SECTARIAN GROUPS
AS SUB-STATE FOREIGN POLICY ACTORS?
THE CASE STUDY OF LEBANON

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ABSTRACT

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THE CASE STUDY OF LEBANON

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Previous studies on foreign policy have documented the proliferation of actors in addition to those focusing on the role of identities in shaping preferences and behavior of actors. This study aspires to address a void in the literature; the role of sectarian identities in foreign policy making by bringing sectarian groups into foreign policy studies as sub-state actors. In doing so, the dissertation adopts constructivist approach as a theoretical framework and assesses its merits for exploring the nexus of identity and the construction of interest in foreign policy and its implications on foreign policy behavior.

The thesis initially explores the evolution of foreign policy studies by giving specific emphasis on the emergence of multiple actors and the concept of identity

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in the literature. Then, it focuses on the analysis of Lebanese history and two case studies –Israel-Hezbollah War and Syrian civil war- through a close scrutiny of the emergence and the consolidation of foreign policy orientations, preferences and behavior of Maronite, Sunni, Shia and Druze communities in Lebanon.

As a qualitative work, the dissertation draws its sources from both primary and secondary sources in addition to a field work in Lebanon.

Through case studies together with a historical analysis of Lebanon based on a constructivist insight, this thesis responds to the necessity of further questioning the unitary actor model, the role of sectarian identity in interest-building processes and tries to present behavioral patterns of sub-state sectarian actors in foreign policy making.

Keywords: Sectarian groups, foreign policy actors, foreign policy, Lebanon.

ÖZ

DEVLET-ALTI DIŞ POLİTİKA AKTÖRÜ OLARAK MEZHEP GRUPLARI? LÜBNAN VAKA ANALİZİ

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Dış politika üzerine yapılan çalışmalar, farklı analiz düzeylerinde dış politika aktörlerinin çeşitliliği ile aktörlerin tercihleri ve davranışlarında kimliğin önemini ortaya koymuşlardır. Hâlihazırda bu çalışma, mezhep gruplarını dış politika çalışmalarına devlet-altı aktör olarak konu ederek literatürde göz ardı edilen dış politika yapım süreçlerinde mezhebi kimliğin rolünü tahlil etmeye taliptir. Kavramsal çerçevesini konstrüktivist (yapısalcı) tasavvur üzerine kuran çalışma, kimlik ile dış politikada çıkar inşası ilişkisi ve bu ilişkinin dış politika davranışlarına etkisini incelemektedir.

Mezhebi grupların devlet-altı dış politika aktörü olarak analiz edilip edilemeyeceğini sorgulayabilmek amacıyla bu tezde ilk olarak dış politika

çalışmalarının evrimi tahlil edilmiştir. Bu analizde çeşitli aktörlerin ortaya çıkışı ve kimliğin çıkar inşa sürecinde etkisi üzerinde durulmuştur. Teorik tartışmanın sonrasında ise Lübnan tarihi ile iki ayrı vaka –İsrail-Hizbullah Savaşı ve Suriye İç Savaşı- çalışmasında özellikle Maruni, Sünni, Şii ve Dürzi grupların dış politika cihetlerinin, tercihlerinin ve davranışlarının derinlemesine analizi yer almaktadır.

Nitel bir araştırma olan çalışmaya, birincil ve ikincil kaynakların yanı sıra Lübnan'da gerçekleştirilen saha çalışması kaynaklık etmektedir.

Sonuç olarak bu tez literatürdeki üniter devlet savının daha fazla sorgulanması çabasıyla çıkar inşa süreçlerinde kimliğin rolü ile devlet-altı dış politika aktörü olarak mezhebi grupların dış politika davranış modellerine ilişkin sonuçlara ulaşmayı hedeflemiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mezhebi gruplar, dış politika aktörleri, dış politika, Lübnan.

To my beloved family

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

English transliteration of Arabic words follows a simplified version of the system used in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, which does not include dots and microns. The only time I do not follow the system is when I quote directly from a written source, in which case I adopt the author's original spelling.

In the case of family names, I have used the transliterations of Lebanese last names, which are commonly transliterated in either English or French (for example, Chamoun instead of Sham'un). Additionally, where a family name begins with the definite article (Arabic: al; English: the), I retain the English, hence '*the* Assad family' rather than '*al*-Assad family'. If the family name is used as a person's name, I do not use the definite article, thus 'Bashar Assad' rather than 'Bashar al-Assad.'

Plurals are written by adding an 's' to the Arabic singular form (for example: Emir, Emirs or Sheikh, Sheikhs). Exempted from this rule are the cases in which the plural form in Arabic is more commonly used than the singular one in the literature, such as 'zaim – zuama.'

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Addressing the American public in August 2013, US President Barack H. Obama referred to the Middle East with the term '*that part of the world*' in his statement:

> We've ended one war in Iraq. We're ending another in Afghanistan. And the American people have the good sense to know we cannot resolve the underlying conflict in Syria with our military. In that part of the world, there are ancient sectarian differences, and the hopes of the Arab Spring have unleashed forces of change that are going to take many years to resolve (Obama 2013).

Contrary to the current commentators about the Middle East, President Obama was right that conflicts among religious groups are hardly new in this region and the crisis of the territorial states of the Middle East did not begin with the American occupation of Iraq in 2003. The root causes of the current crisis have dated back to the early years of post-World War I settlement and the subsequent regional and domestic developments because both the states and the boundaries had been artificially created contrary to the historical legacies (Hinnebusch 2014, p.4). Therefore, it is more convenient to argue that the following clashes between various sectarian groups in Iraq after 2003 under the auspices of regional powers during the years of power vacuum unleashed the sectarianization of political discourse at regional level in a more violent manner. In this regard, Michael Hudson's statement about the resilience of communal identities based on sectarian identities vis-à-vis the national one seems more reinforced and up-to-date than

ever because they are the result of historic doctrinal differences and memories of both antique and recent oppression (Hudson 1968, p.25).

It seems one of the worst now as the latest round of sectarian violence arises and the popular uprisings in the Arab world has just intensified this tendency and caused one of the deepest humanitarian crises all around the region. The civil clashes in Iraq, the rise of Hezbollah as the strongest political force and the growing sectarian tension in Lebanon since 2008, the sectarian discourse during the so-called Arab Spring, the Syrian civil war, and the rise of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria,[1] the war in Yemen, and other conflicts in the region had laid the framework for more violence and suspicion for a broader conflict based on sectarian identities (Luomi 2008, p.47). The so-called Arab Spring demonstrated that sectarian consciousness is degenerating into a sectarian enmity and clashes because both regional and global actors realized that sectarian narratives can easily turn out to be sources of popular mobilization (Reese 2013, p.6; Lynch 2013, p.10). As this violence ascends and the Middle East is witnessing a new phase of sectarian radicalism in our time, sectarian identities started to become more decisive in actors' perceptions and ideas about the ongoing developments. Therefore the issue of sectarian identity has become one of the most driving forces among the regional powers, especially between Iran and Saudi Arabia in addition to their regional allies (International Crisis Group 2014, pp.15−16). In parallel, with the recent developments, transnational[2] sectarian identity which threatens the existing state system in the Middle East has emerged as the most relevant agent of change in the politics of the region and an era-defining characteristic of the current Middle East (Luomi 2008, pp.5−6; Hazran 2010,

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[1] The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria is also known as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, Islamic State of Iraq and Al Sham or just as Islamic State.

[2] Throughout this thesis, there will be a frequent reference to the transnational nature of sectarian identities, which can be defined as the interconnectedness of co-sectarian groups across national borders in the forms of extra diplomatic relations or ties through individuals, religious institutions, cultural organizations and etc.

p.521). As a result, it seems that political conflicts based on sectarian divisions in the lack of politically and economically functioning states seem to have the potential challenge for the regional settlements for the foreseeable future (Abdo 2013a, p.5) and sectarian identities are going to shape foreign policy orientations and preferences of both states and non-state actors in the Middle East.

Subsequently, it has been observed that the deliberate and continuous exploitation of sectarian differences by regional and global actors lead to more radicalized sectarian divisions and more vivid appearance of sectarian actors in regional politics and as Vali Nasr argues, sectarian identities shape behavior of states and non-state actors as well as the regional alliances substantially (Nasr 2007). The role of sectarian identity in foreign policy behavior and alliances constitutes the main incentive of this study since sectarian identities provide not only certain answers to shape a social environment in which policy makers and other actors decide and act but also certain affiliations and points of reference that people define and redefine themselves in accordance with others. After all, as Nasr summarizes, "how you pray decides who you are" (Nasr 2012). While doing so, these identities continuously construct and re-construct the framework in which sectarian groups perceive the other actors and react to them and determine perceptions of actors about the ongoing developments through construction of the self and the other, as well as the preferences, threat perceptions and alliances of these actors in foreign policy issues.

At this point, it must be noted that although the re-intensification of sectarian discourse[3] is comparatively recent at regional level, it has always been the driving force in Lebanese politics especially after the early institutionalization of sectarianism as a part of administrative structure in the mid-nineteenth century. While most of the nation states were built upon multi-ethnic and multi-religious

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[3] An opinion polls conducted in 2011 by World Value Survey reveals the depth of the Sunni-Shia divide in Lebanon that around 80 % of both Sunnis and Shia expressed their trust to their co-religionists 'a great deal', while only 30 % trusted members of other community (Diwan & Chaitani 2015, p.11).

societies, Lebanon, in this respect, constitutes a unique example with its confessional system.[4] As discussed briefly above, however, after the current developments in the Middle East, "many countries in the Arab world are starting to look like Lebanon, once considered an Arab anomaly" and "over time, sectarian identities across the region may, like in Lebanon, come to seem continuous and permanent" (Salloukh 2014, p.1). Thus, it might be a timely effort to look, analyze, and understand the sectarian groups in Lebanon with their foreign policy orientations, preferences and behavior in order to have further insight about how the region is evolving with the rise of sectarian politics. The rise of sectarian awareness at regional level immediately mirrored itself in the Lebanese context and deepened the sectarian rifts while strengthening sectarian alliances of Lebanese actors. Especially during the Syrian civil war, sectarian divisions became more conspicuous and influential in foreign policy decisions and alliances of Lebanese sectarian leaders. In this conjuncture, the role of sectarian groups in the field of foreign policy of Lebanon appears to draw attention in the literature in the coming years not only because Lebanese politics challenged the traditional understanding of foreign policy studies but also because regional politics started to resemble Lebanon in many respects.

Previous works have documented and analyzed the existence of various actors in foreign policy making other than state. However only recently have studies started to place identity-based domestic groups such as the role of Evangelists in US foreign policy and that of certain fundamental groups in Israeli foreign policy, at the center of their analysis on foreign policy behavior and moved beyond the old premises of traditional IR theories, as will be discussed in the next chapter. In this

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[4] Confessionalism is a type of consociationalism (Lijphart 1969), which recognizes the differences along ethnic, sectarian or linguistic lines in a political system in which no sub-group controls the whole structure and commands a majority (Canadian for Justice and Peace in the Middle East 2007). Although confessionalism, or consociationalism, seems very efficient at first glance in preserving minority rights, it is, indeed, an ad-hoc solution neglecting the realities of changing demographic structures and demands and therefore it fails to adjust the system in accordance with the new developments (MacQueen 2009, pp.41–42). For a more elaborate discussion on confessional democratic system of Lebanon please see: *Democracy and Power-Sharing in Stormy Weather: The Case of Lebanon* by Tamirace Fakhoury-Mühlbacher (Fakhoury Mühlbacher 2009).

context, it is strongly believed that the proliferation of sub-state domestic actors in the literature cannot be explanatory as long as these studies ignore the role of ideas and perceptions based on identities of actors.

By arguing that sectarian groups could be considered as unit of analysis in foreign policy studies at the beginning of this PhD research, this thesis now asks how sectarian groups behave as sub-state foreign policy actors in countries where society is divided along sectarian identities and how sectarian identities matter in terms of the definition of the self and the other; or the ally and the enemy in foreign policy affairs. While answering the main research question, this research also addresses certain points related to Lebanese foreign policy making and the role of sectarian groups in Lebanon with the examination of Lebanese history and two case studies, namely the Israel – Hezbollah War in 2006 and the Syrian civil war. Who produces foreign policy of Lebanese government? How have sectarian groups been politicized in Lebanon in foreign policy matters? Do Lebanese sectarian leaders have authentic foreign policy aims of their own? What is the role of foreign powers in making Lebanese foreign policy? How does transnational nature of sectarian identities matter in terms of building alliances for Lebanese sectarian groups?

In light of the ramifications of the rise of the sectarian identity in foreign policy preferences and behavior, this study tries to contribute to the literature in two major directions: from perspective of both the discipline of International Relations (IR) and Area Studies: one in the field of foreign policy at theoretical level related to the discussions on unit of analysis, uniformity of state, foreign policy actors and behavior; the other is about foreign policy making in Lebanon in the literature of the Middle Eastern Studies. First, it is intended to contribute to the study of foreign policy in terms of unit of analysis not only by questioning the unitary actor model but also by brining sectarian groups into the center of discussions through recognizing the role of sectarian identity in the construction of perceptions and interests.

Second, this study analyzes the nexus of sectarian identity and foreign policy making along with a close scrutiny of Lebanese sectarian actors in order to show how sectarian perceptions and ideas in fact an integral part of communitarian imaginations in foreign policy affairs. In this respect, a research on the role of sub-state sectarian groups would present a deeper understanding for Lebanese studies in particular and the Middle Eastern Studies in general as many countries of the region started to resemble Lebanon. When one reads about Lebanese foreign policy, it is a wonder whether one can really talk about a national foreign policy. Moreover, it is observed in the literature that there does not exist sufficient emphasis on Lebanese domestic actors as foreign policy actors because these studies generally focus on the role of regional and systemic variables.[5] As will be covered in details, this thesis illustrates how Lebanon's complex confessional system and the multiplicity of foreign policy orientations have shaped foreign policy making processes in Lebanon by giving emphasize on the role of sub-state sectarian actors. At this point, it is considered that any comparative study on the motivations, desire and behavioral patterns of sectarian groups in Lebanon and their perceptions about foreign policy developments would present a beneficial contribution to the Middle Eastern Studies as well.

Thanks to the existing studies on foreign policy in both literatures of IR and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), there is now a fairly good understanding of nature of foreign policy behavior and multiple actors from different theoretical

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[5] During the literature review, it is observed that Lebanese foreign policy has not been studied adequately. Even major works which focus on the foreign policies of Middle East states ignore Lebanon and it is mostly studied as "a battlefield for various forces, whereas Lebanon itself as well as its foreign policy is not discussed" (Korany & Dessouki 2008). Therefore it is observed that only the following studies try to explain the reasoning and processes in Lebanese foreign policy: *The Foreign Policy of Lebanon: Lessons and Prospects for the Forgotten Dimension* (Hitti 1989), *Is a Lebanese Foreign Policy Possible?* (Salamé 1988), *Reflections on Lebanon's Foreign Policy* (Salem 1994), *Lebanon and Europe: The Foreign Policy of a Penetrated State* (Najem 2003), *The Art of the Impossible: The Foreign Policy of Lebanon* (Salloukh 2008), *Two-Level Games in a Battleground State Lebanon and Foreign Policy* (Bloomquist et al. 2011), *Post-war Foreign Policy: Syrian Penetration and Lebanese Interests* (Najem 2012), Foreign Policy Battles in Post-Syria Lebanon: The Case of the 2006 War (Khanafer 2013). Lastly Henrietta Wilkins studied Lebanese foreign policy from a perspective of domestic political actors in her PhD thesis named *The Making of Lebanese Foreign Policy: Understanding the 2006 Hezbollah-Israeli War* (Wilkins 2013).

perspectives. However, the introduction of sectarian identity to the research reveals how materialist/rationalist approaches such as realism and liberalism, which assume the world as an objective reality, fall short of explaining the underlying dynamics of foreign policy behavior since perceptions and identities of actors matter less compare to material factors in these studies. Thus, this study adapts constructivist approach, as a middle ground attempting to build a bridge between positivists/materialist and post-positivist theories in the discipline (Adler 1997, p.323), since it emphasizes the importance of ideas, norms, and identities in the construction of preferences and interests, which give meaning to the world and therefore became the basis of interests. By doing so, this thesis scrutinizes the complex nexus of sectarian identity and the construction of interests in foreign policy preferences and in alliance building. From the main concern of this research, constructivist insight is advantageous not only in understanding the importance of the historical relationship among different religious communities in the construction of conflicting social group identities, but also in emphasizing the political, social and economic dimensions of these sectarian identities. Additionally, with its emphasis on the construction of identities in socio-historical processes, constructivist approach allows researcher to explore the possibility of the existence of a range of so-called national interests, and their implications on foreign policy choices of various sectarian groups while referring to the continuous debate over their collective identity. Although constructivist scholars have generally adapted their studies at nation state level,[6] it is strongly believed that constructivist approach in this study would be an appropriate paradigm for explaining not only the Lebanese foreign policy but also the motivations, desire and behavioral patterns of sectarian groups as well as the role of sectarian identity in constructing foreign policy decisions and actions of these actors. Therefore, this thesis will also contribute to the constructivist literature by studying the

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[6] Some examples: *At Home Abroad: Identity, Power and American Foreign Policy* by Henry R. Nau, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 & 1999* by Ted Hopf, A Holistic Co*nstructivist Approach to Iran's Foreign Policy* by Mahdi Mohammad Nia, *Identity, Security and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Period : Relations with the EU, Greece and the Middle East* by Enver Gülseven.

construction of identities of sub-state actors and its implications on their foreign policy orientations and preferences.

To conclude, there is an obvious need for additional studies that will focus on identity in general and sectarian identity in particular in foreign policy studies. Such studies will undoubtedly help to expand our knowledge about the contemporary social and political forces in foreign policy making and implementation. Consequently, researching on empirical patterns of sectarian groups in confessional system of Lebanon can help to look beyond the traditional definitions of foreign policy literature and to critically engage how and with what concerns sectarian groups behave in any foreign policy case.

1.1. DEFINING SECTARIANISM AND SECTARIAN ACTORS

Although it is argued that religious doctrines provide a set of main understandings and interpretations as well as some rituals and beliefs for individuals, what is referred by 'religion' or 'sect' are not merely about beliefs, rituals, theological principles or salvation. Rather it is an evolving social phenomenon, which continuously constructs unlimited set of collective identities and defines boundaries of communities and turns out to be a very powerful means for power claim or sources of tensions between different societies. Although religions are considered as monolithic doctrines, different sectarian and sub-sectarian groups have come into existence due to theological, economic or political reasons throughout history. Literally the word 'sect' comes from Latin word *secta* which means way, road, manner, course of action or way of life. In this manner, sect is a group of people forming a distinct unit within a larger group due to certain political, social, or religious distinctions. If the division stems from theological differences, sect can be defined as a distinct religious body, separated from a larger denomination (Merriam-Webster 2014).

While defining sectarian divisions from a perspective of theological narrative is beyond the limits of this study,[7] what is important for this thesis is to analyze the literature on the emergence of sectarian identities. Some scholars like Ussama Makdisi defines sectarianism in Lebanon as a modern phenomenon whose origins can be found at the intersection of European colonialism and Ottoman modernization (Makdisi 2000, p.xi and 6). According to this view, sectarian conflicts were provoked by imperial powers to produce a new historical imagination in order to maintain the division of the country along with European interests (Makdisi 2000). Both Arab nationalists and Islamists favored these approaches as they see Lebanon's confessional system as a fake product of European imperialism. Contrary to this view, however, many scholars trace the root causes of current sectarian identities to the much earlier centuries, a divide aggravated through warfare and mutual oppression. William Harris, for instance,

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[7] Sectarian group in Christianity refers to a very deep distinct bodies identified by traits, structure, leadership and doctrine based on divisions on substantial issues such as the nature of Jesus, the authority of succession, eschatology and papal primacy. In this regard, the first split came in the Council of Ephesus in 431 over the discussions on the human and divine nature of Jesus, in which the Assyrian Church broke off from the mainstream. The second important division came with the Syriac and Coptic Churches, which are known today as Oriental Orthodoxy. However, the great schism in the history of Christianity was the division between Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy in 1053. Protestant denominations broke off from the Catholic Church. Anglicanism, or the Church of England, stemmed mostly from political reasons between the King of England Henry VIII and the Pope in 1530s. The second largest denomination in Christianity is the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Maronite Church, on the other hand, is an Eastern Catholic Church, recognizing the authority of the Catholic Church of Rome with a self-governance privilege (Hackett & Grim 2011; Fairchild 2015; Atlıoğlu 2014; Interview with Anonymous Maronite Priest 2016).

The emergence of different sects in Islam has stemmed mainly from political reasons. Certain debates and discussions about the succession of the prophet after his death in 632 emerged and this debate over succession split the community (Nasr 2007; Lee 2010, p.2; Lee & Shitrit 2013, p.211). Although the early tension had been settled down for a time after the death of Prophet Muhammed, the opposing camps eventually evolved into Islam's main sects in the following decades; namely Shia, Sunni and Kharijite (Çağatay & Çubukçu 1985; Luomi 2008, p.8). In time, there also arose differences in Shia community over the proper line of succession and sub-groups within Shia emerged as well. For instance, mainstream Shias believe that there were twelve Imams, blood descants of Ali and the legitimate leaders of Muslims; where Zaydi Shias broke off from the majority at the fifth Imam. Ismailis, on the other hand, followed the mainstream until the seventh Imam. Currently Shias constitutes a majority in Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan, and Bahrain and a considerable plurality in Lebanon (Ja'fari 2000; Khuri 2007; Nasr 2007). Sunnis, as the largest sect in Islam, have been structured under four schools of thought; namely the Hanafi, the Maliki, the Shafi and the Hanbali; which differed only in minor issues of application of certain principles in the religion (Çağatay & Çubukçu 1985; Blanchard 2009).

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rejects the idea of sectarianism as a modern phenomenon and elaborates memoirs of European travelers in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries in order to demonstrate how Lebanese communal identities have come into being through historical processes (Harris 2009b, pp.10–21).

In spite of the debates over its origin, scholars are mostly in consensus on the existence of a relation between religious identities and political aspirations and they define sectarianism in a context related to its relations with politics. In this respect, William Harris defines sectarianism as "the assertion of cultural distinctiveness and claims to political rights or autonomy based on belonging to a religious community" (Harris 2009b, p.10). In line with Harris, Fatima Ayub describes sectarianism as "the promotion and deliberate deployment of sect-based allegiance in the pursuit of political ends" (Ayub et al. 2013, p.2). Although these two definitions are precisely correct in defining sectarianism in political terms, they are considered inadequate in the context of Lebanon, where the whole country has been established along with the sectarian divisions.

At this point, this study offers an instrumental definition while categorizing sectarianism according to its political and socio-institutional significance and implications. First, sectarianism has emerged as a determining institutional set of arrangements which shape familial, local, regional loyalties and identities. In other words, institutional mechanisms within sectarian communities retain their primacy, constitute a source of communal solidarity and in return that of inter-communal relations as well as enmities. These sectarian institutions have become so important that they define not only intra-communal relations but also inter-communal perceptions through a set of ideas and social practices by delineating the self and the other vis-à-vis other sectarian communities. What is additionally important is that, according to Avishai Margalit, sectarianism is a mode of operation and a state of mind based on keeping principled position uncompromised where any compromise is seen as a rotten one (Margalit 2008, p.39). As Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants Adnan Mansour stated, once these institutions had been established, the political system reinforces

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confessional loyalties and it became extremely difficult to transform the system into a modern democratic representation where the citizenship is essential (Interview with Mansour 2016). Therefore, inter-communal relations based on sectarian identities are mostly permanent and also irreconcilable because sectarianism is a particular form of essentialism of the other and difference making through a variety of institutional and cultural practices (Shaery-Eisenlohr 2008, p.41). Second, political sectarianism refers to a system where sectarian communities are proportionally represented at every level of administrative structure from the lowest levels to the cabinet. Political sectarianism has direct repercussions as far as the main question of this thesis is concerned because it allows sectarian leaders to have control mechanisms in bureaucracy in parallel to state hierarchy because the permanent allocation of offices among various sectarian communities, as Lebanese sociologist Samir Khalaf points out, lead to the construction of religious loyalties, which stands in opposition and undermines national identity (Khalaf 2002b). As will be highlighted throughout the thesis, this will have a direct consequence on the behavioral patterns of sectarian communities as foreign policy actors.

To sum up, sectarianism can be understood as the promotion and utilization of institutionally embedded sect based identities in a society for the pursuit of political interests. Having in mind that religion has played substantial role in building identity, ideology, major institutions and the political culture of various communities throughout the history, sectarian affiliations are important in the political choices of different sectarian communities in both domestic and foreign relations. Indeed, it is for this reason that studies on the role of sectarian identity in politics drew considerable attention in academic circles. In this conjuncture, the number of studies, whether academic writings or reports by different institutions, placing sectarianism to the center of their focus increased.[8]

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[8] Some of these can be listed as the following: "Gulf Charities and Syrian Sectarianism" by William McCants and "Saudi Arabia's Foreign Policy on Iran and the Proxy War in SYria: Toward a New Chapter?" by Benedetta Berti and Yoel Guzansky focus on the role of sectarian

1.2. SELECTION OF LEBANON AND MAJOR SECTARIAN LEADERS

Political developments after the establishment of the Mutasarrifiyya in the mid-nineteenth century within the context of European penetration played a significant role in the construction and reconstruction of sectarian institutions in Lebanon and the political culture in this country has been constructed along with the inter-play of sectarian leaders at domestic level and their relations with their preferred partners. Additionally, the institutional weakness of Lebanese state has allowed sectarian leaders to assume the role of the state for their communities, which in return enhanced their control over their communities. As a vicious circle, sectarianism has been the prominent code of political culture in Lebanon in time. Therefore, Lebanon would present a well amount of data in order to study the role of sectarian identity on the preferences, decisions, actions and behaviors of sectarian groups' leaders. At this point, selection of certain sects must also be made for the feasibility of this study and with this aim four populous and relatively influential sectarian groups, namely Sunnis, Shias, Maronites and the Druze are selected.

1.2.1. Lebanon: The Sectarian State Par Excellence

Lebanon shares language, heritage, history and religion with its neighbors; however, the distinctiveness of the Lebanese society is its collection of eighteen officially recognized religious and sectarian groups, which are mostly centuries older than the modern state of Lebanon. While it is an exaggeration and essentialist stand to argue that all political debates in Lebanon are fundamentally

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motivations on the policies of regional powers (McCants 2013; Berti & Guzansky 2014); studies linking the sectarianism with the growing threat of terrorism like "Syria Spillover: The Growing Threat of Terrorism and Sectarianism in the Middle East" (Levitt 2014); some official documents focusing on the sectarian dimension of humanitarian crisis like "Rule of Terror: Living under ISIS in Syria (UN 2014); "Sectarianism and Transitional Justice in Syria: Resisting International Trials" concentrating on the sectarian nature of war crimes in Syria (Schank 2014); and finally those dealing with the role of sectarian motivations of regional actors in their involvement in Syrian civil war (Heydemann 2013; Dickinson 2013; Pierret 2013a; Pierret 2013b).

sectarian, having in mind the confessional system and the continuing struggles among constitutionally recognized sectarian groups in the Lebanese society, any explanation ignoring the role of sectarian identity on this country would miss one of the significant dimensions of the story. As a result, any explanation on Lebanese politics ignoring religious formations and factors would be inadequate because, as a Lebanese diplomat stated, sectarian identities have always been one of the most central affiliation in Lebanon (Interview with Anonymous Lebanese Diplomat 2015).

Since Mount Lebanon and its periphery had been a kind of a safe haven for various religious minorities throughout the history due to its geographical conditions, Lebanese society was extremely diverse with an almost equal share between Christians and Muslims at the time of independence, and currently Shias and Sunnis make around 30%, Maronites around 21%, and at least three of them constituting more than 5% of the country's population, and no community holds a majority over the others. In this regard, there are five officially recognized Muslim sects (Twelver Shia, Sunni, Druze,[9] Ismaili or Sevener Shia, Alawite or Nusayri), twelve Christian sects (Maronite Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic or Melkite Catholic, Armenian Orthodox or Gregorian, Syrian Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Syrian Orthodox or Jacobite, Roman Catholic or Latin Catholic, Chaldean Catholic, Assyrian, Copt,[10] Protestant) and Judaism[11] (Canadian for Justice and Peace in the Middle East 2007; Malaspina 2008; Shaery-Eisenlohr 2008; US Department of State 2013; Central Intelligence Agency 2016). Having in mind that all demographic estimates should be viewed

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[9] Under the Lebanese political division, the Druze community is recognized as one of the five Lebanese Muslim communities.

[10] The Coptic Community is the last officially recognized sectarian group in July 1995.

[11] Most of Lebanese Jews left in stages to Israel, US, and other countries in Europe since the mid-twentieth century, therefore it is difficult to speak about a Jewish community in Lebanon today in practice (Abu-Fadil 2010).

with extreme caution in the absence of an official census,[12] there is a fact that although the demographic numbers and patterns of settlement changed over time, the divisions and rivalries between these multitudes of sectarian communities dated far back as centuries, and are still considered as a significant factor both in politics and social life.[13]

It must be re-emphasized here that sectarian communities are not just about religious affairs because "belonging [to a sectarian group] does not [only] refer to attendance at places of worship; it means a sense of distinctiveness based on particular histories, myths, festivals, commemorations, localities, and -not least- different external ties" (Harris 2009b, p.9). Therefore, belonging to Lebanon becomes an ambiguous concept where uniformity is not the main aim in the society (Reinkowski 1997). More importantly, the official recognition of sectarian communities has direct repercussions on Lebanese social and political life.

At this point, they have right to be organized according to their religious laws related to issues in civil law, and people in Lebanon has no alternative of opting out of sectarian identities in their daily lives also because the absence of civil law denies the idea of citizenship[14] and sectarianism is indeed from cradle to grave (Yahya 2009). In addition, these communities have certain official offices and quotes in governmental and administrative issues. Due to political and demographic reasons, ten of them have official quotas in governmental and administrative affairs, which are Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Sunni, Shia and Druze since the early Mandate period; and Armenian Orthodox

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[12] Since the size of sectarian groups remain a sensitive issue in Lebanon, a national census could not be conducted since 1932.

[13] Lebanese writer and journalist Eli Fawaz explains the resilience of sectarianism in *What Makes Lebanon a Distinctive Country?* with four basic factors; the diversity of people and their identities, geography, historical legacy of decentralization, and administrative structure (Fawaz 2009).

[14] The term 'citizen' firstly entered into the constitution with the amendments according to the Taif Accord in 1990.

since 1934, Armenian Catholic and Protestant since 1951 and Alawite community since 1989 (Atlıoğlu 2014, pp.29–30).

In a weakly created state like Lebanon in addition to the problem about its creation, as Druze Leader Walid Jumblatt pointed out, "the creation of Lebanon is artificial" (Interview with Jumblatt 2016), the fragmentation of state bureaucracy along with sectarian quotas has prevented the establishment of a state in modern sense. In other words,

> while religiously defined groups exist as social and political communities elsewhere in the Middle East, in Lebanon these structures were modernized and structured in a dialectical relationship with history to become almost 'subnational' and 'ethnic groups', overshadowing -either almost or fully- the existence of the nation state itself (Rubin 2009, p.3).

As briefly mentioned above, the issue of national identity in Lebanon has always been subject to debate since different sectarian communities define the identity of Lebanon according to their perceptions which are mostly incompatible, if not antagonistic.[15] Khalaf notes on the issue of coexistence of two rival identity that;

> confessional loyalties have not only survived and retained their primacy, but also continue to serve as viable sources of communal solidarity. They inspire local and personal initiative, and account for much of the resourcefulness and cultural diversity and vitality of the Lebanese. But they also undermine civic consciousness and commitment to Lebanon as a nation state (Khalaf 2002a).

In this regard, Senior Media Officer of the Progressive Socialist Party Rami Rayess defines Lebanese nation as "*a nation to be* due to the differences about identity" (Al Rayess 2016). In parallel, Timur Göksel also states that it is really difficult to speak about a Lebanon because there are multiple ideas for being Lebanese, or as in Malik's words "a multiplicity of Lebanons-in-the-making" (Malik 2000, p.19; Interview with Göksel 2015). Due to this plural nature of Lebanese society, the final orientation of Lebanon or a common definition for

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[15] In one of the early survey-based research, Hilal Khashan writes that any reference to a Lebanese nation would be injudicious due to the existence of different understanding of their country's origin and their relationship to the past (Khashan 1992).

national identity have been subject to debate. Therefore, Lebanese nation can be defined as "a collection of traditional communities bound by the mutual understanding that other communities cannot be trusted"[16] (Hudson 1968, p.34) with "full of perceptions, counterperceptions, and misperceptions exchanged among its various religious communities"(Malik 2000, p.19) because "there lay different religious loyalties, still the fundamental reality in Lebanese society" (Hourani 1981, p.141). The existence of multiple visions of Lebanon prevents a firm establishment of a national identity based on either Lebanese or Arab nationalism (Salloukh & Barakat 2015, p.15).

As will be elaborated more in the following chapters, the existence of different, if not contradictory, ideas of 'what Lebanon is' and 'what Lebanon should be' lead these groups to search different and sometimes contradictory outcomes in foreign policies and strategies of Lebanon. Although the National Pact of 1943 outlined the main premises and parameters of Lebanon's foreign policy orientation as neutrality in regional and international affairs, it did not prevent major sectarian leaders from searching alternatives; closer association with the Western world for especially Maronites, and the determination to underscore Lebanon's ties to the Arab world for mainly Sunni community (Khanafer 2013, p.1). Therefore, sectarian leaders have a deep tradition of developing strong relations with foreign powers, as some scholars argue, for seeking foreign patrons (Interview with Khashan 2016), which resulted in the long-lasting existence of Maronite-French, Druze-British, Orthodox-Russian, Sunni-Egyptian or Sunni-Saudi Arabian alliances.

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[16] On the issue of inter-sectarian groups trust, there are some empirical studies demonstrating that there is a great deal of trust for its own group members versus members of the other sectarian groups. For instance, it is reported that "fully 72.0% of the Shi'is trusted other Shi'is a great deal, while only 16.9% trusted the Sunnis and 21.7% trusted the Maronites a great deal. Likewise, 83.2% of the Sunnis trusted Sunnis a great deal, but only 32.5% and 31.7% of the Sunnis trusted the Shi'is and Maronites, respectively, a great deal. The Maronites also follow the same pattern: 58% of the Maronites trusted a great deal other Maronites, but the Maronites who trusted the Shi'is and Sunnis a great deal were 18.2% and 13.8%, respectively" (Moaddel et al. 2012, pp.21–22).

To conclude, with this complex and divided society on the basis of sectarian identities, having been embedded in social life and state institutions, Lebanon, as the sectarian state *par excellence* (Hirst 2010, p.2), would provide a well amount of data to study the role of sectarian identity in foreign policy preferences and orientations as well as behavioral patterns of sectarian groups in foreign policy making processes. As widely pointed out in the literature and during the field work, the real decision makers are community leaders and the government is just implementer, not the real executive of these decisions (Canadian for Justice and Peace in the Middle East 2007; Noureddin 2016). If the leaders of sectarian groups are the real decision makers and actors, then one remaining question is whom to study as actors in this research.

1.2.2. Selection of Major Sectarian Leaders

Although eighteen religious and sectarian groups are officially recognized in Lebanon, a reasonable choice of sufficiently representative sects must be made in order to secure the feasibility of this study. For this aim, the four most populous and relatively influential sectarian groups in Lebanese foreign policy are selected, namely Sunni, Shia, Maronite and Druze communities.[17] In order to analyze sectarian groups as unit of analysis in foreign policy, the question of who represents these groups is obviously an important challenge. At this point, just as there is no full harmony in any social entity, between two choices of 'whether sectarianism should be a set of fixed and all-binding value or a flexible and heterogeneous identity shaped by particular circumstances' this study appears to lean toward the second conclusion. In other words, although individuals who belong to the same sect have similar faithful identities and each of these religious confessions has considerable formal and informal influence on their members, it would be quite strained interpretation to assume that they are internally

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[17] It seems that scholars have a concensus on the issue that of all registered sectarian groups, Maronites, Sunnis, Shias, and the Druze are among the most important religious communities in Lebanese politics due to their political legacies, domestic powers, and foreign alliances (Shaery-Eisenlohr 2008).

homogeneous groups. Yet, there is also a fact that certain families, parties and institutions have gradually emerged as the leading and influential organs of certain sectarian communities due to their historical legacy, current financial capabilities and representation capabilities in the parliament and the government in a confessional system (Cleveland & Bunton 2009, p.334). As Maha Yahya states, head of each sectarian group represents the community towards the state and other sectarian communities and the Lebanese legal system "respects these moral subjects [sectarian communities] and guarantees them these roles" (Yahya 2009, p.23). Therefore, Lebanese politics is characterized by, what I call, sectarian cantonization, each of which is dominated by powerful families or religious institutions whose power, in most of the cases, derived from long-standing tradition of communal leadership based on patrimonial or feudal legacies within each and every community.

Within this framework, it is quite reasonable to state here that the selection of actors, whose statements and actions construct and reflect the prevalent view within each community, is quite challenging but not impossible. Considering the period under study in case studies, namely Hezbollah-Israel War in 2006 and Syrian civil war, these actors are determined as Hariri Family for Sunnis, Hezbollah under the leadership of Hassan Nasrallah for Shias, the Patriarchate and the Church for Maronites and Walid Jumblatt for the Druze.

1.2.2.1. Hariri Family in Sunni Community: Rafiq and Saad Hariri

Sunni Muslims have been one of the most significant and populous groups of Lebanese history. Despite their dominance in terms of the size of population and economic privileges, however, Sunnis have relatively been a less political power and generally led by charismatic Druze leaders due to their geographical and political fragmentation (International Crisis Group 2010, p.19). Larkin explains this situation with mainly three reasons; lack of cohesiveness in the community, dearth of capable political leaders compared to Maronites and the Druze, and Sunni aspiration for a greater Arab unity (Larkin 2011).

For these reasons it can be argued that neither traditional powerful families nor Sunni political movements could produce a leader comparable to Kamal Jumblatt, Musa Sadr, Hassan Nasrallah, Camille Chamoun or Bashir Gemayel, who are very powerful in Lebanese politics while being strongly representative of their communities. Additionally, the long-lasting civil war of Lebanon eliminated several Sunni leaders including Sheikh Sobhi Saleh, Mufti Hassan Khaled, and Prime Minister Rachid Karameh, which in the end left Sunnis more fragmented and unprotected (Traboulsi 2007, p.229; International Crisis Group 2010, pp.2–3).

At this point, contrary to Lebanese history, having coming from a very poor family from Saida but raised a big fortune in Saudi Arabia and gained royal support from Riyadh, Rafiq Hariri entered into Lebanese political life through providing a large array of charitable activities during the civil war years (Malik 2000, p.16; Chalaq 2006; International Crisis Group 2010, p.2; Blanford 2006, pp.20–21; Interview with Chalaq 2016).[18] While gaining a social popularity in Lebanon especially among Sunnis,[19] Hariri also developed strong connections with Syria, France, and the US. Thanks to both of his domestic and international ground, Rafiq Hariri has succeed to take over a leading political role and established a true country-wide presence in Lebanon contrary to other Sunni leaders who dominate particular locations (International Crisis Group 2010; Baumann 2012, pp.131–137; Interview with Khashan 2016).[20]

Upon Rafiq Hariri's assassination in 2005, Saad Hariri inherited his father's political legacy in a dramatically changed domestic and regional political context (International Crisis Group 2010, p.5). Although Saad Hariri became successful in

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[18] An interview was conducted with Al Fadl Chalaq in Beirut, who was Chairman of Council on Development and Reconstruction and Former Minister of Telecomunication and a close advisor to Rafiq Hariri during 1990s.

[19] Although he tried to present himself as a national leader rather than a sectarian leader, Baumann argues that since mid-1990s he became a Sunni leader due to increasing political pressures (Baumann 2012, pp.135–137).

[20] Dr. Hilal Khashan is Professor of Political Studies and the head of the Department of Political Studies and Public Administration in American University of Beirut.

the following parliamentary elections in 2005 and 2009 which enhanced Hariri's clear leadership status among Sunni community, his leadership has been subject to discussions since the collapse of his government in 2009 upon the resignation of ministers of March 8 alliance and his self-imposed exile (Bahout 2013). However, his movement Future Movement still holds the majority. For instance, a senior politician Former Foreign Minister Adnan Mansour stated during the interview that even though Saad is not popular as much as his father, his Future Movement represents at least 85 % of the Sunnis (Interview with Mansour 2016).

Despite the fact that his status is being called into question and he is strong neither as Jumblatt nor as Nasrallah among the Druze and Shias respectively, Hariri still preserves his leadership role regardless of what he could or could not do (International Crisis Group 2010; Rowayheb 2011; Wood 2012; Göksel 2015; Salloukh 2016) and he remained as "the most credible leader of Lebanon's Sunni community" (Schenker 2014). Therefore, to conclude this study prefers to assume Saad Hariri as the leader of Sunni community due to the Future Movement's wide representation in the politics in the absence of a more powerful alternative.

1.2.2.2. Hassan Nasrallah as the Representative of Shias

Shia community have long been underrepresented, poor and politically marginalized in Lebanese society (Shanahan 2005), and they also suffered from the lack of governmental services. More importantly, as Hazran states, the greatest portion of Shia population lived in the south and they witnessed direct effects of Israeli retaliatory operations, fights between Palestinians and Israel, and the Israeli invasion (Hazran 2009, p.2). Historically, Shia community had been subject to the control of few feudal families, or Zuama whose primary interest was preserving their political and economic power independent of the well-being of Shia masses (Shanahan 2005; Hazran 2009). Although the National Pact granted the post of Speaker of Parliament to Shia community, as the third important post in the confessional system, it did not have any positive effects for Shia community due to the large disparity between the masses and the feudal leaders. Unlike other

sectarian communities in Lebanon, the privileges and the political leadership of Shia Zuama were firstly pushed aside by the clergy, namely Musa Sadr as the founder of Amal, whose power stem from his leadership capabilities in mobilizing masses (Shanahan 2005; Naor 2014).

In this political environment, Hezbollah was founded in the early 1980s as a resistance movement against Israel by those who were not satisfied with the position of Amal and its conciliatory strategy with the Lebanese system after the disappearance of the founding leader (Harik 2004; Alagha 2006; Shaery-Eisenlohr 2008; El Husseini 2010). As widely emphasized in the literature, although Musa Sadr's movement was historic for the Shia awakening in Lebanon, it was also considered as being too conciliatory with the system (Azani 2009; Mikaelian 2015, p.158). Therefore, since its establishment, Hezbollah waged a struggle against both Shia Zuama and Amal for the leadership of Shia community (Azani 2009). Historically, Hezbollah fulfilled three important roles in order to establish and maintain its leadership within Shia community with a strong armed and financial power, which was not created overnight. The first one is its *resistance*[21] role opposing Israeli invasion. The second one is its ability to be representative of the Lebanese Shias, who have been traditionally underprivileged community in Lebanon (Malik 2000, pp.17–18; Aspen Institute 2008, p.17; Addis & Blanchard 2011, pp.8–9). Other than being their voice, Hezbollah has also provided social services through its very wide network of institutions.[22] By doing so, Hezbollah gained Shia loyalty and trust extensively (US Department of State Cables Beirut 421 2006; Malaspina 2008). In addition to its role, another advantage that Hezbollah has is the financial and military support from Iran (Ehteshami &

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[21] Steven Cook, Senior Fellow in the Council on Foreign Relations, cautions analysts not to underestimate "the extraordinarily powerful narrative of Hezbollah about resistance and Hezbollah's central place in the idea of resistance" (Aspen Institute 2008, p.17).

[22] As of 2006, for instance, US Department of State confirmed that Hezbollah "runs three hospitals, 12 health clinics, 20 infirmaries, 20 dental clinics, 10 civil defense (fire and rescue) departments, and various health awareness programs" in addition to "free construction services for the residents of southern Lebanon" and "supports other public service work such as constructing tennis courts and summer camps for youth" (US Department of State Cables Beirut 421 2006).

Hinnebusch 1997; Shanahan 2005; Azani 2009). To conclude, among the two leading Shia organizations, Hezbollah outstrips Amal and its popular support is currently very strong among Lebanese Shias because the former is plagued by widespread corruption, inefficiency and unpopular leadership by Nabih Berri (Ehteshami & Hinnebusch 1997; US Department of State Cables Beirut 4941 2004; Aspen Institute 2008; Addis & Blanchard 2011).

Hassan Nasrallah became the Secretary General of Hezbollah in 1992 after the former Secretary General Abbas Mussawi's assassination. Upon his ascension to the leadership, Nasrallah played major leadership role in two respects; transforming his party to a more assertive position against Israel on the one hand and to a more cooperative position in the Lebanese politics on the other.

First, the further militarization of Hezbollah through generous Iranian support and the subsequent withdrawal of Israel from southern Lebanon in 2000 and finally the success of Hezbollah in 2006 in resisting Israeli invasion created a major cross-sectarian grassroots supports for him in addition to the consolidation of his leadership among Shias (Köse 2006; Norton 2014). Second, Nasrallah has consciously tried to transform Hezbollah from a just militia group into a legitimate political party through a transition from radicalism to pragmatism and the symbolic marker of these efforts was Hezbollah's participation in the first post-war elections in 1992 (Azani 2009; El Husseini 2010; Addis & Blanchard 2011; Mikaelian 2015).

Recognizing the plural nature of Lebanese society and integrating Hezbollah in this system was a very pragmatic choice because any attempt to impose an Islamic society could trigger widespread domestic and regional opposition (Hazran 2009, p.5). I think, Hassan Nasrallah's major contribution to the Shia political development lies not only in his ability to make Hezbollah more powerful but also in his ability to provide guidance for such power could be achieved without threatening the integrity of Lebanon. Starting from winning eight seats in the Parliament in 1992, the gradual steady success of Hezbollah currently grants 12

seats in the parliament and ministries in the cabinet, and operate as a state-within-the-state, as many Lebanese refer, and the political power of Hezbollah is now unbalanced especially after the assassination of Sunni leader Rafiq Hariri in 2005 and it is mostly argued that Hassan Nasrallah extensively controls most of Lebanese affairs (Interview with Khashan 2016; Salibi 2016).[23]

To conclude with Max Weiss's statement, once a weak and underprivileged sectarian community within the Arab world, Shias of Lebanon have been able to transform themselves from a *"sect-in-itself"* to a *"sect-for-itself"* in order to search for their political rights and a greater political influence in a less than half-century (Weiss 2010, p.187), in a political journey where Hassan Nasrallah has played a distinguished role. Due to this role and his current popularity and power in Shia community, selection of Secretary General of Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah as the highest representative and powerful leader of Shia community in this study seems reasonable.

1.2.2.3. The Holy Voice of the Maronites: The Patriarch of the Church

Historically, the Maronites have constituted one of the most important communities in the territory of current Lebanon and the Maronite Church, in full communion with Rome, has a tradition to lead its community (Henley 2008, p.355). In principle, the role of Christian leaders was reinforced under Islamic rule because patriarchs were held responsible for the conduct of the entire community and enjoyed the authority over internal affairs. Under the Ottoman's *Millet System*[24] this practice was institutionalized and religious leaders of Christian faiths were recognized as official representatives of the members of their community. Since Maronite patriarch had official French protection since the mid-seventeenth

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[23] Elias Salibi is member of the Advisory Board of Lebanese Forces, the second largest Christian political party in Lebanon.

[24] The *Millet System* was an administrative principle based on religion rather than on ethnicity, which granted different religious communities, namely Greek Orthodox Christians, Armenian Christians and Jews, with official autonomy to manage their own communities in civil, personal and religious affairs according to their faiths (Karpat 2002, p.612; Lee & Shitrit 2013, p.212).

century, Maronite community was not regarded as separate millet in Ottoman System. However, Maronite patriarchs have exercised de facto authority over their community thanks to both French protection and a considerable geographical distance from Istanbul (McCallum 2007).

The Lebanese political system, where "little to no separation is made between politics and religion" (Alami 2008), has allowed various patriarchs to take active role in country's administration in the history of modern Lebanon. In this regard, patriarchs are still remembered by Maronites for their determining role in the creation of the Greater Lebanon as a separate entity, their involvement in 1975-1990 civil war and their leadership in the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon in 2005, which are considered as turning points of Lebanese history.

There are certain variables which have constituted the church and its head Patriarch as both the leader of Maronites and a significant player in Lebanese political scene. First, one of the main distinguishing features of the people in Lebanon has been the strength of their religious affiliation in a multi-religious society as discussed above (McCallum 2007). This sectarian identity based definition of the self has been more visible in Christian minorities who have lived predominantly in Muslim community. Therefore, the Maronite identity and so the Church have emerged as a legitimate point of reference in defining themselves for the Maronites, which in return fit out patriarch with certain leadership power. As Fiona McCallum states, historical tradition and the modern political settings have consolidated the sectarian identity as the most cohesive tie among Maronites and it became natural to expect from the religious leader as the source of the identity to act as both the spiritual and civil leader of the group (McCallum 2007).

Second, as common in Catholic faith, the Patriarch as the head of the Church and the father of his community has naturally been regarded as the leader of Maronites (Henley 2008; McCallum 2007).[25] There is a general understanding in Maronite

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[25] Patriarch is the highest judicial authority for Maronites concerning civil law in addition to his executive and administrative powers due to Lebanese political system (McCallum 2007). It must

community that patriarchs are motivated by a desire to preserve the interests of the community and in this respect patriarchs have played successful role while walking a tightrope in order to assure the demands of his community without triggering an internal enmity in Lebanon.

The third variable is Church's willingness to cater the political needs of its society in addition to social and religious needs. Historically, Maronite Church has emerged as the provider of welfare services and social aids in Lebanon where state institutions have fall short of this duty, which allowed Patriarch to become the voice of the community. In such an environment, Patriarchs have been involved in political matters extensively and addressed a lot of major problems of the country (Luca 2011). Moreover, the involvement in political matters has been regarded as a moral duty by patriarchs themselves (Saoud 2011; Luca 2011). For instance, as Ghassan Saoud notes, during an interview on the withdrawal of Syrian troops, Patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir states that he "was in the front row. If the patriarch does not take a stand, who will?" (Saoud 2011).

Fourth, political system in Lebanon also serves to fortify the power of religious institutions in political sphere, where statements and actions of Patriarchate are continuously being followed and tended to be respected by the political figures and relevant agents of the state (McCallum 2007).

To sum up, although the power of the patriarchs has varied depending on the personal capabilities, domestic balance of power and the existence of powerful Christian leadership, the institutional role of the Church in politics has been maintained for centuries. As a result, the Church has been regarded as one of the most central institutions by many analysts and respectable institutions such as International Crisis Group and Congressional Research Service of the US and

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also be noted that despite its institutional hierarchy, the church must not be regarded as a single monolithic institution for which patriarch is spokesman. However, as Henley states, patriarch traditionally and canonically presides over his Church, exercises executive authority, represents the juridical authority and has the power to sign agreements with a civil authority, which in total give a considerable leadership role (Henley 2008, p.355 and 363).

their analyses on Lebanon always include certain sections on the role and the policy of the Maronite Patriarch (International Crisis Group 2008; Hopkins 2012). For all these reasons and more elaborate discussions in the chapters on history of Lebanon, the emphasis in this study as the leader of Maronites will be on Patriarchs Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir and Bechara Boutros Rai who play important roles in respective case studies especially in a politically divided Maronite community in the recent decades.

1.2.2.4. Walid Jumblatt as the True Leader of the Druze

Jumblatt Family has been among the leading Druze families since the Ottoman period and played an important role in Lebanese politics especially since the mid-nineteenth century. Fuad Jumblatt, the leader of his tribe towards the end of the First World War, had sided with the establishment of a separate state under the French mandate, through which he established a privileged position for his family (Gambill & Nassif 2001). His son Kamal Jumblatt founded Progressive Socialist Party in 1949 and appealed to all Muslim communities and expanded his political base through his Arabist views although he still was a Druze leader (Cleveland & Bunton 2009, p.384). Holding the leadership role of the Lebanese National Movement which was founded mainly by Muslims and Palestinians, he emerged as the opposition leader to the existing system in the country dominated by Maronite elites and remained as one of the most influential political figures until his assassination in 1977. Then, Walid Jumblatt took his post and it is widely argued that Walid Jumblatt sustained his leadership within the community and the degree of Druze power and privileges in Lebanon through a kind of survival strategy.[26] This survival strategy means that since the Druze have been minority in the region, they have politically bandwagon with mainstream movements and had alliances in accordance with the necessities of a given condition which has served

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[26] Indeed this survival strategy is a historical legacy to Walid Jumblatt because, as Fuad Khuri writes in one of the most substantial works on Druze community, "their history is replete with shifting alliances… Guided by the principle of self-preservation, especially in times of danger, they used diplomacy or force as they deemed necessary" (Khuri 2004, p.231).

their self-preservation and helped them to claw as much power as they could. In this regard, Walid Jumblatt can be regarded as a true picture of a Machiavellian prince in defending what he assumes as the interests of his family and community (Moubayed 2001; Blanford 2006, p.112; Hazran 2015, p.363; Interviews with Rabah 2016a; Salloukh 2016).[27] It is a pure realist policy which allows Walid Jumblatt to consolidate his position as the sole Druze chief and the leader of the vast majority of Druze community, and it is widely stated during the fieldwork that Jumblatt is representing more than at least three quarter of his community and he is truly known as enigmatic kingmaker in Lebanese politics especially after the withdrawal of Syrian troops in 2005. He also have an area of influence on the Druze in other regional countries through mediators including tribal leaders and sheikhs (Interviews with Rabah 2016a; Khashan 2016; Salloukh 2016).

Today, the Progressive Socialist Party is ideologically secular but supported mainly by Druze community in practice (Knudsen 2005, p.7) and it is strongly represented especially in the election districts populated by the Druze and has 11 parliamentarians whereas the other Druze party, Lebanese Democratic Party, has only two members. To conclude, for all these reasons, selection of Walid Jumblatt as the leader of Druze community in this study seems reasonable because Jumblatt Family has maintained a tradition of leadership for centuries and played a very significant role in shaping the political life of the Druze.[28]

1.2.3. Selection of Case Studies: Israel-Hezbollah War and the Syrian Civil War

Apart from the selection of sectarian groups to study, another challenging question at the beginning of the study is the selection of cases in Lebanese history

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[28] For a more detailed analysis of the ability of the Jumblatt Family to maintain its traditional role through centuries, please see a recent article named "How Elites Can Maintain Their Power in the Middle East: The Junblatt Family as a Case Study" (Hazran 2015).

that are related to foreign policy issues, in which one can study behavioral patterns of sectarian actors. While much of case study research deal with a single case, this study aims to generate stronger conclusions through the possibility of multiple confirmation of the findings from a comparison of two case studies with four sectarian groups. In this respect, Hezbollah-Israel War in 2006 and the Syrian civil war since 2011 were chosen as appropriate case studies in order to analyze the perceptions, attitudes, behaviors of selected actors mainly for two reasons:

First, as will be elaborated more in the chapters on the history of Lebanon, an important characteristic of Lebanese state is its weak nature in terms of institutional and bureaucratic structures, which allowed a continuous foreign penetration. The blatant example of this penetration is the long lasting occupation of the country by its two neighbors; namely Israel until 2000 and Syria until 2005. During the Syrian occupation and especially since the end of the civil war in 1990, the dominant role which the Syrians play in Lebanon extensively pressurized Lebanese actors. This dominance was so wide and extensive that, as Tom Pierre Najem states, not just in terms of Lebanon's foreign policy, but the Lebanon's existence as a truly independent national entity was a legitimate question (Najem 2003, p.212). Although this does not mean that Lebanese sectarian leaders had no authentic foreign policy aims of their own under the occupation, it is considered that a selection of case studies after 2005 would be more beneficial not only because sectarian leaders would behave more freely in terms of their foreign policy orientations but also because they could provide more data to analyze with their actions and statements in the absence of direct Syrian military and intelligence hegemony.

After determining the beginning of the time period as 2005, the other major concern for the selection of case studies is the search for their significance and relevance. In this respect, due to geographical and historical reasons, Syria and Lebanon can be considered as two major regional powers for Lebanese state and sectarian leaders. These states are not only neighbors but also have infiltrated into Lebanese affairs economically, militarily and politically through open and secret

informal alliances with their preferred proxies. Moreover, both the developments within these countries and policies of these states have direct repercussions from the perspectives of Lebanese sectarian leaders. Therefore, it is considered that a comparative study of foreign policy positions of these actors related to these two countries would present a considerable data to scrutiny the role of sectarian identity in the interplay of dynamic positions of sectarian groups. Within this framework, Hezbollah-Israel War and the Syrian civil war are existential and challenging developments for Lebanon during the period since 2005.

1.3. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

This study will analyze foreign policy processes from the perspective of domestic level in general at the theoretical level and the making of Lebanese foreign policy as a result of continuous struggle between major sectarian leaders. As explained at the beginning of this chapter, this thesis mainly attempts to contribute to the understanding of the role of identity on the motivations, perceptions, behavioral patterns and alliances of sectarian groups in any foreign policy case through a comparative analysis of four major sectarian groups in two significant foreign policy cases for Lebanon.

In order to achieve this aim, this thesis consists of three main parts; first a literature review and a theoretical discussion on foreign policy studies in general and the role of identity and domestic/societal actors in foreign policy processes in order to demonstrate the lack of attention to sectarian groups in foreign policy studies. In this part, the evolution of the literature on foreign policy issues from a state centrist realist perspective to a wider framework with the proliferation of actors and studies focusing on the role of identity is being presented through a review of a large number of academic books and articles.

Second, a historical analysis of Lebanese foreign policy from a perspective of the orientations of sectarian groups will offer a diachronic approach to the analysis in

order to understand the construction of identity-based sectarian groups and their roles in Lebanese politics. Reflecting on the transformation of Lebanon from Ottoman times to its current form, this part is based on the analysis of both primary and secondary sources for understanding the very complex nature of confessional system and interaction of different sectarian groups at both domestic and regional level.

Third, two case studies will present detailed contextual analysis of foreign policy preferences, decisions and actions of selected actors in order to reach certain conclusions about the role of sectarian identity in determining the self and the other, friend and foe, and ally and the enemy in international relations. Therefore this part relies on data derived from primary and secondary sources, such as a vast literature of scholarly books, journals, statements, interviews, writings and memoirs of the key actors. Also, Lebanese media was followed as a whole to find out statements made by Nasrallah, Jumblatt, Hariri and Patriarchs like *The Daily Star, Al Mustaqbal, Al Nahar, Al Akhbar and Al Manar*. In addition to the official discourse on these media outlets, the leaked US cables between Beirut and Washington are also used to reveal the parallelism and contradictions between the official discourse of the leaders and their sincere foreign policy orientations. In addition, a field work including interviews with representatives of major sectarian communities and Lebanese scholars from December 2015 to March 2016 was conducted in Lebanon in order to complement the data and analysis.

Acquiring fairly sufficient data and in-depth information in a case study through analysis of primary documents and interviews is often a specific challenge for qualitative works. To offset this problem, I focused on improving my Arabic language and enrolled in a language course in Amman/Jordan before beginning the writing stage of this thesis. Therefore, the field research has been carried out both in English and Arabic to redeem the linguistic problem as much as possible.

During the fieldwork I conducted over 30 interviews[29] with various Lebanese from focused sectarian groups and engaged in many informal conversations. Additionally, I took part in some of religious rituals and visited related institutions in order to observe the practice of communal identity production in everyday settings. The fieldwork was extensively beneficial to understand the role of sectarian identity in the Lebanese society even in daily-life. Additionally, during my stay in Beirut, I was not only learning through the answers my interviewees provided to the questions but also through how members of different sectarian communities assessed my Turkish background. Coming from Turkey, a modern country with an Ottoman legacy with a Sunni dominated population, their positioning of my background as a *Sunni-Turkish researcher* from their perspective also helped me to cognize how sectarian identity has the potential to demarcate the boundaries among communities in Lebanon even for the outsiders.

1.4. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The thesis is divided into three main parts as stated above: after the introductory section of Chapter 1, where the main question and aim of this research as well as the methodology are clarified; Chapter 2 will present a literature review and theoretical framework on the evolution of foreign policy studies to emphasize the proliferation of actors and the introduction of the concept of identity. Following, Chapter 3 and 4 will be on Lebanon's history from a foreign policy perspective. The third main part, Chapter 5 and 6, will include case studies, findings and analyses of the research before the concluding remarks concerning the main question of the thesis in Chapter 7.

Chapter 2 starts with a literature review on the evolution of foreign policy studies from the perspective of unit of analysis from state-centrist early studies to the

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[29] The names of interviewees are being stated during the thesis except those who asked for anonymity in order to protect the privacy of individuals who do not wish to make their statements public.

more complex nature of current foreign policy making. Then, the analysis continues with the definition of foreign policy. Thanks to the existing studies on foreign policy, there exists a fairly good understanding of nature of foreign policy behavior and multiple actors involved in foreign policy making and implementation. However, at this point, this thesis asks the question of how this proliferation of actors and multi-level analysis explains the current foreign policy making if it continues to ignore the role of collective identity, namely sectarian identity, at sub state level. The chapter lastly elaborates the possibility of sectarian groups as foreign policy actors and the role of sectarian identity in determining foreign policy preferences of sub-state actors from a social constructivist approach.

In the second part, the thesis continues with the historical evolution of Lebanon from a sectarian perspective under six sub-periods. Chapter 3 starts with the beginning of the institutionalization of sectarian Lebanese society while focusing on the Ottoman time until the formation of the state in 1920. Then, the Chapter continues with the examination of the French Mandate period from the 1920s to the 1940s in order to present a discussion on the nature of colonial state-making in general and Lebanese nation-building process on the basis of sectarian divisions. The following section deals with the early independence period where the National Pact laid down the fundamentals of Lebanese state until the outbreak of civil war in 1975. Chapter 4, on the contrary, starts with the breakdown of the state in 1975 by dealing with the discussions on communal transformations, militia-based politics and the patterns of external intervention through multi-level alliances during civil war years. Then, it starts with the elaboration of the re-establishment of the state, where sectarian relations and alliances have been re-set under with Taif Accord under Israeli and Syrian occupation. Lastly, this Chapter will cover the period after the assassination of Rafiq Hariri in 2005, when the current political coalitions of the March 8 and March 14 have been established on trans-sectarian manner in a new regional environment where sectarian enmities started to grow on regional bases.

In the third part on case studies, Chapter 5 aims to analyze the degree and the nature of foreign policies of four major sub-state sectarian groups within the framework of Israel-Hezbollah War. In doing so, this chapter starts with an elaboration of the regional settings in 2006. Then, the relations and foreign policy behavioral patterns of selected actors as well as the official Lebanese foreign policy are elaborated separately in order to come up with certain conclusions about the main argument of the thesis along with a very brief chronology of the main events before, during and after the Israel - Hezbollah War in 2006. Chapter 6 also starts with the elaboration of the major developments in the region and in the Lebanese politics on the eve of the uprising in Syria since March 2011. Then, it continues with the early reactions in Lebanon towards the developments in Syria. Later, the focus will turn on the direct involvement of Lebanese sectarian groups in Syrian affairs and the intensification of sectarian concerns as the conflict between Syrian regime and the opposition has become more of a sectarian survival battle.

Finally, Chapter 7 as a conclusion presents the main findings about the Lebanese foreign policy in general and the role of sectarian identity and behavioral patterns of sectarian actors in particular. Since this research tries to explore and understand the role and behaviors of sectarian groups in foreign policy making, certain conclusions are derived from the study and presented in this chapter about what kind of factors matter most in foreign policy behavior of sectarian groups, under what international circumstances they react, under what domestic circumstances they hold a strategy, how their influence is likely to manifest itself, how they frame their strategies and actions and lastly what kind of behavioral strategies they have in foreign policy issues.

CHAPTER 2

**ACTORS AND IDENTITIES IN FOREIGN POLICY:
SECTARIAN GROUPS AS UNIT OF ANALYSIS**

Foreign policy, at first glance, can be defined as the conduct and practice of relations between different actors in the international system. This broad and inclusive definition encompasses diplomacy, political interactions, trade negotiations, defense agreements, bilateral or multilateral cooperation, intelligence and cultural exchanges. In addition, decision making, implementation process and the outcomes of these decisions all form parts of the substance of what is called as foreign policy. Since the term foreign policy is all-encompassing, various scholars from different approaches and theories of IR have been mainly concerned with finding answers to certain questions like: What is foreign policy? Is it exclusively a state behavior? If so, what kind of state behaviors can be considered as foreign policy? If not, what are the actors in foreign policy making and implementation other than states? Who makes foreign policy decisions? What is the effect of the decision unit on foreign policy? How is a foreign policy decision being taken? Who implements foreign policy decisions? And what are the effects of foreign policy decisions? What is the importance of international and regional context in shaping a foreign policy decision?

In the early years of the discipline of IR, scholars have invested considerable efforts on describing and explaining dramatic events in world affairs like war and peace (Wicaksana 2009). These studies mainly considered state as the only actor in international relations and developed mechanisms to understand state

interactions and the means they use. Therefore, traditionally foreign policy had been considered as only the sum of state activities towards their outside world and these have been reserved for a limited number of experts, who were generally official diplomats. In the current international politics, however, even a very short examination of foreign policy studies reveals that the authorities exercised in decision making, actors in implementation and consequences exist in an extensive array of different entities and levels. As the actors have been multiplied with the inclusion of non-state actors in time, the patterns and conducts of foreign policy behavior have been diversified. In doing so, foreign policy analysis have now reached an understanding that a multilayered approach is necessary to have a more concrete and complex picture of any foreign policy. In addition to multiplicity of actors, main concepts of IR, such as state, sovereignty, national identity and national interest, have been challenged and transformed in the meantime. To sum up, it is now clearly understood that foreign policy is not an exclusive area for a small number of state officials; rather foreign policy studies are rich field of researches from its decision making procedures to implementations and as well as actors involved and affected by these procedures and decisions.

This chapter elaborates the evolution of the emergence of various actors in foreign policy making processes in order to understand the role and the importance of societal actors. Thanks to the existing studies on foreign policy in both literatures of FPA and IR, there is now a fairly good understanding of the definition of foreign policy, multiplicity of actors and the nature of foreign policy behavior. However as will be noticed throughout this chapter, it is strongly believed that additional works focusing on societal groups at the sub-state level in general and sectarian groups based on shared confessional identities in specific are deemed necessary because it seems that the proliferation of actors in foreign policy studies is not sufficiently explanatory as long as they ignore identity-based sub-state actors in foreign policy making. Questions of whether sectarian identity has impact on foreign policy behavior, whether sectarian groups can be considered as

unit of analysis in foreign policy, with what concerns they act, what kind of motivations drives behaviors of sectarian groups in foreign policy making, whether there are certain foreign policy behavioral patterns, and what kind of a role that inter/intra/trans-sectarian alliances play in foreign policy are widely ignored by the existing literature. At this point, it is believed that such questions and subsequent discussions will contribute more to foreign policy studies and a constructivist approach focusing on the role of sectarian identity in shaping foreign policy behavioral patterns will no doubt help to expand existing knowledge about the contemporary social and political forces in foreign policy making and implementation.

2.1. PROTEAN NATURE OF FOREIGN POLICY: FROM STATE CENTRICISM TO MULTIPLICITY OF ACTORS

Foreign policy, as used interchangeably with diplomacy, has been an old subject for more than 2.000 years from Thucydides through Machiavelli to Grotius even before the emergence of the discipline of IR. However, the term foreign policy started to be used widely in the eighteenth century with the establishment of first ministries of foreign affairs and the increasing numbers of foreign missions in different capitals (Hill 2003b, p.233). Challenges in foreign policy studies have existed since the very beginning due to debates and discussions over its definition. It may be stated that the main problem in foreign policy studies is related with certain questions of who acts, for whom, how and with what effect in international politics, which paved the way for deeper debates in the literature of IR, because answers to these questions determine both the units and subject matter to be studied.

2.1.1. Realist Understanding of Foreign Policy

2.1.1.1. State as the Only Actor: Classical Realist Approach

Realist thinkers of IR assume that after the emergence of modern nation state system with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, international relations have come to

be established on certain principles, courses and standards which all govern the interactions in the international community. In the early years, foreign policy had been assumed as an exclusive governmental activity from the perspective of classical Realist paradigm, and defined as the actions of a state towards external environment for its survival and interests. Within this line, as Brine White puts it, foreign policy can be defined as a policy designed within the state to be implemented outside the territorial boundaries of the state (White 1989, p.5). George Modelski, also, describes foreign policy as a system of activities, carried out by policy makers who are entitled to act on behalf of their society in order to change behaviors of other states and to adjust to the international environment (Modelski 1962, p.6). In another early study by Patrick J. McGowan, foreign policy is defined as "the actions of national or central governments taken towards other actors external to the legal sovereignty of the initiating governments" (McGowan 1973, p.12). In line with others, Rosenau defined foreign policy as "governmental undertakings directed toward the external environment" (Rosenau 1968, p.310). From the common points in these definitions in classical understanding, foreign policy can be defined as "an official activity formulated and implemented by the authorized agents of sovereign states as orientations, plans, commitments and actions which are directed towards the external environments of the states" (Tayfur 1994, p.117). The realist definition of foreign policy as a term is very much widespread that not only early studies but also a relatively recent work, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* edited by Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne prefers to give a state-centric realist definition of foreign policy in 'key definitions box' where it is defined as "the strategy or approach chosen by the national government to achieve its goals in its relations with external entities" (Hudson 2008, p.12).

Realism is based on a state-centric world and emphasizes the importance of power in a dangerous and unpredictable world. According to realists, politics is governed by objective laws, originating from human nature and these objective laws created an anarchic environment in international politics, where self-interested states

pursue their interest defined in terms of their power for their own survival (Morgenthau 1978, pp.3–15). The state, as the only actor in realist understanding, is a territorially-based political unit with a central decision-making and enforcement machinery. In addition, the state is principally sovereign, meaning that it recognizes no authority in internal and external affairs. In this line, the international politics is composed of similarly characterized, territorial, sovereign political units (Brown & Ainley 2005, pp.23–24) and foreign policy studies are expected to concentrate on behaviors of these states.

Since states are assumed as territorially based entities having an internal and an external environment defined on the basis of its boundaries from a realist viewpoint, there is a sharp distinction between domestic and international politics. From this distinction, realism considers foreign policy as actions towards external environment. Therefore, not only goals and aims but also sources and determinants are searched exclusively in the anarchic international environment in realist approach.[30] This distinction also stems from the unitary understanding of state which proposes a central decision-making and enforcement machinery. As in the phenomena of 'black box' in natural sciences, a device or system which can be viewed in terms of its input and output without any knowledge of its internal workings, the sovereign state is generally considered as a black box and its internal structure and decision making processes as well as perceptions of elites and society are disregarded and consequently the domestic environment and the decision-making procedures are deliberately ignored in these foreign policy studies.

Following, the other essential assumption is the rational actor model, which means that states act rationally in their quest for power in international politics. Such rationality assumes that decision makers perceive the world as real as it is, meaning that misperception of decision makers are rare accidents which can be

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[30] For more information see Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 5th ed., New York: Alfred Knoph Inc., 1978.

ignored (Jervis, cited in Rosati 1981, p.45) and continuously, having a true picture of the world around them, those who are responsible for foreign policy decide on issues on the basis of common national interests. Thus, foreign policy decisions are considered as rational in terms of both ends and means. In other words, monolithic and rational actors choose a set of actions in order to maximize gains and minimize losses (Brown & Ainley 2005, p.71; Farkas 1996, p.343; Nonneman 2005, p.7). In line with this argument, realists affirm that there is no need for the examination of decision making process and motives of statesmen in foreign policy, because as Hans Morgenthau states, decision makers can be assumed as alike (Morgenthau 1978). Related with this rational unitary actor model, state searches for 'national interests' in the external environment in accordance with pre-determined foreign policy goals. Since state is taken as a rational unitary actor, it seems logical to think about an interest that is common for the welfare of the whole nation although the concept of national interest is indeed left vague and there is no generally accepted definition since there is no consensus on who and how to define national interest.

In conclusion, with a reference to one of the seminal works of classical realist school, since "international politics, like all politics, is struggle for power" (Morgenthau 1978, p.25), foreign policy is nothing but a search of a state for power for its survival in the external environment. Therefore, early foreign policy studies focused on state behavior as the only subject matter where states were assumed to be single, unitary and rational actors which try to maximize one common national interest and all political cleavages and disagreements among leaders, interest groups, department of bureaucracies and individuals as well as their perceptions are ignored.

