The Resilience of Clientelist Networks in Lebanese Municipalities
under the Syrian Migratory Shock:

The Cases of Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli

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I, Jean-Baptiste Nicolas Allegrini, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

This thesis explores the durability of elite domination in the three Lebanese municipalities of Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli from 2010 to 2019 in the midst of the Syrian migration crisis. It compares how these clientelist actors endeavoured to retain local power after an unprecedented electoral challenge during the 2016 local elections.

Since Lebanon's independence in 1943, local politics has been controlled by competing networks of patronage which resiliently maintain their grip on municipal power. Nevertheless, the 2016 local elections revealed an unusual defiance against incumbent clientelist leaders in municipalities like Baalbek and Zahle. Moreover, in Tripoli political independents overthrew the oligarchic elites. These results outlined the frailty of clientelist loyalties in the context of a considerable socioeconomic crisis induced by the Syrian forced displacement into Lebanon. However, only two years later, the dominant clientelist actors in each municipality won the 2018 parliamentary votes in the three case cities. Patronage prevailed, once again.

Therefore, the research question framing this project is: "Why did clientelist elites encounter a disruption of their leadership, and then how did they comparatively perpetuate (or recover) their local power in a context of stark material scarcity?"

Clientelist domination rests structurally upon three pillars: materialism, symbolism, and collective action. Accordingly, each typology of clientelism features a set of resources which determine their respective strategies of power competition at times of crisis. This research reveals that clientelist actors do compensate or substitute ailing material means with symbolic, coercive or collective tactics of governance. Thus, despite their different profiles, clientelist actors possess comprehensive tools of power endurance supporting their resilience over time.

This research uses a mixed-methods approach. It presents original fieldwork qualitative (105 elite interviews and participant observations during the 2018 legislative campaign) and quantitative data (210 survey questionnaires with Lebanese and displaced participants) collected in the three case cities from 2018 to 2019.

Impact statement

This thesis offers an academic contribution by systematically comparing the strategic behaviour of local political elites during times of crisis. Based on original data, this dissertation explores the status quo of local clientelist elites dominating power in Lebanon, and how it was hampered by the rise of social exclusion in the context of the Syrian migration crisis. It then considers the strategies used by the same elites to maintain or recover their authority in the three selected municipalities of Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli – in response to being challenged electorally in 2016.

This thesis employs mixed qualitative and quantitative resources collected during eight months of fieldwork in Lebanon between 2018 and 2019. Qualitative data includes 105 elite interviews conducted in both the three case cities and wider Lebanon, and participant observations of competing candidates performed during the 2018 parliamentary campaign. Moreover, quantitative data is used to probe the views of these decision makers. Two original sets of survey questionnaires were shared with resident communities counting 111 Lebanese participants and 99 displaced respondents. The datasets and anonymised interview transcripts are accessible to the scientific community for further analyses. This inductive research design relies on the methodological approach of analytic narratives to generate a theory on defensive power strategies in clientelist governance under stress. The conclusions drawn from this thesis therefore enrich recent literature on local governance in divided societies, by exploring the local elites' extensive agency in weathering and surviving a shock on their material resources.

This research also impacts beyond the academic world by informing the preparation of emergency relief responses. The evidence presented in this dissertation demonstrates the institutional reasons underpinning the variance of socio-political vulnerabilities observed across different municipalities facing a similar migration crisis. In consequence, humanitarian actors can incorporate an assessment of the resilience of informal clientelist elites to best target their developmental support into affected cities. Finally, these research findings weigh in favour of much-needed reform of humanitarian governance to be inclusive of municipal and local aid actors in order to counter the alienation of "host" communities in need.

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This thesis has been a journey of survival. It survived to a pandemic, a revolution in Lebanon, an insurgency in Kazakhstan. It survived to a burn out. But it is here, with all its imperfections. It is here.

This work conveys a lot of pain but also so much passion and love for Lebanon and Syria. This work is dedicated to my Syrian and Palestinian brothers, Fadel and Salam, that I love and miss terribly.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

This thesis explores the durability of elite domination in the three Lebanese municipalities of Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli from 2010 to 2019 in the midst of the Syrian migration crisis. It compares how clientelist actors endeavoured to maintain or recover their local power after facing an unprecedented electoral challenge during the 2016 local elections.

