THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS IN LEBANON: AN ANAYLSIS OF SECTARIANISM, REFUGEES, SOCIOECONOMICS, AND CORRUPTION

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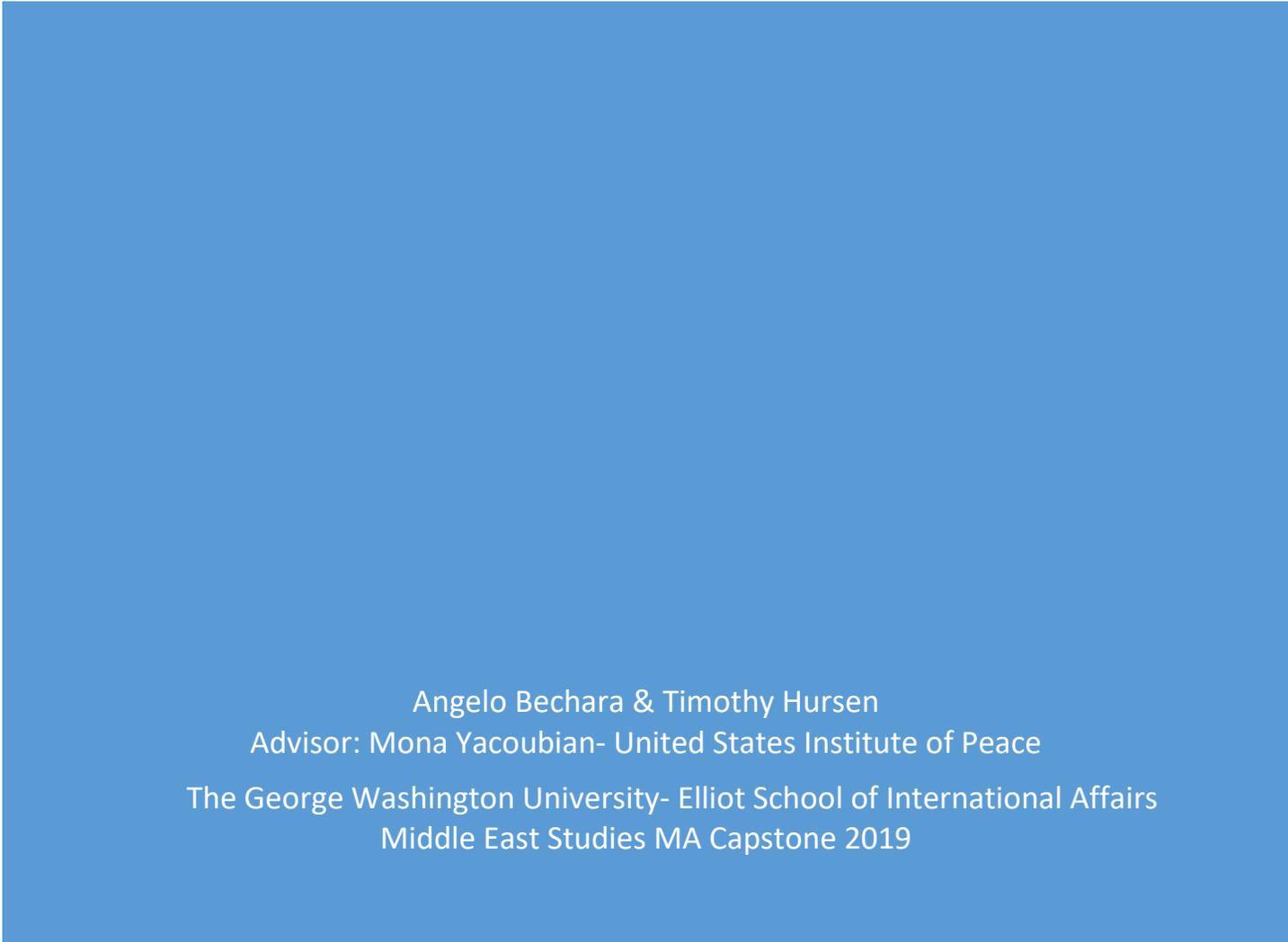
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This paper is dedicated to the people of Lebanon as they continuously aim to be an example of democracy, coexistence, and hope, in a region of the world where such aspirations seem at many times impossible.

شكراً جزيلاً
(Thank you very much)

Angelo & Tim

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Background
    The Republic of Lebanon founded after the withdrawal of the French Mandate in 1943 symbolizes the establishment of sovereign territory that has long been fought over for approximately 6000 years. Since the early existence of the Phoenicians in Byblos in 2500 BC, that territory has been battled over by countless civilizations, the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, to name a few. Post-independence, the Lebanese Republic has experienced its own scenes of turmoil from outside invasions to a 15-year civil war from 1975 to 1990. In order to easily follow the main arguments in this study, it is important to highlight some background information on the formation of the 1943 Lebanese Republic, the history of refugees in Lebanon, and The Taif Agreement (National Reconciliation Act).
    For the sake of this paper, when referring to Lebanon we will be discussing the post-1943 Lebanese Republic. The National Pact of 1943 led by independent President Bechara El-Khoury called for the unification of Muslims and Christians towards a common goal of coexistence and fraternity in the societal make-up of the new country. The key point was for the Christians to denounce their allegiance to the West, specifically France, and for Muslims to forego the notions of Lebanese Pan-Arabism.[1] The National Pact established the first signs of sectarianism in Lebanon by designating specific government leadership roles based on sect:

- President of the Republic: Maronite, Catholic.
- Prime Minister (President of the Council of Ministers): Sunni, Muslim.
- Speaker of Parliament (President of the Council of Deputies): Shii', Muslim.

    The first mass exodus to Lebanon was the Palestinian refugee influx as a result of the 1948 Palestinian War and was followed by an even larger migration of Palestinians due to the 1967 Six Day War. Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon presented a serious and multi-layered policy challenge for the Lebanese government at that time. With such a drastic demographic shift in a system where political representation is dependent on the ethno-religious makeup of the population, the balance of power would undoubtedly be changed irrevocably if Palestinian refugees had been granted Lebanese citizenship. The decision to withhold citizenship and legal entry to Lebanese labor markets stemmed from these fears. As the number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon increased, so too did tensions with local Lebanese citizens. It is alleged that camps formed for Palestinian refugees became sites for radicalization and collaboration among agents seeking to commit acts of terror in Lebanon. A common argument heard on the floor of the Lebanese parliament paints the influx of Palestinian refugees into Lebanon as one of the primary underlying causes for the Lebanese Civil War in 1975. According to The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), approximately 450,000 Palestinian refugees still reside in camps located in various Lebanese regions. Given the longevity of the Palestinians' residence, Lebanese society and government have precedent to build upon shaping attitudes and policies towards the new influx of Syrian refugees from the 2011 Syrian Civil War. Syrians have been fleeing their country to neighboring states and Europe since the start of the Syrian Civil war in 2011, a large number of them have moved to Lebanon. There are approximately 1.1 million United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon, along with another approximately 500,000 seasonal agricultural and construction workers who have remained in Lebanon due to the war. According to the last Lebanese census, there are 4 million Lebanese living in Lebanon in an area of 10,452 kilometers squared. As a result, Lebanon's population density has significantly increased placing

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[1] Humud, Carla. 2018.

a toll on the country's resources, economy, and politics. Lebanon has the highest number of refugees per capita in the world, the UNHCR estimates that there is 1 refugee per 4 nationals. Unlike Palestinian refugees, Syrians are not set up in designated refugee camps and are living among Lebanese communities. There is a sizeable faction of Lebanese, namely Christians, that fear that tensions caused by large numbers of Syrian refugees could incite violence or another civil war. A second faction of Lebanese, namely Muslims, are not totally opposed to Syrian resettlement in Lebanon. This divide in viewpoint among sects over refugees is a major discussion throughout this study. Since the end of the Lebanese Civil War, public service delivery in Lebanon has been inadequate.[2] For the past few decades, the Lebanese public has lacked proper water and electric provision, forcing residents to rely on private third party water and energy providers to meet their daily demands. The influx of approximately a quarter of the Lebanese population has exacerbated these pre-existing shortcomings of the Lebanese public sector. Studies conducted in the areas of Lebanese health, law, and education paint a detailed picture of the Lebanese government's inability to respond effectively to the needs of refugee populations and the risks that these policy failures may pose. One of the main reasons for Lebanon's government inefficiency is the nature of sectarian practices in all branches of politics and throughout the public sector.