2.1.1.2. Neo-realist Approach to State Foreign Policy

In the following years, scholars of Realist School of IR have also succeeded in developing systemic explanations of state decisions and actions by focusing on the mutual implications of the relation between foreign policy agency and

systemic factors.[31] The systemic interpretation of foreign policy studies emerged from the understanding that the totality, as more than the sum of its parts, is considered as a unit regulator and restrictive on behaviors of states (Yurdusev 2007, pp.11–12). Through a new understanding of system, systemic theories propose international system as appropriate level of analysis in understanding state behaviors (Brian 1999, p.38). The dominance of neo-realist and neo-liberal approaches leads to the rise of emphasis on analysis of the international system as the determining factor in foreign policy behavior.

A top-down account of international relations in Kenneth Waltz's neo-realism is based on the idea that the supreme skill of foreign policy decision makers lies in recognizing the signals sent by the system. In this respect, neo-realism offers the structure as the main ordering principle in foreign policy studies. In Waltz's conception of structure there are three important points to be mentioned, namely ordering principle, character of units, and the distribution of capabilities (Wendt 1999, pp.98–99). The ordering principle is the anarchy due to the principle of sovereign equality, which resulted in the creation of a self-help system (Waltz 1986, p.81). Second, the character of units refers to the existence of functionally similar units due to the same constraints imposed by anarchic structure. Lastly what becomes important in foreign policy studies is the power distribution in this anarchy because actors can only maneuver depending on their power capabilities within the limits of system. Through accepting these assumptions, neo-realism regarded states as billiard balls on a billiard table and argued that the main factor that determines state behaviors is the international structure.

Foreign policy in neo-realism is considered as a never ending power game for states' security in an anarchic world, where material capabilities of states

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[31] It is important here to note that Harold Sprout and Margaret Sprout also tried to contextualize the analysis of foreign policy from a systemic approach before neo-realism. According to them, the understanding of any foreign policy outputs necessitates the analysis of power capabilities in which a foreign policy is decided and implemented. What is also important in their study is their emphasis on the interpretation of international context by decision makers according to their environmental knowledge and intellectual capacities (Sprout & Sprout 1957).

constitute the main currency that states have in their hands and the anarchical structure of world politics is the main determinant of states' decisions (Waltz 1979; Smith 1986, p.21; Donnelly 2005, pp.34–40; Nonneman 2005, p.7; Wicaksana 2009; Nguyen 2014, p.22; Waltz 1986, p.22).

2.1.2. Liberal Approach to Foreign Policy Studies

Liberalism originally emerged in the eighteenth century of Europe as a philosophical approach and put forward a set of ideals in criticism to the existing privileges of aristocratic political system and advocated on limited government where individuals could be free from arbitrary state power (Lerner et.al., cited in Kılınç 2001, p.15; Burchill 2005, p.55). Having a tradition of prioritizing the individual over state, liberal scholars of International Relations sought to establish a better international society without challenging the basic assumptions of Realism. In other words, liberal thought affirms that the existing nature of power politics can be transformed towards a more peaceful world due to the belief in progress (Dunne 2001, p.163). As Burchill puts forward, elimination of self-interested international system centered on war and conflicts may be possible through "a preference for democracy over aristocracy, free trade over autarky, and collective security over the balance of power system" (Burchill 2005, p.58).

2.1.2.1. Initial Challenge to Classical Understanding of State

Starting with the 1970s, if not earlier, liberalists challenged pre-given acceptance about the state-centric understanding of world politics and asserted that increased linkages among states, sub-state, supra-state and non-state actors have eroding the traditional primacy of the state in foreign policy (Alden 2011). Within this framework, as Moravcsik summarizes, the fundamental promise of liberal theory of international relations on the issue of foreign policy is that the relationship between states and the surrounding domestic and transnational society shapes state preferences and behaviors by ways of interdependence and international regulations (Moravcsik 1997, p.516). It started to be widely argued that non-state actors can also be recognized as units of analysis in foreign policy studies because

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they put pressures on their governments through their own financial resources and capabilities.[32] What additionally important in this development is that these non-state actors, whether a multinational company, a non-governmental local organization or a societal group, do not only try to put pressure on the state to change its foreign policy preferences in favor of its interests but also started to pursue *de-facto* foreign policies in accordance with their own agendas by establishing independent relations with their partners.

Although liberal theory of foreign policy did not challenge the main premises of realist school like the primacy of state, it can be considered as a substantial departure from the traditional understanding of state. By introducing the societal actors into the international politics, it brought a bottom up view to the understanding of state. Once the political arena was defined as a battleground for competing interests among various individuals and societal groups, the idea that foreign policy decisions and actions could be result of this domestic struggle was introduced to the literature. Another important contribution of liberal theory is the introduction of state types into the foreign policy literature. Liberals categorized states from tyranny to democracy depending on the existence of representative

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[32] The level of analysis has been subject to debate in the discipline of International Relations since almost the beginning of foreign policy studies. By introducing two levels of analysis, namely the international system and the national sub-systems, David Singer firstly brought a systematic approach to the question of level of analysis. In Singer's terminology, the international system is the most comprehensive of the levels which covers the totality of interactions; while the other level of analysis is the primary actor of international relations, namely nation states (Singer 1961). In a later study, Singer identifies three levels; namely decision maker, or individual, national level and systemic level (Singer 1971, p.16). In *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*, Kenneth Waltz similarly defined three *images of analysis* for explaining conflicts in the international system; individual, state, and international system (Waltz 1959). As the state-centric views had been challenged, the question of what to study as unit of analysis becomes more problematic. *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, edited by Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, proposes three levels of analysis in analyzing foreign policies of states: the domestic level, regional systemic level and the global (international) level (Hinnebusch & Ehteshami 2002, pp.2–14 and 335). Finally, Nuri Yurdusev summarizes that unit of analysis in International Relations can be categorized in the following way: (1) Individual as an actor, (2) Groups composed of individuals or societies, (3) All-encompassing actor refering to international structure (Yurdusev 2007, p.7).

institutions and their accountability to their publics (Moravcsik 1997, p.518).[33] The implication of this categorization in foreign policy issues is that type of government is considered as important in analyzing state behaviors, which open the way for the studies of inner mechanisms of so-called unitary state.

2.1.2.2. Liberal Systemic Approach to Foreign Policy: Neo-liberalism

Another approach to foreign policy studies in liberal school of IR is from systemic perspective. In parallel to the assumption in neo-realism, neo-liberals also assume the totality as more than the sum of its parts and the main determining factor of states' behavior (Yurdusev 2007, pp.11–12). However, neo-liberalism offers a different systemic account of international relations by emphasizing the possibilities of cooperation as determining factor of states' behaviors (Brown & Ainley 2005, p.75).

Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye introduced the idea of transnationalism and the Complex Interdependence Approach (Keohane & Nye 1971a; Keohane & Nye 1977). Neo-liberal approach proposes two main assumptions about world politics related to this study: increasing linkages among states and non-state actors and the recognition of multiple channels for interaction (Lamy 2001, pp.188–189). First, although they still prioritize the state, Keohane and Nye recognize the importance of non-state actors in international relations. The environment of interstate politics also includes a well amount of significant inter-societal intercourses, which are out of governmental control (Keohane & Nye 1971b, p.330; Alden 2011). This environment of complex interdependency includes diversity of actors including states but also forces inside and outside of the domestic sphere of the state, which in the end diminishes the scope of state action in foreign policy making. The inclusion of non-state actors and the transnational relations into the foreign policy analysis introduced a new understanding of foreign policy. In a world, where the

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[33] Regarding how differences in state structures explain differences in foreign policies, there is a study named "Does Democracy Cause Peace?" by James Lee Ray, which demonstrates differences in foreign policy behavior of democracies and non-democracies (Ray 1998).

interactions of state officials do not take place in a vacuum, transnational actors, both individuals and groups of individuals, can play their roles through either by participating as members of coalitions that control or affect their governments or by playing direct roles with foreign governments or other transnational actors. Second, the term complex interdependence refers to the various, complex transnational connections between states and also between societies. Keohane and Nye define transnational relations as "contacts, coalitions, and interactions across state boundaries that are not controlled by the central foreign policy organs of governments" (Keohane & Nye 1971b, p.331). Therefore the complexity of the current international relations can only be understood through the examination of these transnational relations. It was a real breakthrough from a state-centric world and traditional understanding of foreign policy, which was assumed to be conducted only by the recognized official organs of states.

With these main assumptions in mind concerning the international relations in general and foreign policy in specific, Robert Keohane formulated neo-liberal institutionalism proposing the possibility of cooperation under anarchy because the intensification of transnational communication and interaction with distant individuals changed the attitudes in world politics. Despite Keohane agrees with neo-realists on certain concepts, neo-liberalism draws different conclusions from these settings towards the establishment and maintenance of international cooperation, as the ordering principle of international structure, which constraints and shapes states' behaviors. More simply, according to neo-liberals, states created international institutions and regimes to reach cooperation and once they are established, these international structures constrain behaviors of states in favor of a more cooperative and peaceful relations (Keohane 1984; Reus-Smit 2005, pp.190–193).

2.1.3. Proliferation of Domestic Actors and Study of Foreign Policy Behavioral Patterns

With the emergence of liberal notions questioning state nature and societal actors, new approaches in foreign policy studies have emerged and consequently these academic discussions have resulted in a split within the discipline of IR. As many scholars summarize, a literature of FPA emerged which scrutinizes mainly what is happening inside the state on the one hand; and there was another literature of IR Theories focusing on interstate relations and the structural constraints (Wicaksana 2009; Light 1994; Kubalkova 2001; Nonneman 2005, p.7; Hellmann & Urrestarazu 2013). Durbin summarizes the methodology of FPA with three guiding questions that should be answered in foreign policy studies: (1) Who are the actors? (2) What factors influence each actor's position? (3) How do actors' positions come together to generate governmental policies? (Durbin 2014). By answering these main questions, FPA studies are considered significant from the perspective of this study for mainly two reasons: First, they contributed extensively to the emergence of the literature of domestic actors in foreign policy studies by breaking the state into its parts. Second, they delve into the inner dynamics and mechanisms of states in order to understand the making of a particular foreign policy and behavioral patterns of domestic actors.

Although scholars of FPA share the basic premises of realism, such as state centrism and the rational actor model, they defined foreign policy as a series of decisions taken by the official decision makers. Therefore the explanation of any foreign policy turns out to be the examination of decision-making processes and behaviors of individuals or groups acting on behalf of the state. In other words, opposed to an abstract entity as in realism, the term state has been materialized in order to understand the actual nature and mechanism of any foreign policy behavior. Richard Carlton Snyder and his colleagues, as the pioneers of the Decision Making Approach in FPA literature, looked under the nation state level and emphasized the importance of the players there:

> We adhere to the nation state as the fundamental level of analysis, yet we have discarded the state as a metaphysical abstraction. By emphasizing decision making as a central focus we have provided a way of organizing the determinants of action around those officials who act for the political society (Snyder et al. 1962, p.53). [34]

The idea of discarding nation state as a metaphysical abstraction and focusing on decision making and domestic actors in these processes is indeed very substantial shift from classical realism because what is called international relations is indeed grounded on individual decision makers, which constitute the true agent and the main source of all international relations (Hudson & Vore 1995, pp.210–211; Hudson 2005, pp.1–3). Additionally, Bureaucratic Politics Approach[35], as another body of literature in FPA, focused mainly on the role of the bureaucratic agencies within state structure and bureaucrats as individuals. It is argued that since bureaucrats are permanently on seat and possess the expertise which is especially valid for foreign policy issues, the emphasis should be centered on their role in foreign policy decision making. In his seminal book titled *Essence of Decision*, Graham Allison offers explanation on the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 through an investigation of internal mechanisms of both US and USSR. According to Allison, the unitary actor model of foreign policymaking does not present an efficient explanation; rather there is a necessity for an analysis of both intra-organizational factors and inter-organizational factors within the state structure (Allison 1971). Consequently, in simple explanation, depending on the situation, any state could mean certain individuals (the president, the prime minister and the speaker of the parliament etc.)[36], a set of bureaucratic units and groups in state

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[34] For more information about Decision Making Approach see, Richard C. Synder, et al., *Foreign Policy Decision Making: An Approach to the Study of International Politics*, New York, Free Press, 1962.

[35] Graham Allison's study of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis (Allison 1969; Allison 1971), *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* by Morton Halperin (Halperin 1974), *Neither Peace Nor Honor: The Politics of American Military Policy in Vietnam* of Robert Gallucci (Gallucci 1975) can be listed as examples of this approach.

[36] There is a broad literature on the role of individuals in foreign policy behavior. These studies try to explain, for instance, the Second World War by examining the role of Hitler, the end of the Cold War by studying Gorbachev, Russia's recent infiltration in its region through analysis of

structure[37] or any domestic actor[38]. Thus, scholars of FPA criticized the idea of unitary actor model and focus on set of decisions and actions made by recognizable units and the ones who take decisions in the name of states and finally the factors that influence them. By doing so, FPA scholars also challenged the idea of objective and single reality because examining decision making process has necessitated study of psychological and cognitive factors that influence decision makers' perceptions. In other words, how decision makers perceive the international environment based on his/her intellectual capacity and given information becomes important in international politics and also in foreign policy studies (Tayfur 1994, p.120).

Theories of FPA have covered well that foreign policy decisions are being taken and implemented through an extensive bargaining of different entities inside the executive and legislative branches of a state according to their varying priorities,

psychology of Putin, and growing role of Turkey in the Middle East by examining the personalities and perceptions of the twain of Prime Minister and the President. They focus on different aspects of individuals and so may concentrate on the education of the individual, intellectual capacity, analytical skills (Dyson & Preston 2006), his ideology and beliefs (Amstutz 2014, pp.27–28), leader's psychology and motivations (Barber 1973; Etheredge 1979), leaders' cognitive maps and schemas (Shapiro & Bonham 1973; Carbonell 1978), his family characteristics (Hudson 1990) and their life experiences (Stewart 1977) in exploring state foreign policies.

[37] Another unit of analysis in the state structure is group, composed of top decision makers. Although these groups are composed of the individuals that can be analyzed at individual level, the reason for an analysis of foreign policy at group level is the fact that those small decision making groups may influence decisions and behaviors of individuals. Therefore the main questions here become how membership of a small group affects the individual and how decisions are being reached in a group environment. Irving Janis, for instance, in one the most seminal works on this subject, *Victims of Groupthink*, states convincingly that group psychology, preserving group harmony and desire for personal acceptance in the group generally lead to the deterioration of decision making quality and result in irrational thinking, excessive optimism and self-censorship (Janis 1972, pp.172–174). For other significant studies on groupthink see (Tetlock 1979) which tests Janis's assumptions in US foreign policy making processes, (George 1980) which covers malfunctions in the US executive branch in the advisory process to the President, ('t Hart 1994) which provides a systematic revision of Janis's work by using the Iran-Contra affair in 1986.

[38] The importance of domestic actors has drawn attention in foreign policy studies. In this respect, contributors to the edited book, *The Limits of State Autonomy: Societal Groups and Foreign Policy Formulation*, study the relationship between the organization of societal groups and foreign policy outcomes such as societal influences, grassroots movements, ethnic and business interests (Skidmore & Hudson 1993). Another study is about junior party influence in coalition cabinets in making of foreign policy (Kaarbo 1996). Another reference is to the relation between the media and the making of foreign policy studied by Steven Livingston (Livingston 1997).

preferences, abilities and interests. In other words, organizations and bureaucracies put their own survival at the top of their list of priorities and state agencies may seek to achieve separate goals, which in some cases contradict to each other. Therefore, FPA scholars also challenged the concept of objective single national interest, which is common to the nation and focus on the internal bargaining within the state. For instance, Morton H. Halperin reveals in his study on American defense policymaking that different administrative parts of US behaved with various priorities and seek to achieve separate goals (Halperin 1974).

The literature has also dealt with some critical questions like: (1) Which domestic actor matters most in the formulation of foreign policy? (2) Under what international and regional conditions will they have more importance? (3) What domestic circumstances and state types provide a suitable ground for sub-state actors? (4) How is their influence likely to manifest itself? (5) On which bases do they formulate their foreign policy choices? (6) How do they frame their foreign policy discourses? It is argued, for example, that when the regional and international security perception is low, the leader holding the power is weak, and governmental and administrative entities lack structural autonomy, these sub-state actors are more likely to have a significant impact on foreign policy choices. Concerning the international circumstances, it is argued that domestic actors and interest groups are likely to have more influential power over foreign policy issues in time of peace and low-threat international environment because allowing domestic actors to contribute to the making of foreign policy choices are regarded as low costs in these times. Regarding domestic circumstances, sub-state groups are expected to gain the most policy traction when the government is vulnerable like a case of an electoral defeat, weak institutionalization and precarious economic and military power. On the issue of the manifestation of the influence, it is argued in general that the importance of a domestic actor is evaluated through its power to remove the leader or executive body from office, to use veto to

obstruct the government's program, or to shape the definition of national interests (Ripsman 2009, pp.170–194).

To conclude having raised the importance of inner circles of states in foreign policy analysis, FPA approaches brought discussions and struggles among different actors in a state into the agenda to be addressed in any study of foreign policy. By doing so, it did not only broaden the content of foreign policy studies but also opened the way for other social sciences like political science, sociology and psychology to contribute to the studies in this field in order to capture the factors that affect decisions of individuals and how various interests have been formed.

2.2. DEFINING FOREING POLICY WITH MULTIPLE ACTORS

Since 1970s, international politics has welcomed a new political understanding which has been increasingly seen as a system of multilevel governance, with a plurality of actors at different levels: supranational, national and sub-national. In parallel, foreign policy studies have proceeded on the basis of the changing nature of foreign policy from a state-centric world to a more complex structure with multiple transnational actors, which are beyond the explanatory powers of traditional theories. As covered above, state-centric approaches confined foreign policy into what diplomats say to each other, which indeed leave out many of the most interesting parts of the international politics (Hill 2003a, p.3).

Starting with 1970s and especially after the end of the Cold War, multinational companies (MNCs) exercising *de-facto* foreign policy through their financial resources, NGOs through their ability to mobilize votes and interest groups with their ability to generate pressure on state decision making mechanism and interests groups within many countries have been recognized as a central feature of the globalizing world. What additionally important in this development is that these non-state actors, whether a multinational company or a non-governmental

local organization, do not only try to put pressure on state but also started to pursue their own foreign policies in accordance with their own agendas by establishing relations with actors in and out of their states or with other states as well. Thus, approaches to foreign policy analysis should necessarily include domestic and transnational sources, which are not necessarily tied to the state also. As the traditional views remained inefficient to supply reasonable and sufficient explanations for the current developments of 1970s, classical approaches to foreign policy have been challenged in many aspects not only due to their ontological weaknesses concerning its perception of state but also for their failure to expound the changing nature of foreign policy with fundamental transformations in international relations. Therefore, 1970s marked the inclusion of non-state actors into the foreign policy studies intensively. This development indeed has repercussions mainly in three spheres for understanding foreign policy; namely actors of foreign policy, subject of foreign policy and the distinction between domestic and foreign.

First, as international relations are no longer state centric, foreign policy analysis may also focus on non-state actors such as MNCs, NGOs and international organizations having their own agendas other than states. The multiplicity of actors in international relations created a network of interdependence which is not very suitable for the frameworks of realist understanding of foreign policy. Second, in addition to new coming actors in international politics with their own agendas and roles, in 1970s the world has also witnessed a fundamental change that economic developments and issue of dependency, oil crisis and etc. started to become very important foreign policy matters. Therefore, not only the actors but also the subject matter of foreign policy analysis has multiplied. Following the growing interdependence among states and non-state actors, thirdly, it has become more challenging to distinguish the domestic and external environment, which had been indeed a problematic assumption, and for this reason, which had been already criticized as state above. Therefore as the world politics has transformed enormously and the globalization of much of the daily life has challenged the

traditional understanding of foreign policy in terms of both defining foreign policy and determining what should be studied under this heading, new definitions deem to be necessary.

Having considered all these developments, when one starts with analyzing 'foreign policy' as a term, the first thing to be examined is the term 'foreign'. By mentioning a policy as a foreign, it still refers to a distinction between foreign and domestic. In its early categorization, foreign policy refers to a policy toward the world outside states' territorial borders (Kaarbo et al. 2013, p.1). Naturally, foreign policy studies have necessarily been concerned with the boundaries between the external environment and the domestic environment, and further have picked up the environment outside of the nation-state as its main inquiry. Going to war with a neighboring country, signing an international trade agreement or aiding a minority group in another country are all considered as examples of foreign policy in its traditional meaning. However, although these examples make the issue simple to understand, the contemporary international politics, as discussed above, blurred the distinction between foreign and domestic realms, meaning that what is considered as domestic can easily be regional or international at the same time, or *vice versa*. Does this mean that the distinction between domestic and foreign is no longer valid? This thesis argues that the complex nature of contemporary politics and interdependence between domestic and foreign environments do not abate the distinction, but refute the idea that foreign and domestic environments are worlds apart. As stated by Juliet Kaarbo; the distinction can be made according to intended target of the policy. If the primary target is towards the outside of the borders, the policy can be considered as foreign policy, although it might have ramifications for the domestic politics (Kaarbo et al. 2013, pp.2–3).

The term 'policy', secondly, refers to a whole range of activities of an actor. Although it is state-centric, James Rosenau's conceptualization is suitable to define policy: foreign policy as orientation, foreign policy as plans and commitments, and foreign policy as behaviors. In the form of foreign policy as

orientations, policy refers to highest principles and tendencies of an actor. Secondly, foreign policy as plans and commitments refers to policy as design, meaning something that is designed purposely to reach specific objectives. In other words, they are materialized translations of higher traditions and perceptions in the form of foreign policy as orientation. Lastly, foreign policy as behaviors refers to activities and actions addressed to practical problems of daily international affairs. In other words, foreign policy in the form of behavior is actual activities in accordance with orientations, plans and commitments (Rosenau 1976, pp.16–17). All these three forms of foreign policy are important in order to have a full picture of an analysis. While reading literature about foreign policy, it is very frequently possible to see the emphasis on either the decision making or the implementation part, and generally the other part is completely ignored or analyzed only in few words. However, this thesis defends the argument that foreign policy is a complete story with its orientations, aims, decision making procedures and implementation phases.[39]

Having all these discussions in mind, this study basically takes Christopher Hill's definition at its center. According to Hill, foreign policy is "the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations" (Hill 2003a, p.3). Hill's definition has an inclusive approach in different aspects for new types of actors and their actions, which became very important in international relations especially in the last few decades. First, the definition asserts the term 'an independent actor' rather than 'state', which enables the inclusion of non-state actors, but at the same time recognizes the importance of state. Additionally it is 'official external relations' rather than 'governmental', which prevents the analysis from being just state-centric. Lastly, Hill still insisted on the nature of official relations as 'foreign', since the world is still composed of separated communities rather than being a homogenized body (Hill 2003a, p.3). In terms of subject matter of foreign policy, this research takes

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[39] For more information on this subject see Steve Smith and Michael Clarke (edts.), *Foreign Policy Implementation*, London: G.Allen & Unwin, 1985 (Smith & Clarke 1985).

the viewpoint that foreign policy does not only include traditional issues such as geostrategic concerns, security and defense, but embraces all aspects of engagements including so-called low-level politics such as trade, immigration, the environment, human rights and international crime to name but a few. Within this line, foreign policy can be defined as the sum of orientations, commitments and behaviors carried by an independent actor based on its perceptions of the developments as well as other actors in international relations towards the outside world but usually have repercussions in the domestic environment.

2.3. CONSTURTIVIST INSIGHT IN FOREING POLICY: THE ROLE OF IDENTITY

As most of the main premises of previous foreign policy studies have been challenged in parallel to the fact that state centric views remained insufficient, both sub-state and non-state actors started to attract considerable attention in the literature. However, the proliferation of actors in the literature still failed to discern a very important variable, that is the ideational factor in foreign policy making (Sullivan, cited in Wicaksana 2009). Pressures for political change are sweeping the world politics based on micro collective identities, as witnessed by the mass movements of the so-called Arab Spring and other popular movements all around the world from East Asia to the Americas. New groups inside and outside of countries are demanding their communal rights at both domestic and international level and they introduced new concepts to the global politics like micro nationalism and religious rights based on their identities. These developments have significantly transformed the existing nature of international politics and presented new challenges in understanding foreign policy since the end of the Cold War. Therefore the academic interest in identity has gained central position in foreign policy studies with the spread of micro nationalism, rise of religious fundamentalism and subsequent political developments as they all challenged the mainstream theorizing in the discipline of International Relations (Bozdağlioglu 2007, p.121; Wicaksana 2009). Since this thesis aims to present

more systematic discussions on the role of sectarian identity in the motivations, aims and perceptions of these foreign policy choices in addition to the behavioral patterns of sectarian groups as foreign policy actors, it is believed that Social Constructivism (hereinafter referred as to Constructivism) can present necessary explanatory variables for the crisis of foreign policy studies in introducing the role and the significance of the identity.

2.3.1. Main Premises of Constructivism Considering Foreign Policy Studies

1990s witnessed the coming of identity issues to IR Theory where scholars began to discuss ideational factors as significant components of foreign policy discussions, constructivist scholars stressed cultural and ideational factors as determining for both state behaviors and the structure of the international system. The founding father of constructivism, later named as conventional constructivism, Alexander Wendt affirms that units and structures shape each other as a result of a web of inter-subjective understandings, or as he puts forward 'anarchy is what states make of it'(Wendt 1992). In this respect, it is strongly believed that the main strength of constructivism in finding explanatory tools for the 1990s lies in its emphasis on identities, norms, social agents and the mutual constitution of structure and agency, which have been ignored in previous theoretical approaches (Gülseven 2010, p.35).

The main cause of constructivist approach is its rejection of earlier theories' assumption that the world is an objective given fact. Contrary to materialist theories, both realism and liberalism including their systemic versions, constructivists argue that what is called timeless truth or objective reality are indeed socially constructed in relational manner through inter-subjective identities, ideas and norms (Hopf 1998, pp.171–173). The basic principle of constructivism has been derived from the understanding that meaning is socially constructed. As the founding father of constructivism, Wendt asserts, "a fundamental principle of constructivist social theory is that people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have

for them" (Wendt 1992, pp.396–397). In other words, according to constructivism material objects and capabilities in world politics are important but what is more important is how they are perceived by a specific actor or what these material objects mean for it. That is why states act differently towards certain states than others because they perceive different levels of threat or friendship from different states independent of their military capabilities (Houghton 2007, p.30).

Main premises of constructivism in general can be listed as the following: an emphasis on the social construction of the reality, a balanced emphasis on ideational as well as material structures, a focus on the role of identity in defining interests and so in shaping political actions, and the mutual constitutiveness of agents and structures (Flockhart 2008, pp.82–87). First, constructivist scholars argue that the reality which is mostly taken as given is indeed a constant construction through the production of shared knowledge about the world. This ground breaking approach to the international politics has allowed scholars to understand the socio-cultural context that they study and their formation processes (Gülseven 2010, p.35).

Second, there is a strong emphasis on ideational forces and structures in addition to material ones. Structures cannot be understood and explained only through material forces such as military capabilities and wealth, but it needs to include the ideational factors because they are the ones which shape how political actors interpret any international context. In Wendt's words, "material forces are not constituted solely by social meanings, and social meanings are not immune to material effects. On the other hand, it is only because of their interaction with ideas that material forces have the effects that they do" (Wendt 1999, pp.111–112). What made constructivism more explanatory is its middle ground position between rationalist and reflectivist theories. As Guzzini argues, it allows any researcher to be critical towards, or at least innovative to, the main premises of traditional paradigms without turning into a radical idealist position while balancing between the assertions of single truth and relativism (Guzzini 2000, pp.147–148). Although it emphasized the subjective and relational nature of the

truth, scholars like Alexander Wendt, Emmanuel Adler and Jeffrey Checkel do not reject the existence of a world independent from thoughts (Adler 1997, p.333; Gülseven 2010, p.24; Sørensen 1998, p.87). What they affirm is that this so-called independent world gains its meaning through ideas, shared norms, identities and practices of agents. By having such a position, constructivism became popular in its opposition to objective materialism. By referring to Wendt's example, it is for this reason that 500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the US than 5 North Korean nuclear weapons (Wendt 1995, p.73). In other words, since Britain is not perceived as an enemy by Washington, its heavy arsenal is not considered as a threat.

Third, Flockhart affirms that "identity is the agents' understanding of self, its place in the social world, and its relationships with others" (Flockhart 2008, p.85). Therefore interests of an agent are being shaped through how it perceives any given context. Following, while shaping interests, identity also implies a particular set of preferences which will result in a specific decision or behavior. The role of identity is very central in constructivist approach therefore it will be covered in more details in the following part, however, to make it clear for the time being, it can briefly be stated that the formation of any agent's identity in a historical, cultural, political and social context is very important and they became the most proximate causes of choices, preferences and action (Hopf 1998, p.174). To illustrate, Flockhart gives the example of Denmark and Sweden since they are like units and therefore are expected to present similar behavior from a pure materialist analysis. However, Sweden's self-identity as a middle power rather than a small state has substantial effect on Swedish foreign policy choices, which are different than those of Denmark (Flockhart 2008, pp.85–86).

The last main assumption is the mutual constitutiveness of agents and structures. In constructivism, structure is defined as "the institutions and shared meaning that make up the context of international action" and the agent is "any entity that

operates as an actor in that context" (Hurd 2008, p.303).[40] Constructivist scholars criticize neo-realist approach because it is limited in the sense that only the structure and its influential role in states' behaviors are emphasized. However, as Hurd affirms, both agents and structures can contribute to the process of constructing and reconstructing each other continuously (Hurd 2008, p.304). Within this line structures of international politics are also product of a continuous social interaction rather than given material facts and therefore they are subject to change (Wendt 1995, p.71; Wicaksana 2009). To express it in Wendt's words, "the character of international life is determined by the beliefs and expectations that states have about each other, and these are constructed largely social rather than material structures" (Wendt 1999).

2.3.2. Systemic, Unit-Level and Holistic Approaches: Identity at All Levels

Constructivism is comparatively recent theory, nevertheless it should not be regarded as a single homogeneous theoretical approach (Barnett 2014, p.156). Of the many types of categorizations of constructivism in the literature on various bases (Ruggie 1998, pp.880–882; Checkel 2004, pp.2–10; Behravesh 2011; Tidy 2007, pp.13–14; Hopf 1998, pp.181–185; Cho 2009, pp.82–90; Nia 2011, pp.281–283; Reus-Smit 2005, pp.199–201), a three-fold distinction among systemic, unit-level, and holistic variants in line with Reus-Smit's argumentation is a useful starting point from the perspective of this thesis.

Systemic constructivism follows Waltzian perspective in terms of unit of analysis, but questions objective and materialistic understanding of the system. As exemplified by the writings of Alexander Wendt (Wendt 1999; Wendt 1992), systemic constructivism concentrates on the interaction between states and the system. Wendt introduced two kinds of identities of states; social identity and corporate identity. Social identity refers to "the meaning an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others," while corporate identity means

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[40] Although Hurd defines the agent as *any entity*, it should be noted that the commitment to state as unit of analysis is still central to early constructivist studies.

internal human, material, ideological, or cultural characteristics of a state (Wendt 1994, p.385). More simply, social identity refers to the identity emerging out of the interactions among states; and corporate refers to the one related to the domestic politics. Since social identity is cognitive and structural, enabling an actor to define itself in a situation in relation to others, Wendt places social identity at the center of his studies and emphasizes the role of social identity in determining states' foreign policies. By doing so, however, it fails to capture the domestic politics and its function in constructing and re-constructing identities, interests and political actions (Reus-Smit 2005, p.199; Nia 2011, pp.281–282).

Main contribution of constructivists to systemic studies is the introduction of the concepts of mutual constitutiveness of state behaviors and system. In other words, Wendt argues that there is a need for rethinking the fundamental assumptions about agent and structure and value them as co-determined and mutually constituted (Wendt 1987, p.339). Second, constructivist scholars challenged to the materialist definition of structure and brought the idea that structures are gaining their meaning socially and culturally in the eyes of agents depending on their identities. Therefore, they challenged the understanding of structure as given and Wendt introduced three different cultures of international structure; namely Hobbessian, Lockean, and Kantian, where agents may perceive other agents enemies, rivals or friends respectively depending on their socially constructed identities.

Unit-level constructivism, on the other hand, concentrates on the domestic realm of states in order to explore the relationship between domestic social norms and the identities and interests of states, which is mainly represented by Peter Katzenstein's writings. It seems very clear that the state is not a black box anymore, yet only few scholars have opened that box from a constructivist perspective. In this regard, Katzenstein's significant contribution is the dedication to understand the history of societies by analyzing their attitudes, practices and expectations about their relationship to the world outside (Gourevitch et al. 2008, p.893). Katzenstein's work is very valuable from the perspective of this thesis

because it emphasizes domestic structures and cultures in the process of the construction of national identity (Katzenstein 1993, p.266). Systemic theorizing, according to Katzenstein, is not sufficient since it ignores the domestic construction of national identity. [41] By analyzing the domestic process, he demonstrates how domestic groups have different and sometimes contradictory visions about the national identity (Katzenstein 1996, pp.19–26). In one of his seminal works, for instance, Katzenstein seeks to demonstrate the role of specific norms and values in Germany and Japan on their different responses to similar terrorist threats (Katzenstein 1993, pp.269–272). These scholars argue that domestic socialization processes play role in state's identities since states do not construct their identities and interests only through interaction at the outside world. In other words, they try to explore how internal processes within a state can transform state's identity and so interests (Reus-Smit 2005, p.200; Nia 2011, p.282).

From unit-level constructivist perspective, cultural characteristics, historical legacy of the state, the religious or social traditions, norms and values that both people and elites have all affect the states' foreign policy decisions and behaviors (Browning n.d., p.10). An important study in this respect is *Identity, Power and American Foreign Policy*, where the writer argues that foreign policy studies are much about "what kind of society the nation is, not just what its geopolitical circumstances are" (Nau 2002, p.240) and analyzes the construction of American identity at domestic level and its implication on its foreign policy (Nau 2002). *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 & 1999* by Ted Hopf offers more careful discussion on the issue of identity and how Russians perceive themselves in world politics as well as the issue of construction of domestic identity in Moscow's foreign policy choices (Hopf 2002). Another study is on Iranian foreign policy since 1979, where the

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[41] Checkel also criticizes the lack of a theory of agency in constructivism especially in the early years since it overemphasized the role of social structures and norms at the expense of the agents (Checkel 1998, p.325).

writer concentrates on the importance of certain norms and values in Iranian culture like logic of responsibility, discourses of anti-hegemonism, justice, martyrdom and Persian legacy and their repercussions on foreign policy like (Nia 2011). Considering constructivist studies on Turkish foreign policy, for instance, Enver Gülseven concentrates on the discussions on Turkey's national identity since 1923 and what domestic identity discussions imply in terms of political interests and foreign policy in the relations with the European Union, Greece, and the Middle East (Gülseven 2010).

Finally, whereas systemic and unit-level constructivist approaches stick to the traditional distinction of the international and domestic realm, holistic constructivism tries to build a bridge in explaining how identities and interests have been constructed in time through a multi-level analysis. In Reus-Smit words, scholars like John G. Ruggie and Friedrich Kratochwil try to build "a unified analytical perspective that treats the domestic and the international as two faces of a single social and political order" (Reus-Smit 2005, p.201). It is for this reason that foreign policy decisions and actions are considered as mutual consequences of social interactions at both domestic and international level, or a mixture of corporate identity and social identity. Having emphasis on normative and subjective identities at both domestic and systemic levels, holistic constructivism has the merit of explaining the developments of the normative and ideational structures of the world (Reus-Smit 2005, p.201). In this thesis, it is strongly believed that classification of level of analysis would only serve for the sake of pedagogical simplicity and analytical clarity. Therefore, there is a need for an aggregate approach, which underlines the need for the integration of information at several levels of analysis from individual leaders to the international system as the best explanations would be multilevel, ranging from the most micro to the most macro (Hudson 2008, p.16) because these levels should not be considered as alternatives to each other. Only through this way, the construction of sub-state sectarian identity and the perception of sectarian leaders towards foreign policy developments can be explained. Therefore, having covered the theoretical

approaches to foreign policy in terms of both unit of analysis and subject matter, this study puts forward holistic constructivist approach as the most appropriate method to understand the behavioral patterns of sub-state societal actors, including sectarian groups, in foreign policy making.

2.3.3. Identity and Foreign Policy Behavior

The concept of identity is the core of constructivist challenge to the previous theories in explaining both the domestic and international politics, which are constructed in relation to others, and emerged out of interactions, participation with other actors through institutional context (Hopf 1998, pp.193–196; Telhami & Barnett 2002). In Hopf's words, identities perform very significant function in society "by telling *who you are*" and "*who others are*" (Hopf 1998, p.175). This is very important role because by defining an actor in a situation, they imply a set of interests and preferences of that actor regarding the situation. In other words, "interests do not exist to be 'discovered' by self-interested, rational actors" (Katzenstein 1996, p.2) rather they are continuously constructed through social interaction at all levels through set of norms and values. This is substantial shift from previous understandings in showing how perceptions are constructed independently from material forces and how identity is important in defining self and the other, friend and foe, or ally and threat.

In constructivism, it is argued that not only the system but also actors and processes gain their meanings through actors' perceptions and identities which are continuously constructed and reconstructed. According to Wicaksana, what decision makers see as international context is an ideational human invention, which is a set of norms but not physically built. This position does not refute the importance of material forces but it proposes that the subjective understanding of these material conditions matter more in shaping foreign policy choices because their impact is mediated by the ideas that give them meaning (Cho 2009, p.79; Wicaksana 2009).

Bringing the issue of identity into analysis is also a direct challenge to the concept of national interests and the rational actor model of previous theories, which tries to understand the behaviors of states through an analysis of outcomes while comparing them with states' defined and given interests without giving particular focus to the process of formation of identities and interests (Wendt 1992, p.391; Stanton 2002, pp.1–2). Although the concept of interest is central in constructivist studies, they try to find a new way for explaining how beliefs, expectations, interpretations and perceptions affect definition of interests. Realist approach proposes that national interests can be defined objectively as a combination of states' power capabilities and desire, and once they are defined they are stable and unchanging. On the contrary, constructivist scholars brought a productive literature on the formation of national interests and argue that national interests are historically constructed and reconstructed in social processes and they are not based on pure material objects, rather based on the perception of material objects by the decision makers. In other words, what is distinguishing factor in constructivist understanding of interest is that they both problematize the concepts of state, interests and identity and focus on their social formation and therefore foreign policy of any state, based on the constructed interests, is generally directed by ideas and especially their relationship to events (Hurd 2008, pp.302–303; Legro 2005, p.4). Therefore, it can rightly be argued that foreign policy actors at all levels act in the pursuit of what they see as their interests, rather than the so-called unchanging and permanent interests as realists suggests.

The next question, therefore, is how identity influences foreign policy choices. To start with Wendt's argumentation, interest is "the product of inter-subjective process of meaning creation" (Wendt 1999, p.328). For this reason, interests are closely linked with the perception of an actor; therefore they act in response to any development or any other actor depending on their ideas and perceptions. On this issue, Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein illustrate the link between the policy on the one hand and the identity and the environmental structure on the other, as shown below.
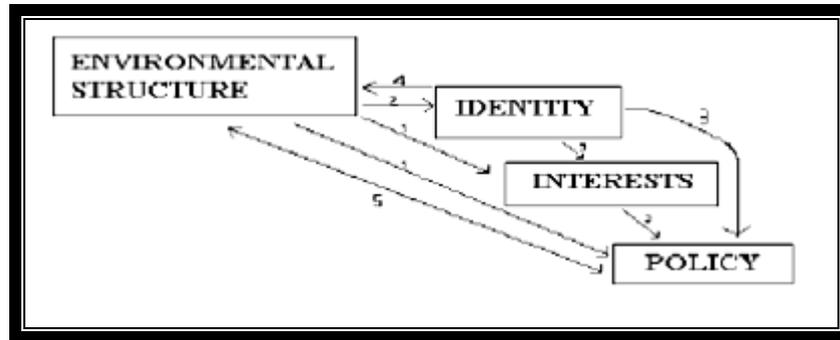
Figure 1: Construction of Policy Behavior (Jepperson et al. 1996, p.53)

It is strongly believed that domestic political developments and identity building processes are also central to understand foreign policy choices and these processes are not only mutually constitutive between state and societal actors but also very important in relations between societal actors as well. In these continuous processes of identity building, sub-state foreign policy actors, like sectarian groups, produce and reproduce new definitions of self and others in relation to both domestic and external balance of power, which in the end determines their foreign policy choices. Consequently, since each and every part of the society has different perceptions and ideas about the external environment and so various interests related to a given development, the definition of national interest becomes more problematic because implementation of a certain foreign policy for achieving a specific end requires utilization of different kinds of sources, on which domestic groups may or may not agree.

Not only deciding but also implementing a foreign policy choice, therefore, turns out to be a constant struggle between different societal groups, including sectarian groups, aiming to direct the course of foreign policy in accordance with their perceptions and ideas about the final orientation of the country. In other words, referring to Gülseven;

competing identity conceptions of diverse actors who take part in the formulation of foreign policy complicate the definition of national interests, suggest different foreign policy pathways and prevent development along any one path. This brings ambivalence to the foreign policy of the state in question (Gülseven 2010, p.45).

On the nexus of identity and interests, which has direct repercussions on foreign policy choices of sub-state actors, Martha Finnemore states that "much of foreign policy is about defining rather than defending national interests" (Finnemore 1996, p.ix) due to the existing various foreign policy orientations. Within this framework, therefore, identities became the bases for foreign policy interests (Galariotis 2007, p.1) because both structural and domestic opportunities and constraints like regional/international balance of power, strength and deepness of regional and international alliances, domestic balance of power and reactions of other societal actors gain their meanings through actors' perceptions. From a holistic constructivist perspective, the perception of regional and international balance of power, the distribution of power (Wendt 1999) and domestic constraints (Breuning 2007, pp.115–117) all constrain foreign policy behavior through constructing and re-constructing identities and interests. Like states, domestic actors also consider the external environment and the balance of power as well as the actors in this external environment and domestic balance of power in their foreign policy preferences and decisions. To conclude, the analysis of foreign policy from a constructivist approach is to scrutinize how processes of social interaction produce and reproduce the context, which in turn construct and reconstruct actors' identities, perceptions and interests related to a given foreign policy development and finally determine foreign policy choices.

2.4. SECTARIAN GROUPS IN FOREIGN POLICY MAKING

Thanks to the previous studies on foreign policy, there is now a fairly good understanding of the nature of foreign policy behavior and the multiplicity of actors. However it is strongly believed that additional works focusing on the role

of identity in general[42] and sectarian groups in specific in foreign policy making and the role of sectarian identity in constructing actors' perceptions about the self and the other, or the ally and the enemy, will no doubt help to expand our understanding in foreign policy studies because sectarian groups and their leaders may have various foreign policy orientations and they may search for foreign alliances in order to influence their governments and to increase their domestic political leverage. Although it is argued that major religious doctrines have provided a set of understanding and theological interpretations as well as some rituals and beliefs, these interpretations have been subject to evolve in response to political and social circumstances in time. Therefore what referred by 'religion' is not merely beliefs, rituals, theological principles or salvation; rather it is a social phenomenon, which constructs a set of group identities and defines the boundaries of communities and turns out to be a very powerful means for power claim or sources of tensions between different societies. Thus, when an issue enters into a kind of religious and sectarian sphere, it certainly includes a sort of political nature. In this respect the term sectarian, as discussed in the previous chapter, is used to describe an identity or affiliation to a particular religious sect for the promotion and utilization of certain political ends in foreign policy matters within the context of this thesis.

2.4.1. Sectarian Identity in Foreign Policy

In a substantial study on the relationship between foreign polices of Middle Eastern states and the concept of identity, leading constructivist scholar Michael Barnett defines identity as;

> the understanding of oneself in relationship to others. Identities, in short, are not personal or psychological; they are social and relational, defined by the

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[42] Indeed there is a fairly good amount of study on the role of ethnic minority groups on foreign policy making processes. The questions of whether ethnicity matters in foreign policy making and to what extent ethnic minority groups influence foreign policy are widely discuessed in foreign policy studies. For a good review of the literature on the influence of ethnic minority groups in foreign policy making, please see: "Ethnic Minority Interest Group Attributes and U.S. Foreign Policy Influence: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis" by Trevor Rubenzer (Rubenzer 2008).

actor's interaction with, and relationship to, others; therefore all political identities depend on the actor's interaction with others and the actor's place within an institutional context (Telhami & Barnett 2002).

In another study, identity is defined as "shared definition of a group that derives from members' common interests, experiences and solidarity" (Taylor and Whittier, cited in Fominaya 2010, p.394). Özkırımlı, on the other hand, defines identity as "social and political constructs" which serve particular ideological positions and interests (Özkırımlı 2005, p.55).

One needs to ask how a group of individuals form a collective entity and how cohesion within that group is sustained over time. At this point, there are two aspects of identity in terms of this study. The first one is that collective identities are subject to change depending on time and place and therefore they are "never absolutely stable" (Özkırımlı 2005, p.55), rather they should be regarded as "a dynamic reflexive process" (Melucci, cited in Fominaya 2010, p.396). Thus sectarian identities are partly formed in relationship to other religious and sectarian groups in a given domestic and regional context. Although religions are considered as monolithic doctrines, various sectarian groups and denominations have come into existence due to theological, economic or political reasons in time. Therefore it would not be correct to suggest that sectarian groups are monolithic entities with a clear clerical bureaucracy, universally accepted dogmatic systems and set of rituals, presenting a single identity to all of its members. Having in mind the internal differences, however, it is still a valid argument that members of a sectarian group share certain perspectives and views about the world they live in and sectarian identities constitute a kind of loyalty and a particular definition of self and the other in a society. Therefore, although this thesis recognizes the differences within sectarian communities and the fluid nature of sectarian identity, it is believed that individuals belonging to the same sect have similar identity in a given time and each of these religious confessions has considerable formal and informal influence on their members in defining the self and other, which has significant influence in political studies.

Second, one also needs to take the multiplicity of identities into consideration. Smith states that "human beings live in a multiplicity of social groups, some of which are more significant and salient than others at various times" (Smith, cited in Özkırımlı 2000, p.79) Therefore, individuals possess multiple identity at different times, which are not necessarily in harmony with each other. In the literature, it is widely argued that there are different types of groups and individuals who are members of multiple groups simultaneously (Ferguson and Mansbach, cited in Sterling-Folker 2009, p.111). For instance, a person can be a Muslim and a Druze, while he is living in Lebanon whose family origins from either Israel or Palestine and working as bank manager. These religious, sectarian, national (based on citizenship), ethnic and occupational identities may imply different affiliations at the same time and these memberships create multiple identities linked to institutional roles of each actor and they are inherently social definitions and have their meanings in relation to others (Wendt 1992, p.398).

Hence, the existence of multiple identities does not refute the prominence of some of themes over others. However, it is important to question critically which identity is dominant at a particular case and why sectarian identity achieves prominence in this study. Although the point that an individual can be a member of ethnic, sectarian, professional, social and economic groups at the same time has been a very natural argument and multiple group membership is normal at any given society, for the reasons discussed in the previous chapter, this thesis prefers to focus on the role of sectarian identity on the perceptions of domestic actors about foreign policy matters and how their behaviors are being affected by these perceptions in the case of Lebanon. Throughout the history, sectarianism has always been part of the politics especially in countries where people of different confessional groups live in close proximity to each other and sectarian identity has been one of the most important variables for political players in defining the self and the other, the good and the evil, friend and foe.

In addition to its long-lasting importance, the resurgence of religious and sectarian identity as a crisis of modernity at the global level especially in the last decade

(Thomas 2005) makes this study timely because as the state capabilities decline and governments fail to provide basic needs of people, sub-state actors based on sectarian affiliation have gained further loyalty of their members and become more powerful in both domestic and regional politics (Gause 2013). In addition to this global trend, since the politics in the Middle East has been regarded as the balance of power among communities rather than the relationship between individuals and the state, as Nasr argues, particular collective identities defining the *communities* become more important and the confrontation among sectarian groups has the potential to shape future politics (Nasr 2006b).

Issue of identity in foreign policy studies is a broad subject and a comparative look at the literature demonstrates that it has been continuously studied. However, it is observed that the issue of sectarian identity is evaluated as mainly at state level as the defining factor in certain states' foreign policies. In other words, the questions like 'who we are?' and 'how we are perceived by others?' on sectarian bases have been studied in terms of their implication in foreign policy behavior of nation states, as demonstrated in the next section, yet there are really few studies on the nexus of the sectarian identity and societal actors and its influence on foreign policy choices and behaviors.

2.4.2. Sectarianism and Sectarian Actors in Foreign Policy Studies

After a well surveyed literature review, it can easily be observed that the literature on the nexus of sectarian identity and foreign policy behavior is mostly about the nature and the role of moral values and religious norms in the conduct of state foreign policies. As shown below, most of the studies aim to describe the context in which certain faith has influenced foreign policy decisions and behaviors of decision makers and the conduct of world affairs, nevertheless sectarian groups as sub-state actors have not been studied sufficiently.

As also mentioned before, sectarian identity has always been a considerable political variable as a transnational tie between different societies, however, the

academic inquiry has awaken since 2003 especially in the Middle Eastern Studies and studies on US Foreign Policy. Vali Nasr argues that although the Shia-Sunni conflict is an age-old scourge for the region, wars within Islam in our time will shape the future substantially because the deep Shia-Sunni conflict since 2003 radically changed the regional context and sectarian violence is not limited to Iraq but has the potential to expand from Gulf to Lebanon (Nasr 2006a, p.22; Nasr 2006b). Therefore, much has been written on the rise of sectarianism in Iraqi context since 2003, because sectarian politics is very central subject to debate and analysis in the literature on Iraq. The rise to power of Shias in Iraq and the concerns of the Sunni governing elites across the region about their Shia populations' demands and the possibility of the Sunnis' removal from power have generated a sectarian consciousness and vexations. The early manifestation of this sectarian consciousness is the emergence of the term, *Shia Crescent*. It is used to refer a possible rise of Shia power under Iranian leadership across the region which will overwhelm the Sunnis in the Middle East. Indeed, this concern was popularly met by the political leaders of the region as Barzegar states;

> The concern was first warned by King Abdullah of Jordan in 2004… As Hosni Mubarak puts it, 'the Shias in the region are more loyal to Iran than their own countries.' Saud al-Feisal voiced Saudi Arabia's concern about Iran's increased role in Iraq by saying that, 'all Arab countries assisted Iraq to not be occupied by Iran in the Iran-Iraq war, but now we are handing the whole country (Iraq) over to Iran without reason (Barzegar 2008).

In the Middle Eastern Studies, sectarianism drew considerable attention. In this regard the foremost example is the literature on the Iranian foreign policy and its Shia background especially after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. How and to what extent Shia factor influence foreign policy choices of Iran? The literature, in general, can be divided into two: those trying to demonstrate how realistic impedances play role in foreign policy choices of Iran; and those emphasizing the discourse, which has been dressed up with mostly religious and in some cases with sectarian components. Kayhan Barzegar, for instance, states that although the role of Shia factor in Iran's foreign policy was empowered by the advent of the

1979 Islamic Revolution, pragmatic aims have always derived Iranian decision makers (Barzegar 2008). There are also some recent studies focusing on pragmatic approach of Iranian decision makers and Iran's good relations with Tunisia's Al-Nahda Party and Sunni Hamas (Ehteshami & Zweiri 2007; Ehteshami & Zweiri 2008; Ayub et al. 2013, pp.1–4 and 17). On the other hand, historically the issue of Shia identity in Iranian foreign policy has been discussed more frequently after the occupation of Iraq in 2003, because relations between Iran and Shia factions in the region, specifically in Iraq, has been enhanced after the invasion (Gause 2014, p.10). On the issue of Iranian interest towards Shia groups in Iraq, even Barzegar and some others admits that the coming of Shia dominated government in Iraq to power has turned out to be a turning point in empowering the place of Shia factor in Iranian foreign policy (Barzegar 2008; Bakeer 2013). Therefore it is almost a consensus in the literature on Iranian foreign policy that Shia identity has important implications on the construction of decision makers' perceptions about the friend and foe, and so the interest. At this point, this thesis argues that, as will be further elaborated in the next section, a constructivist approach has the potential to bridge the gap in the literature with its balanced emphasize on both the material forces and their perceived meanings in the minds of decision makers.

Related to the nexus of confessional values and foreign policy choices specifically other than Middle Eastern context, while explaining the significance of Evangelist values in American foreign policy Mark R. Amstutz clearly states that since moral norms, stemming from religious values, provide a basis for judgment, without those moral values, namely some notion of right and wrong, good and evil, it would be impossible to condemn or support foreign policy initiatives (Amstutz 2014, p.11). In other words, it is argued that in every foreign policy decision, there is at least hidden value judgment based on morality which can somehow be associated with sectarian principles of decision makers. Similarly, in another study examining American attitudes toward Israel, it is argued that the partisan support for Israel and hard-liner US policies of the Bush Administration in the

Middle East is explained by the emergence of new religious cleavages and evangelical belief of dispensationalism, predicting an Armageddon that would end with the second coming of Christ (Cavari 2013). Additionally, Walter Russell Mead argues that in the making of American foreign policy, religion has always been a significant factor by shaping the nation's character, forming Americans' ideas about the world and US interests, influencing the ways Americans respond to international events (Mead 2012, p.247). In addition to this, Thomas F. Farr continuously scrutinizes how religious motivations affected US International Religious Freedom Policy (Farr 2012; Farr 2010). These studies specifically focus on the importance of sectarian values in the process of constructing the self and the other, friend and foe, ally and enemy in international politics.

The role of sectarian affiliations of leaders on their foreign policy making and the importance of the religious beliefs and affiliations in shaping decision making processes through constructing perceptions have been subject to academic studies as briefly covered above. On the other hand, it is surprisingly observed that these studies mainly focus on state level and only few studies place the role of sectarian identity on foreign policy behavioral patterns of domestic actors and sub-state sectarian groups at the center of their investigation and move beyond the old premises of realist paradigm of the discipline of International Relations. Regarding the subject of this study, other than general discussions on the role of sectarian identity in world affairs, there are some specific studies, which focus on religious actors in international relations and their engagement on states' foreign policies, though few in number.

Jeffrey Haynes tries to identify and examine political activities of certain religious actors in both domestic and international context and how they affect political outcomes in his book named *An Introduction to International Relations and Religion*. He introduced two types of religious actors: state-related religious actors and non-state religious actors. State-related ones are those which have close links to the governments, but conceptually distinct from them. On the other hand, those in the second category are religious individuals or movements acting in both

domestic and international contexts without any connection with governments (Haynes 2007, pp.34–35). The ability of any religious actors to translate its potential capacity into tangible results in any state foreign policies, according to the writer, heavily depends on its ability to access to foreign policy decision making process and their power to raise campaigns in public or manage lobbying (Haynes 2007, p.49).

On the issue of the role of sectarian societal actors and their engagement with outside world in parallel to their efforts to shape foreign policies of a state, Evangelical groups and their foreign policy orientations and aspirations have deserved particular attention in the literature. Especially during the era of neo-conservatives in the US under George W. Bush Administration, the role of Evangelical groups in US Foreign Policy and their formal and informal relations with outside world have drawn particular interest from different scholars. An earlier study, named *Representing God in Washington: The Role of Religious Lobbies in the American Polity* by Allen D. Hertzke, covers a wide range of sectarian groups, such as Liberal Protestants, Roman Catholics, Jews, Evangelical, and Black Evangelicals, searching influence on American policy making. He argues that unlike other lobbyists representing institutional and domestic constituencies, religious lobbyists represent international constituencies and theological traditions through their transnational connections (Hertzke 1988). Another important study on the role of religious groups in US Foreign policy making is *The Influence of Faith: Religious Groups and U.S. Foreign Policy* edited by Elliott Abrams. Contrary to realist principles, this book analyzes the role of faith-based groups such as missionary and relief organizations in the formulation and implementation of US policy. According to Abrams, sectarian groups have impact on defining the national interests and shaping US foreign policy objectives through their capabilities in raising funds to different charity organizations and delivering social services (Abrams 2001). Another substantial study has been written recently by Mark R. Amstutz, named *Evangelicals and American Foreign Policy*. He reveals the longstanding involvement of

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Evangelical groups with issues like global poverty, sex trafficking, religious persecution and most importantly US position towards Israel in line with their Evangelist interpretation of the Bible (Amstutz 2014). There is also another study showing the impacts of religious sub-state groups on Israeli foreign policy making. Israel Shahak and Norton Mezvinsky, writers of *Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel* for instance, note that fundamentalist groups in Israel have played significant role in shaping foreign policy of Israel through their vigorous opposition to the peace process and their support for the settlements in the West Bank by interpreting it as so-called a divine process of redemption of Israel (Shahak & Mezvinsky 1999).

2.4.3. Sectarian Groups as Sub-State Foreign Policy Actors

Sub-state actors in foreign policy studies are defined as interests groups, which are "private associations of people who have similar policy views and who pressure the government to adopt those views as policy" (Rourke 2007, p.87). In terms of taxonomy of these actors, Christopher Hill offers a practical basis depending on their primary concerns: territorial, ideological/cultural, economic. By territorial, Hill refers to those organizations either using or seeking some territorial base, such as the Palestine Liberation Organization and the African National Congress. The second category, ideological/cultural, refers to those referring to promote ideas or ways thinking across national frontiers. The third and the last category is economic actors, because their primary focus is wealth-creation (Hill 2003a, pp.195–203). Although Hill's categorization is practical in terms of pedagogical clarity, it is important to note that these categories are not mutually exclusive. To illustrate, an ideological group may well have its own economic interests, or even in some cases, certain territorial claims, too. Within this framework, sectarian groups are sub-state foreign policy actors sharing a common sectarian identity and having a common aspiration for the promotion and utilization of certain political ends in foreign policy matters.

With the growing interdependence and the rise of transnational relations, as already covered, the literature demonstrates that any sub-state domestic actor including sectarian groups may traditionally seek to achieve its foreign policy goals through pressuring its government to adapt a policy in accordance with its sectarian perception and orientation. In this regard, any domestic actor may engage in governmental processes by creating pressure mechanisms in order to shape and direct the foreign policy decisions and behaviors of their home state. This is indeed a typical action of any sub-state actor, including sectarian groups, as covered above because after all nation state is still one of the most pertinent entity in international relations. As noted, state is still the preeminent structure carrying out formal relations with the outside world and taking decisions about the resources necessary to carry out political activities. Therefore, sectarian groups like any other sub-state actor still need to be involved in decision making processes of their own governments (Sterling-Folker 2009, p.112). In doing so, after analyzing the literature and practices, it is generally observed that the first way of shaping government decision is to rely on its own social, economic and military capabilities in order to impose their foreign policy perceptions and orientations. The second way, on the other hand, is that sub-state actors are keen to build foreign alliances with outside states and non-state actors in order to make their international partners pressure members of government in shaping governmental decisions in favor of their interests.

Contrary to Rourke's definition, however, sectarian groups are not necessarily bind by a particular behavioral pattern of pressuring their governments to reach their goals, rather they can develop several behavioral patterns on their own initiatives depending on the given context. How do sectarian leaders who act on behalf of their communities assess and respond to international threats and opportunities? More importantly how do they link the domestic power struggle with that of regional and global one? In which situations, under what conditions and to what extent can domestic actors bargain with state leaders and influence foreign policies or pursue their own private relations with others at abroad? How

do domestic actors establish their relations with other power groups in the country? What kind of relations do they have with the outside world? What is the importance of state structure and state power in analyzing sectarian actors in foreign policy matters? While such questions may widen the understanding of foreign policy, after a well survey of literature and practice of sub-state sectarian actors this thesis argues that leaders of sectarian groups play three-level game in formulating and framing their foreign policy preferences. In addition to pressuring government, which is a traditional behavioral pattern of domestic actors, sectarian leaders may develop two additional patterns of behaviors especially at times when state becomes more fragile and their weight in politics rise: foreign policy actor as quasi-state or foreign policy actor as embedded in the state.
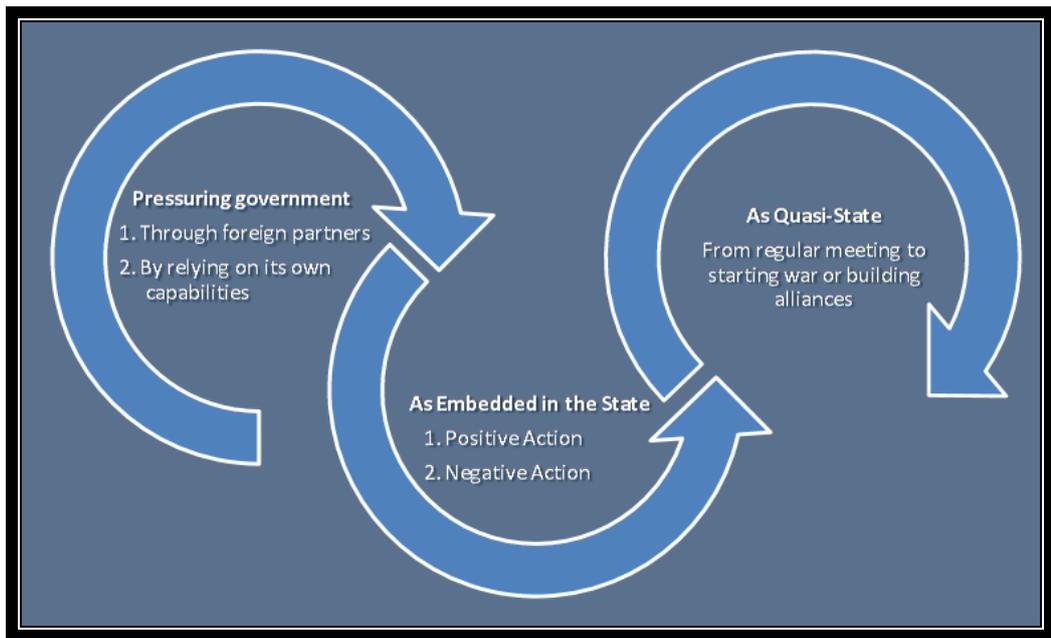
Figure 2: Behavioral Patterns of Sectarian Actors

When a state is institutionally fragile and not sovereign as it is expected to be, a sectarian leader can increase its political power and go as far as acting as a state,

what I call foreign policy actor as quasi-state if the leader had the required capabilities. The term quasi-state [43] for a sectarian group refers that these confessional groups may carry out their own private foreign policy agenda in its relations with both states and non-state actors independent from formal inter-state relations. In this case, sectarian actors do not need to pressure any government to achieve its foreign policy aims. More clearly, as will be discussed in case studies in the upcoming chapters, a sectarian leader may act as a sovereign and autonomous player in international politics and initiated a very real foreign policy actions from regular meetings with foreign representatives to starting a war with a neighboring country. Throughout the analysis of Lebanese history and case studies, this dissertation also aims to explore the degree and the nature of these relations with foreign actors as well as the repercussions of these informal relations.

The second behavioral pattern, namely foreign policy actor as embedded in the state, is more specific attitude, or more visible, in a particular state structure; namely confessional system. As discussed in the introduction, confessionalism like in Lebanon is based on proportional representation of various sectarian groups in governmental and state institutions. Therefore this political system allows major sectarian groups to have a proportional power in the bureaucracy parallel to official state hierarchy, which let them to shape and influence both decision making processes and more importantly the implementation of any foreign policy decision. Sectarian groups may generally prefer to act as a foreign policy actor as embedded in the state, when they do not have sufficient power to act as a quasi-state and need to settle with the domestic balance of power. This power, which stems from the nature of political and social system in the country, may demonstrate itself in two ways; namely as I call, positive action and negative action. Barnett argues that sub-state actors would try to pursue their own foreign policy objectives when some of their members are in power in certain offices and

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[43] The word *quasi* comes from Latin which means "almost, as it were", therefore Meriam-Webster defines quasi as "in some sense or degree, resembling in some degree" (Merriam-Webster 2015).

these objectives can differ those of the existing governments (Barnett 2007, p.201). In the case of a confessional political system, leaders of sectarian groups may enjoy considerable loyalty of the members of their communities, who are also holding offices in various bureaucracies and interfere into state affairs through these posts. Within this line, positive action of a sub-state sectarian group as being embedded in the state means that they utilize state's and government's capabilities in order to pursue their foreign policy interest through offices which are granted to them in confessional systems. The negative action, secondly, refers to disintegrating state institutions in order to shape the implementation of any decision. In this case, confessional leaders may block implementation of any governmental foreign policy decision depending on their leadership capabilities and power that they hold in the bureaucracy. In other words, since they are embedded in the state with official quotas and the state is built around these internal identity groups, it is highly possible that sectarian leaders through sectarian loyalties may prevent government from acting. For instance, it might be possible for a government in a confessional system to refrain from using its national army due to the possibility of its disintegration along with confessional lines, if the decision is not a consensual one of all community leaders.

The last but not the least, an important part of foreign policy studies is dedicated to the relationship between decision makers and public opinion. Laura Neack states that the study of foreign policy is the study of both statements of decision makers and the behaviors or actions of actors (Neack 2008, p.9). Therefore one needs to analyze behaviors and actions carefully along with what actors declare to be their goals. Leaders of sub-state groups as sectarian actors need to frame and legitimize a foreign policy choice vis-à-vis the society in general in order to gain the support for their foreign policy preferences (Mintz & DeRouen 2010, pp.149–166). At this point, it is believed that how leaders of sectarian groups framed their foreign policy preferences is very crucial and challenging in the eyes of their constituencies and public, especially when they act either as quasi-state or as embedded in the state. Looking at practices of sectarian leaders, it is observed that

sectarian leaders generally develop a more rhetorical discourse based on moral values or national interests to enhance public support for their own choices as national leaders at state level do. In this respect, this study with following parts on history and case studies will also present an opportunity to explore the validity of this argument for confessional leaders.

2.5. CONCLUSION

The transformation that foreign policy studies have experienced has started with certain questions like what foreign policy is, who makes it, and how it should be analyzed. For this inquiry, theories of both IR and FPA have both expanded levels of analysis and included various actors into foreign policy studies. However, only the proliferation of actors is not sufficiently explanatory as long as these studies ignore the role of identity and its impact on the perceptions of actors. At this point, it is argued that constructivism has become one of the most significant developments in the discipline of International Relations since the end of the Cold War with its emphasis on the relational construction of reality, which was taken as objective and given in previous studies (Fearon 1998, p.305; Cho 2009, p.96). Contrary to materialist premises in realism and liberalism in foreign policy studies, constructivist scholars mainly argue that values, perceptions and identities of actors must be carefully analyzed without denying the importance of material forces in foreign policy processes in order to understand the social context that actors perceive and operate in.

The commitment to look below the nation-state in the field of foreign policy studies has gained a new meaning with the introduction of identity politics and the rise of sub-state identity groups. As mentioned, this thesis does not only question the unity assumption of the state but also problematize the explanatory power of the existence of multiple actors as long as the role of identity-based groups are ignored in foreign policy studies. Especially after the introduction of constructivist insight in world politics, I think, the field has now become a very

productive area of study and therefore it must respond to the recent debates about the rise of sectarianism and their roles in both domestic and foreign policies. While sectarianism has been a historical phenomenon and possesses significant repercussions in world politics, the deliberate attempts to exploit sectarian differences and divisions in recent years especially since the end of the Cold War seem to shape the agenda of the foreign politics. In this context this thesis argues that a study on the question of whether sectarian groups can be considered as unit of analysis in the foreign policy literature is considerable interests and will bring a new phase of debate to the existing literature.

After introducing sectarian groups as unit of analysis in foreign policy studies, the other ambitious aim of this thesis as discussed above is to find explanatory tool and variables about behavioral patterns of these actors. More specifically, how sectarian identity drives decisions and actions of sectarian groups in foreign policy making and what kind of behavioral pattern they have emerge as two important questions to be studied. It is argued here that since sectarian identity constitute a kind of loyalty and a particular definition of self and other in a society, it creates a group affiliation, which can be taken as a reference point in defining friend and foe, or ally and enemy, in political matters. Additionally, sectarian identity imposes a set of perceptions and interests about foreign policy issues both at regional and international level, which are going to be elaborated more in the coming chapters. Concerning behavioral patterns, in addition to the traditional behavioral pattern of pressuring the government through various means, since nation state is still the most preeminent entity carrying out formal relations in international relations despite great transformations of world politics, this thesis offers that leaders of sectarian groups may develop two additional behavioral patterns especially when state fails to deliver proper governmental functions. In such contexts, as discussed above, sectarian groups may act as quasi-state actors and deliver state-like functions from regular meetings with outside world on foreign policy issues to the starting war with a neighboring power; or

may emerge as an actor embedded in the state and use their informal power through offices they hold in state bureaucracy.

To conclude, it is argued that a holistic constructivist approach would be an appropriate methodology for understanding both the rise of identity politics and the emergence of sectarian groups as foreign policy actors and explaining foreign policy behavioral patterns of sectarian groups in foreign policy making. Based on a constructivist insight, it seems possible to answer possible questions about choices of alliance buildings and perceptions of friend and foe in foreign policy matters due to its merit of explaining normative and ideational processes.

CHAPTER 3

THE MAKING OF SECTARIAN LEBANON:
EMERGENCE OF VARIOUS FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATIONS

Lebanon, or Lebanese Republic, a relatively small country on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, is a democratic republic with a total area of 10.400 square km and a population of around six million based on July 2015 estimation (Central Intelligence Agency 2016). Lebanese territory, mostly rugged by mountains and valleys, is dominated by the ranges of the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon Mountains, parallel to the coast of the Mediterranean. After it had been established as the State of Greater Lebanon in September 1920, it achieved its independence from France, mandatory power, in 1943. Both before and after the independence, the issue of sectarianism has been a central phenomenon, where its geography and history constructed a diversity of sectarian groups. Although there are continuities in this pattern of sectarianism since the pre-independence time, the situation of the country was quite different in terms of the nature of sectarian relations before 1943, and also before 1920.

In the following two chapters, it is aimed to explore continuities and changes in foreign policy orientations of sectarian groups and their alliances both in domestic and at abroad. As already mentioned in the previous part, this thesis argues that there is a need for a holistic approach in understanding foreign policy cases. For this aim, contrary to the general tendency in the literature on Lebanese foreign policy, this thesis aims to concentrates on the domestic actors without ignoring the regional and systemic variables. In doing so, the following two chapters

specifically focus on main pillars of Lebanese society, inter-communal relations, their alliances both at domestic and abroad, policy making, the workings of government and the political process in Lebanon from a foreign policy perspective. What are the origins, nature and repercussions of Lebanon's confessional system? How does it differ from other democracies? How has the state been established on sectarian divisions and the role of sectarian alliances in this process? What is the historical explanation of the development of state-society relation and dimensions of integration in divided society? How has the national identity been defined? Or more conveniently, could it be defined? These questions and alike will be tried to be elaborated in a historical perspective in relation to their relevance to foreign policy making in this part.

Such an analysis will also examine the origins and construction of sectarian identities and demonstrate how diverse identities emerged in Lebanon in relational manner. In order to understand the role of sectarian identity in foreign policy orientations and choices of sectarian groups, it is first necessary to understand the historical roots of the building processes of various identities. In this manner although the existence of different religious communities in the territory of current Lebanon had been a reality for centuries, it is believed that the history of Lebanese confessional system goes back to the late Ottoman period in which the first institutionalization of sectarian politics had been realized. Therefore, in order to grasp the making and unmaking of Lebanon's foreign policy and the role of sectarian groups in this process, it is believed that an analysis and understanding of the creation of Lebanon, the origins and working mechanisms of confessional system, in other words, the evolution and working of the Lebanese political system from the mid-nineteenth century to the present would be complimentary to understand the role of sectarian groups in current foreign policy making procedures.

In one of the most seminal works on Lebanon, *The Modern History of Lebanon*, Kamal Salibi affirms;

A small country is rarely involved in an international conflict to her advantage. Whatever side such a country may support, her real interest in the conflict remains of secondary importance, and is likely to be sacrificed should higher interests so dictate. Her allies will normally keep her uninformed of their ultimate motives, leaving her to drift into complex situations which she can little understand or control. Finally, as her internal affairs become entangled in the outside conflict, these affairs themselves get out of hand, leaving her at the mercy of whatever forces prevail (Salibi 1965).