Since Lebanon's independence in 1943, local politics has been controlled by competing networks of patronage which resiliently maintain their grip on municipal power. Nevertheless, the 2016 local elections revealed an unusual defiance against incumbent clientelist leaders in municipalities like Baalbek and Zahle. In Tripoli, political independents overthrew the oligarchic elites. These results outlined the frailty of clientelist loyalties in the context of a considerable socioeconomic crisis induced by the Syrian forced displacement into Lebanon. However, in the 2018 parliamentary elections only two years later, dominant clientelist actors in these three case cities won the elections. Patronage prevailed, once again.

In this introductory chapter I contextualise this dissertation's main research question: "Why did clientelist elites encounter a disruption of their leadership and then how did they comparatively perpetuate (or recover) their local power in a context of stark material scarcity?" I then present a detailed overview of the thesis which outlines the theoretical, methodological, and empirical chapters addressed by this research to put a comparative light on the agency possessed by local elites in the three selected Lebanese cities to reproduce their power after an electoral challenge.

1.1 Motivation and Context
1.1.a Clientelism in Local Governance

In Lebanon, the national institutions constituting Lebanese democracy erected in 1943 reflect the religious diversity displayed by this small Levantine country. Located on the protective topography of Mount-Lebanon, the country became a host of

religious minorities in the Near-East who found there a refuge.[1] Today the state still officially recognises 18 confessions.[2] Each religious group's demographic weight in the Lebanese population is projected into proportionate quotas guaranteeing the political representation of each commune.[3] This system of power-sharing, segmenting the seats in the legislature, government, judiciary and the bureaucracy in a divided society is called consociationalism. It also entails the formation of governmental coalitions, grants each religious group a mutual veto on decisive issues, and allocates them a sizeable level of autonomy.[4] In essence, the functioning of this system largely rests upon political elites.

Inter-elite cooperation is meant to guarantee inclusive decision making for all communities, theoretically enabling them to weather the eruption of social cleavages.[5] For functioning consociation, political elites first need to gain sufficient electoral support within their respective religious sects to claim legitimate communal representation. This is however where social reality departs from the theoretical premises of consociationalism. To expand their legitimacy, Lebanese elites do not rely upon fair and free electoral competition where electors can easily alternate their preferences at each ballot. Instead, political elites of all sects have created clientelist systems which ensure the stability and perpetuation of their leadership.

Each politician ties a social contract with their protégés to decrease the unpredictability of electoral contests. The clientelist contract entails the leader providing physical and human protection to supporters in exchange for the latter's electoral loyalty.[6] In consequence, the durability of one's leadership depends upon his capacity to fulfil this clientelist social contract. In such a regime, the state merely assumes the role of a subcontractor whose resources are extracted and diverted by its

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[1] Jihane Sfeir, "Le Liban, pays de refuge. Généalogie des réfugiés arméniens, palestiniens et syriens (1915-2015)," [Lebanon, Country of Refuge. Genealogy of Armenian, Palestinian and Syrian Refugees (1915-2015)] *Relations internationales* 4 (2017): 39-50.
[2] Alexander D. M. Henley, "Religious Authority and Sectarianism in Lebanon," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* (2016): 3.
[3] Bassel F. Salloukh and Renko A. Verheij, "Transforming Power Sharing: From Corporate to Hybrid Consociation in Postwar Lebanon," *Middle East Law and Governance* 9 (2017): 154.
[4] Arend Lijphart, "Consociationalism After Half a Century," in *Consociationalism and Power-Sharing in Europe: Arend Lijphart's Theory of Political Accommodation*, ed. by Michaelina Jakala, et al. (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2018): 1.
[5] Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," *World Politics* 21 (1969): 218, doi:10.2307/2009820.
[6] Susan C. Stokes, "Political Clientelism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, ed. by Robert E. Goodwin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): 649.