The post-civil war structure of Lebanese government is one that is organized rigidly on the basis of religious sect. The Taif agreement agreed upon in Saudi Arabia in 1989 led to many landmark changes to the Lebanese Republic. Firstly, Taif ended the 15 year Lebanese Civil War.[3] Furthermore, the Taif agreement dictates that the Parliamentary and Council of Minister representation must be split 50% for Christians and 50% for Muslims.[4] This divide diluted powers for some sects that had exercised a more politically dominant role in the past, in this case the Maronites, while giving more power and representation to Muslims and Druze. This also paved the way for Hezbollah's emergence into the political arena producing candidates who would later win seats in the Lebanese Parliament. The post-Taif period led to the reinforcement of confessionalism in the everyday geography of the country, where neighborhoods and cities became defined and labeled as Christian, Druze, or Muslim.[5] Moreover, Taif called for the "disarmament and disbandment of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias". Parties like the Lebanese Forces (LF) and Kata'eb, to name a few, transitioned smoothly from armed militias to unarmed political parties. Hezbollah remains one of the factions which refuses to give up arms to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) causing major gridlock in many government negotiations due to an uneven scale of power between an armed party and unarmed parties.[6] The authors of the Taif agreement anticipated that there will be a time in the future where the Lebanese government will need to eliminate sectarianism, therefore leading them to develop a plan for a "sectarian elimination committee" within the act.[7] Finally, Taif called on the establishment of a security pact with Syria that led to the formation of a special socio-political relationship between the two countries.[8] This relationship allowed for nationals of

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[2] Interview MP Yacoubian. 2019.
[3] Humud, Carla. 2018.
[4] Henley-Religious Authority and Sectarianism in Lebanon 2016.
[5] Gasiorowski, Harris, Government & Politics of the Middle East and North Africa.
[6] Suleiman, The Role of Political Parties.
[7] Interview President Sleiman. 2019.
[8] Humud, Carla. 2018.

both countries to enter and exit each other's countries without a visa or passport requirement.[9] The Syrian military presence in Lebanon throughout the war and later was to help bring the Lebanese Civil War to an end and to aid Lebanon with the expulsion of Israel from the southern border. Syria's military did not leave Lebanon until 2005 after being pressured by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559. The Syrian military was intended to stay for two years after the Lebanese Civil War ended, but stayed for a total of 15 years post-civil war, creating negative sentiments towards them from members of Lebanese society and politics.

Introduction

Political parties in Western democracies seek power primarily through electoral processes, civil society pressures, and campaign donors, but in Lebanon this is not the case.[10] Lebanese politicians seek influence and power primarily through bribery and other corrupt practices, this is not to say that the Western political parties are innocent of this practice, but in the West corporate interests and donors are more subtle than how some Lebanese politicians directly pay certain citizens to vote and campaign. Nabih Berri, leader of Amal and the speaker of Parliament has been in office for well over 30 years. Samir Geagea has been the leader of the Lebanese Forces since the Civil War. Hassan Nasrallah has been the Secretary General of Hezbollah since the Civil War as well. These well entrenched, upper middle-class and even rich class, 'Zouama' (Arabic for champions or leaders) win their legitimacy by making promises for party dominance over the political establishment and increased representation of their own political sect. This is what appeals to Lebanese society. It creates a culture and society that is not swayed by eloquent political debates, flashy campaign ads or kissing babies. The Zouama control money and power in government, as well as in many private companies. Lebanese political elites are idols in the eyes of their followers from the older Civil War-generation, but in the eyes of others, especially youth, they are the reason why Lebanon remains corrupt. Sectarianism in Lebanon is not a new phenomenon, yet it continues to reemerge as a factor contributing to political stalemates and disagreements. In light of the Syrian refugee influx, Lebanon has witnessed exacerbated public service delivery inadequacies and an inability to bridge the gap between sects on a unified response to the influx of this new population to the country. In light of the assassination of former PM Rafik Hariri in 2004 and major protests that followed in 2005, Lebanese politicians built coalitions that went beyond sectarian lines. Lebanon witnessed for the first time the emergence of issue-based coalition building, rather than sectarian-based coalition building. The March 14th and March 8th coalitions included parties from various ethno-religious sects. As time progressed, interests shifted and so did alliances within these coalitions. Today, the two major coalitions are not as strong as they were when first formed in 2005, but a loosely held framework of the two still exists. The issue of Syrian refugees in Lebanon further divides parties within the post-2005 political coalitions. While within March 14 and March 8 there are alliances between Muslims and Christians, it is safe to conclude that Christians are less supportive of Syrian refugee assistance than Muslims. In a 2018 Human Rights Watch Report, the UNHCR reported that predominantly Christian municipalities and politicians have been involved in forcibly evicting and expelling Syrian refugees. Additionally, the report shows that those Syrians being forcibly expelled and evicted were predominantly Muslims, whereas Christian refugees in many cases were not subject to the same treatment.[11]

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[9] Ibid.
[10] Suleiman, Michael.2018.
[11] Human Rights Watch. 2018

This new issue of Syrian refugees is an additional obstacle in clear communication and relationship building among the already weakly linked post-2005 coalitions. Sectarianism has shaped the minds and attitudes of Lebanese citizens over the course of time and has trickled into the inner fabric of society, including University politics. There has been a recent emergence of secular, independent, and non-sectarian movements predominantly at the youth level, calling for an end to sectarian practices in government. This research takes into account the heightened level of political and economic tension caused by the recent Syrian refugee influx, while discussing the political engagement and attitudes of young independent Lebanese university students and independent politicians.

This research project is comprised of two case studies. The first case focuses on university student council elections and the emergence of independent youth groups. The second case focuses on the eight-month gridlock leading up to the eventual formation of the Council of Ministers in 2018-2019. University students often repeated that their student council elections act as microcosms of the national elections. Highlighting the voices of independent student movements is important in understanding the future of Lebanon's political landscape, given that these youths have the potential to take leadership roles in Lebanon's government in the coming years. It is also important for the sake of this research, to dissect the negotiation framework of the recent Council of Ministers formation in order to gain insight into the fragmentation, alliances, and communication between Lebanon's multiple sects and parties. Both cases complement each other, as they discuss the impact of Lebanon's recent struggle to accommodate 1.1 million refugees on political engagement at a micro and macro level in a country already divided along strict sectarian lines.

Question
How has the influx of Syrian refugees impacted university students' and politicians' engagement in Lebanese politics?

Methodology
The data collected for this study was primarily sourced from written transcriptions of recorded interviews. Interviews lasted an average of 30 minutes and were primarily conducted in person in Lebanon and in Washington, DC. However, some of the interviews and meetings took place over the phone and via Skype for those with whom we were unable to find time to meet in person. Our subjects included one sitting member of Lebanese Parliament Paula Yacoubian, one former Lebanese President Michel Sleiman, one Lebanese American University Professor Bassel Salloukh, two U.S. Embassy officials, and a sampling of 30 total students from four different universities in Lebanon. These universities are the American University of Beirut (AUB), Lebanese American University (LAU), Notre Dame University (NDU), and Université Saint-Joseph (USJ).

One defining feature that links nearly all of the politically engaged subjects that contributed to our research is their independent political identity or rather their non-affiliation with established political parties. In the case of the university student subjects, those we interviewed belong to a club, group, or movement at their university that is not affiliated with an establishment political party but is rather identified as independent politically. To find our subjects among these groups the snowball method proved very effective as many of those involved in student politics that run in elections as independents know of each other and communicate with some degree of frequency. Interviews with public figures were arranged more

simply by reaching out directly to their offices and assistants via email to request a meeting. While all subjects gave informed verbal consent to participate in this research project, the names of student subjects were not collected and will not be used in the text of this report in order to protect their identities and preserve their privacy.