Kamal Salibi's this judgment is actually about the early nineteenth century Lebanon, nevertheless it is still very relevant in understanding the whole history of Lebanon and its foreign policy orientations in terms of the complex interdependence between foreign and domestic actors and the importance of regional and international powers on Lebanese foreign policy choices. However, it is strongly believed that the historical analysis in the following two chapters will also reveal the importance of domestic sub-state groups and their foreign policy orientations depending on their perceptions and ideas about the ongoing events because, as Nau argues, a foreign policy study "begins with what kind of society the nation is" (Nau 2002, p.16).

For this aim, the history of Lebanon is going to be studied under seven sub-periods, while giving emphasize to the recent times. In order to elaborate the early beginning of sectarian Lebanon, a brief elaboration on the transition from the Emirate to the Qaimaqamate and the emergence of the Mutasarrifiyya, when the sectarian division had firstly been institutionalized under the auspices of great powers of Europe, will be presented. In the second part, the French Mandate period from the 1920s to the 1940s will be covered. This part is going to present a discussion on the impact of colonialism in the region and the nature of the colonial state-making in general and Lebanese nation-building process on the basis of sectarian division under French Mandate. The last part in this chapter will start with an elaboration of the National Pact, which affirmed Christians' recognition of country's place in the Arab world, as well as Muslims' approval of its independent statehood. It will continue with the examination of the applicability of the principle of neutrality, as envisaged in the Pact from 1943 to

the outbreak of civil war in 1975. Chapter 4, on the other hand, will start with the breakdown of the state, communal transformations, militia-based politics and the patterns of external intervention through multi-level alliances during civil war years from 1975 to 1990. Then, it will continue with the analysis of the Taif Agreement, where the sectarian relations and the alliances were re-established. The chapter will then focus on the analysis of the post-civil war period under Israeli and Syrian occupations which lasted until 2000 and 2005 respectively. Finally the early 2000s, which paved the way for the emergence of current political alliances will be covered. This chronologically ordered diachronic analysis, giving emphasize to the recent times, aims to reveal the root causes of the confessional system and its working mechanisms from a perspective of foreign policy studies. To do so, the second part of the thesis focuses on main pillars of Lebanese society, inter-communal relations, their alliances both at domestic politics and abroad, policy making patterns, working of the Lebanese government in a chronological order because it is firmly believed that an understanding of the evolution and working of the Lebanese political system from the mid-nineteenth century to the present would be substantial knowledge for the analysis of the role of sectarian groups in Lebanese foreign policy.

3.1. LEBANON UNDER THE OTTOMANS: THE LONG PEACE[44]

The territory of the modern Lebanese Republic had been under the Ottoman rule from 1516, when the Ottoman Sultan Selim I defeated the Mamluks, to 1918 when the Ottoman troops left the territory towards the end of the First World War. Under the early years of the Ottoman control, the territory of modern Lebanon was neither a united entity nor it was called Lebanon or Mount Lebanon (Salibi 1965, p.xii). Rather, the territory of modern Lebanon under the Ottoman sovereignty experienced three kinds of administrative systems: Emirate

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[44] In reference to Engin Akarli's highly recognized book, *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920*.

(Principality), Qaimaqamate and Mutasarrifiyya. In this part, the development of an autonomous political regime in the Ottoman Mount Lebanon, the historical and geographical core of today's Lebanon, is going to be elaborated while the people of Mount Lebanon had been moving toward becoming a society with a distinct political identity and system. The analysis of the Ottoman period is considered highly important not only because the current system in Lebanon has its roots in the *Millet System* of the Ottoman Empire and the *Règlement Organique* of 1860, where the communal boundaries were firstly defined on the basis of sectarian identities institutionally but also because the early foreign alliances of these confessional groups have come into being during this period.

3.1.1. The Emirate and Double Qaimaqamate Periods

After the Ottoman Empire had taken the control of eastern shores of the Mediterranean, the first recorded political entity in the lands of modern Lebanon dates back to the establishment of the Emirate. The Emirate rested on a quasi-feudal system based on landlords, called Emir who was required to maintain social order and deliver required taxes and other obligations to the Sultan. During the early Ottoman authority in the mid-sixteenth century, there were mainly four communities, namely Druze, Maronite, Greek Orthodox and Shia (*Mutawali*) (Farah 2000, p.5). The administration of the emirate was first left to the Ma'ans, an important family from the Druze community, which was wealthy and politically powerful. From the end of the seventeenth century, the Chehabs ruled the Mountains until the Druze-Maronite War started in 1841. Having converted from Sunni Islam to Christianity, Bashir Chehab II became the first Maronite ruler of the Emirate of Mount Lebanon.

Regarding to its territorial character of these emirates, the coastal cities of Tripoli, Beirut and Saida in addition to the Beqaa Valley had not been considered as under the direct rule of Ma'ans or Chehabs, which had been part of the Governorate of Damascus (Salibi 1965, pp.xi–xiii). In other words, only the mountainous hinterland of coast starting from Tripoli on the north to Saida on the south was

under the jurisdiction of this Emirate. Having developed strong traditions of local autonomy in the mountainous land, it is stated that a Maronite-Druze feudal association controlled the territory until the mid-nineteenth century and Habib Malik argues that a tradition of autonomy as a separate political entity had been established in this period (Malik 2000, p.3). Historically speaking, the mountainous Lebanon has been a port of refugee for sectarian minorities even before the Ottomans because, as William Harris affirms, the geographical character of the Mountain prevented foreign direct control and provided these small communities with considerable autonomy. In addition to this, the natural compartmentalization of these mountains has made the autonomous evolution of various sectarian groups possible in a historical process (Harris 2006, pp.59–60). In this manner the Maronites and the Druze were the two communities which were most connected to the Mount Lebanon, and Shias had found a more autonomous area in Beqaa, while most of Greek Orthodox and Sunnis were living in coastal areas.

The Emirate period was not an easy rule for the Sublime Port[45] because it could be defined as a continuous struggle between the central government in Istanbul and Druze rebellions.[46] Although the sectarian groups and their populations were different from the modern time, the existence of different sectarian groups had certain degree of political importance in the early years too. However, it can be stated that the relation between different communities in this period was basically based on feudal characteristics, rather than sectarian nature (Salibi 1965, p.xiii). In other words, an intricate network among influential families, defined by inherited

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[45] The Sublime Port is also known as the Ottoman Porte or High Porte, which is '*Bab-ı Ali*' in Turkish, literally meaning 'high door'. It is a metonym for the central government of the Ottoman Empire by reference to the gate giving access to the principal state departments in Istanbul.

[46] While explaining the multiplicity of communuties in Mount Lebanon and their difficult relation with Istanbul, one of the early Arabist Carsten Neibuhr states in his memoirs after an expedition in late eighteenth century that "there are many different sects and religions, many of them have sheikhs and emirs of their own nations. They rent certain districts of the pashas. But the rent is seldom paid until the Turks are getting the rent with an army, which always will be very expensive" (Carsten, cited in Heurlin & Hansen 2011, p.4).

social status and actual power, empowered the social stratification whereas the actual power during the Emirate period stemmed from agricultural resources controlled by certain families. It is stated that the differences in religion among powerful families were not an obstacle for close cooperation for a common political considerations, while cross sectarian divisions and formations existed on the basis of power relations of emirs and sheikhs. In this regard, a symbiotic relationship between the Druze and the Maronites had come into existence as a result of a somehow local patriotism against the image of 'Ottoman-colonizing other' (Gürcan 2007, p.14). On the other hand, Kamal Salibi points out a very important distinction between power relations and social relations. To put it in a more clear way, while Druze, Christian and Muslim peasant warriors could fight side by side in defense of a common feudal cause, the actual social contacts between various sectarian communities were severely restricted to only casual or business purposes (Salibi 1965, p.xiv). Therefore, it is convenient to argue that although any explanation on the relations among different communities in power relations cannot solely be based on sectarian differences, it would still be difficult to ignore these divisions even in the time of the Emirate especially in inter-communal social relations.

Contrary to the cross-sectarian alliances in domestic power struggles, sectarian communities of Mount Lebanon had their relations with foreign powers generally based on their sectarian identities. The holy places and Christian communities have been obvious attraction to the European powers even in the seventeenth century. Among them the Maronites had become the main channel for France to extend its influence in the eastern Mediterranean. Albert Hourani, for instance, states that French Ambassador in Istanbul was instructed to protect the Christians of the Levant[47] in 1639 and the Maronite clergy visited French Court in order to ask protection of the French King in 1649. In response, French King Louis XIV

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[47] The term Levant is used to indicate the eastern Mediterranean littoral covering the modern state of Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the southern Turkey and the territories under Palestinian Authorithy (Harris 2005, p.vi).

issued letters-patent, declaring the Maronite community in his special protection, which led to the establishment of a particular relationship between them (Hourani 1946, p.147). Even before this, another special connection between the Maronite Church and the Catholic Church of Rome had been established in the twelfth century and the Vatican had enhanced its influence further by opening a Maronite collage in Rome in 1585 for the education of the Maronite clergy. Continuously, the Maronite Patriarchate entered into a full union with the Church of Rome by accepting its doctrine and recognizing its superiority in 1736 (Harris 2006, p.28 and 70; Farah 2000, p.11; Hirst 2010). In addition to religious union, there are some archival documents which demonstrated that the Pope in Rome commended the Maronite Church in political issues, For instance, in a letter dated September 1610, Vatican commanded the Church to enhance the existing relations with Emir Fakhraddin, who was known with, as the letter reads, "his strong enmity to the Turks" (Abu Husayn 2009, p.36).

Inter-sectarian struggles started in the very early of the nineteenth century. For instance Bashir Chehab II, Emir of Mount Lebanon between 1788 - 1840, allowed the Maronite Church to emerge as a political power in return for patriarchic rally to ensure the support of Maronite landlords and religious leaders in the name of communal solidarity (Akarli 1993, p.21; Ayhan & Tür 2009, p.34). This political union in addition to the close ties with France and the Catholic Church since the early seventeenth century led to the rise of the Maronite Patriarchate as a political entity (Farah 2000, p.11; Hirst 2010). Following the rise of inter-communal tensions, the first sectarian conflict occurred in Mukhtara Battle in 1825, where Bashir Chehab, with the support of the Maronite Church and the Governor of Egypt Mehmed Ali Pasha[48] overwhelmed Druze leader Bashir Jumblatt. What

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[48] The spelling of Mehmed Ali Pasha's first name in both Arabic and Ottoman Turkish was consistent (محمد) with Arabic letters, yet there is a distinction in transliteration. He was known as 'Muhammed' by his Egyptian subjects, and this name is being used uniformly in Arab historical scholarship. However, given his original status as a commander in the Ottoman bureaucracy, his first name is rendered as 'Mehmed', which is the standard rendition of that name in Ottoman Turkish. In this thesis, 'Mehmed' is going to be preferred depending on both Ottoman sources and his official status in the Ottoman military.

was novel about Mukhtara Battle is that although there were Druze and Shia chieftains fighting on both sides, the Maronites concentrated their support on one side alone, which means that sectarian solidarity and identity in a conflict had already evoked in the early period of the nineteenth century (Akarli 1993, p.21).

The important note that should be made here is that the inter-sectarian tensions of the Emirate had not been exempt from the rivalries of regional politics and European powers because as France assumed the role of protector of Catholics in the Ottoman Empire, Russia tried to bear the role of guardians of Orthodoxy in the Empire while Britain entered into an alliance with the Druze in the early nineteenth century towards the end of the Emirate (Weinberger 1986, p.42; Harris 2009b, p.10). The emergence of the conflict between the Sublime Port and the Governor of Egypt caused deepening of mutual suspicions between different communities in this region, where the Druze sided with Istanbul and the Maronites supported Cairo (Salibi 1965, p.28; Akarli 1993, p.25). When 1821 Greek Rebellion had started, Istanbul Government asked assistance of Governor Mehmed Ali Pasha of Egypt, who asked for the control of Syria in return for his support. After the refusal of his request, his son Ibrahim Pasha conquered the territory of modern Palestine and Syria in 1831-1832 and Istanbul Government was forced to appoint him as the governor. The advancement of Egyptian army to the Levant, without doubt, had direct repercussions in Lebanon. The Emir Bashir Chehab II had fallen in a position of obedient agent of Ibrahim Pasha due to his powerful ties with Egypt even in cases contradicted Emir's own interests. During the reign of Ibrahim Pasha, heavy taxation, promotion of political and social equality between Christians and Muslims, measures of forced labor, disarmament of the Druze community and especially obligatory military conscriptions from the Druze and the Maronite communities prompted local revolts against Egyptian rule in Syria. Then this resentment turned into a severe Druze rebel in 1837 in Houran, a region in the southwestern of the current territory of Syria, which was oppressed with the support of a four thousand Christians from Lebanon (Salibi 1965, pp.28–35). Although the insurrection was finally subdued, the Druze rebel of 1837-38

had important repercussions in memories of the Druze which led to the alienation of the Druze in the Emirates.

When Mehmed Ali Pasha decided to disarm all communities in the Mount, Bashir II summoned the chiefs of the Christians and the Druze of Dayr Al Qamar to surrender their arms absolutely in May 1840. As a reaction to this decision, the Druze, Maronites, and Greek Catholics of the town rebelled, which was quickly spread to other cities and finally brought the end of the Emirate (Salibi 1965, pp.38–39). Indeed, the insurrection of 1840 and the following sectarian clashes in 1841 were a cumulative result of both involvement of foreign forces and internal developments (Akarli 1993, pp.27–28). With the existence of power vacuum in Mount Lebanon and having been determined to prevent the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire haphazardly, the European Powers, namely Britain, Russia, Austria and Prussia, decided to intervene into both the internal affairs of Lebanon and the rivalry between the Ottoman Empire and Mehmed Ali Pasha. Just after the insurrection had started in Dayr Al Qamar, the Ottomans and Britain backed the insurgents particularly Druze and supplied them with arms. Furthermore, Russia encouraged rebellions, particularly Greek Orthodoxes (Salibi 1965, pp.41–42; Makdisi 1996). In addition to the involvement through supporting proxies, British and Austrian troops and warships were located in the region to force Mehmed Ali Pasha and Bashir II, supported by France, to come to an agreement in accordance with the foreign powers' interests. Finally, with the direct involvement of foreign forces, Ibrahim Pasha started to withdraw from Lebanon in October 1840 and Bashir II left the country. After him, Bashir III was appointed as the Emir but he was incompetent to keep the internal politics under control. According to Salibi, under an unimpressive Emir and with a lack of a common enemy to keep various Lebanese fractions and groups together, the social and sectarian tensions regenerated, which caused a two decades of civil unrest and strife (Salibi 1965, p.44).

In 1841, Maronite-Druze clashes started again and turned into a civil war leaving behind a deep blood feud. In 1842 French, British, Russian, Austrian and Prussian

ambassadors in Istanbul met with the Ottoman Foreign Minister in order to bring the situation under control on an agreeable solution and to prevent the Ottoman government to solve the issue of its own accord. Consequently it is decided to divide the Mountain into two qaimaqamate, or districts: one in the north under a Maronite district governor (qaimaqam) and the other in the south under a Druze district governor, where the Beirut-Zahla-Damascus road formed the rough boundary between these two districts (Keleş 2008, pp.134–135). What is very important in terms of sectarianism in this new system was the establishment of advisory councils to assist each district governor. Each council was planned to consist of six judges and six advisors representing six major communities, namely Sunni, Shia, Maronite, Druze, Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox.[49] This is a very important development because confessional representation in the administration as an institutional principle was introduced for the first time in Lebanese history (Traboulsi 2007, p.26) and Prof. Dr. Abdul Rahim Abu Husayn stated that the institutionalization of sectarianism can be dated back to this period under heavy foreign pressure despite it was not Ottoman's will (Interview with Abu Husayn 2016).[50]

Double Qaimaqamate system was, indeed, problematic by its nature. Although it was based on the division of sectarian groups, the source of the problem was that the new system had been built on the false assumption that Beirut-Damascus road divided the region into two homogenous social entities. On the contrary, the Druze and Christians had been living together in most of the regions. As Salibi notes, the number of Christians in the southern district, for instance, was more than double number of the Druze, although it was defined as Druze district (Salibi

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[49] For the full text of the regulation establishing double qaimaqamate, which was revised in 1850 in Turkish see: Erdoğan Keleş, "Cebel-i Lübnan'da İki Kaymakamlı İdari Düzenin Uygulanması ve 1850 Tarihli Nizamnâme", *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Bölümü Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2008. In the original text, Sunni is referred as *Muslim* whereas Shia was referred as *Mutawali*.

[50] Dr. Abdul Rahim Abu Husayn is Professor of History in the Department of History and Archeology at American University of Beirut.

1965, p.63; Salibi 1988, pp.15–16). Beside this false assumption, division of the Mount into two as Druze and Maronite areas had excluded the existence of other sectarian groups like Shias, Greek Orthodoxes, Greek Catholics and Sunnis.[51] Therefore, the settlement of double Qaimaqamate left the matter unresolved. Another problem in this period was the foreign infiltration because the consulates in Beirut and embassies in Istanbul were so involved in internal affairs of the Ottomans concerning Lebanon and inter-sectarian relations that even a very daily problem in Lebanon might became Anglo-French affair (Salibi 1965, pp.72–79; Keleş 2008, p.138). To conclude, the new system could not provide solution for the troubles of the Mountain; rather it aggregated the problems by institutionalizing sectarian differences and the channels for foreign interventions, which would end up with another civil war in 1860 and led to the establishment of the Mutasarrifiyya in Lebanon.

3.1.2. The Mutasarrifiyya Period

In February 1860, another mountain-wide civil war has started with the assassinations of two Christian priest as a result of social and sectarian tensions which had long been developing in the country and the continues rivalry between mainly British, French and other European powers in the region. The imminent clashes between the Maronites and the Druze spilled over to Sunni and Shia communities when the conflict had spread to the southern Beqaa and Damascus (Ayhan & Tür 2009, p.40; Najem 2012, p.6). According to Salibi, civil war of 1860 was so devastating that approximately eleven thousand Christians had been killed, a hundred thousand had become homeless, and many casualties from the Druze side (Salibi 1965, p.106). After it was understood that the issue could not be settled by local officials and troops, the Sublime Porte sent fifteen thousand troops under the command of Foreign Minister Keçecizade Mehmed Fuad Pasha with full power to resolve the affairs in Mount Lebanon and Damascus in July

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[51] Indeed, Russia had demanded insistently the establishment of another district for Greek Orthodox community but this demand was not approved during negotiations in Istanbul.

1860. Additionally, France had also sent a troop of seven thousand men to Damascus in August 1860 and Britain sent its navy (Fawaz 1994).[52] In the literature, it is consensually stated that the 1860 Civil War created an obvious excuse for European powers to intervene in the affairs of the Mount in a more direct and concrete manner (Najem 2003; Najem 2012; Wilkins 2013, p.23).

Fuad Pasha immediately settled the issue and without doubt his justice was swift and harsh. Many Ottoman local officials including the Governor of Damascus and several military commanders were hanged and hundreds of others were severely punished due to the gross neglect of duty. On the other hand, some of the Druze leaders fled to avoid punishment and the others were imprisoned for life or burdened with a huge indemnity for their responsibility of provocation of the early attacks (Salibi 1965, p.108; Akarli 1993, p.30). Although the immediate settlement of the issue was quick, the political settlement which would shape the future of Lebanon came after several negotiations between the Ottoman Empire and the European powers. Finally an organic statute, named *Règlement Organique* (*Réglement et protocole relatifs à la réorganisation du Mont Liban, Cebel-i Lübnan Vilayet Nizamnamesi*), signed in Istanbul on 9 June 1861 for the reorganization of Mount Lebanon. According to Abu Husayn, Mutasarrifiyya came into existence due to the following reasons: The first one is the declining power of the Ottoman Empire in that era, which prevented the empire to maintain stability and order in the region. The second one is the urgent necessity to end the perpetual local clashes and conflicts. The third one is the heavy penetration of European powers in the Ottoman affairs in the Levant. Ottomans, on the other hand, accepted this solution in order to prevent further or direct intervention of great powers but they considered the Mutasarrifiyya as a temporary settlement (Interview with Abu Husayn 2016).

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[52] The 1860 civil war that began in Mount Lebanon and spilled over into Damascus witnessed the most severe outbreak of sectarian violence in the history of Ottoman Syria and Lebanon. For the detailed analysis of the 1860 events and its relation with the broader themes of nineteenth century social, political, and economic changes see: Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *An Occasion for War: Civil Conflict in Lebanon and Damascus in 1860*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994 (Fawaz 1994).

Map 1: The Mutasarrifiyya (Traboulsi 2007, p.42)

This organic statute constituted Lebanon as an autonomous province under the guarantee of the six signatories, namely the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain,

France, Russia, Austria and Prussia.[53] An important fact about this organic statute, at first glance, is that it was the first time that "Lebanon" or "Mount Lebanon" as a term acquired definite official use (Salibi 1965, p.xii). The *Règlement Organique* granted Mount Lebanon a sui-generis structure, Mutasarrifiyya, first subdivision of a governorate, with a limited autonomy. According to this regulation, the administration was going to be established under a Christian plenipotentiary, or mutasarrif appointed by the Porte after the approval of the guarantees (Article 1). Additionally, mutasarrif was to be assisted by the Administrative Council of twelve members representing different sectarian communities elected from seven administrative districts of the Mutasarrifiyya. The twelve seats, according to Article 2, were distributed based on the demographic realities of the time and land ownership; as four Maronites, three Druze, two Greek Orthodoxes, one Greek Catholic, one Shia (*Mutawali*) and one Sunni (Akarli 1993, p.80; Winslow 1996, p.41; Reyhan 2006; Traboulsi 2007, p.43).[54]

The Mutasarrifiyya Period had lasted from 1861 to 1915, when the autonomy of Mount Lebanon was suspended due to the First World War. This half century experience in Mount Lebanon can be defined as relatively autonomous and peaceful years, which led to the rise of institutionalism and prosperity in the country. First, as noted by Salibi, the peace and order during the Mutasarrifiyya and the rise of European interests in Lebanon led to a general development and prosperity such as the rise of agricultural production, construction of roads and bridges, efficient public services and general security in addition to the

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[53] When the ambassadors in Istanbul reconvened with the Ottoman foreign minister to review matters at the end of the first term of the first governor in 1864, an international protocol was signed for a series of important amendments which remained as the basic document during the Mutasarrifiyya period. Additionally in 1867, Italy had also adhered to the statues as a seventh guarantor. For the full text of organic statute in Turkish see Cenk Reyhan: "Cebel-i Lübnan Vilayet Nizamnamesi", *Memleket Siyaset Yönetim*, 2006.

[54] Indeed, initially the Administrative Councilors were equally divided between Christians and Muslims, however, a revision in the Règlement in 1864 modified this into seven Christians to five Muslims.

establishment of modern administration and bureaucracy (Salibi 1965, pp.116–117).

Second, this period can also be defined as the full institutionalization of sectarian representation and the enhancement of sectarian affiliations as the primary source identity (Makdisi 2000). Although the issue of sectarian differences had always been a central question in Lebanon throughout history, these sectarian groups were both politically and territorially defined on the basis of demographic data and their administrative posts were ensured by law with the *Règlement*. In other words, during the Mutasarrifiyya, sectarian representation became an axiom of Lebanese politics and later formed the basic principle of the confessional system (Wilkins 2013, p.23; Salloukh & Barakat 2015, pp.13–15). Within this line, not only the Administrative Council but also the judicial system was established according to confessional quotas in an effort to build a court system in harmony with the social and political realities of the Mountain.[55]

Third, Lebanon's special autonomy within the Ottoman political system was another characteristic of this period. The foreign involvement was formalized under concessionary international agreements by creating a guarantees' mechanism and even the emergence of *Règlement* and the creation of such an administration was a kind of co-production of the European powers, particularly France and Britain (Harris 2006, p.36; Reyhan 2011, p.217). During the Mutasarrifiyya, Lebanese leaders make a routine of consulting to guarantor powers for the foreign support. Akarli points out that opportunistic ambitions of certain individuals from leading families led to the reliance of local population in general and the Mountain's Christians in specific on the international support in internal affairs (Akarli 1993, p.186). Without doubt, this situation was extremely exploited by the European powers of the time and any call for alliances from inside Lebanon were welcomed utmost by the Europeans. The foreign orientations

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[55] The Grand Judicial Council, for instance, was to be composed of a president and six judges in addition to six official counsels representing the six major sects, while the public defenders would be designated by their respective communities (Akarli 1993, pp.132–136).

of sectarian groups had further been enhanced by the increasing economic and cultural connections due to the rise of foreign interest in the Levant. During the second half of nineteenth century, European powers in addition to American missionaries intensified their activities around this region under a kind of "self-imposed civilizing mission" through various cultural activities (Milton-Edwards & Hinchcliffe 2008, p.62). In parallel to this, as Hagopian states, Maronite Christians developed a strong identity about their role in creating a modern Lebanon and bringing the enlightenment to their country (Hagopian 1989, p.109). Moreover, the Mutasarrifiyya was considered as a step towards independence by Maronites according to Abu Husayn (Interview with Abu Husayn 2016). In addition, as Harris notes, open access to European powers and the North America combined with a large Christian population resulted in flow of Lebanese to these countries and a cultural interchange, which led to the creation of Lebanese Diaspora during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Harris 2006, p.60).

To conclude, the system built by the *Règlement* created a relative peaceful period and Mount Lebanon enjoyed a relatively stable political structure, which was based on confessionalism controlled by the guarantees; and an economic growth generated by the silk economy; and enhancement of transnational relations through shared religious identities. Above all, although Lebanon has experienced a series of very violent crises and re-settlements according to necessities of the time in the coming years and so on, the fundamental principle of power-sharing regime based on sectarian quotas established in the Mutasarrifiyya has not been changed until today.

3.2. THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND THE FRENCH MANDATE

At the end of the nineteenth century, the decentralization and finally gradual dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was the common idea among European powers

as a solution to the so called 'Eastern Question'.[56] The destiny of Mount Lebanon, however, changed with a *coup d'état* in Istanbul in 1913 because the Party of Union and Progress in power aimed to strengthen central authority across the Empire contrary to the previous periods. Within this line, the central government suspended the autonomy of the Mount Lebanon and placed it under martial rule when the Empire entered into the First World War, which was contrary to the Mount's long standing political traditions. Whatever Istanbul's efforts were, a broader discourse of liberation emerged in the Levant during this period. Arabism based on the liberation from the Ottoman Empire emerged partly in response to the educational and socio-economic developments, the spread of print media, and partly in opposition to the centralization policies of the Young Turks in power (Makdisi 1996, p.25). After the First World War, it was no longer possible to maintain the integrity of the Empire due to domestic conditions and the partition plans of Europeans, searching for dominance over natural resources in the Middle East. As a part of the Empire, Lebanon was not excluded from these international power calculations. The Ottomans withdrew from Lebanon in 1918 and the Administrative Council remained in charge for the next 20 months under the auspices of a French Commissioner. In October 1918, Emir Faisal, son of Sharif Hussein who initiated the revolt against the Ottomans with the support of Britain, came to Damascus. In July 1919, a short lived Arab Kingdom of Syria was established including the modern territory of Lebanon under Faisal of the Hashemite Family. However, after the San Remo Conference in April 1920 which proposed a French mandate to the region, French troops occupied the Lebanon and Syria in July 1920 (Gürcan 2007, p.33). The start of French mandate in July 1920 both in Lebanon and Syria has ended the Syrian independence and the idea of Lebanese-Syrian unity.

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[56] The Eastern Question encompasses the diplomatic and political problems emerged from the steadily weakened Ottoman Empire especially after the late Eigtheen Century, although the expression does not apply to any particular problem. The expression includes a varity of issues raised in the Ottoman territory, power struggle to safeguard military, strategic and commercial interests of the European powers, the collapse and finally the division of the Ottoman Empire among the victors of the First World War.

On 1 September 1920, French High Commissioner General Henri Gouraud proclaimed the creation of the State of Greater Lebanon, *Grand Liban*, under French mandate, including the territory of the Mount Lebanon, Beirut, Tripoli, Sur, and Saida, and the regions of Ba'albaq and the Beqaa, and the districts of Rashayya and Hasbayya. In other words, its borders were set from the Southern Great River (*Nahr al-Kabir al-Janoubi*) in the north to the Palestine in the south, and from the Mediterranean in the west to the summits of the Anti-Lebanon Range in the east. With these territorial borders, it can easily be argued that the State of Greater Lebanon was entirely a creation of France as a result of a regional and international compromise (Malaspina 2008, pp.49–50; Rabil 2011, p.9; Interview with Al Rayess 2016).

3.2.1. The Greater Territory, The Greater Lebanon?

The creation of the State of Greater Lebanon from Nahr Al Kabir to the gates of Palestine and to the peaks of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains was an artificial production of the French Mandate because the territorial expansion had no historical foundation. Rather, as Salloukh argues, it produced a society with multiple sectarian, ideological, economic, regional and cultural cleavages (Salloukh 2008, p.284). Therefore a severe opposition to the establishment of Lebanon with its current borders came from different segments of both Muslims and Christians except the Maronite Church. Harris states that Sunni Muslims of coastal cities like Beirut and Tripoli had suspicions of a long term Christian-dominated administration while Shia leaders of the Beqaa and Jabal Amil feared the loss of their autonomy. In addition to them, Syrian Arab nationalists including mainly Greek Orthodox and Muslim intellectuals denounced both the establishment of separate entity and its territorial expansion (Harris 2006, pp.40–41). Even the Maronite feudal leaders were mainly against the territorial expansion because it sharply decreased the proportion of Christians in the population. It is stated that while the population of Mount Lebanon was approximately 400.000 in the early 1910s, Christians constituted almost 80 % of it with Maronites comprised 58 %. On the other hand, the population of the State of

Greater Lebanon was composed of 53 % Christians (Zamir, cited in Maktabi 1999, p.230; Milton-Edwards & Hinchcliffe 2008, p.62).

At this point having become firmly rooted institution counterbalancing the traditional feudal families through its alliance with France, the Maronite Church and Patriarch Huwayyik espoused the creation of larger Lebanese entity and indeed his lobbying in Beirut, Paris and the Vatican was the main driving cause for the French administration to create the Greater Lebanon (Malik 2000, p.4; Harris 2006, p.9; Salloukh & Barakat 2015).[57] On the issue of Maronite Patriarch Huwayyik's influence on French officials, Akarli notes, the fact that Patriarch was the second only to the high commissioner in the protocol in the ceremony of the declaration of the Greater Lebanon demonstrated the victory of the Church over the secular leaders in installing its aspirations about the future of Lebanon (Akarli 1993, p.180).

To conclude, the creation of Lebanon with its current territory was mainly considered as a French-Maronite Church production, which alienated almost half of the population of the new Lebanon. While Sunnis yearned for pan-Syrian identity, Shia population continued to fear from a Christian domination in their mountains in the south. The Druze, on the other hand, were divided in their attitudes to the French mandate because the powerful Jumblatt family opted to work with the government under French rule. The divisions continued also on the Christian side because Christian Orthodoxes became nervous about the full Maronite domination although they also concerned about Muslim rule (Milton-Edwards & Hinchcliffe 2008, p.63). To conclude, the creation of Greater Lebanon failed to create a national identity and could not end the search for final identity of various communities, as will be covered in the following sections.

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[57] Patriarch's apiration for the territorial expansion of the Greater Lebanon stemmed from the concern to create an economically viable entity with sufficient agricultural lands and access to portal cities (Interview with Abu Husayn 2016).

3.2.2. The Constitution of the Lebanese Republic

In 1925, the Representative Council[58] was assigned to prepare a constitution for Lebanon by the French Commissioner, Henri de Jouvenal (1925-29). It was adapted on 23 May 1926 and renamed State of Greater Lebanon as Lebanese Republic. 1926 Constitution marked the beginning of consociational (multi-communal) system based on confessional (multi-sectarian) divisions in Lebanese politics and it was considered as one of the most important landmarks of the French mandate. Indeed, the establishment of a sectarian system was neither the only nor the most popular argument in the process of the writing of the constitution. Although there were serious criticisms to the recognition of a confessional system at constitutional level from both Muslim and Christian leaders, the views that supported non-sectarianism were suppressed through pressures from Paris and the Maronite Church (Thompson 2000, pp.50–51; Malaspina 2008, p.48).

As discussed earlier, the Constitution officially recognizes the religious plurality in Lebanese society, and also granted equality to all communities before the law (Constitution 1997, Art. 7, 9, 10) and the most important aspect of the 1926 Constitution was the legalization of the concessional system based on sectarian division because it enshrined confessional politics throughout all levels of administration in Lebanon (Zahar 2005, p.225; Rabil 2011, p.1). Since the principle of confessional system was not a consensus, the sectarian language of 1926 Constitution has been reconsidered in the following years but it remained as the foundation of the political and administrative system of the republic. Among those articles promoting confessionalism, the Article 24 affirms that the members of the chamber of deputies would be elected according a decree, which promotes sectarianism (Constitution (1926 Version) 1926). Even in its current status, Article 24 highlights confessionalism not only in emphasizing the sectarian

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[58] The Representative Council had been hold according to the proportions of religious communities in Lebanon and mainly designed by the High Commissioner of France in April 1922.

division of the seats but also in determination of the seats according to the sectarian nature of the district (Constitution 1997). Article 95 explains the logic of sectarianism that sectarian groups shall be represented in public in a just and equitable manner for the sake of justice and amity (Constitution (1926 Version) 1926; Art. 95, Constitution 1997, pp.259–250; Donohue 2008, p.2510; Rabil 2011, p.1). This article assures the confessional representation in Lebanese politics at all levels of the state structure.

The constitutional establishment transformed the Lebanese political system into a quasi-federation among the various religious groups. Additionally, state relinquished personal status of citizens and religious affairs to recognized religious bodies according to the constitution. This sectarian regime (*al-nizam al-taeifi*) allowed sectarian identities to determine the extent of one's political rights and privileges as well as personal status (Constitution 1997; Traboulsi 2007, p.90; Saliba 2010). The principal of confessionalism has become central to the Lebanese system and subsequent constitutional amendments and agreements could not annul this system, on the contrary the role of religious affiliation in the political structure of government has been extended despite verbal dedication to the annulment of confessional system is being continuously uttered. In brief, although these regulations had been regarded as temporary arrangements on the way to an integrated Lebanese nation, these paved the way for the construction of sectarian identities separately not only in socio-economic affairs but also in domestic and foreign politics.

3.2.3. The 1932 Census in Lebanon

The 1932 Census is extremely important in Lebanese history not only because it was the last official census[59] but also because it became the foundation for the

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[59] The first census was carried out in 1921 under huge controversial debates about its legitimacy because Muslims boycotted it as the expression of their protest against the creation of Greater Lebanon apart from Syria. In this census, 555.000 residents and 130.000 migrants were registered (El-Khoury & Jaulin 2012, p.4).

proportional distribution of offices and seats in the state and for the National Pact in 1943. Although the census was subject to great discussions in terms of its accurateness, it provided the political base for the establishment of the power sharing system under Christian dominance (Maktabi 1999, p.220). The issue of citizenship and the status of emigrants had turned out to be a very critical debate before 1932 census because of the political system of Lebanon. The Treaty of Lausanne[60] and the 1921 Census was taken as reference to register people in Lebanon as citizens or foreigners in 1932. According to this, those who are registered in 1921 Census and those who could prove their presence in Lebanon on 30 August 1924 had been registered as citizen and others would have been registered as foreigners. Within these conditions, Muslims who boycotted 1921 Census and those who could not prove their presence were registered as foreigners. In addition to this, Bedouins who were mostly Muslim, could not prove their presence in Lebanon in August 1924. Maktabi also argues that Muslims insisted on the exclusion of emigrants from the census results, who were mostly Christians (Maktabi 1999, p.221). However, the Maronite Church succeeded to reach its demands, otherwise with the inclusion of Bedouins[61] and the exclusion of the emigrants, Maronites might become a small minority within a sectarian state to Maronite Church's horror (Gürcan 2007, p.51).

Under these debates and oppositions, which are considered beyond the scope of this study, the census recorded that the number of Lebanese residents was

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[60] The issue of citizenship in the former territory of the Ottoman Empire was regulated with the Treaty of Lausanne. Article 30 of the Treaty states that "Turkish subjects habitually resident in territory which in accordance with the provisions of the present Treaty is detached from Turkey will become ipso-facto, in the conditions laid down by the local law, nationals of the State to which such territory is transferred" (Lausanne Treaty 1923 Art. 30). In line with this judgement, French Commissioner issued Arrêté n°2825 of 30 August 1924, which simply reproduced the article and applied a citizenship on the basis of the principle of residence in Lebanese territory (El-Khoury & Jaulin 2012, pp.3–4).

[61] Another important note should be stated here is that there are two other civil statutes in Lebanon other than to citizenship: 'under consideration' (جنسية قيد الدرس) and 'without records' (مكتوم القيد). The former, which was introduced in 1958, means that Bedouin, who had not registered in the 1932 census, acquired this spatial status which is less than a full citizenship, having access to basic public services with major restrictions. These people were granted with full citizenship in 1994. The second category was again for Bedouin with no nationality papers and government services.

793.396, foreigners 61.297 and migrant 254.987 according to the official journal of the state. It also stated that Christians represented %50 of the Lebanese residents and 58,5 % of the Lebanese population including migrants (Maktabi 1999, pp.222–223; El-Khoury & Jaulin 2012, p.7). The census showed that Maronite Christians with a 32 % of country's overall population had a slight majority over the second largest sectarian group of Lebanon, namely Sunnis. Other main confessions can be listed as the Greek Orthodox, the Greek Catholic, Shia Muslim and the Druze.
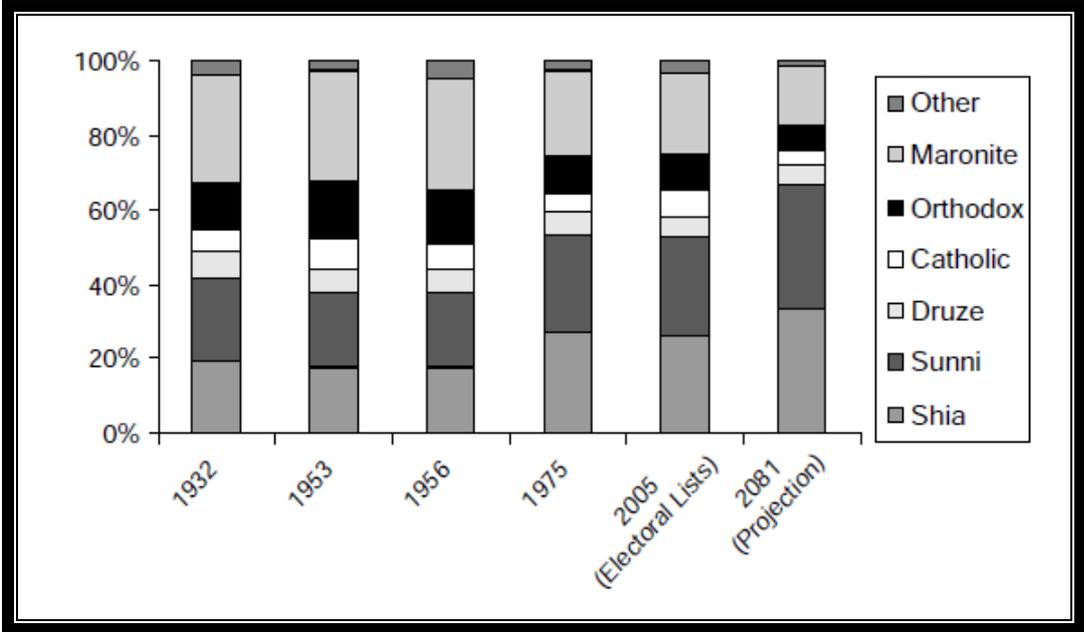
Figure 3: Historical Evolution of Demography in Lebanon (Farha 2009, p.92)

Since 1932 no official census has been conducted but this does not necessarily mean that there has not been any study on the demography of Lebanon. These are generally based on the electoral lists and birth rates and conducted by different NGOs or inter-governmental organizations. For example in 1956 it was estimated that the population was around 1,5 million with around 54 % Christians and 44 %

Muslims. More recent studies, on the other hand, demonstrate that Christians constitute around 35-40 % of the population while Muslim, and particularly Shia, population has increased considerably, as also shown in the figure above (Statistics Lebanon 2013, p.1; Farha 2009).

To conclude, since the heavily politicized and questionable results of 1932 census were obtained through the exclusion and inclusions of preferred groups, the census has been criticized severely. However, the foremost result of the census from the perspective of this study is the demonstration of the multi-fragmented nature of Lebanon and the results constituted the necessary pretext for the French Mandate to establish a state under Christian and particularly Maronite control. It also provided Christians with full power and control in the process of nation building and state making (Maktabi 1999, p.221).

3.2.4. The Legacy of the French Mandate and the Independence

The French mandate of a nearly quarter century, without doubt, has its own repercussions in Lebanese history. The end of the French Mandate does not necessarily mean the end of the legacy of the mandate period, which will be summarized in this section. First, it can be argued that the very existence of the state of Lebanon with its current borders did not reflect any historical reality, rather it was a Franco-British colonial partition plan of the Middle East in the beginning of the twentieth century when a new type of imperial control was introduced in the international politics (Makdisi 1996, p.25). This new type of control was based on the principle that the mandatory power was responsible for building government structure and guiding the mandates towards self-government. The Lebanese Republic has emerged out of such a plan, as Fawwaz Trablousi states, and the Lebanese frontiers were determined by European powers against the will of the majority of population to preserve the interests of France in the context of the partition of the Arab provinces between Paris and London (Traboulsi 2007, p.75; El-Khoury & Jaulin 2012, p.2). Therefore, Lebanon with its current territories and fragmented society stands as a-historical entity, which

was a French project with the support of the Maronite Church and the enlarged territory set the stage for power struggles between various confessional groups (Moaddel et al. 2012, p.6).

Second, the First World War had left the region to British and French powers, where they were able to redraw the political map according to their aspirations and interests, however, as Salibi rightly affirms, they were not aware of the fact that "to create a country is one thing; to create a nationality is another" and French rule certainly failed to do so (Salibi 1988, p.19). Indeed the creation of the Lebanese state was a result of a series of compromises between the French mandatory power, the Maronite Church and a limited number of elites. Therefore, an ethos of national identity in Lebanon was never forged in a collective struggle (Makdisi 1996, p.24; Zisser 2011, p.7). Identity basically remained in sectarian and patrimonial contexts, and it could not be transformed into a national affiliation (Lewis, cited in Wilkins 2013, p.24) because the Lebanese nation state from the beginning lacked the internal legitimacy due to different concerns of Muslim and Christian sectarian groups. Elizabeth Thompson argues in *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* that the legacy of French Administration in Lebanon was far from a centralized nation-state model based citizenship in modern sense (Thompson 2000). On the contrary, Lebanese experience under French Mandate can be summarized as the resurrection and empowering of the old traditional forms of social and political identities and structures. The result is merely the legalization and even constitutionalization of the sectarian system, which heavily divided society along with various religious and sectarian identities. Therefore, this thesis argues that the creation of modern Lebanon was embedded with two structural problems, which could not be overcome till today: intensive identity crisis and weak state authority. By intense identity crisis, I refer to the unacceptance of Lebanese national identity as the primary source of identity at both domestic and regional level. The problem of weak state has also stemmed from the nature of confessional system, in which state offices are distributed according to sectarian

affiliations rather than personal qualifications. As discussed in the previous chapter, this political system allows major sectarian leaders to have a proportional power in the bureaucracy parallel to official state hierarchy, which let them to shape and influence both decision making processes and more importantly the implementation of any foreign policy decision. In conclusion, the analysis of French Mandate period in Lebanon reveals that the process of state making failed to produce a nation state in modern sense in the absence of a national identity and a common aspiration for Lebanon, which in time led to the existence of different foreign policy orientations.

Third the gradual rise of the Maronites, and particularly the consolidation of the power of the Patriarchate, as a social, political and economic power in the context of Lebanon was reinforced by the French Mandate (Ekinci 1998, p.24; Moaddel et al. 2012, p.7). During the Ottoman Empire until the end of nineteenth century, Sunni and Greek Orthodox communities constituted the urban merchant and educated class, while the Maronites, the Druze and Shias had been rural farmers, living mostly in the mountainous areas. However during the French Mandate, Sunnis and the Greek Orthodox lost their privileged status while the Maronites prospered due to their close relations with the French administrations. From the perspective of this research, it can be argued that the rise of the Maronite community economically and politically compared to other domestic groups since the beginning of the Mutasarrifiyya due to their close relations with a powerful external actor demonstrate a very good example of the importance of foreign building alliances to enhance the domestic leverage.

3.3. MERCHANT REPUBLIC AFTER THE INDEPENDENCE[62]

Although the French Administration had been able to sustain Lebanon as separate state, imposed borders against the will of the majority of its population, detachment from Syria and annexation of contentious coastal cities led to political oppositions, riots and widespread anti-French violence during the whole period (Traboulsi 2007, pp.75–80). Therefore the political discussions both on the legitimacy of Lebanese state and the possible annexation to Syria were far from being settled and led to the 1943 National Pact as an answer to these discussions.

3.3.1. The Road to the Independence

The economic repercussions of the Great Depression of 1929, the rise of Palestinian port of Haifa, waves of strikes around Lebanon and other economic, social and political troubles for Mandate Lebanon and Syria reactivated the debates between those in favor of annexation to Syria and those of independence (Traboulsi 2007, pp.95–97). In addition to the domestic and regional transformations, this period was also marked by the rise of Germany in Europe. In response to the rise of Germany, France signed treaties with both Syria and Lebanon in 1936 and 1939 respectively in order to strengthen the loyalties to the mandatory regimes (Winslow 1996, pp.70–71). The Franco-Syrian Treaty of Independence in 1936 is particularly important not only because it overtly guaranteed the independence of Syria but also it confirmed that independent Syria would drop its annexationist demands about Lebanon (Al Solh 1994, p.124).

In parallel, discussions on the independence in Lebanon had risen immediately and after a round of negotiations the Franco-Lebanese Treaty of Friendship and Alliance tacitly recognized a possible independence. I think the domestic discussions during the negotiations for the treaty were considerably important in order to demonstrate the different aspirations of various sectarian groups about the

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[62] Lebanese politician, writer and journalist Michel Chiha, one of the fathers of the constitution, describes Lebanon as *a merchant republic*, which was created by geography and history (Hartman & Olseretti, cited in Gürcan 2007, p.77).

future of Lebanon. The possibility of independence brought two uncompromising groups together for the opposition: Christians who had been in favor of French mandate and the rejectionist who had been tended to a union with Syria in early 1920s. Christian protectionists opposed independence because they feared that free Lebanon would easily be annexed by Syria. Unionists, who were predominantly Muslim on the other hand, argued that any reference to independence in an international treaty would legitimize the independent Lebanon and terminate the hope for annexation with Syria. It is for this reason Traboulsi states that "while the Christian negotiators were looking for French guarantees vis-à-vis Syria and the Lebanese Muslims, the Muslim negotiators were looking for French guarantees vis-à-vis the Christians" (Traboulsi 2007, pp.98–99).

Although the way for independence was opened with these treaties, the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 suspended the process for a while because the French High Commissioner Gabriel Puaux abolished the constitutional rule by declaring state of emergency in the Levant and dissolved the Chamber of Deputies. However the war conditions and the invasion of France by Germany and the Franco-British competition over the colonies matured the conditions for Lebanon's independence. The constitutional system was re-established in 1942 and an electoral law was decreed in 1943, which set up a parliament of 55 seats based on the ratio of 6/5, 30 for Christians and 25 for Muslims, which became guideline for sectarian quotas until the Taif Accord (Traboulsi 2007, p.106). Bishara Khuri was elected as the president of the republic on 21 September 1943 and he asked Riad Solh to form a government.

The newly elected Chamber of Deputies carried out a number of constitutional amendments such as rejecting the French mandatory authority as the sole source of political power and reinstating Arabic as the country's official language on 8 November 1943. With these constitutional amendments, the end of the French Mandate was on horizon. As a reaction to this, the French authority declared the constitutional revisions null and void and arrested the president, prime minister and several ministers, then appointed Emile Eddé as the head of the state and

prime minister.[63] This direct intervention of the French Mandate caused a nation-wide violent reactions and general strikes, which prevented Eddé to form a government or maintain the public order in Lebanon. Finally, French High Commissioner George Catroux ordered the release of prisoners and declared the end of the French mandate in Lebanon in 22 November 1943 (Traboulsi 2007, pp.107–108).

3.3.2. The National Pact: A Compromise between French Tutelage and Penchant for Syria

The National Pact is a verbal compromise between the two major and powerful political leaders, Bishara Khuri and Riad Solh and manifested itself in the program of the first cabinet of Prime Minister Riad Solh as outlined in the ministerial declaration delivered to the Deputies on 7 October 1943, which laid the foundation of the independence (Riad Solh's Ministerial Declaration 1943; Rabbath 1970, pp.438–443; Al Solh 1994, pp.126–128; El-Khoury & Jaulin 2012, p.6). In this manner the National Pact was neither a written agreement nor referred to popular referendum, rather it was a product of a traditional feudal style politics, a verbal agreement between leaders of two major communities.[64] Since it is a verbal agreement, there is a discussion on the real content; however from the perspective of this thesis the agreement on the distribution of the top offices among sectarian groups in order to reach a rapprochement between the Maronite and Sunni communities is essential (Milton-Edwards & Hinchcliffe 2008, p.64). It

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[63] Although both Emile Eddé and Bishara Khuri were educated in the French missionary schools, they led different ideals about the Lebanese national identity. While Eddé was strictly exclusionist towards Muslims, Khuri embodied the revised Lebanism, a combination of Christian and Arab Islamic culture. The latter position was not compatible with that of the Maronite Church and most of the Christian elites (Gürcan 2007, pp.55–56; Rabil 2011, p.13).

[64] It is argued that the dualism of the pact is one of the main problems of the National Pact while being an agreement only between Maronite and Sunni sectarian leaders and excluding other major communities. In this respect, a possible involvement of certain leaders from Druze, Orthodox and Shia communities might have strengthened the pact (Salamé 1988, pp.351–352).

ensured that the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister would be Maronite Catholic and Sunni Muslim respectively.[65]

In terms of the functioning of the government and the state, the National Pact brought a better participation of the Muslim community in administration (Traboulsi 2007, p.110), which was different than the Mandate period, where the Maronites in specific and Christians in general had almost the final word in state administration. However, the participation of the Muslim voice in the government should be elaborated within the context of the existing Constitution, which gave exceptional power and primacy to the post of Presidency in state affairs, which was still reserved for the Maronite community. On this issue, Lebanese Constitutional Jurist Edmond Rabbath states that "the head of state in Lebanon corporally incarnates … all the life of the State" (Rabbath, in Traboulsi 2007, p.109). These powers can be summarized as being the head of executive, appointing the ministers and the prime minister, holding the right to dismiss his cabinet, vetoing legislative decisions, dissolving the legislature, and calling for new elections (Constitution 1997, p.Art. 60). This uncontested authority gave a very functional power in governmental affairs and foreign affairs to the President, and so to the Maronite community, but it can still be argued that the National Pact introduced a balanced understanding especially during the times of powerful Sunni prime ministers.

The most significant aspect of the National Pact in terms of this thesis is its interpretation of Lebanese identity. Although Lebanese Constitution emphasized the independence of Lebanon with indivisible unity and integral sovereignty (Art. 1, Constitution (1926 Version) 1926), the lack of a social consensus among Lebanese about their national identity had always been a problem during the

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[65]Being a verbal compromise, there are interpretational inconsistencies in the literature on whether the Pact includes specific regulations about the Speaker of the Parliament, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Chief of the General Staff are to be selected among Shias, Greek Orthodoxies, Christians and Druze respectively. However what is important about the pact is the recognition of sectarianism and therefore the above mentioned discrepancy is not a core concern of this thesis.

mandate period. While most of the Muslims identified themselves as Arabs seeking Syrian tutelage, or even unity with Syria; Christians were in search for sovereign Lebanon from Syria with an aspiration to establish a very close relationship with the West, and especially with France (Salibi 1965, pp.27–29). Both Bishara Khuri and Riad Solh were aware of this identity crisis and aimed to come up with an agreement, which was satisfactory to both Christians and Muslims. Within this framework in the ministerial declaration, Riad Solh emphasized Lebanon as an independent country with Arab face (Riad Solh's Ministerial Declaration 1943). Actually, it was a compromise where Christians accepted the Arab identity and forsake Western tutelage; and Muslims accepted the Lebanese independence and forsake their aspiration for being part of Syria or a larger Arab state. Through this solution, the National Pact had somehow become a palatable answer for both the Maronites, a prosperous merchant class who wanted to control the government in their own interests and could settle for a formal break with France; and the Sunnis led by Arab nationalists, who wanted independence from France and could settle without a formal tie with Syria (Saliba 2010; Najem 2012, pp.12–14; Hirst 2010, p.11; Salloukh 2008, pp.284–285; Zahar 2005, p.219; Crow 1962, pp.490–491; Khazai & Hess 2013, pp.9–10; Harris 2006, p.136). More simply saying as Attié affirms, the agreement aimed to *Arabize the Christians and Lebanize the Muslims* on the eve of the independence (Attié 2004, pp.8–9). In this respect, one also needs to take into consideration the relevance of regional and international balance of power in Lebanese affairs although the National Pact is defined as a verbal agreement between two confessional leaders. The effort to Arabize the Christians and Lebanize the Muslims was also a result of policies of external actors. It is argued that Britain was an important actor in this consensus in accordance with its foreign policy in the Middle East, aiming to contain French influence in the Middle East (Gürcan 2007, p.63; Rabil 2011, p.14). In line with this argument, Attié states that the involvement of non-Lebanese actors, mainly Syria, Egypt and Britain, was decisive in reaching the pact (Attié 2004, p.8; Salloukh & Barakat 2015, p.16).

Defining Lebanon as an independent country with Arab face had direct repercussions on foreign policy of the country because defining the national identity directly turned out to be defining country's relations and obligations towards the outside world. First, it was recognized that Lebanon became an independent state while forgoing any kind of penchants for Syria and France. In terms of foreign policy of Lebanon, this principle had considerable importance because it envisaged an independent Lebanon in the Arab world as well as a freedom from French tutelage. In other words, this means that Muslim demand for unity with Syria and Christian demand for French presence or Western protection in Lebanon had come to an end, which can be named as foreign policy neutrality (Roberson 1998, p.4; Zahar 2005, p.227). This neutrality aimed to maintain a neither east nor west position in foreign policy choices of the government. However, the principle of neutrality could not be realized in real sense except during the early years and then violated due to the differing foreign policy orientations of the various groups. Indeed, a non-alignment could be considered as a foreign policy choice for any state; yet the problem in Lebanese neutrality is the fragmented nature of Lebanese society. Hitti touches upon a very important point concerning the failure of this neutrality position and argues that since the National Pact failed to construct a sense of national unity and identity, it could not provide a sufficient common ground for the country's orientation between the West and the Arab world (Hitti 1989) because, as Attié states, the National Pact was more of an effort to create an alliance between confessional elites for a functioning government by defining Lebanon between east and west, rather than seeking an integration process of different confessional communities through creating a national identity (Attié 2004, p.24). Another critique to this position of neither east nor west came from Salem, who argues that the double negation of National Pact (Muslims' retreat from Arabism and Christians' retreat from European tutelage) brought a vague foreign policy stance. That is to say, it was now easy to talk about what a foreign policy decision could not be with the National Pact, but it was still difficult what it could be. According to Salem, this double negation devalued Lebanon's foreign policy decisions because they are being made for

negative rather than positive reasons. Further, this so-called neutrality prevented Lebanon to build strong and effective alliances with other states where it would be deemed necessary in the following years in times of the Arab-Israeli conflicts in the region and during the Cold War rivalry at international level (Salem 1994, pp.70–72). The last critique was that the pact had also failed to catch the spirit of the time because it was formulated to solve the problems of the Mandate period as it proposed neutrality between pro-French and pro-Arab orientations. However, the pact failed to response to the great transformations of the regional and global politics of 1940s such as the rise of the US (the United States) and the USSR (the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) as the great powers, a newly emerging bipolar world and the emergence of Arab-Israeli conflicts (Salem 1994, p.71).

To conclude the National Pact was believed to bring a harmonious social existence between various confessional groups under an agreed framework, nevertheless it turned out to be another step to jeopardize the establishment of citizenship identity loyal to the state, rather than a loyalty to confessional leaders (Najem 2003; Wilkins 2013, p.26). In the absence of a common national identity in a deeply divided society, the pact failed to create a necessary ground for a functioning foreign policy because it failed to transform the main sources of foreign policy decisions and actions, which are identities and perceptions of Lebanese confessional groups towards the outside world. In such an environment, although Lebanon officially tried to defend neutrality in foreign policy discourse, sectarian groups within Lebanon have continued to pursue their own foreign policy goals through relying their own capabilities both within the society and the state and establishing external alliances.

3.3.3. Lebanese Balanced Journey in the Troubled Arab World during the Presidency of Bishara Khuri

Although the leaders of two prominent sectarian communities had agreed upon the neutrality of Lebanese foreign policy, it has never become easy for Lebanese

government to apply this neutrality since the politics of 1940s and 1950s have presented continuous challenges to Lebanon.

3.3.3.1. The Establishment of the League of Arab States

The first of these challenges was the establishment of the League of Arab States (Arab League) in line with pan-Arabism, an ideology espousing the unification of Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa according to the myth of "*the one Arab nation with an immortal mission*" (Ajami 1978, pp.355–356). According to this ideology, the existence of multiple Arab countries contrary to single Arab nation is a direct product of imperial powers, aiming to exploit the resources of the Middle East. Therefore supporters of pan-Arabism argue that it was compulsory for Arab leaders to form alliances and economic cooperation, if unity could not be achieved in short term.

Under the influence of pan-Arabism, the Arab League was formed by Egypt, Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Lebanon in March 1945 (Arab League 2015). On the eve of the foundation, there had been other Arab unity projects proposed by Hashemite Family ruling Iraq and Syria like Greater Syria and the Fertile Crescent Plan. In such a conjuncture, President Bishara Khuri opted for the League in order to secure Lebanon from a direct threat of Hashemite annexation desire (Traboulsi 2007, p.111). Following to this preference, Lebanon had become a founding member of the League and it generally defined its Arab policy in accordance with its membership to the League. Through participating in meetings before the establishment, Lebanon also achieved to introduce a special clause in the League's charter, which states that;

> "The Arab States represented on the Preliminary Committee emphasize their respect of the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon in its present frontiers, which the governments of the above States have already recognized in consequence of Lebanon's adoption of an independent policy, which the Government of that country announced in its program of October 7, 1943, unanimously approved by the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies" (Alexandria Protocol 1944 Art. 4).

With this special clause in addition to the unanimity principle in decision making [66], the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon were officially recognized by the other Arab states. To conclude, the Lebanese diplomacy in the early years of independence emerged as a check and balance system in a very hostile regional environment to its independence; and in this context the membership of Lebanon to the League can be considered as successful to assure that regional states recognized Lebanon as an independent and sovereign country (Gürcan 2007, pp.68–69). Although the new administration aimed to please different segments of the society through becoming a member of a regional organization with the insurance of the recognition of independence, there were also critics to this foreign policy initiative because of the Christian concerns about the Arabization of Lebanon.[67] Maronite Patriarch Arida, for instance, criticized the protocol for putting Lebanon under Arab rule and blamed President Khuri for working under the shadow of Sunni prime minister (Al Solh 2004, pp.253–255; Rabil 2011, p.17).

3.3.3.2. The War with Israel in 1948

Prior to the independence of Israel, the position of Lebanese confessional groups toward these conflicts between Muslim Arabs and the Jews were controversial. While Maronite leaders perceived the existence of the Jews in the Levant as another challenge and obstacle for pan-Arabist movements, they were mainly in favor of the Zionism and the Maronite Church advocated to the establishment of a state for Jews in Palestine. For this reason, the Maronite archbishop of Beirut presented a memorandum in July 1947 to the United Nations in which he affirms that "to consider Palestine and Lebanon as parts of the Arab world would amount to a denial of history" (Ellis 2002, p.26).

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[66] Upon Lebanon's insistent demands, the principle of consensus instead of majority vote in decision making was accepted in the Arab League (Salem 1994, p.74).

[67] Although Christian Arab intellectuals have played crucial role in the emergence of Arab nationalism, the general Christian perception towards pan-Arabism in Lebanon can be defined as "a camouflage for local ploy to disrupt the internal sectarian system, to the detriment of the Christian half of the country" (Salamé 1988, p.350).

When Britain ended the mandate over Palestine and Zionist leader David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel on 14 May 1948, the neighboring Arab states Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Transjordan and Lebanon declared war against Israel. The Arab-Israeli war[68] lasted for almost a year and concerning Lebanon an armistice agreement was signed between Israel and Lebanon on 23 March 1949 (Malaspina 2008, p.48). The entrance of Lebanon into the war should be considered within the context of its membership of the Arab League. Hitti explains that this decision was an answer for the demands of domestic political debates and the Arab League, rather than the sincere will of the political elites of that time because Israel, from the perspective of Lebanese elites, was "a declared enemy for domestic and Arab political reasons rather than the perceived enemy out of geopolitical or historical concerns" (Hitti 1989, p.9). Therefore, Lebanese role in the war was determined by its sectarian composition and it did not play a major role during the battle beyond sending a token force to its border with Palestine (Ellis 2002, p.26).

Although Lebanon refrained from participating actively, it could not avoid from the results of the war. The foremost result of the war was the refugee problem when approximately 700.000 Palestinians were displaced and thousands of them preferred Lebanon due to its geographic proximity (Malaspina 2008, p.59). The influx of mainly Muslim Palestinians into Lebanon would impact Lebanon for decades not only in terms of communal boundaries and the internal balance at domestic level but also regarding its relations with Israel. Due to the poverty and frustrations, refugee camps became center for the Palestinian militias, or fedayeen, in 1950s and became a major foreign policy issue of Lebanon as dividing Muslims and Christians.

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[68] Arab-Israeli War in 1948 was known as the Israeli War of Independence by the Jews and as Nakba (catastprohe) by Palestinians.

3.3.4. Precession towards the West in 1950s

In 1952, Camille Chamoun was elected as the new president and his term was known as the period of economic prosperity and presidential authoritarianism. From economic perspective, President Chamoun drew on favorable regional economic developments such as the boom in the oil economies and the flow of Arab capital to Lebanese banks with a fear of wave of nationalizations in Syria, Iraq and Egypt. From political perspective, on the other hand, he chose to be the center of full authority in Lebanon. In his term, presidency subordinated both executive and legislative. In executive, Chamoun appointed weak prime ministers who were dependent on him and ruled the bureaucracy through top bureaucrats, of whom majority were Maronites (Harris 2006, p.140; Rowayheb 2011, p.411). Concerning foreign policy orientation, he held a very pro-western position during the regional and international crisis of the 1950s, as will be covered in the following sections.

3.3.4.1. The Baghdad Pact Dividing Lebanon Further

During the early Cold War years of 1950s, the US and the USSR started to emerge as the major players in the Middle East and at regional level Egypt, Iraq, Iran and Turkey were the countries searching for regional influence while making alliances with these super powers. In such a rivalry, the Soviet Union was trying to extend its political and economic power while the US and Britain aimed to contain the growth of Russian influence in the region. Indeed these efforts paved the way for the establishment of the Baghdad Pact in February 1955 among Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and Britain. In response to this initiative, the Arab Tripartite Pact between Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria was formed in May 1955 (Attié 2004, p.70). In such a regional division in the shadow of the rivalry between the super powers of US and the Soviet Union, where did Chamoun stand? President Chamoun established a very close partnership with the US by receiving $6 million as military and economic aid in 1953, allowing US air force for reconnaissance missions, and signing preferential commercial treaty.

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Nevertheless, although Chamoun's intention was very clear in keeping Lebanon in the Western camp in practice, Lebanese official foreign policy did not adhere openly to the anti-communist pact and stayed neutral by not being member of the Baghdad Pact, which was criticized by the majority of Christians (Hinnebusch 2003, p.26; Traboulsi 2007, pp.128–131; Malaspina 2008, pp.61–62). Concerning the rise of Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt and the Egyptian-led Tripartite Pact, the pan-Arabist discourse aroused great enthusiasm throughout the region and in Lebanese public as well. Therefore, pressures on Lebanon to adhere the Arab Tripartite Pact were stepped up in late 1955 both from domestic and regional actors and as a result pro-Egyptian Sunni politician Rashid Karami was appointed as prime minister (Attié 2004, pp.83–89). The polarized Lebanese politics in the early 1950s also led to the emergence of Kamal Jumblatt as a very important leader of the upcoming years.[69] Kamal Jumblatt's opposed the Baghdad Pact and developed a strong opposition campaign against Chamoun addressing both foreign policy orientation of the President and domestic issues such as nepotism and failures of reforms (Attié 2004, pp.83–84).

3.3.4.2. The Suez Crisis

Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal on 26 July 1956, which was a vital trade route between Europe and Asia. In response, Israel invaded the Sinai Peninsula and headed toward the Canal Zone while Britain and France joined Israel and launched military attacks. Although the conflict did not last long, the Suez Crisis is important in terms of its long term ramifications. It was observed during the crisis that the regional balance of power has changed and the former colonial powers were no longer the authority in the Middle East. The crisis also deepened the divide between Israel and Arab world because the Suez Crisis also propelled Nasser to emerge as the prestigious leader of the Arab world. With this new image, Egypt started to develop more assertive discourse on Arab-

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[69] Although Kamal Jumblatt became the leader of his community in 1943 and participated in Lebanese politics in 1940s, his active political career started when he officially founded the Progressive Socialist Party on 17 March 1949.

Israeli issues although Egyptian-Israel border was relatively quiet until the Suez Crisis (Attié 2004, pp.101–102; Malaspina 2008, pp.60–61).

The further polarization of the Arab world into pro-Western and pro-Nasser after the Suez had adverse effects on Lebanese foreign policy orientation because it became more difficult to adhere the neutrality even at the discursive level because contrary to the official position of Lebanon, pro-Nasser sentiments especially among Muslims and pan-Arabist circles raised as he appealed to the Arab masses. As the British Ambassador George Middleton in Beirut expresses that "pro-Nasser sentiments are the order of the day and undoubtedly popular. Portraits of the Egyptian dictator are beginning to appear in all the shops and I should think that nearly half the taxis in Beirut also have his portrait displayed in the rear window" (Attié 2004, p.101). In such a conjuncture, however, as Malaspina states, Chamoun tried to keep Lebanon away from the rise of Arabism as much as possible in order to protect the Lebanese neutrality (Malaspina 2008, pp.60–62). Nevertheless, the moderate position of the President failed and anti-Chamoun campaign had grown towards the end of the 1950s mainly among frustrated Muslims. As the opposition against him ascended, Chamoun preferred to strengthen his alliance with the US within the context of the Eisenhower Doctrine (Attié 2004, pp.104–106).

3.3.4.3. The Eisenhower Doctrine and the 1958 Crisis towards the End of Chamoun's Period

The Eisenhower Doctrine, as declared by US President Dwight David Eisenhower in January 1957, was financial and military assistance program to Middle East countries which were threatened by Communism in response to the rising Soviet influence. While pro-western governments, like Iraq, Libya and Saudi Arabia welcomed it, the doctrine was not received as a struggle against communism, rather as a new American initiative to intervene into regional affairs, by mainly Syria and Egypt. President Chamoun declared the acceptance of the terms of the Eisenhower Doctrine in March 1957 (Attié 2004, pp.112–119). Chamoun's confrontation with Nasser and his endorsement of the Eisenhower Doctrine were

in stark contrast to the spirit of the National Pact. The decision of the president caused alienation of the Muslim community and politicians, consisting of the Sunnis and the Druze, which in the end triggered a series of protests against Chamoun (Attié 2004, p.100; Rowayheb 2011, p.416). In addition to this opposition, Chamoun also lost the Christian support. According to Traboulsi, Raymond Eddé, the leader of the National Bloc, and Maronite Patriarch Paul Peter Meouchi emerged as the leaders of the Christian opposition, which reacted to the developments in the country and the region and called for Lebanese neutrality in the Arab conflicts in contrast to Chamoun's anti-Nasser policies (Traboulsi 2007, p.132). Salloukh argues that Chamoun's use of the Eisenhower Doctrine to naturalize his domestic rivals and opponents' assertion for Arab intervention in Lebanese affairs paved the way for the first civil war of Lebanon in 1958 (Salloukh 2008, pp.304–305). In such a domestic conjuncture fanned by the regional developments like the overthrow of the pro-western monarch in Iraq and the establishment of United Arab Republic, a country-wide revolt has started when Camille Chamoun attempted to ensure a second term of presidency in contrast to the constitution in 1958. When General Fuad Chehab refused to deploy the army against the Muslim revolt, the Maronite Phalange militia supported Chamoun and as a result of clashes thousands of people lost their lives (Malaspina 2008, pp.64–65; Khazai & Hess 2013, p.10). Finally, US intervened in Lebanon upon the invitation of Chamoun and General Fuad Chehab was elected as the new President and he appointed Karami to form a national unity government (Gendzier 1997).

To summarize the 1950s under the presidency of Chamoun, it can be stated that the growing division in the Arab world made it difficult to maintain the Lebanese unity in terms of foreign policy matters. As the regional developments divide the political leaders into pro-western and pro-Nasserist camps, both sides blamed each other for violating the balancing formula of the National Pact. While Maronite leaders led by Chamoun were in favor of improving relations with the West to protect Lebanon's independence from increasing Arab nationalism,

Muslim leaders urged to work for Arab nationalism against imperialist aims of outside powers (Harris 2006, pp.141–143). In addition to the different foreign policy orientations, the presidential authoritarianism during Chamoun period tried to eliminate strong Sunni families from administrational power through the appointment of Sunnis who were personally linked and dependent to him. This caused a further resentment in Muslim opposition. Additionally, some scholars argue that the failure to sustain the neutrality of Lebanon in regional affairs during Chamoun period was the most important reason of the growing domestic tensions (Khanafer 2013, p.1). Finally the growing unrest led to an insurrection in 1958, which resulted in a direct foreign intervention to Lebanon and the end of President Chamoun's period. The explicit message of Chamoun's period from the perspective of this research is that a Lebanese foreign policy, lacking the support and consent of certain important Muslim and Christian communities in Lebanon, is not sustainable in the long run. However, one fact also stands very obvious that it is almost impossible to create a consensus due to the existence of various sectarian identities, which in turn defines the perception of interests in the absence of a nation-building project in independent Lebanon, which resulted in the construction of multiple identities and foreign policy orientations through defining self and other; ally and enemy from various sectarian perspectives.

3.3.5. President Fuad Chehab: Period of Relative Lull in Regional and International Politics

Presidency of Fuad Chehab can be considered exceptional in the history of Lebanon because he was not only the first military man in the presidency but also he carried out systematic state interventions in favor of socio-economic justice in the country by relying on his strong network in security bureaucracy, which is called Chehabism (Harris 2006, p.146).[70] His period is widely known as a period

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[70] Coming from a middle class family and having republican ideals about Lebanese identity, Fuad Chehab did not prefer to form a kind of coalition with feudal families; rather he built his executive power on state bureaucracy, and particularly the office of military intelligence, known as *al-maktab al-thani* or *deuxième bureau* (Harris 2006, pp.146–147; Salloukh & Barakat 2015, p.19).

of reconciliation and stability in Lebanese politics through cooperating closely with the various religious groups. Chehab did not only defuse the internal tensions but also carried out a very comprehensive reform program in his country in order to bring social and economic justice. Having a personal experience in the military through direct contact with soldiers from peripheries, Fuad Chehab was aware of some of the root causes of the country's problem, that is to say, social and political effects of regional disparities. In order to overcome these disparities, state played an active role in the economy during his presidency, in contrast to traditional limited state role in Lebanon. He carried out regional development projects such as such as building country-wide infrastructure, road constructions, bringing water and electricity to remote areas, building hospitals and medical centers in rural areas, stimulating major agricultural projects and providing public education from primary to university level. He also tried to balance the Christian-Muslim parity in governmental and administrative offices (Traboulsi 2007, pp.140–141; Rabil 2011, pp.20–21; Rowayheb 2011, p.416). [71] In terms of Lebanese foreign policy, Chehab followed a policy of neutrality in regional politics, where the Middle East politics of his period also allowed such neutrality with fewer tensions compare to the previous one. His foreign policy choices were a delicate balancing act to maintain relative harmony between the pro-Western groups and Arab nationalists, basically Nasserist (Salem 1994, p.74; Salamé 1988, p.355 and 358; Traboulsi 2007, p.138; Wilkins 2013, p.27).