own servants, including elected politicians and bureaucrats, to service the needs of clientelist network members.[7] Altogether, the Lebanese political elites constitute a clientelist regime founded on similar premises, which defend the interests of a small elite of wealthy leaders at the expense of the public good(s).[8] The principal interest of Lebanese clientelist elites is therefore to perpetuate an endless status quo.[9] Accordingly, it is important to note that this clientelist regime perceives institutional reforms or the rise of outer-systemic political challengers as threatening signs for the legitimacy of this system of informal governance.[10] Nevertheless, the recent history of Lebanon demonstrates the tremendous endurance of clientelist loyalties. The powerful transgenerational dynasties of several political houses – *zu'ama* – is testimony to the success of Lebanese political elites' strategies of domination and power reproduction.[11]

So far, I have only discussed the shape and functions of national institutions. However, how does this clientelist regime project itself onto local governance in Lebanon? The country implements a hyper-centralised administrative system. Nevertheless, municipalities play a foundational role in the clientelist power structure.[12] The literature review, in chapter 2, describes how the vertical power of clientelism is rooted in local politics and holds the reins of power in the shadows of formal authorities.[13] Indeed, national political elites build their clientelist network in

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[7] Melani Cammett and Sukriti Issar, "Bricks and Mortar Clientelism: Sectarianism and the Logics of Welfare Allocation in Lebanon," *World Politics* 62 (2010): 390.

[8] Lara W. Khattab, "The Genealogy of Social and Political Mobilization in Lebanon under a Neoliberal Sectarian Regime (2009–2019)," *Globalizations* (2022): 1-18, doi:10.1080/14747731.2021.2025296.

[9] John Nagle and Mary-Alice Clancy, "Power-sharing after Civil War: Thirty Years since Lebanon's Taif Agreement," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 25 (2019): 5, doi:10.1080/13537113.2019.1565171.

[10] Carmen Geha, "Co-optation, Counter-Narratives, and Repression: Protesting Lebanon's Sectarian Power-Sharing Regime," *The Middle East Journal* 73 (2019a): 9-28.

[11] Ward Vloeberghs, « Dynamiques dynastiques : transmettre le pouvoir familial au Liban contemporain » [Dynastic Dynamics: Conveying Family Power in Contemporary Lebanon] (paper presented at the congress of the Association française de Science Politique, Paris, 2013).

[12] Khaldoun AbouAssi, Tina Nabatchi, and Randa Antoun, "Citizen Participation in Public Administration: Views from Lebanon," *International Journal of Public Administration* 36 (2013): 1029–43, doi:10.1080/01900692.2013.809585; Fouad el Saad, "Strategy for the Reform and Development of the Public Administration in Lebanon," *Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform* (2001).

[13] Bruno Dewailly et al., "Pouvoirs locaux et décentralisation en période de (re)construction étatique. Les cas du Liban et de la Palestine ; Etude comparée, » [Local Power and Decentralisation in a Period of State (Re)construction. The Cases of Lebanon and Palestine; Comparative Study], Rapport PRUD groupe Liban-Palestine, Les municipalités dans le champ politique local. Effets de modèles de décentralisation dans la gestion des villes en Afrique et au Moyen-Orient [PRUD Lebanon-Palestine Group Report, Municipalities in the Local Political Field. Effects of Decentralisation Models in City Management in Africa and the Middle East], 2004.

at least one local stronghold where their respective religious group is demographically dominant. There, clientelist leaders recruit new members (who provide capital to the network), provide access to welfare, and secure the area, therefore locking their political legitimacy.[14] Most often, the dominant clientelist leader would endeavour to pervade the formal institutions of local governance (including the municipal council, presidency of the council and the local administration) to protect his interests and use the municipality to showcase the virtues of his executive power.[15] In consequence, the status quo observed at the national level is mirrored locally where clientelism sustains the power of local elites.