We attempted when possible to start each interview with a broad, basic probe to gauge what the subjects perceived to be the most significant challenges facing Lebanon today. Syrian refugees were not often the first point of departure for our subjects in answering this question, but in many cases this was mentioned as a critical issue and led to a discussion of causes, consequences and possible solutions to the current crisis. During the course of these interviews we asked our subjects for their views on the issue of the influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon. We asked them specifically how they believed the Lebanese government and international community were addressing the issue and followed up by asking them to make predictions and policy recommendations for the near future. We also asked subjects for their opinions on the role of sectarianism in Lebanese politics which, for student subjects, led to a discussion of sectarianism on campus and its role in student council elections. Students that belonged to independent movements and groups were also asked to describe the origin and nature of their group and to give their opinions on both issues from an independent's point of view.

While we did not ask our student subjects directly about their own ethnic or religious identity, our sampling methods for student subject respondents may have yielded more interviews with students from Christian families while underrepresenting students of other religious backgrounds. This is due in part to the fact that two of the four universities that we observed, NDU and USJ, are Christian universities with predominantly Christian student populations. While the student populations at LAU and AUB are more diverse, future research would benefit from a larger sample size of interviews with students from more non-Christian universities to better represent the religious diversity of Lebanon.

The subject group of independent politicians was limited to only two interviews. The small size of this second subject group is due both to the relatively small number of active independent politicians and to the limitations of this research project. While Michel Sleiman does not currently hold an elected political office, his legacy as president and ongoing work with initiatives encouraging youth civic engagement lends great value to his perspective on the issues discussed in this paper. MP Paula Yacoubian is the only sitting member of parliament currently representing civil society groups, but further research into independent political movements in Lebanon should incorporate more of the voices of those actively involved in these movements.

In both cases the subject groups we identified excluded students and politicians affiliated with establishment political parties. The primary reasoning for this exclusion is the prevalence of information readily available regarding the positions and views of establishment parties on the issue of refugees. The lack of research into how emerging independent movements engage with this issue is what influenced the decision to focus on interviewing subjects from these movements. For this reason, our interview data will serve as the foundation for our discussion of independent movements and student groups, while the discussion of establishment political parties and the role of sectarianism in the Lebanese political system will draw more heavily on a review of existing literature, news reports, and official public statements.

Case Study I: The Emergence of Independent University Student Groups and Student Council Elections.

Religion and politics are two seemingly inseparable entities in Lebanon. Religion is upheld structurally as the politician's point of entry for their career throughout which they are obliged to act in the interest of their party to bring the greatest returns possible to its members and supporters. The fact that these parties are conflated with religious sects and locked in fierce and relentless competition for political capital and resources is what propels the formation and entrenchment of sectarian identity and sectarian division at every level of Lebanese society. It is this political competition for resources that leads to the formation of clientelist networks of patronage within ethno sectarian groups with political elites at the top vying for the material interests of their base in exchange for continued support. The clearest examples of this patronage system at work come from analyses of how Lebanese citizens navigate inadequate public service systems by engaging in sectarian politics to secure their share of public goods.[12] Many rely on their party's network of influence when it comes to entering the job market and are able to secure valuable positions by leveraging their relation to a political party. The result is a relationship of dependence on political elites for ensuring the provision of basic necessities where support through voting along sectarian party lines becomes something owed rather than earned.

This same sectarian dynamic is reproduced at universities across Lebanon specifically when it comes to student body elections. Students tend to form and participate in groups that are defined by their affiliation with a particular political party and the sect that it represents. In much the same way that an individual's sectarian identity can be reliably used to predict their voting behavior in national elections, sectarian identity is the primary factor in the average Lebanese university student's decision to vote for a student representative or join a politically engaged student group.[13] The connections between student groups and political parties are at times explicit despite the fact that most universities have a policy, as apolitical institutions, which prohibits outside interference in student politics.[14] These policies prevent student groups from using the name, associated colors and symbols, or any slogans of a Lebanese political party. This does not prevent party involvement in the form of funding campaigns, sponsoring interest events, and financing the use of material incentives to secure votes for a candidate. At NDU, the Debate Club and Social Club are examples of student groups that benefit from these types of relationships with political parties.[15] Clubs like these bear unassuming names and do not formally acknowledge the nature of their relationships with party patrons while receiving their support both financially and in the form of access to networks of influence. This external influence on student council elections is highly effective in shaping their outcomes. Student groups with the support of political parties have consistently been those most successful in securing seats on councils at universities across Lebanon.

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[12] Nucho JR. (2016) Everyday sectarianism in urban Lebanon. Princeton University Press.

[13] Parreira, Christiana, Daniel L. Tavana, and Charles Harb. 2019. "University Elections and Political Socialization in the Developing World."

[14]Ibid.

[15] Interview Transcript, NDU. 2019.

Debate Club -NDU
Figure 1.[16]

Social Club -NDU
Figure 2.[17]

Political parties are not seeking to influence university policy formation through interfering in these elections. In the Lebanese context higher education is a battleground for deeply involved establishment political elites looking to extend clientelist networks and recruit future supporters from among the best and brightest of the next generation of their base demographics. The entrenched presence of these political parties on campuses reproduces sectarian identity as a tool for political mobilization and limits the growth of anti-establishment movements led by student activists.[18]

Issues directly related to student life and university policy are meant to be the basis for student campaign platforms, but students automatically read into each candidate's relation to broader national issues by virtue of their association with a larger political organization whose positions are well known and documented in most cases[19]. The stances of political parties on the issue of Syrian refugees in Lebanon are largely determined by the two important factors of religious identity and the degree of support for the Assad regime in Syria. Parties that belong to the March 8th coalition are more likely to be in favor of reinitiating diplomatic relations with Syria to facilitate the return of refugees while parties in the March 14th coalition largely prefer to communicate with Syria via the international community to refrain from legitimizing the Assad regime. Religious differences within the March 14th coalition lead to differing views on Syrian refugees as well. The Maronite Christian Lebanese Forces (LF) and Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) are staunch proponents for the immediate return of refugees to Syria and politicians of this party exhibit more intensely negative rhetoric about refugees than the Sunni Muslim Future Movement (FM). This is reflective of the fact that Syrian refugees in Lebanon are predominantly Sunni Muslim.

While a consensus seems to be forming among most of the parties that refugees should soon return to Syria, the disagreement on this issue stems from the question of how and when these returns should happen. Much of the political discourse in Lebanon surrounding the return of refugees hinges on the word "voluntary". Most can agree that returns should be completed safely, but the addition of the word voluntary triggers for some a fear that refugees will not return of their own accord. This is the backdrop of political party rhetoric and engagement with the Syrian refugee issue that might influence students to join particular student groups on campus.

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[16] NDU Debate Club, Facebook Page. 2019
[17] NDU Social Club, Facebook Page. 2019
[18]Parreira, Christiana, Daniel L. Tavana, and Charles Harb. 2019. "University Elections and Political Socialization in the Developing World."
[19] Ibid.

Institutions of higher education and liberal student spaces are valued in political behavior literature for their role in strengthening liberal democratic institutions. This is often treated as a universal quality and is rarely viewed critically. Universities are shown to influence student political attitudes and behaviors during the early stages of their development, but evidence shows that universities tend to reflect and reproduce elements of the political context in which they are situated.[20] Rather than machines that uniformly produce liberal, pro-democracy, anti-establishment activists, universities are susceptible to cooptation and manipulation by political elites who seek to reproduce their power in these spaces. At Lebanese universities this has meant that existing establishment clientelist networks and identity politics have dominated student elections in the absence of any significant challenge from outside the system. The parties that enjoy the most influence at a given university are dependent primarily upon the demographic of the student body and the surrounding area of its campus. Universities located in predominantly Christian areas have stronger representation of Christian political parties and are likely to feature competition between the Lebanese Forces (LF) and the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM)[21].

Voting Process

Voting procedures for student council elections are well regulated and monitored and run parallel in many ways to national voting standards. In fact, the same NGO that ensures the transparency and reliability of national elections is involved in the student council elections of the largest universities in Lebanon. The Lebanese Association for Democratic Election (LADE) assists in the drafting of bylaws for election procedures. LADE is present on campus on the day of elections to ensure a peaceful environment and even announces the winners. The NGO also reports on individual students and groups who break electoral law by pressuring and intimidating voters to ensure a fair and transparent democratic process.

