LCRP offers "rewards" such as housing, social security or livelihood programs. The stabilization document elaborated by the government does not only offer strategies of survival to Syrian refugees but also to the poor and marginalized Lebanese people. With Migdal's reasoning in mind, we can argue that the LCRP constitutes a new opportunity for the state to gain social control over the population. By providing *strategies of survival* to individuals through the LCRP, Lebanon can increase its level of social control. By increasing its level of social control, the Lebanese state becomes a stronger organization from the mélange of organizations. The management of the refugee flow will enable the new government of Lebanon to gain legitimacy.

The shift in the Lebanese government coincides with Migdal's argument that a state is constantly *becoming* as a result of these struggles over social control (Migdal 2001: 50, 57). The Lebanese state is not a fixed entity but is able to evolve over time. The capabilities of the state have evolved since the beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis as the Lebanese state went from a lack political support to the elaboration of a new strategy with the LCRP. The LCRP constitutes a new opportunity for the state to increase its capabilities and thereby gain social control over the population. In Migdal's view, increasing the capabilities would not only lead to better social control but would eventually reinforce the strength of the Lebanese state.

5.4.6 Hezbollah's Legitimacy

After the discussion around the Lebanese state legitimacy, Hezbollah's legitimacy will be analyzed by presenting events from the past that have build up its reputation as a strong organization as well as the newest tendency in relation with the Syrian refugee crisis.

Hezbollah's Past Experiences

Before the Syrian crisis, Hezbollah gained respect and legitimacy at several points in its history through its strong engagement for the Shi'a community. A first key-action for Hezbollah was the provision of social welfare to the Shi'a community living in southern Lebanon. Several authors agree that the Lebanese state's inability to provide social services in the context of civil war and Israeli occupation has left room for Hezbollah's social welfare strategy and to take over the state's responsibilities (Atzili 2010, Grynkewich 2010, Wiegand 2009). On the one hand, the Lebanese state was powerless and absent from the provision of social welfare, and on the other hand, the poor, politically underrepresented and marginalized Shi'a community living in southern Lebanon (Atzili 2010: 768) was in dire need, as that region was the most affected by war (Grynkewich 2010: 362). The inability of a state to control its own territory leaves behind a vacuum of power from which a non-state actor can usurp state power and enjoy a freedom of action within the state (Atzili 2010: 761). By providing education, health services and general infrastructure such as water and sanitation and waste collection, Hezbollah has not only overtaken the state's responsibilities and filled the vacuum of power, but has gained respect for its social generosity (Atzili 2010: 768-769, Early 2006: 124).

The provision of social welfare by Hezbollah to the community can be seen as what Migdal's considers a way to make people adhere to their organization by offering rewards (Migdal 1988: 29). Offering such rewards is a way for Hezbollah to penetrate society, to develop its capabilities and to increase its social control over the population. The provision of social welfare by other organizations than the state threatens the state's legitimacy as these services are usually considered as belonging to the role of the state through the social contract it has to its population (Grynkewich 2010: 350, 352). In short, the creation of alternative social welfare services highlights

the failure of the state to uphold its end of the social contract (Grynkewich 2010: 353). The provision of social welfare by non-state actors offers an alternative entity for the population in which it can place its loyalty, the creation of a new social contract, which will increase the organization's legitimacy (Grynkewich 2010: 353).

Another key-event for Hezbollah in gaining legitimacy was the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000. The withdrawal of the troops was perceived as Hezbollah's victory, as the organization had played a central role in the resistance against the occupation (Norton 2007a: 478-479, Early 2006: 123). Hezbollah gained in legitimacy and credibility from the Shi'a community, as once again, by providing security, the organization assumed the responsibility of the state. Hezbollah's main support came from the Shi'a community who offered Hezbollah material and political support (Atzili 2010: 767). By providing security, Hezbollah gained in legitimacy and was able to increase social control as state by Migdal (Migdal 1988: 22), as Hezbollah became an organization that people trusted and needed.

A third aspect that played in important role in Hezbollah's legitimacy was the decision to participate in politics through the parliamentary elections in 1992. By making this decision, Hezbollah gained political integrity and legitimacy from the Lebanese population (Early 2006: 121, 124; Lob 2014: 4). Since Hezbollah was considered as a social, military and political force within Lebanese society (Early 2006: 124), its legitimacy seemed to be higher than the legitimacy of the Lebanese state was, so its social control could increase, winning power over the state.