However, the literature demonstrates that clientelism is not structurally monochrome.[16] In the literature review chapter of this dissertation, chapter 2, I describe the several faces of the current clientelist spectrum as observed in contemporary Lebanon. My interest lies with the three forms of clientelism which emerged from the Lebanese Civil War which lasted from 1975 to 1990. The occurrence of the war demonstrated the fall out of the consociational system when Lebanese elites proved incapable of managing conflicting interests. Nevertheless, clientelism did not disappear in the ashes of burning downtown Beirut. Instead, it updated itself to deepen its grip on power, above all at a local level. National institutions were then in disarray and the country split into regional sectarian cantons where militias constituted their states within the state.[17] This return to the local granted new clientelist structures the experience of governance. By the end of the civil war, several powerful militias attempted to normalise their status and became political parties. Militia-to-political clientelism was born. Among them, the Christian militia turned political party of the Lebanese Forces dominated in the Christian populated city of Zahle in the Bekaa governorate.[18] In parallel, a form of religious clientelism emerged. In the neighbouring municipality of Baalbek, the Shia

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[14] Melani Cammett, "Sectarianism and the Ambiguities of Welfare in Lebanon," *Current Anthropology* 56 (2015): 76-87.

[15] Mona Harb, « La gestion du local par les maires du Hezbollah au Liban, » [Local Governance by Hezbollah Mayors in Lebanon] *Critique internationale* 1 (2009): 57-72.

[16] Albert Hourani, "Ideologies of the Mountain and City," in *Essays on the Crisis in Lebanon*, edited by Roger Owen (London: Ithaca Press, 1976), 35; Nizar A. Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon: Roots and Trends," *Middle Eastern Studies* 37 (2001): 176, doi:10.1080/714004405.

[17] Judith P. Harik, *The Public and Social Services of the Lebanese Militias* (Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1994).

[18] Farid el Khazen, "Political Parties in Postwar Lebanon: Parties in Search of Partisans," *The Middle East Journal* 57 (2003): 612.

Islamic Resistance, also known as Hezbollah, incarnated a form of Islamic-communitarian clientelism.[19] Finally, a third form of clientelism, oligarchism, spread in Lebanon's port cities inhabited by Sunni communities, especially in the North. The city of Tripoli was the setting for billionaire businessman Rafik Hariri's empowerment.[20] His son, Saad, would later create the Future Movement after his father's assassination in 2005.[21] To grasp the characteristics of each typology of clientelism, I outline in chapter 3 of this thesis the power structure of clientelism. In brief, the domination of clientelist power rests upon three pillars: materialism, symbolism and collective action. Each form of clientelism possesses different material, symbolic and collective resources which determine the power strategies which it can deploy to perpetuate its local domination. Hence, we know that the agency of clientelist networks is determined by their internal resources and also by the social structure of the locality in which a network governs. So, my interest is to understand how these internal characteristics contribute to the perpetuation (or recovery) of local elites' power dominance.

1.1.b The Syrian Migration and the Disruption of Clientelist Power

The literature on local politics effectively exposes the dynamics of governance in ethnically divided cities across regions of the world.[22] Nevertheless, there are no attempts yet at trying to systematise the comparison of local governance in divided municipalities to explore the endurance of elite power over time. Moreover, no

[19] Krista E. Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 32 (2009): 675, doi:10.1080/10576100903039320.

[20] Najib Hourani, "Capitalists in Conflict: The Lebanese Civil War Reconsidered," *Middle East Critique* 24 (2015): 145, doi:10.1080/19436149.2015.1012842.

[21] Are John Knudsen, "Competitive Clientelism in Secondary Cities: Urban Ecologies of Resistance in Lebanon," *Third World Thematics: A TWQ Journal* (2021): 5, doi:10.1080/23802014.2021.1968313.

[22] Stephen Deets, "Consociationalism, Clientelism, and Local Politics in Beirut: Between Civic and Sectarian Identities," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 24 (2018): 133-157, doi:10.1080/13537113.2018.1457817; Matteo Fumagalli, "Informal Ethnopolitics and Local Authority Figures in Osh, Kyrgyzstan," *Ethnopolitics* 6 (2007): 211-233. doi:10.1080/17449050701345017; Fumagalli 2007; Joseph Leibovitz, "Faultline Citizenship: Ethnonational Politics, Minority Mobilisation, and Governance in the Israeli "Mixed Cities" of Haifa and Tel Aviv-Jaffa," *Ethnopolitics* 6 (2007): 235-263, doi:10.1080/17449050701345025; Brandon Stewart, "From Adversaries to Allies: Ethnic Gerrymandering and Ethnic Party Behaviour in Local Elections in Macedonia," *Nations and Nationalism* 25 (2009): 318-39; Sherrill Stroschein, "Politics is Local: Ethnoreligious Dynamics under the Microscope," Ethnopolitics 6 (2007): 173-85, doi:10.1080/17449050701344994; Zdeb 2021 Aleksandra Zdeb, "Accommodating Liberal Consociations: The District Brčko Case and the Role of Informal Institutions in the Consociational Model," *Ethnopolitics* (2021), DOI:10.1080/17449057.2021.1973729.