The accuracy of the system is routinely put to test by student candidates who maintain running lists of their pledged votes up until the announcement of the winners. This practice is feasible in smaller contexts and can be used to predict election results quite reliably. The fact that this method is so effective encourages some student groups to actively seek out potential supporters by searching the roster of new students for last names that are common among their candidates' sects or ethnic groups as they arrive on campus.[22]

The candidate running for election who represents an establishment party will often implore the un-affiliated student voter to vote for the candidate who is of their same religious or ethnic background as this must mean that they truly have the student's best interests at heart. These pressures to vote a certain way were described by students as emanating from candidates and at times even from the student's own friends and family.[23] An appeal to how the student's family would want them to vote and how their parents might feel about their decision to side with a student outside their own group is a compelling argument. Efforts to secure votes can escalate to forms of harassment with continued phone calls at all hours of the night, attempted bribes, and even threats and acts of violence.[24] For some schools the actual act of voting is now done remotely from the student's computer or phone. This system is currently in place at several

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[20] Ibid

[21] Tabbara, Rana.

[22] Interview Transcript, NDU. 2019

[23] Interview Transcript, LAU. 2019.

[24] Interview Transcript, NDU. 2019

universities and is provided by the administration.[25] Subjects noted that the e-voting system allows for complete privacy and shields students from some of the pressures that they might otherwise feel when compelled to vote in person. [26]

Independent Movements

The emergence of independent political movements and student groups on these campuses has posed the first significant challenge to the status quo of establishment control. As one of the first and now the largest student-led independent political organization in Lebanon, the Secular Club at AUB came onto the campus scene when it entered student council elections in 2012.[27] This first electoral campaign, under the name Campus Choice, ran on a platform supporting "skilled and dedicated independent student activists who seek to effectively represent students' interests".[28] Similar groups have formed on other campuses since then with a Secular Club running in elections at USJ in 2017, The Independent List running in elections at NDU in 2018 and Ghayyir running in the most recent elections at LAU this year. AUB saw consistent success in council elections winning four seats in 2015, five seats in 2016, six seats in 2017 and three seats in 2018. The USJ Secular Club was able to secure five seats in their first time running in elections in 2017. Across all four schools independent candidates won a total of one tenth of all available council seats in 2018 elections.[29] Relative to the much larger number of seats won by political parties at these universities the successes of independent groups may seem insignificant, but in the context of the previously unchallenged domination of these parties on campuses these seats are meaningful ground covered.

Any success at all in challenging establishment party influence is indicative of a great deal of effort and coordination on the part of independent movements who are at a critical disadvantage. Those that choose to run for elections on an independent platform do not present themselves as members of an "in-group" and are unable to access the benefits that come with that effective strategy.[30] In place of appealing to ethno-sectarian identity, these candidates must work all the harder to build a compelling platform with broad appeal. The emphasis placed on developing platforms with compelling arguments and attention to detail is a defining characteristic of independent campaigns at these universities and has influenced the partisan student groups to make efforts to emulate this format. The effect that these movements have had in changing the way that candidates present themselves and their platforms is an achievement in itself. Candidates across the board have felt the need to refine their messaging and develop clearer platforms to compete with those that are independent. In more ways than one the emergence of independent student groups on university campuses has induced and encouraged more competitive student council elections. The growing success of these movements on campuses in recent years is likely connected to the civil society response to the trash crisis of 2015 as movements on campus have been able to capitalize on mounting public disapproval of government inadequacy in addressing a critical issue like waste management. Campus politics both influence and are influenced by political movements and changing sentiments at the national level.

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[26] Interview Transcript, LAU. 2019
[27] AUB Secular Club. Webpage
[28] Ibid.
[29] Houri. 2018.
[30] Parreira, Tavana, & Harb. 2019.

The Secular Club at AUB does not limit its focus to campus centric issues alone, but has always been outward facing with a long commitment to the "nation-wide civic movement against the sectarian and corrupt political establishment".[31] Their response to sectarian politics transcends their campus and leads them to connect with independent groups on other campuses. The Mada Network is an NGO that was formed in 2017 by the members of the AUB Secular Club to connect the disparate independent student movements at various Lebanese universities. These connections empower and increase the capacity of every student group simply by providing an outlet for cross-communication and collaboration. The progressive, secular organization also positions itself as an outlet for students to remain politically active after graduation as an alternative to leaving the country they love. Among our respondents many students voiced competing desires to either remain in the place they love and call home or to flee a broken system for broader horizons abroad. The connection of these movements and the creation of networks like Mada to foster coordination among them are positive developments towards the translation of the support and success of these movements from the campus to national politics

These independent movements that have taken root on campuses mirror similar movements that have slowly been gaining ground in municipal elections. Beirut Madinati (Beirut My City) began as a response to the waste management failures of the Lebanese government and was born out of the large-scale "garbage crisis" protests of 2015 and 2016. A group of activists and academics from AUB formed this volunteer-driven local political movement in 2015 and ran in the 2016 Beirut municipal elections on a multi-point platform that prioritized the efficient provision of public goods in a time when the government had continually failed its citizens in providing adequate electricity, water, and waste removal services. Municipal government would have been a promising outlet for Beirut Madinati to address service provision issues as municipalities are empowered to address issues like these that the national government has avoided. While the campaign eventually proved unsuccessful against the well-established Future Movement's "Beirutis List", Beirut Madinati received 40% of the total votes. This was an unexpectedly high percentage of votes for an independent movement in a district that had previously been under tight establishment control. The challenge that Beirut Madinati posed to the FM in these elections led the establishment party to produce an actual concrete platform for the first time ever. This was never done previously and is both a sign that independent movements can influence establishment parties and a sign that establishment parties will go to great lengths to prevent independents from winning elections. Independent movements present an alternative to the system that appears more appealing in light of establishment failures. The trash crisis is a prime example of a social issue that inspired the formation of a rapidly growing movement which drew its continued support from a diverse group of Lebanese citizens who met on common ground when it came to frustration with government inefficiency. The Lebanese government response to the Syrian refugee crisis is also plagued by similar inefficiencies.

The Lebanese government continues to refer to Syrian refugees as "displaced" peoples in order to avoid settlement and integration according to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Lebanese General Security (LGS) has engaged in the lengthy and difficult process of returning refugees to Syria. Each individual is cleared by the Assad Regime to confirm that they fled ISIS and not Assad before they return to Syria. According to our interview with U.S. Embassy Beirut's Refugee Coordinator, only about 15000 refugees of the 1.1 million have

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[31] AUB Secular Club. Webpage.

returned to Syria via LGS's return initiative. Additionally, the Lebanese government has refrained from using language pertaining to the voluntary return of refugees with an emphasis placed instead on the safety of the process.

The Lebanese government is coming under increasing international and domestic pressures to expeditiously return refugees to Syria. The increasingly inflammatory rhetoric from the political establishment is a source for concern that Syrians are and will continue to be forced to leave Lebanon against their will. The lack of a coordinated and effective policy framework for addressing this issue is a cause for frustration with ineffective government institutions. In place of a coordinated and effective national strategy, individual political parties and municipalities have elected to develop and implement their own strategies and programs for providing services for, policing, and facilitating the return of refugees to Syria. This decentralization of refugee policy favors municipalities as viable options for independent political movements looking to implement their own policies or programs to address the issue.

Campus elections and municipal elections alike seemed to amount to foregone conclusions before the emergence of independent movements. In both cases the level of competition and quality of platforms were improved with the inclusion of these movements. The formation of independent movements is tied to mounting public discontent with establishment elite and ineffective systems. The symbolic victory of Beirut Madinati in challenging the establishment signaled a change in public opinion as a result of the same frustrations that the next generation of independent activists feel at universities across Lebanon. Campus politics and activism have been the precursor to national movements in Lebanon before and the growth of active independent student movements could form the basis for the next wave in Lebanese national politics.[32] While recent independent movements have not achieved desired success in municipal and parliamentary elections in the face of establishment push-back, future successes of these movements will likely be founded on their ability to effectively harness and incorporate the enthusiasm and power of student activists.