Hezbollah's Role in the Syrian Refugee Crisis

The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon has revealed an ineffective state that faced difficulties in addressing the refugee crisis (ICG 2013: 2). Even though state institutions have not been completely absent from the humanitarian assistance, the primary providers for Syrian refugees where host communities, civil society networks and UNHCR (ICG 2013: 5). Hezbollah, as a civil society network, has had a welcoming attitude towards Syrian refugees even though the organization has been closely operating on the Syrian regime's side (ICG 2013: 12). Hezbollah's secretary

general Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah, called the Lebanese to "deal with the presence of Syrian refugees in a purely humanitarian manner and not politicize it" (Daily Star 2013). Since the first arrivals of Syrian refugees, Hezbollah has offered them in-kind assistance, medical care (Zaatari 2012) and shelter by mobilizing social networks and municipalities under Hezbollah's control. The distribution of social welfare was not only done for Syrian refugees but as well for Lebanese citizens. Like its past experience, providing social welfare to the people in absence of a strong state is a way for Hezbollah to gain legitimacy over the population. Social welfare is here again used as Migdal's strategies of survival for the individual so that people adhere their organization. However, the Shi'a organization has closely controlled the distribution of assistance to refugees in order to make sure that help was not given to insurgent (ICG 2013: 12). The Shi'a community seems to mistrust Syrian refugees because afraid that after the Syrian regime they will turn against Hezbollah (ICG 2013: 13).

Hezbollah's Legitimacy at Risk

Hezbollah's involvement in Syria has caused a growing discontent and mounting criticism from the Lebanese population, the Shi'a community included (Lob 2014: 1). Hezbollah's military actions could endanger and weaken its popular legitimacy that the organization gained over the years. The Shi'a's main fear was that Hezbollah's intervention would develop anger within the Lebanese Sunni community and that old sectarian tensions inside Lebanon would grow again (Lob 2014: 3). Furthermore, public statements from Shi'a politicians, clerics, intellectuals and activists have been made against Hezbollah and against its intervention that did not follow Lebanon's Shi'a's interests but rather created instability in the country. The intervention was self-interested, increased sectarian tensions, violated Lebanese sovereignty as well as human rights of Syrians (Lob 2014: 4).

Hezbollah's political integrity and legitimacy was also affected by its system of governance. As a political party since 1992, Hezbollah has more and more used its political influence to pursue the interests of its military wing at the expense of its popular support. For example, by resigning from the cabinet, Hezbollah's ministers paralyzed the government in the party's own interests. Furthermore, corruption

scandals involving Hezbollah officials that broke out have also negatively impacted Hezbollah's popular legitimacy (Lob 2014: 4, 5).

After having applied Migdal's three indicators of social control to the Lebanese state and to Hezbollah, a conclusion about PART II can be drawn. Following the analysis of the Lebanese state, we can argue that the level of compliance to the Lebanese state is relatively low. As the Lebanese Army has been unable to sanction the one who do not comply with the state, Lebanon faces difficulties in ensuring its compliance. Furthermore, with a blocked and ineffective government, the Lebanese state goes through a crisis of faith in political institutions. The level of participation towards the state is also low. We have also seen that for many years, the Lebanese state did not enjoy popular legitimacy. Since the Syrian refugee crisis, the Lebanese state has met difficulties in putting in place state's rules and in obtaining legitimacy. However, with a shift in the Lebanese government and the implementation of concrete refugee policies, Lebanon seems to be in position to take over legitimacy. The LCRP could be seen an instrument for the Lebanese state to win legitimacy over its population again. To sum up, since the Syrian refugee crisis, Lebanon has no social control as it had difficulties in developing its *capabilities.* Following Migdal's argument, the fewer capabilities, the more difficult it is to gain social control and therefore the weaker the state. Thus, we can argue that Lebanon, in the midst of the Syrian refugee crisis, is a weak state. In the analysis of Hezbollah's social control, we have seen that Hezbollah's level of compliance has been relatively high. Its strong army enables the organization to derogate the state's rule and to make use of sanctions. Furthermore, as one of the largest organizations, we can argue that the participation in Hezbollah's organization is high. We have seen that from past experiences, Hezbollah has won a high level of legitimacy. However, we have also seen that Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian conflict and non-respect of the dissociation policy could threaten Lebanon's stability as it reinforces political divisions and growing anger from the Lebanese community, Hezbollah supporters included.

6. Conclusion

This thesis at hand has analyzed the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon and its implications for Lebanon's stability. In order to answer my research question, I have focused on the challenges Lebanon has faced since the beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis as well as on its effects on the Lebanese state. The research question that has guided us during the whole thesis has been the following:

> *How has the presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon challenged the socio-economic and political stability of the country and how have the political debates around refugee policies affected Lebanon's role as a sovereign state?*

In the first part of the analysis, we have seen that the presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon has challenged Lebanon in various ways.