research has yet studied if and how the different distribution in material, symbolic or collective resources matters in the choice of strategies of governance adopted by clientelist actors. I explain in the methodological chapter of this thesis (chapter 4) that I designed this research in order to analyse how the identities of clientelism matter in explaining the durability of elite power. I have therefore selected the three municipalities of Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli as the case cities of this research for their variance in terms of locally dominating forms of clientelism. The difficulty of such a research design is that it remains particularly arduous to study the shadows of local politics. However, the occurrence of a circumstantial external crisis affecting local governance exposes clientelist rule. The Syrian migratory shock on Lebanon, which started in 2011, reveals the agency possessed by local clientelist actors. The bloody repression of peaceful demonstrators in Syria led to a massive and forced displacement of thousands of Syrian and Palestinian families into neighbouring Lebanon.[23] The border regional capitals of Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli were the largest urban shelters for the migrants seeking safe refuge.

In the theoretical argument chapter (chapter 3) I describe how the settlement of displaced communities fundamentally transformed the social order of "host" communities. Syrians were purposefully commodified into an exploitable "resource" to create new rents for the elites and the wider local populations.[24] Plunging Syrian migrants into a desperate level of precariousness subsequently inflicted dramatic social costs upon Lebanese workers.[25] Syrians competed for jobs and drove thousands of Lebanese into unemployment. Indeed, displaced communities did not solely integrate into the labour market. This research reveals that displaced Syrians exchanged their work for patronage and were thus also integrated into the clientelist networks of local elites. This finding, which was consistently observed in the three case cities, counters the clientelist literature's assumption that only voters benefit from patronage. The consequences of the inclusion of migrant workers into

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[23] Kamel Dorai, "Conflict and Migration in the Middle East: Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon," In *Critical Perspectives on Migration in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Marianna Karakoulaki et al. (Bristol, UK : E-International Relations Publishing, 2018) : 113-26.

[24] Luisa F. Freier, Nicholas R. Micinski and Gerasimos Tsourapas, "Refugee Commodification: The Diffusion of Refugee Rent-Seeking in the Global South," *Third World Quarterly* 42 (2021): 2747-66, doi:10.1080/01436597.2021.1956891.

[25] Zeinab Cherri, Pedro Arcos González, and Rafael Castro Delgado, "The Lebanese–Syrian Crisis: Impact of Influx of Syrian Refugees to an Already Weak State," *Risk Management and Healthcare Policy* 9 (2016): 169, 171, doi:10.2147/RMHP.S106068.

clientelist networks was brutal for some Lebanese clients. Lebanese patrons implemented what I describe as a social exclusionary mechanism, which removed the least valuable clientelist network members from both state and clientelist coverage. I observed that in this post-migration social order, the least valuable clients were the ones lacking any means to exploit the Syrian "resource", and only owning their own labour capital. This means that a large portion of the lower middle classes, from craftsman, to teachers, to shopkeepers, lost their attractiveness to clientelist elites. The empirical chapters dedicated to each case city (chapter 5 on Zahle, chapter 6 on Baalbek and chapter 7 on Tripoli) describe how social exclusion, indirectly measured by the rise of unemployment and poverty, increased amongst locals. In essence, local elites had devised their own survival at the cost of the livelihoods of their former protégés. This meant that the social contract tying clients with their leaders was shattered.