Case Study II- The Lebanese Cabinet Negotiation Gridlock 2018-2019

The Lebanese Constitution calls for the Council of Ministers to be reassigned each time there is a new parliamentary election. In May 2018, Lebanon held its first parliamentary elections in nine years, calling for the Prime Minister to form a new Council of Ministers with approval from the President.[33] During this time period, Lebanon was also facing the surmounting pressure of the Syrian refugee influx, causing an added layer of complexity to the political landscape. Shortly thereafter, the Prime Minister began negotiating with heads of major parties, sects, and coalitions to form the new Council of Ministers or as the Lebanese refer to them: the National Government. The negotiation and formation process took about 8 months leaving the country in political vacuum and acting ministers for a prolonged period of time.[34] The Council of Ministers is Lebanon's primary executive body. Post-Taif, the Lebanese government began using the term "سيادية وزارة", which translates into "sovereign or key ministry", meaning ministries relating to external defense, internal security, foreign affairs, and finance.[35] Furthermore, Taif dictates that these key ministries must be distributed equally among sects, making sectarian

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[32] Harik, Judith, and Lokman Meho. 1996.

[33] MEE & Agencies. 2018
[34] Ibid.
[35] Humud, Carla. 2018.

disagreement over them a primary issue in the negotiation. The Council of Ministers includes more ministries than the aforementioned key ministries, but given the important role those ministries play in Lebanese government and society, they are highly sought after by major parties. As the term of the previous Council had expired and no agreement on a new Council had been reached, the Lebanese government was in caretaker status for 8 months.[36] Had the Prime Minister and President been able to incorporate the nine elements of a successful negotiation into this formation process one can argue that the gridlock would not have occurred.[37] Given that Lebanon has a tumultuous background of intertwined religions and long standing political animosities, it was difficult to apply these nine elements into the negotiation framework. This case study aims to look back at this most recent complex multiparty negotiation in Lebanon and analyze its outcome.

The Negotiation Process

According to Dr. Charles Field, there are nine elements to a successful negotiation framework, which starts by identifying the parties and directly linking them with the issues they present and are advocating for, making parties and issues the first two of the nine elements. Dr. Field then outlines the next seven elements of a successful negotiation, those being relationship, interests, communication, options, standards of legitimacy, alternatives, and commitments. In this case the parties are the Prime Minister of Lebanon Saad Hariri, the President of Lebanon Michel Aoun, and the leaders of the various coalition blocs and parties. Hezbollah, The Lebanese Forces (LF), The Free Patriotic Movement (FPM), Amal, The Future Movement (FM), and Phalange Party (PP) were the most mentioned and active actors in the list of various other parties. These parties have been organized into two major coalitions, March 8 and March 14, discussed in more detail below.[38] Additionally, the Lebanese public is considered a party in this negotiation since the public is represented by the democratically elected parliament who constitutionally must grant the newly formed Council of Ministers their trust.

The issues that divide the March 8 and March 14 coalitions are many, but for the sake of this case study they can be narrowed down to six:

- Key ministry allocation based on sect.
- Hezbollah's weapon arsenal and military capability.[39]
- FM and Prime Minister Hariri's loss of seats in Parliament & LF's newly acquired seats.[40]
- FPM as a party and President of the Republic.
- FPM & Hezbollah's calls to modify the Taif Agreement.[41]

While some of these issues are not new to the Lebanese political debate, some arose during the Council formation process. Hezbollah's possession of weapons has always been a redline for March 14 and independent politicians such as former President Michel Sleiman.[42] FM, Prime Minister Hariri's party, lost a number of seats in the May 2018 parliamentary elections giving the FM less political capital over Cabinet seat options, specifically in a key ministry. Subsequently,

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[36] Ibid.
[37] Field, Charles. 2015
[38] Humud, Carla. 2019.
[39] President Sleiman, Michel. 2019.
[40] Bahout, Joseph. 2018.
[41] Ibid.
[42] President Sleiman, Michel. 2019.

the LF gained more seats in the 2018 parliamentary election, giving the party leader Samir Geagea the capital needed to demand a key ministry. The FPM, who's former leader is the current President of the Republic Michel Aoun, announced that their ministry allocation number should not be merged with that of the President Aoun. Finally, FPM and Hezbollah mentioned their desire to amend the Taif Agreement to create a major ministerial bloc aligned with the President's policies.[43] Retrospectively, these issues lawmakers had at the negotiating table were not defined in broad enough terms and seemed to be on the outset impossible to align or unify without one or more party concessions driving the negotiation away from the parties interests.

Nine Elements of a Successful Negotiation

Framing the Negotiation

Parties ◄──────────────────────────► Issues

Communication   Relationship

Interests

Options

Criteria

Alternatives   Commitment
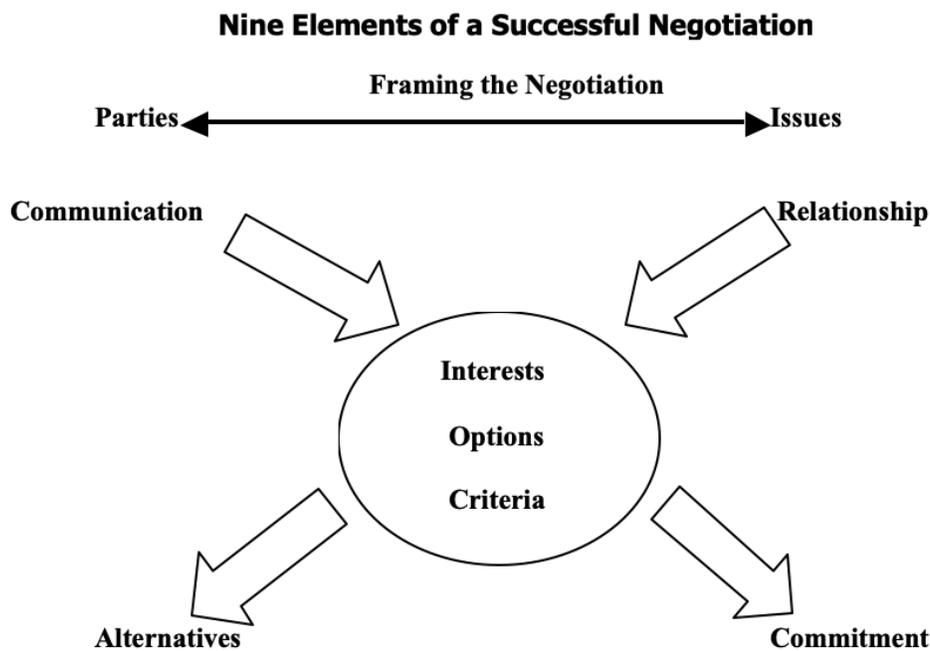
Figure 3.[44]

The relationships between these parties makes up the most complex faction of this process, therefore it is important to define the blocs, parties, coalitions and their relationships to one another with some historical background. The added level of complication in the Lebanese political system is the aforementioned religious component post-Taif, also known as sectarianism.[45] Moreover, the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Al- Hariri in 2005 led to newly modified post-2005 blocs of alliances which are still mostly reflected in today's Lebanese government.[46] The two major alliance blocs are known as the March 8th and March 14th, both of which have a mix of Christian and Muslim representation.[47]As mentioned before, the March 14 & March 8 coalitions do not share the same characteristics today as they did in 2005. The two coalitions have gone through serious changes and reforms since 2005, shifting

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[43] Bahout, Joseph. 2018.
[44] Field, Charles. 2015.
[45] Suleiman, Michel.1967
[46] Humud, Carla. 2018
[47] ibid.