Firstly, the socio-economic level has been tremendously shaken by the arrival of Syrian refugees as their presence has affected Lebanon's economy in many ways: decline of Lebanon's GDP growth; decrease of Lebanon's trade sector of merchandise, services, and food; Lebanon's tourism sector on hold; saturation of Lebanon's real estate sector by the increase of demand and prices; and general increase of Lebanon's public debts. Lebanon's social welfare system, already weak before the Syrian refugee crisis, has also been affected considerably. The main services that Lebanon was supposed to provide through the social contract – housing, infrastructure, employment, health care, and education – became saturated. The inability of the Lebanese state to provide these basic needs led to the break down of the social contract, as the state could not fulfill the requirements from the contract.

Secondly, the Syrian refugee crisis has also affected the political level in Lebanon. Lebanon's consociational system has faced difficulties to stay in place. The presence of Syrian refugees has divided Lebanese society between sectarian lines and has led to a fragmentation of the political culture that is represented between the Shi'a coalition March 8 and the Sunni coalition March 14. The failure of the state to elect a new president highlighted the difficulties of the state in maintaining the system in place. The difficulties in convening parliamentary elections underlined the challenges

of the state in ensuring its effectiveness. The local fights in Lebanon showed that Lebanon was not able to ensure civil order in the country and, as political power is not distributed anymore according to the Constitution, the state's legitimacy can be questioned.

We can argue that Lebanon's political stability has been affected by the presence of Syrian refugees and that the Syrian refugee crisis has been a significant burden for Lebanon. The difficulties to cope with this burden on a political level have revealed the inefficiency of the consociational system in the Lebanese case and therefore its failure. According to Imad Salamey, the challenges Lebanon has faced are too significant and the Lebanese government too weak for the country to cope with the refugee crisis with a meaningful strategy. He states, "the modern Lebanese government is weak and fragile and will not be able to establish a coherent policy toward the refugees. (…) (Salamey in Knusten 2014).

In the second part of the analysis, we have seen that the political debates around the Syrian crisis have affected the Lebanese state in its role as a sovereign state and that the crisis context has enabled other organizations to take over the state's role.

Lebanon's social control has been analyzed with Migdal's three indicators of social control – compliance, participation and legitimation. The Syrian crisis seems to have reinforced the non-compliance to the state that was already weak before the crisis, as Lebanon has proven its inability to have a strong army. The participation in the state has also become weaker since the Syrian crisis especially after the resignation of Member of Parliament blocking parliamentary and presidential elections. Lebanon's legitimacy has already been weak before the Syrian refugee crisis but has been reinforced with the crisis, as the state showed its difficulties in coping with the situation. However, the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan could represent a good opportunity for the state to gain in legitimacy and therefore in social control over its population. However, the LCRP also underlines the fact that Lebanon is a weak country unable to cope with the situation itself and that needs support from the international community. Lebanon's call for help underlines the lack of capabilities of the country and its dependency on other actors, in this case the international community.

In juxtaposition to the Lebanese state, we have analyzed Hezbollah's social control. Hezbollah's strong military wing has showed that the organization is in

position to ask compliance to the society and that even the state has to comply to it by tolerating Hezbollah's military actions at the Syrian border. The radicalization of new Islamic groups at the Lebanese border will enable Hezbollah to continue its fights probably without any objection from the state as Hezbollah seems to be the only military faction able to ensure a strong defense for Lebanon's security. Being one of the largest political organizations, Hezbollah has always enjoyed a strong participation from the Shi'a community. With the Syrian crisis, the participation has not decreased but even enabled the party to block the government by boycotting parliamentary sessions. The blocked and inefficient government in place does not seem to offer any other reliable political alternative to Hezbollah at the moment. Therefore, Hezbollah is likely to maintain its strong participation as the organization is seen as the best alternative at the moment in the country. Since the foundation of the organization, Hezbollah has gradually gained in social and political legitimacy. As long as the Lebanese state is not able to assume the social welfare and Hezbollah will take over that role, the organization will keep its popular support. The provision of social welfare by one specific organization can lead to a dependency of the population to this organization. However, we have also seen that Hezbollah's military involvement at the Syrian border has caused a growing discontent from the Lebanese society, Hezbollah supporters included. Even though there is a risk of Hezbollah's legitimacy, new events such as the rise of Sunni extremism need Hezbollah as a security provider. Despite of the erosion of Hezbollah's popular legitimacy, the Shi'a organization remains a dominant actor in Lebanon with strong prospects.

To open up broader discussion, we can also say that the situation in Lebanon is highly dependent on the evolution of the regional crisis. Syria and Lebanon had been closely dependent on each other for many years. As stated by Itani and Grebowski, Syria's stability and Lebanon's weakness has allowed Syria to dominate Lebanese politics in the past and now Syria's weakness is again shaping Lebanese politics (Itani and Grebowski 2013: 1).

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