However, I then faced a major methodological hurdle. How could I measure the dissatisfaction of clientelist network members which would endanger the durability of elite power? I decided to use electoral results as indirect indicators of the resilience of clientelist dominance. Elections are indeed one of the only measurable public expressions of clientelist loyalties. If the ballots revealed a shift of allegiances away from clientelist actors, which is not a normative behaviour within the clientelist regime, it would signal the disruption of clientelist loyalties.[26] Conversely, if clientelist actors renewed their local or parliamentary mandates as expected, or if a patronage was replaced by another one, this would indicate the strength of clientelism in that constituency. That is why I use in this dissertation two electoral events, the 2016 local elections and the 2018 parliamentary elections, as measurements of the endurance of clientelist loyalties. The first vote in 2016 measures the challenge, or even breakage, of clientelist loyalties.[27] My interest is subsequently to analyse the reaction of the clientelist leaders stunned by the defiance

[26] Stephen Deets and Jennifer Skulte-Ouaiss, "Breaking into a Consociational System: Civic Parties in Lebanon's 2018 Parliamentary Election," *Ethnopolitics* (2020): 1, doi:10.1080/17449057.2020.1761655.

[27] Carmen Geha, "Politics of a Garbage Crisis: Social Networks, Narratives, and Frames of Lebanon's 2015 Protests and their Aftermath," *Social Movement Studies* 18 (2019b): 78-92, doi:10.1080/14742837.2018.1539665; Knudsen, "Competitive Clientelism"; Christine Strassmaier and Peter Nassif, "Lebanese Municipality Elections 2016: Local Decisions with National and Regional Ramifications," *AIES Fokus* 4 (2016): 1-4.

of their former protégés. Then, the second vote in 2018 is used as a test to measure whether the strategies deployed by local clientelist elites since 2016 successfully maintained or recovered their local domination.[28] So, what did the ballots show?

In 2016, the local elections did effectively convey the social angst felt by unprotected citizens recently abandoned to their fate by local elites.[29] The results of the first vote organised since the start of the Syrian migration in Lebanon demonstrated an unprecedented disruption of clientelist loyalties in the three case cities. In Zahle, citizens voted down their incumbent traditional elites to empower a coalition of militia-to-political parties headed by the Lebanese Forces. The electoral picture was unexpectedly worse in the stronghold of Hezbollah, Baalbek, where a coalition of independents strongly challenged the Islamic Resistance.[30] Hezbollah won the contest, but the result demonstrated the unusual frailty of its electoral base. Then, Tripoli was the stage of a rare electoral upheaval in the recent history of local politics in Lebanon. The dominant oligarchic elites, led by Saad Hariri of the Future Movement party, lost the elections to a civil society list backed by a political dissenter, General Ashraf Rifi.[31] These results represented a major challenge to the authority of these local elites whose norm of power-sharing governance guaranteed near-constant dominance in their respective strongholds. This thesis endeavours to expose in three empirical chapters dedicated to each case city the strategic political response that clientelist networks respectively adopted to preserve or recover their dominance.

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[28] Despite the different characteristics of local and legislative elections, the two elections are relevant comparative indicators. In both ballots, the same clientelist network compete for the mandates at stake and thus reveal the power dynamics of the moment. Indeed, a breakage of trust amongst clientelist network members, as observed in 2016, could be similarly expressed in a parliamentary ballot in 2018.

[29] Knudsen, "Competitive Clientelism," 2.

[30] Marie-Noëlle AbiYaghi and Léa Yammine, "The October 2019 Protests in Lebanon: Between Contention and Reproduction," *Civil Society Knowledge Centre, Lebanon Support* (2020): 6, doi:10.28943/CSKC.001.80000.

[31] Tine Gade, "Limiting Violent Spillover in Civil Wars: The Paradoxes of Lebanese Sunni Jihadism, 2011–17," *Contemporary Arab Affairs* 10 (2017): 189, doi:10.1080/17550912.2017.1311601.