their interests and fractioning the relationships among parties within them, further weakening these already loosely held coalitions. Since 2005, the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), from the Druze sect has played a decisive role in swinging votes and decisions in favor of either the March 8 or March 14 coalition. Figure 2, below provides a visual representation of the coalitions since 2005. That being said, the relationship between the parties is not uniformly religious as the two main coalitions are a mix of Muslim and Christian parties. Since 2005, the coalitions have evolved and gone through various stages of change and although some ties within coalitions have weakened the main bi-coalition framework exists in the Lebanese government today.[48]
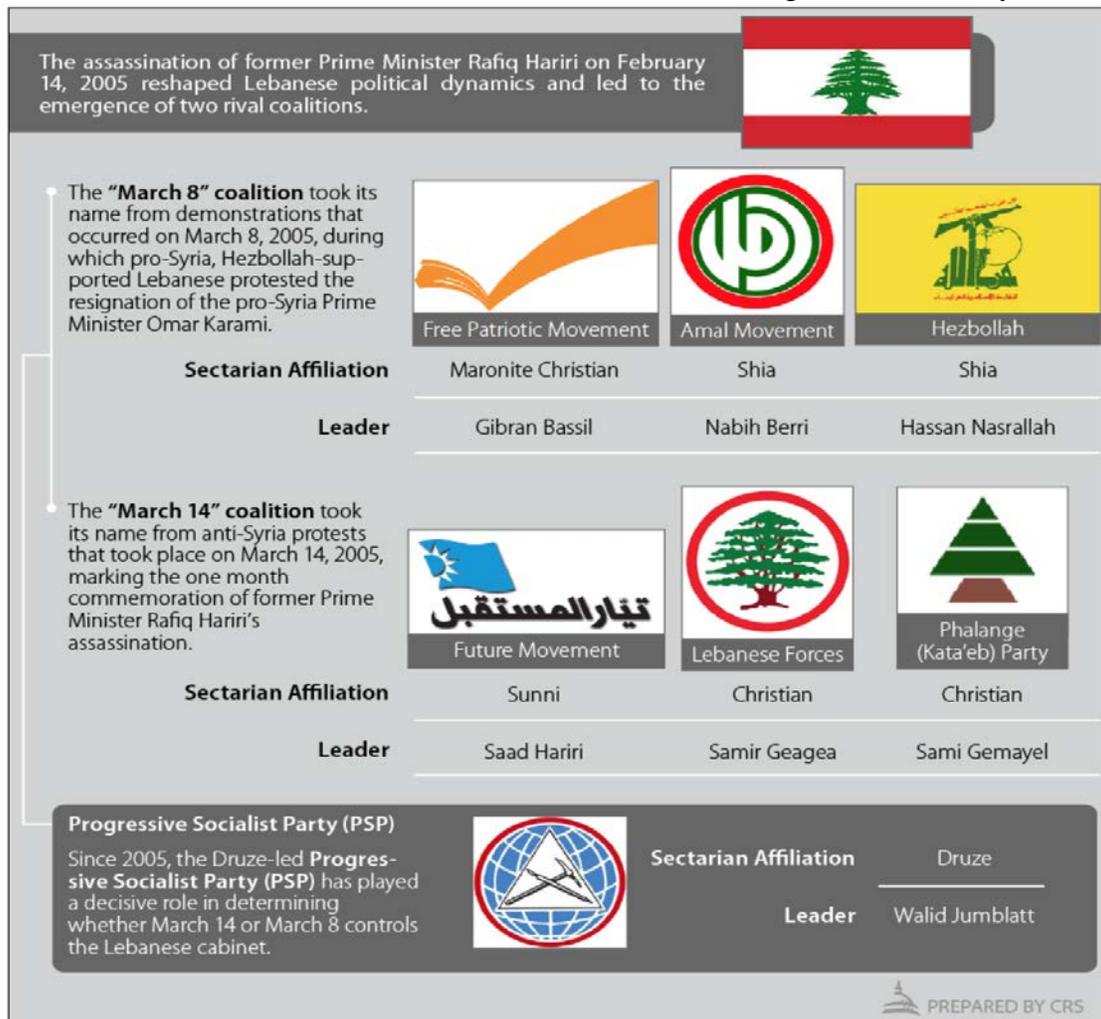
Figure 4. [49]

Specifically, the recent friction within the coalitions can be tied directly to Syrian refugees. Syrian refugees who migrated to Lebanon are predominantly Sunni, paving way for more sympathy to their cause from the Future Movement and the broader Muslim sect. On the other hand, the LF, Kata'eb, and FPM are all Maronite parties that do not support Syrian refugee settlement. Lebanese Christians still feel negatively about Syrians due to the Syrian army's

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[48] ibid.
[49] Humud, Carla. 2018.

mistreatment of the Christian population during their occupation of Lebanon.[50] As per the aforementioned Human Rights Watch report, Sunni Syrians were targeted for forced evictions and returns at a much more alarming rate than Christian Syrians.[51]

The interests held by the parties align directly with the issues, making it easy to deduce that the main interest by all parties is to have as much control or power in the executive government.[52] While March 14's interests were reciprocal to the democratic parliamentary election outcome and constitution, March 8's interests were confounded with their demand to modify the constitutional framework.[53] All parties in any negotiation have interests and those are to be distinguished from their demands.[54] Furthermore, a major interest that was extremely important to all parties was to actually elongate the duration of the negotiation and play for time.[55] According to Joseph Bahout, there are three different elements to this interest in time:

1. The implicit knowledge that the United States is attempting to significantly weaken Iran, and subsequently Hezbollah. This happening would play to March 14's power over government formation.
2. The Syrian battlefield moving to the Assad regime's advantage during the Battle of Idlib would give March 8 power over Lebanese government formation.
3. The end of the hearings of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, which ended in September 2018, were promised to reveal whether or not Hezbollah will be guilty for the assassination of Prime Minister Hariri's late father Rafik. Results accusing Hezbollah would give March 14 power over government formation.

For those three reasons, it was in each coalitions personal interest to prolong the negotiation process in hopes that one of those three revelations would shift the balance of power in the Lebanese political arena.[56] All three happenings were bound to unfold during the short term while negotiating a new Council of Ministers. The only common ground the majority of parties saw was the brink of economic collapse Lebanon was on, and that a prolonged caretaker government would be detrimental to the Lebanese economy.[57] The coalitions contradicting interests seemed to drive them towards schemes to undercut one another, leading to poor and in some cases non-existent communication.

Communication is essential to the success of any negotiation whether it be bilateral or multilateral, and in this case the communication was often held back given tensions between certain factions of the coalitions.[58] Good communication requires extra work and a desire to reach across the aisle to understand the other parties involved. By contrast, poor communication can quickly lead to failure due to misunderstanding.[59] Looking back at the history of the March 8 and March 14 coalition much of their communication had been distorted due to their extreme differences of opinion. Going back to the issue of Hezbollah's arms, sheds light on a main point of poor communication between the two coalitions. Some parties within the March 14 coalition refuse to communicate or negotiate with Hezbollah until they give up their weapons to the

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[50] Human Rights Watch. 2018.
[51] Human Rights Watch. 2018.
[52] Bahout, Joseph. 2018.
[53] Bahout, Joseph. 2018.
[54] Field, Charles. 2015.
[55] Bahout, Joseph. 2018.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] MEE & Agencies. 2019.
[59] Field, Charles. 2015.

national government, giving birth to a new problem within the existing case lawmakers are trying to solve. Specifically regarding the Cabinet formation case, President Aoun hinted prior to the start of negotiations that there had been agreements made before the parliamentary election between Hariri, Aoun, and Geagea, showing a direct example of backdoor communication that did not include the larger negotiation framework who will later have a voice at the table.[60] The secret deals that were primarily sought to be beneficial in the long run, were premature since parties had set up a deal without considering options in the event of a change in voter results. Hariri's loss of seats in the parliamentary election is what led to the premade secret deal to become null and void, wasting time and creating false hope within a section of the larger multiparty framework.

Options in a negotiation are the beginning towards reaching a common ground, the increased amount of options presented by each party in the negotiation gives the negotiators a better ability to compromise. In this case the LF presented a narrow set of options, because as mentioned before, Samir Geagea felt as though his party had the political capital to make certain demands towards key ministries reciprocal to their parliamentary seat gain. On the other hand, the FM and Prime Minister Hariri presented more options to the table given the fact that he recognized his party's decline in political capital reciprocal to the 2018 parliamentary outcome. That being said, the amount of options presented to and by the two major parties of the March 14 coalition were dictated by the constitution, more specifically the Taif Agreement. By contrast, the major parties of the March 8 coalition, Hezbollah and the FPM presented options that required a modification of the constitutional framework.[61] In this negotiation case, the standard of legitimacy is the Lebanese Constitution, which includes the sectarian shares outlined in the Taif Agreement.