To conclude, Fuad Chehab was credited with a number of reforms to reach a modern administration and redistribution of economic wealth. Although he had the popular support of middle classes, petite bourgeoisie, some intellectuals, civil servants and Muslim street in general, his reforms were not clearly welcomed by all groups. The series of reforms eventually flourished an opposition of traditional

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[71] Although Maronites were approximately 29% of the population, they had at least half of the official posts and most of the higher positions in the ministries during Chamoun period. However, they held no more than a third by the end of Chehab's mandate (Traboulsi 2007, pp.139–140).

feudal elites, large sections of the oligarchy including the Muslims and the Maronites.

3.3.6. The Issue of Palestinians in Lebanon after 1967 War

Having been involved in politics before like participating in the foundation of the Phalange Party and being member of Constitutionalist Bloc at the same time, Charles Helou (in office between 1964-1970) emerged as a compromise president and supported by Fuad Chehab. Though he was not personally marginal in politics, the regional developments and the domestic power balances of his time presented strenuous choices between hammer and anvil (Rabil 2011, p.21). The domestic polarization between the Chehabists and their opponents, the Arab-Israeli conflicts and the intensification of the tension between Egypt and Saudi Arabia played important role in the making of foreign policy of Lebanon during the presidency of Helou.

The most important development in Helou's period is the 1967 War, which had direct effects for regional politics. Relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors had never been normalized since 1948 as partly covered in the previous sections. In reaction to the mobilization of Egyptian troops in the Sinai Peninsula in addition to Syria's and Jordan's support for Egypt, Israel launched preemptive airstrikes against Egypt on 5 June 1967 and all-out war began. It was a war that Israeli army had taken the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, the Golan Heights and the East Jerusalem from Egypt, Jordan and Syria (Malaspina 2008, p.66). Lebanon, in this war, sided with the Arab countries but refrained from sending troops or any material support, however it could not isolate itself from the consequences due to presence of Palestinian refugees. The concrete defeat of Arab armies in six days was a catastrophic tragedy in the eyes of Palestinians and they gave up all their hopes from Arab regimes and started to organize themselves for the fight against Israel in the refugee camps. Therefore, Lebanon was plunged into the Arab-Israeli conflict when Palestinian armed fighters started to use the Southern Lebanon as their basis for launching raids

against Israel (Harris 2006, pp.151–152; Traboulsi 2007, p.152; Malaspina 2008, pp.67–68). [72] However, the establishment of Palestinian fighters in the south attracted indignation of both domestic and regional powers. The Assads, a large feudal Shia family in the south, and security/intelligence agencies of Lebanon were skeptical about the Palestinians since they were considered both as a threat to the traditional leadership of the feudal structure and as a possible pretext for Israeli military retaliations. Related to this, the government of Lebanon was pressurized by both Israel and Syria in order to control the southern region and not to allow Palestinian armed presence to found a ground, which triggered the first armed clashes between the Lebanese security forces and the Palestinians (Traboulsi 2007, pp.152–153). However the Lebanese army was not able to control armed Palestinians and Israel held the governments of hosting Palestinian military groups and retaliated militarily. Harris argues that the Palestinian-Israeli hostilities deteriorated Lebanese sovereignty on the border area as well as around the refugee camps in main cities (Harris 2006, p.152).

The issue of Palestinian refugees re-exposed the sectarian divisions in Lebanese society as it started to become main source of conflictive relations with Israel. Maronite leaders Pierre Gemayel, Camille Chamoun and Suleiman Farangieh urged for a strict control over Palestinians due to their potential threat to the stability of Lebanon as well as to the Maronites' claim to power. In line with this reaction, Sunni upper class feudal leaders like families of Salam and Solh were not enthusiastic about Palestinian radicalism. Kamal Jumblatt, however, established closed connection with the political groups in Lebanon, which were in favor of the Palestinian cause. He founded the Lebanese National Movement (LNM) with a collection of populist parties in order to carry out his campaign against the Maronite and Sunni establishment in the country (Harris 2006, pp.152–153; Huse 2014, p.18).

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[72] The Palastinians became more organized even before 1967 when they formed the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) with the support of Arab governments in order to found a state in the homeland.

The clashes between the army and armed Palestinian groups resulted in the Cairo Accord in November 1969, which was an agreement between Yasser Arafat and Lebanese Army Commander-in-Chief General Emile Bustani. The Accord[73] allowed the presence and authority of Palestinian guerrillas in the camps. (Cobban 1984, pp.47–48; Ellis 2002, pp.29–30; Malaspina 2008, pp.66–67; Rabil 2011, p.22). Besides its substantial importance in terms of Arab-Israeli politics such as providing administrative autonomy for the refugee camps, lifting employment restrictions, and tacitly allowing Palestinian attacks on Israel, the Cairo Accord had three important repercussions in Lebanese politics from the perspective of this research. First, the prior developments and the Accord led to the break between the Muslim public and the Lebanese security agencies, which were heavily under the control of the Maronites. Second, it constituted the emergence of the alliance between the Arab nationalist, leftist parties, the PLO and the Kamal Jumblatt, which would become one of the main party in the upcoming civil war. Lastly, it allowed the PLO becoming a state-within-a-state and led to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 during the Civil War (Traboulsi 2007, pp.154–155; El-Khoury & Jaulin 2012, p.10).

To conclude it can be stated that President Helou pursued Chehab's foreign policy principle, which was maintaining close cooperation with Arab states without jeopardizing its independence and relations with the west. Therefore, Helou tried to find a middle ground position with the Cairo Accord as Lebanon was becoming increasingly polarized along confessional lines over the issue of armed Palestinians' attacks against Israel. However, this middle ground position is criticized by some scholars on Lebanese foreign policy for making concessions without addressing the roots of the problem and postponing the crisis (Hitti 1989, p.13).

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[73] Although the text of the agreement is not acknowledged, an unofficial text appeared in Al Nahar in April 1970, which was not contradicted by either side.

3.3.7. From Social Impasse to Civil War in Early 1970s

Suleiman Farangieh, coming from one of the leading Maronite families of the North, was elected to the Parliament in 1960 and developed good ties with traditional Muslim feudal families like Salams and Assads. In his election to the presidency, he also gained the support of Kamal Jumblatt. Farangieh was known for his opposition against Chehabist policies, his adherence to Maronite prerogatives, [74] tolerance to Palestinians in the early years [75] and his close friendship with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad. Harris notes that Farangieh's indulgence towards the Palestinians and the leftist groups as well as Maronite prerogatives constituted a disastrous political combination which will paved the way for the civil war (Harris 2006, p.154; Huse 2014, p.24). It is therefore President Farangieh was regarded as in large part being responsible for Lebanon's descent into the civil war despite the social and economic transformations of the late 1960s and early 1970s swept Lebanon into a series of crisis which were beyond his control.

In order to understand the history of Lebanon, the period of the late 1960s and the early 1970s is very important because the repercussions of regional politics, the internal social and economic developments and the emergence of alliances of civil war domestically and regionally had substantial remarks for the following years of Lebanon. Starting from the mid-1960s, a bunch of social and economic developments transformed the socio-demographic structure of Lebanon. The agriculture sector heavily suffered from the direct control of big entrepreneurs,

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[74] It was claimed by many anonymous interviewees during the field work in Beirut that after being the president, Suleiman Farangieh promised in a secret meeting with Maronite leaders to do everything and sign every contract that leading Maronite families needed, claming that it was "their time to rule."

[75] When King Husein of Jordan expelled Palestinians from Jordan in 1970, Farangieh's lax policy of border supervision allow thousands of PLO fighters to enter into Lebanon, in which they could continue to confront with Israel. Although the Arab-Israeli conflicts have always been a concern for all sectarian groups in terms of demographic concerns, relations with Israel and their armed struggle with Lebanese army, the issue became more problematic after 1970 due to the dramatic increase in the Palestinian population and their armed activities, which had been used as a pretext for Israeli attacks (Sorby 2011, p.193).

influx of low-paid Syrian agricultural workers, crisis of small land-owning farmers and consequently emigration of impoverished farmers, mostly Shias, to Beirut. Contrary to the agriculture, economic growth due to industrial sector and service sector had marked the growing economic inequalities, while the rich, mostly a few number of leading families of the Sunnis and the Maronites, were getting richer. As Zahar notes, this did not only deepen the rift between the center and the periphery, which was a chronic problem in Lebanon, but also radicalized the periphery and masses that closely mapped onto religious affiliation (Zahar 2005, p.229). Therefore it can be argued that when the unequal system based on sectarian privileges and feudal patronage was accompanied with social frustrations and unbearable living standards due to socio-economic transformations in Lebanon of its time in a very troubled regional environment, the result became recurring armed or unarmed crises which brought the fifteen years of internal clashes.

Additionally these years also witnessed heavy penetration of both regional and international actors in Lebanese affairs. Therefore, the Lebanese foreign policy and the behaviors of sectarian groups should be understood from a perspective, which takes these regional and international powers as well as systemic settings into consideration. Najem, for instance, affirms that the Lebanese foreign policy was influenced by the Arab-Israeli conflicts and the pan-Arab movements at regional level. The vulnerable state structure divided among sectarian groups did not only open the way for external actors to play important role in Lebanese affairs but also caused periodic eruptions of internal ideological tensions due to the external interferences (Najem 2012, pp.19–20). These tensions had increased as Palestinian fighters started to be organized more freely in the south under the Cairo Accord and increased their capabilities with the support of neighboring Arab states in early 1970s. In such settings, Farangieh saw the solution for the problem of armed Palestinians by forcing the LNM and the PLO to come to an agreement under Syrian auspices (Salloukh 2008, p.305).

3.4. CONCLUSION: THE END OF THE NATIONAL PACT

In early 1970s it was clearly understood that the National Pact no longer provided a working ground for the Lebanese politics due to the domestic socio-economic developments and continuous foreign interventions. The underlying problem of the National Pact, as discussed before, was its vague commitments about state's policies without addressing the root causes of the problem that was the lack of a national identity and so the lack of common national interests. Within this line Lebanon's neutrality, envisaged in the Pact, was not realized in a divided nation in both Arab-Israeli context at regional level and the Cold War rivalry at the international level because the definition of interests cannot be separated from the issue of identity.

In order to apply a neutral stance in regional politics there must have been a consensus among various sectarian communities about Lebanese identity and its foreign policy orientation. In the lack of such a national identity, it became impossible to pursue policy of neutrality and to keep the world at bay indefinitely as the events of 1950s and onwards demonstrated. There were two major foreign policy tendencies in the early years of Lebanon leading up to the civil war. The first one was the advocacy of Lebanon's full neutrality in the Arab-Israeli conflicts and strengthening relations with western powers, generally identified with the Maronite side. Indeed the foreign policy orientation of the Maronite Church can be considered as coherent in its indulgence to the west since the Mutasarrifiyya period. The second one, mainly Muslim sects like the Sunnis and the Druze, was identified with a pro-Palestinian foreign policies and indulgence towards Nasser's pan-Arabism (Salloukh 2008, p.295; Milton-Edwards & Hinchcliffe 2008, pp.65–66). Established Sunni feudal leaders, for instance, can be considered as closer to pan-Arabist ideas although they were not very enthusiastic about the presence of armed Palestinian groups in Lebanon. The Druze chieftain Kamal Jumblatt, on the other hand, clearly recognized the socio-economic pressures in the society and strengthened his political influence with a

close partnership with the leftist popular parties and the Palestinians thorough establishing a loose coalition of discontented Muslims, known as the LNM.

Especially after 1967 War, the Palestinian guerillas had become one of the major issues among Lebanese actors and a pretext for regional powers to intervene into Lebanese politics. From the perspective of Christians, particularly Maronites, the PLO was perceived as a source of Israeli attacks and Syrian-Egyptian intervention to Lebanese affairs. In addition, according to Lebanon's foremost historian Salibi, from the perspective of Maronites in general, the Palestinians were seen as a Trojan horse which Lebanese radical parties could use to subvert the Lebanese system (Salibi 1976). Muslims, on the other hand, were tolerant to the presence of armed Palestinians not only because they are sympathetic towards their co-religionists but because they regarded the armed Palestinians as a potential balancing power in the domestic politics against the Maronite dominance. Therefore, the LNM not only supported the presence of armed militias but also called for political reforms in the country (Rowayheb 2011, p.417). To conclude, it can be stated that even before the civil war, domestic confessional groups tried to use the foreign policy issues and alliances in order to enhance their domestic positions.

The early independence years also demonstrated that the difference over foreign policy orientations would have direct repercussions in the domestic politics and they could easily turn out to be internal conflicts. In other words any drift from neutrality destabilized Lebanon internally, where even the definition of being neutral was also subject to discussion among different sectarian perspectives In this manner, as covered in this chapter, disagreements among Lebanese confessional groups over foreign policy issues, such as the cases over the Eisenhower Doctrine and the presence of Palestinians within the context of Arab-Israeli struggle, easily turned to violent clashes among them, which open the way for further foreign penetration of the country. (Salem 1994, p.74; Salloukh 2008, pp.283–284). In such a conjuncture, sectarian actors tried to develop their relations with regional and international powers or strengthen their own domestic

capabilities like financial or military resources or the offices they hold in the bureaucracy in order to enhance their domestic leverage and to pressure the government. In other words, they try to affect the process of government's foreign policy making and implementation in Lebanon because after all nation state is still one of the most pertinent entity in international relations. In addition to this, it was still possible to talk about a functioning state in Lebanon in early independence period although it was weakly established. Therefore, during this period, both Kamal Jumblatt and the Maronite Church or the politicians having close relations with the spiritual leadership neither seek to seize the power nor to dismantle territorial unity; rather they search for the channels to control the governmental processes in order to influence decisions. In addition to this, it is observed in the analysis of early Lebanon that sectarian identity played important role in their search for alliance at abroad to increase their domestic political power. When one looks at these alliances, it is observed that while Sunnis defined their communal interests with a closer foreign policy to Sunni Arab world, Maronite elites sided with preferential relations with either the Catholic Church in Rome or with Paris. Therefore it can be stated that although the alliance building has not been purely based on sectarian identities, the sectarian harmony in these alliances, namely the Maronite community with Catholics, Orthodox with Russia, and Sunni masses with Sunni Arab regimes, cannot be explained only as a coincidence.

To conclude, however, the formal existence of a weakly functioning government and the governmental institutions do not guarantee that Lebanese society would be able to form a political unity in the absence of a common national identity and a common aspiration for the future Lebanon. Therefore continuous crises and armed clashes in early 1970s made Lebanon to walk a delicate tightrope with domestic and foreign pressures and the armed clashes between the Phalange and the Palestinians in April 1975 marked the end of the National Pact. One reasonable question would be whether the National Pact had really existed before 1975. It is surely a justifiable question and the principles of the National Pact could not be realized fully even in the very early years of the independence; yet it

can be argued that there was a general reference to the National Pact and the idea of state-making even without a national identity in those years. However the civil war years were the full fragmentation of both the state and society, when even the idea of Lebanon was subject to debate, as will be covered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

THE BREAKDOWN OF THE STATE:
SECTARIAN LEADERS AS FOREIGN POLICY ACTORS

Historical analysis of foreign policy orientations of sectarian groups in the second part of the thesis aims to explore the continuities and changes in foreign policy orientations of sectarian groups, their alliances and their foreign policy behavioral patterns. In the previous chapter, the emergence of confessional groups having different perceptions about Lebanon is analyzed based on inter-communal relations and alliances both at regional and international levels. In doing so, such an historical analysis reveals the construction of diverse sectarian identities in relational manner due to both domestic dynamics and foreign interventions. Starting with the analysis of civil war between 1970 and 1990, Chapter 4 firstly focuses on the breakdown of the state and inter-sectarian relations. The process of communal transformations, militia-based politics and the increased external interventions through multi-level alliances is substantial to understand the nature of confessional relations in domestic politics and their perceptions of foreign policy in Lebanon in a deeply fragmented society. Then, it continues with the analysis of the Taif Agreement, where the sectarian relations and alliances were re-established and Syria ensured its influence on Lebanon's both domestic and foreign affairs. The chapter, then, focuses on the analysis of the post-civil war period under Israeli and Syrian occupations which lasted till 2000 and 2005 respectively. Finally the early 2000s will be elaborated before the case studies of Israel-Hezbollah War in 2006 and the Syrian civil war started in 2011 in the following chapters. Early 2000s are considered particularly important in terms of

the emergence of new regional settings polarized by Iran and Saudi Arabia at regional level and the emergence of current Lebanese political alliances at domestic level.

4.1. CIVIL WAR: 1975 - 1990

In April 1975 Lebanon entered into a period of prolonged civil clashes, which suddenly turned into a bloody civil war between multiple sectarian groups and within groups, in which both regional and international powers were involved. It was a story of transformation from an image of tolerance and cohabitation to a violent battlefield with full of enmities and power struggles based on sectarian identities and political interests. The civil war was finally settled in October 1989 with Taif Accord, but the real end of armed clashes, however, waited until October 1990. Portraying the civil war in Lebanon as a pure battle between the Christians and Muslims or a struggle between the state and rebellions are surely oversimplification and inaccurate because both Christians and Muslims were in several of the opposing parties in the conflict. However any explanation ignoring the mutual animosities between different sectarian groups fed by socio-economic and political disparities would miss the substantial dimension of the war because even the identity cards indicating religion could get a person killed if the person was in the wrong side of the city during the civil war years (Horner 1977, p.11; Sorby 2011, p.202; Nedelcu 2013, p.1). For this reason, it is believed that nothing but the civil war of 1975-1990 has marked such an extensive track in the collective memories of Lebanese people for the reproduction of conflicting sectarian identities and for the construction of various foreign policy orientations along with these identities. In this section, the breakdown of Lebanese state will be elaborated along with the sectarian leaders' alliances at both domestic and international level. In this respect the study of civil war from the perspective of foreign policy behavior of major sectarian leaders provides a very suitable case study to understand how they act with both regional and international powers in

order to strengthen their domestic positions and pursue their foreign policy goals as sub-state foreign policy actors; whether as embedded in the state or as quasi-state as presented in Chapter 2. After the dissolution of Lebanese state, foreign policy in Lebanon shattered into a number of sectarian pieces, where each confessional group or leader established separate relations with its preferred partner like Syria, Israel, Libya, and Iraq (Salem 1994, p.75; Salamé 1988, p.349). In exploring foreign policy behavioral patterns of sectarian leaders in Lebanon of which the Lebanese government was one, the civil war will be analyzed in three phases; the first phase includes the period until the arrival of Syrian troops in June 1976 and a relative peace in 1977, the second phase is the escalation of clashes and the direct involvement of regional powers until the Israeli invasion in June 1982, and the last phase is the period until the implementation of the Taif Accord in October 1990.

4.1.1. The First Phase of the Civil War: 1975 - 1977

The attacks against a church in Ain Al Rammaneh in the morning and the following attack against a bus carrying the Palestinians in the afternoon of 13 April 1975 triggered a civil war, as a result of the culmination of domestic and external factors of decades. The clashes between right-wing Christians, particularly the Maronites, and Palestinians with their Lebanese allies had been gathering for a number of years as covered in previous chapter. In the early 1970s, the problem was mainly between the Lebanese army aligned with Christian political parties on the one hand and the Palestinian organizations on the other. All measures that the state of Lebanon took and all domestic and regional efforts to ease the tension failed to produce a result and constituted the prevailing atmosphere in Lebanon just before the start of the war (Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, pp.13–14). There is a considerable literature on Lebanese civil war and the reasons behind the outbreak of civil war. Due to multifaceted nature of the protracted civil war, it is difficult to explain the process in a straightforward narrative because Lebanese people experienced the war differently based on their religion, geographical location, and class (Nedelcu 2013, p.7). However, it can be

stated that there are two main groups analyzing the reasons of the war, although they are not excluding each other: those who perceive civil war as a largely sectarian conflict (Makdisi & Sadaka 2003; Salibi 1985) and those focus on social grievance between different segments of the society from Marxist perspective (Horner 1977). In addition, it must be noted that the whole literature portrays the external intervention as one of the most significant factor in provoking, prolonging and ending the war. In this thesis, it is believed that an approach considering both the sectarian enmities and economic inequalities together in order to examine the tension between the deprived Sunni and Shia masses aligned with the Palestinian refugees and the privileged Maronite feudal elites would be more comprehensive approach (Cleveland & Bunton 2009, pp.217–230; Hirst 2010, pp.81–110; Sorby 2011, pp.193–194).

When the clashes had started, the combatant parties could be defined as two warring camps having major and minor militias and parties. On the one side there was PLO and the LNM led by Druze leader Kamal Jumblatt opposing to the Maronite-dominated traditional political establishment based on the principles of sectarianism in the politics and *laissez-faire* in the economy. In terms of foreign policy, the opposing camp demanded from Lebanese government to protest the Israeli attacks against Lebanon. Although it is mainly led by the PLO and Jumblatt, the opposition group to the Lebanese status quo also attracted Shias as well as ordinary Sunnis and the Druze who were in favor of reforms in the system. On the other side, there was a coalition of right-wing Christian leaders, mainly Maronite leaders like Pierre Gemayel and Camille Chamoun. It must also be noted that although this conservative bloc was dominated by Maronite militia-politicians, some Sunni feudal families and others who were in favor of the current system were aligned with this bloc (Huse 2014, p.24; Sorby 2011, pp.201–202; Cleveland & Bunton 2009, p.384; Traboulsi 2007, pp.187–190; Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, pp.15–18; Altunışık 2007, p.5). Having already armed in the preparation for a possible confrontation, the militia organizations at both camps developed into large and complex organizations with complex public services,

social services and other administrative offices during the civil war. [76] It is reported that while estimated 60 % of their budget was reserved for military costs, about 40 % was allocated to information offices and social services. Information activities involved press releases, conferences, newspapers and television stations as well as opening representation bureaus abroad while social services were composed of scholarship, medical assistance and food subsidies (Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.17; Sorby 2011, p.200). The liberal market economy of Lebanon was transformed into a system dominated by armed sectarian militias and war lords. The country was disintegrated into around ten cantons controlled by different sectarian militia organizations having their illegal ports which enable them to carry out illegal and uncontrolled trade in addition to their quasi-state activities like collecting so-called tax in return for security service, which provided an important financial interest to these warlords (Traboulsi 2007, pp.231–237). Therefore, it must be noted that the sectarianization of Lebanon was not just a political development, but also had an important socio-economic dimension. With the collapse of the state, all warring factions started to act as quasi-states having their own security, social and economic apparatuses. In sum, Lebanon could only be defined as divided territories under armed sectarian mafias and militias with a marginalized state, having no de-facto control over the country since 1975.

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[76] In the first phase of the civil war the main militia power in the opposition camp was mainly the PLO and to a lesser degree the Progressive Socialist Party which totally constituted around 10.000 fighters. As the war unfolded and especially after the Israeli invasion, Palestinian forces had to withdraw from Lebanon, but they were replaced by around 3.500 fighters of the Amal. In addition, towards the end of the war Hezbollah joined this group with around 4.000 fighters, which mainly focus on resisting Israeli and the South Lebanese Army in the southern region On the other hand, the main Maronite dominated political parties having militias were National Liberal Party of Camille Chamoun and Kataeb Party of Pierre Gemayel in addition to minor groups like the Marada Brigade of Sulaiman Farangieh located in Zagharta and the Guardians of the Cedars. The Kataeb and National Liberal parties constituted the Lebanese Forces, which was merged with the Guardians of the Cedars in 1980 and reached to 8.000-10.000 fighters in total (Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.16; Katz & Russell 1985; Sorby 2011, p.198).

4.1.1.1. The Maronite Church at the Beginning of the War

Random abductions of civilians on the basis of their sectarian identities and the activities of sectarian militias towards the others during the war intensified the sectarian nature of the conflict; and therefore the whole process of civil war can be considered as the process of the reconstruction of self and the others in Lebanon. For this reason, Huse notes that despite the fact that various sectarian groups existed in Lebanon for centuries, the civil war destroyed any basis for a consensual approach in the country; so the Maronite and Muslim blocs found themselves as too apart to find a common ground (Huse 2014, p.53). In addition, Kamal Salibi also assesses the general feeling of treason-felony on both sides in his report in 1985. The Christian view was that they were betrayed by Lebanese Muslims who were aligned with Palestinians, while the Muslim opinion was that their fellow Christian citizens damaged the idea of coexistence by denying their rights (Salibi 1985, p.3). Indeed the interviews in Lebanon during the field research left the same impression because when the issue somehow turned to the civil war, interviewees like Elias Salibi, militia captain in the Lebanese Forces during the civil war, define their cause as a matter of survival against all Muslims that came to kill Christians (Interview with Salibi 2016).

Historically tied to the fate of Maronite Catholic community in Lebanon, the Maronite Church as whole was heavily involved and affected by the civil war. The Lebanese Monastic Orders and Maronite League issued a memorandum in October 1975 to the President of the Republic, stating that;

> Religious bigotry and confessional fighting, the slaying of innocent people beginning with the three monks, the barbaric attacks in Christian villages, and murder and expulsion of their sons, the wrecking of their homes, the desecration of their churches, all these point to the presence of a dreadful plan which is being executed with great precision in order to disfigure the image of Lebanon and obliterate its vocation, dilute the characteristic traits of its civilization, and put an end to its manner of existence; in short, man has died in Lebanon and the savage beast has awakened (CEMAM 1975, p.76).

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According to this statement, it is obvious that the Maronite Church perceived the struggle as Christian, Lebanese and civilized against those who were non-Lebanese and savage. The declaration also demonstrates the mood among clergy that the existence of Christian community had been threatened. In the following parts of the documents, the memorandum also asserts the Maronite determination to establish Lebanese authority completely and clearly on the regions which fall under real occupation referring to the West Beirut under Muslim control (CEMAM 1975, pp.77–78). Therefore with such a vision of the situation, it was very natural that having over 100 monasteries and a very wide network of churches in countryside, the Monastic Orders played a forefront role in the so-called Christian resistance and they made alliance with the Kataeb Party and provided moral, human and material sources to the militias (Henley 2008, p.357; Salibi 1976, p.105).

While the Maronite League and the Order of Lebanese Maronite Monks began to pressurize both Maronite political leaders and the Patriarch himself toward more radical position, it must be noted that the Maronite Patriarch Anthony Peter Khoraish as the head of the church presented a more moderate stance. It is for this reason that Patriarch Khoraish visited Muslim and Druze religious leaders in addition to the heads of other Christian denominations immediately after his election in early 1975 (Horner 1977, p.11). Nevertheless, caught in the middle – between radical demands of monastic orders and his own inability to regulate the church in the mid of a civil war - it would have become no longer possible for Patriarch to fully control the lower orders of the church, as will be covered.

4.1.1.2. The Awakening of Lebanese Shias

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Lebanese Shia masses were the least represented community in Lebanese political system although Shia feudal elites held the post of Speaker of the Parliament since the independence. However, the civil war years experienced a transformation of Shias in Lebanon in terms of both intra-communal structure and inter-communal relations. By early 1970s, they

were still denied to have access to proper share in the parliament and other bureaucracies compare to that of Sunnis and the Druze although their population had increased more than that of any other Lebanese sectarian groups and became one of the most populous confessions (Moaddel et al. 2012, p.7; Malaspina 2008, pp.86–87; Hazran 2010, p.533).

One of the most important difficulties in Shia community was the lack of communication between the Shia feudal leaders and the ordinary people so it became very difficult for them to present their voice in Lebanese political system. Most of the Shias were living in the rural villages in the south during the early independence but the majority of land belonged to a few feudal families. In early 1970s they had to move to the suburbs of Beirut from their villages due to both economic reasons and Israeli air raids (Ehteshami & Hinnebusch 1997, p.117; Harris 2006, p.158). When Shias moved from rural villages to the suburbs of Beirut, where the control of feudal lords was limited, a transformation in the nature of intra-communal hierarchy came into being and the political leadership of Shia Zuama were pushed aside by Shia clergy (Shanahan 2005; Naor 2014). In such an environment, a religious leader Imam Musa Sadr emerged as the leading figure not only among Shias but also in Lebanese politics. After Musa Sadr became the first head of the Supreme Islamic Shia Council in 1969, he founded the Movement of the Dispossessed in 1974 and its military wing, the Lebanese Resistance Regiments in 1975, to urge for better economic conditions and political representation for the Shia community and its military wing, which would be popularly known as Amal.[77] Although Imam Sadr's movement was originally Lebanese, it was sectarian in the sense that it spread exclusively among Shia community both in the villages and in cities' suburbs and his call was responded by Shia masses and the traditional feudal leadership was replaced by

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[77] The name 'Lebanese Resistence Regiments' (Afwaj Al-Muqawama Al-Lubnaniyya), when abbreviated, in Arabic created the acronmy 'Amal', which means 'Hope' in Arabic. For a very detailed discussion of the emergence of Musa Sadr as the Shia leader and the establishment and ideology of Amal please see *Amal and the Shi'a: Struggle for the Soul of Lebanon* by Augustus Richard Norton (Norton 1987).

the clergy within Shia community. In terms of inter-communal relations, Sadr asked for equality for Shias within a pluralist society without challenging the integrity of Lebanon. However, Sadr's movement with an armed militia was perceived as a threat by the traditional powers of Lebanese political structure, both Sunni and Maronite leaders. Additionally, Amal was not only a challenge to the privileges of the existing structure but also a countervailing force against the growing influence of Palestinians in the south because the general Shia public opinion was against the presence of the PLO in the south not only because they considered the south as their historic land but also because it constituted the pretext for Israeli retaliation and left that vulnerable to the military attacks. (Traboulsi 2007, p.178; Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.12; Malaspina 2008, p.86; Ehteshami & Hinnebusch 1997, pp.117–119). Therefore, it can be stated that the early years of the civil war experienced the construction of Shia political mass movement in Lebanese politics, searching for its political rights while balancing not only Maronite but also Sunni sectarian communities in domestic balance of power.

4.1.1.3. Syrian Military Intervention in 1976 as a Maronite Foreign Policy Initiative

In the first months of the civil war, the conflicts continued mainly between the PLO backed by Kamal Jumblatt and Maronite militias. Both sides were supported by outside powers and, as Huse states, Syria was supplying military aid to the PLO while Israel was arming Christian groups (Huse 2014, p.52). By the end of summer of 1975, the military balance was in favor of the LNM but the Christian regions like the East Beirut remained under the control of Maronite militias. In such a conjuncture, the Syrian regime initiated a mediating policy in Lebanon between warring parties through a compromise formula. In doing so, foreign minister of Syria Abdulhalim Khaddam went to Lebanon in September 1975 to initiate a cease-fire and assisted the formation of the National Dialogue Committee to propose reforms (Sorby 2011, p.203). Although the negotiations were locked due to the uncompromising attitudes of the parties, President

Farangieh declared the Constitutional Document in February 1976 to reach a consensus. The Syrian-backed document proposed the empowerment of the prime minister's office, reduction of the power of the Maronite community in the official posts and equal parity between Christians and Muslims in the Parliament (Rabil 2011, pp.23–24; Sorby 2011, p.207; Huse 2014, pp.67–68). The constitutional document was considered acceptable by most of the Christians because it still conserved the power of Maronites in comparison to a non-confessional system which was offered by Jumblatt. In other words, although it proposed an equal representation in the parliament between Christians and Muslims, a non-confessional system might have been a worse case for the Maronites where they would have been only a small minority due to changes in the population. Additionally, Assad promised a full control of Palestinian guerillas, to which Christians were militarily inferior. The document was also acceptable from the perspective of Sunni leaders because it brought a political system where Sunni prime minister would enjoy relatively bigger power. Lastly, although it did not recognized the demographic changes in favor of Shia community, Shia leaders including Musa Sadr considered the constitutional document as a starting point for greater changes. On the other hand, Jumblatt and other leaders of the LNM opposed the document on the basis that it was still sectarian though it was more equitable and since the LNM was the main warrior party on the side of Muslims, it was able to prevent the document to be realized (Traboulsi 2007, pp.194–195; Harris 2006, p.166).

With the collapse of reconciliation efforts, the war regenerated and the LNM increased its power and gained the control of 80% of Lebanon by early 1976. Syrian regime did not tolerate this reaction and Syrian troops first entered into Beqaa in April 1976 with a small power upon the invitation of President Farangieh. Having considered that the absolute victory of Palestinians might have triggered an Israeli aggression or the disintegration of Lebanon, Syria reinforced its troops in Lebanon in June 1976. Since Assad was concerned with a possible direct Israeli involvement, Syria launched a large scale operation in Lebanon

against the LNM and a pax-Syriana was enforced in Lebanon with the support of Maronite militias (Harris 2006, pp.165–166).

The entrance of Syrian troops into Lebanon to support the Christians against the LNM forces led to one of the most luminous ironies of the Middle East history since Syria was generally considered as the leader and cradle of Arab nationalism along with Egypt. In terms of foreign policy preferences of sectarian leaders, the Syrian intervention deserves further elaboration particularly from the perspective of Maronite leaders. In this respect, although it is not historically suitable, Farangieh aligned with Syrian regime in order to suppress armed activities of Palestinians under Syrian tutelage. Salloukh argues that Maronite leader first tried to use Syrian power to bring a minimal constitutional reforms, when it failed, he then invited its direct military intervention to preserve the existing system in Lebanon (Salloukh 2008, p.305). It was a very tactical change of alliance from Maronite perspective, because when the situation in Lebanon started to change in favor of the PLO and its Lebanese allies, Gemayel and Farangieh entered into a rapprochement with Assad in exchange for limiting the militias that Syrian regime supported. At this point PLO leader Yasser Arafat and Druze leader Kamal Jumblatt failed to realize that Assad's main concern was Syria's regional standing.[78] Therefore, Maronite leadership took the advantage of a compromise that would both please most of Lebanese leaders and make the Maronite leadership associates of Damascus. They were also successful to convince Syrian regime to work with traditional Lebanese rulers rather than to replace them (Huse

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[78] When the LNM backed by Syria gained considerable superiority, Syria faced with a policy dilemma in Lebanon. The military superiority of the LNM would lead to partition of Lebanon where the Maronites would have established their own state on their regions by the support of Israel or Israel might have intervened to change the balance of the game, which in both cases would lead to dangerous collision with Israel. In addition to this, although Hafez Assad took the responsibility to take the front-line in Arab-Israel issue, he did not convinced with the idea that the PLO could act independently. Therefore, PLO's uncompromising stance in spite of Syrian insistence for reconciliation damaged the mutual trust between Assad and Yasser Arafat. Faced with such a potential threat and realized the complexity of the situation in Lebanon, Syria preferred the integrity of Lebanon through establishing a new compromise formula between fighting parties, a solution which would both ease the fear of the Maronites and respond to the demands of others (Sorby 2011, pp.200–204; Huse 2014, p.112; Traboulsi 2007, pp.194–198; Harris 2006, p.164).

2014, p.68 and 74). To conclude, Syrian military intervention in 1976 constitutes one of the clearest examples of how an alliance with foreign power would work for the interest of that community in domestic politics. Secondly, although an alliance between the Maronites and Syrian regime was unexpected because, as Nisan notes, the indigenous notion of a separate free Lebanon in line with Christian-Phoenician nationalism was deeply rooted in the Maronite narratives (Nisan 2000, p.51), an invitation for Syrian military intervention constituted a grave challenge to the Maronite identity. Therefore it clearly demonstrated that foreign alliances are prone to change when leaders of sectarian communities perceived and an existential challenge for their existence.

The first phase of the civil war ended with Syrian military intervention in Lebanon and a relative peace in the country had started. Indeed, Huse correctly defined the situation in Lebanon after Syrian intervention as *the absence of war*, rather than as a peace because it was soon understood that this period was just the beginning years of the civil war (Huse 2014, p.111). One of the direct consequences of the Syrian military presence in Lebanese affairs was the election of Elias Sarkis as the President of the Republic and he took the office in September 1976. Although the LNM led by Kamal Jumblatt supported Raymond Eddé, the LNM accepted the election results (Sorby 2011, p.209; Traboulsi 2007, pp.200–201). President Sarkis tried several initiatives to find a solution for the growing conflicts among the LNM and the Maronite militias. Within this framework, he planned to appoint Druze leader Kamal Jumblatt as a member of the cabinet which was objected by Hafez Al Assad due to his clear opposition to Syrian influence in Lebanon (Nisan 2000). Being in office but not in power, as he was generally described, Sarkis could not manage to commence a real negotiation process between parties in order to bring and maintain stability and peace in his country.

4.1.2. The Second Phase of the Civil War: The Maronite - Israeli Alliance

Despite a relative calm in the country due to Syrian presence, the PLO continued to use southern Lebanon to attack Israel and Israel held the lack of authority in the south as the causes of PLO's attacks and invaded southern Lebanon in March 1978. During its invasion it did not only create a security zone along the Israeli-Lebanese border but also established a militia organization, named the South Lebanon Army (SLA), which was made up of mainly Maronite Christians but also included some Druze and Shia soldiers. The Israeli invasion caused the deployment of UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) along the border towards the end of the same year and Israel withdrew its forces in June 1979 (Ellis 2002, p.33; Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.19; Malaspina 2008, pp.79–80).

This period also witnessed the rise of Bashir Gemayel as the leader of Lebanese Forces and he was able to unite all Christian militias under his command in 1980 because of both his personal charisma and Israeli support. Contrary to the older generation of Maronite leaders, he was against the presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon from the beginning because he believed that Lebanese sovereignty could not be restored with Syrian or Palestinian presence in the country. Therefore he aligned with Israel to force Syrian troops out of Lebanon (Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.19; Traboulsi 2007, pp.208–211; Rabil 2011, p.25). Early 1980s also witnessed heavy involvement of both Israeli and Syrian troops in sectarian clashes through their proxies, which led to the actual division of Lebanon into regions that was controlled by the Lebanese Forces, the PLO, the SLA and Syrian troops. Having been highly concerned about the situation in Lebanon in such a conjuncture, Israel started a large scale ground, sea and air attack to Lebanon in order to root out PLO militias from Lebanon, which was called by Israel "Operation Peace for Galilee" after an attack on Israeli ambassador in London by PLO guerillas in June 1982. Israeli troops quickly advanced in Lebanon and forced PLO leaders and fighters to leave the country (Malaspina 2008, pp.81–84; Rabil 2011, pp.45–46). President Sarkis invited a peacekeeping force involving

US, British, French and Italian troops in Beirut to monitor the evacuation of PLO fighters from Lebanon.[79]

On 23 August, Bashir Gemayel was elected as the president with a strong American and Israeli support although his election was contentious because many Muslim parliamentarians boycotted the election. Walid Jumblatt, for instance, described him as *the candidate of the Israeli tanks* (Traboulsi 2007, p.215). In terms of his foreign policy orientation, although Bashir Gemayel had not taken the office yet, he met with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, who asked him to start peace negotiations between Israel and Lebanon (Traboulsi 2007, p.216).[80] With the confidence of expelling the PLO from Lebanon, removing the Syrian influence and installing a pro-Israeli president, Israel hoped to force a peace treaty immediately. However, Bashir Gemayel was assassinated on 14 September 1982, just few days before he would have taken the office. Following the assassination, Gemayel's brother Amin Gemayel became the president until 1988 and Israeli troops occupied even the west Beirut (Nisan 2000, p.57; Malaspina 2008, pp.84–85).

Israeli occupation divided Lebanon into two: the resistance against Israel and pro-peace treaty groups. Successor of the LNM, the Lebanese National Resistance Front (LNRF) since September 1982, consisted of leftists, some Palestinian groups and Shia armed guerillas represented the resistance and mainly active in the south in organizing attacks against military convoys, Israeli soldiers and military camps. This group had the support of Damascus since Assad lost his faith in Maronite leaders and initiated a process of rapprochement with Muslims including Palestinians, the Druze and Shias (Rabil 2011, p.25). The other group led by President Amin Gemayel negotiated a peace accord with Israel, which was

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[79] During the evacuation of Palestinian armed groups, it is stated that Syrian President Assad allowed a few thousands PLO fighters to move into Syrian-controlled areas in Lebanon or to the refugee camps in Tripoli (Rabil 2011, p.50).

[80] This meeting was planned to be secret but Israeli government leaked the minutes of the meeting intentionally, in which Israeli Prime Minister call Bashir Gemayel as "my son".

signed on 17 May 1983, but has never been ratified due to the strong Syrian and domestic opposition (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1983; Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.20).[81] To conclude, as Rabil rightly states, although it seemed as if Israel and its Maronite allies had won the day after the invasion and the election of Bashir Gemayel as the president (Rabil 2011, pp.45–46), the invasion marked a new beginning in the civil war with the enhancement of the alliance between the PLO and Syria in addition to the gradual consolidation of Shia groups in the southern region, which were waging a guerilla war against Israeli occupation. Therefore, on the contrary to Israel's expectations Israeli position in Lebanon suddenly became untenable after the invasion and Israeli army retreated towards the southern Lebanon.

4.1.3. Third Phase of the Civil War: Further Sectarianization of the War

The third phase of the civil war started with the Israeli occupation in 1982 and continued until the acceptance of Taif Accord. This phase witnessed the direct outside intervention while both Syria and Israel occupied most of the country. It was also the period of failed attempts to reach a national reconciliation and the rise of Iranian-backed Shia organization Hezbollah under Israeli occupation in addition to rise of sectarian enmities between parties due to the mountain wars of early 1980s and the clashes in the south.

4.1.3.1. The Rise of Hezbollah under Israeli Occupation

As mentioned above, of all major sectarian groups in Lebanon, Shias were historically the weakest in both economy and politics of Lebanon. However, Musa Sadr's movement could gain a popular support on the eve of the civil war and it ensured foreign support. Having been trained and armed by the Syria-backed Palestinians, Musa Sadr joined the LNM initially. Continuously, Amal became a

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[81] For the full text of Agreement between Israel and Lebanon please visit the official webpage of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs: http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MFADocuments/Yearbook6/Pages/114%20Agreement%20b etween%20Israel%20and%20Lebanon-%2017%20May%201.aspx and see Rabil 2011, pp.46–49 for the story and reasons of the abrogation of the May 17 Accord.

major warring faction and a large organization, appealing to Shia community (Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.12). However, as the Syrian regime searched for an end to civil war as discussed in previous sections, Musa Sadr turned against the Druze leader Kamal Jumblatt and the PLO and sided with the reconciliation efforts. Indeed both Shia public and the elites were not in favor of both the continuation of the civil war and the presence of Palestinian militias in the south. That is why, Amal in the south collaborated with the Israel to expel PLO militias from the south in the early phase of the invasion in addition to Musa Sadr's moderate position in favor of a peaceful solution contrary to the PLO and Kamal Jumblatt. However Israeli policy in the southern Lebanon since 1978 occupation, like mass detentions, destruction of agricultural fields, house searches, radicalized Lebanese Shias and diminished Amal's political stance in the absence of Musa Sadr,[82] which together led to the rise of Hezbollah as the one of the main domestic and regional Shia force in the following years (Ehteshami & Hinnebusch 1997, pp.116–120; Moaddel et al. 2012, p.86; Hazran 2009, p.4).

In addition to the fact that the moderate approach by Amal did no longer appeal to the Shia public under the harsh conditions of civil war and Israeli occupation, the idea of more militant strategy was also reinforced by the regional politics (Moaddel et al. 2012, p.8). The Iranian Islamic Revolution in 1979 was a historic rupture in terms of Iranian stance in regional affairs because the new regime was clearly anti-Zionist and supported Lebanese Shias to a large extent contrary to pro-Israeli Shah of Iran. Therefore Iran started to implement a new foreign policy aiming to mobilize Shias of Lebanon against Israeli invasion and assisted Hezbollah financially and militarily during 1980s and the ground was already fertile for this. For instance, Iran and Syria agreed on the deployment of 1500 Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps in Beqaa Valley in order to train Lebanese fighters (Rabil 2011, p.43). In addition, while establishing channels, Iran did not face with important obstacles because the transnational identity of Shia

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[82] Imam Musa Sadr disappeared during an official visit in August 1978 in Libya and was never heard from again.

community and the training of major religious leaders in Shia holy cities facilitated the links, as also mentioned in the first chapter (Ehteshami & Hinnebusch 1997, pp.116–117). As a result of Iranian efforts, various smaller resistance organizations united under one organization led by a cleric Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, which would later be known as Hezbollah after its declaration in 1985. During 1980s, Hezbollah became more militant and organized series of attacks against Israeli troops and other foreigners in Lebanon. Therefore it can be stated that the third phase of the civil war was marked by strong alliance of Hezbollah and Iran, which led to the rise of Hezbollah and the entrance of Iran in Lebanese politics while Syria continued to work with the Amal during the civil war years (Salem 1994, p.75; Ehteshami & Hinnebusch 1997, p.129; Traboulsi 2007, pp.229–230; Malaspina 2008, p.87).

Hezbollah's declared its ideology officially in 1985 with an Open Letter, which also states its foreign policy orientation and alliances. First, while defining themselves in the introductory part of the letter, Hezbollah acknowledged its recognition of the Guardianship of the Jurisprudent (*Wilayat Al Faqih*) as the center of Islamic state and the Grand Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as the leader. Therefore, it can be considered as an open declaration of its loyalty to Iran. In terms of enemies, Hezbollah defined the Phalangists (the Lebanese Forces), Israel, France and the US as their major enemies by charging them for being responsible for the invasion, destruction of villages and massacres of civilians. In addition, the Open Letter denounced the alliance between Israel and the Lebanese Forces and specified the expelling the Americans and the Zionists from Lebanon as its one of main aims (Hezbollah's Open Letter, cited in Alagha 2002).

4.1.3.2. The Maronite Church: Divided between the Patriarchate and the Monastic Orders

In the literature it is mostly argued that the civil war was decisive in terms of the leadership in the Maronite community. Before the establishment of Lebanon under Maronite domination and even until the 1970s, the church did not only involve in politics very actively but the patriarch played a leading role for his

community because they regarded themselves as the *father* of their communities (Henley 2008, p.367). However, civil war years with their unique conditions changed this traditional leadership role gradually because Maronite militia leaders began to gain central importance, particularly the Phalange Party.

In addition to the rise of militia-political leaders, the Maronite Patriarch Khoreish who was elected just before the civil war in 1975 was not in line with his predecessors personally and he tried to portray more modest stance in the public (Henley 2008, p.353). However, historically tied to the political developments in Lebanon, the Maronite Church continued to play an important role during the civil war independent from the Patriarch Khoreish. Henley argues that the role of Patriarch Khoreish during the civil war was far from being decisive to lead his community especially in times of desperate necessity (Henley 2008, p.357). However this position did not constitute an obstacle for Maronite monks to participate actively along with Maronite militias. Since monks had a very large network of churches in both cities and the rural areas, it is argued that they provided the militia forces theological justification and moral support in addition to the logistic assistant and men power (Henley 2008, p.361; Collelo 2003, p.191).[83] However, the status of Patriarch was reinforced again with the election of Nasrallah Sfeir as Patriarch in 1986 when Patriarch Khoreish was forced to resign from his office. Although Patriarch Sfeir was a compromise candidate between different groups in the Maronite community (Henley 2008, p.365), he actively involved in politics of Lebanon as one of the leading figure not only in the Maronite community but also in Lebanese context in late 1980s especially in the issues of presidential elections, General Michel Aoun's war and the discussions on the Taif Accord within his community, which will be covered in the following sections.

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[83] Indeed some scholars like Walid Khalidi interprets the different stances of Patriarch on the one side and the monks supporting Maronite militias with all means on the other as "a subtly prudential division of labor" (Khalidi 1979, p.72). In doing so, in other words, the Maronite church could prevent itself from being on the side of Phalangists militias publically while giving tacit permission to the involvement of lower religious orders in the war effort.

4.1.4. Sectarian Leaders as Foreign Policy Actors during the Civil War

The term of Amin Gemayel's presidency ended without an elected successor in September 1988 and he named the Chief of Staff General Michel Aoun as prime minister, which was largely opposed by Muslims. The acting prime minister Selim Hoss declared himself as the legitimate one because General Aoun was a Maronite Christian and the prime minister must have been Sunni (Traboulsi 2007, p.240). Therefore Lebanon entered to the last years of the civil war without a president but with two prime ministers; one was ruling the Christian areas in the East Beirut and Mount Lebanon and the other exercise power on the rest of the country. In March 1989, General Aoun and the Lebanese army launched a "Liberation War" against Syrian forces to drive them out of Lebanon. These two years until the implementation of the Taif Accord witnessed very bloody intra-sectarian clashes, mainly between the Amal and Hezbollah in Shia community and between Samir Geagea's forces and Aoun's army in Christian community (Harris 2006, p.240). Both the domestic reaction to the devastation of intra-confessional war and the changes of regional and international politics in the late 1980s paved the way for a settlement.

Under the above mentioned conditions, sixty two Lebanese deputies who had been elected in 1972 gathered in Taif in Saudi Arabia for reconciliation in Lebanon on the basis of a document which had been prepared by the Tripartite High Commission (Algeria, Morocco and Saudi Arabia). Deputies reached an agreement known as the Document of National Understanding or more popularly Taif Accord on 22 October 1989. After the official declaration, Aoun issued a decree dissolving the parliament and declaring the agreement null and void. It took almost a year to oust General Michel Aoun from Lebanon with an alliance of Samir Geagea and Syria and legally amend the constitution for the finalization of reforms and to bring peace.[84]

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[84] In the absence of president as the chief Maronite leadership post in Lebanon, Patriarch Sfeir took up the role of his predecessors and actively involved into politics. He first lobbied to restore

One of the most distinguished characteristics of the Lebanese civil war is its duration because it was much longer than other civil wars since the Second World War. There are different approaches to explain the reasons of duration. These studies mainly focused on economic reasons, external intervention and confessional society. Richani, for instance, argues that war economy created by leaders of warring parties turned out to be the main reason of prolonging the Lebanese civil war because militias could find various means to increase their financial positions (Richani 2001). Second approach to explain this prolonged civil war focuses on the role of external interventions. These studies emphasized the role of Syria and Israel in the civil war through financing or arming militias in addition to their direct involvement with their own troops (Al Badawi & Sambanis 2000; Corm 1994). The last group, which this thesis is also in line with, takes the attention to another aspect of Lebanon, although it recognized the importance of the role of war economies and external interventions. Samir Makdisi and Richard Sadaka argues that economic greed and external interventions played substantial roles in other civil wars, but what made distinguished the Lebanese civil war is the existence of non-monotonic relationships and religious fractionalization. These groups were historically constructed on the basis of sectarian identities so even the policies of the government or any other governmental organization were interpreted from sectarian lenses. Therefore it is argued that institutionalized and socially recognized sectarian divisions within Lebanese society explains the prolonged the conflicts along with foreign penetration (Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, pp.34–35). In addition to this, the civil war has also further deepened the divisions and reconstructed new collective memories and perceptions about the self and the other. As Traboulsi argues, when the militias established their authority in their territories, they first cleansed their lands through expelling or killing others. Therefore the culture of sectarian identity reached its climax and eradicated all

the presidency with an acceptable candidate however after the failure of these efforts, Sfeir worked with the Christian deputies and supported the agreement in Taif conference (Henley 2008, pp.365–366). It is also argued that he played crucially important role in Samir Geagea's decision to oppose Aoun's war against Syria and to side with Taif Accord (Interview with Salibi 2016; Harris 2006, p.253; Khazen 2001, p.45).

memories of coexistence and common interests among Lebanese (Traboulsi 2007, p.233). Therefore this thesis prioritizes the role of historically constructed and institutionally established sectarian identity to explain the civil war because it is also considered as the root cause of high level foreign penetration.

Reading the civil war from a foreign policy perspective demonstrates that one of the reasons of the civil war was the existence of various foreign policy orientations in the absence of a national identity. Contrary to the identity problem, the conduct of foreign policy in early independence period was reserved for one sect through the office of presidency (Salloukh 2008, p.286). Thanks to the constitutional provisions, the president was the single power in making foreign policy decisions. In this setting, any foreign policy decision could be subject to debate, if the president could not formulate a natural stance, which was indeed the case most of the time. In the early independence period Lebanese foreign policy orientation especially in regional affairs caused major conflicts between Muslims and Christians. The former groups predominantly Sunnis were calling for a pro-Palestinian foreign policy. The latter, particularly Maronite leaders, sided with a neutral role in Arab-Israeli conflicts and the prevention of Palestinian armed groups from using Lebanese lands to attack against Israel (Wilkins 2013, p.29). Therefore the issue of identity of Lebanon and where it should stand in regional and international crisis became a point of discussion among different sectarian groups.

During the prolonged civil war, Lebanese state, including the army, shattered into a number of sectarian pieces, in which they were exercising quasi-state authority in their own territories (Hitti 1989, p.5) therefore making or implementing any foreign policy decision in the name of whole Lebanon became impossible (Salloukh 2008). Therefore, having lost virtually all of its independence and authority, official Lebanese foreign policy, as Salem argues, echoed the interests of Damascus (Salem 1994, p.75). In terms of sub-state sectarian groups' foreign relations, since none of them was capable of unifying the country either by consent or coerce, they chose to pursue their own interests by establishing close

links and alliances with their preferred partners such as Israel, Syria, Iran, Libya and Iraq at regional level and the Soviet Union and the US at the international level (Salamé 1988, p.349; Salloukh 2008, p.296; Khanafer 2013, p.74). In this manner, as covered above, these sectarian groups and their armed militias did not only receive financial, military and political support but also collaborated with invading powers since they do not identify their own interests with the defense of Lebanon's independence. On the nature of alliances, civil war years demonstrated once again that sectarian identity is significant in building and maintaining cooperation with foreign partners as in the case of the alliances between the Maronites and the western countries; and the rise of Shia organizations and Iran especially after 1979. However, it is also observed that when the existence of a certain community was threatened by any other domestic or foreign power, leaders of these sectarian groups could enter into a temporary cooperation with all other groups at one point or another based on the principles of Machiavellian politics in order to protect interest of the community (Hitti 1989, pp.7–8). Civil War also demonstrated how sectarian leaders' search for power thorough foreign alliances paved the way for various channels of foreign penetration. As Roberson states, after 1970s Lebanon became like a black hole or a vacuum into which many outside influence and interventions were drawn (Roberson 1998, p.5). Due to this heavy foreign penetration and the importance of foreign powers, sub-state domestic actors always consider the regional and international settings while formulating their policy choices in both domestic and foreign issues (Hitti 1989, p.8). Lastly, as pointed out by Hitti, the nature of alliance with Israel deserves particular attention because "local friends of Israel" had always tried to distance themselves from Israel publically because an open association produced considerable negative repercussions, which would retard the continuation of that alliance due to the possible Arab reaction. In other words, the taboo of an open alliance limited Israeli capabilities in Lebanon, thus Israel generally preferred to rely on its own power to maintain its influence in Lebanon through its troops or its direct proxy the SLA (Hitti 1989, p.7).

4.2. TAIF ACCORD: REDEFINING LEBANESE IDENTITY

As mentioned above, Lebanese deputies elected in 1972 gathered in Taif in Saudi Arabia and agreed on the Document of National Understanding, Taif Accord, under the auspices of the regional powers and with a strong US support. In addition, Elias Hrawi[85] was elected as the President. Meanwhile, Lebanese Army under the command of Emile Lahoud having the full support of Samir Geagea's forces and the Syrian Army launched an attack on Aoun and forced him to seek exile in France in response to his decision not to recognize the Taif Accord (Ellis 2002, p.37; Zahar 2005; Harris 2006, p.240; Traboulsi 2007, pp.242–244; Wilkins 2013). It is important to note that the external pressure was the main driving force in ending the civil war to reach reconciliation. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in July 1990 led a formation of regional and international consensus to settle the crisis in Lebanon and to enforce the implementation of Taif Accord before any international intervention to the Gulf Crisis. On the other hand, Michel Aoun lost his last external supporter since Saddam Hussein was busy with Kuwaiti invasion. At this point, having considered the international transformations of late 1980s, Hafez Assad adjusted Syria's foreign policy position very skillfully and joined the US campaign against Iraq in exchange of a US approval for implementing the Taif Accord on its own terms. In other words, Syria benefited from this conjuncture and joined the US-led coalition against Iraq in order to become the leading force in the implementation of the Taif Accord through direct military action with a tacit Arab and US approval, so that Syria could extend its control over Lebanon (Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.36; Harris 2006, pp.237–241; Altunışık 2007, p.6; MacQueen 2009, p.47; Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.25). Considering the subject matter of this thesis, Taif Accord is substantially important in four aspects. First, it redefines the Lebanese identity, second it readjusts the confessional

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[85] Indeed an American/Saudi candidate Rene Muawad was first elected as the President of the Republic, yet ten days after his election, he was assassinated by a car bomb attack (Harris 2006, p.240).

system. The last two points are important in terms of foreign policy orientation of Lebanon. In this regard, the third chapter of the Accord deals with the Israeli invasion of the southern Lebanon while the fourth one defines the Syrian-Lebanese relations.

4.2.1. Redefining the Identity of Lebanon

In terms of identity, the Document states that "Lebanon is a sovereign, free, and independent country and a final homeland for all its citizens. Lebanon is Arab in belonging and identity" (Taif Agreement 1989 Part I, Art. A and B.). In this regard, the Taif Accord made the National Pact written in terms of identity of Lebanon without solving the problem.[86] The wording of the agreement is the continuation of the compromise between those in favor of linking Lebanon to the Arab world and those emphasizing its isolation from its region. In other words, since the Taif Accord did not clarify this identity problem while defining it as free and sovereign but Arab in belonging, the identity debate continued to be divisive in forthcoming years. In the absence of a guiding line, to sum up, Muslims continued to prefer to emphasize the part "Arab in belonging and identity," while Christians placed the particularity of Lebanese identity as a core value in their foreign policy orientations as in the pre-civil war period (Maila 1992, pp.4–6; MacQueen 2009, p.65).

4.2.2. Remaking the Confessional System and Foreign Policy

The political settlement of the Taif Accord based on the confessional system with a modified formula although this does not mean that it did not introduce important changes in the system. The foremost change in the executive power is the

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[86] On this issue, Salem states that Taif Accord transformed Lebanese identity from a more neutral position to the formulation of "Arab in belonging and identity". By doing so, Salem argues, Taif portrayed a pro-Arab identity for Lebanon (Salem 1994, p.76). However, such an explanation puts aside the previous article in the Taif, which defines Lebanon as sovereign, free and independent country. Although Lebanon had presented a foreign policy stance towards pro-Arab affiliation after Taif Accord, this thesis argues that it is not because of Taif Accord's formulation, rather because of the Syrian presence in the country and a tacit international acceptence for this penetration.

weakening of the president vis-à-vis Sunni prime minister. In other words, both the prime minister and the speaker of the parliament[87] have been strengthen and the political power was distributed equally to the highest three posts in Lebanon. The absolute and unilateral privileges of the Maronite President were curtailed and given to the speaker of the parliament, the prime minister, and the council of minister. In terms of legislative power, the parliament is divided into two between Christians and Muslims, and the speaker's term was extended to four years (Part II Taif Agreement 1989). In this regard, to conclude, it is considered more equitable formula for power sharing both in the executive and legislative (Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.35; MacQueen 2009, p.60; Rabil 2011, pp.63–65; Najem 2012, p.50)

Despite important changes, the essence of political system remained same and the executive power is mostly vested in the council of ministers which is constructed as a grand coalition of sectarian communities proportionally. The Taif Accord proposes that decisions would be taken in consensus. If it cannot be reached then the majority vote is considered enough with the exception of important issues, which require a two-third vote (Constitution 1997, Art. 65).[88] The principle of collegial political governance requires a continuous consensus among the major religious communities (Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.38; Salloukh 2010a, pp.136–

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[87] The political status of Shias was increased in two terms. The first was the increased representation in the parliament, which put them on an equal status with Sunnis and commensurate with the demograph of the community. The second was the enhancement of the role of the speaker of the parliament consideably. However, these consessions did not satisfy neither Amal nor Hezbollah because they demanded the end of consociational system. However having considered the balance of power in regional context and the international support that Syria had, both Hezbollah and Amal readjusted their positions and did not challenge Taif Accord. In this manner, Hezbollah's gradual acceptance of Syrian hegemony reflected pragmatic calculations of the party (Taif Agreement 1989; Mohamad 2011, p.19; Hazran 2009, p.2; Harris 2006, p.263 and 278; Mikaelian 2015, p.160).

[88] The Article 65 defines the following issues as basic which requires two-third majority: "The amendment of the constitution, the declaration of a state of emergency and its termination, war and peace, general mobilization, international, long-term comprehensive development plans, the appointment of employees of grade one and its equivalent, the reconsideration of the administrative divisions, the dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies, electoral laws, nationality laws, personal status laws, and the dismissal of Ministers" (Constitution 1997, Art. 65).

137; MacQueen 2009, pp.40–41). However, the search for a cross-sectarian wide consensus to ensure a voice for various social elements would become practically impossible in the following years especially within the absence of a powerful external actor. In this regard, although Hafez Assad's supreme control over Lebanon postponed the emergence of a crisis, reaching consensus among all actors started to become problematic starting with the early 2000s.

Taif Accord is also very important in terms of foreign policy issues because it empowered the prime minister and the council of ministers vis-à-vis the president in foreign policy issues. Article 52 of the constitution after the amendments gives a conditional power to the president in negotiating and ratifying international treaties and agreements that these decisions should be with the approval of the prime minister and the cabinet (Constitution 1997, Art. 52). Salloukh argues that shifting the policy-making power in foreign policy issues from the presidency to the council of ministers can be considered as a major concession by the Maronite community (Salloukh 2008, p.298).[89] Other than administrative and executive changes in the field of foreign policy, Taif Accord is also decisive in Lebanon's relations with its neighbors, Israel and Syria, which will be covered in the following.

4.2.3. Liberating Lebanon from Israeli Occupation

The third chapter of Taif Accord is mainly about Israeli occupation in Lebanon. Although it is a very brief paragraph, it calls both for "liberating Lebanon from Israeli occupation" within the context of UN Resolutions 425, 508 and 509 and for the reinstatement of the border with the support of UNIFIL (Taif Agreement 1989 Part III). From this perspective, Taif Accord does not have any reference to

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[89] The Taif Accord created controversial responses in Christian community. Those who rejected argued that this document was the end of Maronite prerogatives, while pro-Taif Christian groups led by Patriarch Sfeir argued that Taif was the denouncement of attempts to abolish Maronite privileges since Christians still hold the 50 % of the political offices in addition to the presidency (Rabil 2011, p.62). On this discussion, Harris rightly states that the equalization of Christian-Muslim representation was indeed the best option that Christian elites could expect if one considered the demographic changes since the independence (Harris 2006, p.262).

neither a peace between these two countries nor to the normalization process in bilateral relations. Despite its call, Israel continued to be present in the southern Lebanon until its retreat in May 2000, except Shebaa farms, Ghajar village and Kfarshouba hills, which are considered Lebanese territory from the perspective of Hezbollah and Lebanese government (Ravid 2007).[90]

4.2.4. Lebanese - Syrian Privileged Relations

The issues of Syria's role in Lebanon and the bilateral relations constitute one of the most important parts of the Taif Accord. In this regard, there are mainly two important sections: one is the part related with the establishment of Lebanese sovereignty (Taif Agreement 1989 Part II, Art. D) and the other is the part on bilateral relation (Taif Agreement 1989 Part IV). It is stated that these two parts were first presented to the Syrian approval and they were not subject to debate during Taif negotiations (MacQueen 2009, p.58). Indeed, the imposition of these parts over Lebanese deputies clearly demonstrates the impact of Syrian regime over the outcome of the agreement although it did not directly participated in negotiations. From this perspective, Taif Accord provided necessary legal framework for the *de-facto* direct Syrian penetration into Lebanese affairs since 1976.

On the issue of establishing Lebanese authority over its entire territory, the Document provides Syrian army in Lebanon with a legitimate power to assist Lebanese forces in every aspect. It is a very broad definition of mission without any concrete conditionality or limitation; in addition the withdrawal of Syrian troops would be decided through negotiations between two governments. Therefore this part of the Accord is the legitimization of the presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon and the recognition of a hegemon to maintain the order and to oversee the transition from war to peace (Maila 1992, p.82; Zahar 2005; Harris

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[90] Israeli invasion until 2000 and its current presence in Shebaa farms, Ghajar village and Kfarshouba hills has been Hezbollah's continuous justification for its exemption from disarmament called in the Taif Accord (Harris 2006, p.238).

2006, p.262; MacQueen 2009, p.59; Rabil 2011, p.61; Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.16). The fourth section, on the other hand, deals with the bilateral relations, which reemphasizes Lebanon's Arab identity and its fraternal relations with Arab countries. However, it further reminds that there are very special ties between Lebanon and Syria, which constitutes the base of privileged relations. In this line, Maila argues that the Document became the main reference to conclude bilateral agreements in all domains including foreign policy, which extended Syrian influence greatly (Maila 1992, pp.95–96). In terms of security interests, this section ensures that Lebanese government must not allow its territory to become a passageway or base for any power threatening Syria while Syrian government is equipped with the right to prevent any action which threatens the security, independence and sovereignty of Lebanon. In a more clear way, while Lebanon has been obliged with the traditional principle of non-intervention in international relations, Syrian commitment is just the opposite of this principle because it allowed Syria to intervene in the affairs of Lebanon (Taif Agreement 1989 Part IV; Maila 1992, pp.96–99; MacQueen 2009, p.61).

4.3. POST-TAIF PERIOD UNDER SYRIAN AUSPICES

Taif Accord modified existing consociational democracy with the support of regional and international powers, but still left a controversial legacy of national identity. Nedelcu argues that sectarian identities became even more strong after 1990 since Taif Accord is a regionally and internationally recognized written agreement contrary to the National Pact (Nedelcu 2013, pp.6–7). In addition to internal debate over the national identity, Taif could not bring an end to both Israeli and Syrian presence in the country, and therefore Lebanon has continued to become the battlefield of regional rivalries.

4.3.1. Lebanese Affairs under Syrian Hegemony in 1990s

Having granted a special relation in Taif Accord, Lebanese – Syrian relations were enhanced by series of treaties among two are particularly important in terms of foreign policy issues (Malik 2000; Ellis 2002, p.39; Altunışık 2007; Salloukh 2010b, p.208). First, the Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination was signed on 22 May 1991, which paved the legitimate way for Syrian intrusion in Lebanon's affairs through coordination mechanisms in foreign affairs, defense and security, and economic and social policy. Harris argues that the initial intention of Syrian regime was not to be contend with the phrase "coordination" in this treaty, rather they demanded "integration in all domains", however it could not be possible due to US and other regional countries' opposition (Harris 2006, p.279; Hijazi 1991). In addition, towards the end of the same year, Defense and Security Pact was signed, which allowed 'the highest level of military coordination'.[91]

In the meantime, Syrian regime started to reshape the Lebanese political figures in its favor. Elections in 1992 were particularly important in this manner because the electoral law and districts were prepared for this aim (Khazen 1998). For instance,

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[91] For the full text of the former and the latter, please see United Nations Treaty Series (Treaty of Brotherhood 1992) and (The Defense and Security Agreement 1991). For the realization of the highest possible level of coordination, the former agrement establish a joint "Higher Council" chaired by heads of states and having mandatory and enfocable authorithy (Najem 2003, p.213). It is also reported that Security Chief of the Syrian troops in Lebanon Ghazi Kenan made a revealing declaration about Syrian perception in 1991 by stating that "*You Lebanese, you are shrewd, creative and successful merchants. Soon, you are going to have 12 million neighbours coming toward you. Create light industries. Engage in trade and commerce. Indulge in light media, which does not affect security. Shine all over the world by your inventiveness, and leave politics to us. Each has his domain in Lebanon: yours is trade; ours, politics and security*" (Traboulsi 2007, pp.245–246).

The Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination states that "Lebanon shall not become a transit way or a base for any power, state, or organization which seeks to undermine Syria's security, while Syria, keen to preserve Lebanon's security, unity, and independence, shall not allow any action that would constitute a threat to Lebanon's security." Another article also notes that "Syria's security requires that Lebanon should not be a source of threat to Syria's security and vice versa under any circumstances" (Treaty of Brotherhood 1992). These commitments are considered particularly important, becuase they will be point of discussion within the context of relations with Israel and even during Syrian civil war, as will be discussed in the following chapters.

Maronite leaders were targeted and a sense of insecurity was created among Christians before the elections and therefore the elections were boycotted by the majority of the Maronites (Khazen 2001, p.45; Salloukh 2008, p.296). However, it was also welcomed by most of Lebanese as a significant step on the way for stabilization after the prolonged civil war. The election results from Maronite perspective, Hudson argues, were depressing because most of the traditional and prominent Christians leaders could not enter to the parliament. In line with these arguments, supporters of General Aoun had been detained and the other main Maronite leaders were jailed in 1994. Mohammed Noureddin, for instance, stated that Hafez Assad created his own Maronite leaders while marginalizing the traditional ones like the Patriarchate, General Michel Aoun and Samir Geagea (Interview with Noureddin 2016).[92] The election results were also important from another perspective that for the first time in Lebanese history Hezbollah won considerable seats in the parliament, making it the largest single bloc (Hudson 1999, pp.28–29; Norton 1999, p.43). In contrast to Geagea's imprisonment, other leaders were allowed to continue their political activities under Syrian rule such as Nabeh Barri's Amal Movement, Druze chieftains Arslan and Jumblatt families, Sunni Karame and Miqati families in Tripoli, and Rafiq Hariri in Beirut. In this respect, Hezbollah's position is particularly important because it was able to develop very good relations with both Damascus and Tehran. Iran persuaded Syrian regime to *advise* the Lebanese government to defer Hezbollah's disarmament in the southern Lebanon due to the Israeli invasion (Ehteshami & Hinnebusch 1997, p.137; Salloukh 2008, p.296; Mikaelian 2015, p.161).Although Amal was supported by Syria and Hezbollah by Iran, Hezbollah started to attach itself with the political establishment under Syrian tutelage after Taif Accord and refrained from being in opposition to the Damascus regime, so it turned out to be instrumentally valuable for Syria in its relations with Israel (Ehteshami & Hinnebusch 1997, pp.137–138; Norton 1999, p.52). Therefore, Hezbollah

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[92] Dr. Mohammed Noureddin is Professor at the Deparment of History at the Lebanese University and Director of the Center for Strategic Studies in Beirut.

remained as the winner in the post-Taif period because it could preserve its arsenal in contrast to other militia groups.

One defining characteristic of the post-Taif period until 2005 was the Syrian domination of Lebanon and especially during 1990s this domination was with the consent of major regional and international powers (Salem 1994, p.77; Salloukh 2008, p.302; Najem 2003, p.212). In the early 1990s, Syria and Lebanese government signed a series of treaties which tied Lebanese affairs in line with Syrian interests in addition to the adaptation of problematic election laws and other regulations (Khazen 2001, p.44; Malik 2000, p.25). An important scholar on Lebanon and a leading politician Farid Khazen states that the political decision making in foreign policy affairs of Lebanon remains very much in Syrian hands that it was even very difficult to talk about an independent Lebanese foreign policy in the post-Taif period (Interview with Khazen 2016).[93] Therefore, the Lebanese foreign policy was mainly formulated to achieve Syria's domestic and regional objectives (Najem 2003, pp.218–219; Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.15).

To conclude, the extensive Syrian control over foreign and domestic affairs of Lebanon through manipulation of sectarian and political divisions in 1990s brought the question whether Lebanon was an independent state. The argument here is considered quite reasonable because it was really difficult to talk about an independent state mechanism of Lebanon, dominated by an authoritarian neighbor that was sanctioned by the global superpower (Harris 2006, p.239). Thus the historic principle of neutrality had been replaced with the principle of, in Salem's word, "unambiguous alignment with Syria" (Salem 1994, p.76). However from the perspective of this thesis, 1990s are regarded as considerably important because even under the complete Syrian hegemony through its military, intelligence and political apparatus, leaders of major sectarian groups were able to establish significant influence through their alliances with external powers

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[93] Having coming from a prominent noble Maronite family, Farid Khazen is an important politician in the Free Patriotic Movement and professor of political science at American University of Beirut.

including Syria. Therefore, as will be covered in the following sections, despite Syrian tutelage over Lebanese foreign policy, one needs to note that the internal forces which have shaped Lebanese foreign policy were present in this period. In this context, although each and every Lebanese sectarian actor took the possible Syrian response into consideration and avoid any direct action that could provoke Syrian reaction, Shia groups led by Hezbollah continued their relations with Iran, Rafiq Hariri engaged with Saudi Arabia, and certain traditional Maronite leaders including the Church allied with the West (Najem 2003, p.209; Khazen 2003, p.613; Salloukh 2008, p.296; Najem 2012, pp.104–116).