1.1.c Perpetuation of Elite Dominance Post-2016

The strategies of power dominance employed by local elites are determined both by the structure of their locality and the clientelist networks' material, symbolic, and collective resources. By the structure of a locality is meant the pre-existing local demographics, the characteristics of the Syrian migration influx, and the social situation which ensued from the socioeconomic crisis. Based on these structural elements, each respectively challenged clientelist elites strategically devised how they could preserve local dominance according to the assets they possessed. The theoretical argument chapter (chapter 3) posited that each pillar of clientelism: materialism, symbolism, and collective action, could compensate for the loss of another resource. The post-2011 Syrian migration into Lebanon particularly affected the material capacity of each clientelist network as local resources became scarce. Therefore, I assumed that the clientelist networks considered in this thesis would strive to compensate their diminished finances. I then formulated three gradual expectations which describe the determination of the elites' power strategies in a context of economic crisis. The first expectation, (E1) postulates that with a lack of material resources a clientelist network could attract compensatory financial means from external sources of funding (like the diaspora or incoming humanitarian actors) to service the needs of clientelist members. Subsequently, the second expectation (E2) posits that if a clientelist network cannot find external sources of funding, it could substitute its material scarcity by mobilising communal symbolism with the hope to galvanise core supporters behind its leadership. Finally, a third expectation (E3) considers that a clientelist network lacking both material and symbolic resources could resort to collective action to reinstate the legitimacy of its regime against political outsiders. Overall, these three inductive expectations illustrate the substitutive capacity of the three pillars of clientelism. These three expectations aim to analyse whether the internal characteristics possessed by the clientelist networks do determine the decision making of these actors. If these expectations were empirically supported by the narratives extracted in interviews, it would thus constitute a significant explanation for the resilience of local elites' power, despite facing a major economic crisis.

I therefore assessed the internal resources of the three selected forms of clientelism: the Lebanese Forces' militia-to-political clientelism in Zahle, Hezbollah's Islamic-communitarian case in Baalbek, and the Future Movement's oligarchic profile in Tripoli. Accordingly, my analysis presumed that Zahle's militia-to-political and Baalbek's Islamic-Communitarian clientelism both presented foundational symbolic means inherited either from their warfare histories and/or their religious doctrine. Conversely, oligarchism, as incarnated by the Future Movement in Tripoli, presented clear symbolic limitations. This meant that the leadership of the Sunni party could be deprived from a substitutive choice of symbolic power strategies if facing a sudden shock on its financial means. As a last resort, when both material and symbolic means are missing, the oligarchic leadership in Tripoli would have to use a strategy of collective action. This strategy implies that the Future Movement reaches the support of rival Tripolitan Sunni clientelist leaders to obstruct the governance of political challengers. The aim of this strategy is to demonstrate the legitimacy (or the inescapability) of the clientelist regime for voters who had defected to the challengers.

The empirical findings collected in fieldwork from 2018 to 2019 reveal that each clientelist network strategically used its assets to maintain or recover their power over its respective municipality after the electoral shock of 2016. The fifth chapter of this thesis, which focuses on the case city of Zahle, demonstrates how the local elites leveraged external material resources, mainly from Christian diasporas, to compensate for the rising needs of the local communities. In the city of Baalbek (chapter 6), Hezbollah promoted the party's combatant symbolic schemes and exerted violent coercions against challengers to preserve the dominance of the Islamic political movement. In the meantime, chapter 7 describes how the Future Movement relied upon a strategy of collective action to obstruct the governance of political challengers in Tripoli. Local clientelist actors empirically confirmed their substitutive reliance on material, symbolic or collective strategies to support their endangered power. Nevertheless, would these strategies prove sufficient to reshape loyalties with disenfranchised core supporters?

The test of the second vote then comes into play. I personally observed the 2018 parliamentary elections to measure whether local elites managed to maintain or even

recover their local dominance since the 2016 local elections. All of them did. Even the oligarchic elites of the Future Movement, which were seen as the weakest example of clientelism, reinstated their local control. Patronage prevailed, once again. The substitutive character of the power strategies detailed in this research therefore constitutes an essential factor to understand the endurance of elite domination in contemporary Lebanon.

1.2 Thesis overview

The next chapter, **chapter 2** first provides a review of the literature on consociational institutions. In particular, it describes how Lebanon departs from the Lijphartian ideal to constitute a clientelist regime. Subsequently, the chapter narrows down the meaning of contemporary clientelism. From this broad definition it details the competing typologies of patronage, notably the three forms which emerged during the Lebanese Civil War, which are compared in this thesis. Then, the chapter jumps from the national institutional level to the local. It presents how Lebanese municipalities partake into the clientelist regime while retaining large rooms of political autonomy. The chapter concludes with the description of the so-called "customarily routine" or the prevailing norm of clientelist elite reproduction of local power over time.