The standard of legitimacy in any negotiation is crucial to primarily ensure fairness amongst parties at the table, making this standard the bedrock of common ground and understanding.[62] As mentioned previously, there were calls by the FPM to modify the Constitution in order to gain a majority bloc. Specifically, this modification meant disregarding the President's political affiliation giving him a number of seats to allocate separate from his party's allocation. This would create an imbalance in the structure of the Council of Ministers and would set a bad precedent for future council formation negotiations. Standards of legitimacy exist to protect parties from unreasonable demands, as in this case the constitution protected the rest of the parties from the FPM and Hezbollah's unreasonable demands.[63] This standard of legitimacy drives us to the two final elements of a wise negotiation: alternatives and commitments.

Alternatives are the solutions that arise in a negotiation without an agreement by acclamation from the whole negotiating framework; on the other hand commitments happen when, to a certain extent, each party involved forgoes part of their ask to reach a common ground.[64] In particularly this negotiation, alternatives were not an option because a government needed to be formed. The economy of Lebanon was close to total collapse and the Council of Minister gridlock did not help improve the socioeconomic situation of the country.[65] Many

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[60] Bahout, Joseph. 2018.
[61] Bahout, Joseph. 2018.
[62] Field, Charles. 2015.
[63] Ibid.
[64] ibid.
[65] Salloukh, Bassel. 2019.

alternatives were presented by parties, but none actually committed to those alternatives since walking away from the table was not an option. March 14 was adamant on having LF in a sovereign ministry given their gain of parliamentary seats. Furthermore, March 14 did not want Hezbollah to have any sovereign ministries as that would hurt U.S. aid to Lebanon. Additionally, March 8 wanted FPM to have more than one sovereign ministries according to their constitutional modification plea. Moreover, Hezbollah's second alternative was that they would agree to no sovereign ministries if FPM, their Christian allies, would have two. The alternatives, are what kept the negotiation process in a complete stalemate.

In conclusion, many argue that the commitments made in January and the outcome of the 8 month negotiations resulted in no real difference from the initial proposals made in secret by Aoun, Geagea, and Hariri prior to the election. The result of the eight-month negotiation was an prolonged proposal of alternatives, followed by walking away from the table for a few days, then walking back to the table after realizing they cannot settle for alternatives. As for commitments, the LF conceded and agreed to the Deputy Premiership without any sovereign ministries, the FM agreed to the interior ministry, the FPM agreed to the Foreign & Defense ministries. Hezbollah on the other hand received the Ministry of Health, although the Minister is not an official member of Hezbollah, he is known to be an ally of the group. Additionally, Hezbollah agreed to have a second minister who is Sunni pro-Hezbollah and also not officially a member of the party. The only positive commitment derived from this long negotiation was the need to appoint more women to the Council of Ministers. This led to the appointment of the country's first ever woman Minister of Interior, Raya el Hassan, along with three other women ministers in non-sovereign ministries. What can be learned from this negotiation is that lack of communication by making premature agreements can potentially lead to an unexpected future with new circumstances, leaving the negotiators with a large number of polarizing alternatives and interests. Unfortunately, what forced Lebanon into commitments over this Council formation, even after eight months of debate, was the country's impending economic failure and lawmaker's forced hands to compromise rather than true willingness to do so. Finally, the issue of Syrian refugees in Lebanon further complicates the alliances within the post-2005 political coalitions. While within March 14 and March 8 there is are alliances between Muslims and Christians, it is safe to conclude that Christians are less supportive of Syrian refugee assistance than Muslims. This new issue of Syrian refugees is an additional obstacle in clear communication and relationship building among the already weakly tied post-2005 coalitions.

President Michel Sleiman on Sectarianism

When asked about sectarianism, both former President Sleiman and MP Paula Yacoubian indicated that the augmentation of this political dynamic will continue to destroy the country. President Sleiman added that the Constitution, following the Taif Agreement, includes a clause calling for the establishment of a "Sectarian Elimination Committee". This committee would be presided over by the President of the Republic, to then establish an upper house of government that represents all sects based on sectarian quotas; therefore, freeing the parliament of sectarian quotas making it a lower house with the same number of representatives as today representing the true democratic will of the voters.[66] Furthermore, the president added the need to truly act on implementing decentralization of government administrations. Discussing the political atmosphere in universities in Lebanon is what prompted the President to share with us these

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[66] President Sleiman, Interview. 2019.

steps towards eliminating sectarianism in Lebanese politics, as he did not believe that sectarianism in the only elected house of government is a healthy model of governance for the youth of Lebanon to mirror and have represent them. That being said, many argue that an upper house of government already exists by referring to the Council of Ministers. The upper house mentioned in the Lebanese Constitution is one that has yet to be formed, which would be a house that is directly elected by the people filled by a sectarian quota. The Council of Ministers is an appointed body by the Prime Minister and approved by the President, making it the Cabinet rather than an upper house.

Conclusion

In summary, the Syrian refugees have impacted Lebanon and caused a great stress on the government's ability to improve its situation. One interviewee notably added that it seems as though every time in history Lebanon has had a brief moment of tranquility to begin moving forward and improving, some event happens within the country or along its borders that sets everything back years if not decades. What seemed to be a common response among university students is that the Lebanese government is using the issue of Syrian refugees as an excuse to cover up their shortcomings. Interestingly, those Christian parties and sects who have been outwardly against the presence of refugees and denouncing their presence have begun to look at more creative ways to criticize their presence. For example, a major river way in Lebanon that has been heavily polluted for a number of years, became the main talking point of the FPM blaming refugees for the pollution and calling on the national government to expel them in attempts to appear more environmentally conscious. In the party's history there has not been such a specific environmentally focused talking point, but all of a sudden this creative anti-refugee rhetoric emerged. The Syrian Refugee crisis in Lebanon comes at a very crucial time in the country's history. As the country is on the brink of economic collapse[67], one can only imagine the pressure on government institutions. It is important to closely observe what will happen in the near future to further address the issue of Syrian refugees, given that current responses are vague and executed mostly by international organizations rather than the Lebanese government. In both case studies, it might seem that the overwhelming sentiment is one blaming sectarianism and corruption at every opportunity possible for Lebanon's bad socioeconomic situation. When asked to describe their outlook on the future of Lebanon, every interviewee voiced a sense of hope for improvement in their response. All subjects interviewed believed in the resiliency of the Lebanese Republic, a country with longstanding historical precedent for overcoming adversity in the face of overwhelming odds dating back to the Phoenicians. What has kept Lebanon afloat during recent times of sectarian gridlock is the strong presence of civil society pressing for freedom of expression and association with regional partners.[68] Some of the next crucial steps towards a durable solution is for the Lebanese people to cultivate strong independent leaders and to elect those representing the aforementioned civil society interests. Following our meeting with MP Paula Yacoubian, Lebanon's only civil society member of parliament, we learned that her views align directly with those of the independent university students who believe that the old framework binding Lebanese political coalitions together is detrimental to the country's sustainability.[69]

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[67] Interview Dr.Salloukh. 2019.
[68] Rizkallah, Rand Corp. 2019.
[69] Interview MP Yacoubian. 2019.

Our research has drawn us to conclude that there is a decline in traditional political elites' popularity, and that independent movements are forming slow and steady growth reaching the ears and minds of more citizens than ever before. It is true that independent student groups do not have specific positions on the issue of Syrian refugees, but they do know how to work in diverse teams to accomplish their goals. While they might not address these national level issues on campus, that is not to discredit their ability to translate their campus activism to national activism in years to come. The initial group that formed Beirut Madinati was comprised of academics, student activists, and alumni from the AUB Secular Club. The campaign's significant challenge to the establishment directly shows what independent student activists are able to achieve when they apply to national politics their experiences gained through university civic engagement. Given that all the other groups from different universities we analyzed in Case Study I were established only one or two years ago, one can only imagine the potential for these groups to organize in future national campaigns opposing the establishment. Moreover, the ability of the newly established Mada Network to increase the effectiveness of cross-campus collaboration will elevate the interests and concerns of independent student groups to the national level.