4.3.2. Rafiq Hariri's Decisive Rise in Lebanese Politics

When Rafiq Hariri entered into Lebanese politics actively as *"the real father of Taif Agreement"* (Interview with Chalaq 2016; Abou Zeid 2015), he had already established a very large public support among Lebanese, but particularly in Sunni community. Having Saudi royal family's trust and a colossal fortune from construction and public works sectors in Saudi Arabia, he had started to provide a large array of charitable activities from education to healthcare since the late 1970s. At the middle of civil war where state had collapsed, these charities created a very popular and strong social support for Hariri (Chalaq 2006; International Crisis Group 2010, p.2; Blanford 2006, pp.20–21; Interview with Chalaq 2016). As a result of this domestic popularity, Hariri's foremost achievement was to consolidate his leadership in Sunni community, which has suffered from lack of unity and a Sunni leader for several decades.[94] In the meantime, Hariri developed strong connections with Syria, France, and the US in addition to his close ties with Saudi royal family due to his personal ability as

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[94] The lack of unity in Lebanese Sunni community stems from two reasons according to several scholars, with whom interviews were conducted during the field study. The first one is their urban life style contrary to the Maronites and the Druze. Since the Ottoman times, Sunnis have been mostly populated in big cities along with the coastal line and had good relations with state authorities. Second, Sunni population has been too big and spread into cities of Saida, Beirut and Tripoli to be under one leader (Interviews with Rabah 2016b; Khashan 2016; Salloukh 2016). Therefore, Sunni community has been geographically and politically fragmented between prominent families of the North and Beirut.

gifted diplomat, which provided a large external support (Interview with Chalaq 2016; International Crisis Group 2010, p.2).

Despite Hariri's cautious stance towards Syria in addition to his domestic and international power, Syrian regime considered him as Saudi project as a response to the rising power of Shia political factions in Lebanon and therefore it tried to minimize him in Lebanese politics. However when the government of Omar Karame failed to bring neither economic stability nor prosperity to the country, Assad appointed Rafiq Hariri in order to bring foreign aid and loans to stabilize the Taif establishment in 1992 (Harris 2006, pp.280–281; Blanford 2006, p.66). As a gifted businessman, Hariri's initial concerns were economic reforms and the reconstruction of Lebanon[95] and he did not actively address political issues due to Syrian tutelage and internal divisions, rather he preferred to deal with economic issues since Lebanese and Syrian economic interests were entwined (Blanford 2006, p.viii; Khanafer 2013, p.44). Thanks to the rapid recovery of Lebanese economy, Syria benefited from the influx of Syrian workers into Lebanon and its remittance to Syrian economy and therefore it granted a degree of independence for Hariri in foreign policy making especially in economic issues (Najem 2003, p.216; Najem 2012, pp.83–84).[96] In this manner, he started large economic investment programs with the Gulf States, and particularly with Saudi Arabia and he also enhanced Lebanese relations with western countries led by France and the US in order to receive foreign aid. In the meantime, he also enhanced his political stance and 1996 elections were decisive in this manner because he held a bloc of 30-40 deputies in addition to other parties' support (Hudson 1999, p.30). Hariri's western oriented choices in economic relations and his gradual rise in domestic

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[95] Due to his ambitious construction projects in Lebanon, Norton names Hariri as the CEO of Lebanon (Norton 1999, pp.41–42).

[96] It is also important to note that despite his cooperation, the regime in Damascus did never trust in Rafiq Hariri fully. William Harris states that Hariri had better relations with prominent Sunnis in Syrian regime namely Vice President Abdulhalim Khaddam and Chief of Staff Army Corps General Hikmat Shihabi, not with Hafez Assad or other security officials which were mostly Nusayri (Harris 2006, p.284; Salloukh 2008, p.298; Blanford 2006, p.31).

politics were not welcomed by Syria because the strengthening of relations with Saudi Arabia and the west were considered as means to counter Syrian influence in Lebanon. At this point, one needs to note that Hariri could be considered as a remarkable Sunni leader who was able to shift the Sunni position from the traditional anti-western camp towards a more neutral stance; and to re-orient the focus of western powers from Christian elite to Sunni leaders. However this shift should not be understood as change of Sunni position from pro-Syria towards anti-Syria (Najem 2012, p.2012; Interviews with Rabah 2016b; Salloukh 2016; Salibi 2016). Therefore, it is quiet defendable to argue that Rafiq Hariri westernized Sunni community's foreign policy orientation in 1990s, which has been historically anti-western, and they started to develop strong relations with the west.

To conclude, Rafiq Hariri emerged as a very strong political figure not only in Lebanese context but also at regional level due to his success in the recovery of Lebanese economy and his foreign alliances. However, without doubt, Hariri could not continue either his political or economic activities in Lebanon without Syrian blessing (Interview with Chalaq 2016; Blanford 2006, p.33), therefore his position towards Syria especially in 1990s cannot be portrayed as a confrontation, rather he tried to enlarge an area of maneuver for both himself and Lebanese government to act more independently and to develop the relations with western world.

4.3.3. Consistent Opposition of the Church against Syrian Hegemony

The Maronite Church led by Patriarch Sfeir was in favor of the implementation of the Taif Accord because of mainly two aims. The first one is the necessity to end the civil war, which specifically damaged the Maronite neighborhoods especially during the intra-Maronite clashes. As mentioned above, the late years of the civil war witnessed severe clashes within sectarian communities. These were mainly in the Maronite and Shia communities. The intra-sectarian clashes within Christians were mainly between General Aoun's forces and Samir Geagea's militias, which

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caused almost the biggest damage in Christian areas during the whole civil war. It is therefore Patriarch Sfeir's search for an immediate settlement along with Taif Accord can be understandable although the new political establishment was not favorable within Maronite community. The second reason, according to Harris, was that Patriarch Sfeir knew that Taif Accord was the best option that Christians could expect due to both the changing balance of power in Lebanon and the demographic changes, although it was not the preferred one (Harris 2006, p.262).

Although Patriarch Sfeir supported the implementation of the Taif Accord along with Samir Geagea, it did not take so much time to change their positions for two significant reasons. First, Taif Accord was not fully realized according to its letter and spirit. This fact was acknowledged by one of the key architects of the Accord and Former Speaker Hussain Husseini that there was little resemblance between the original text of Taif and the reality of Lebanese politics in the early 1990s (Khazen 2001, p.44). Farid Khazen, who was known with his closeness to Patriarch Sfeir, told to the author that Sfeir did not hesitate to raise his voice against Syrian tutelage when the Taif was ignored (Interview with Khazen 2016). [97] To be more clear, despite the fact that Taif Accord granted some privileged rights to Damascus regime during the establishment of Lebanese authority after the civil war, the main aim of the spirit of Taif was to establish a sovereign and capable state authority in Lebanon. It is therefore Taif Accord envisaged the retreat of Syrian troops to Beqaa gradually after two years since the election of the president. However as discussed above, Syria used its privileged position to establish an absolute Syrian control over Lebanese affairs, which was not welcomed by Maronite community. Albert Mansour, former Defense Minister in the first cabinet after the Taif, described the actions of Syria through its proxies as "coup against Taif" (Khazen 2001, p.44).

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[97] During the several interviews in Lebanon, it was noticed that most of the Christians recall the period under Syrian domination as 'Christian Frustration' (*Al Ihbaat Al Masihi*), a term which is still widely used on newspapers while referring the current situation of Christians in Lebanon.

Second, the Church was also concerned about Syrian project of marginalizing and alienating Maronite elites. In the absence of General Aoun and Samir Geagea, one exiled, the other jailed; Syria started to create a new generation of Maronite leaders, who were cooperating with the Syrian rule (Salloukh 2010b, p.219). In this manner, Maronite political elites were divided into two camps: Farangieh family, presidents Elias Hrawi and Emile Lahoud on the one hand; Michel Aoun, Amin Gemayel, Dori Chamoun and Carlos Eddé on the other hand (Salloukh 2008). At the heart of this division Patriarch Sfeir had turned against the absolute Syrian hegemony in Lebanon and later led the oppositionist group. The Maronite opposition to Syrian hegemony would be more remarkable when Patriarch Sfeir escalated the tempo of anti-Syria movements with the establishment of the Qornat Shehwan Gathering in April 2001 under the auspices of the Maronite Church in line with the changes in both regional and international politics, which will be analyzed in the last section of this chapter.

4.3.4. The Druze Position towards Syria

Two leading Druze families, Arslan and Jumblatt, tended to consent to Syrian presence and became important Syrian allies during the post-civil war era (Interview with Jumblatt 2016; Salloukh 2008, p.296). Despite the suspects about the assassination of Kamal Jumblatt in 1977, Walid Jumblatt came to a compromise with Damascus regime and served in Syrian controlled governments in exchange for Syrian protection of Druze community against the Maronites during the civil war (Schenker 2006; Interviews with Abu Husayn 2016; Zeidan 2016).[98] Sami Moubayed elaborates on Jumblatt's foreign policy choice and argues that he played the rules of the game in order to enhance his domestic position and increase his legitimacy in Beirut. When Israel occupied Lebanon in 1982, he again sided with Syria, which granted him the position of the sole Druze chief from the perspective of Damascus (Moubayed 2001, p.35). According to

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[98] Indeed Jumblatt himself also acknowledged that despite the assassination of his father, he chose to be ally of Syrian regime to protect Druze community in Lebanon against Maronites who were aligned with Israel (Interview with Jumblatt 2016).

Abu Husayn, Jumblatt's approach is understandable in terms of a sectarian leader's concern to protect his community (Interview with Abu Husayn 2016). Therefore this foreign policy choice can be named as unwilling alliance, which was necessitated by the domestic power struggle of civil war years.

Towards the end of 1990s, however, Jumblatt readjusted his position towards Syria slightly. When President Hrawi's term finished in 1998, Hafez Assad chose the army commander Emile Lahoud as the ideal Maronite to take the presidency from Syrian perspective. Following the declaration of Damascus's will, Parliament gathered to vote for Lahoud's election in September 1998. Although Lahoud's presidency was not the preferred choice of any political parties and confessional leaders in Lebanon except Shia leaders Nasrallah and Barri, Lahoud received every vote cast in the parliamentary session except Walid Jumblatt's bloc of nine deputies. Progressive Socialist Party of Druze leader preferred to stay as absentee during the voting in order to show their unhappiness at Lahoud becoming president (Blanford 2006, pp.69–70). Dr. Nassir Zeidan and Rami Rayess state that Jumblatt opposed Lahoud's presidency for mainly two reasons: First he did not want an army general in the post of presidency in principle, because this might have a possibility of dictatorship in Lebanese fragile system. Second, he was not good with Emile Lahoud personally (Interviews with Zeidan 2016; Al Rayess 2016).[99] To conclude by the late 1990s, it is argued that Jumblatt's stance represented the first open show of unhappiness about the Syrian intervention in Lebanon within the Muslim community (Gambill & Nassif 2001; Harris 2006, pp.289–290). However, this should not be elaborated as an explicit criticism of Syria, because his concrete opposition against Syrian presence in Lebanon would start in 2000s when he strategically made peace with the Maronite Church after the historic visit of Patriarch Sfeir to Chouf in August 2001 (Interviews with Abu Husayn 2016; Rabah 2016a).

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[99] Dr. Nassir Zeidan is Professor at the Department of History at the Lebanese University.

4.3.5. The Resistance against Israel: Hezbollah under Auspices of Syria

When the Israeli forces occupied Lebanon for the second time in June 1982, it was more extensive and planned operation to root out armed Palestinians from Lebanon and to maintain a continuous security zone of around 15 km wide along with the border (Prados 2007, pp.15–16; Sharp et al. 2006). After forcing the PLO to leave Lebanon, Israel's main concern was to monitor the southern Lebanon in order to prevent militia groups from attacking Israel during 1990s. In line with this priority, Israel was not very much involved with the politics in Beirut compare to Damascus except the southern region. Norton argues that Israel continuously supported its local allies in their domestic struggle in return for an assist to Israeli presence in southern Lebanon (Norton 1999, p.49). Although Shias had first been contented with Israeli struggle against PLO groups in early 1980s, the continuous invasion radicalized Shia groups and Iranian-backed Hezbollah has become the dominant force resisting against Israeli army and its ally the SLA.

If Syrian domination over Lebanon served its own geopolitical aims in regional affairs in 1990s, particularly related to the issues with Israel, Hezbollah can be considered as one of the main means of this policy. However this relation surely was not just for the interests of Syria, because Hezbollah also benefited to a great extent from this partnership in order to consolidate its power in the post-civil war period. The exemption of Hezbollah from the disarmament process in the name of the liberation of occupied land from Israel was not only a strong bargaining card that Syria used as Wilkins argue (Wilkins 2013, p.34), but also a very strong asset that Hezbollah held to strengthen its domestic leverage compare to other confessional groups in Lebanese domestic politics. Having preserved its arsenal and found a place for maneuver through Syrian blessings, Hezbollah's foreign policy orientation was very clear during 1990s, which can be summarized as being good with Syria and being against Israel. For instance, Syria was described as the source of the stability and Lebanese - Syrian relations were defined as a natural aspect of Lebanon's Arab affiliation in the official program of Hezbollah's

in the parliamentary elections in 1996. This was further enhanced in Hezbollah's program in the elections of 2000 even after Israeli withdrawal. The document states that "*Hezbollah considered the special and destined relations with Syria as an element of force for both Lebanon and Syria in order to confront ... the dangers posed by the Zionist entity.*"[100] Thus, it can be said that Hezbollah continuously defended the *privileged* relations with Syria. No less significant, it should also be emphasized here that Hezbollah also supported the enhancement of Lebanese - Iranian relations during 1990s due to both its ideological and sectarian affiliation to the Wilayat Al Faqih and the material support from Tehran (Rabil 2011, pp.80–81).

Related to the Hezbollah's stance towards Israel, on the other hand, Hezbollah was allowed to take the lead on the military struggle against Israel and enjoyed implicit political support of Lebanese government under Syrian rule (Rabil 2011, p.71). Therefore Hezbollah continued its operations against Israeli troops and the SLA in the occupied area of Lebanon in addition to some occasional attacks against Israeli land. In 1996, Israel launched its third military massive attack in Lebanon, which resulted in bombings of infrastructure of electric power plants and destruction of villages, killing of civilians and the creation of 400.000 internally displaced people (Ellis 2002, p.38). The gravity of human casualties, once again, emphasized the weakness of the Lebanese government and caused US Secretary of State Warren Christopher to involve into the issue through Syrian authorities in Lebanon. A tacit agreement was reached under the auspices of the US, which created a *modus vivendi* between two parties that Israel would refrain from attacking civilian targets in Lebanon while Hezbollah would not attack on Israeli territory. Although this tacit agreement was violated occasionally, scholars elaborate that by agreeing with this terms, Israel indirectly accepted the right of the Lebanese to attack Israeli soldiers in Lebanon in the name of self-defense (Norton 1999, p.50; Harris 2006, p.281). This is a very important event that it

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[100] For the full texts of Hezbollah's Parliamentary Elections Programs in both 1996 and 2000 in English, please see (Alagha 2006, pp.254–265)

demonstrated the decisive power of Hezbollah in foreign policy issues related to the neighboring states even in the mid-1990s.

Due to high number of casualties without any concrete gain on Israeli side, Prime Minister Ehud Barak promised to withdraw from southern Lebanon in his election campaign in 1999 (Wilkins 2013, p.34). Although his initial strategy was to assure Israeli and Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon at the same time as a part of Syrian-Israeli talks, the continued stalemate forced Barak to fulfill his promise unilaterally in May 2000. Following the Israeli retreat, Hezbollah militias moved into the southern security zone areas and captured around 1.500 SLA fighters and turned them over to the Lebanese courts for charges of treason (Blanford 2006, p.73; Prados 2007, p.16). The unconditional withdrawal from southern Lebanon in May 2000 was a truly historic moment and presented by Hezbollah as a clear military victory as a result of its determinant guerilla warfare. Indeed it was really historic because, as Hazran argues, the Israeli retreat in 2000 was the first and only time that Israel withdrew from an occupied Arab land without a peace treaty or security arrangement (Hazran 2009, p.4).

4.4. THE EMERGENCE OF THE CURRENT LEBANESE POLITICS

Israel withdrew from Lebanon in May 2000 and Syrian President Hafez Assad died on 10 June 2000 just days after Israeli retreat and Lebanon entered to the new millennium with a new Syrian administration and without Israeli presence in the south in a new regional context, which will be scrutinized in this part.

4.4.1. The Regional Politics in 2000s

The terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 and the subsequent US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq changed the politics of the Middle East dramatically. Since the domestic and foreign environment of Lebanon are mutually constructive, 9/11 attacks and the subsequent developments had direct repercussions on Lebanese politics and foreign policy orientations of sectarian leaders. Guided by the idea of

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war on terror, having no tolerance to regimes that were perceived as enemy, the neo-conservative administration in Washington invaded both Afghanistan and Iraq. The overthrow of the Baath regime and the total dissolution of the Iraqi state with all of its institutions and society had profound impact on the Middle East's strategic landscape (Alloul 2011, p.6 and 11). Nasr states that the power vacuum in Baghdad was seen as an opportunity by major communities of Iraq to adjust the inequalities in the distribution of power (Nasr 2006b, p.58). The demands for reform by mainly Shias and Kurds and their confrontation with Sunnis turned into a series of severe internal clashes in the absence of a state in Iraq. Indeed the domestic contests for power had also a regional tone, which triggered the struggle for regional power between regional players; Saudi Arabia and Iran. Having been released from its adversary neighbor, Saudi Arabia emerged as the new Arab *moderate*[101] contender with its financial capabilities and western support. On the other hand, the eradication of Iraq and Afghanistan, which previously contained Iran, paved the way for Iranian influence in Iraq particularly and in the wider Middle East. Iran gradually increased its geopolitical weight through Iraq's large Shia population, which frightened Sunni governments and attracted Saudi response (Khanafer 2013, p.50; Alloul 2011, p.11; Zisser 2011, p.13; Potter 2014, p.1).[102] To conclude, although sectarian identities have been well established in this region, one of the lasting legacies of the US-led war on Iraq and the subsequent conflicts is the rise of sectarianism as a point of reference in a more violent manner (Nasr 2007; Jawad 2009).

Another strategic change in 2000s related to the US-led initiatives in the region was specifically about Syrian-Lebanese relations. While Lebanon was previously

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[101] The term *moderate axis* refers Washinsgton's Arab allies as opposed to the *resistance front* coined to describe Iran, Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas.

[102] The overthrow of Saddam Hussein has a symbolic meaning to the region that it ended minority Sunni rule and empowered Iraqi Shias, who had been oppressed very extensively by the regime. Therefore, this change has triggered broader transformations in the post-Saddam Middle East which triggered a Shia revival in cultural and political terms (Nasr 2007; Carlisle 2007, p.157; Luomi 2008, p.7).

left to the control of Damascus in the early 1990s, the new security perception after 9/11 Attacks caused US Administration to redefine its Middle East strategy and its relations with Syria and Lebanon.[103] Within this line, President George W. Bush Administration considered Lebanese territory under Syrian hegemony as a breeding ground for both Shia and Sunni radical groups and declared Bashar Assad as a *persona non grata* for its regional interests and started to pressure Syria in order to compel it to withdraw from Lebanon (Altunışık 2007, pp.9–10; Hirst 2010, p.294; Najem 2012, p.108; Khanafer 2013, p.39). Therefore Lebanon reemerged as an arena for regional competition in order to limit Syrian and Iranian influence in the Middle East. In this struggle, Lebanese domestic actors, who were against the Syrian influence in their country, found a very suitable environment to refresh their foreign relations with western powers in order to counter Syrian hegemony.

4.4.2. The Way toward the Withdrawal of Syria from Lebanon

If the retreat of Israel was a victory on Hezbollah side and a loss on Israeli side, I think, Syria was the other loser from this withdrawal, because its physical presence in Lebanon became a point of discussions as Lebanese increased their voices for a similar move by Syria. Syria had legitimized its continuous domination over Lebanese domestic affairs and foreign policy in the eyes of Lebanese through Israeli presence in the south during 1990s. However in the absence of Israeli troops in the south, these arguments lost their justification bases. Then the critiques towards Syrian presence in Lebanon started to be pronounced more loudly. Even before Israeli, for instance, Al Nahar newspaper published an open letter by Gibran Tueni addressed to the Syrian regime in March 2000 stating that "'*I must tell you quite frankly that many Lebanese feel that*

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[103] Syria started to face with US criticisms since 2001 and in March 2003 US Secretary of State Colin Powell referred for the first time to the *Syrian occupation in Lebanon*. Continuously, the Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act in December 2003 states that Syrian presence in Lebanon as illegal and unacceptable. In addition, several executive orders imposing sanctions on Syria were launched due to '*its support for terrorism*' and its presence in Lebanon from Washington's perspective (Harris 2006, p.296).

Syria's behavior in Lebanon completely contradicts the principles of sovereignty, dignity and independence" (Blanford 2006, p.74). In such a conjuncture, it is also argued that the death of Hafez Assad in June 2000 was also a turning point in the Lebanese - Syrian relations because although the domination of Damascus over Beirut had not depended on only personal leadership of Assad and his son Bashar was not a weak ruler as much as expected, the change of leadership in Damascus resulted in a relative weakening of Syrian regional influence. Therefore it is argued that the perception of relative weakness of traditional patron allowed certain Lebanese actors to challenge Syrian hegemony in Beirut more easily and more loudly (Zisser 2011, p.12). On this issue related to the main subject matter of this thesis, Najem affirms that even in the period from 1990 to 2005 under Syrian tutelage when the existence of Lebanon as a truly independent state was questioned, a careful examination of the interplay of Syrian, Lebanese and sectarian interests is necessary in order to understand Lebanese foreign policy because sectarian leaders continued to pursue their own interests despite their capabilities were highly restricted (Najem 2012, p.102).

On 30 April 2000 the first organized opposition group was formed under the auspices of the Maronite Church; the Qornat Shehwan Gathering, which was composed of politicians and intellectuals affiliated with the Patriarchate (Blanford 2006, p.107; Salloukh 2009, p.139; Salloukh 2015, p.27). The Qornat Shehwan originally called for the redeployment of Syrian troops to the Beqaa. Continuously, the Council of Maronite Bishops chaired by Patriarch Sfeir issued a statement in September 2000, condemning Syrian total hegemony in Lebanon, portraying the situation as intolerable and urging for the relocation of Syrian troops in preparation for a final withdrawal in conformity with the Taif Accord. This declaration is important because it was equating Israeli and Syrian armies as foreign and asked for the full withdrawal of the latter too. Indeed, Patriarch Sfeir had already been a very significant figure in the opposition circles, but with this written declaration, the Maronite Church has been regarded as the symbol of Christian struggle against a Muslim dominated order after Taif Accord from

Lebanese Christians' perspective (Salloukh 2010b, p.220). Then, Walid Jumblatt started to volume up in his calls for the redeployment of Syrian troops (Nisan 2000, p.68; Khazen 2001, pp.44–45; Harris 2006, p.293; Blanford 2006, pp.80–81; Salloukh & Barakat 2015, p.27). Jumblatt explained that the call for redeployment was indeed regarded as a step for the final withdrawal of Syrian army, but in those days the opposition started with the declaration of this limited aspiration (Interview with Jumblatt 2016). Indeed the rapprochement of the Maronites with the Druze was a historic development after centuries of enmities; therefore the anti-Syrian opposition could no longer be ignored by Damascus. Despite the precautions of Syrian and Lebanese security agents, the anti-Syrian unrest spread in 2001 as Christians started demonstrations in the streets (Milton-Edwards & Hinchcliffe 2008, p.70).

Starting with the mid-2001, some Sunni and Shia figures added their criticisms in search for a more balanced relationship with Syria (Blanford 2006, p.81). However, it must be noted that these figures were still lacking the support of both powerful Sunni politicians and the Sunni public in general. As noted before, Syrian regime always had tense relations with Hariri due to his ability to acquire an extraordinary domestic and foreign support, which made him difficult to be manipulated by Syria contrary to traditional feudal Lebanese leaders (International Crisis Group 2010, p.4). In early 2000s, Rafiq Hariri had tried to be in between of anti-Syria groups and those loyalists to Syria because he was considering especially the Christian opposition too hostile to Syria and too sympathetic to western demands about the disarmament of Hezbollah (Interview with Chalaq 2016). Despite his moderate stance, Damascus continued to regard Hariri as a threat who was plotting with France and the US, despite the fact that he was a compromiser who had not directly challenged to Syria and searched for more equitable relations. In this respect, Hariri's search for greater executive power and his continuous clash with especially the security apparatus of

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Damascus in Lebanon annoyed Syrian authorities (Salloukh 2010b, p.213).[104] By the mid-2004 the tension between Syrian regime and Hariri had increased sharply over the issue of extending President Lahoud's tenure by an additional three years (Harris 2006, p.297; Prados 2007, p.5; Malaspina 2008, pp.97–98; Harris 2009a, p.63; Salloukh 2010b, p.216).[105] Patriarch Sfeir also demonstrated his opposition to the possible extension and warned that constitutional amendment would finish what little left of the democracy in Lebanon (Blanford 2006, pp.90–91). Despite the critiques, the Syrian regime could not comprehend the international conjuncture[106] and insisted on the extension of Lahoud's term and Hariri agreed on the constitutional amendment in the cabinet meeting in exchange for the freedom to form a government based on his choice. Then, the extension was approved in the parliamentary meeting on 4 September 2004 under heavy Syrian

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[104] On Hariri's stance towards Syria, his close teammate Alfadel Chalaq stated in the interview that Hariri's good relations with Saudi Arabia did not necessarily mean that he was against Syria. On the contrary, he continued, Hariri had always worked for good relations between Damascus and Beirut even if he had mix feelings about the style of Syrian presence in Lebanon (Interview with Chalaq 2016).

[105] For the extension of Lahoud's tenure, Hariri was summoned to Damascus and many sources claim that Bashar told Hariri: "*There is nothing to discuss, I am Lahoud and Lahoud is me and this extension is to happen or I will break Lebanon on your head than break my word*" (Blanford 2006, p.100; Harris 2009a, p.67; Hirst 2010, p.301).

[106] The extension of Lahoud's term created international outrage, too. UN Security Council Resolution 1559 was approved on 2 September 2004 with the support of American, French and British diplomats. The Resolution did not only "declares its support for a free and fair electoral process in Lebanon's upcoming presidential election … without foreign interference or influence" but also strongly calls for the withdrawal of all remaining foreign forces and the disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias (UNSC Resolution 1559 2004). The wording and the all-inclusive content of the Resolution and its international support was an open message to Syria that it would face punitive sanctions by extending Lahoud's mandate. For different reasons the US and France had a consensus on Syria. The US held Damascus responsible for the ongoing troubles in Iraq while France was fed up with its continuous disrespect for French influence in Beirut.

Syrian regime blamed Hariri for the Resolution 1559 however many of Hariri's political colleagues and aides deny that he formulated the text of the resolution except the fact that he did use his influence with Chirac to strengthen the pressure on Syria to prevent Lahoud's extention. However, considering the parts related for the full withdrawal of Syria and the disarmament of Hezbollah, according to Chalaq, it is mostly probable that these were the will of French and US Administrations becuase these were not the priorities of Hariri. Alfadel Chalaq continues that "his sincere conviction was that Hariri did not play role in writing of the Resolution for two reasons: First he would not work against Syria because of his political beliefs, second he would not dare to do so" (Interview with Chalaq 2016).

pressures and threats against deputies.[107] Hariri resigned in October 2004 when he was not allowed to form a government freely (Harris 2006, p.237 and 299).

Although Bashar was able to keep Lahoud in his office, he would soon realize that only the preservation of a loyal president could not sustain Syrian presence in Lebanon. In December 2004, a cross-sectarian opposition entity, the Bristol Gathering, against Syrian tutelage was formed. It was the official union of major Christian and Druze political leaders regarding their foreign policy attitude towards Syria. Composed of Walid Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party, Samir Geagea's Lebanese Forces, Michel Aoun's supporters, and members of the Qornat Shehwan Gathering; the Bristol Gathering asked for free parliamentary elections in 2005 and for the resignation of Karame's government and called for the first time for a full withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon (Blanford 2006, pp.116–117; Milton-Edwards & Hinchcliffe 2008, p.70). In such a political conjuncture, the assassination of Rafiq Hariri on 14 February 2005 on the eve of May 2005 elections created widespread frustration in the country and led to the formation of a very wide anti-Syria coalition by Christian, Druze and Sunni communities, named as Independence, Intifada or more western term the Cedar Revolution in addition to the strong international condemnation of Syria as Syria and pro-Syrian agents were inevitably blamed for the assassination. The domestic demonstrations were cross-sectarian except a limited participation of Shias and they called for the resignation of the government, termination of Syrian military presence and an international investigation for Hariri's assassination. In conclusion, as domestic and international outrage mounted, Syrian President Bashar Assad was obliged to withdraw Syrian troops from Lebanon and the withdrawal was completed on 26 April 2005 (Malaspina 2008, p.98; Milton-Edwards & Hinchcliffe 2008, p.70; Harris 2009a, p.63; Zisser 2011, p.13; The Daily Star 2015b).

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[107] In the cabinet meeting, only three ministers of Walid Jumblatt's bloc voted against the decision and in the parliamentary session, Rafiq Hariri voted for the motion and again only Jumblatt's bloc voted aganist it as a parliamentary bloc (Blanford 2006, pp.102–106).

4.4.3. Sunnis after Rafiq Hariri: Breaking with Syria

The assassination of Rafiq Hariri and the subsequent political developments were substantially important in terms of the foreign policy orientation of Sunni community. Although Rafiq Hariri had good relations with western leaders and westernized his community's foreign policy orientation, his foreign policy stance cannot be regarded as anti-Syrian, as mentioned above. What he searched for was more balanced relations with Damascus and the release of the pressure of Syrian intelligence-military apparatus on Lebanese politics. Within this line, although he had contacts with oppositionist groups like the Bristol Gathering and the Qornat Shehwan Gathering through intermediaries, he refrained from building alliance with them publically. His assassination, however, created so great anger and grief in Sunni community that it shattered Sunni acquiescence to Syrian rule in Beirut. Just on the evening of 14 February, members of Qornat Shehwan and Walid Jumblatt gathered in Hariri mansion in Koreitem with Hariri's Future Movement and his death has enhanced the opposition very strongly as the Sunni community joined.

Hariri's funeral turned into an anti-Syrian mass demonstration, which would shake Lebanese politics in the following days (Interview with Khazen 2016). The intensity of the Sunnis reaction was so pivotal that it suddenly raked up all bad memories associated with Syria both during and after the civil war. Close aide of Rafiq Hariri Alfadel Chalaq commented on the situation that;

> Sunnis also have bad and painful memories about Syrian presence here, but they chose to ignore them due to their loyalty to pan-Arabism. However, the assassination of Hariri gave them their Hussain[108]. Now Sunnis also have their Hussain, which is not good. Unfortunately the Israeli invasion and

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[108] It is referred here to the narrative of martyrdom of Hussain, son of Ali Ibn Talib and the third Imam of Shias. The narrative lies at the core of Shia identity as the symbolism of an innocent spiritual believer martyred by an unjust power. Although history alone is not sufficient to explain the contemporary politics and the identities in the region, it must be noted that modern-day references to the sectarian narratives of centuries before are significantly symbolic in the collective memories of confessional groups.

Syrian presence became equal in the minds of the most of Sunnis, which is not correct but a fact (Interview with Chalaq 2016).

In conclusion, although the history of Lebanon witnessed competitive and sometimes violent relationships between the Maronites, the Druze and Sunnis; the assassination of Hariri altered the traditional sectarian antagonisms and created a cross-sectarian consensus except Shias, which demanded an immediate withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon for the first time in history. Additionally, certain credible institutions draw the attention to another point that although there were historical tensions between Sunnis and Shias, the assassination of Hariri marked the re-intensification of sectarian polarization within the Muslim community, which has constituted the main division in the current Lebanese society (International Crisis Group 2010, pp.10–13).

4.4.4. The Emergence of New Alliances after the Cedar Revolution

After 15 years of bloody civil war followed by 15 years of Syrian tutelage, the year 2005 was historic moment for Lebanon because for the first time in generations Lebanon regained its independence and realized a parliamentary elections without the direct presence of Syria. The first half of 2005 witnessed large demonstrations anti and pro-Syrian groups in Beirut. Hezbollah and Amal mobilized approximately half a million people on 8 March in order to show their support for the presence of Syria. In response to this, Syria's opponents composed of Saad Hariri – Walid Jumblatt camp and the traditional Christian leaders organized the largest demonstration in Lebanon's history with the participation of around one million supporters on 14 March (The Daily Star 2015b; Harris 2009a, pp.63–65). These demonstrations constituted the main pillars of the current Lebanese politics, namely anti-Syria March 14 Alliance and pro-Syria March 8 Alliance.[109]

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[109] It is here worth mentioning that although Michel Aoun had supported anti-Syria demonstrations, he chose to rally in the elections as a seperate party. Then, Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement joined the March 8 Alliance in 2006 after Hassan Nasrallah agreed on a list of political

The elections of 2005 marked the victory of the March 14 Alliance with 72 seats out of 128 seats in the parliament. The Shia Alliance of Hezbollah and Amal demonstrated its power mainly in the south and gained 33 seats. The Free Patriotic Movement (also known as the Change and Reform Movement) under the leadership of General Michel Aoun gained 21 seats and there were also 2 independent deputies (Prados 2007, pp.11–12; Harris 2009a, pp.66–67).[110] In spite of the victory of Saad Hariri – Walid Jumblatt coalition with the support of certain traditional Christian leaders, electoral pattern led to the formation of a mixed government. The new government of Fouad Siniora was consisting of 15 members from March 14 alliance and 9 members from the opposition except Aoun's group. It is also argued that the Government of July 2005 was important from the perspective of Hezbollah's position. For the first time in Lebanese history, Hezbollah demanded representation in the government (Prados 2007, p.11). Hassan Nasrallah explained their participation in the government through their full responsibility to take care of the resistance at all levels of state institutions. Without doubt, this participation has bolstered the image of the party as a legitimate national player and put it into a stronger position to shape domestic and foreign policies (International Crisis Group 2005, pp.20–21).

In terms of sectarian nature of these two coalitions, it mainly represents the Sunni - Shia division. The main constituent of March 14 was Sunni community while the main parties of March 8 are Shia Hezbollah and Amal.[111] Therefore it is important to note that the main Christian – Muslim division until 2005 ceased to

principles related to the certain issues such as relations with Syria and the disarmanment of Hezbollah.

[110] Despite the cross-sectarian demonstrations and the nationalist rhetoric by all parties during the election campaigns, results of 2005 elections once again demonstrated that sectarian cantonization of the politics is the most persistant characteristic of Lebanon due to both historical traditions and the current electoral law (International Crisis Group 2005, pp.3–4; Salloukh 2009, p.140; Totten 2012, p.17).

[111] The outspoken leader of the anti-Syrian camp Walid Jumblatt, as the great prestidigitator of Lebanese politics, changed his stance in 2009 and joined March 8 Alliance (Hirst 2010, pp.312–314). This political stance has gaved Jumblatt a decisive role in determining whether March 14 or March 8 controls the cabinet after 2005 (Blanchard 2014, p.5).

exist and the Lebanese political system has been reformulated along with the Sunni − Shia division on the issue of their perception towards Syria (Wilkins 2013, p.36). Christian and Druze leaders have opportunity to bandwagon with either side depending on their interests. In terms of foreign policy orientations, the main foreign policy principles of the March 14 Alliance can be listed as opposing Syrian interference and Iranian intervention, disarming Hezbollah, supporting Special Tribunal for Lebanon, which was established to investigate Hariri's assassination. It has also maintained good relations with Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, Turkey, France and the US. On the other hand, Syrian legacy continued even after the withdrawal of Syrian troops through Hezbollah's growing role in Lebanese politics. Therefore, the March 8 Alliance's foreign policy orientation could be regarded as just the opposite of the former as Hezbollah strengthen its relations with Syria and Iran. Hezbollah took the lead in defending the advancement of Lebanese − Syrian relations, for instance, Rabil states that the party expressed its "desire to build the best distinguished brotherly relations with Syria" in its 2009 parliamentary election program (Rabil 2011, p.79).

4.5. CONCLUSION: SECTARIAN LEADERS AS FOREIGN POLICY ACTORS FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Lebanese confessional system has direct repercussions in all areas of Lebanese life from politics to social relations, from domestic balance of power to its relations with the outside world. Therefore, foreign policy in Lebanon is not an exemption and heavily influenced by the existence of socially and legally recognized sectarian identities. As discussed in the second chapter, foreign policy is very much related with both the nature of state and the perceptions of domestic actors about wider regional and international environment. In this respect, the analysis of Lebanese history in order to understand the nexus of sectarian identities and foreign policy orientations/goals reveals that the traditional IR theories fail to explain the foreign policy making in Lebanon, thus there is a need

for a constructivist approach which can recognize the role of sectarian identity in the construction of interests at sub-state level.

To begin with, the analysis of Lebanese history demonstrated that the most permanent source of identity has been sectarian affiliations since the mid-nineteenth century compare to the significant role of patrimonial relations and ideological movements for a limited periods. Traditionally, sectarian identity has done mainly two duties: the first one is the construction of the self and the other in a communal manner in Lebanese society. Through socio-institutional practices, sectarian identities have emerged as the point of reference for communal solidarity in defining inter-communal relations. In time, this sectarian nature of the society was replicated in administration structures, which led to the formation of confessional system, where sectarian identity has become the basic reference for the promotion of sect-based allegiance in the pursuit of political goals and social mobilization. To conclude, as Wilkins notes, sectarian identity in Lebanon has emerged as the driving force behind every political move made, every external alliance formed and every foreign policy decision taken (Wilkins 2013, p.40).

Second, the Lebanese history also demonstrated that it is quite impossible to reach a consensus on foreign policy matters in the absence of a common national identity or aspiration for the future of a country. Therefore, although there is a repetitive emphasis on the necessity of a neutral foreign policy stance for Lebanon, the lack of a common national identity has resulted in the divergent foreign policy orientations and a collection of foreign policies and strategies simultaneously. Since these orientations are mostly conflicting to each other, a kind of neutrality between the west and the Arab world has emerged as the most reasonable policy, at least, for the Lebanese state. However, whatever the official discourse is, this does not mean that sectarian leaders gave up their traditional foreign policy aspirations (Najem 2012, p.101 and 118; Najem 2003, pp.211–212). Therefore, the historical analysis extensively showed that sectarian leaders seek to achieve their foreign policy goals through pressuring Lebanese

government to adapt a policy in accordance with their sectarian perceptions and orientations since state is still the preeminent structure carrying out formal relations with the outside world.

Third, as related with the previous one, in addition to the lack of a national identity, Lebanon also suffered from an inadequate institutionalization process of state building, which has left a legacy of weak state and high level of foreign penetration (Najem 2012, pp.101–102; Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.12; Salem 1994; International Crisis Group 2005, p.i; Interview with Göksel 2015). In this respect, this chapter also demonstrated that the civil war finished what little left of a state structure in Lebanon. The lack of a national identity together with a lack of functioning state allowed sectarian leaders to hold substantial power in constructing their communities' collective memories and to carry out relatively independent foreign policies as foreign policy actors. This chapter revealed that there is a considerable merit in understanding the ambiguous nature of informal networks of sub-state sectarian groups in Lebanon because sectarian leaders may develop two additional patterns of foreign policy behavior especially at times when the state becomes more fragile and their weight in politics rise. In this case, rather than pressuring Lebanese government for the search of their interests, it is observed that sectarian leaders may develop foreign relations as quasi-state actors or they may use their communal power in order to shape the implementation processes of any foreign policy decision through their coreligionists in official bureaucracies.

As a natural consequence of the simultaneous existence of a weak state structure searching for a neutral foreign policy on the one hand and various confessional groups with different foreign policy aspirations, Lebanon has constituted an important challenge to the traditional understanding of foreign policy studies. Contrary to the general tendency in the literature which focuses on the role of regional and international powers on Lebanon and ignores the authentic role of domestic identity groups, there is a significant merit in analyzing the foreign

policy behavioral patterns of Lebanese sectarian leaders in detail, which indeed is the main aim of the following case studies.

CHAPTER 5

2006 ISRAEL – HEZBOLLAH WAR:
LAUNCHED BY A SUB-STATE SECTARIAN ACTOR
AGAINST A STATE

Having covered the theoretical approaches and the historical analysis of Lebanese sectarian actors in relation to their foreign policy orientations, the following two chapters aim to analyze the nature of foreign policies of four major sectarian actors in two main issues after 2005 in Lebanese politics; namely the Israel – Hezbollah War in 2006 and the Syrian civil war started in March 2011 respectively. In this respect, Chapter 5 aims to analyze the degree and the nature of foreign policies of four major sub-state sectarian groups within the framework of Israel-Hezbollah War.[112] As will be covered, sectarian leaders formulated, implemented and framed their own foreign policy positions with their preferred regional and international partners along with their sectarian identities and independent from Lebanese government.

This chapter starts with an elaboration of the regional settings in 2006, which is briefly introduced in the previous chapter. Since Lebanese politics and the regional settings are unavoidably interlinked, changes in the regional context directly affect the power play among Lebanese sectarian leaders. Therefore the first section aims to provide the context for the following sections, where

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[112] The Israel - Hezbollah War in 2006 is variously called like the 2006 War, the 2006 Israeli-Lebanese War, the Sixth Arab-Israeli War, the July War, 33-Day War or the Second Lebanon War in the literature.

perceptions, aims and behaviors of sectarian actors will be elaborated. Then, the relations and foreign policy behavioral patterns of selected actors as well as the official Lebanese foreign policy are going to be elaborated separately in order to come up with certain conclusions about the main argument of the thesis along with a very brief chronology of the main events before, during and after the war. It should be noted at the beginning that the analysis of the war itself should not be considered as a comprehensive source with all details since the main focus is the nature of foreign policies of sectarian actors as units of analysis. Finally, certain conclusions derived from the analysis of the war will be presented about the main question of the thesis.

5.1. THE MIDDLE EAST IN 2006: THE REGIONAL CONTEXT AND THE BILATERAL RELATIONS

5.1.1. The Regional Contest for Power

A discussion on the regional context in 2006 with a specific focus on the major regional and international foreign policy shifts that occurred after the 9/11 Attacks and the subsequent developments is significant because the geopolitics of the Middle East had been transformed during 2000s. These transformations substantially changed the inter-Arab relations and regional alignments in the broader context. The invasion of Iraq and the subsequent developments triggered a regional contest which divided the region into two large poles in the early 2000s, namely Sunni Arab states backed by the US on the one hand, and Iranian-Syrian-Hezbollah axis[113] on the other. After the election of hard-line president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2005, who was determined to pursue nuclear program in Iran, the relations between the US and Iran witnessed a dramatic turn. In addition to his determination on nuclear issue, Iranian officials also changed their attitudes towards the near geography thanks to regime changes in Afghanistan and

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[113] US officials recognizes Hezbollah as simply a proxy of Iran and Syria, and this view has been acknowledged in many official reports (Sharp et al. 2006, p.2).

Iraq. While the fall of the Taliban and Saddam presented a very well opportunity to Iran to expand its influence, the occupation of Iraq and the failure to maintain stability in the country deteriorated the American prestige (Nasr 2007). The establishment of a stable regime in Iraq became a major challenge in the years ahead of the invasion because, as Nasr argues, major Iraqi communities perceived the fall of Saddam as an opportunity to seize the power rather than to form a liberal democracy since they, Nasr continues, view politics as a balance of power among communities, rather than a relation between citizen and the state (Nasr 2006b).

The power struggle in Iraq after the fall of Saddam, manifested itself as a very bloody sectarian war, caused the emergence of certain alliances, where major regional powers like Saudi Arabia and Iran took role. As mentioned Iran found place for maneuver in the Middle East for acting as a regional power and it has strengthen its relations with Syria, Hezbollah, Sunni Hamas and even with the Muslim Brotherhood and placed its anti-Israeli discourse at the center of its regional policies. On the other hand, the concern about the rise of Iran as a Shia power made Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and most of the administrations of the Gulf States and the United States as well as Israel to come to a common stance. The substantial cause for this diverse union was the Iranian possible capability to be a nuclear power in the Middle East, which would change the regional balance of power and threaten Israel's status and trigger a nuclear race in the region (Mossaad, cited in Wilkins 2013, p.54). In this regional conjuncture, most of the other regional states and non-state actors were searching for ally to bandwagon with to enhance their regional positions. Notwithstanding the interests of major Middle Eastern powers and international actors, non-state actors such as Hamas, Hezbollah and other fundamentalist groups used this struggle to alter the regional balance in their own interests, which is later referred as 'the new Middle Eastern Cold War' (Valbjørn & Bank 2007, p.11).

The region-wide division of these two camps was strongly constructed through Sunni-Shia division rhetoric especially after the deepening of the civil war in Iraq,

and therefore Sunni-Shia division has emerged as the important factor to understand the regional politics. As the mirror of the Middle East, these developments had direct repercussions in Lebanese politics and Lebanon had already become a site for this regional struggle by 2004. Within this line, the coalition of Lebanese sectarian leaders reflected regional warring camps; namely while March 8 alliance led by Shia Hezbollah was the direct manifestation of Iranian-Syrian coalition and demanding a close relation with Syria, Sunni-dominated March 14 represented US-led alliance in Lebanese domestic politics threatening to snatch Lebanon away from Syria's orbit. Therefore, the 2006 war can be analyzed within this general framework and as will be covered, this trend was vivid during the 2006 War in shaping the behaviors of major Arab states and the sectarian leaders in Lebanon.

5.1.2. Israeli – Lebanese Border Reconsidered

There have been ongoing disputes, conflicts, clashes and wars in the region for the readjustment of borders since the end of the Ottoman Empire, although most of them stayed mainly similar. In parallel, the disagreements about Israeli - Lebanese border were not new in 2006. Concerning the issue of Israeli – Lebanese border, it is argued that even before the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, Zionist leaders had a perception of a country starting from the Litani River at least in the north (Sultan (2008) and Chomsky (1980), cited in Wilkins 2013, p.51; Hirst 2010, p.22). [114] However, the border between Israel and Lebanon had stayed comparatively quite after the establishment of the State of Israel till the late 1960s. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the main reason of the clashes were the armed conflicts between Israel and Palestinian groups after they had been expelled from Jordan and forced to settle in Lebanon (Hirst 2010, pp.86–92).

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[114] Hirst explains the interest of Israelis into a territory up to the Litani River with historic, strategic and economic reasons. Historically, they argue, southern Lebanon had supposedly been home for ancient Jewish tribes, which also religious roots. Secondly, inclusion of southern Lebanon under the control of Israel would enhance the defensive capabilities. Lastly, the control of the southern bank of the Litani River and the assured access to it are positive assets to Israel in terms of fertile lands and irrigation through river's water (Hirst 2010, pp.22–23).

Following the continuous attacks against Israel and Israeli retaliation, Israel invaded Lebanon twice, first in 1978 which was comparatively short and the second in 1982 from southern Lebanon up to Beirut in order to establish a pro-Israeli administration through supporting Bashir Gemayel.

In Israeli - Lebanese relations, one of the key actor has been Hezbollah which was established under the conditions of Israeli invasion when Shias were further marginalized (Wilkins 2013, p.52). Immediately after its establishment, Hezbollah organized continuous attacks against both Israeli soldiers in Lebanon and Israeli land, which resulted in the withdrawal of Israel in 2000. After the withdrawal, the conflicts did not come to an end and both sides continued to launch cross border attacks. To conclude, it can be stated that the border issue between these two countries has been affected by many factors including but not limited to Israeli historic claims and desire for accessing water and enhancing defensive capabilities, the activities of the Palestinian armed groups, the long occupation of Israel in the south Lebanon, Hezbollah's arsenal and cross-border attacks and violations of IDF and Hezbollah (Wilkins 2013, p.53; Hirst 2010).

Along with the controversial stances, Israeli - Lebanese border has been frequently violated by both sides since the withdrawal in 2000 to the war in 2006 although almost all of them could be considered minor. Although Israel declared that it had completed its withdrawal from Lebanese territory in May 2000 and confirmed by the UN (UNSC Press Release 2000), Hezbollah and Lebanese government did not confirmed this statement because they argue that the withdrawal can only be completed after Israeli Army leave Shebaa Farms, Ghajar village and Kfarshouba Hills, which were claimed to be Lebanese territory. These territories are disputed areas, but after the withdrawal of Israel, Syria also acknowledged that the aforementioned areas do not belong to Syrian territory.[115] Therefore Hezbollah continuously claimed that the withdrawal of Israeli Army

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[115] It is also reported by the UN in 2007 that Shebaa Farms belongs to Lebanese territory (Ravid 2007).

from Lebanon has not been completed due to the aforementioned territory and continued its cross border attacks (Sharp et al. 2006, p.8).[116]

To conclude, Israeli – Lebanese border witnessed continuous minor violations by both sides due to the existing disagreements between Israel and Lebanon even after the withdrawal of 2000. However it should be noted that these violations did not turn to a major clash between the parties. Therefore it is argued that there seems to be unwritten rules of the game during this period that Hezbollah continued to attack Israeli targets in the Shebaa Farms and Israel shelled Hezbollah outposts, and both sides tried to avoid from attacking civilians (Interview with Göksel 2015). However, the attacks of Hezbollah on 12 July 2006 was not in line with this unspoken agreement since this operation was outside of the disputed Shebaa Farms, which made it a casus belli for Israel and triggered a war (Tür 2007, pp.115–116; Interview with Göksel 2015).

5.2. ISRAEL - HEZBOLLAH WAR FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SECTARIAN ACTORS

Israel - Hezbollah War was triggered by Hezbollah's attacks on 12 July 2006 resulted in death of three Israeli soldiers and kidnapping of two, followed by Israeli operation to rescue the soldiers in which five additional soldiers were killed (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006a; Ayhan & Tür 2009, p.239; Kalb & Saivetz 2007, p.7). The Kadima coalition Israeli government described the attack as *an act of war* and responded with a full blown military answer, which started a war between Israel and Hezbollah for 33 days (CNN International 2006b). The

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[116] Najem argues that the use of Shebaa Farms served to Syrian interests as well as that of Hezbollah rather than the interest of Lebanese government because it constituted a kind of pretext for the legitimization of the continuation of *armed* Hezbollah even after the Israeli withdrawal (Najem 2012, pp.103–104).

war had lasted until the 14 August and ended with the UN Resolution 1701 without a clear end.[117]

5.2.1. Starting a War as a Concrete Foreign Policy Action by Hezbollah

One of the foremost questions that should be studied about this war is its beginning: Why did Hassan Nasrallah decide to launch a sudden attack on Israel and why did Israel respond with such a large extent contrary to the previous cases?[118] There is a well amount of literature on the underlying causes behind Hezbollah's behavior. It seems possible to summarize the arguments on this issue under two broad categories: The one which considers Hezbollah as a just proxy of Syria and Iran; and the second which considers the party as an independent actor. The first group of scholars point out that Hezbollah's actions are generally nothing but an extension of Syrian and Iranian policies by referring to Hezbollah's

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[117] The war left many civilian deaths and the destruction of the most of the infrastructure in the southern Lebanon. According to the different sources, Israeli bombardments and ground invasion into Lebanon resulted in death of an estimated 1200 Lebanese including most of which were civilians and nearly 140 Israelis including 43 civilians, 4000 injured and around a million internally displaced people. In addition to humanitarian casualties, Lebanese infrastructure such as roads, bridges and runways at Beirut's international airport, was either damaged or destroyed; some 15,000 homes and 900 factories, markets, farms, shops and other commercial buildings were wrecked (International Crisis Group 2006, p.1; Prados 2007, p.20). Additionally, for more detailed analysis of the results of the war militarily please see, "Lessons and Implications of the Israel-Hizbullah War: A Preliminary Assessment" (Makovsky & White 2006).

[118] Concerning the extent of Israeli retaliation, indeed it was unexpected because previous crisis generally ended with a limited retaliation and a prisoner swap when Hezbollah succeeded in capturing Israeli soldiers or cross-border attacks (Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.36). However in 2006, Israeli campaign included a complete land, sea and air blockage and full scale bombing campaign targeting Lebanon's infrastructure. It is argued that Israel considered Hezbollah's action as a diversionary tactic since this operation was outside the disputed Shebaa Farms (Tür 2007, pp.115–116). In addition, it is also argued that Israel considered the attacks as a part of wider Iranian initiative to change the balance of power in the Middle East from regional perspective (Wilkins 2013, p.80). Indeed, Israeli perspective was more sided with their perception that Israel was about to be surrounded by regional threats. As explained by Israeli Foreign Minister repetitively, Israeli officials considered the nature of threat is regional related to Hezbollah, Syria, Iran and Hamas axis (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006b) and they even differentiated Lebanese government and Hezbollah officially by stating that "Israel, along with the Lebanese government, and the international community on one side, and Hezbollah, Hamas, Syria and Iran on the other side" (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006c). Another explanation comes from Israel's domestic politics. It is argued that although the nature of the threat in July 2006 was similar to other menaces elicited in the past, the newly elected Israeli administration thought that it needed to prove itself domestically and internationally (Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.43).

relations with Syria and particularly with Iran, which were covered in the previous chapters. These scholars generally affirm that the planning and the execution was direct product of series of meetings held in Damascus between Iran and Syria and implemented by their proxy (Bell 2006). This perception was also shared by Israeli officials, as Deputy Foreign Minister Gideon Meir acknowledged on 13 July 2006, just after Hezbollah's attack that;

> Syria and Iran support these groups [Hamas and Hezbollah], not only because they support their ideology, but also because they provide Damascus and Tehran with tool to strengthen the influence of their own regimes and to divert attention from other issues [referring to Iran's nuclear weapons] which have exposed them lately to international pressure (Meir 2006).

However, it is strongly believed that in spite of the strength and the deepness of the alliance between Iran, Syria and Hezbollah, it should be noted that it is not justifiable to argue that Hezbollah was acting simply as surrogates on behalf of its patrons although it made sense for Hezbollah that it designs its strategies through consultation with its regional allies.

The second group of scholars like Emile Hokayem, on the other hand, states that considering Hezbollah as a just stalking horse is too simplistic approach, which overestimates Iranian influence and ignores the transformation of Hezbollah from its initial structure to its current status with considerable autonomy in line with this thesis (Al Hokayem 2007, pp.36–44). In this respect, there is an argument which links Hezbollah's action to its perception about regional issues through focusing specifically on Palestinian issue. As state before, the border issue between these two countries has never been independent from Israeli – Arab issues. In this line, CRS analyst Prados states that Hezbollah launched its attacks to demonstrate a gesture of solidarity with Hamas fighting with Israel in Gaza at that time which began two weeks before the war (Prados 2007, p.17). During these attacks on Gaza, significant Palestinian casualties occurred and around 100 Hamas members were arrested. According to Hirst, Nasrallah tried to show his

party's solidarity with the Arab cause and its support to Palestinians contrary to the silence of Arab regimes (Hirst 2010, p.331). Some also try to explain Hezbollah's action through focusing on the continuation of Israel's military occupation of certain Lebanese territories (Geukjian 2008, p.136).

Faced with this division in explaining Nasrallah's decision, this thesis argues that a moderate position would be more explanatory in understanding both the independent agenda of Hezbollah and the Iranian influence on the organization. To begin with Nasrallah's stance, it is argued that he wanted to effectuate a prisoner exchange with Israel without calculating the possible extent of Israel's response.[119] In this respect, Hassan Nasrallah explained Hezbollah's operation with two major goals in his speeches: the release of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli prisons and drawing attention to the sufferings of the prisoners and their families (Nasrallah 2006; Khanafer 2013, pp.57–58). In response to the image of proxy, Nasrallah also continuously emphasized the discourse of the Resistance and its Lebanese nature.[120] Notwithstanding that Hezbollah's action was harmonious with Iranian interests; this does not necessarily mean that Iran directed Hezbollah with full control. It could be very possible that the decision makers of Hezbollah might interpret that any possible demise of Iranian power as its substantial regional ally would deteriorate its power and initiated the kidnapping in order to divert the international attention from Iran's nuclear program to other developments. In addition, Wilkins argues that Hezbollah's decision to strike Israel suddenly was a result of a strategic calculation from Shia perspective. In the above mentioned regional momentum, when the international pressure on Iran reached its height, the sudden strike to Israel and the 2006 War was a determinant foreign policy action of Hezbollah to

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[119] Some analysts also make very defensible educated guesses that if the leader of Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah had anticipated the scale of Israel's attacks against Lebanon, he would not, most probably, have authorized the kidnapping (Mohamad 2011, p.20).

[120] In this respect, a UN diplomat in Lebanon, for instance, states that Hezbollah was searching to dampen sectarian tensions and were very keen to be seen as a Lebanese group on the eve of the war (International Crisis Group 2005, p.17).

release the tension over its ally (Wilkins 2013, p.56). To sum up, an approach taking both the autonomy of Hezbollah and its alliances mainly based on Shia identity into account would be more reasonable in order to assess the importance of regional actors, the historical alliance between Hezbollah and Iran, and as well as the Hezbollah's own perception about the ongoing developments both in the region and in Lebanon. Therefore, it is more reasonable to argue that there might be a combination of certain domestic tactical reasons and regional calculations behind this unexpected attack and Nasrallah had ordered the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers not only to strengthen his party's domestic position by suppression the debate about its arsenal and also to demonstrate its loyalty to its historical alliances.

From the perspective of Lebanese domestic politics, the war came out at a very meaningful time, when Iran was facing a growing pressure about its nuclear program regionally and the tension between March 8 and March 14 alliances was increasingly growing about the disarmament of Hezbollah. As discussed in Chapter 4, after the withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon, the legitimacy of Hezbollah's weapons was questioned. In response, Nasrallah continuously affirmed that Hezbollah has been the Resistance against Israeli and its arsenal is the heart of its power. In this respect, the entrance of Hezbollah into the Lebanese government in 2005 for the first time also aimed to get a formal statement assuring the Resistance as 'sincere and natural expression of Lebanese people's right to defend its land and dignity in the face of Israeli aggression, threats, and ambitions as well as of its right to continue its actions to free Lebanese territory' (Al Hokayem 2007, pp.44–45). However, these arguments were not considered as satisfactory by the other leaders. Therefore, one of the most substantial causes of the internal division was the issue of Hezbollah's arsenal since 2000. Hokayem argues that the underlying reason of Hezbollah's action was the justification efforts of its *raison d'être* as a military resistance (Al Hokayem 2007, p.44) because there occurred a kind of trans-sectarian public opinion on the disarming

Hezbollah, which could not be acceptable for the party.[121] Thus, it is argued that Hezbollah tried to use the kidnapping to counter pressure from Lebanese officials and factions and Nasrallah believed that a successful prisoner exchange after kidnapping might dampen pressure for the disarmament (Alagha 2008).

In addition to the role of sectarian alliances as one of the underlying causes of Hezbollah's action, what is also important within the framework of this dissertation is that Hezbollah launched a cross border attack to a neighboring country and kidnapped two of its soldiers, which means that it acted as an sovereign and independent player and initiated a very real foreign policy action – starting a war - without consulting or informing the government. Additionally, this foreign policy action was responded by Israel as if Hezbollah was the legitimate and notified drawee. First, having participated in the political process of the country and gaining two ministerial positions in the cabinet, Hezbollah was responsible for informing the cabinet about a plan that obviously had international repercussions. Beyond that, the use of force and issues like war and peace are within the sphere of state's monopoly and can be considered as direct expression of state sovereignty (Geukjian 2008, p.138). In addition, a few hours after Hezbollah's raid, Nasrallah explained the attacks as an ordinary statesman by holding a press conference and declared that Hezbollah did not want to start a war but to negotiate for a prisoner exchange and also did not hesitate to threaten Israel if it wanted a confrontation, they were ready and had some surprises for them (Harel & Issacharoff 2008, p.83).

To conclude, concerning the argument of this thesis, the beginning of the war even vividly demonstrates that the Lebanese government was not able to control the activities of sub-state actors, which also have power in state mechanisms and

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[121] One of his speeches Nasrallah states on the issue on 25 May 2005: "if anyone, anyone, thinks of disarming the Resistance, we will fight them like the martyrs of Karbala [and] cut off any hand that reaches out to grab our weapons because it is an Israeli hand". An Hezbollah official elaborated this statement that this warning was a necessary warning to everyone, therefore, there was not a single Lebanese who might come to us and tell us to disarm (Interview with Hezbollah official, cited in International Crisis Group 2005, p.18).

these actors have the capacity and ability to pursue foreign policy actions even including starting a war independent from the government. In other words, Hezbollah, as a quasi-state foreign policy actor, initiated a major foreign policy action without the consent of other sectarian groups and consultation to the Lebanese government.

5.2.2. Lebanese Government as the Battlefield of the Sectarian Leaders

After the analysis of the beginning of the war, it seems reasonable to look at Lebanese government's initial reactions as well as the responses of major sectarian leaders, who were also the members of the cabinet. In order to understand government's reaction, one needs to know the composition of the government. As usual and a legal necessity when it came to the formation of the cabinet or making an appointment to an administrative position, the confessional system in Lebanon had its long lasting historical rules, most of which are unwritten. In this respect, due to the principle of representation of major sectarian groups in the cabinet and the necessity of consensus or majority of 2/3 in decision-making, it is important to analyze the structure of Prime Minister Fuad Siniora's government. Within this framework, 24-member cabinet was composed of 15 members from the March 14 Alliance, 6 members from the March 8 Alliance and three independents. In this composition, Hezbollah and its ally Amal had five membership (Hirst 2010, p.313). Although Fuad Siniora and the March 14 led by Saad Hariri constituted the majority in the government, they need to reach consensus with the March 8 in governmental decisions. Thus, for Siniora's government, it was almost impossible to act as a unitary actor especially on the issues related to controversial security matters.[122]

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[122] It is therefore important to note that the term Lebanese government in the context of this chapter mainly refers to the diplomatic initiatives handled by Fuad Siniora and by the Minister of Culture Tareq Mitri, not by Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants Fawzi Sallouk who was assigned by Amal and Hezbollah to this post.

When Hezbollah initiated its cross-border attack and Israel responded to such extent, Siniora government faced with two immediate options without having prior information: supporting Hezbollah and fighting with Israel by deploying Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) or positioning itself distanced from Hezbollah and arguing its neutrality. Without doubt, Prime Minister and the March 14 Alliance chose the second option. Despite its official stance condemning the Israeli invasion, Siniora government distanced itself from Hezbollah's strategy. For instance, it is stated by Ali Hasan Khalil, chief advisor of Nabih Barri, who recalls daily developments of the war in his book that Prime Minister Siniora told him that the government would not take any responsibility of Hezbollah's action because Nasrallah did not keep his promise not to provoke Israel against Lebanon (Khalil 2012, p.19). Professor Hilal Khaskan also confirmed this argument by stating that although Siniora blamed Israel for the invasion in public, he hoped Israel would crack Hezbollah down in secret (Interview with Khashan 2016).

Concerning the subject matter of this thesis, what is more important than which option was preferred by the government is that Lebanese government found itself in an awkward situation. Lebanese attorney and politician Karim Pakradouni, for instance, elaborates the first cabinet meeting after the attacks. In this meeting, Prime Minister Siniora criticized Hezbollah for dragging the country into the war. In this respect, having the full support of Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, Siniora proposed the inclusion of the statement to the first ministerial declaration that "*the government was not informed of this operation and does not approve of it*". Siniora also sided with negotiations with Israel through UN channels to reach an immediate ceasefire (Pakradouni, cited in Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.33; Pakradouni, cited in Wilkins 2013, p.114). Hezbollah members, on the other hand, opposed this statement since they consider it biased. Due to their opposition, a weaker declaration was released by the government stating that "*the government is not responsible for what is happening and for what has happened*" (Pakradouni, cited in Wilkins 2013, p.113). Therefore, as the war had started by one of its domestic actor and which was also member of the government and its territory

was attacked, the only point that Lebanese government could raise was the fact that it was not related with the ongoing events. In other words, a sub-state armed sectarian group initiated a war with the neighboring country without the consent of the central authority, which was a clear foreign policy act, and the government was forced to acknowledge that it has no affair in this business while criticizing the both sides rather than hauling Hezbollah over the coals or confronting with the foreign army. This clearly demonstrated the inefficacy of the government and its limitations *vis-à-vis* other domestic societal actors in certain foreign policy cases.

The unexpected foreign policy action of Hezbollah deepened the internal divisions within the Lebanese administration. President Emile Lahoud defended Hezbollah's position and argued that the Resistance would be victorious in this war. However, President's stance was not welcomed by the member of cabinet from the March 14, and Prime Minister Siniora openly criticized Hezbollah because it had not consulted the government and threatened Lebanon with its unilateral action (Siniora 2006a). In parallel, Saad Hariri put his argument as the following:

> What we are witnessing today is the execution of an Iranian and Syrian plan of which Hezbollah is merely an instrument. Their aim is to prevent any forward move in Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq and to compel the US to negotiate from a point of weakness (ICG, cited in Tür 2007, p.121).

It is very clear that the cross-border operation was regarded as a virtual *coup d'état* to impose Hezbollah's agenda on the country by many in Lebanon, including Hariri's men, Jumblatt and main Maronite leaders (Shehadi 2007).

Since Siniora's government had good relations with Arab states in the region through Hariri's network, it could be able to lead its allies to criticize Hezbollah for starting the war. Saudi Arabia, for instance, acknowledge on the same night of kidnapping that "*there is a difference between legitimate opposition and reckless adventurism perpetrated by elements in the state working without the government's knowledge*" (Harel & Issacharoff 2008, pp.102–103; Nasr 2007). It

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was not very surprising that Saudi Arabia would side with Siniora's government in line with its alliance to Hariri Family, but the wording and the open condemnation of a group targeted by Israel is worth mentioning. In addition to Saudi Arabia, certain Arab states except Syria also implicitly supported Israel's operation on Hezbollah, which was also later contended even by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert (Luomi 2008, p.11; Pakradouni, cited in Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.39). It was important because the general response towards Hezbollah's action from Arab capitals was not shaped within the framework of Arab-Israeli struggle, rather within a new posturing in the region which is sectarian identity. It is argued that possible explanation for this attitude of Arab states would be the policy calculation of Arab regimes that Israel's military superiority over Hezbollah would led to the weakening of Iran's position in the Arab street and in the region leaving Saudi Arabia as the sole Middle Eastern axis of power (Valbjørn & Bank 2007, p.242) because from Sunni perspective, Hezbollah is following Syrian-Iranian agenda and trying to overthrow the March 14 alliance from the cabinet since it did not coincide with their interests.

To conclude, Prime Minister Fuad Siniora and major leaders of March 14 alliance formulated a wait-and-see policy and made do with only presenting their criticisms weakly in the first days. It is widely argued during the first phase of the war, certain sectors of Sunni and Christian communities and Jumblatt were hoping a very hard slap on Hezbollah by Israel (Interview with Göksel 2015). In this line, Prime Minister and March 14 alliance, enjoying strong support from key regional and international powers politically and financially (Najem 2012, p.120), did not ask for an immediate cease fire in international platforms, which was considered as a covered consent for Israeli attacks against Hezbollah, which was perceived as an Iranian proxy and domestic rival for them (Mohamad 2011, p.20; Steinvorth & Windfuhr 2006).

5.2.3. Jumblatt's and Hariri's Strategies to Counter Hezbollah

Despite the destruction of the war in the south Lebanon, it can still be argued that sectarian divisions and interest were still shaping agendas. Though the IDF

entered into the Lebanese territory, it did not face with Lebanese Army. On the contrary, it was an asymmetric war between Israel and Hezbollah, an armed sectarian actor. Although there were discussions on the deployment of the LAF during the war, the LAF was not ordered to combat with Israeli army. There were several reasons raised in the literature for this (Wilkins 2013, p.51 and 110; Kalb & Saivetz 2007, p.3). The first and the practical reason was the lack of military equipment and resources of LAF to carry out a defense against Israeli army. More importantly, however, the possibility of disintegration of the army along with confessional lines is the second reason since it is composed of various sectarian groups, whose loyalty is to their sectarian leaders rather than the state.[123] It was discussed in those days that Sunni, Druze and Christian soldiers and officers might refrained from a direct clash with Israel just to defend Hezbollah, who acted recklessly and immaturely from their perspective. Lastly, it is argued, members of March 14 alliance did not allow LAF to be used in the hope that Israel would destroy Hezbollah more easily so that it could not return to its previous situation. The wait-and-see stance of leaders of March 14 was indeed open secret in Beirut during the war (Harel & Issacharoff 2008; Interview with Salloukh 2016; Interview with Khashan 2016).

In this respect, the most open and stable foreign policy position came from Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, who severely criticized Hezbollah. The opposition against Hezbollah from the outspoken leader of the anti-Syrian camp Jumblatt was very well known even before the war. Within this framework, he had continuously blamed Hezbollah for being driven by Iranian-Syrian rather than Lebanese agenda. In one of his interviews, for instance, he clearly stated that *"They [Hezbollah] are a tool in the hands of the Syrian regime and for Iran's regional ambitions"* (Makovsky & White 2006, p.20; Hirst 2010, pp.312–314; Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.33). Regarding Hezbollah's unilateral action, Dr. Nassir Zeidan

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[123] For a detailed analysis of the structure, social make-up, political orientation of the Lebanese army based on data collected through interviews with nearly 4500 officers; please see "Towards a Representative Military? The Transformation of the Lebanese Officer Corps Since 1945" by Oren Barak (Barak 2006).

added that Jumblatt was critical of Hezbollah's irresponsible behavior without informing or consulting other Lebanese leaders, which resulted in the invasion of the southern Lebanon once again (Zeidan 2016). [124] Moreover, senior media officer of Jumblatt's party Rami Rayess explained their position that "Hezbollah gave the pretext to regional powers to use Lebanon as a battleground for their own ambitions in order to draw the attention to somewhere else other than their weapons." He also continued that "his party's historical position on the Palestinian cause is obvious, but defending the idea that state should hold the monopoly over weapons as in any other state is something else"(Interview with Al Rayess 2016). Therefore, from the beginning, Jumblatt cleared his stance about Nasrallah's decision. Indeed, none of any other Lebanese leaders could set such an open criticism (Totten 2012, p.211). In a television interview just hours after from the start of the war, Walid Jumblatt stated that;

> The time had come for Hezbollah to say loud and clear if its decisions were made by the Lebanese people or if it was carrying out Syrian and Iranian instructions that Lebanon paid the price for….What's happening now in Lebanon is, among other things, Tehran's answer to the international community on the Iranian nuclear issue (Harel & Issacharoff 2008, p.98).

Even after the devastating effects of the war and the repositioning of other senior leaders on the issue at least publically, Jumblatt consistently stick to his initial position and supported a ceasefire which would enable Lebanese government to extend its authority without any limitation even in the south. In other words, he defended a ceasefire to bring a new political order rather than just to cease conflicts. On 19 July, he openly acknowledged his idea by stating that;

> We want a ceasefire, but not at all costs. The condition for this must be that the Lebanese state will be the one responsible for decisions on matters of war and peace and it is Lebanon that will be responsible for defending the south. In the event of a cease fire being declared just for the sake of it, the country will be unable to continue governing itself, since war could break out again at

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[124] In this respect, Jumblatt stated during the interview that he was not informed prior to Hezbollah's attack and surprised by the attacks (Interview with Jumblatt 2016).

any moment, under any excuse [on the side of Hezbollah] (Harel & Issacharoff 2008, pp.117–118).

The interpretation of this statement is clear that despite the public support for Hezbollah due to the growing casualties, Jumblatt continued with his critical line against Hezbollah to the point of defending the continuation of the war. In parallel, Jumblatt insisted on his argument even after the war. For instance, responding to Totten's questions in an interview, Jumblatt stated that "*Hassan Nasrallah is officially the representative of Iran's Ayatollah Khamenei, they want to use Lebanon as a battleground or as a bargaining card. This is what they have done in the summertime, when Nasrallah declared the war against Israelis*" (Totten 2012, p.212). Druze leader based his position and arguments on certain principles and 2006 War was not regarded as a war of liberation, rather it was a determinant act of a Shia proxy of Iran, which was acting as a state within a state in order to release the international pressure against Iran over nuclear issue from Druze perspective.