The post-2005 political coalitions in Lebanon are not as strong as they were in 2005 since the influx of Syrian refugees has further pushed the Christians and Muslims apart because of their opposing viewpoints on Syrian refugee settlement. Establishment politicians have used Syrian refugees as a scapegoat for the inadequate delivery of public services and political gridlock that existed before their arrival. Civil Society movements have demonstrated success in challenging the establishment to act on significant issues. Civil Society can also pressure establishment politicians to address the Syrian refugee issue in future election cycles, if not win and solve the issue themselves. Finally, the government must act on implementing the Taif's "Sectarian Elimination Committee" which will aim to establish an upper house of government based on sectarian quotas, ridding the parliament of such sectarian divisions.

The case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon is one that has added to the weakening of alliances and has encouraged the bolstering of sectarian identity as politicians appeal to populist fears. As one student mentioned, "it is as if they were beginning to step out of their comfort zones (sects) to defend our (the people) interests, but now they are going back to their comfort zones and defending themselves by huddling with their sects". There are two visions for a future of Lebanon, one that must be put to action in the short term and one that will inherently happen in the long term as an effect. In the short term, the people must hold their representatives accountable at the ballot box by using the tool of democracy they have at their disposal to give power to those seeking to represent them rather than corporate and external interests. The influx of Syrian refugees in Lebanon has shed light on those establishment elites who seek to maintain their control of power by polarizing society and pitting its members against one another based on their differences. Instead, independent movements have realized that the diversity is Lebanon's greatest strength. The prosperous future of Lebanon lies in the hands of those who will uphold the values of merit, transparency, and integrity and resist the temptations of sectarianism in electing leaders to shape the way forward.

"There must be a measure of pleasure reserved for those who can deploy sectarianism with such effectiveness and precision, who can switch the country's public mood from one of national reconciliation to one of acrimony. There must be something pleasurable about seeing people suffer so much and yet rest assured that sectarianism's disciplinary violence, ideological hegemony, and vast clientelist networks protect against any prospective popular uprising. The pleasures of sectarianism are indeed so injurious and woeful." –Dr. Bassel Salloukh, The Pleasures of Sectarianism.[70]

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    This report written by scholars in the field of education details the effects of the Syrian refugee crisis on each of the three countries neighboring Syria and explains how the education systems in each of these countries are failing to meet the needs of refugees in different ways.

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[70] Salloukh, Bassel. 2018.

Specific policy recommendations are made for the case in Lebanon and valuable data found in this report will prove helpful in comparing Lebanese education policy to its neighbor countries.

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        This article written by medical anthropologists details the daily experience of Syrian and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in their struggle to maneuver within the Lebanese healthcare system responding to policies like refugee registration and insurance contracting. The authors explain how these factors can simultaneously prevent and/or disincentivize refugees' accessing healthcare services and expose them to structural violence while advocating for the incorporation of healthcare access into comprehensive plans to address refugee crises. This work will prove helpful in understanding the specific barriers to healthcare access for Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

President Sleiman, Michel. (2019). Field Research Interview Bechara, Hursen. Baabda, Lebanon

Rabil RG. (2016) The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: The double tragedy of refugees and impacted host communities. Lanham: Lexington Books.
        This book written by a political scientist examines the effects of the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon on institutions, and host communities in Lebanon. The author provides a clear, lucid

description of the legal, social, economic, and political effects that refugees have on Lebanese society and the system of social services as well as Lebanese attitudes towards refugees. This work will prove indispensable in our framing of the crisis as well as interpreting potential changes in political attitudes of host communities in Lebanon.

Refaat MM, Mohanna K. Syrian refugees in Lebanon: Facts and solutions. The Lancet.
         This article written by medical anthropologists details the dramatic effect on the health infrastructure in Lebanon caused by the influx of Syrian refugees must be addressed. The authors argue that the full coordination and cooperation of national and international organizations is vital in creating an emergency response plan to address the short term needs of refugees. They maintain that more emergency plans should be developed in the event that the battle of Damascus causes ⅙ of the Syrian population to migrate to neighboring countries. A final plan should be developed for the post-conflict phase of rebuilding in Syria. The proposed solutions to solving healthcare systematic failures in this article will prove useful in our interpretation of other Lebanese policy plans.

Reidy E. Nowhere to go. The Nation. (2018)
         This news article summarizes the Lebanese government's evolving response to Syrian refugees. Syrian refugees in Lebanon are only marginally more comfortable in Lebanon than in the warzones they have fled. Without access to sufficient health services, employment, or relative safety, the living conditions of many Syrians in Lebanon are deplorable and static. With little hope for a change in circumstances in the refugee legal framework of Lebanon, these conditions may begin to serve as an impetus for refugees to return to Syria prematurely. The Syrian refugee crisis is reminiscent, in the mind of many Lebanese politicians and citizens, of the Palestinian refugee crisis of 1948 which many believe contributed to tensions underlying the civil war in Lebanon. While Lebanon has welcomed many Syrian refugees into their borders, these refugees have never been able to attain citizenship or legally enter the labor market for fear of disruption to the delicate balance of the sectarian system. The limited tolerance shown for Syrian refugees in Lebanon seems to be waning as time wears on, as shown by increasingly negative rhetoric and continued clashes between security forces and Syrian refugees. Looking forward, Spring elections may bring an escalation to the refugee issue. This article is helpful in justifying our intentions of comparing the Palestinian and Syrian refugee crises in terms of policy responses as well as general attitudes and lived refugee experiences.
Rizkallah, Gengler, Reedy, Carpenter. (2019). Rand Corporation, Countering Sectarianism in the Middle East. From: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB10052.html

Saab, B. Brookings. 2008. Shaping Lebanon's Future.
https://www.brookings.edu/research/shaping-lebanons-future/

Salloum N. (2017) LAU's Independent Candidates Win Again at the 2017 Student Council Elections.

Salloukh, Bassel. (2018). The Pleasures of Sectarianism. From: https://www.lcps-lebanon.org/featuredArticle.php?id=131

Salloukh, Bassel. (2019). Field Research Interview Bechara, Hursen. Lebanese American Univeristy, Beirut, Lebanon.

Salloukh, B., et alii. (2015) *Politics of Sectarianism in Postwar Lebanon*. London: Pluto Press.
        This book written by a team of leading political scientists attempts to explain why the pressures and forces of the Arab Spring did not lead to a regime change in Lebanon and how sectarianism might have played a role in the Lebanese government's ability to avoid upheaval. The author illustrates the forces that maintain the sectarian balance and provides examples of those that often unsuccessfully work against it. This work will help us to understand nuances of sectarian politics in Lebanon and how this system might respond to shocks such as a refugee crisis.

Suleiman, Michel. (1967) The Role of Political Parties in a Confessional Democracy: The Lebanese Case. *The Western Political Quarterly* Vol. 20, No. 3 (Sep., 1967), pp. 682-693.
        This article written by a political scientist explains how a confessional democracy functions specifically in Lebanon and how political parties are placed along sectarian lines within Lebanese society. The author argues that contrary to other examples of this type of political system, Lebanese political parties are actually a driving factor in the maintenance of political stability and balance rather than a factor contributing to the downfall of the regime. This work will be helpful background knowledge in our analysis of interplay between political parties and sects and instrumental in our understanding of Lebanese politics on the whole.

Ṣāliḥ MM. (2009) The political views of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon: As reflected in May 2006. Beirut: al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations.
        This report published by a Lebanese think tank compiles data from 2006 indicating Palestinian views on topics including returning to Palestine, settlement options, weapons, camps' security and Lebanese authorities. This data is taken from over 1000 interviews conducted across nine locations in Lebanon and is helpful in understanding the predicament of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. This report will help us identify factors contributing to suffering and unrest among refugees and will prove useful in informing any interviews conducted with refugees.

U.S. Embassy Beirut Refugee Coordinator. 2019. Field Research Interview. Aoukar, Lebanon.

Verme, et alii. (2016) The welfare of Syrian refugees: Evidence from Jordan and Lebanon. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.