Due to this perception and his severe opposition, it is also argued that Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party tacitly supported Israeli actions against Hezbollah during the war (Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.34). WikiLeaks documents shed light on the position of Jumblatt more clearly, when the cables between Beirut and Washington were leaked. In this manner, leaked cables of US Department of State can be considered as one of the most valuable resources to demonstrate how leaders of sectarian groups engaged in informal foreign relations and alliances in order to strengthen their domestic positions and to counter their rivals. It was revealed that Walid Jumblatt with other Druze members of the cabinet, Minister of Telecommunications Marwan Hamadeh and Minister of Information Ghazi Aridi, carried out regular meetings with US Ambassador Jeffrey Feltman during the war in order to express their views and suggestions. During the meeting on 16 July, for instance, Jumblatt explained that "*even though March 14 should call for a cease-fire in public, it is hoping in private that Israel proceeds with its military operations until it destroys Hezbollah's military capabilities.*" In addition, when

he was asked about his opinions on military strategy of Israel, it is stated in the cables that he advised that Israel had to invade southern Lebanon until it cleared Hezbollah out of southern Lebanon while refraining from civil massacres. Then he continues that the LAF can replace the IDF once a ceasefire would be reached but if there was a ceasefire before clearance of Hezbollah, Hezbollah would win the war, at least in the eyes of people (US Department of State Cables Beirut 2403 2006). In another leaked cable about the meeting on 4 August, it is stated that Druze leader Jumblatt expressed his regrets that Israel failed to assess Hezbollah's operations on the ground and the conflict turned to Hezbollah's advantage (US Department of State Cables Beirut 2540 2006). In addition, Druze leader believed that Hezbollah could be disarmed by neither domestic groups nor by Lebanese Army but Israel. It is for this reason that Jumblatt saw the Israeli attacks as an opportunity to disarm Hezbollah and to remove Syrian and Iranian influence on Lebanese affairs. In his interview with Tottem, Jumblatt clarified that "*Nobody in Lebanon said or believed it was possible to disarm Hezbollah by force, but as a Lebanese I don't accept a state within a state*" (Totten 2012, pp.212–213).

Despite Jumblatt's clear stance publicly, Jumblatt was not the only one who expected a possible demise of Hezbollah as a result of Israeli invasion and in regular touch with the American ambassador. It is also revealed by the WikiLeaks that despite its more moderate stance in public, leader of the Future Movement Saad Hariri was also in regular contacts with the US embassy. For instance, leaked cables reports about a meeting on 20 August that Saad Hariri made a commitment that when Lebanese Army would be consolidated with the American support, it would crush Hezbollah. As stated in the leaked cable, once the army has "some teeth and some morale," Hariri promised to "smack Hezbollah down." In addition, after asking for support for himself, in his words again, "*give me a chance, and I will f*** Hezbollah*" he said (US Department of State Cables Beirut 2680 2006).

These cables revealed the nature and the extent of the coordination between the leaders of the March 14 alliance and the US Ambassador Jeffrey Feltman during

the war. In an ordinary country, it is most probable that these meetings can be seen as proof of treason, however, this was neither surprising for Lebanese politics nor a treason. On the contrary this example demonstrates both the existence of different visions of Lebanon of various sectarian leaders and the existence of complex foreign relations and alliances through informal transnational links in Lebanese politics. Not surprisingly, this is how Lebanese leaders play politics in Lebanon, which lead to the existence of multiple foreign policies of various sectarian leaders in the lack of a clear consensus on Lebanese identity. From Druze and Sunni perspectives, Hezbollah's growing arsenal was considered as a direct threat to the country and it is probable that it may use its militia to take over the whole power in Lebanon by force to establish a Shia state. According to Cambanis, the Druze were afraid of a possible Lebanon under the full control of Hezbollah with the support of Lebanon's hard-liners – not only of the Shia, but members of other sects who opposed American influence in the Arab world and wanted to eclipse Christians and the Druze in Lebanon (Cambanis 2010, pp.50–51). The same concerns were shared by Sunni leader due to Hezbollah's assertion to preserve its arsenal.

These cables, to sum up, demonstrated how the perception of domestic balance of power is extensively important while formulating foreign policy strategies. Since an absolute victory of Hezbollah would change the balance of power in Lebanese politics in favor of Shia leader Hassan Nasrallah irrevocably, others carried out an active diplomacy to reach out a ceasefire, which would not only end the war but also, and more importantly, limits Hezbollah's capabilities because within the current situation Hezbollah, in the eyes of other sectarian leaders, had already become a state within a state.

5.2.4. Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir: Maronite Perspective

Regarding Hezbollah's unilateral foreign policy action, Christians in general and the Maronites in specific were not very much different from the positions of Sunnis and the Druze. During the interviews in the field study, it was noticed that

2006 Israel – Hezbollah war was commonly defined by the Christians as a purely Iranian - Israeli war taking place in Lebanon and Christians had nothing to do with this war except humanitarian assistance for southern people whose villages had been bombarded or invaded by Israeli army (Interviews with Salibi 2016; Elias 2016).

Just few days after the beginning of the war, it is argued that a Maronite group, the Lebanese Foundation for Peace, sent an open letter to Israeli Prime Minister on 14 July 2006 to express their support to Israeli attacks against Hezbollah and to urge Israel to hit terrorist infrastructure hardly (The Lebanese Foundation for Peace 2006). In addition, it is also revealed in another US cable that Minister of National Defense Elias Murr, Orthodox Christian, admitted that Christians were supporting Israel during the Israel – Hezbollah war and waited in the hope of the destruction of Hezbollah until Israel began to bomb their neighborhoods (US Department of State Cables Beirut 372 2008). Be that as it may, it clearly demonstrates the depth of the division among sectarian communities, which led one to support an external military attack against another in the hope that it would strengthen its domestic power through other's destruction, which is more shocking that this behavior can be seen reasonable by an official who was the highest responsible for the national defense.

In addition to the other Christian leaders in March 14 alliance, Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir actively involved into the ongoing developments during the war. He declared his criticism for Nasrallah's unilateral action and opening the country for Israeli occupation. In an interview published in Spiegel, for instance, he declares the war as a proxy war and states; "*our country must not serve as the one that makes it territory available as a proxy rallying ground and battleground for other states. Neither the conflict over Iran's nuclear program nor any other Iranian issues concern us Lebanese*" (Steinvorth & Windfuhr 2006). In the same interview, he also expressed his concern about the growing outward migration of Lebanese Christians that they were forced to live the country due to the war. Additionally, he visited the US and met with Vice President Dick Cheney and

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in July 2006. During his visit, he did not only condemn Israel's retaliation but also called Hezbollah to lay down its arms to reach a political solution. In other words, according to Patriarch Sfeir, kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers could not be a just cause for the dismemberment of a whole country. However, he also criticized Hezbollah for its irresponsible behaviors and demanded a truly sovereign Lebanese government exerting its sole authority over all of Lebanese territory (PR Newswire 2006; Elfeghali 2010). Indeed, Patriarch's call can be interpreted as his demand for the disarmament of Hezbollah militias. After his return from the US, he expressed his expectation on 27 July for the assurance of a ceasefire under reasonable and acceptable conditions by the utmost support of US (Hourany 2006). Therefore, it can be stated that the statement of the Patriarch is in accordance with the other Maronite leaders and March 14 alliance. Like Maronite politicians, while he was criticizing Israel, he also insisted on the necessity of the disarmament of Hezbollah in order to reach a permanent solution to Lebanese problems from Maronite perspective.

5.2.5. Fuad Siniora's Seven-Point Plan and Reactions

As a Sunni politician Fuad Siniora, strongly aligned with Saad Hariri, pursued a foreign policy agenda with two main aims: first achieving a ceasefire, second while brining ceasefire securing regional and international support to implement its domestic policy agenda including strengthening the government's sovereignty and pacifying Hezbollah through disarmament. Indeed the Lebanese government worked with the US and Sunni Arab regimes very closely during the war to bring a ceasefire which prioritized the disarmament of Hezbollah rather than the immediate end to the war. It can be argued that the failure to search for an immediate ceasefire was considered as a green light to Israeli attacks by leaders of March 14 alliance, which in time significantly weakened the position of Lebanese government and so the Sunni leaders.[125]

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[125] During the war Siniora's government was severely criticized for being too close to the US and Siniora, himself, was regarded simply as "Bush's man in Lebanon" and so "friend of Israel" (Wilkins 2013, p.87).

On 25 July 2006, Prime Minister Siniora participated in an international conference with foreign ministers of Russia, the United States, Italy, Germany, France, the UK, Spain, Canada, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the representatives of the UN, the EU, and the World Bank. The participants discussed how to bring an end to the conflict in Lebanon and agree on making pressure to achieve an immediate ceasefire. In this conference, Prime Minister presented Seven-Point Plan, aiming to reach comprehensive ceasefire, which can briefly be listed as the following:

> 1. Undertaking to release the Lebanese and Israeli prisoners and detainees through the International Committee of the Red Cross,
>
> 2. Withdrawal of the Israeli army behind the Blue Line, and the return of the displaced to their villages,
>
> 3. Commitment from the Security Council to place the Shebaa Farms area and the Kfarshouba Hills under UN jurisdiction until border delineation and Lebanese sovereignty over them are fully settled. While in UN custody, the area will be accessible to Lebanese property owners there. Further, Israel surrenders all remaining landmine maps in South Lebanon to the UN,
>
> 4. Lebanese government extends its authority over its territory through its own legitimate armed forces, such that there will be no weapons or authority other than that of the Lebanese state as stipulated in the Taif national reconciliation document,
>
> 5. The UN international force, operating in South Lebanon, is supplemented and enhanced in numbers, equipment, mandate and scope of operation, as needed, in order to undertake urgent humanitarian and relief work and guarantee stability and security in the south so that those who fled their homes can return,
>
> 6. The UN, in cooperation with the relevant parties, undertakes the necessary measures to once again put into effect the Armistice Agreement signed by Lebanon and Israel in 1949, and to insure adherence to the provisions of that agreement, as well as to explore possible amendments to or development of said provisions, as necessary,
>
> 7. The international community commits to support Lebanon on all levels, and to assist it in facing the tremendous burden resulting from the human, social and economic tragedy which has afflicted the country, especially in the areas of relief, reconstruction and rebuilding of the national economy (Siniora 2006a).

Although Siniora presented the plan as the official plan with the consent of Lebanese, it should be regarded as Siniora's foreign policy document and one part of the domestic battle between March 14 and March 8 alliances (Khanafer 2013, p.66). As can be easily interpreted from the text, beyond reaching a ceasefire, the plan also addressed Hezbollah for limiting its capacity. Firstly, the call from Siniora challenged the existence of Hezbollah's weapons by affirming that the Lebanese government demand international support to maintain the monopoly of force and authority in the country as envisaged in the Article 4. Second, several provisions called for the establishment of UN jurisdiction in disputed areas in order to remove the Hezbollah's pretext to justify its armed presence against oppositions and criticisms, as mentioned previously.

Not surprisingly the plan was criticized by Nasrallah and supported by members of March 14 alliance because with the above mentioned formulation it can be argued that the Seven-Point Plan reflected the agenda of March 14 and US led alliance because it aimed disarmament of Hezbollah as a precondition for a long term agreement. In this line, Maronite Patriarch acknowledged his support for the plan in his interview published in Spiegel. In that interview, for instance, he openly criticized Hezbollah for having armed militias.

> I support Prime Minister Siniora's peace plan, which calls for the disarmament of all Shia militias. As soon as a ceasefire with Israel takes effect, as soon as the two sides exchange prisoners and the Shebaa Farms are returned to Lebanon, Hezbollah will no longer have the right to maintain an army. Hezbollah has become a state within a state, with help from Iran. That's not something we can continue to accept after the war (Steinvorth & Windfuhr 2006).

However, the plan was severely criticized by the opposing side. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants Fawzi Salloukh, for instance, describes the discussions in the first cabinet meeting after the Rome Conference in his memoirs. President Lahoud criticized Siniora for not getting the consent of the cabinet about the plan and not coordinating with him. He also criticized Siniora's unconditional

commitment for the disarmament of Hezbollah and for the establishment of UN provisions in Shebaa Farms. (Salloukh, cited in Khanafer 2013, pp.66–67).

With its controversial responses, Siniora's Seven-Point Plan was significant in certain respects in understanding diverse perceptions of Lebanese leaders in both foreign and domestic policy matters. First, although it was presented by the prime minister of Lebanon in an inter-governmental conference, it was soon understood that what was called Lebanese proposal was the expression of interests of certain groups, holding the power at that time. In other words, when the representatives of sectarian groups take the governmental power in their hand, they can pursue a kind of foreign policy in the hope for gaining domestic leverage against their domestic competitors. In this case, Siniora's proposal was a genuine formulation in order to benefit from Hezbollah's aggressiveness to delegitimize its armed presence in accordance with the interests of March 14 alliance. Another important point that should be raised about the plan was that it disclosed the inability of the government domestically and internationally and expressed its dependence on external actors in implementation of the plan. Therefore, leaders of March 14 alliance under the name of government were searching for international support in order to realize their domestic agendas. The third point is the existence of multiple foreign policies in Lebanon. While Fuad Siniora was presenting his plan as the Prime Minister of Lebanon, President Emile Lahoud claimed that Prime Minister had no authority to present a plan on behalf of Lebanese foreign politics since he did not have approval of neither Council of Ministers nor the President (Pakradouni, cited in Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.35). Therefore any study on Lebanese foreign policy must monitor all related actors comparatively and simultaneously, otherwise focusing on the official post only would miss the main point in the story.

The final concluding remark would be that the Seven-Point Plan was the first official proposal from the Lebanese government and mainly reflected the interests of March 14 alliance. However it would not be the text, which brought the ceasefire, although it was partly incorporated in UN Resolution 1701. In the next

section UN Resolution 1701 is going to be analyzed along with its difference with Siniora's plan. The discussion on the differences is considered substantial because, as Salloukh argues, the differences do not only show the variances in foreign policy objectives of Siniora's government and that of Hezbollah, but also stand as the vivid example of how a sub-state sectarian group became able to shape the final text, that Lebanese government agreed (Interview with Salloukh, cited in Wilkins 2013, p.119).

5.2.6. Lebanese Government in line with Hezbollah's Discourse

During the war, one significant success of Nasrallah was his ability to develop a nationalist rhetoric and to present Hezbollah as the true defender of the nation in order to legitimize Hezbollah's arsenal. In other words, it is very important to note that whatever Hezbollah's real incentives were, he always presented itself as the Resistance and the defender of the Lebanese nation. At the very beginning of the war, to illustrate, Hezbollah acknowledged its demands as the followings: Immediate Israeli withdrawal behind the Blue Line, official border between Lebanon and Israel declared by the UN in 2000, international guarantees that Israel will respect the integrity of Lebanese borders, stopping Israeli intrusions into Lebanese airspace, the release of Lebanese prisoners in Israel. This position was also backed by other Hezbollah leaders; Grand Ayatollah Hassan Fadlallah stated on 28 July that "*all of us together are taking the same position within the government…. Nobody in Lebanon is opposed to Lebanese sovereignty being extended over all its territory.*" (Yassine 2006). Therefore, it can rightly be argued that Nasrallah framed Hezbollah's foreign policy through a nationalist discourse since he wanted to present Hezbollah as a Lebanese organization rather than a Shia militia. Therefore, Nasrallah's speeches during the war have been based on the principles of anti-hegemonisim or anti-imperialism.

In parallel, secondly, contrary to the hopes of Hezbollah's rivalries, the party built a very strong image of resistance whatever the Israeli retaliation was, as the only active armed groups fighting against Israel. The popularity that Hezbollah

received from all around the Middle East was so strong that it turned out to be a trans-sectarian and a very active support.[126] Hirst states that according to public opinion polls a full 87 % of Lebanese supported Hezbollah as the Resistance against Israeli aggression; this sentiment was really high even in non-Shia communities like 89% of Sunnis, 80% of the Druze and Christians after the devastating results of the war (Hirst 2010, p.357).[127] Therefore as Hirst affirms, it can be said that Hezbollah was able to transcended the great sectarian schism for a while and establish a kind of "*Sunni-Shia unity against Zionist-Crusader alliance*" (Hirst 2010, p.360). This image enabled Hezbollah to consolidate its domestic power and rearrange the center of gravity in Lebanese confessional system towards Tehran (Kerr 2012, p.28) and therefore the Lebanese government took Hezbollah decisions into account when making foreign policy decisions, even during the negotiations about the terms to end the war. In addition to Lebanese leaders, representatives of major powers also took Hezbollah as the one to negotiate about the war. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, for instance, negotiated mainly with Nabeh Barri on behalf of Hezbollah, rather than with Prime Minister Fuad Siniora (Pakradouni, cited in Wilkins 2013, p.108).

Third, Hezbollah also utilized the war to strengthen its alliance with Syria and Iran whatever the critics from the Lebanese government and other major Maronite and Sunni leaders. It continued to receive substantial military aid from these two countries. This help was so extensive that Hezbollah could fight back against Israel and continued the war until Israeli administration came to its terms.

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[126] A Sunni from Tripoli even under the conditions after Syrian civil war said during an interview: "We all host our Shia brothers at our homes without considering them as Shia" (Interview with a Sunni Lebanese 2015).

[127] Israeli full scale attack on Lebanon in response to kidnapping of its soldiers was criticized as being at least disproportionate by major international powers like Russia, China and France, too. It also attracted even Israeli ciriticism. Gideon Levy, a columnist in Haaretz, for instance, stated in his article on 16 July that *"Regrettably, the Israel Defence Force once again looks like the neighbourhood bully. A soldier was abducted in Gaza? All of Gaza will pay. Eight soldiers are killed and two abducted to Lebanon? All of Lebanon will pay. One and only one language is spoken by Israel, the language of force."* (Wilkins 2013, p.60).

As a result of these achievements, it may well be argued that Nasrallah managed to direct government's policy. In line with this, initial demands of Hezbollah were adopted by Prime Minister Siniora and on 8 August he clarified Lebanese demands by just reciting them except the release of prisoners (Al Jazeera TV, cited in Wilkins 2013, p.118). As the war progressed and the destructive Israeli attacks continued, Fuad Siniora had to reformulate his foreign policy position (Khanafer 2013, p.69) because the threat that Hezbollah posed from Sunni perspective started to become more subordinate to the destruction of the whole country. Especially after Israeli airstrike on Qana on 30 July, resulted in death of 28 civilians of which 16 were children, the Lebanese government, along with Hezbollah, released a statement saying that they refused to enter into any diplomatic negotiations until a ceasefire was assured. In other words, the Israeli attacks were so devastating that they could no longer be justified through blaming Hezbollah for its unilateral and *adventures* action. Siniora also cancelled his meetings with Condoleezza Rice and thanked Hezbollah for its sacrifices for the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon while it also distanced Lebanese government from the US led alliance and announced Israel as 'war criminals' (Kerr 2012, p.28; Global Insight 2006). Then, Prime Minister engaged active foreign policy initiatives to gain international support for an immediate ceasefire as the country faced with a threat of complete demolition. The temporary rapprochement between the government and Nasrallah's foreign policy stances towards Israel is considered important because it showed that only when the complete destruction of Lebanon, as an existential threat to all Lebanese, became concrete, sectarian leaders may reach a temporary understanding. As Wilkins argues, from the perspective of this dissertation, "unity in Lebanon only became achievable once the different factions in Lebanon shared common threat, that was greater than the one they posed to each other" (Wilkins 2013, p.117). Indeed, the use of phrases like "unity" and "shared common threat" might be misleading in Lebanese context although Wilkins tried to touch upon an important point. Therefore, it is better to reformulate the argument as the following: unless the foreign threat became existential for all communities in a concrete sense such as

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the full destruction of the country, it is very difficult to create a foreign policy position and strategy in Lebanon, on which various sectarian leaders may follow.

To conclude, during the war Hezbollah took state's role in defending the country and formulating the foreign policy, more specifically how and when to finish the war. Additionally, thanks to its well performed but more importantly well marketed defense, Hezbollah attracted a high level of public support. As Timur Göksel affirms, Israeli decision makers supposed that the full scale attack on all Lebanon would convince Lebanese to turn on Hezbollah as the real cause of their suffering, yet the opposite happened in practice (Interview with Göksel 2015). In other words, Israeli officials thought that a full scale attack would persuade especially non-Shia communities that Hezbollah was the reason of the destruction of their lives. Indeed there was a kind of suitable environment for such a planning which can be understood from public demonstrations among Sunnis, Christians and Druze against Hezbollah in the early days of the war. However, as the war had progressed, the massive insult of Israel to Lebanon worked in opposite direction and the public anger turned against it as the suffering of all southern Lebanese became visible.

5.3. THE UN RESOLUTION 1701: BRINGING THE END TO THE WAR

After almost a month, it was understood that although Israeli army carried out heavy airstrikes and launched a ground operation which caused severe human casualties and the destruction of Lebanese infrastructure heavily, it was not possible to eliminate Hezbollah completely. On the other side, while Hezbollah continued to launch rocket attacks against northern Israel and combat in southern Lebanon, it was not possible for Hezbollah to reach a clear victory. Therefore the war continued inconclusively as Hezbollah mostly remained intact on the one hand and no concrete real gains in Hezbollah's side on the other. However, a need for an immediate ceasefire became increasingly concrete as the humanitarian situation deteriorated.

In this conjuncture, Washington and Paris proposed a resolution on 5 August which was rejected by the Lebanese government due to Hezbollah's opposition. Lebanese Prime Minister stated that the draft resolution was not adequate to address the problem and did not include provisions of Seven-Point Plan. Siniora also stated that any resolution must address the root causes of the war, namely Israel's occupation and its perennial threat to Lebanon's security (Siniora 2006b). The reason for Hezbollah's rejection was that the draft did not propose Israeli withdrawal before the ceasefire. Then, with certain amendments, the UN Resolution 1701 was accepted in the Security Council on 11 August 2006.[128]

Resolution 1701 was accepted by all related actors surprisingly including Israel, Hezbollah and the Lebanese government, as well as leaders of major sectarian groups and international powers. The Resolution mainly proposed the deployment of the LAF in the south of the Litani River, the expansion of the UNIFIL, the establishment of Lebanese sovereignty over its own territory. Nevertheless it did not brought a solution to the core issues like prisoner exchange and Hezbollah's armed presence (UNSC Resolution 1701 2006). The reason for this consensus without an agreement is explained by experts of International Crisis Group that the Resolution came in a very precarious time that all parties agreed on an ambiguous outcome because all needed a face-saving solution after the devastation of the country (International Crisis Group 2006, p.i).

The Lebanese government supported the resolution officially despite its internal divisions and Siniora can be considered successful in mobilizing Arab regimes to enhance his domestic position against Hezbollah and to include some provisions from his plan to call for ceasefire. As mentioned, after the first draft resolution was rejected, an Arab delegation went to New York to persuade France and US to include Siniora's Seven-Point Plan into the final resolution (CNN International 2006a). Siniora's government also used UN platforms very effectively to achieve a ceasefire under UN auspices (Salloukh & Barakat 2015, p.29).

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[128] For the full text of the UN Security Council Resolution 1701 please visit the official website of UN: http://www.un.org/press/en/2006/sc8808.doc.htm.

As discussed before, the issue of the deployment of the LAF in the south has always been a very disputable subject among different sectarian groups during the war therefore the decision to assign the LAF in the south according the Resolution created discussions in the cabinet. Members of March 14 alliance argued that the deployment of the LAF is indispensable necessity to strengthen the state's sovereignty and prevent sub-state actors to take over the role of Lebanese security institutions. Yet, unsurprisingly ministers of the March 8 alliance opposed the proposal but finally Nasrallah also agreed on the deployment of the LAF (Pakradouni, cited in Wilkins 2013, p.111). For the government, it is a kind of success because after so many years, it was for the first time that Lebanese government controlled its entire territory at least on the paper. The expansion of the area of the LAF, in addition to the enhanced UNIFIL, was at least a symbolic challenge to Hezbollah's dominance over the south (Fattouh & Kolb 2006, p.96; Gambill 2006). March 14 alliance assisted Siniora fully, since the Resolution 1701 calls for the disarmament of Hezbollah implicitly and the deployment of the LAF to the south, which was presented as a success for Sunni bloc led by Saad Hariri, in general. In addition to call for disarming, it also limited Hezbollah's freedom of movement by deploying the LAF and enhancing the UNIFIL in the southern Lebanon. Therefore, it is argued that the resolution shows how Siniora and Hariri used government capabilities and international conjuncture to create a pressure for Hezbollah and to enhance themselves in Lebanese politics relatively.

Although the UN Resolution was not what Nasrallah really wanted and he criticized it for being favorable to Israeli demands (Khanafer 2013, p.71), he did not reject the resolution because Hezbollah emerged from the war with a clear sense of victory due to its comparative success in resisting to a far superior military force in spite of casualties in human power and assets (International Crisis Group 2006, p.8). It may also be argued that Hezbollah partially influenced the final writing of the resolution because it is more supportive of Hezbollah's interests than both Siniora's plan and the first draft resolution. Indeed, the initial intention of both Fuad Siniora and the US Administration was to issue a

resolution under Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN, which would authorize the use of force, says Timur Göksel who was consulted during the preparation of the resolution. However, he continues, this was not possible due to a possible reaction from Hezbollah and Siniora was finally convinced to present a more moderate text which also considered Hezbollah's sensitivities (Interview with Göksel 2015). For instance, there is no direct reference to the disarmament of Hezbollah in UNSCR 1701 by mentioning its name and it is not a pre-condition for a ceasefire, whereas the Seven-Point Plan proposed the disarmament as pre-condition to end the war. This shows how Hezbollah was capable of pursuing its interests and succeeded even in international platforms. Although the resolution "*emphasizes the importance of the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory…. for it to exercise its full sovereignty, so that there will be no weapons without the consent of the Government of Lebanon and no authority other than that of the Government of Lebanon*", the disarmament was left to the consent of the government. When one considers the process of decision making in the cabinet, the disarmament of Hezbollah is almost impossible because there is no possibility to reach an agreement on this issue without Hezbollah's consent. For this reason, Hezbollah did not reject this statement in the Resolution because since they hold two ministries in the government they have right to influence the decisions on the issue of disarmament. Mahmoud Qumati, a member of Hezbollah's political bureau, explains that having two posts in the cabinet where unanimity is necessary, Hezbollah insisted to preserve the issue of disarmament as purely internal matter, to be discussed in time as the state and the LAF has strengthen (International Crisis Group 2007, p.2). After all, Hezbollah found a legitimate ground where it could justify its militia against aggressive Israel and mostly brought an end to the discussion of its weapons for another period of time.

In conclusion, from perspective of Lebanese government resolution can be regarded as positive foreign policy result in general because it brought an end to the war and the deployment of the LAF, also it called for disarmament of all groups. However, in practice, it suffered from certain deficiencies. The foremost

among them is the divisions among the government members on the final draft and the making of UN Resolution to satisfy Hezbollah which weakened the government's image.

5.4. TOO MUCH GLORY, TOO MUCH FEAR

At the beginning of the war, the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers was disputed among Lebanese, even in Shia community. In other words, there were questions whether the kidnapping had really been worth it due to the great destruction in mainly Shia populated south Lebanon. However, according to Salloukh, as Hezbollah resisted against the invasion and the marginalization of Hezbollah by the leaders of other sectarian groups became visible, Shia public turned themselves to the leadership of Nasrallah in defense of sectarian privileges (Salloukh 2009, pp.146–147). Especially the silent and inert positions of Saad Hariri and Prime Minister Siniora were interpreted as a tacit approval for the invasion in the hope for obliteration of the resistance as mentioned above, which triggered a reaction especially among Shias. Additionally, according to the International Crisis Group based on a number of interviews in Lebanon, Shia clerics had presented the war in such a way that Israel's actions were not only directed against Shias in order to cleanse the south but also targeted all Lebanon (International Crisis Group 2007, p.5). Nasrallah benefited from this perception in order to consolidate his power within his community and to transform it to a broader framework that the elimination of resistance would lead to elimination of Shias, which in turn means the destruction of all Lebanon by Israelis. In other words, although Hezbollah miscalculated the Israel's reaction, Nasrallah became successful to transform the war to legitimize Hezbollah as a credible force in the eyes of the public at least.

Out of the war, Hezbollah presented itself as the *true resistance movement.* During the field study, one of the interviewees, who requested anonymity, reported that a Hezbollah representative told him after the war that "*they stop to be mutewali, now they were the real defender and the representative of Islam*"

(Interview 2016).[129] In addition to the withdrawal of May 2000, Hezbollah's military achievement in this war has enormously increased its political prestige inside and outside Lebanon at the expense of Lebanese government and contributed to the consolidation of Shia political stature, positioning them at the center of the decision-making process (Hazran 2009, p.4). Prados also adds that Hassan Nasrallah acquired a folk hero status for mainly two reasons: his organization's military power and its ability to initiate disaster relief projects far more quickly and efficiently than state institutions (Prados 2007, p.20). However its unilateral action to initiate the war, its military capacity to wage war against Israel unilaterally and to become successful to a great extent concerned non-Shia leaders as well, where sectarian identities and interests came into the scene (Altunışık 2007, p.14). Although this perception also found its ground in public wide, criticisms against Hezbollah among elites were deeper and cross-sectarian. Although Nasrallah tried to cool down the tension between Sunni and Shia communities, from Sunni perspective under the leadership of Hariri family and its loyalists, Hezbollah with its arsenal has always been a possible threat to them. In line with this, while a considerable part of Lebanese people thought that Hezbollah won the war, at least half of them still demanded Hezbollah to disarm, which includes large majorities among Sunni, Christians and the Druze (Makovsky & White 2006, p.20). Just few days before the end of the war, for instance, the leader of the Kataeb Party Amin Gemayel talked about strategies that would weaken Hezbollah through strengthening other Shia parties in his meeting with the US Ambassador Jeffrey Feltman (US Department of State Cables Beirut 2578 2006). He also challenged the general perception that Hezbollah won and saved Lebanon. On the contrary he stated that;

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[129] The term *mutewali* refered to those communities who accepted Islam from non-Arab people during the early period of spreading Islam, which also includes pejorative meening. The feeling of treatment as lower by others among Shias is very common. In this line for instance, Ayatollah Sayed Ali Al Hakim, a Lebanese Shia cleric who comes from a powerful clerical family, states "The Sunnis treat Shia in the region like second-class citizens" (Abdo 2013a, p.8).

> Druze and the Christians would be out front in holding Hezbollah and specifically Nasrallah, publically accountable for dragging Lebanon through weeks of war. [In addition] Israel has so far mobilized only 25.000 troops and that it has clearly held back from a full-scale invasion, while Hezbollah lost 70% of its physical strength. It hasn't a victory. It has a disaster. We need to reverse the perception (US Department of State Cables Beirut 2578 2006).

Another important Christian leader Samir Geagea criticized Nasrallah after the war by accusing him for acting according to his own selfish agenda and interests. He stated that most of the Lebanese did not feel victory because of a major catastrophe, which made their present and future uncertain and he added final solution could be achieved in Lebanon only if Hezbollah stopped operating as a state within the state (Dakroub 2006)

In addition to Sunni, Druze and Christian political leaders, in one of his interviews, Maronite Patriarch Sfeir also condemned Hezbollah as a proxy for dragging Lebanon into war between the United States and Israel on the one hand, Iran and Syria on the other. Patriarch also criticized General Michel Aoun, one of the most important Maronite politicians, for establishing partnership with Hezbollah for tactical reasons. However, the most important part of this interview was his expression about Hezbollah and its rising power. As the spiritual leader of the Maronites, he expressed his anxiety that "*if Hezbollah should one day take power in Lebanon, the Christians will leave the country in droves*" (Steinvorth & Windfuhr 2006). In other words, too much glory for Hezbollah with its arsenal created an environment for Lebanese Christians to feel themselves under siege. It is for this reason that, one commentator on *The New York Times* argues, that Christians began reestablishing militias and stockpiling weapons again (Cambanis 2007).

5.5. EARLY CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING FOREING POLICIES OF SECTARIAN ACTORS

This chapter covered the regional environment in early 2000s, Israel-Hezbollah War, and the foreign policy preferences and the behaviors of sectarian leaders. In

doing so, it focused mainly on the overlapping battles during the war in terms foreign policy orientations which had repercussions also in domestic politics. It is clearly observed that foreign policy choices of sectarian leaders are heavily shaped by their different visions for Lebanon even in the case of an actual occupation. In brief, Siniora's reaction mainly reflected the perception of March 14 alliance, which was torn between a desire to end Israeli invasion and the hope that this invasion would possibly bring an end to Hezbollah's military force (Khanafer 2013, p.63). Nasrallah's position, on the other hand, was clearer that he carried out the resistance against Israeli army along with a well-developed network of social programs towards those whose lives were severely affected by the attacks. While the Sunni − Shia divide constituted the main issue in Lebanese politics, the Maronite Church mainly concerned for the well-being of Christians especially in the south while Druze leader has his own aspirations.

As mentioned before, Lebanese politics can be studied from two main perspectives and Israel − Hezbollah War is not an exception. The first and the more prevalent one is from a broader framework which pays attention to the wider regional and international settings, while the other approach mainly analyzes sub-state actors and their foreign policy behavior as well as the Lebanese government and the interplay among these actors. Since Lebanon is composed of various confessional groups and therefore open to foreign infiltration, the general tendency in the literature is to study Lebanon as the battlefield of regional and international powers or systemic dynamics and to ignore the inner mechanisms at domestic level. At this point, as discussed in the second chapter, it is believed that a holistic constructivist approach may present an explanatory tool in explaining how domestic identities and interests are important in foreign policy orientations, which treats the domestic and the foreign contexts as two faces of the same process of identity building. The July War clearly demonstrated that it is extremely necessary to understand ideas and perceptions of sectarian leaders and the role played by sectarian identity groups in Lebanon and their behavioral patterns in foreign policy issues.

As covered in this chapter, statements speeches, interviews and policy actions of Lebanese sectarian leaders before, during and after the war demonstrated how identities in Lebanon were diversified and most of the time contradictory, and so the visions and perceptions for Lebanon. Therefore, this study scrutinized how sectarian divisions between these different actors are manifested in Lebanese foreign policy and how these actors framed their foreign policy agendas and shaped the government's foreign policies during the war or determined the environment in which Lebanese government made foreign policy decisions. Due to this fragmented structure in the absence of a national identity, it is also very clear that Lebanese government was so vulnerable to the external pressures because each and every sectarian leader was searching for foreign support. This vulnerability of Lebanese state in foreign policy making can only be understood through an analysis of the behaviors and policy agendas of influential sectarian groups and their leaders, contrary to the main promises of traditional IR theories.

From the course of this study, one may argue that leaders of sectarian groups in Lebanon have mainly three types of foreign policy behavior. To begin with, the traditional foreign policy behavior of any sub-state actor is to pressure the national government in search for its foreign policy goals. Despite the great transformations in the nature of international relations and the rise of non-state actors, it can still be argued that after all nation-state is still one of the most pertinent entity in international relations and in some cases the only legitimate actor. Therefore, as the war demonstrated, sub-state sectarian leaders tried to affect the process of government's foreign policy making and implementation in Lebanon because it is still the preeminent entity carrying out formal relations with the outside world such as being an official participant in the negotiations to end the war. Therefore, sectarian leaders still need to be decision maker in governmental procedures basically through two main ways: by relying their own capabilities or by building foreign alliances to make necessary pressure on the government. The first one is to rely on its social, economic and military capabilities in imposing their foreign policy agendas on the official Lebanese

position. In this regard, during the war, for instance, Nasrallah with a strong militia had a veto power on foreign policy choices vis-à-vis Israel or had right to impose its agenda on the official Lebanese policy as seen in the case of writing UN resolution, which brought the ceasefire. The second mean is the building alliances outside of Lebanon in order to make their international partners pressure on members of government in shaping governmental decisions. One important side of building up relations with external actors from the perspective of sectarian actors is that it allows penetration of Lebanon and repression of domestic rivals from external sources in order to limit their capabilities in government's decision making process. Although there were many examples in this chapter, among others Saad Hariri's relations with Saudi Arabia and with the western powers in this respect could be considered as a good example of limiting Hezbollah on issues like disarmament and the deployment of the LAF in the south, in which it recorded considerable success.

As defined in Chapter 2, another behavioral pattern would be acting as a quasi-state entity. In this type, sectarian actors freely design and establish their foreign policy agendas on behalf of their sectarian groups and this foreign policy behavior can vary from simple meeting with foreign diplomats to starting a war with a foreign country. As stated before, Hezbollah's unilateral attack should be seen from two perspectives. First, it attacked and kidnapped two foreign soldiers and provoked Israel to retaliate massively against Lebanon, which is a vivid foreign policy action. Second, from the perspective of Lebanon, Hezbollah's action was direct challenge to the authority of the Lebanese government, as the sole arbitrator of foreign policy in theory. This challenge, indeed, provided the context to analyze even the relevance of the state in relation to other sovereign states while there are non-state actors taking over its role and emerging as the relevant party for the neighboring state. In addition, they can also develop strong foreign alliances with particular aims and goals like sovereign actors to enhance their both domestic and international statures. In this respect, the July War clearly demonstrated how sectarian leaders in Lebanon bandwagon with foreign powers

in order to enhance their political and confessional interest against their domestic rivals (Khanafer 2013, p.64).

The third pattern mainly stems from the weak nature of the Lebanese state system and the strong nature of sectarian affiliations in the absence of a national identity. First as a historical tradition, Siniora government during the war was far from presenting a coherent position. It was not able either to support Hezbollah's cause or to control its actions. In an institutionally weak state, confessional system allows major sectarian groups to have considerable share in the bureaucracies of the country from lover levels to the high levels, where "state apparatus is divided into fiefdoms of sectarian leaders" (Salloukh 2015, p.5). In other words, they are embedded in the state with official quotas and the state is built around these internal identity groups, which both prevents government from acting as unitary actor and gives sectarian leaders an important amount of power in state institutions parallel to the official hierarchies. As Salloukh affirms, "an employee in the public sector, an officer in any one of the state's multiple security institutions, or even a member of the Constitutional Court will not necessarily act as members of autonomous state institutions, but are more likely to act as protégés and clients of sectarian leaders" (Salloukh 2015, p.7), where nepotism based on sectarianism is the determining factor in bureaucratic careers rather than meritocracy (Salloukh 2008, p.300).

In this respect, the analysis of the July War from foreign policy perspective showed that there were multiple lines of sectarian loyalties in the state bureaucracy, which prevented the deployment of the army in the south against Israel. This is indeed the case of negative action as defined in Chapter 2. Since there are no common agreed mechanisms/procedures and a common aspiration, the implementation of any state decision heavily depends on the will and determination of bureaucrats, whose loyalties mainly defined by their sectarian identities, which should remind us the aforementioned discussion on the deployment of the LAF. The second one, which is named as *positive action* in this thesis, is that confessional leaders may utilize the capabilities of state for the

interests of their communities when they are holding a kind of power or an official post. In other words, sub-state sectarian actors use state capabilities to reach out their sectarian agendas through state capabilities. Since the prime minister is mainly representing the March 14 alliance under the influence of Saad Hariri in this case, Siniora initiated certain programs and proposals in accordance with the interests of Sunni leaders against Hezbollah on behalf of the Lebanese state in different international platforms without receiving the consent of President Lahoud and other members of the government. Siniora's Seven-Point Plan, for instance, is a very clear example in understanding how Sunni prime minister manipulated the official Lebanese position according to his sectarian and domestic concerns *vis-à-vis* other competing sectarian communities.

In addition to the patterns of foreign policy behavior, it should also be noted that sectarian identities construct leaders' foreign policy choices because they shape their perceptions about the ongoing developments in both domestic and regional politics. Therefore, the perception of regional and international balance of power, strength and deepness of their regional and international alliances are important in formulating, implementing and framing foreign policy agendas. The perception of Israel – Hezbollah War itself as a part of broader regional and international developments was important in shaping foreign policy behavior of the leaders of sub-state sectarian groups as seen in this chapter. In this respect, Israel-Hezbollah War, according to Zisser, was not perceived as another Arab-Israeli war, but Iranian - Israeli conflict especially among the Sunni leaders (Zisser 2011, p.14). Regarding the regional context, presented at the very beginning of the analysis, any positive result on the side of Hezbollah in this conflict was regarded from Sunni perspective as a direct challenge to the existing regional balance of power in favor of Shia Iran. It is therefore that the possibility of Hezbollah's victory caused Sunni leaders both in Lebanon and in the Middle East to criticize Hezbollah's actions in a way that was perceived as even pro-Israel. Related to this, it should also be noted that the main driving force in the behaviors of sectarian leaders during the war was their interest calculations based on their

relationally constructed sectarian identities from constructivist approach. The anti-Iranian policy which manifested itself in Lebanese politics as anti-Hezbollah strategy by major Sunni leaders complied with a classic balance of power logic, according to which other regional actors would ally in order to balance Iran at regional level, and Hezbollah in Lebanese context (Valbjørn & Bank 2007, p.7).

In brief, Israel - Hezbollah War once again showed how internal and foreign struggles among both domestic and foreign powers overlap to construct Lebanese foreign policy and how leaders of confessional groups disagree on defining the enemy, the ally, and the country's foreign policy orientation. This whole discussion again takes the reader to the substantial argument about the multiplicity of foreign policies in Lebanon as continuously emphasized during this research (Salem 1994, p.72; Salamé 1988, p.347; Salloukh 2008, p.284; Bloomquist et al. 2011, p.9; Wilkins 2013, pp.42–43). The ineffective nature of Lebanese state[130] coincided with the independent and autonomous sectarian leaders having various identities and affiliations cause the emergence of various foreign policy goals during the war. Israel - Hezbollah War deepened the sectarian divisions because after all, as argued by Luomi, Hezbollah's success was perceived by major Sunni powers both in and out of Lebanon as a wake-up call and an extension of Iranian power (Luomi 2008). Jumblatt stated that Hezbollah failed to offer this victory to Lebanese, but rather they choose to keep it for themselves, which deepen the concerns about Hezbollah's arsenal in other sectarian communities. In the end, he continued, the victory deepen the divisions between Hezbollah and others, which still continues (Interview with Jumblatt 2016). Whatever the public sympathy to Hezbollah due to its resistance against Israel, Hezbollah's agenda concerning the

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[130] In addition to the structural weaknesses, these offices such as the presidency, prime ministry, the council of ministers are highly depend on those who hold the office in particular time. Legally speaking, contrary to the early settlement, Sunni Prime Minister has been strengthen in foreign policy issues with the Taif Accord. Additionally, the Council of Ministers is also enhanced by more power with the Taif Accord, yet whatever the institutional and legal capacities, the cabinet generally functions as a platform for sectarian leaders to discuss foreign policy issues, rather than as being the real executive power. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants plays a minor role, according to Salloukh, which is not more that articulating technical procedures like liaising diplomatic missions in Beirut, serving Lebanese expatriates and dealing with the execution of commercial and economic agreements (Salloukh 2008, p.299).

war had been deeply criticized especially by the elites. Allegations about the close link between Iran and Hezbollah and Hezbollah's unilateral action, despite the fact that it had granted governmental seat in the cabinet, raised the sectarian concerns and deepen the rift between Shias on the one hand, and Sunnis and Christians on the other. That rift has deepened as Hezbollah's opposition against the disarmament of its militia became more concrete. Having a very strong military capability compared to a non-state actor, Hezbollah started to be perceived as an existential threat by other confessional leaders and groups. In this kind of political conjuncture with full of sectarian conflicts and failures of credible commitments and mutual trust among sectarian groups, the existence of Hezbollah's arsenal shaped both the intra-communal tensions and major sectarian leaders' perceptions of the war. According to David Lake and Donald Rothchild, the security dilemma lies in situations where one or more disputing parties have incentives to resort to preemptive use of force (Lake and Rothchild, cited in Geukjian 2008, p.145). Only in this context one can fully understand the fear that Hezbollah's weapon has caused among other Lebanese confessional groups. More openly, Christian, Druze and Sunni leaders saw that Hezbollah's arsenal, as a possible existential threat, had the capacity and ability to fight against Israel so in any time it desires, these weapons might turn against them as experienced in May 2008. Therefore their foreign policy agendas were shaped by this perception and they try to trigger their international partners to make pressure on the issue of disarmament. It is for this reason that Fuad Siniora, Saad Hariri, Walid Jumblatt and Patriarch Sfeir had continuously raised the issue of Hezbollah's weapons in their meetings, speeches and interviews. The degree of the perception of existential threat is so central that many of them have got engaged in continuous contacts with foreign powers to urge them to target Hezbollah's arsenal and this issue would be the center of political discussions in the following years, until both the regional and domestic settings are going to be reshaped by the civil war in Syria, which would be scrutinized as a case study in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

SECTARIAN LEADERS IN SYRIAN CIVIL WAR:
DEEPENING OF SECTARIAN FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATIONS

After the analysis of Israel – Hezbollah War in the previous chapter, Chapter 6 intends to examine the impact of Syrian civil war on Lebanon, the perceptions of sectarian communities towards the civil war in Syria and their foreign policy stances towards the ongoing developments. In order to understand the nature of informal relations of sectarian groups with their preferred international partners and their strategies about foreign policy issues, the Syrian civil war has provided a perfect example considering the complex transnational relations between these two countries and their direct involvement in the war. It was a very well-known fact that Lebanon would be affected by the coming political and social earthquake from the beginning of the uprising in Syria because each and every actor in Lebanon has traditional and very deep relations with certain groups in Syria, which would prevent them to be able to stay aside. It is also important to note that since the main aim is to elaborate the nature of behavioral patterns and alliances of major sectarian leaders as units of analysis in foreign policy studies, the Syrian civil war will be elaborated from this perspective and only the important events and cornerstones in Syrian crisis will be mentioned in this chapter.

Additionally, since the main subject matter of this thesis is not the war itself, but the foreign policy positions of Lebanese actors towards the war, it is quite reasonable to determine a time period to study, in which all actors have clarified their positions in this case study. Because the war itself continues now and any

possible solutions seems to be less possibility in the near future, it is highly necessary to determine a definite time period to study and leave the other post developments for future researchers. In this respect, the period from March 2011, when the social uprising started as peaceful demonstrations, to the middle of 2013 is considered adequate to understand the full realization of the positions of Lebanese sectarian actors. At this point the Battle of Al Qusayr in April 2013, where Syrian government forces has re-taken the town in Homs from the armed opposition groups, can be considered as a turning point event in the Syrian civil war in terms of the participation of Lebanese actors. During the government's operations against the armed opposition groups in Al Qusayr, the involvement of Hezbollah was direct and played key role in the battle. Therefore, the battle of Al Qusayr is considered as the major event and a departure from Hezbollah's previous involvement in Syria in terms of both the nature and the extent of the participation and the conduct of the operations (Sullivan 2014, p.4; International Crisis Group 2014, p.7). Since Hezbollah's involvement became clear and acknowledged to such extent, all other parties in Lebanon clarified their foreign policy positions towards the civil war in the neighboring country. For these reasons, the period between March 2011 and mid-2013 will be covered in this chapter in order to analyze foreign policy orientations and the perceptions of Lebanese leaders and the role of sectarian identity in these political stances.

As in the previous case study, Chapter 6 starts with the elaboration of the major developments in the region and in the Lebanese politics on the eve of the uprising in Syria. Then, it continues with the early reactions in Lebanon towards the developments in Syria. As will be discovered, it is again Hezbollah and its leader Hassan Nasrallah, which determine the main line in Lebanese politics concerning the uprising in Syria. The chapter, therefore, will continuously elaborate the intensification of the involvement of Hezbollah in Syrian affairs and the reactions from both the government and other sectarian leaders. It is also very important to note at the very beginning that the situation in Syria has mainly evolved in response to both internal dynamics and policies of regional and international

powers. Therefore the importance of regional actors and theirs relations with Lebanese leaders, primarily neighboring and major states in Middle East like Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Qatar, will be included in the study. Finally, this chapter is going to present early conclusions derived from the analysis before the concluding chapter, where final analysis and arguments will be presented.

6.1. THE RISE OF SECTARIANISM IN THE REGION ON THE EVE OF THE POPULAR UPRISINGS IN THE ARAB WORLD

The rivalry for regional hegemony, as mentioned before, between two poles of the Middle East has been intensifying since the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. The so-called Arab Spring has complicated and intensified this rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia and their respective allies both at the regional and international level. It is now being played in all around the Middle East, such as Iraq, the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Yemen, Lebanon, and more severely in Syria. The sectarianization of the regional contest and the instrumental use of sectarian identities for these geopolitical ends have militarized this rivalry and deepen the sectarian affiliations and enmities, which in some cases turned into a civil war between various communities (Salloukh 2013, p.32). The popular uprisings in the Arab world emerged in such a regional environment towards the end of 2010 due to mainly internal economic and social problems in Tunisia. The regional settings have drastically changed when Tunisians rose up in December 2010, which resulted in the overthrow of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Popular protests quickly spread throughout the Middle East in Egypt, Bahrain, Libya and Yemen. In addition, as Altunışık argues, once they had started as an internal development, they were mostly directed and shaped by regional and global developments and actors (Altunışık 2012). It was in this regional context that Syrian uprising broke out. In early 2011, the political, economic, and social grievances in Syria have manifested themselves as relatively limited demonstrations, demanding political and economic reforms. Although they were few in numbers in terms of participants, the detention of a group of boys in Daraa and regime's harsh

responses to protests with increasing repression sparked larger and angrier demonstrations and the opposition evolved into armed rebellion and began to call for the overthrow of the regime immediately.

As Patrick Seale competently explains the power struggle in Syria in the broader context of regional politics in one of the most seminal works on Syria, Syria has generally been at the hearth of regional rivalries (Seale 1965). Having in mind the regional contest since 2003, Syria again became the center of the regional and international competition for hegemony. As Salloukh argues Washington and its regional allies, Riyadh and Ankara, viewed Damascus as an indispensable actor, which should be controlled because Syria provided Tehran with opportunity to project its political power in the region and to transfer its material capabilities along Israel's borders through linking it with Hezbollah and Hamas with its geopolitical location. Additionally, Syria was also perceived as a potential challenge to the interests of Washington and Riyadh with its very close and unbalanced links in Lebanon (Salloukh 2013, pp.38–39). From the other side of the coin, Syria is also very central and one of the major pillars of its regional hegemony in the Middle East for Iran, as continuously mentioned in the previous chapters. Saudi Arabia's stance vis-à-vis the situation in Syria was mainly shaped by its own regional calculations from the perspective of containing Iran's power in the region (Salloukh 2013, p.40). This foreign policy does not only include direct military, financial and political means but also involve leading other regional actors including Lebanese ones towards its foreign policy objectives. After the transformation of peaceful protest movements into a bloody civil war in Syria, the use of sectarianism as an instrument of regional policy became dominant in Saudi discourse and it tried to isolate Iran and its Arab allies based on sectarian identity in the hope for toppling *Alawite* regime in Damascus. Without doubt, its Lebanese ally, the Future Movement, could not isolate itself from this regional strategy to reorient Syria away from the axis of resistance towards the Saudi-US camp (Salloukh 2013, p.41). More openly the regional rivalry has manifested itself in Syria as a competition between two contradictory aims; the

toppling of Alawite regime to replace it with a Sunni partner from Saudi perspective and preserving it at all costs from Iranian side.

This regional geopolitics transformed Syrian issue from a political reform movement into first an armed struggle, and then a very violent civil war. Heydemann in this respect argues that regional Sunni dominated countries saw the possible fall of Assad regime as a geopolitical opportunity to build a setback for Iran's regional ambitions and might create a successor government more sympathetic to them. On the other hand, he continues, Iran perceived a growing threat from the spread of uprising in Syria for its power in the Arab world (Heydemann 2013, p.3). Therefore the uprising in Syria unleashed dormant sectarian tensions and cleavages within Syrian society, and has spilled over into Lebanon.

6.2. THE NEW LEBANESE GOVERNMENT FACED WITH SYRIAN CRISIS

The sectarianization of Iraq and its subsequent regional ramifications, the assassination of Rafiq Hariri, Hezbollah's takeover of Beirut in May 2008 and the overthrow of Saad Hariri-led government in January 2011 have all accumulated growing aggressiveness among various sectarian communities in Lebanon, especially between Sunnis and Shias. In addition to the increasing resentments between Sunnis and Shias, other sectarian groups increasingly perceive themselves as endangered minorities (Bahout 2013, p.3; Diwan & Chaitani 2015, p.10). Both Christians and the Druze feel themselves marginalized in this lethal polarization both at Lebanese and regional context. Therefore it can rightly be argued that sectarian tensions within the Lebanese political scene have spiked on the eve of the popular uprisings in the Middle East (Cammett 2013, p.1; Sater 2012, pp.4–5; Bahout 2014a, p.4).

During the beginning of popular uprisings in the Arab world, Lebanon was in the middle of another political crisis due to the upcoming submission of funds to the UN Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL), which was rejected by Hezbollah.[131] The rejection of Hezbollah turned out to be a governmental crisis as March 8 ministers resign to bring down Hariri's government, which refused to cut his cabinet's ties with the STL (The Daily Star 2015b). Then, Hezbollah brought down the government of Saad Hariri in January 2011, but he remained caretaker Prime Minister for another couple of months until June 2011, when Najib Miqati formed Hezbollah-led government.

Although establishing national unity governments including representatives of all major factions became a custom in Lebanon, it was not possible for Miqati, nominated by Hassan Nasrallah, Michel Aoun and Walid Jumblatt. In other words, forming the new government was not an easy task for Miqati due to the rising sectarian contentions and rejections of March 14 alliance to participate. After a series of intense negotiations, Miqati government was announced on 13 June 2011 and it was the coalition of March 8 parties and Walid Jumblatt. In order to understand the foreign policy choices of Miqati, the nomination of him and the power balance of his government are highly important. The nomination of Miqati in January 2011 was the direct expression of the power shift in Lebanon from Sunni dominated anti-Syrian Future Movement to Shia Hezbollah on the eve of the uprising.

In the very early phases of the uprising in Syria, almost all political and sectarian factions were mostly agreed on the idea that Lebanon's core interests in Syria stem from Syria's stability since it is necessary for the stability in Lebanon and

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[131] The Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) was established in March 2009 to hold trials for the people accused of carrying out the assignation of Rafiq Hariri in line with UN Resolutions. Although the tribunal was formed at the request of Lebanese Prime Minister, it was never ratified by the Lebanese government. The tribunal is comprised of international and Lebanese judges. Currently funding for the STL comes 51% from voluntary contributions and 49% from Lebanon. The funding and the operation system of STL have been continuously subject to severe debates in Lebanese politics. For further information, please visit the official website of the tribunal: http://news.specialtribunalforlebanon.com/en/.

well-functioning of bilateral economic relations (Yacoubian 2011). Due to imbalanced historic relations, the political stability in Lebanon is deeply depended on the fate of Syria's stability. From the opposite perspective, a possible widespread instability in Syria means breaking up the fragile status-quo in Lebanon. On the side of economic interests, two countries have complex economic ties that transcend borders. Therefore the economic prosperity is very much related with the stable relations between these two countries. Therefore it is assumed that from any Lebanese government perspective, the foremost priority concerning Syria in its foreign policy objectives is its stability. In line with this perspective, Prime Minister Najib Miqati tried to balance the Lebanese position in the early days of Syrian crisis in order to maintain a continuous contact with other prominent political players from March 14 and to keep Lebanon off from Syrian crisis.

Before going into the details of foreign policy positions of sectarian leaders during the popular uprisings in the Arab world and Syrian civil war, it would be quite reasonable to start with the official foreign policy of Lebanese government in the early days of the crisis. When one talks about the foreign policy means and capabilities of Lebanese government concerning the developments in Syria, it should be noted that Lebanese government has very limited capabilities if not none. Therefore, in line with limited capabilities, Miqati's choice was purely the disassociation from Syrian issue such as being absent in the international meetings about Syria since the primary concern is to minimize fallouts of Syrian war (Yacoubian 2011). This stance had two basic reasons with the calculation of current regional and domestic balance of power: The first one is afore mentioned reality that most of Lebanese governments faced with. The imbalanced relation between Syria and Lebanon caused Lebanese governments to be ineffective in their foreign policy formulations about Syria. The second reason is the deeply paralyzed and fragmented political nature of Lebanese politics especially on the issue of Syria, as covered in the previous chapters. As a result, Miqati resorted to one of the oldest principle in the Lebanese foreign policy discourse since the early

days of independence, namely neutrality with regard to the situation in Syria (Hopkins 2012, pp.5–6). Within this line, Lebanon did choose to be absent from voting in the meeting of the UN and the Arab League.[132]

Concerning the foreign policy choices of Miqati, one also needs to note the fact that even though Najib Miqati was under the influence of March 8 alliance, and Hezbollah in specific, he was a Sunni prime minister after all. As a Sunni leader, he tried to distance himself from Damascus in this crisis as much as possible, because he was also under the constant pressure from his Sunni powerbase in the northern Lebanon and Sunni patrons in Riyadh[133]. Indeed it can easily be said that though the civil war in Syria is a very real challenge to the stability in Lebanon, with a balanced foreign policy position towards Syria, Najib Miqati can be regarded successful in preserving the internal peace in Lebanon and keeping the country and the government aside by this crisis as much as possible especially in the early stages (Barnes-Dacey 2012, p.2). However, Miqati's efforts to dissociate Lebanon form Syria were jeopardized by contradictory perceptions and orientations of different sectarian groups in the country, even by the members of his cabinet.

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[132] It is reported that President Michel Suleiman and Prime Minister Najib Miqati agreed to detach Lebanon from the draft UN resolution through remaining absent in voting, which severely criticized Syria. Ambassador Nawaf Salam, Lebanon's Special Envoy to UN, explained Lebanese stance with the following statement: "*in order to protect Lebanon's unity and stability, it abstains from voting*" (Naharnet Newsdesk 2011). This statement alone, indeed, demonstrates the political quandary that the Lebanese government is in. The official foreign policy choice of Lebanon in UN meeting was indeed a balancing act in responding to domestic balance of power of the country. Though both Prime Minister and the Speaker of the Parliament were pro-Syrian politicians at that time, it was more or less balanced by President Michel Suleiman, who was regarded as neutral (Hopkins 2012, p.5).

[133] It is reported that Prime Minister Najib Miqati stated once in his interview: "when we pray, we look toward Mecca, my political direction is Saudi Arabia" (International Crisis Group 2012, p.17).

6.3. DIVERGENCES IN LEBANESE PERCEPTIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CRISIS

Independent from the government, various political factions based on their sectarian identities have different aspirations about the future of Syria and Assad regime. An important survey conducted in early 2012 demonstrated that only 53 % of Lebanese agreed that Bashar Assad should step down compared to nearly 90 % in other Arab countries like Jordan, Egypt and Tunisia. This result might mislead any researcher because although the Lebanese people in general seem balanced on the issue, a closer look to the poll results revealed the real reason behind this balanced position. When one looks at the opinion of different sectarian communities, the deep fragmentation in the society along with sectarian identities rose to the surface, where contradictory foreign policy orientations between different sectarian groups can be observed easily. For instance, more than three-quarters (80%) of the Sunni population voiced that Assad should step down, as do more than half (67%) of the Christian community. But 97 % of Shias has favorable opinion of the Syrian leader, and only 3 % of Shias thought that he should step down (Pew Research Center, cited in Khazai & Hess 2013, pp.4–5). These figures are considered very substantial to understand how the sectarian identity shapes the perception of the community towards a leader of neighboring country and how Lebanon's population is divided over the faith of Syrian leader in line with confessional groups since Assad is a member of the Alawite division of Shia Islam.

Although the government tried to dissociate Lebanon from Syrian crisis at least on the paper, political uncertainty and the unrest on the side of Sunni community in Lebanon due to the conflicting aspirations about Syria culminated in public demonstrations and the early clashes in the northern city of Tripoli in June 2011 between Sunnis and small minority Alawite group can be considered as the early repercussions of the Syrian crisis (International Crisis Group 2012, p.17). As the mirror of their communities, the reactions of leading sectarian leaders have also varied from supporting the regime fully to joining to the calls for the overthrow of

Assad regime. It can be argued that the immediate effect of Syrian crisis was the exacerbation of political and sectarian divide between the supporters of Syrian regime and those anti-Assad because, as put forward by International Crisis Group, March 14 and March 8 coalitions interpreted Syrian case from contradictory perspectives: almost a dream coming true on the one side of Sunnis, while a potential apocalyptical nightmare for Shias and Hezbollah most specifically (Ellis & Guckenberg 2012, p.10; International Crisis Group 2012, p.i). The division on the future of Syria manifested itself in Lebanese politics as a split into two camps, those that are pro-Hezbollah and those that are against Hezbollah. In a more clear explanation Hezbollah, Amal and Christian Free Patriotic Movement supported Assad, while members of March 14 alliance have denounced Syrian regime. In this split, while Walid Jumblatt had supported the formation of the Miqati government in alliance with Hezbollah, he has taken a more ambiguous stance on the issue of Syria, which will be covered below.

6.3.1. Hassan Nasrallah's Early Comments: Divine Uprisings except in Syria

When the extent of the so-called Arab Spring had not been yet to be known, Hezbollah and media affiliated with it had constructed a discourse to suit their agenda that as if Arab peoples were started to reject western puppet governments which Hezbollah had been waging a war for decades for "*the new Middle East created by its own people*" (Ellis & Guckenberg 2012, p.3 and 16; Alagha 2015, p.45; Yacoubian 2011). To illustrate, Hassan Nasrallah declared his full support for popular demonstrations in the Arab street in his speech on 7 February 2011 by saying that;

> We are gathering here to announce our solidarity, and our standing side by side in support of the people of Egypt, and before we stood side by side in support of the people of Tunisia. You are waging the war of Arab dignity. Today, with your voices, blood and steadfastness, you are retrieving the dignity of the Arab people; the dignity which was humiliated by some rulers of the Arab world for decades (Nasrallah 2011c).

Contrary to this stance, Hassan Nasrallah gave a speech on 25 May 2011, where he acknowledged his support for the regime in Damascus when protests had just started in Syria. This speech is considered as important not only because Nasrallah acknowledged his party's support to Assad in this case but also because he framed the nature of this support. Nasrallah revealed how he interpreted what is happening in Syria by stating that;

> One of the factors that form our stance is that toppling the regime in Syria is an American and Israeli interest meaning toppling the regime in Syria and exchanging it with another regime, similar to the Arab moderate regimes which are ready to sign a peace and submission agreement with Israel. Another factor that constitutes our stance is what Syria means to Lebanon as what happens there has its repercussions on Lebanon and results on having repercussions on the region as a whole (Nasrallah 2011b).

He additionally explained Hezbollah's stance in backing Assad regime with four reasons. In his words, these are Syrian efforts for Lebanon in defending and maintaining its unity throughout history, Syria's stance regarding Israel, Syria's position towards American and Israeli plans about the Middle East, and the dedication of Bashar Assad to implement reforms (Nasrallah 2011b). It is clearly understood from his speech that Nasrallah links the ongoing developments with the regional balance of power and the political balance in Lebanon and explains Hezbollah's support for the regime in Damascus with references to regional and international balance of power. Nasrallah perceives the possible fall of Assad would change the regional balance of power in the interests of Israel and the US, which was perceived as a direct threat to Hezbollah, a perception that many analysts agree on (Hopkins 2012, pp.11–12; Ellis & Guckenberg 2012, pp.37–38; Khazai & Hess 2013; International Crisis Group 2014, p.3). Another important element in Nasrallah's speech is the reference to the historical alliance with Bashar Assad because one of the reasons presented in the speech for backing Assad is to redeem the old liabilities to Syrian regime due to its historical efforts in defending Lebanon. In line with this perception of Syrian crisis, Nasrallah did not also hesitate to acknowledge Hezbollah's actions about Syria independent from Lebanese government. In other words, he also explained what backing

Assad meant in different speeches in 2011: commitment to the stability, security and safety of Syria, call for Syrian people to cooperate for dialogue, and rejection of international sanctions imposed on Syria. As easily understood, Nasrallah framed a kind of foreign policy as a sovereign actor (Nasrallah 2011b; Nasrallah 2011a).

In another speech in June 2011, Nasrallah again linked the efforts to bring the Syrian regime down with the interests of Israel and the US. Later, he would also link the emergence of jihadist groups in Syria with the policies of these powers. He states, for instance, that; *"if Syria falls into the hands of America, Israel and takfiris, the resistance will be besieged and Israel will enter Lebanon and impose its will"* (Nasrallah, cited in Fisk 2013). In this regard, the possible fall of Assad regime was perceived as a threat to Hezbollah at the regional level. In other words, Nasrallah was continuously integrating the party's message on Syria with the broader regional settings along with its traditional alliances.

To conclude, as observed easily, Hezbollah stance has dramatically changed when the uprisings reached to the gates of Damascus, which has been its strategic ally. This change, indeed, was not only related with the Secretary General or some high ranks of Hezbollah. On the contrary, Hezbollah members, including those criticize the unbalanced relation between Syria and Hezbollah, demonstrated a full integrity in assisting Syrian regime, since its downfall was considered as an existential threat because, as many note, the very existence of Hezbollah as it is now heavily depends on its relations with Syria and Iran militarily, financially, ideologically, and politically so given their fear of what the demise of regime would cause, Shia position including both Hezbollah and Amal is to back Assad in spite of the possible risks in Lebanon (Samii 2008, pp.32–33; Diwan & Chaitani 2015, p.11). However, it should be also noted here that in the early stages of Syrian crisis, Nasrallah rejected Hezbollah's direct interference in Syrian affairs and denied the accusations that Hezbollah had sent fighters to Syria; rather he tried to frame his foreign policy stance on more diplomatic and peaceful means. Since Hezbollah had overwhelming military power in Lebanon compare to

other Lebanese groups, which had already been subject to severe criticisms, Nasrallah had not wanted to enter into a direct confrontation in Syria to prevent further domestic and regional accusations and isolation.

6.3.2. The Leadership Problem and The Initial Reactions in Sunni Community

Nasrallah's support to the uprisings against Sunni regimes and his severe opposition to the one against Syrian regime were regarded as hypocritical decision by other key sectarian leaders in Lebanon. Therefore, this contradictory stance was severely criticized by leaders of March 14 alliance and they accused Hezbollah for backing a dictatorship just for sectarian concerns. Of all the sectarian actors examined in this thesis, Saad Hariri, the leader of the Sunni Future Movement, was expected to be the one of the most ardent opponents of the Assad regime in Syria when one considers the contentious relations between the Family and Damascus especially since 2005.

The civil war in Syria, however, has caught both the Sunni community and the Future Movement unprepared in terms of leadership and strategy. First, although Saad Hariri took over the leadership after the assassination of his charismatic father, he could not be successful to fill his post and to maintain the continuity of his domestic power. One reason for this was Hariri's self-imposed absence in Lebanon since the early 2011 after his government was toppled. This damaged not only his credibility but also that of the Future Movement. In addition to these, during the field work, it is strongly noticed that the financial power of Hariri Family has also been in decline, which indirectly deteriorates the political power of Hariri in Lebanon (Interviews with Göksel 2015; Chalaq 2016; Rabah 2016b; Salibi 2016). Additionally, one also need to take into consideration that March 14 alliance had lost its cohesion and energy after Syria had retreated from Lebanon militarily because what had united them so strongly was the presence of common *enemy*. In such a conjuncture, the political fragmentation in Sunni community has deepened, where no consensus has emerged on the appropriate response and

strategy towards Syria because they hesitate to have a clear stance between policy options of either backing opposition at all costs or standing aside in this unpredictable crisis (Majidyar 2014a; Perry & Holmes 2014).

From Lebanese Sunni perspective, the turbulence that the region has been witnessing since the early 2000s have been seen as parts of a wider pattern playing out in the Middle East to consolidate Shia dominance and Iranian influence in the region. Within this framework, rapid and cascading changes in the status-quo of the Middle East as a result of the popular uprisings in general and the Syrian political crisis has only amplified this political fragmentation and crystallized sectarian marginalization in Lebanon (Interview with Göksel 2015). In this respect, as widely stated, the possible demise of Assad might mark the end of the tendency of rise of Shia power both in the region and particularly in Lebanon. Additionally, in the current political picture in Lebanon after Taif Accord, Sunni community has perceived Hezbollah as the only real obstacle to acquire privileges promised to them in Taif. Therefore, as stated repetitively, from Sunni perspective, Assad regime was regarded as enemy repressing Sunni politicians in Lebanon and Hezbollah as its important mean for this and therefore, a possible fall of Assad regime is perceived as the key for altering the domestic balance of power in favor of Sunnis. Additionally, from regional balance of power perspective, the possible fall was a rupture in the Syrian-Iranian axis, which would brake Iranian capabilities to infiltrate into Arab, and more specifically Lebanese affairs (Hopkins 2012; International Crisis Group 2012, p.i and 20; Khazai & Hess 2013, p.53; Diwan & Chaitani 2015, p.11).

Makram Rabah concludes that although Sunnis are united in terms of political orientations and aspirations about the future of Syria, their leadership is too weak to demonstrate a determined Sunni stance (Interview with Rabah 2016b). Hariri could not go further from showing his sympathy to the uprising, at least publically. For instance, in early 2012 the Future Movement published a policy paper arguing that Beirut Spring of 2005 is the father of the Arab Spring of 2011 (Vloeberghs 2012, p.246). Yacoubian also argues that Hariri, especially in the

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early phase, tried to balance his position that while opposing to Assad, he did not want to provoke Syrian ire if the regime would survive and he strongly denies accusations about financing and supporting the Syrian opposition militarily (Yacoubian 2011). It is also not considered impossible that his allies dedicated themselves to support Syrian opposition tacitly with his covered consent; however Hariri himself has framed a cautious foreign policy strategy and tried to distance himself from these allegations. Therefore, it can be said that the foreign policy position of Saad Hariri failed to shape and lead Sunni community for a clear foreign policy agenda compare to Nasrallah's stance. In addition, as the uprising lasted and the Assad did not fall quickly as many expected and as Hezbollah increased its involvement in Syrian civil war, the ambiguous stance of Hariri would become more challenging for the Future Movement and the absence of Saad Hariri in Beirut, without doubt, deteriorated his leadership role further.

6.3.3. Patriarch Boutros Rai as the Voice of Maronites

Patriarch Moran Bechara Boutros Rai was elected as the head of the Maronite Church on 15 March 2011 with more than two-thirds of the bishops (Interview with Anonymous Maronite Priest 2016) and the new Patriarch found the growing crisis in the neighboring country on his immediate agenda. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the Maronite Church under the leadership of Patriarch Sfeir was one of the leading actors, which organizes the oppositionist politicians and intellectuals under Church's auspices during 2000s. Although the Church emerged as the leading figure against Syrian presence in Lebanon, the popular uprising in Syria and the subsequent armed clashes presented challenges to the Maronite spiritual leadership in determining its foreign policy stance in two respects.

First, although the Church was historically against Syrian continuous infiltration into Lebanon, it has not considered the regime in Damascus problematic by its nature (Interview with Khazen 2016). To make it clear with Patriarch's words, he defined the Syrian regime as "*the closest thing to democracy in the Arab* world" in addition to his warnings that the fall of the government and a possible rise of

the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria threatened Christians across the region (Star 2011; Dakroub 2011; Nakhoul 2012). From Church's perspective, the well-being of Christians in the Levant is the primary concern, and in this respect, Assad regime is not considered as dangerous for the existence of Christians in Syria due to its secular nature.

Second, Maronite Church has faced with a deep division within Maronite political elites on the issue of Syria. Despite a conventional expectation, key Maronite leaders have presented a contradictory picture to their public on the issue of Syria (Interview with Rabah 2016b). Amine Gemayel, the leader of the Kataeb Party, adopted a policy of positive neutrality in response to the Syrian conflict in spite of the historical enmity of his family to Assad regime. In one of his interviews, he explains the causes for his neutrality, two of them worth mentioning. First, he argues that since the conflict in Syria had been internationalized, Lebanon would be under the pressure of this international contest if they are also involved into Syrian affairs. Secondly and more importantly, he addressed the internal division on the issue of Syria in Lebanese public depending on sectarian affiliations. He expressed his concerns that any involvement might turn into an internal conflict in Lebanon between various communities (Nassif 2012). It is important to note that this foreign policy choice does not directly stem from his preference about the faith of Syrian regime; rather the reason of Kataeb Party's neutrality was the uncertainty over the conflict's outcomes and its possible spill-over effect on Lebanon as a true civil war. The leader of Lebanese Forces Samir Geagea, on the other hand, has framed a very critical political stance towards Assad's regime. Michel Aoun, lastly, is particularly important because his party represents at least half of the Christian population. Member of Aoun's party in the parliament Farid Khazen stated that Aoun had been in favor of a settlement between the parties initially. However, he continued, as the armed clashes turned into a sectarian war and the opposition started to be dominated by Sunni extremists, Aoun needed to reformulate his foreign policy position towards the ongoing developments because extremist groups has been threatening the existence of the Christian

community in Syria (Interview with Khazen 2016).[134] Then he started to criticize the uprising explicitly and backed the Syrian regime. Aoun also linked the future of Christians in both Syria and Lebanon to the fate of the regime. More explicitly, he states that "the fall of the regime will be the fall of democracy and the Christians will be the first victims" (Lebanon Files 2012), a view that is also shared by the Church

Having concerned with the fate of Christians in Syria and faced with the political division in the Maronite community, the Patriarchate has sided with the easement of the tension in the early stages and applied a policy of *"wise silence"*, as termed by Rabah, despite its legacy of tense relations with Damascus historically and its alliance with the anti-Syrian March 14 Alliance (Interviews with Göksel 2015; Rabah 2016b). Because Khazen mentioned that Patriarch Rai's priority is the stability in Lebanon and the Church was heavily concerned with a possible spill-over effect (Interview with Khazen 2016) because in a possible civil war it is highly possible that the Christian community would get the biggest harm out of this struggle (Interview with Saglam 2016).

When the protests against Bashar Assad started to be led by mainly militarized Sunni Muslims having some extremists on their sides, Patriarch Rai called for the calm over Syria and urged Christians to offer Assad another chance and to give him enough time to carry out a reform process in September 2011. Additionally, on his personal assessment about Bashar Assad, Patriarch Rai commented that "*he is open-minded person who studied in Europe but he cannot make miracles*" (Star 2011; Dakroub 2011; Nakhoul 2012). The Syrian civil war has brought a new conjuncture to the Middle East and the majority of the Christian community fear that a possible Sunni Islamist government in Damascus might inspire the Lebanese Sunni community (Hopkins 2012, p.6; Yacoubian 2011). In such settings spiritual leader Patriarch Rai continuously expresses his concerns about

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[134] It must also be noted that Aoun was blamed for his foreign policy stance because he is dependent Hezbollah and had no choice, but to follow Nasrallah, to whom his political career and his desire to become president has been depended .

the ongoing developments. On 4 March 2012, for instance, "we are with the Arab Spring but we are not with this spring of violence, war, destruction and killing. This is turning to winter" Patriarch told Reuters. Additionally, in the same interview, he also drew a parallel between what happened in Iraq after 2003 and the current developments in Syria: "*How can it be an Arab Spring when people are being killed every day? They speak of Iraq and democracy, and one million Christians out of an original 1.5 million have fled Iraq. All communities in the Middle East were threatened by war and violence, economic and security crises, but Christians were particularly vulnerable because of their relatively small and dwindling numbers*" Patriarch said. He also expressed his fears about the possibility of a sectarian conflict in Lebanon between Sunnis on the one hand and the Alawites and Shias on the other (Stott & Nakhoul 2012).[135]

Additionally, it is also reported in the field research that during the early period, the Maronite Church invited certain opposition figures to Beirut and some of them were even sent to Rome tacitly in order to learn about their aspirations and plans about the future of Syria. During these meetings, the representatives of the Church were disappointed when they realized that these groups were caught on the wrong foot and did not have any plan or strategy other than a desire to overthrow Assad. The interviewee, who heads a think-tank institute based in Beirut and close to the Maronite community, continued that as a very traditional institution having long history, the Church had enough experience not to trust or invest any effort in someone who does not have any project or strategy except certain pipe dreams (Interview with Anonymous Researcher 2016).

Apart from statements and speeches, on 9 February 2013, Maronite Patriarch visited Damascus and led a praying in an old church in the city. In his speech in the church, he asked all local and regional leaders to put an end to war and bring

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[135] In addition to the changing dynamics of the region in the reign of the current Patriarch, some analysts also draw attention the personal differences between Patriarchs. The current Patriarch Boutros Rai is considered to be more willing to have softer relations with Damascus than the previous one (International Crisis Group 2012, p.6).

peace through dialogue. It was a very symbolic and important visit because it was the first visit to Syria by a Maronite Patriarch since the independence of Lebanon, especially when one considers the growing criticisms to the regime in Damascus (Karouny 2013; Fisk 2014). Therefore, Patriarch's visit was considered as a symbolic support for Assad regime at a time when Christians feel the threat from the rise of political Islam, having potential to replace the reign of ruthless but secular Assad family. Due to the symbolic importance of this visit, Patriarch Rai was criticized severely by the leading newspapers, which are known as pro-Saudi like *Al Sharq Al Awsat*. Just after Patriarch's controversial statement declaring 'Syria as the closest thing to democracy in the Arab world', former editor in chief Tariq Homayed accused Rai for forgetting the main perpetrator of the assassinations against the leading Christian figures in Lebanon in 2005 and for echoing the position of Iran, Hezbollah and the Maliki's regime in Iraq (Homayed 2012).

Concerning Patriarch's position in Syrian crisis, despite Boutros Rai's statements and his visit to Damascus, one needs to be careful about the underlying reasons of the rapprochement. As a Lebanese diplomat said during the field research that "Patriarch Rai hates takfiris more than Assad and therefore his position give such an impression of alliance between these two parties" (Interview with Anonymous Lebanese Diplomat 2015). This argument was also emphasized by the church official who insistently clarified that the visit of the Patriarch is expressing his concern about the sufferings of Christians and it should not be interpreted as a support to any side (Interview with Anonymous Maronite Priest 2016). In addition, the foreign policy stance of the Church is diplomatically successful because it managed to have contact with Syrian Christians and make the regime take care of them more through sustaining this link. Additionally, this foreign policy position should not be considered inconsistent with the historical legacy because what made the Church critical about Syria was not Syrian regime itself; but Syrian penetration into Lebanese affairs which suppressed and marginalized traditional political elites. Khazen summarized this during the interview by saying

that "Christians were against Syrian control of Lebanon, not to Syria itself. What we experienced and what we fought against was a typical case of occupation. We always wanted to be good with Syria as two neighboring states" (Interview with Khazen 2016). Thus, the church's policy can be considered consistent in this respect to preserve the well-being of its community.

The other issue that annoys Patriarchate concerning the Syrian crisis is the issue of Syrians in Lebanon. When the humanitarian crisis in Syria has threatened lives of Syrians, many of them started to seek refuge at abroad. Therefore another direct repercussion of Syrian civil war in Lebanon is the refugee crisis, as any other neighboring country. The refugee crisis is more challenging for Lebanon than others due to its sectarian system and its small population. Firstly, it is the foremost country receiving refugees in terms of rational numbers. With around 4,5 million population, 1.2 million registered Syrian refugees (UNHCR 2015) and plus unregistered ones is a real difficulty to cope with. However, what is more challenging on the issue of refugees is that it is not only a problem in numbers. Due to the confessional system in Lebanon based on proportional representation of various sectarian groups, the influx of Syrians into Lebanon, the vast majority of whom are Sunni and most probably will continue to stay in Lebanon, presented a big challenge to the stability of confessional system. That is why, the Maronite Patriarch Rai also urged Christians of the Levant to stay in the region for the sake of population (The Daily Star 2015a). Therefore, it can be said that from a sectarian perspective, increasing number of Sunnis in Lebanon with the influx of refugees was perceived as a threat by the leaders of other sectarian communities to their existence, mainly Shias and Christians (International Crisis Group 2013, p.14).[136]

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[136] Influx of Syrian Sunnis to Lebanon is a problem also from Shia perspective. Nasrallah saw this refugee influx as a major threat to their advantageous position in terms of population numbers and rejected the creation of Syrian refugee camps in the country (International Crisis Group 2012, p.16; International Crisis Group 2014, p.17).

To conclude, although supporting the Syrian regime was neither easy nor preferred choice, Maronite Patriarch Rai has sided with the continuity of the current regime in Damascus for the sake of the stability and the security of his co-religionists when the replacement of autocratic leaders with radical groups became possible whatever the reactions were. Patriarch's foreign policy choice openly demonstrated the importance of sectarian identity and the idea of preserving the security of Maronites in Syria when his community faced with an existential threat.

6.3.4. Traditional Complex Relation between Families of Jumblatt and Assad

Walid Jumblatt was the leading voice in anti-Syrian camp in Lebanon since 2000 especially after the assassination of Hariri and also held Syrian regime responsible for the assassination of his father Kamal Jumblatt in 1977. However, he moderated his critiques against Syrian regime after his rapprochement with Hezbollah in late 2000s and supported Miqati government along with March 8 Alliance. As famous with his shift of alliances and in turn becoming the real king-maker in Lebanese politics, Jumblatt's position was considerably important. However, before his current stance, I think it would be more convenient to briefly elaborate the status of Druze in the current Lebanese society and politics because it presents important clues to understand Jumblatt's choices.

At the current situation, it is stated that the Druze are a real minority in Lebanese society having around 180-200.000 population, but holding considerable share in both political and administrative posts compare to their ratio in the whole population. In addition to this, Jumblatt is also able to play a crucial role in determining the wining party given the domestic balance of power. In order to preserve this strong representation, Jumblatt as the most prominent leader of Druze community played a very realist political game and try to maintain good relations with all parties in Lebanon and in the region and generally sided with the status-quo (Interviews with Salloukh 2016; Mansour 2016; Abu Husayn 2016; Noureddin 2016; Khashan 2016). In a more clear way, Göksel summarized that in

order to understand Walid Jumblatt's position, one needs to ask one simple question: "How can I protect interests of Druze community in this given political conjuncture?" (Göksel 2016). In this respect, Jumblatt policy choices can be defined as a simple survival strategy for a minority in a conflictual region in order to prevent any danger for his community.

At the beginning of the Syrian crisis, Jumblatt defined the uprising in Syria as American and Israeli conspiracy plan to divide the country (Atlıoğlu 2015, p.20; Now News 2012). He visited Damascus and met with Assad in order to discuss the developments in Syria. However, he changed this position and started to criticize Assad regime very quickly. Within this framework, he increased his critics as Assad's brutality increased. At the beginning, he called for immediate political reforms. However as the crisis has deepened and spread all around the country and Assad started to lose key areas across Syria, he had a clearer stance for opposing Assad. For instance, in an interview in January 2012 by Reuters, Jumblatt expresses his concerns about the future of Syria as "Assad listens to nobody" and he emphasized the necessity for a dialogue in Lebanon between all groups and mainly the leaders of the Shia and Sunni communities as the crisis was deepening (Evans & Lyon 2012). In an another interview in early 2012, Jumblatt took a further step in his foreign policy stance against the regime in Damascus and asserted that Russia and Iran must have convinced Assad for a regime change, which was seen as the only solution for the current unrest (Dakroub 2012).

During the interview, for instance, referring his meeting with Assad in the early days of the uprising, he stated that he was fool to believe that Assad was sincere in his reformation plans, yet, he continued, now it is very clear that he is far more worse than his father (Interview with Jumblatt 2016). Therefore, he distanced himself from Hezbollah on Syrian issue, but it should not be interpreted as a clear opposition to the regime in Damascus at the very beginning. However, as the crisis has continued, Jumblatt shifted his position towards open criticism against Assad. Within this framework, senior media officer of the party Rami Rayess clarified that Progressive Socialist Party has one priority in Syrian issue, that is an

immediate political solution based on two main pillars; the unity of Syria and the removal of the current regime (Interview with Al Rayess 2016). Additionally, Druze leader called the Druze of Syria to join the revolt against the regime by stating that "we have 20 Druze Syrian officers fighting with the rebels, which is good. I am telling them: your future is with the free Syrian people. I can do no more" (Perry 2012; Evans & Karouny 2013; Now News 2012). However, contrary to this public image of his stance in this case, Salloukh drew the attention to another fact that some of the Druze in Syria, which are indeed loyal to Jumblatt through sectarian and tribal connections, continued to join internal clashes along with the regime's side. According to him, this shows how Jumblatt is good at politics while he is criticizing Bashar Assad, Druze community in Syria backs the regime (Interview with Salloukh 2016).[137] This policy stance of Jumblatt stems from two main reasons. The first one is, as mentioned above, his concern about the survival of his community, which are intensely populated in the southern Syria and some in Idlib province in the north. The second one is that as a comparatively smaller community in Syria too, the Druze are not able to afford to be on the losing side of the ongoing sectarian contest in the region. Therefore his position is understandable as long as the outcome of the crisis was uncertain because, as Salloukh points out, it is a balancing act, which ensure the possible alliance with the winning power in Syria (Interview with Salloukh 2016).

6.4. THE BAABDA DECLARATION: COMMITMENT TO DISSOCIATION

Whatever the extent of exhilarator and impressive rhetoric that sectarian leaders might use, at the early stages of the uprising it is generally observed that all major

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[137] Indeed, Jumblatt has continued to urge Syrian Druzes not to join to the Syrian army and security forces in the crackdown on protesters at least publically in his statements, however they continue to join (Dakroub 2012). On the issue of Walid Jumblatt's influence on the Druze in the region other than Lebanon, although Walid Jumblatt did not accept his influence on Syrian Druzes in any ways (Interview with Jumblatt 2016), it must be noted that both academic and journalistic comments agree on the opposite.

sectarian leaders sided with the status-quo. This foreign policy stance is mainly result of the fear of unpredictable and unmanageable consequences of the current developments. Indeed their concern is very understandable because when Arab revolutions reached to the gates of Damascus and spread in the country, the Sunni-Shia cleavage in Lebanon had already been well in the making and Lebanese leaders simply avoided from adding fuel to an existing fire in Lebanon. It is a very remarkable trans-sectarian consensus that the status quo in Syria in the early days of uprising remains preferable option to many.

This consensus led to the declaration of the Baabda Declaration on 11 June 2012 as a consequence of mainly President Michel Suleiman's efforts. The Baabda Declaration[138] is a presidential document issued by the National Committee of Dialogue. The declaration firstly condemns "*tragic events in the north of the country*", without even naming the clashes between Sunnis and Alawites in Tripoli.

Concerning the Syrian crisis among other issues, participants from both March 8 and March 14 alliances also reached on a consensus on the following principles:

> -Lebanon should eschew block politics and regional and international conflicts. It should seek to avoid the negative repercussions of regional tensions and crises in order to preserve its own paramount interest, national unity and civil peace.
>
> -Measures should then be taken to control the situation on the Lebanese-Syrian border. The establishment of a buffer zone in Lebanon should not be permitted. The country cannot be used as a base, corridor or starting point to smuggle weapons and combatants. At the same time, the right to humanitarian solidarity and political and media expression is guaranteed under the Constitution and the law crisis (Baabda Declaration 2012).

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[138] The origional text of Baabda Declaration in Arabic is published in the website of the Presidency of Lebanese Republic and it is available on http://www.presidency.gov.lb/Arabic/News/Pages/Details.aspx?nid=14483. The official English version was also transmitted to the General Assembly and Security Council of UN on 13 June 2012 by the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the UN and it is available on http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Lebanon%20S%202012%20477.pdf.

It is understood from the text that key Lebanese leaders again committed, at least formally, to the neutrality assumption of Lebanon in regional affairs. In the first statement, therefore, it is stated that leaders have agreed to insulate Lebanon from the developments in Syria in order to preserve the stability and peace in the country. Then, the declaration continues with the open commitment to refrain from using Lebanon as a passageway for the smuggling of weapons and militias into Syria.

To sum up, the Baabda Declaration is simply the open expression of Lebanese sectarian leaders' commitments to the necessity to neutralize Lebanon in regional dynamics and to dissociation policy from the Syrian crisis at least on the paper. Therefore it strongly underscored Lebanon's neutrality with regard to the events in the Middle East in general and in Syria in specific on the basis of national motivations. In other words, according to Sami Nadir, Baabda Declaration tried to neutralize Lebanon from the war ranging in Syria (Nadir 2013a). However the declaration should not be overrated because of two reasons. The first one is that in essence it was the product of President Suleiman's will, not the other leaders. The second one is that no leader could reject to sign the declaration because it was a declaration of the good will to preserve Lebanon out of ongoing crisis. However one also needs to point out that though sectarian leaders all agree on the dissociation policy on the paper, this should not be evaluated as a full and sincere commitment.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Adnan Mansour between June 2011 and February 2014 elaborated the applicability of the Baabda Declaration during the interview in Beirut and stated that the neutrality was not possible for both de-facto and de-jure reasons. First, considering the historical, economic, demographic and social ties between these two countries, neutrality on the issue of ongoing developments in Syria to such extent was not applicable according to Mansour. From the perspective of legal obligations, he continued, due to the bilateral agreements like the Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination, Lebanon is obliged not to be a base or a transit way for any power which seeks to undermine Syria's

security (Interview with Mansour 2016; Art.III of the Treaty 1992). Therefore, Hezbollah and its allies argued that Lebanese government must cooperate with the Syrian government to overcome -what they call- terrorist activities and the flow of weapons and people to Syria through Lebanese territory.

To conclude, as will be covered in the following parts, as the Syrian crisis has deepened and became an existential challenge for some groups in Syria and so in Lebanon, various sectarian groups would increase their involvement and started to support either the regime or the opposition depending on their perceptions of this current issue, which in turn deepen the sectarian strife in Lebanon. Within this conjuncture, it is not wrong to argue that the declaration was another stillborn attempt for the neutrality of Lebanese leaders in the absence of a common identity.

6.5. DIRECT INVOLVEMENT INTO SYRIA AND THE INTENSIFICATION OF SECTARIAN CONCERNS

As the clashes in Syria have deepened, it became more difficult for sectarian leaders to stay aside. As covered so far, not only their concerns about Lebanese politics but also the transnational responsibilities towards coreligionist groups in Syria made them pursue active strategies out of Lebanese borders. In line with the logic of responsibility along with sectarian affiliations, Nasrallah, Hariri, Patriarch Rai and Jumblatt undertook fraternal commitments and started to be involved more deeply in Syrian affairs, which in turn clarified the sectarian lines in Lebanon. The conflicts between regime forces and armed opposition had escalated to civil war by around mid-2012 and to one of the most bloody war in the following years, where hundreds of thousands civilians had lost their lives and millions of Syrians left their homes in search for a secure places both in Syria and abroad.

As the war had turned out to be a real conflict between armed opposition and the Syrian Army with its militias, the sectarian dimension of the conflict was started to be pronounced more. For instance, it is reported by International Crisis Group based on interviews with refugees from Homs that although there were deep-rooted economic, social, and political reasons in explaining uprising in Homs, the only thing that counted in the eyes of people was sectarian identity, since the main divide is confessional between two fighting sides of the Homs (International Crisis Group 2012, p.3). As the conflicts in Syria started to be defined with sectarian rhetoric, the fight in Syria between Alawite regime and Sunni dominated opposition was perceived as a mirror image of the Sunni-Shia fault line in Lebanon that has been deepening since the early 2000s and the infiltrations of all sectarian groups in Syrian affairs have become more visible and concrete. For example, smuggling of weapons and flow of foreign fighters in border villages depending on the villagers' sectarian allegiances became a normal issue, especially as a support to opposition forces. The continuous flow of weapons and fighters to rebellions in Syria through Lebanon has been the case in the border regions of Tripoli and Akkar, which are populated predominantly by Sunnis (Nadir 2013b). On the other hand, Hezbollah also provided practical support through Shia villages on the border in addition to its advisory support in the field.

6.5.1. Involvement of Sunni Extremist Groups into Syria and Their Challenge to the Traditional Leadership in Lebanon

With the lack of a strong leadership and a clear strategy to deal with the current crisis, as mentioned above, the stage was left to the more extremists to fill the power vacuum. It is argued that current developments in the region have revitalized Salafist networks in the northern Lebanon (Interview with Chalaq 2006; Diwan & Chaitani 2015, p.11). It is widely observed that Sunni groups especially in the northern part of the country started to take active role in both providing support to armed opposition groups in Syria and helping Syrian refugees in Lebanon through various means. First, some argues that jihadist Lebanese groups provided logistical support for the transportation of arms and

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fighters across the border (El-Basha & Khraichel 2012). Second, Islamists in northern Lebanon also provided accommodations to Syrians who crossed the border and they reestablished their old connections with the groups in Syria. Third, radical Lebanese Sunnis went to Syria voluntarily to fight against the regime in addition to some jihadi Salafists leaders sent fighters *en masse* (Alagha 2015). Therefore, radical Sunni leaders in Lebanon started to gain more pivotal role and fill the leadership gap in the Lebanese Sunni community and started to challenge against traditional and central powers within the community including Saad Hariri (International Crisis Group 2012, p.4; Cammett 2013, p.1; Majidyar 2014b).

It should also be noted here that there are also some allegations that Saad Hariri's Future Movement supported Syrian opposition tacitly through these Sunni extremists groups and sent certain financial support. According to these views, it was also reported that there were some smuggling of light weapons through Sunni areas along with the border, which were mainly started as commercial affairs but then turned into an organized activity, where certain political figures in the Future Movement has been involved. Within this line, although jihadists took the main role in the smuggling of weapons and transfer of foreign fighters, Saad Hariri was also hold responsible by the Syrian regime for these activities. For instance Syria protested use of Lebanese territory for smuggling of weapons in May 2012 officially by specifically naming and accusing Lebanese Salafists and Saad Hariri's Future Movement (Charbonneau & Nichols 2012; Hopkins 2012, p.9).

6.5.2. Hezbollah's Direct Fight along with Syrian Regime Forces

During the early 2012 accusations against Hezbollah that it directly involved in Syrian war has increased and Hassan Nasrallah reluctantly admitted that Hezbollah militants were fighting in Syria with their own accord while he continued to deny party's involvement as a whole. However, starting from the mid-2012, around a year after the start of the uprising, Nasrallah also changed his attitude in his speeches. Before he was contend with acknowledging his support

for Syrian regime and reform process in Syria. Nevertheless in his interview with Julian Assange on 17 April 2012, for instance, Nasrallah started to blame Syrian opposition for what was happening in Syria and for their rejection of a dialogue process. In this interview he also mentioned the participation of Al Qaida members to the opposition fighters, which was seen as a direct threat from Nasrallah's point of view (Assange 2012). Only towards the end of 2012, Nasrallah again admitted Hezbollah's role in Syria, but only in terms of humanitarian concerns. He insisted that this was limited to the protection of Shias, living on the Syrian side of the border and threatened by the rebels (Nasrallah, cited in International Crisis Group 2014, p.1). This stance is also very important, because even in the issues of humanitarian necessities, the sectarian solidarity is on the agenda.

Whatever Nasrallah told, however, the direct armed presence of Hezbollah in Syrian crisis has already been revealed in mid-2012 overtly. One of the direct consequences of this is the press release from US government to add Hezbollah to the list of organizations under sanctions due to its ties to the Syrian government and integral role in the continued violence in Syria. The official press release on 10 August 2012 from the Department of the Treasury asserts that;

> The U.S. Department of the Treasury today designated the terrorist group Hizballah for providing support to the Government of Syria… This action highlights Hizballah's activities within Syria and its integral role in the continued violence the Assad regime is inflicting on the Syrian population (US Department of Treasury 2012)

The press release did not only accuse Hezbollah for being responsible for the continued violence but also explained the nature of the support. According to the US officials, Hezbollah has actively assisted Syria through providing training and advice to Syrian militias but also helped to the government by extensive logistical support and Hezbollah armed fighters. The same press release also refers to the Iranian role by stating that *"long after the Assad regime is gone, the people of Syria and the entire global community will remember that Hizbollah, and its*

patron Iran, contributed to the regime's murder of countless innocent Syrians"
(US Department of Treasury 2012).[139]

When the challenge to the existence of Assad regime became very tangible in early 2013, the historical alliance has become more visible and Hezbollah's direct military involvement became an undeniable phenomena. In this line, Nasrallah ended remaining suspense by acknowledging in a public speech that Hezbollah members were supporting the Assad regime on 30 April 2013. In that speech, he mentioned the battle of Al Qusayr and the attacks of fundamentalist groups to Shia holy places in Syria, and asserted that Hezbollah would not hesitate to offer help and back up for the fighters against these groups. He also added that "*Syria's friends won't let it fall in American, Israeli, and Takfiri hands*" (Nasrallah 2013b; Fulton et al. 2013, pp.22–23). [140] On 25 May, Nasrallah acknowledged Hezbollah's responsibility in protecting the regime in Damascus by stating that;

> I frankly say that Syria is the backbone of the resistance, and the support of the resistance. The resistance cannot sit with hands crossed while its backbone is held vulnerable and its support is being broken…This new stage is called fortifying the resistance and protecting its backbone, and this is the responsibility of all of us… We are the people of this battle (Nasrallah 2013a)

Indeed, Hezbollah had begun to take a more direct combat role in Syria as the Assad regime began losing control over Syrian territory since the second half of

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[139] Salloukh also notes that "Tehran sent in its most trusted Iraqi and Lebanese proxies under the supervision of Revolutionary Guard commanders" which demonstrates the degree of the significance of the struggle in Syria from Iranian perspective (Salloukh 2014).

[140] Hezbollah's declaration has attracted severe criticism from mainly March 14 alliance; and other sectarian leaders also readjust their rhetoric and positions accordingly. For instance, just after the Nasrallah's speech which he vowed to *not to allow the fall of Syria into the hands of America, Israel and the Takfiris*, the General Secretariat of March 14 Alliance released a press statement stating that "Nasrallah's speech shows a coup against the Taif Accord and against coexistence. It also shows the party's abandonment of the disassociation policy decided by its cabinet and disloyalty to the Baabda Declaration" (Naharnet Newsdesk 2013; Now News 2013a). Additionally, Saad Hariri directly accused Hezbollah for dragging Lebanon into sectarian conflicts through involving Syrian civil war (Reuters 2013). Even former President Michel Suleiman, who was considered as neutral compared to others, call for limiting Hezbollah's ability to carry out unilateral foreign policy actions in August 2013 for the first time, which was a clear expression of frustration in Christian community to Hezbollah's unilateral actions at abroad without consulting neither the government nor the other communities (Sullivan 2014, p.24).

2012. However, the recapture of Al Qusayr by the regime in April 2013 can be considered as a turning point event in the Syrian civil war in terms of the direct participation of Hezbollah (Atlıoğlu 2013, pp.6–7). Then, especially after mid-2013 many news and reports claiming that Hezbollah participated very actively in the Syrian war by sending Hezbollah armed groups to Damascus, Daraa, Aleppo, and Idlib have raised extensively (The Daily Star 2014b; The Daily Star 2014a; The Daily Star 2013a; The Daily Star 2013b).

When the opposition, especially more jihadists factions, started to advance around Lebanese border from Homs to Damascus and threatened one of Hezbollah's strong hold in Lebanese territory, Hermel, in the beginning of 2013, Hezbollah was alarmed by this existential threat. As argued by Diwan and Chaitani, from Hezbollah's perspective, Salafi rebels' next target would be Lebanon so it is better to fight with them in Syria today rather than do battle in Lebanon tomorrow (Diwan & Chaitani 2015, p.11). This perception has also been shared by Minister Adnan Mansour, who stated that Hezbollah's cause is not just for the stability and security in Syria, but "by doing so it is also protecting Lebanon, which would be the next target of takfiri and wahabi groups" (Interview with Mansour 2016). In such a conjuncture, while Assad's power was coming to an end as armed opposition groups closed in the center of capital, Hezbollah started to back Assad with a robust, well-trained force whose involvement in the conflict indeed changed the direction of the fate of the conflicts. In this respect, it can rightly be argued that large number of Hezbollah fighters have operated openly in Syria since the beginning of 2013, especially across the border area.[141] With a support to such extent with well-trained fighters, it is a wide consensus that Hezbollah

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[141] The real extent of the support of Hezbollah to Syrian regime is still subject to debate. However, it is now almost verified from open sources that the degree of support has risen and the role of Hezbollah shifted from an advisory mission to direct combact activities during the crisis. From the outset Hezbollah has sent its militants for training and advisery missons, then it directly participated in the combats. In addition, though it was not a secret, the presence of Hezbollah fighters in Syria other than border areas like Homs and Damascus has been admitted by Nasrallah in December 2013, by stating that "We are only present in Damascus, Homs, and areas near the border" (Now News 2013b).

enabled the regime to regain control of certain areas and improve its fighting capabilities especially in residential areas in low-intensity conflicts and reversed the tide of the conflict (Sullivan 2014, p.4; US Department of Treasury 2012; International Crisis Group 2012, p.18; Blanford 2014). Also Göksel added, Hezbollah's complete control over the Syrian – Lebanese border contributed extensively in limiting oppositionist groups' capabilities (Interview with Göksel 2015). As mentioned repetitively throughout the dissertation, the significance of the strategic alliance between Iran, Syria and Hezbollah is a fact needless to talk about as Syria serves as a conduit for Iranian arms and a safe haven for Hezbollah. In this respect, Göksel noted that a friendly regime in Damascus is vitally important for Hezbollah, because otherwise it would be completely besieged and locked in Lebanese territory. It is also stated that the importance of Al Qusayr, for instance, stems from its strategic location on the way of Hezbollah's access to ports of Tartus and Latakia, where it receives Iranian support (Interview with Göksel 2015). Therefore, when the opposition forces became vital threat to the very existence of the Assad regime, Hezbollah did not want to risk its access to Damascus and Tehran because Syria's importance to Hezbollah is not limited to its financial and material support; but it provided safe haven for Hezbollah. As a result, any existential threat to Damascus was perceived as a direct threat with the same degree to Hezbollah itself and Hezbollah did not hesitate to respond very actively to a development in neighboring county, which was a real foreign policy decision and action.

Another underlying fact behind Nasrallah's stance is the perception of the ongoing crisis from regional perspective. As argued in this paper, sectarian leaders cautiously monitor the regional balance of power and develop foreign policy positions according to the changes in this balance. On 24 October 2011, Nasrallah explained from his point of view that although the Assad regime acknowledged that they were ready and serious about reforms and able to implement them, the confrontation in Syria took a different path. According to him, it became clear that the internal issue was directed by foreign pressure not

for reform or democracy, but only for the overthrow of the resistant in Damascus (Nasrallah 2011d). From regional perspective, Mohamed Noureddine from Lebanese University states that;

> The Syrian file is no longer a Syrian file only and surely it is not a domestic problem, rather it is a regional and international struggle, in which all related states and non-state actors have already involved. In such a complex struggle, what could Hezbollah have done? The main aim of Hezbollah in Syria is not the preserving Syrian regime, which is the argument of those who want to devalue Hezbollah's struggle. Hezbollah is in Syria in accordance with its traditional stance, which is anti-Israel and anti-imperialist (Interview with Noureddin 2016).

In terms of the role of sectarian identity in Hezbollah's decisions and actions, one needs to trace the clues in Nasrallah's speeches. There were mainly three arguments, which had heavy sectarian discourse among others in Nasrallah's speeches for explaining their involvement in Syrian war: the self-defense of Lebanese Shia villagers on the Syrian side of the border, the necessity of protecting Shia shrines[142], and the defense against the spread of Sunni extremism into Lebanon. These concepts can be considered a clear rupture from early speeches because in the beginning Nasrallah presented ongoing developments in Syria as a challenge to the Axis of Resistance in order to shore up the military capabilities of Assad regime and Hezbollah. While Nasrallah had built his arguments on broader framework like resistance against Israel and imperialism at the early stages of the Syrian crisis, it can easily be observed that the discourse was influenced by sectarian rhetoric as the crisis has deepened and the threat against Assad regime has become more tangible. In other words, during the crisis Hezbollah's involvement, what has begun as a limited operation to boost the regime and deter its enemies, has expanded into a wide-range of intervention in the conflicts. Following, as involvements increased, the sectarian discourse started

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[142] Religious shrines are powerful symbolic significance in Shia culture. The Sayyidah Zeynab Mosque in Damascus was a particularly popular destination for Shias from Lebanon and the region as a whole. After car bomb attacks to this shrine, for instance, Nasrallah stated that "the destruction of the Sayyidah Zaynab shrine could have led to a sectarian war in the region. We sent 40 to 50 fighters to protect it" (Now News 2013b).

to become predominant. Additionally, as David Lesch clearly demonstrated that the Syrian crisis, started as public demonstrations, has radicalized different segments of the population and gained a very sectarian character over time as foreign extremist fighters have come to play a major role in the opposition (Lesch 2012, pp.55–58).[143] Within this framework, a possible change of power in Syria from an Alawite clan to Sunni-dominated coalition was perceived as a threat for the Shia existence in Lebanon.

Within this framework, the spread of Sunni jihadi fundamentalist groups in the country is a very central factor, shaping Nasrallah's foreign policy position. According to Sunni jihadists, both Alawites in Syria and Shia Hezbollah are their vital foes. Therefore, in his famous speech on 25 May 2013, after referring Israel as the first danger to peoples of the region, Nasrallah declared that;

> The second danger is the changes taking place in Syria, in our surrounding, at our borders, on the gates of our cities, villages and houses. The predominance of Takfiri groups in the field (Nasrallah 2013a).

The issue of Sunni extremists in the opposition is very important in Nasrallah's speeches because as the Syrian crisis became more sectarian struggle, it became easier for Nasrallah to legitimize party's involvement in Syrian war for his own community. In other words, it can rightly be argued that the communal solidarity for backing Assad among Shias became widespread with the deepening sectarian divisions during the Syrian civil war and the rise of militant jihadists.[144] Therefore although Hezbollah kept its relative natural position in the early period having

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[143] The Syrian Crisis was mostly perceived as a sectarian crisis by many regional actors by both Shias and Sunnis. In June 2013 Yusuf Al Qaradawi, for instance, called Sunni Muslim to join the rebels fighting Syrian President as he denounced Al Assad's Alawite sect as an offshoot of Shia Islam and more infidel than Christians and Jews. Before it in May 2013, he states that "How could 100 million Shia defeat 1.7 billion Sunnis? I call on Muslims everywhere to help their brothers be victorious... Everone who has the ability and has training to kill ... is required to go to Syria" (Abdo 2013b). In addition Hezbollah's media outlets like Al Manar announced the death of its militias in Syria as martyrs performing their jihadi duties. These provocative statements easily escaleted the conflict on sectarian basis.

[144] It is reported that a Shia Lebanese stated: "We can live under Assad's regime. What option Shias have under jihadi rule, except being slaughtered?" (International Crisis Group 2014, p.11).

considered the domestic balance and reactions in Lebanon, it developed a very concrete support to Syrian President after the emergence of Sunni jihadists in Syria and the possibility of its spill-over into Lebanon.

6.5.3. Christian Anxiety for Their Existence

From Maronite perspective, the ongoing developments in Syria which has a possibility to spread into Lebanon are threatening the lives of minorities in the Middle East. A senior politician in Free Patriotic Party under the leadership of Michel Aoun, Farid Khazen explains the general concern among Christians, as the struggle in Syria has taken more sectarian nature;

> At this time of major changes, many question marks hover over Arab states and societies. What has come to be known as the Arab Spring has raised much concern about the Christian presence in the troubled Arab world, before and after the winds of change blow through… The role of religion in the state and society has become the main subject of attention in the Arab world. This has raised many concerns for those who believe that religion should be separated from the state… These concerns are common among Christians and Muslims, even though Christians are more apprehensive about their existence than about any pragmatic regional concern. Moreover, certain Arab states have introduced new governing practices as a result of the Arab Spring…especially given the emergence of new political forces, notably organized Salafism (Al Khazen 2012).

Khazen's elaborations on the ongoing developments are very demonstrative, especially when his close relation with the former Patriarch Sfeir was taken into consideration. It is understood that the widespread concern in Lebanese Christian community is their perception of the rise of Salafism in Syria which would threat the lives of Syrian Christians as the armed sectarian struggle between Shia and Sunni extremists became more visible. In this respect, on the side of Christians in general and the Maronites in specific, the fall of Assad and the possible Sunni regime was seen as unfavorable scenario for the future of Christians in the Middle East. As demonstrated in an article in the New York Times based on interviews with couple of religious leaders in both Syria and Lebanon in the early months of the uprising, this was clearly stated that a possible change of power following the

growing chaos scared ordinary Christians because it might result in a tyranny of an extremist Sunni leadership. Therefore Christian community has made do with monitoring the development with growing disquiet. As argued in the article, the main reason for the salience in some cases and the support for the regime in others was this fear, rather than a sincere favor or sympathy for Assad in the Levantine Christian community (The New York Times 2011; Hopkins 2012, pp.6–7).

Although religious extremism in Lebanon is still limited, there is a widespread concern that frustrated Sunnis would increasingly join Salafist groups and the extremism has the possibility to spread due to the ongoing civil war in the neighboring country and the widespread poverty in the north (Diwan & Chaitani 2015, p.11; Interviews with Mansour 2016; Rabah 2016b). In this respect, former Minister Alfadel Chalaq, for instance, states that sectarian enmities among communities started to become more radical and violent in Lebanon and he continues that Sunni people in rural villages in the north have less tolerance towards even moderate Sunnis who have a secular lifestyle than they used to have before, when he grew up in one of these villages. He also added that what makes Sunni extremism unpredictable and uncontrollable is the absence of a powerful point of reference in both religious and political terms as in the case of political leadership of Hezbollah and Amal and religious leadership of Ayatollahs among Shias (Chalaq 2016). Indeed, it is beyond personal experiences and observations and a high level of concern about extremism is about 92 % of Lebanese public, as released by PEW in July 2014 (Diwan & Chaitani 2015, p.20). In line with these statements, it is widely argued during the interviews that the Sunni extremism is perceived as more threatening than Shia extremism from Christian perspective (Interviews with Göksel 2015; Salloukh 2016; Khashan 2016). In this respect, Hezbollah's general policy towards Christians in Lebanon after Israeli troops withdrew from the south is widely referred during the fieldwork in Lebanon by several interviewees. It is stated that there had been a concern in the minds of southern Christians about their future after Hezbollah became de-facto authority in the south after 2000. Contrary to these concerns, however, Hezbollah applied a

very strategic policy in the south that it has not imposed any lifestyle to Christians and their security was not threatened. In doing so, it is argued that a kind of reconciliation emerged between these communities (Interviews with Göksel 2015; Senior Lebanese Officer 2016; Noureddin 2016). In addition, in the current Syrian crisis, it is also argued that Hezbollah's militias are protecting Christian villages alongside the border area against the attacks of extremists (Interviews with Mansour 2016; Salloukh 2016). In this line for instance, Patriarch Rai stated that "if Hezbollah was not in Syria, ISIS would have been Jouneiyh" (Noureddin 2016), and he later urged all Lebanese to "unite and take responsibility in order to face together the great danger of the ISIL which has begun to penetrate in Lebanon" (Official Vatican Network 2014).[145]

To conclude, although Church's initial position was in favor of stability in Syria and disassociation of Lebanon, as covered above, once it became no longer viable policy option the Church reoriented its position towards Syria, given the fact that nobody can answer the question of what would probably happen once Assad is overthrown (Interviews with Göksel 2015). Above all, the civil war has turned out to be a kind of de-populationization of Christians in Syria as they have moved abroad, which is also worrying the Church. For all these reasons, it might be concluded that the main reason behind Patriarch Rai's position in this case is its concern about the future of Christians in the Levant and therefore the Church has chosen to side with the devil it knows, because both the continuation of civil war and the other alternative pose existential threats to Christians both in Syria and Lebanon from their perspective.

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[145] Politically speaking, it must be noted that the Christian community is divided which prevents them from adopting a one belligerent Maronite foreign policy stance. In this respect, Samir Geagea's Lebanese Forces has a clear stance in opposing Assad regime and it is strongly noticed during the interviews that those who are politically closer to Geagea are very critical of the current Patriarch. However since this thesis focuses on the Church itself and the position of other two major Christian parties, namely Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Party and Suleiman Farangieh's Kataeb Party, are in line with Patriarchate's stance, the presented Maronite stance towards the ongoing developments in Syria would be justified as a Maronite vioce.

6.5.4. Druze Perception towards the Rise of Extremism

Within the current political conjuncture with an increasingly sectarian rhetoric between Shia and Sunni extremisms, it is widely argued that Jumblatt wanted to make sure that the Druze community would not fall into this war of extremisms (Khazai & Hess 2013, p.44). The rise of extremism constitutes a threat for Druze minority in Syria. In this regard, for instance, Druze academician Dr. Nassir Zeidan stated that one of the biggest threat in Syria is the rise of extremism in the turmoil from Druze perception (Zeidan 2016). Within this framework, it can be argued that the reason of the support of Syrian Druze to the regime, as also admitted by Jumblatt (Jumblatt 2016), might be this sectarian threat perception emanated from the rise of certain groups in Syria.

As a leader of small minority, Walid Jumblatt also continued to maintain good relations with all parties in Syria, including Al Nusra Front in line with the aforementioned survival strategy. When some oppositionist like Al Nusra Front started to gain considerable power in certain places in Syria, he did not hesitate to make some statement which would please these groups when the civil war started to threaten the existence of the Druze in Syria. He even declared Al Nusra Front[146] not as a terrorist group but rather as Syrians with legitimate political grievances against the regime. Responding to a question in an interview published on *Asharq Al Awsat*, Jumblatt states that;

> I am not courting the Al Nusra Front but there are Syrians who were left with no choice but to join this group. They found it a way to triumph over the terrorism of the Syrian regime. What can I say to them? Shall I call them terrorists? I will not do that. They are not terrorists, despite the Arab and international claims in this regard (Abbas 2015).

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[146] Al Nusra Front is a Sunni Islamic jihadists militia fighting against Syrian regime with the aim of establishing an Islamic state in the country. The groups was established in early 2012 and it is considered as the Syrian brach of Al Qaeda. Currently, it is designated as a terrorist organization by couple of countries including the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Russia and Turkey.

The reason behind this declaration was his concern about the lives of Syrian Druze and he was able to protect them after a verbal understanding with Al Nusra Front (Rabah 2015). Jumblatt's statements about Al Nusra are very important in terms of this thesis, because it clearly demonstrated that inter-sectarian alliances can change according to time and conjuncture in line with the interest of specific community and the main priority of a sectarian leader is the survival and well-being of his community.

6.6. FIGHT IN SYRIA BUT DISASSOCIATION IN LEBANON?

One of the most underlying principles emphasized in the official Lebanese foreign policy is the continuous reference to neutral orientation of Lebanon in regional and international developments. In the lack of a consensus on a foreign policy position among sectarian communities, the official position has been most of the time a kind of dissociation policy based on neutrality assumption. In this line, the Baabda Declaration and the policies of Miqati can be considered noticeable expression of this legacy. However, although the official discourse mostly remained as neutral foreign policy, it does not necessarily mean that sectarian leaders gave up their traditional foreign policy aspirations as covered above.

Direct involvement of Shia and Sunni groups into the Syrian civil war in many ways did not only have results in the battlefield in Syria, but also have direct repercussions in Lebanon, where sectarian tensions have increasingly destabilized the country. In this regard, although many groups have involved directly in the struggle in Syria, leaders of key sectarian communities refrained from transferring these fights into Lebanese territory even though in most of the fronts between Syrian regime and the opposition, Lebanese Sunnis and Lebanese Shias are fighting against each other. (Anonymous Lebanese Diplomat 2015). This is partly a result of the lessons of a civil war still alive in the memories (Interview with Göksel 2015). There seems to be an implicit agreement between international, regional and domestic actors to sideline the country from the actual civil war in

Lebanese territory. So far, as Diwan and Chaitani argue, feudal-like sectarian leaders have been able to make cross-sectarian deals to prevent Lebanon to fall in the cataclysm of a new civil war since none of them has interest in domestic conflict when the Syrian crisis presents enough instability to the region (Diwan & Chaitani 2015, pp.13–15).

Despite the direct clashes have not spread to Lebanon, involvement of sectarian groups in Syrian civil war have direct repercussions in Lebanon. From Shia Nasrallah's perspective, the desire end is the regime's survival whatever the cost would be. From Hariri's perspective, the Assad regime should be demised not only because it represents mounting Alawite repression on Sunnis but also the regime was a traditional threat to Hariri family, as covered throughout the thesis. From the perspective of Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, although he tried to calibrate his opposition to the regime at the beginning, he openly criticized Assad and called for his removal from the power. The Christian community, on the other hand, is more divided concerning the desired end in Syria, yet the Church in line with the most powerful Christian party Free Patriotic Party preferred the survival of Assad regime not because his sympathy to Assad but due to its disquiets of what would succeed Assad in Damascus. Having considered these contradictory foreign policy stances, the involvement became costly for each party and sectarian enmities among various communities have been deepened.

From Nasrallah's point of view, the fall of Assad regime was an existential threat at regional and Lebanese context, therefore he developed his party's foreign policy position at all costs. In other words, its involvement affected Hezbollah's standing within Lebanon and the stability within the country. The loss of credibility of Hezbollah's image as the resistance after its involvement in Syrian civil war is widely pronounced by different sources in academics and bureaucracy.[147] A foreign diplomat in Beirut, for instance, stated that "Hezbollah

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[147] Despite the critiques from other sectarian communities, Nasrallah still has the support of his community despite great losses in Syria due to two main reasons: widespread concern about the

lost its all credibility in the eyes of Lebanese. It is very clear that Lebanon could not be isolated from the things in Syria. However with such an extensive involvement, Nasrallah openly showed that it acts in accordance with Iranian agenda, not the Lebanese one. He is just doing what his Iranian bosses order" (Anonymous Diplomat in Beirut 2015). So, the military intervention of Hezbollah to such extent damaged the legitimacy of the party whatever Nasrallah's arguments are (Salloukh & Barakat 2015, p.30). It is important to note here that Nasrallah, like other sectarian leaders, uses national, or Lebanese, rhetoric and discourse while framing his party's foreign policy choices and behaviors. In other word, sectarian leaders all argue that their foreign policy choices are representing the Lebanese interests whatever the real intentions were. However, aside from others, Nasrallah was the foremost example of this and he continuously gives nationalist references in his speeches and always defended that *they were protecting Lebanon* (Now News 2013b). In spite of Nasrallah's argumentation, however, Hezbollah's involvement in Syria had important consequences on Hezbollah's standing within Lebanon as well as on security and stability within the country since the growing sectarian tensions have directly impacted security and stability in Lebanon. It started to be perceived as a sectarian militia and lost its regional and domestic credibility among other sectarian communities. The full commitment to the Syrian regime at all costs damaged Hezbollah's role as regional player. Internally also, Hezbollah was perceived as a threat and irresponsible actor through triggering the spillover of Syrian sectarian civil war into Lebanon than a resistance movement as the defender of homeland against external invader as it was just after 2006 War.

Whatever the communitarian support it has, the domestic division over Syria, which is a roughly Sunni – Shia fault line, has deepened and the critics from Sunni Future Movement became more aggressive. March 14 alliance defines Hezbollah's intervention as an invasion perpetuated by Iran in order to save

rise of extremism and subsequently perception of existential threat (Göksel 2015; Noureddin 2016) and their religio-cultural characteristic in being loyal to leadership (Saglam 2016; Khashan 2016).

Alawite regime in Damascus for Tehran's strategic calculations (Salloukh & Barakat 2015, p.30). As Bahout argues Sunni - Shia tension in Lebanon have intensified on two-levels, which are mutually nurturing each other: symbolic/identity based on the one hand, and geopolitical based on the other hand, which resemble the conditions on the eve of the civil war started in 1975 (Bahout 2013, p.1; Bahout 2014b). The intensification of sectarian-based division between communities and the rise of politics based on identity during Syrian crisis can be explained by the existential nature of the struggle because it is strongly believed that the conflicts in Syria were not perceived as a simple power struggle for resources; but a very existential challenge for the existence of either community in Lebanon.

6.7. EARLY CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR OF SECTARIAN ACTORS

This chapter started with the regional environment on the eve of Arab popular uprisings and foreign policy behavior of Lebanese sectarian leaders related to the Syrian crisis which started as peaceful popular demonstrations and turned into a civil war. This case study once again demonstrated that weak nature of Lebanese state based on confessional divisions prevented Lebanese government from acting actively towards Syrian crisis. Therefore, Miqati government referred to the neutrality principle since it had very limited capacity to impose any foreign policy decision. However, the neutrality of Lebanese government did not necessarily mean the neutrality of Lebanon at all.

Various sectarian leaders having various affiliations developed different foreign policies and strategies in Syrian civil war independent from the official Lebanese foreign policy. This thesis argues that the main political figure among under study in this case study is Hassan Nasrallah. Nasrallah's foreign policy behavior in this crisis is simply backing Assad as much as the conditions has necessitated. On the other side of the spectrum, the foreign policy stance of Saad Hariri mainly aimed

to eliminate Assad in Damascus and its ally Hezbollah in Lebanon to consolidate his power in Lebanon; yet, he refrained from acting very openly for this cause. Maronite Patriarch Rai has sought to mediate between these two positions in hopes of securing the existence of Christians in the region although he demonstrated his sympathy towards the Assad regime. Walid Jumblatt, on the other hand, progressively raised the critical tone towards Assad in search for security for his Druze community in Syria.

Since the fall of Assad presents a very crucial challenge or opportunity to major sectarian leaders in Lebanon, the study of foreign policy positions of these leaders presents an excellent example of how and why sectarian players bypass state structures in the pursuit of their goals, where differences based on sectarian identities are extreme and where the complex interplay of domestic, regional and international forces has considerable effect. As the main conclusion, this chapter argues that the response of each of Lebanon's leading sectarian leaders to the Syrian conflict is best explained by their perceptions of developments according to their sectarian identities since Syrian civil war has deepened Sunni - Shia divide and marginalized the other sects as in line with the general tendency especially after 2005 in Lebanon. The role of sectarian identity in defining self and the other is very central in understanding foreign policy choices of sectarian leaders. In this respect, it is seen that each and every sectarian leader is heavily concerned about the well-being of coreligionists in Syria. Due to the Sunni-dominated rhetoric at the beginning of the demonstrations and the rise of militant jihadists during the course of civil war, the opposition was viewed as being anti-Shia by both Hezbollah and Shia community at large, and therefore as a threat to existence of Shias in both Syria and Lebanon (Al Amine, cited in Ellis & Guckenberg 2012, p.39). In addition to this, the choices of Patriarch Rai stems from his concerns for his community in Syria as covered previously. The regime in Damascus was neither ally nor friend of the Patriarchate. On the contrary, the Patriarchate has been one of the strongest centers of critiques of Syrian dominance in Lebanon. However, due to changing conditions in the region with the rise of

sectarian extremism, spiritual leader of the Maronites reorganized both Patriarchate's foreign policy stance towards Assad's regime and domestic inter-sectarian relations. Druze leader Walid Jumblatt is no exception from this argument and as the lives of the Druze in Idlib and Suwaida has been threatened by the ongoing instability in Syria, he raised his voice against Assad regime to somehow please extremists in Syria in order to reach a kind of temporary reconciliation for the sake of his community. Additionally, relatively a recent study, for instance, demonstrates apparently that even the attitudes towards foreign interventions of a foreign country vary substantially depending on the sectarian community. For instance, Shias gave the lowest approval to the role of Saudi Arabia in Lebanese affairs while the Sunnis mark the highest ratings. This correlation is reversed considering Iranian-Syrian role, and the western role draws the highest ratings in the Maronite community compare to Sunnis and Shias (Moaddel et al. 2012, pp.22–23), which shows how transnational sectarian ties shape foreign policy perceptions in Lebanon recently.

Second, the degree of the threat perception is very substantial in determining their foreign policies. Since the leaders of sectarian communities perceived the struggle in Syria as a matter of survival in Lebanon, they did not hesitate to involve in Syrian affairs and developed their foreign policy agendas independent from that of the Lebanese government and reactions from domestic actors. Whatever the domestic reactions and criticisms, for instance, Nasrallah has pursued a very extreme foreign policy strategy, which involves not only consultation and training of Assad's forces but also the direct participation of Hezbollah's fighters into the conflicts all around the country. This full commitment demonstrates that Nasrallah perceived the fall of Assad as an existential threat at regional level and therefore he has believed that the benefits of this survival strategy outweigh the costs. This was indeed sounded off by a senior Hezbollah commander, who states that;

> True, our support for the regime has carried some negative consequences. But the price of not intervening would have been comparatively far higher. We

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could have been surrounded by our enemies, and our physical link to Iran via Syria could have been severed (International Crisis Group 2014, p.8).

The same argument can also be valid for the foreign policy choice of Patriarch Rai and Walid Jumblatt. As International Crisis Group reports based on interviews with Maronites in Lebanon, the jihadi threat discredited Syrian opposition and its cause in the eyes of Christians (International Crisis Group 2014, p.9). Since a possible jihadist regime in Syria was perceived as an existential threat for Christian community, Patriarch Rai made his choice in favor of Assad's stay in power. In other words, although neither Assad nor Nasrallah were the best friends of Patriarch, once the existential external threat displaced the threat that sectarian groups posed each other, Maronite spiritual leader changed Patriarchate's traditional stance and aligned with the regime in Damascus tacitly. Walid Jumblatt's position, on the other hand, has been consistent with his search for security for the Druze in Syria. It was very interesting to study speeches and statements of Jumblatt in Syrian crisis because it shows how sectarian actors behave according to pragmatist principles and adapts behaviors of sovereign actors of international relations when the issue of survival enters into the stage.

Third, in terms of regional balance of power, the popular uprising in Syria has already turned out to be a game of regional and international powers along with proxies. Additionally, the Assad regime was perceived as the key element in these regional settings by all Lebanese leaders. Therefore the possible fall or the continuity of the regime in Damascus has turned out to be an important shift in regional balance of power according to the interests of sectarian leaders in Lebanon. For instance, the destiny of Assad was linked to the destiny of Hezbollah and all Shias in general in Nasrallah's speeches several times, as the following.

> What is taking place in Syria is very crucial and decisive for Lebanon, for our present and our future time (Nasrallah 2013a).

> Should Syria fall in the hand of the Americans, the Israelis, the Takfiri groups and America's representatives in the region which call themselves

regional states, the resistance will be besieged and Israel would reenter Lebanon, impose its conditions on Lebanon, and renew its greed and projects in it. Lebanon then will enter the Israeli era again. If Syria falls, so will Palestine, the resistance in Palestine, the West Bank, Gaza, and Holy Al Quds (Nasrallah 2013a).

In other words, the support for Syrian President morphed into an existential necessity from the perception of regional politics by Hezbollah. This possible change in the balance of regional power is perceived by Hezbollah leaders so substantial that the involvement of Hezbollah into a very sectarian crisis in Syria was not seen as problem even though it means break of relations with important segments of Lebanese society and the region. To conclude, it is understood that survival of regional allies are comparatively more significant than the continuity of domestic stability or alliances from Lebanese actors.

The perception of domestic balance of power is also central in understanding behaviors of sectarian leaders. As discussed before, one important aspect of building alliances outside of Lebanon is the search for domestic power through pressures of preferred international partners. In this manner, sectarian leaders stayed loyal to the position of their international and regional partners in the case of Syrian civil war too in order to preserve their domestic statues. As covered before, since the end of the civil war in Lebanon, Hezbollah's stance on major issues both at domestic and regional levels has been heavily depend on its assessment of how the issue would affect its arsenal because it was the main point of domestic criticisms. Since the fall of Assad would probably be not in favor of this arsenal, Nasrallah determined a foreign policy choice in this line. On the other side of the spectrum, Sunni leaders were frustrated by the rise of Hezbollah in Lebanese politics, therefore the Future Movement aligned with Saudi Arabia and Turkey not only because of regional calculations but also its desire to limit its main rival in Beirut.

Another conclusion would be on the foreign policy behavioral patterns of sectarian leaders. In this respect, Syrian case study demonstrated very clearly how they act in line with the model suggested in Chapter 2, which is also similar with

the conclusions of the previous chapter on the July war. Since it will be elaborated more in the concluding chapter, in brief, the first behavioral pattern as in the case of Israel – Hezbollah war was pressuring Lebanese government in order to shape its decisions through different means. The first one is to rely on its social, economic and military capabilities in imposing their foreign policy agendas on the official Lebanese position. In this respect, Hezbollah, for instance, became able to prevent the Lebanese government to take side during the meetings of the Arab League and the UN. The second mean is building alliances outside of Lebanon in order to make their international partners pressure on members of government in shaping governmental decisions. Sunni search for support in the capitals of major Middle Eastern states to pressure Hezbollah can well be considered under this category. In addition to the traditional behavior of any sub-state actor, it is clearly observed during the case study that sectarian leaders, as quasi-state entities, have acted independently as sovereign actors do in international relations. For instance, Nasrallah's decision to send Hezbollah's militias into Syria, Patriarch Boutros Rai's historic visit to Damascus during difficult times for the Assad regime, Hariri's open challenge to Syria and Jumblatt's statements can easily be regarded as different kinds of foreign policy stances independent from Lebanese government. It is important to state that since the war in Syria presents more serious challenges to all Lebanese actors and became an issue of survival, they intensified their independent foreign policy actions compare to the case of the July war in the previous chapter. The third pattern mainly stems from the weak nature of the Lebanese state system, as mentioned before, since Lebanese confessional system allows major sectarian groups to have considerable share in the bureaucratic structures. Through these posts, confessional leaders may utilize state's and government's capabilities, which is named here *positive action*. For instance, Foreign Minister of Miqati government, Ambassador Adnan Mansour called for the reinstatement of Syria in the Arab League at a conference of the League in Cairo in March 2013 contrary to his government's stance (Hajj 2013).

To conclude, this case study demonstrated that Lebanon's precarious political system prevented Lebanese government to develop a clear and effective foreign policy, which was best demonstrated by the disassociation policy in the Baabda Declaration. However, having considered the historical and social ties between Syria and Lebanon, the policy of dissociation from what is happening in Syria, indeed, was not a viable formulation. In the lack of a powerful government with a clear foreign policy strategy towards Syria, each and every sectarian faction has pursued their own foreign policy agendas depending on their perceptions of the situation while the government maintains its traditional weak foreign policy stance, which together led to the multiplicity of foreign policies in Lebanon.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Having assumed sectarian groups as sub-state actors and treating them as unit of analysis in foreign policy studies, this research scrutinized Lebanese foreign policy making by focusing specifically on the role of sectarian identity and behavioral patterns of these actors. As a challenging case for the traditional understanding of foreign policy making with its unique characteristics, Lebanese foreign policy started with the independence in 1943 but sectarian groups had their long-lasting tradition of foreign relations since the Ottoman period, especially after the establishment of the Mutasarrifiyya under the auspices of European imperialism in the mid-nineteenth century.

After the independence of modern Lebanon in 1943, the National Pact defined the main principle of foreign policy orientation, which was as an agreement between the two powerful sectarian communities of the time; namely Maronites and Sunnis. Having envisaged a neutral stance in regional politics, the National Pact failed to provide a functional common ground not only because of the existing different foreign policy orientations of sub-state sectarian groups but also because of its failure to respond to the great transformations of the international politics of the mid-1940s. Additionally, despite the claim for neutrality had been frequently dressed up in the objective rational language, it had lost its relevance as different sectarian communities struggled over the right to define 'who Lebanese people are' and 'where Lebanon belongs to.'

The civil war years between 1975 and 1990 had intensified the debate over national identity as Lebanese state broke down completely and it became just one player out of many that shaped foreign policy in Lebanon. Among these multiple players, sectarian leaders emerged as the real executive power of foreign policy affairs in accordance with their own interests along with their alliances with Syria and Israel, which had their troops in Lebanon since 1976 and 1982 respectively. In this milieu, the civil war demonstrated how foreign policy making in Lebanon shattered into pieces along with the complex interplay between sectarian leaders and the regional/international powers.

The Taif Accord, as the postwar settlement, redefined Lebanese identity which had direct implications on the foreign policy behavior of sectarian groups. It allowed Syria to consolidate its hegemony in Lebanon by all means through proclaiming a privileged relation between these two countries while sectarian leaders had limited opportunities under Syrian tutelage. However, the withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon in 2000 transformed Lebanese domestic politics while consolidating Hezbollah as the Resistance on the one hand; and building up an opposition group against Damascus under the auspices of Maronite Patriarch on the other. The assassination of the former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri in February 2005 triggered one of the most significant developments in Lebanese history and ended Syrian occupation in April 2005. The early hopes for a democratic recovery after the withdrawal of Syrian troops, however, immediately vanished and sectarian divisions demonstrated themselves in foreign policy orientations and behavior of sectarian groups.

Sectarian actors regained their abilities to pursue their own foreign policy agendas more freely after 2005. Two big coalitions that were established immediately after the assassination of Hariri had their own visions of Lebanon as discussed in the previous chapters. While Sunni dominated March 14 alliance preferred to develop strong ties with the West and the Arab states; Hezbollah-led March 8 alliance strengthened its alliance with Syria and Iran. Meanwhile, the sectarianization of regional politics after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 highlighted the divisions in

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Lebanese society, which in return intensified the role of sectarian identity in foreign policy preferences and behaviors of sectarian actors in Lebanon.

Finally, the study of two recent major developments revealed the nature of foreign policy making and the role of identity in foreign policy orientations in a deeply divided society that is based on sectarian identities. Despite more than a half of a century of independence, Lebanon's political system remains inadequately institutionalized and highly personalized due to the existence of a weak state on the one hand and strong sectarian affiliations on the other. Therefore, the country has alternated between frequently changing fragile governments and sectarian conflicts.

This short overview has once again demonstrated that the preservation of socio-institutional sectarian affiliations in a confessional system allowed sectarian leaders to control their communities where communal identities prevailed over national aspirations. In this framework, foreign policy processes have been controlled by a limited number of sectarian leaders, representing their sectarian communities. The case of Lebanon signals that due to these informal mechanisms and sub-state sectarian actors where state generally remains ineffective, the study of foreign policy cannot solely be based on the institutional and bureaucratic structures within the state. In this context, a more rigorous study of foreign policy necessitates a deeper understanding of the ambiguous interplay and network of relations among various sectarian actors and their behavioral patterns.

7.1. UNDERSTANDING LEBANESE FOREIGN POLICY

Competing sectarian communities are simultaneously advancing their own foreign policy agendas by different means and foreign policy making in Lebanon is deeply fragmented between the interests of various sectarian groups. Concerning the Lebanese foreign policy in general, as covered in Chapter 2, foreign policy is very much related with the nature of state, domestic actors and state's location in

wider regional and international environment. Additionally, it is clearly observed during this research that the confessional system have direct implications on foreign policy decision making mechanisms and implementation processes. Therefore, this study reveals certain conclusions about Lebanese foreign policy in general. Concerning the subject of this thesis, there are mainly five key concluding remarks about Lebanese foreign policy which are mutually affecting foreign policy behavior of sectarian actors.
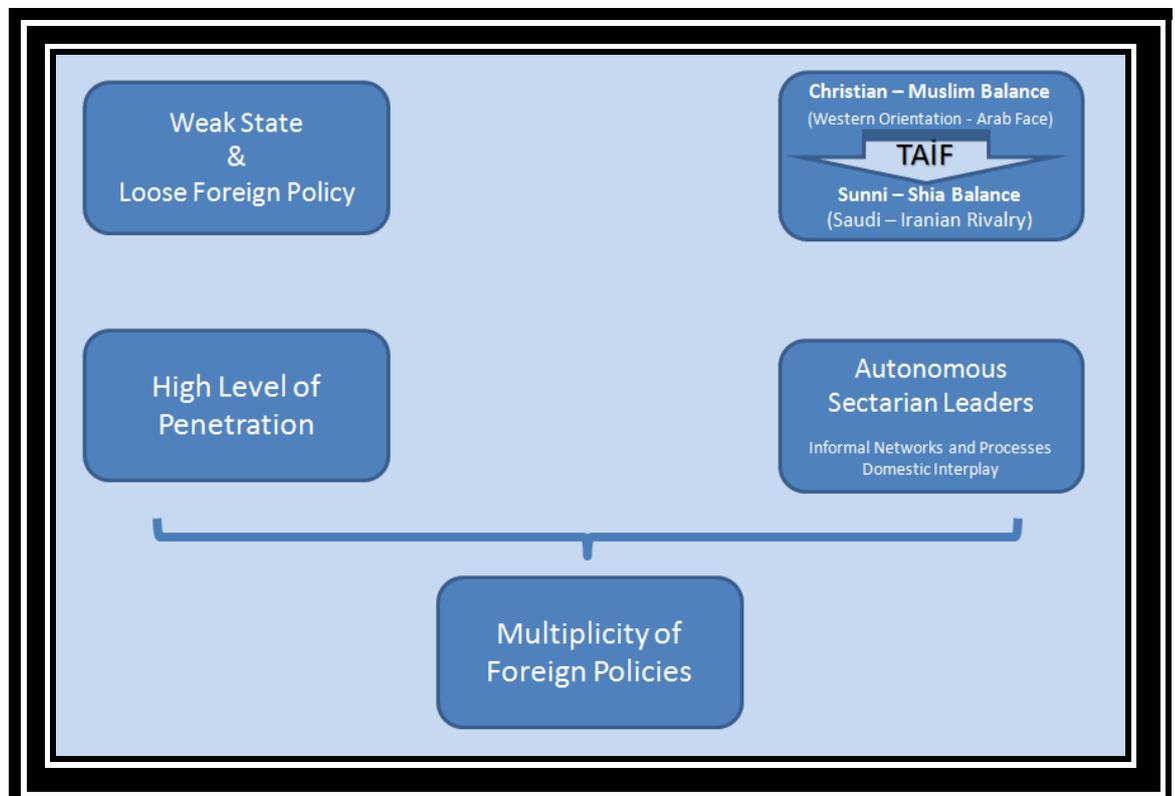

Figure 4: Lebanese Foreign Policy

The first important factor bearing on Lebanese foreign policy is the weakness of the state, which prevents a cohesive foreign policy stance. The political order that established through principles of 1926 Constitution, National Pact and Taif

Accord produced weak institutional structure while reinforcing religious divisions based on the representation of various sectarian identities. Thus, Lebanese government can best be defined as a deeply paralyzed and fragmented political entity, having various sectarian groups with their own militias, dynamics, agendas, and transnational links and operating as autonomous actors outside of state control. The central state barely asserted its hold over the country due to ongoing instability, which I call sectarian cantonization. Therefore, it is difficult for Lebanese governments to dictate a foreign policy on sectarian leaders; rather it has been a forum for leaders of various confessions to come together, discuss and agree on certain principles. In such a conjuncture, Lebanese state has no capacity to impose an assertive foreign policy decision because sectarian leaders can opt out and pursue their own interests through different means inside and outside of the Lebanon, as discussed above. Therefore, what is called Lebanese foreign policy is not the product of unitary governmental process, rather a loose temporary agreement after a severe bargaining process among various sectarian actors having alliances at multiple levels and also embedded in state institutions.

In the absence of a well-institutionalized state apparatus in addition to the lack of a common national identity, foreign policy orientation of Lebanon has always been subject to debate between sectarian leaders. During the French mandate and the early independence period, the major division was between Christians and Muslims, who were predominantly represented by the Maronites and the Sunnis respectively. The National Pact was formulated to present a solution for this foreign policy orientation problem, which affirmed Maronites' recognition of country's place in the Arab world, as well as Sunnis' approval of its independent statehood. After the Taif Accord and especially since the early 2000s, however, it is widely argued that the major division within Lebanon about country's final orientation has stemmed from Sunni - Shia divide under the influence of regional rivalry even before the Syrian civil war as discussed in the previous two chapters. In such a conjuncture, Maronite and Druze leaders are now playing between these two axes depending on their interests, rather than being the center of either pole.

To sum up, the historical analysis together with case studies affirms that the major discussion on the foreign policy orientation of Lebanon has transformed itself from a debate between Maronite – Sunni aspirations to a competition between mainly Sunni and Shia aspirations, which in return prevents forming a coherent foreign policy.

The third conclusion might be that any research on Lebanese foreign policy highly necessitates the study of sectarian leaders and their relations with outside world from domestic politics perspective. This conclusion has two major implications. First, formal offices responsible for foreign policy making barely have executive power in foreign policy matters, rather the existence of informal networks based on mostly sectarian identities should be considered substantial in the foreign policy formulation process. In addition to their structural weaknesses, offices such as the presidency, prime ministry, the council of ministers are highly depending on those who hold the office in particular time and they play minor role in foreign policy makings. In other words, this research found out how and why sectarian leaders bypass state structures in the pursuit of their foreign policy goals and the complexity of decision making and implementation processes in a confessional system. Second, although the literature generally argues that Lebanese foreign policy should be studied from systemic level, this research demonstrated that one also needs to have a multi-level and multi-causal analysis in order to understand the Lebanese foreign policy by looking at the domestic interplay. This approach must scrutinize the complex and intertwined regional and international dynamics as well as the domestic interplay on any foreign policy issue. Although it must be stated that the foreign penetration is very fundamental in understanding foreign policy of Lebanon, there is a considerable merit in studies which focus on the autonomy and independence of sectarian leaders both in their authentic foreign policy orientations and preferences in accordance with the precarious interplay of sectarian and foreign interests. In other words, although Lebanese foreign policy is open to the infiltration of foreign powers and sectarian leaders have been bound by these foreign powers, this does not necessarily mean that they do not have any

independent role. From this perspective, even under Syrian tutelage, this study demonstrated that a careful examination of aspirations and behavior of sectarian actors is necessary in addition to the interplay of Syrian, Lebanese and sectarian interests.

The fourth significant characteristic is the high level of foreign penetration in the making of foreign policy in Lebanon, as this thesis in agreement with the previous works covered before. The fact that the official Lebanese foreign policy tried to maintain a kind of a neutral position does not necessarily mean that different sectarian communities abandon their traditional links with preferred foreign powers to pursue their sectarian interests and strengthen their domestic positions vis-à-vis other confessional groups. There are mainly two reasons for this penetration: while international and regional actors empower Lebanese political actors to pursue the former's geopolitical interests, Lebanese sectarian leaders are also bandwagon with external actors to enhance their own domestic political positions. Therefore, Lebanese foreign policy turns out to be a two-level game in which sectarian leaders at the local level and foreign powers at the international level compete for power inside Lebanon and at the broader region. This paved the way for heavy foreign penetration because external actors generally tend to contact with a specific sub-state sectarian actor rather than the official representatives of Lebanon.

Lastly, this thesis once again confirmed the existence of multiple foreign policies in Lebanon simultaneously, a point that was raised in various studies. It is for sure that the ineffective nature of Lebanese state coincided with the independent and autonomous sectarian leaders having various affiliations causes the existence of various foreign policy preferences and behaviors by sub-state sectarian leaders in parallel to Lebanese foreign policy, which also represents interest of a particular confessional group. Therefore, study on Lebanon from foreign policy perspective presents an excellent example of how different sectarian groups bypass state structures in the pursuit of their goals with the preferred foreign partners. In this competition, while the official Lebanese foreign policy stance has been associated

with the principle of neutrality in regional and international settings most of the time, which means a loose and passive foreign policy formulation, continuous debates on Lebanon's identity as covered in previous parts have resulted in the emergence of divergent conceptions and perceptions of foreign policy orientations and a collection of foreign policies and strategies simultaneously by various sectarian leaders.

7.2. THE ROLE OF SECTARIAN IDENTITY IN ALLIANCE BUILDING

The point of departure for this study was the observation that sectarian groups in Lebanon can behave as foreign policy actors independently from Lebanese state. Therefore, it firstly looked at what the literature on foreign policy studies have accumulated so far on the issue of foreign policy actors at different levels in order to have an insight about the emergence of foreign policy actors. The literature review demonstrated that scholars of IR have invested enormously to the proliferation of actors in foreign policy studies. As a result, the realist paradigm had already been challenged and it is observed that various actors try to shape foreign policy agendas of governments according to their interest because they differ substantially on the final aspirations of their countries. Then, the research continues with the importance of identity in general and the sectarian identity in specific in order to understand the underlying cause of this difference because the proliferation of actors in foreign policy is not sufficiently explanatory as long as they ignore the issue of identity.

Contrary to realist assumptions, constructivist studies have demonstrated that state identities are not constructed through a national consensus. However, they have not sufficiently analyzed the construction of identities at sub-state level and its ramifications on foreign policy behaviors of sub-state actors. At this point, by linking foreign policy and identity at sub-state level as a novel contribution, this study found out that the analysis of sectarian groups in foreign policy making in deeply divided societies based on religious affiliations is an important insight for

foreign policy studies since sub-state identity perceptions have the potential to shape societal perceptions on foreign policy matters and affect political debates in the country, which influence not only state behaviors and abilities but also foreign policy preferences and behavioral patterns of sectarian actors.

This study presents what the so-called sectarianism revival stands for and what this sectarian identity means for the perception of the self and the other, ally and enemy, friend and foe in terms of foreign policy issues at sub-state level. Taking sub-state sectarian identities for granted misleads the researcher to ignore how particular identities have been constructed and what this entailed for foreign affairs. Within this framework, this study argues that different meanings can be attributed to the domestic and regional developments depending on the actors' sectarian identities, which give meaning to the world and therefore became the basis of interests. By bridging the gap between the sub-state actors and the concept of sectarian identity in the case of sectarian actors in Lebanon from a foreign policy perspective, this research assesses how sectarian identity shapes foreign policy preferences and behavior. Thus, as its foremost contribution, this study affirms that sectarian groups can be considered as significant foreign policy actors at sub-state level in foreign policy studies since they have their own -and most of the time contradictory- foreign policy orientations other than the state and behavioral patterns other than traditional behavior of any sub-state actor, namely pressuring the government through different means.

One important theme in security studies is the focus on the decision of whether and with whom to ally when faced with a threat. This study shows that the construction of threat perception through actors' identities play important role in building alliances and sectarian identity emerges as an important factor in determining alliances of Lebanese sectarian leaders with foreign partners. The historical analysis and case studies clearly demonstrated that sectarian leaders tend to be closer with co-sectarian actors in their transnational relations. When one looks at these alliances, one observes that while Sunnis defined their communal interests with a closer foreign policy to the Sunni Arab world,

Maronite elites sided with preferential relations with France. In addition, Shia leaders established closer links with Assad regime and Iran especially after the Islamic Revolution in 1979. Therefore, it is possible to argue that although the alliance building is not purely based on sectarian identities, the sectarian harmony in these alliances, namely Shia Hezbollah with Iran, Sunni elites with Sunni Arab regimes and Maronites with Christian world cannot solely be considered as a coincidence. In line with this point, it is difficult to explain the sustainability of historical relation of Maronites with France and Catholic Church in Rome, and the Sunnis with the heirs of Muslim Empires, Shia ties with religious centers in Iraq and Iran and the transnational links between regional Druze communities. However, it is also important to note that these alliances are prone to change and fluid in spite of certain continuities. In this respect, although there is a tendency of building alliances with co-sectarian foreign actors, yesterday's alliances may not bear binding significance or reference to either today's or tomorrow's in a very complex politics of Lebanon.

Lastly, despite the sectarian nature of foreign policy preferences and orientations of sectarian actors in Lebanon, it is also observed in this research that all confessional leaders argue that their foreign policy choices represent Lebanese interests and they frame their foreign policy choices through nationalist or anti-imperialist discourse. In other words, although leaders have informal relations based on their interests according to sub-state confessional identities, this research found out that these leaders generally frame the discourse of their foreign policy agenda on national rhetoric while blaming others for collaborating with the so-called enemies of the nation. When the speeches by these leaders are analyzed, it is also observed that Lebanese sectarian elites are surprisingly very suspicious of each other's interactions with foreign actors. During the July War, for instance, Nasrallah had developed a nationalist rhetoric and presented Hezbollah as the true defender of the nation in order to legitimize Hezbollah's arsenal. In other words, it is very important to note that whatever the real Hezbollah's incentives were, he always presented the party as the resistance and the defender of the Lebanese

nation. Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 5, what is additionally important in this case is that this example demonstrates how a sub-state sectarian leader may direct the government in accordance with its foreign policy orientation, especially when he forms the discourse on national rhetoric.

7.3. BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS OF SECTARIAN GROUPS

Case studies together with a historical analysis openly reveals that sectarian leaders in Lebanon constitute an important part of foreign policy making in the country as sub-state foreign policy actors and they historically tended to develop multi-layered relations with their preferred international partners in order to influence government's behaviors or to pursue their foreign policy goals independently. After introducing sectarian groups as sub-state foreign policy actors, this research revealed the degree and the nature of the foreign relations that were built throughout the history, or more clearly, how sectarian groups behave as sub-state foreign policy actors in foreign policy making in Lebanon, which is divided along sectarian identities.

Keeping the main research question in mind, I propose a three-kind of categorization in understanding the foreign policy behavioral patterns of sectarian groups, derived from two case studies on Lebanon: sub-state foreign policy actor pressuring government, as embedded in the state, and as quasi-state.

First, the traditional foreign policy behavior of any sub-state actor is pressuring the government in order to reach its foreign policy goals since, after all, the nation state is still the pertinent entity in international relations, carrying out formal relations with the outside world and taking decisions about the resources necessary to carry out political activities. Therefore, sectarian leaders, like any other interest group, try to shape governmental procedures. In this case, sectarian leaders do not seek to seize the power in an absolute degree, but to control the

process and influence the decisions without dismantling Lebanon's territorial framework and sovereignty, as much as possible.
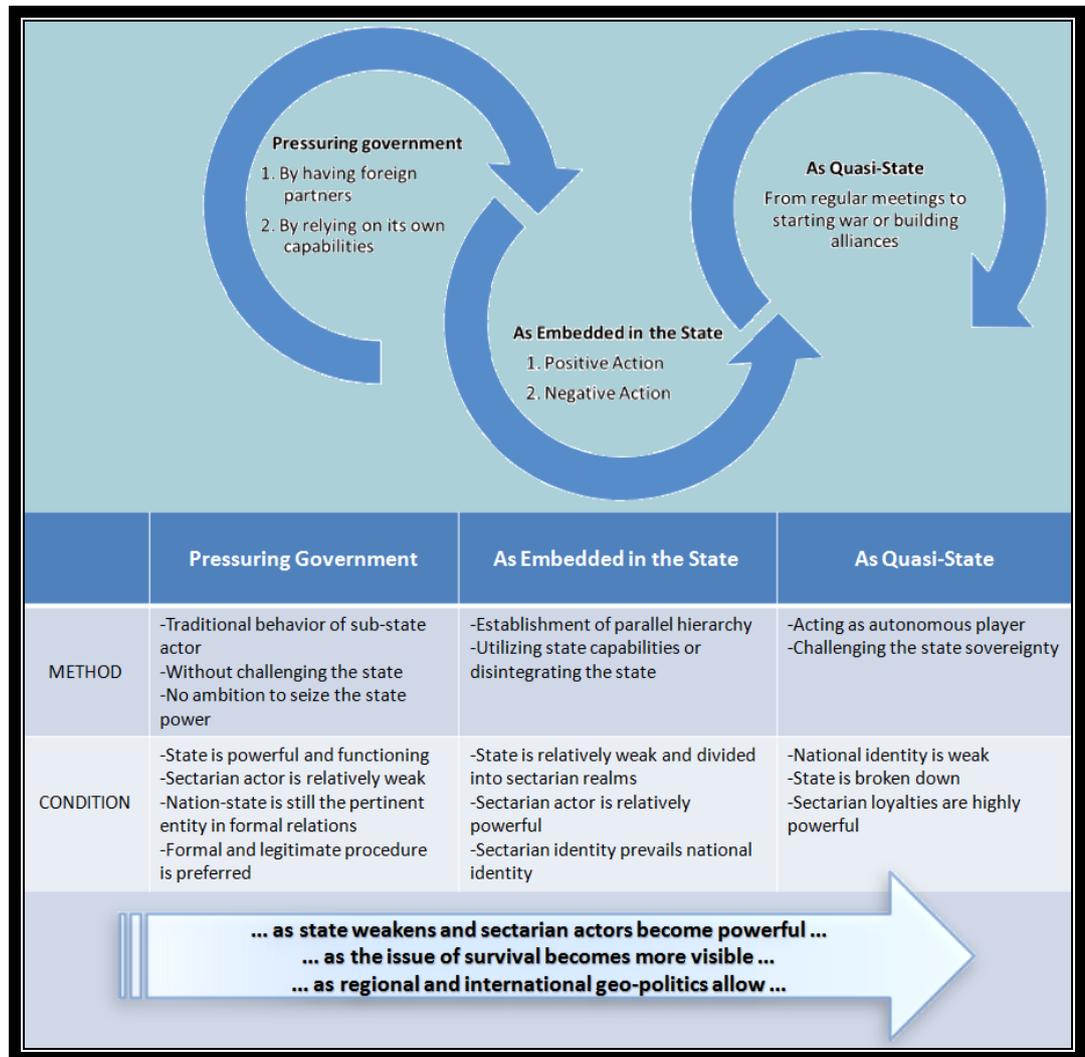

Figure 5: Foreign Policy Behavioral Patterns of Sectarian Actors

This study suggests that the two basic ways of pressuring government occur either by its own domestic capabilities or by the influence of the preferred foreign partners. The Lebanese history presents vast amount of examples of how sectarian

groups pressure governments through relying their own capabilities, as it was covered in details in Hezbollah's attitude during Israel – Hezbollah War.

As the second way of pressuring the government, longstanding divisions between sectarian groups in terms of identity formation and their interests in both domestic and foreign politics enable the foreign penetration in Lebanon and allow leaders of confessional groups to engage in a very close relationship with their preferred foreign partners. In this case, the aim of building alliances outside of Lebanon is mainly to make their international partners pressure on the members of government in shaping governmental decisions in their interests or to strengthen their domestic leverage. In an agreement with former American Ambassador Jeffrey Feltman, one of the chief practitioners in Lebanon, "various groups of Lebanese [people] for generations sought outside support to help check the power of other Lebanese" (Feltman, cited in Aspen Institute 2008, p.9).

As repetitively shown in the thesis, even before the establishment of Lebanon as a separate entity, the Maronite Church had the tradition of developing very close relationship with the Catholic Church in Rome in order to enhance its domestic leverage and pressure the Ottoman Empire during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Additionally, Patriarch Huwayyik's initiatives in the early 1920s with France, Sunnis in 1970s with the PLO, Shias more recently with Iran and Syria are all examples of these alliances, where sectarian leaders asked even for direct foreign interference in Lebanon's affairs. The Taif Accord settlement until 2005 was also a clear example of this type of behavior because, as Khanafer argues, sectarian leaders who favored strong ties with Damascus could be able to pressure Lebanese governments under the Syrian tutelage.

The second type of foreign policy behavior, sectarian groups as being embedded in the state, is mainly specific attitude for sectarian leaders in a confessional state system, where state is divided into sectarian realms under the rule of sectarian leaders. In this political structure, people are heavily bound to their sectarian leaders through socio-institutional networks and latter's material capabilities

within the community. Thus, the system forces people to privilege sectarian identities over national affiliations, as discussed throughout the thesis. Therefore, a governmental employee in the public sector or an officer in the army does not behave as member of state administration, but tends to act as a client of sectarian leaders. The system, based on sectarian loyalties in a confessional system with a weakly established state, creates a vicious circle where sectarian leaders control state and resources so that they can control state policies that serve the material interests of the sectarian leaders, which constructs modes of political mobilization under the sectarian leaders' control. The proportional representation of various sectarian groups in governmental and state institutions together with strong sectarian cohesion as in the case of Lebanon allows major sectarian communities to have a considerable power in the bureaucracy, which lead to the emergence of sectarian groups as, what I call, foreign policy actors as embedded in the state having parallel hierarchies in the state apparatus.

This power, which stems from the nature of political and social system, may demonstrate itself in two ways as parallel to the official state hierarchy; as I named "positive action" and "negative action". The positive action as embedded in the state refers to the utilization of state's capabilities by the members of a particular sectarian community to pursue their foreign policy interests under the control of the sectarian leader. Although the foreign policy choices generally represents the nature of the ruling party in any other country, which is holding the central governing power for a limited period of time, the positive action here refers to the establishment of parallel hierarchies and implementation of alternative strategies other than those of the central government. To illustrate, when Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora met with international actors and participated in intra-governmental meetings during the Israel-Hezbollah War, he spoke as the representative of a particular sectarian community rather than the prime minister where premiership remained as a subordinate role he played in certain cases, which was discussed in Chapter 5 on the issue of the Seven-Point Plan.

The negative foreign policy action as embedded in the state, on the other hand, refers to the disintegration of the state institutions to shape the implementation of any decision taken by the government. In this case, confessional leaders may block implementation of any governmental decision depending on their leadership capabilities and power that they hold in the bureaucracy. For instance, as discussed repetitively, the sectarian nature of Lebanese army has always been very volatile in foreign policy cases which have direct domestic repercussions. Therefore, sectarian leaders had the ability to prevent the army to act with a harmonious command through its sectarian nature if they do not agree with the government's decision for the deployment of the army, as demonstrated in the cases of internal clashes in 1958 and civil war or during the July War in 2006.

The third behavioral pattern is, as proposed in this thesis, acting as "a quasi-state" in foreign policy matters. The term foreign policy actor as a quasi-state refers to the fact that these confessional groups may carry out their own private foreign policy agenda through their own capabilities independent from formal inter-state relations. As analyzed in various cases, especially at times when Lebanese state is institutionally more fragile, a sectarian leader can increase his political power and go as far as acting as a state leader. In this behavioral pattern, the aim is not pressuring the government or shaping any governmental decision, but rather is to carry out a foreign relation or to initiate a foreign policy strategy on his own while sectarian leader acts as a sovereign and autonomous player in international politics and initiated a very real foreign policy action from regular meetings with foreign representatives to starting a war with a neighboring country. This type of foreign policy behavior is a direct challenge to the authority of central government to produce a unitary state foreign policy.

Comparatively speaking, it is observed from both the analysis of Lebanese history and the case studies that sectarian leaders have tendency to act as quasi-state actors when they either feel a serious existential threat to their communities as in the possibility of spread of Syrian civil war into Lebanon or when the state breakdown as in the case of civil war. In this respect, civil war years can be

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considered as the consolidation of sub-state sectarian leaders as they emerged as quasi-state entities in the absence of a common national identity and a functioning state. Additionally, it is also observed throughout this thesis that regional and international geo-politics and preferences of foreign powers have also been very determinant factor in shaping behaviors of sectarian leaders because foreign policy behavior is a product of actors' identities and current geo-political, economic and social conjuncture. Since a political rivalry or conflict in Lebanon is mainly about larger fissures in the region, foreign policies of regional and international powers could also be very important as in the case of, for instance, the royal protection of French King to the Maronite community in seventeenth century or the initial military and strategic support of Iran to Hezbollah for building its existing capabilities. One last note should be that this categorization of foreign policy behavior is neither linear nor mutually exclusive. In other words, a sectarian group may both launch a foreign policy action as a quasi-state entity and try to pressure governmental decision making. As discussed in the case of Israel – Hezbollah War, while Hezbollah carried out a war without consulting to the government or asking its support; it also tried to be active in governmental procedures by relying its own capabilities in order to shape Lebanese government's strategies.

7.4. PATHS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As discussed in Chapter 1, Lebanon constitutes a very unique example with its complex and divided society on the basis of sectarian identities, which have been embedded in social life and state institutions. In this regard, it can be considered as a failed example of nation-building process without a common idea about 'what Lebanon is' and 'what Lebanon should be.' Therefore, although Lebanon is a very suitable case to study how sectarian identities matter in terms of the definition of the self and the other and how sectarian groups behave as sub-state foreign policy actors, this study is also aware of its limitations and takes Lebanon

as a sui-generis example. However, considering the fact that a number of countries in the Middle East like Iraq and Syria started to look like Lebanon in the new geopolitical situation currently unfolding in the region since 2003, this study might contribute to the field through subsequent follow-up works on sub-state sectarian actors in aforementioned countries despite its challenges. Therefore, apart from its immediate contributions, this study also aims to have long-term implications on the Middle Eastern Studies. The lessons of Lebanon's complex confessional system could serve as a yardstick for other plural societies experiencing a post-conflict settlement process as sectarian divisions are going to become a significant factor in shaping behaviors of both states and non-state actors in the Middle East. The future works could include the findings of this study for future research for selected cases in Iraq and Syria. By doing so, these studies might also pave the way for comparative studies on the behavioral patterns of sectarian actors in different countries.

Additionally, as this thesis mainly focused on one leader from major confessional communities by taking the actor as the most representative of the community, intra-sectarian discussions are basically considered as beyond the limit of this research. Based on the findings of this thesis, but also taking its limitations into account, it is highly believed that any study on how a sectarian leader develops and frames a foreign policy position and legitimizes it vis-à-vis other major leaders within the community would be worth studying because a case study on the Syrian civil war demonstrated that the perceptions of sectarian elites may vary, [148] which was the case especially in the Maronite community. While pursuing a foreign policy, leaders of sub-state sectarian groups try to get the consent of their constituency firstly, then to reach an agreement with other domestic leaders and the governmental officials at domestic level and at the same time try to find foreign support or alliance to enhance their domestic statute. Therefore, a study on the process of developing and framing a foreign policy

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[148] The historical analysis demonstrated that fragmentations become more visible when there is no strong confessional leader or when the sectarian threat perception is comparatively low.

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position within the sectarian community would be subject to future research, which might expand our understanding about the behavioral patterns of sectarian actors in foreign policy issues.

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A. TURKISH SUMMARY

DEVLET-ALTI DIŞ POLİTİKA AKTÖRÜ OLARAK MEZHEP GRUPLARI?
LÜBNAN VAKA ANALİZİ

Dış politika üzerine yapılan çalışmalar, farklı analiz düzeylerindeki dış politika aktörlerinin çeşitliliği ile aktörlerin tercihleri ve davranışlarında kimliğin önemini ortaya koymuşlardır. Hâlihazırda bu çalışma ise mezhep gruplarını dış politika çalışmalarına devlet-altı aktör olarak konu ederek literatürde göz ardı edilen dış politika yapım süreçlerindeki mezhebi kimliğin rolünü tahlil etmeye taliptir. Literatürdeki genel kanının aksine Ortadoğu'da dini gruplar arasındaki çatışmalar yeni olmayıp ulus devletin bölgedeki kimlik sorunu da 2003 yılında ABD'nin Irak'ı işgali ile başlamamıştır. Birinci Dünya Savaşı sonrası Ortadoğu'da kurulan düzen tarihsel mirasın aksine devletlerin ve sınırların yapay bir şekilde oluşturulmasına sebep olmuştur (Hinnebusch 2014, p.4). Bu nedenle 2003 sonrası Irak'ta bölgedeki diğer ülkelerin de desteği ve himayesiyle farklı mezhebi gruplar arasında meydana gelen çatışmaların, siyasi söylemi daha derinden ve daha şiddetli bir biçimde mezhebileştirdiğini söylemek daha uygundur. Bu kapsamda; Michael Hudson'ın ulusal kimlik inşası karşısında toplumsal kimliklerin kalıcılığı konusundaki tespiti her zamankinden daha güncel görünmektedir (Hudson 1968, p.25).

Mezhebi kimlik bazlı çatışmalar arttıkça bahse konu kimliğin aktörlerin düşünce dünyalarını ve davranışlarını şekillendirmede daha fazla etkili olduğu, Ortadoğu'da siyasal ve sosyal gelişmeleri yönlendirmede en önemli faktör olarak

ortaya çıktığı ve özellikle İran-Suudi Arabistan rekabetinde belirleyici rol oynadığı görülmektedir (Luomi 2008, p.47; Reese 2013, p.6; Lynch 2013, p.10; International Crisis Group 2014, pp.15–16; Hazran 2010, p.521). Bu nedenle siyasi ve ekonomik olarak işlevsel devletlerin nadiren bulunduğu bölgede mezhebi kimliğe dayalı çatışmaların bölge düzenini sarsacağı ve bu bağlamda da mezhebi kimliğin aktörlerin dış politika cihetleri ile tercihlerini şekillendireceği öngörülmektedir.

1. GİRİŞ

Mezhebi kimliğin dış politika davranışları ile ittifaklarındaki rolü üzerine sorular bu çalışmayı teşvik etmiştir. Söz konusu kimlik, karar alıcılara kararlarını aldıkları ve davranışlarını sergiledikleri çerçeveyi sunmalarının ötesinde belirli aidiyetler de yükleyerek onların kendilerini diğerlerine mukayese ile tanımlamalarını da sağlamaktadır. Nasr'ın da belirttiği üzere "nasıl ibadet ettiğiniz kim olduğunuzu belirlemektedir" (Nasr 2012). Bu süreçte bahse konu kimlikler, aktörlerin kendilerini ve diğerlerini tanımlayışlarını, tercihlerini, tehdit algılarını ve ittifaklarını inşa ederken mezhebi grupların diğer aktörleri algıladıkları ve bunlara tepki verdikleri çerçeveleri belirlerler.

Bu noktada söylemin ve siyasetin Ortadoğu'da yeniden mezhebileşmesi göreceli olarak yeni bir gelişme olsa da mezhebi kimlik Lübnan'da özellikle mezhepçiliğin idari yapıda yasal yollarla yer almaya başladığı on dokuzuncu yüz yılın ortalarından itibaren asıl güç olarak öne çıkmıştır. Diğer bir deyişle Ortadoğu'da kurulan ulus devletler, farklı etnik ve dini grupları ihtiva etseler de bu anlamda konfesyonel idari sistemi ile Lübnan münhasır bir örnek teşkil eder.[149] Ancak

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[149] Konfesyonalizm toplumdaki farklı etnik, dini veya dilsel farklılıkları siyasi sistem içerisinde tanıyan ve herhangi bir alt grubun tüm yapıyı kontrol etmesini veya çoğunluğu ele geçirmesini engelleyen siyasi sistemdir (Lijphart 1969; Canadian for Justice and Peace in the Middle East 2007). İlk bakışta azınlık haklarının korunması konusunda etkin görünse de konfesyonelizm, toplumun değişen dinamiklerini göz ardı eden ve sağlıklı bir vatandaşlık bilincinin oluşturulmasını engelleyen geçici bir çözüm olabilir (MacQueen 2009, pp.41–42). Lübnan'daki konfesyonel sistemin ayrıntıları için bakınız: *Democracy and Power-Sharing in Stormy Weather: The Case of Lebanon* (Fakhoury Mühlbacher 2009).

yukarıda da kısaca değinildiği üzere, bölgedeki son gelişmeler sonrasında Ortadoğu'daki birçok ülke bir zamanlar Arap dünyasının anomalisi olarak anılan Lübnan gibi görünmeye başlamış ve mezhebi kimlikler bölge genelinde kalıcı ve etkili olacak gibi görünmektedir (Salloukh 2014, p.1). Bu açıdan, Lübnan'daki mezhebi grupları, dış politika cihetleri, tercihleri ve davranışları açısından farklı boyutlarıyla incelemenin ve analiz etmenin bu dönem itibarıyla gerekli olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Bölge genelinde mezhebi aidiyetlerin belirginleşmesi kendisini kısa sürede Lübnan'da göstermiş ve mezhebi ayrışmaları derinleştirmiştir. Özellikle Suriye iç savaşı mezhebi gruplar arasındaki farklılıkların barizce açığa çıktığı ve mezhebi kimliğin aktörlerin dış politika davranışlarında ve ittifaklarında etkili olduğu bir dönem olmuştur. Bu bağlamda hem bölgenin giderek Lübnanlaşması hem de Lübnan dış politika yapım süreçlerinin geleneksel dış politika anlayışımıza meydan okuması nedeniyle mezhebi grupların Lübnan dış politikası yapım sürecinde aldığı rollerin literatürde artan oranda ilgi çekeceği düşünülmektedir.

Evvelki çalışmalar, dış politika yapım süreçlerinde devlet dışında da aktörlerin olduğunu ortaya koymuşlardır. Buna ek olarak yakın dönemde yapılan akademik araştırmalar ise kimlik bazlı devlet-altı grupların dış politikada oynadığı role dikkat çekmeye başlamışlardır. Bu bağlamda mezhebi grupların dış politika analizinde analiz birimi olarak ele alınıp alınamayacağı merakıyla başlayan bu çalışma, "Dini kimlikler özelinde bölünmüş toplumlarda devlet-altı dış politika aktörü olarak mezhebi gruplar ne tip dış politika davranış modellerine sahiptirler? Mezhebi kimlik dış politika meselelerinde aktörün kendisini ve diğerlerini, başka bir değişle dostunu ve düşmanını tanımlamada nasıl rol oynar?" sorularına yanıt aramaktadır. Bu tez, bahse konu temel sorularına yanıt ararken aynı zamanda, Lübnan dış politika yapımı ve mezhebi grupların Lübnan'daki rolü hakkında da bazı sorulara atıf yapmaktadır: Lübnan hükümetinin dış politikasını kim şekillendirmektedir? Dış politika konularında Lübnan'daki mezhebi gruplar hangi süreçte siyasallaşmışlardır? Lübnan'daki mezhep gruplarının liderlerinin kendilerine has dış politika amaç ve stratejileri var mıdır? Bahse konu süreçte dış

güçlerin rolü nedir? Lübnanlı gruplar için mezhebi kimliklerin milli sınırları aşan yapısı ittifak arayışları ve inşasında nasıl bir rol oynamaktadır?

Mezhebi grupların devlet-altı dış politika aktörü olarak analiz edilip edilemeyeceğini inceleyen ve bu amaçla onların dış politika davranış modellerine ilişkin çıkarımlar yapan bu çalışma, Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplini ve Bölge Çalışmaları kapsamında literatüre katkı yapmayı hedeflemektedir. Öncelikle, analiz birimi, devletin bütünlüğü, dış politika aktörleri ve dış politika davranış modelleri gibi konularda devlet-altı aktörlere kimlik bakış açısıyla katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır. İkinci olarak ise Ortadoğu'da dış politika literatürüne ve Lübnan'daki dış politika yapım süreçleri hakkındaki çalışmalara katkı sağlayabilecektir. Bahse konu alandaki literatüre bakıldığında Lübnan dış politikasının genelde göz ardı edildiğini, ele alındığı durumlarda ise genellikle sistemik faktörlerin etkisi altında kaldığı yönünde incelendiği görülmektedir. Ancak bu tez, ülke her ne kadar uluslararası ve bölgesel güçlerin rekabet sahası olsa da Lübnan'daki devlet-altı mezhep gruplarının kendilerine özgü rolleri ve davranışları olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu nedenle de iç politikadaki aktörler çerçevesinden Lübnan dış politikası yapım süreçlerinin incelenmesinin, söz konusu literatüre önemli bir katkı olacağı düşünülmektedir.

Kavramsal yaklaşımını konstrüktivist (yapısalcı) tasavvur üzerine kuran çalışma, uluslararası ilişkilerin ve dış politikanın objektif bir şekilde incelenebileceğini iddia eden geleneksel yaklaşımlardan olan realizm ve liberalizmin aksine, aktörlerin kimliklerinin ve algılarının dış politikadaki gelişmeleri yorumlamalarında çok önemli olduğuna inanır. Bu çerçevede mezhebi kimlik ile dış politikada çıkar inşası arasındaki karmaşık bağı devlet-altı düzeyde aydınlatmayı amaçlayan tez, konstrüktivist çalışmaların devlet analiz biriminden toplumsal aktörler analiz birimine taşınmasında da rol oynayacaktır.

1.1. Lübnan'da Analize Konu Aktörlerin ve Dış Politika Olaylarının Seçimi

Günümüz Lübnan'ındaki mezhebi kurumsal yapılar ile siyasal kültürün kuruluşunda, on dokuzuncu yüzyılın ortalarından itibaren Avrupalı büyük güçlerin etkisiyle kurulan mutasarrıflığın önemli rol oynadığı düşünülebilir. Mutasarrıflık döneminde kurulan on iki kişilik İdare Meclisi, o dönemki Lübnan toplumunda yer alan cemaatlerin oransal olarak temsil edildiği bir yapıyı hayata geçirmiştir. Bu dönemde kurumsallaşmaya başlayan ve Fransa'nın manda idaresi altında tüm kurumlarıyla anayasal bir rejim halini alan konfesyonel sistem sonucunda hâlihazırda Lübnan toplumu, yasal olarak tanınmış on sekiz farklı dini cemaatten oluşmaktadır. Hirst'in deyimiyle mükemmel bir mezhebi devlet (*sectarian state par-excellence*) örneği sunan Lübnan (Hirst 2010, p.2), bu çalışmada vaka analizleri için seçilmiştir. Gerek tarihsel nedenlerle gerek dağlık coğrafi yapısıyla bahse konu ülke, özellikle dini ve mezhebi grupların sığınabilecekleri bir liman olmuştur. Hâlihazırdaki çoğulcu yapısı bölgedeki diğer ülkelerin aksine bir grubun demografik üstünlüğü şeklinde de değildir. Bu bağlamda nüfusun yaklaşık % 30'ar kadarını ayrı ayrı Sünniler ve Şiiler, % 21'ini Maruniler oluştururken, kalanlardan diğer üç mezhebi grup (Grek Ortodoks, Grek Katolik ve Dürzilik) da nüfusun en az ayrı ayrı % 5'ini oluşturmaktadır (Canadian for Justice and Peace in the Middle East 2007; Malaspina 2008; Shaery-Eisenlohr 2008; US Department of State 2013; Central Intelligence Agency 2016).

Lübnan'da yasal olarak tanınan ve medeni hukukta kendi dini kurallarını uygulama hakkına sahip olan bu gruplar, sosyal olarak kapalı toplumlar şeklinde örgütlenmişler ve Lübnanlılar üzerinde kimliklerinin inşası ve kendilerini tanımlama aşamasında önemli bir bağlayıcılık kazanmışlardır. Yahya'nın ifade ettiği gibi beşikten mezara (Yahya 2009) kadar sosyal, toplumsal, ekonomik ve siyasi ilişkileri belirleyen bu aidiyet bağları çoğu durumda ulus-kimliği inşasını da aksatmıştır. Bu da mezhebi grupların liderlerine ve kanaat önderlerine hem siyasi hem de toplumsal manada önemli güçler vermiştir. Tezin ana konusu açısından söz konusu liderler, dış politika süreçlerinde gerçek karar alıcılar olarak ortaya çıkmışlar hükümet ise bu liderlerin kendi aralarındaki rekabet platformu olagelmiştir.

Lübnan'da yasal olarak on sekiz mezhebi grup tanınmış olsa da gerek dış politikadaki önemleri gerek teze konu araştırmanın gerçekleştirilebilirliği açısından dört önemli grup (Sünni, Şii, Maruni ve Dürzi) teze konu olarak seçilmiştir. Devlet-altı dış politika aktörü olarak, bu grupları dış politikada kim temsil ediyor sorusu araştırmanın başlangıcındaki en önemli sorulardan biriydi. Tüm sosyal gruplarda olduğu gibi her ne kadar grup aidiyeti belirli bir homojenlik sağlasa da mezhebi grupların da yeknesak yapılar olmadığı açıktır. Buna karşın, bazı ailelerin, partilerin ve kurumların kendi mezhebi gruplarını temsil etme kapasitesini haiz oldukları literatürdeki yaygın kanıdır (Cleveland & Bunton 2009, p.334; Yahya 2009, p.23). Bu çerçevede çeşitli tarihsel gelişmeler, feodal ilişkiler, finansal kapasiteleri veya gerek bölgesel gerek uluslararası ittifakları sayesinde Sünniler için Hariri Ailesi, Şiiler için Hasan Nasrallah liderliğindeki Hizbullah, Maruniler için Maruni Kilisesi Patrikliği ve Dürziler için de Velid Canbolat, bu tezde incelenen vaka analizleri çerçevesinde temsil kapasitesi en geniş aktörler olarak belirlenmiştir.

Aktörlerin belirlenmesinin ötesindeki bir diğer önemli konu ise vaka analizi olarak seçilecek dış politika olaylarının belirlenmesidir. Bu bağlamda da Suriye'nin Lübnan'dan çekildiği ve iç aktörlerin göreceli olarak özgürce hareket edebildikleri 2005 sonrası dönemden 2006 yılındaki İsrail – Hizbullah Savaşı ile Mart 2011'de başlayan Suriye iç savaşında seçilen aktörlerin dış politika duruşları incelenecektir.

Bu çerçevede tez, üç ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. Dış politika çalışmaları literatürünün incelendiği ve tezin kavramsal çerçevesinin sunulduğu birinci bölümde, dış politika yapım süreçlerinde aktörler ve bunların davranış biçimleri üzerinde durulmuştur. Bu bölümde oluşturulan kavramsal çıkarımlar tezin tarihsel incelemesi ve vaka analizi bölümlerinde seçilen aktörlerin davranış modellerini analiz etmek üzere kullanılmıştır. İkinci ana bölüm ise iki ayrı kısımdan oluşmaktadır. Lübnan dış politika tarihi, bahse konu mezhebi grupların bölgesel ve uluslararası aktörlerle kurdukları ittifaklar dış politika perspektifinden incelenmiştir. Tezin sonuç bölümünden önceki üçüncü ana bölümde ise ele alınan

vakalar oluşturulan kavramsal çerçeve ve tarihi analizin ışında incelenmiştir. Sonuç bölümünde ise gerek Lübnan dış politikası gerek devlet-altı dış politika aktörü olarak mezhebi grupların davranış modellerine ilişkin çıkarımlara yer verilmiştir.

2. DIŞ POLİTİKADA AKTÖRLER VE KİMLİKLER: ANALİZ BİRİMİ OLARAK MEZHEBİ GRUPLAR

Bu araştırma, tezin kavramsal çerçeve bölümünde iki önemli tespitte bulunmaktadır. Bunlardan ilki, dış politika üzerine yapılan çalışmalar zaman içinde salt devlet merkezli yaklaşımların yetersiz olduğunu göstermiştir. Literatür taraması, dış politika hakkında yapılan çalışmalarda aktörlerin farklı düzeylerde çeşitlilik gösterdiğini ve bunun farkında olunmasının da dış politika yapım süreçlerinin zenginliği ortaya çıkardığını göstermiştir. Bu çerçevede dış politika, bağımsız bir aktörün diğer aktörleri ve olayları algısı ve idraki temelinde çoğunlukla yurtiçinde de yansımaları olan ancak aslen dış dünyaya yönelik oluşturduğu cihet, plan, taahhüt ve davranışlarının toplamı olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu tanım dış politika analizlerinde farklı açılardan fayda sağlamaktadır. Öncelikle 'bağımsız aktör' ifadesi ile salt devlet odaklı bir yaklaşımın ötesine geçilmektedir. İkinci olarak bu tarz bir tanım, dış politikayı sadece alınan kararlar ve davranışlar temelinde inceleyen bir yaklaşımın aksine karar alma süreçlerini de ortaya çıkarabilecek şekilde bir anlayışı benimsemektedir. Üçüncü ve daha önemlisi, tanım bu şekliyle aktörlerin kimliklerine önem vermekte ve onların dış politika tercih ve davranışlarının çevrelerini anlamlandırmaları çerçevesinde şekillendiğini savunmaktadır.

Kavramsal çerçeve konusunda literatüre yönelik ikinci tespit ise dış politika çalışmalarında farklı aktörlerin analiz birimi olarak kullanılmasına karşın devlet-altı düzeydeki grupların dış politika davranışlarında kimliğin öneminin yeterince ilgi görmediği, bunun devamı olarak da mezhebi grupların dış politika davranışlarına ilişkin konuların ise akademik anlamda göz ardı edildiğidir.

Bahse konu iki tespitten yola çıkarak bu tez, mezhebi grupların devlet-altı dış politika aktörü olarak incelenebileceğini ve bu anlamda mezhebi kimlikleriyle şekillenen algılarının onların dış politika tercih ve davranışlarında önemli olduğunu savunmaktadır. Dış politikada amaçlarına ulaşmak isteyen mezhebi gruplar, diğer devlet-altı aktörler gibi öncelikle kendi hükümetlerine çeşitli yollardan baskı uygulamayı tercih etmektedirler. Uluslararası ilişkiler geçtiğimiz son elli yılda aktörlerin çeşitlenmesine tanık olsa da özellikle bazı alanlarda ve resmi platformlarda hâlihazırda devlet, muhatap alınan aktör olmayı sürdürmektedir. Bu nedenle de mezhep grupları diğer aktörler gibi gerek kendi yerel güç ve kabiliyetleri gerek yurtdışında kurdukları ittifakları yoluyla hükümetlere baskı uygulamakta ve kararları kendi amaçları doğrultusunda şekillendirmeyi amaçlarlar.

Dış politikada amaçlarına ulaşmak amacıyla çeşitli baskı mekanizmaları yoluyla hükümetin kararlarını şekillendirmeyi hedefleyen bu gruplar, başka hangi yöntemleri kullanabilirler? Bu çalışma mezhebi kimlik bazında örgütlenen bahse konu devlet-altı dış politika aktörlerinin nasıl davranışlarda bulunduklarına ve dost veya düşman algılarını nasıl oluşturduklarına ilişkin çeşitli önerilerde bulunmaktadır. Özellikle devletin göreceli olarak etkinliğinin azaldığı ve devlet-altı liderlerin güçlendiği durumlarda mezhep grupları iki ayrı dış politika davranışı daha geliştirmişlerdir: devlet-gibi (*quasi-state*) ve devlete gömülü (*embedded in the state*) dış politika aktörü.

Devlet kurumsal olarak kırılgansa bir mezhebi lider kendi siyasi gücünü arttırarak adeta bir devlet gibi davranabilir ki bu davranışa bu tezde devlet-gibi dış politika aktörü denmektedir. Bu ifadeden kast edilen, bir mezhebi grubun kendi dış politik amaçları doğrultusunda ve kendi kapasitesi çerçevesinde diğer devlet ve devlet-dışı aktörlerle ilişki tesis edebilmesidir. Diğer davranış modeli olan devlete gömülü olarak dış politika aktörlüğü ise genel olarak konfesyonel sisteme münhasır olmamakla birlikte bu sistemde daha yaygın görülebilecek bir durumdur. Farklı mezhep gruplarının oransal olarak devlet bürokrasisinde temsilini garanti eden konfesyonel sistem, mezhebi grupların liderlerine devlet

içerisinde ve resmi hiyerarşiye paralel şekilde yapılanmalarına izin vermektedir. Ulusal aidiyetlerin önüne geçen mezhebi grup bağları bahse konu grupların, hem dış politikada karar alma süreçlerini hem de alınan kararların uygulanmasını etkileme kapasitesini haiz olmasını sağlamaktadır. Bu güç kendini tezde tanımlandığı üzere iki şekilde göstermektedir: müspet eylem (*positive action*) ve menfi eylem (*negative action*). Barnett'in ifade ettiği gibi devlet-altı aktörler kendi dış politika gayelerine ulaşmak için kendi mensupları bürokrasi ve hükümette yer aldığında bu mevkileri kullanabilirler (Barnett 2007, p.201). Konfesyonel sistemde bu durum, çok daha sistematik ve kapsamlı bir şekilde tezahür edebilir. Menfi eylem ise özellikle bir kararın uygulanmasının, kurumların parçalanarak veya paralelize edilerek engellenmesidir.

Sonuç olarak, dış politika çalışmalarının geçirdiği dönüşüm, hem devlet dışı aktörlerin çalışmalara dahil edilmesini hem de aktörlerin karar ve davranışlarında belirleyici rol oynayan kimlik faktörünün analizlere entegre edilmesini sağlamıştır. Ancak yapılan literatür çalışması, mezhep kimliği ve mezhep gruplarının dış politika yapım süreçlerindeki etkisinin ve rolünün göz ardı edildiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Kavramsal düzeyde bu çalışma, dış politika analizine devlet-altı aktör olarak mezhebi grupların dâhil edilmesini önermekte ve bu bağlamda bahse konu aktörlerin dış politika davranışlarına ve mezhebi kimliğin bu süreçlerdeki rolüne ilişkin çıkarımlar yapmayı hedeflemektedir.

3. LÜBNAN'DAKİ MEZHEBİ GRUPLARIN DIŞ POLİTİKA AKTÖRÜ OLARAK ORTAYA ÇIKIŞI

Lübnan tarihinin dış politika perspektifinden analizinin yapıldığı tezin ikinci ana bölümü, araştırmaya konu olan mezhebi grupların kendilerini kurumsal olarak konsolide edip farklı dış politika cihetleri geliştirdikleri dönem ve özellikle iç savaş sürecinde Lübnan devletinin bütün kurumlarıyla dağılmasına ve işlevini yitirmesine paralel olarak dış politika aktörü şeklinde ortaya çıktıkları dönem şeklinde iki kısımdan oluşmaktadır.

3.1. Mezhebi Lübnan'ın Oluşması: Farklı Dış Politika Cihetlerinin Ortaya Çıkışı

3.1.1. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Dönemi

Bugün Lübnan Cumhuriyeti olarak bilinen topraklar, 1516 yılında Yavuz Sultan Selim'in gerçekleştirdiği fethin ardından dört yüzyıl boyunca Osmanlı hâkimiyetinde kalmıştır. İlk dönemde emirlik olarak yönetilen Lübnan'da, 1840'lı yıllardan itibaren çifte kaymakamlık, 1860'lı yıllardan itibaren ise mutasarrıflık idaresi uygulanmıştır. Osmanlı döneminde bugünkü Lübnan'a kıyasla çok daha sınırlı bir alanı kapsayan söz konusu idareye, temel olarak Lübnan Dağı dâhil edilmiş bunun dışında kalan Beyrut ve Trablus gibi şehirler bu alana dâhil edilmemiştir. Emirlik dönemi temelde feodal bir siyasi sistemin hüküm sürdüğü dönem olarak kabul edilmekte ve mezhebi gruplar arası ilişkiler sosyal anlamda sınırlı olmakla birlikte siyasi anlamda farklı saiklerle yürütülmüştür. İç mücadelelerde farklı mezhebi gruplara mensup temelde feodal olan otoritelerin ittifakları görülmesine karşın dış aktörlerle geliştirdikleri ilişkilerin mezhebi karakterle kurulduğu gözlemlenmektedir. Bu dönemde kendi mezhebi grubu içerisinde gücünü konsolide eden Maruni Kilisesi, 1649 yılında Fransa Kralı XIV. Louis'den resmi koruma temin etmiştir (Hourani 1946, p.147). Emirlik döneminde Lübnanlı gruplar arasında yaşanan mücadelelerde dikkat edilmesi gereken bir konu da bahse konu ilişkilerin bu dönemde dahi Avrupalı güçlerin bölgeye dair rekabetinden bağımsız olmadığıdır. Katolik dünyanın liderliği savı nedeniyle Fransa Maruni cemaati, Rusya Ortodoks cemaat ile ilişkilerini geliştirerek bölgeye nüfuz etmeye çalışırken İngiltere ise özellikle on dokuzuncu yüzyılın başlarından itibaren Dürzi cemaati ile ilişki tesis etmiştir (Weinberger 1986, p.42; Harris 2009b, p.10).

Gerek Avrupalı güçlerin Osmanlı'nın iç işlerine karışması gerek İstanbul-Kahire arasındaki gerginlik gerekse Maruni ve Dürzi toplumu arasındaki var olan husumet 1841 yılında bölgede bir iç savaşın başlamasına sebep olmuş ve neticesinde Lübnan'da çifte kaymakamlık dönemi başlamıştır. Buna göre Beyrut-

Zahle-Şam yolu sınır kabul edilerek Lübnan Dağı iki ayrı kaymakamlık şeklinde yapılandırılmış ve kuzeye Maruni, güneye de Dürzi kaymakam atanması kararlaştırılmıştır. Ayrıca kaymakamlara danışmanlık yapmak üzere altı kişilik iki ayrı heyetin oluşturulması ve heyette Maruni, Dürzi, Sünni, Şii, Grek Katolik ve Grek Ortodoks cemaatlerinden birer temsilcinin bulunması üzerinde uzlaşılmıştır (Traboulsi 2007, p.26; Keleş 2008, pp.134–135). Çifte kaymakamlığın bahse konu prensiplerle kurulması, mezhebe dayalı temsiliyetin idarede kural olarak uygulanması açısından ilk olması nedeniyle önemlidir (Mülakat: Abu Husayn 2016). Çifte kaymakamlık sistemi bölgede istikrarın tesisi açısından yeterli olmamış ve 1860'ta başlayan daha geniş bir iç çatışma neticesinde 9 Haziran 1961'de Lübnan Dağı Mutasarrıflığı kurulmuştur. Mezhebe dayalı sistemin nüfusa oranla yapılmasını kurallaştıran bu dönem konfesyonel sistemin Lübnan idari yapısında kurumsallaşmasının temellerini atmıştır.

3.1.2. Fransız Manda Yönetimi Dönemi'nde Lübnan

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Ortadoğu genelinde bütün topraklarından çekilmesinin akabinde Suriye ve Lübnan toprakları Fransız Manda İdaresi'ne bırakılmıştır. Fransa, 1 Eylül 1920 tarihinde Büyük Lübnan (*Grand Liban*)'ın kuruluşunu ilan etmiştir (Malaspina 2008, pp.49–50; Rabil 2011, p.9; Mülakat: Al Rayess 2016). Yaklaşık çeyrek yüzyıl süren Fransız Manda yönetiminin Lübnan'ın mevcut teşkilatı ve yapısı açısından önemi büyüktür. Öncelikle Lübnan'ın hâlihazırdaki sınırlarıyla bağımsız bir devlet olarak teşekkülü başlı başına Fransız projesidir. Tarihsel sürecin ve o dönemde başta Sünni, Şii ve Grek Ortodoks cemaatlerin niyetlerinin aksine Lübnan Dağı'nın sınırlarının genişletilerek Lübnan'ın toplumsal yapısının daha da karmaşık bir hale getirilmesi ve konfesyonel sistemin modern Lübnan'ın anayasasına dâhil edilmesi manda döneminin mirası olarak kabul edilebilir (Traboulsi 2007, p.75; El-Khoury & Jaulin 2012, p.2; Moaddel et al. 2012, p.6).

Fransız manda döneminin hâlihazırdaki çalışma açısından Lübnan'daki ikinci önemli mirası ulus inşa sürecinin göz ardı edilmesi ve buna paralel olarak da

Lübnan devletinin kurumsal yapısının güçlendirilmemesidir. Bu iki olgu konfesyonel sistemle birlikte düşünüldüğünde, Lübnanlı kimliğinin oluşmasının önüne geçilmiş, mezhebi aidiyetlerin milli kimliğin önünde yer alması sağlanmış, mezhebi liderlerin ve kurumların kendi cemaatleri üzerinde önemli oranda güç tesis etmesi sağlanmıştır.

Son olarak ise, Osmanlı Dönemi'nde kendi kurumsal yapılarını Maruni kilisesi ve patriklik liderliğinde oluşturan ve buna paralel olarak bu dönemde giderek güçlenen Maruni cemaati, manda döneminde Fransız himayesinden istifade edebilmiştir. Bu himaye sayesinde modern Lübnan'ın ilk döneminde önemli oranda siyasi güç elde etmişlerdir (Ekinci 1998, p.24; Moaddel et al. 2012, p.7).

3.1.3. 1943 Sonrası Lübnan Cumhuriyeti

İkinci Dünya Savaşı ile başlayan süreçte Fransa'nın Lübnan'daki manda sistemini devam ettiremeyecek duruma gelmesi ve yerel aktörlerin de bağımsızlık yönünde mücadeleleri sonucunda 22 Kasım 1943'te manda yönetiminin son bulduğu ilan edilmiştir (Traboulsi 2007, pp.107–108). Bu dönemde Cumhurbaşkanı Bishara Khuri ve Başbakan Riad Solh arasındaki uzlaşıya dayanan Ulusal Pakt, ülkenin bağımsızlığını elde ettiği ilk dönemde belirleyici bir rota olarak kabul edilmektedir (Riad Solh's Ministerial Declaration 1943; Rabbath 1970, pp.438–443; Al Solh 1994, pp.126–128; El-Khoury & Jaulin 2012, p.6).

Bu çalışma açısından Ulusal Pakt'ın önemi, Lübnan kimliğine ilişkin tasvirlerde bulunması ve ülkenin idare sisteminde konfesyonel sistemi ilke olarak kabul etmesinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Lübnan kimliği açısından bahse konu uzlaşı, Arap bütünlüğünü savunan ve ağırlıkla Sünni Müslümanların oluşturduğu siyasi liderlerle başta Fransa olmak üzere batı dünyası ile daha yakın ilişki geliştirilmesini savunan ve ülkenin Hristiyan yapısına vurgu yapan Maruni liderler arasında anlayış birliği yaratmayı hedeflemiştir. Bu nedenle de Lübnan'ı Arap yüzü olan bağımsız ve tarafız bir ülke olarak tanımlamıştır. Bu

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perspektiften, Attié, bahse konu paktı Hristiyanları Araplaştırırken, Müslümanları da Lübnanlaştırmıştır şeklinde tanımlamaktadır (Attié 2004, pp.8–9).

Bahse konu bir uzlaşı ile Lübnan'ın tarafsızlığı üzerine varılan prensip, görünüşte ideal bir başlangıç kabul edilmekle birlikte Lübnan'ın bağımsızlığını kazanmasının ardından mezhebi grupların dış politika cihetlerindeki farklılıklar nedeniyle uygulanamamıştır. Ayrıca bu dönemde gerek bölgesel nedenlerle gerek Soğuk Savaş'ın süper güçlerinin çekişmesi neticesinde Lübnan'ın istikrarlı bir şekilde tarafsız kalabilmesi her zaman mümkün olmamıştır. Bu noktada not edilmesi gereken önemli bir diğer konu da, Lübnan'ın devlet olarak tarafsızlığını koruyabildiği dönemlerde dahi Lübnan toplumunu oluşturan mezhebi gruplar farklı devletlerle ilişkilerini sürdürmüş ve çeşitli ittifaklar içerisinde yer almaya devam etmişlerdir.

3.2. Devletin Dağılışı: Dış Politika Aktörü Olarak Mezhebi Liderler

3.2.1. İç Savaş Dönemi

13 Nisan 1975 günü önce bir kiliseye düzenlenen ve ardından Filistinlileri taşıyan bir otobüse yapılan saldırılar akabinde Lübnan, on beş yıl sürecek ve tüm toplumun derinden etkilendiği, buna paralel olarak devletin bütün kurumlarıyla dağıldığı bir döneme girmiştir. İç savaş dönemi, Lübnan'da mezhebi kimliğe dayalı milis güçlerin kendilerini gerek sosyal, gerek ekonomik gerekse siyasi yönden güçlendirdikleri ve Lübnan içerisinde kendi kontrol ettikleri bölgelerde devlet gibi davrandıkları bir süreç olmuştur. Devletin etkisini yitirmesine paralel olarak da mezhebi liderler, kendi dış politika amaçları ve cihetleri doğrultusunda çeşitli ilişki ve ittifaklar kurmuşlardır.

Maruni toplumunun kendisini yaşamsal tehdit altında hissettiği (Mülakat: Salibi 2016) bahse konu dönemde kimliğin temel referans noktası olan Kilise, toplumun gelişmelere bakış açısını şekillendirmede önemli rol oynamış, siyasi platformda öne çıkma imkânı bulmuş ve milis liderlerle sürekli iletişim ve koalisyon halinde bulunarak gerekli ideolojik, insani ve materyal desteği sağlamıştır (CEMAM

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1975, pp.77–78; Salibi 1976, p.105; Henley 2008, p.357). Ayrıca, iç savaşın özellikle ilk döneminde Kemal Canbolat liderliğindeki Filistinli ve diğer güçler karşısında zor durumda kalan Maruni liderler, Suriye ile ittifak kurmaktan çekinmemiş; dönemin Cumhurbaşkanı Süleyman Faranjiyeh ise 1976 yılında Suriye'yi Lübnan'a askeri müdahaleye davet etmiştir.

Suriye'nin doğrudan müdahalesi ile çatışmalar göreceli olarak yavaşlasa da Lübnan'ın güneyindeki Filistinli milislerin İsrail'e yönelik saldırıları devam etmiştir. Bu nedenle 1978 yılında İsrail, Lübnan'ın güneyini işgal etmiş, kendisine bağlı bir milis kuvvet (Güney Lübnan Ordusu) oluşturmuş ve güneyde güvenli bölge kurmuştur. Bunun üzerine Birleşmiş Milletler kararı ile UNIFIL teşekkül edilmiş ve Lübnan-İsrail sınır bölgesine yerleştirilmiştir (Ellis 2002, p.33; Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.19; Malaspina 2008, pp.79–80).

Tezin içeriği açısından iç savaş döneminde öne çıkan bir diğer gelişme ise Şii toplumunun, tarihsel geleneğin aksine bir şekilde kendi içinde örgütlenerek önemli bir siyasi ve milis güç olarak Lübnan sahnesine çıkmasıdır. Tezde ayrıntılı bir şekilde incelendiği üzere Lübnanlı Şiiler, çeşitli nedenlerle toplumun ekonomik ve siyasi yönden en zayıf toplumuydular (Moaddel et al. 2012, p.7; Malaspina 2008, pp.86–87; Hazran 2010, p.533). 1950'li yıllardan sonra yaşanan iç göçlerle daha önceleri güneyde kırsalda yaşayan bahse konu toplum, gerek İsrail saldırıları gerek ekonomik nedenlerle Beyrut'a yerleşmeye başlamışlardır. Bu dönemde Şii din adamlarının Beyrut'ta yaşayan Şiilerin örgütlenmesinde önemli rol oynadığı görülmektedir. 1969 yılında Şii Yüksek Meclisi'ni kurarak lideri olan İmam Musa Sadr, Şiilerin siyasi olarak örgütlenmesinde ve silahlanmasında önemli rol oynamış ve Emel Hareketi'ni kurmuştur (Traboulsi 2007, p.178; Makdisi & Sadaka 2003, p.12; Malaspina 2008, p.86; Ehteshami & Hinnebusch 1997, pp.117–119). Buna karşın, 1978 yılının Ağustos ayında Musa Sadr'ın Libya'ya ziyareti sırasında kaybolmasının ardından Emel Hareketi'ni yetersiz bulanlar ve İsrail'e karşı daha sert askeri mücadeleyi savunanlar, 1980'li yılların ilk başlarında bahse konu hareketten ayrılarak Hizbullah'ı meydana getirmişlerdir. 1985 yılında yayınladığı bir bildirge ile kuruluşunu ilan eden

Hizbullah, ilerleyen yıllarda sadece Şii toplumu açısından değil tüm Lübnan siyasetinde belirleyici bir güç olacaktır.

Lübnan İç Savaşı, mezhebi liderlerin dış politika aktörü olarak ortaya çıkışlarında belirleyici önemdedir. Lübnanlı kimliği üzerinde asgari bir uzlaşı sağlayamayan farklı mezhebi gruplar, zaten sınırlı kapasitesi olan devletin işlevini yitirmesiyle birlikte kendi çıkar algıları doğrultusunda dış politikalarını geliştirmeye başlamışlar ve tezin kavramsal çerçevesinin sunulduğu ilk bölümde önerildiği üzere devlete gömülü veya devlet-gibi dış politika aktörü olarak ortaya çıkmışlardır.

3.2.2. Taif Anlaşması

1989 yılında Suudi Arabistan'ın Taif şehrinde bir araya gelen Lübnan Parlamentosu üyeleri, Taif Anlaşması'nı kabul etmişlerdir. Bahse konu anlaşma tezin çerçevesi açısından bakıldığında özetle dört açıdan önemlidir. Öncelikle Lübnan kimliğini tekrar tanımlamaktadır. Ulusal Pakt'la benzer bir yaklaşım içinde olsa da söz konusu pakta göre Lübnan'ın Arap kimliğine daha fazla vurgu yapmaktadır. İkinci olarak konfesyonel sistemi yeni baştan şekillendirmiş ve devlet idaresinde Marunilerin gücünü azaltarak Sünni başbakan ve Şii meclis sözcüsünün rolünü kuvvetlendirmiştir. Üçüncü olarak, İsrail işgalinin BM kararları çerçevesinde sonlandırılması öngörülürken ikili ilişkilerde bir normalleşmeye atıf yapılmamıştır. Son olarak ise Lübnan ve Suriye arasında imtiyazlı bir ilişki tesis edilmesi kararlaştırılmış ve Lübnan'ın iç savaş sonrası tekrar yapılandırılması konusunda Suriye'ye görevler verilmiştir (Taif Agreement 1989).

3.2.3. Suriye'nin Himayesinde Taif Sonrası Dönem

1990'dan 2005'te Suriye'nin askeri manada Lübnan'dan çekilişine kadar geçen dönemde üzerinde durulması gereken dört önemli husus göze çarpmaktadır. Bunlardan ilki, bu dönemde Lübnan'ın tamamen Suriye idaresinin etkisi altında olduğudur. Taif Anlaşması'nda imtiyazlı ilişki tesisini elde eden Şam Yönetimi, akabinde Lübnan'la imzalanan ikili anlaşmalarla ülkenin siyasi, askeri, ekonomik, sosyal ve dış politik kararlarını şekillendirmede meşru zemini kendisine oluşturmuştur. Ayrıca ülkedeki iç siyasi dengelere doğrudan müdahale eden Suriye, Lübnan siyasetinde kendisine muhalif olabilecek bütün aktörleri oyun dışına itmiştir (Khazen 2001, p.45; Salloukh 2008, p.296).

İkinci önemli husus ise iç savaş sürecinde düzenlediği sosyal yardımlarla özellikle Sünni kesimde tabanını genişleten Refik Hariri'nin bu dönemde önemli bir siyasi figür olarak ortaya çıkışıdır (Chalaq 2006; International Crisis Group 2010, p.2; Blanford 2006, pp.20–21; Mülakat: Chalaq 2016). Gerek bölgesel gerek uluslararası arenada kurduğu önemli ittifaklarla ve ülke çapında yürüttüğü sosyal projelerle elde ettiği yerel destekle Hariri, 1990 sonrası Lübnan siyasetinin en güçlü aktörü olmayı başarmıştır.

Taif sonrası döneme ilişkin üçüncü önemli husus ise Suriye'nin Lübnan siyaseti üzerindeki bütün baskılarına rağmen giderek büyüyen Suriye karşıtı muhalefettir. 2000 yılında İsrail'in Lübnan'dan çekilmesinin ardından daha görünür bir hal alan bu muhalif oluşumun merkezinde Maruni Kilisesi Patriği Sfeir yer almaktadır (Khazen 2001, p.44). Patrik Sfeir, başta Maruni siyasi elitlerin katılımıyla daha sonraları da giderek yaygınlaşan Suriye karşıtı muhalefetin oluşumunda ve şekillenmesinde rol oynamıştır. Bu muhalefete Dürzi lider Velid Canbolat açıkça katılmamış olsa da çeşitli siyasi olaylarda aldığı tavırla sempatisini göstermiştir (Gambill & Nassif 2001; Harris 2006, pp.289–290; Blanford 2006, pp.69–70).

1990 sonrası Lübnan siyasetindeki en önemli gelişmelerden sonuncusu ise İran ve Suriye'den aldığı destekle Hizbullah'ın Lübnan siyasetinde en baskın siyasi güç

olarak kendisini tesis etmesidir (Wilkins 2013; Rabil 2011; Norton 1999; Harris 2006; Prados 2007).

3.3. 2000'lerde Bölge Siyaseti ve Mevcut Lübnan Dengelerinin Ortaya Çıkışı

11 Eylül 2001 tarihinde ABD'de düzenlenen terör saldırıları ve akabinde Afganistan ile Irak'ın işgali bölgedeki siyasi dengeleri temelinden değiştirmiştir. Irak'ta oluşan iktidar boşluğu gerek yerel gerek bölgesel güçlerin etki sahalarını genişletmek amacıyla rekabetine sebep olmuş; bunun neticesinde bölge mezhebi kimlik söyleminde İran ve Suudi Arabistan kamplaşması çerçevesinde ikiye bölünmüştür (Khanafer 2013, p.50; Alloul 2011, p.11; Zisser 2011, p.13; Potter 2014, p.1). Bahse konu genel çerçeve içinde düşünülmesi gereken bir diğer değişim ise bölgede Suriye'ye tanınan hareket serbestliğinin 2000'lerle birlikte kısıtlanmasıdır. Özellikle Irak'ta savaşan Şii ve Sünni milislere Suriye tarafından müsamaha gösterildiğine inanan ABD Yönetimi, Suriye'ye yaptırımlarını arttırmış ve Lübnan'dan çekilmesi yönünde baskısını arttırmıştır (Altunışık 2007, pp.9–10; Hirst 2010, p.294; Najem 2012, p.108; Khanafer 2013, p.39).

İsrail'in Lübnan'dan geri çekilmesi sonrasında bölgedeki gelişmelere paralel olarak Lübnan'da Suriye karşıtı muhalefet organize olmaya başlamış ve tabanını genişletmiştir. İlk başlarda Suriye ordusunun Taif'te öngörüldüğü üzere kırsala çekilmesi çağrıları ile başlayan muhalif açıklamalar, ilerleyen dönemde Suriye'nin Lübnan'a doğrudan müdahalelerini de hedef almıştır. 2004 yılında Cumhurbaşkanı Emile Lahoud'un görev süresinin Suriye'nin baskılarıyla uzatılması ise Şam Yönetimi'nin Lübnan'daki siyasi figürlerle bağını kopartmıştır (Harris 2006, p.297; Prados 2007, p.5; Malaspina 2008, pp.97–98; Harris 2009a, p.63; Salloukh 2010b, p.216).

Bahse konu bölgesel ve yerel siyasi dengeler çerçevesinde 14 Şubat 2005'te Refik Hariri'nin bir suikastla öldürülmesinden Suriye ve Suriye ile bağlantılı gruplar sorumlu tutulmuş ve Suriye karşıtı muhalefet geniş halk yığınları ile protesto

gösterileri düzenlemiştir. Akabinde 26 Nisan 2005 tarihinde Suriye Ordusu Lübnan'dan çekilmek durumunda kalmıştır.

2005 sonrası dönemde Lübnan'da iki önemli koalisyondan bahsedebiliriz: 8 Mart ve 14 Mart İttifakları. 14 Mart İttifakı Saad Hariri liderliğinde ağırlıklı olarak Sünni gruplardan oluşurken, 8 Mart İttifakı ise Hizbullah ile Maruni lider Mişel Aoun'un katılımıyla teşekkül etmiştir. Bu iki ittifakın temel ayrıştıkları konular, başta dış politika meseleleridir.

4. VAKA ANALİZLERİ ÇERÇEVESİNDE DIŞ POLİTİKA ANALİZ BİRİMİ OLARAK MEZHEBİ GRUPLAR

4.1. İsrail-Hizbullah Savaşı

Tezin vaka analizlerinin ilkini oluşturan 2006 yılındaki İsrail-Hizbullah Savaşı, araştırmada ele alınan mezhebi liderlerin bahse konu savaşa ilişkin dış politik duruşları çerçevesinde incelenmektedir. Esasen devlet-altı bir aktör olan Hizbullah'ın, devlete has bir dış politika davranışıyla İsrail'le savaşı başlatması ve diğer mezhebi liderlerin de bu savaşı algılamaları ve savaş sürecinde takındıkları dış politika davranışları tezin sonuç bölümü için önemli veri oluşturmuştur. Bu amaçla, bu bölüm bölgesel ve Lübnan siyasi dengelerinin analizi ile başlamıştır. Takip eden kısımda ise, savaşın başlamasının ardından ele alınan liderlerin açıklamaları ve kurdukları ittifaklar ve bu davranışlarındaki mezhebi kimliklerinin rolü incelenmiştir.

4.2. Mezhebi Grupların Suriye İç Savaşı'na Yaklaşımları

Suriye'de rejim karşıtı gösterilerin başladığı Mart 2011'den Hizbullah'ın doğrudan ve açıkça Suriye İç Savaşı'na müdahil olduğu Kusayr Savaşı'na kadar geçen dönemde Lübnanlı mezhebi grupların Suriye'deki gelişmelere ilişkin açıklamalarının, kararlarının ve davranışlarının ele alındığı bu bölüm tezin ikinci vaka analizini oluşturmaktadır. Mezhebi kimliklerin belirginleştiği ve ayrıştığı bu dönemde bahse konu grupların dış politik tavırları, Suriye'deki iç savaşa bakış

açılarındaki kimliğin rolü ile devlet-altı bir aktör olarak davranış biçimleri hakkında gerek tezin bu bölümünde yer alan gerek son bölümdeki sonuçlar ve çıkarımlar çerçevesinde önemli ipuçları vermektedir.

5. SONUÇ

Tezin bu bölümünde, ortaya konan kavramsal yaklaşım çerçevesinde ele alınan Lübnan tarihi ve vaka analizlerinden elde edilen çıkarımlar ve sonuçlar bir arada ve kategorize edilmiş bir halde sunulmaktadır. Söz konusu bağlamda, dış politika incelemelerinde mezhebi grupların devlet-altı analiz birimi olarak ele alınabileceği argümanıyla yola çıkan bu tez, genelde Lübnan dış politikası ve daha özelde ise Lübnanlı mezhebi grupların dış politika davranış biçimleri ve mezhebi kimliğin dış politika olaylarında aktörün kendisini ve diğerlerini, başka bir değişle dostunu ve düşmanını tanımlamada rolü hakkında sonuçlara ulaşmıştır.

5.1. Lübnan Dış Politikasını Anlamak

Bu tezde yürütülen tarihsel yaklaşım ve vaka analizleri Lübnan'ın izlediği dış politikanın aslında literatürdeki geleneksel yaklaşımların öngördüğü biçimde olmadığını, aksine devletin kompozisyonunu, iç siyasi dengeleri, bölgesel ve uluslararası konjonktürü ve devlet-altı aktörlerin Lübnanlı kimliğine ilişkin tartışmalarını ilgilendiren bir konu olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu bağlamda Lübnan dış politikası dört ana dönemde incelenebilir. 1943 yılında elde edilen bağımsızlıkla başlayan dönem Ulusal Pakt ile varılan uzlaşı altında şekillendirilmeye çalışılmıştır. Temelde Lübnan'ı bölge siyasetinden soyutlamayı amaçlayan ve tarafsız dış politika ilkesine vurgu yapan bu uzlaşı, farklı mezhebi grupların birbiriyle çatışan dış politika eğilimleri sebebiyle zamanla geçerliliğini yitirmiştir. 1975-1990 yılları arasında süren iç savaş ise devlet kurumlarının temelden yıkıldığı ve Lübnan toplumunun farklı mezhebi gruplar özelinde ayrıştığı bir dönemdir. Bu nedenle bahse konu ikinci dönemde Lübnan devletinin dış politikasından bahsetmek olanaksız hale gelmiş ve mezhebi liderler devlet-gibi aktörler olarak kendi çıkarları doğrultusunda dış politika yürütmüşlerdir. 1990

yılında Taif Anlaşması'nın yürürlüğe girmesi ile başlayan üçüncü dönemde ise Suriye'nin himayesi nedeniyle devlete ait bağımsız bir dış politika sürdürülemezken devlet-altı aktörler Suriye'nin sıkı denetimi altında kendilerine sağlayabildikleri hareket serbestliği oranında dış politika davranışlarını sürdürmüşlerdir. 2005 sonrası dönem ise Lübnan'ın dış politika cihetine ilişkin iki ayrı çatışan kampın mücadelesi şeklinde tanımlanabilir.

Dönemsel kategorizasyon dışında Lübnan dış politikasına ilişkin beş ayrı çıkarımdan da bahsedilebilir. Bunlar özetle, zayıf devlet yapısı neticesinde pasif dış politika, Lübnan'ın aidiyetine ilişkin ilk dönemde Hristiyan-Müslüman ve Taif sonrası dönemde Sünni-Şii dengesi veya rekabeti, bağımsız mezhebi liderlerin varlığı, bölgesel veya büyük güçlerin yüksek oranda müdahalesi ve son olarak da farklı aktörler tarafından yürütülen çok sayıda dış politikalar şeklinde sıralanabilir.

5.2. Mezhebi Grupların Dış Politika Davranış Modelleri

Lübnan tarihinin dış politika perspektifinden incelenmesi ve vaka analizleri açıkça göstermiştir ki Lübnanlı mezhebi liderler, devlet-altı dış politika aktörü olarak Lübnan'da dış politika yapım süreçlerinde önemli rol oynamaktadır. Bu bağlamda devlet-altı bir aktörün geleneksel davranış biçimi olan hükümete baskı mekanizması geliştirerek alınan kararları şekillendirmeyi hedeflemenin yanı sıra söz konusu aktörler, özellikle devletin göreceli olarak etkinliğinin azaldığı veya devlet-altı liderlerin güçlendiği durumlarda devlet-gibi (*quasi-state*) veya devlete gömülü (*embedded in the state*) dış politika aktörü olarak da hareket edebilmektedirler.

Tezde bahsedildiği üzere her ne kadar yaşanan son dönem, devlet merkezli uluslararası ilişkileri dönüştürmüş ve devlet dışı aktörlere önem kazandırmış olsa da hâlihazırda bazı resmi süreçler ve hükümetler arası toplantılar hala devletin tekelinde bulunmaktadır. Bu nedenle devlet-altı aktörler, çeşitli baskı mekanizmaları ile hükümetlerin aldığı kararları şekillendirmeyi hedeflemeye devam etmektedirler. Bu çalışma iki tip baskı oluşturma yolu tespit etmektedir.

Lübnanlı mezhebi liderler, kendi yerel güç ve olanaklarına dayanarak veya kendi tercih ettikleri dış güçlerle ittifak kurarak Lübnan hükümetinin dış politika yapım süreçlerinde etkili olmayı amaçlamaktadırlar.

Devlet-altı dış politika aktörü olarak sergilenen ikinci tip davranış modeli ise bu tezde devlete gömülü (*embedded in the* state) aktör olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Adeta mezhebi grupların kantonlarının toplamı olarak tanımlanabilecek Lübnan devletinde siyasi yapı, cemaat liderlerine gerek siyasi gerek ekonomik gerek hukuki gerekse sosyal birçok yetkiler vermektedir. Ayrıca her mezhep grubu, devlet hiyerarşisinde nüfuslarına oranla kotalara sahiptir. Bahse konu sistemde, cemaat önderleri devlet hiyerarşisi içinde kendilerine bağlı ve devlet yapısına paralel güç grupları oluşturabilmektedir. Bu güç, dış politika meselelerinde iki tipte tezahür etmektedir: müspet eylem (*positive action*) ve menfi eylem (*negative action*). Müspet eylem, devlet yetkisinin gücü elinde bulunduran kişi tarafından devletin çıkarları doğrultusunda değil de kendi mensubu olduğu cemaatin liderinin emirleri ve çıkarları doğrultusunda kullanılmasıdır. Menfi eylem ise tezde örnekleriyle tanımlandığı üzere herhangi bir durumda hükümetçe alınan bir dış politika kararının bahse konu yetkiler tarafından mezhebi grubun çıkarları doğrultusunda uygulanmasının engellenmesidir.

Üçüncü tip dış politika davranışı ise tezde ayrıntılı olarak önerildiği şekilde devlet-gibi davranıştır. Özellikle devletin kurumsal olarak kırılganlığının arttığı dönemlerde mezhebi liderin kendi siyasi gücünü arttırarak adeta bir devlet gibi davranabilmesini ifade etmektedir. Bu davranış modelinde, mezhebi grup kendi dış politik amaçları doğrultusunda ve kendi kapasitesi çerçevesinde diğer devlet ve devlet-dışı aktörlerle ilişki tesis edebilmekte ve savaş başlatma gibi devlete has dış politika davranışlarında dahi bulunabilmektedir. (Rubin 2009)

B. CURRICULUM VITAE

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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	METU International Relations	2009
BS (Minor)	METU Administrative Studies	2006
BS (Major)	METU International Relations	2006
High School	Atatürk High School, İzmir	2001

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2014-Present	Gazi University, Department of International Relations	Research Assistant
2009-2014	Republic of Turkey, Prime Ministry	Middle East Analyst
2006-2009	KAR-DE Machinery	Foreign Trade Representative
2005-2006	METU, Department of International Relations	Student Assistant

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Turkish: Native, English: Fluent, Arabic: Intermediate

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Field Research on the role of sectarian identity and behavioral patterns of sectarian groups as a unit of analysis in foreign policy making, Semi-structured Interviews, Lebanon, December 2015 - March 2016, Granted by TÜBİTAK.

2. "Lübnan Ermenileri: Tarihi, Lübnan'daki Konumu ve Türkiye'ye Bakışları", S. Tamçelik (Ed.), *Ermenistan: Tarih, Hukuk, Dış Politika ve Toplum*, Ankara: Gazi Kitabevi, 2015, pp. 621-647.

3. "Middle Eastern Studies in the Age of Globalization", 14th METU Conference on International Relations, Area Studies and International Relations: Intersecting Dimensions, METU, Ankara, June 2015.

4. "The European Union as a Normative Power in the Context of The European Neighborhood Policy", 9th METU Conference on International Relations, The Mediterranean in the World System, Northern Cyprus, May 2010.

5. "Water Dispute in the Middle East: The Tigris and Euphrates", 4th Congress on International Relations: Regional Alliances and Power Centers, Ege University, İzmir, May 2005.

C. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ☒ **X**

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : TINAS
Adı : MURAT
Bölümü : ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : SECTARIAN GROUPS AS SUB-STATE FOREIGN POLICY ACTORS? THE CASE STUDY OF LEBANON

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☐   Doktora ☒ **X**

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐

2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐

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