In **chapter 3**, the theoretical argument chapter opens with a brief account of the migratory shock encountered in Lebanon after 2011. Next, it focuses on how clientelist elites dutifully implemented a social exclusionary mechanism to protect their own political dominance. This mechanism entails the breakage of clientelist loyalties preceding the 2016 local elections. In shock after the results of the 2016 ballots, local elites had to respond to this unconventional moment of defiance. Therefore, the chapter exposes how the three pillars of clientelist dominance - materialism, symbolism, and collective action - offer potentially substitutive strategies of power perpetuation for endangered elites. Accordingly, I formulate three gradual expectations which explain the endurance of elite dominance despite their respective material scarcity.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology supporting this inductive and comparative research design. The chapter further details the justification for the case selection of the municipalities of Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli. Then, the chapter draws portraits of each selected municipality before the migratory shock, in order to underline the structural features of their respective terrains and the identities and practices of the dominating power holders. The second part of the chapter describes the comparative research design of this thesis, and especially emphasises the role of the 2016 and 2018 elections to measure the durability of clientelist loyalties. It subsequently details each source of self-generated and secondary data used in this thesis and how they separately contribute to unveiling the power dynamics in the case cities. This thesis uses provides original qualitative data (105 elite interviews and observations) and quantitative data (111 Lebanese and 99 displaced respondents who answered separate questionnaires) to disclose the decision-making narratives of local elites. Finally, the chapter concludes with a reflexive exercise about fieldwork research.

In the second part of the dissertation, the following three chapters (chapters 5, 6 and 7) are dedicated to the empirical analysis of the governance trajectory of each selected municipality. All the empirical chapters follow a similar chronological structure to facilitate their comparison.

o   Pre-2011. First, the chapters contextualise local power dynamics right before the eruption of the Syrian migration as expressed in contemporary elections, the 2009 legislative and the 2010 local elections.

o   2011-2016. Second, the chapters consider how the Syrian migration influx after 2011 impacted the structure of the locality of interest, in terms of demographic balance and the localisation of migrants' settlement. These characteristics underlie how local elites devises strategies of commodification and exploitation of the Syrian "resource". The chapters details how the elites' integration of Syrian migrants into their networks resulted in the breakage of clientelist loyalties with Lebanese members.

o 2016. Third, the description of the electoral challenge observed at the 2016 local elections expresses the defiance towards clientelist dominance in the three case cities.

o 2016-2018. Fourth, the chapters unveil the type of power strategy (material, symbolic or collective action) implemented by clientelist elites to retain the loyalty of their protégés.

o 2018. Fifth, the chapters conclude on the electoral test of the 2018 parliamentary elections, to assess the endurance or recovery of clientelist power.

Chapter 5 presents the local governance trajectory in the city of Zahle from 2010 to 2018. Traditional Christian elites were holding the reins of municipal power in 2011 when the Syrian migration affected the city. Nevertheless, the political inertia of the mayor angered the Zahlawis, who suffered from the job competition exerted by migrant workers. Soon clientelist loyalties to the traditional elites waned, leading to the former's defeat in the 2016 local elections. Disenfranchised Zahlawis elected a coalition of Christian parties headed by the Lebanese Forces (LF). The chapter reveals that the new militia-to-political-led municipality acted upon the material pillar of its domination. The mayor endeavoured to alleviate the material pressures weighing on local communities by using two compensatory strategies. First, the municipality externalised the Syrian presence, and its material costs, by strictly implementing residency and labour laws. Second, it leveraged external sources of funding to address the rising needs of the local communities. In 2018, survey data confirmed that the overwhelming majority of Zahlawis felt protected by their municipality. Therefore, only a pinch of costless symbolism was necessary during the 2018 parliamentary election for the Lebanese Forces to securely win the leadership of the Greek-Catholic representation. The chapter concludes on the confident domination of the Lebanese Forces over the political destiny of Zahle.

Chapter 6 presents the local governance trajectory of the city of Baalbek, from 2010 to 2018. Hezbollah (HEZ), the Shia Islamic-communitarian clientelist network, controlled the municipality of Baalbek from 2004. After the eruption of the Syrian conflict, thousands of Syrians found a refuge in Baalbek. However, Hezbollah

politically and religiously segregated its relief exclusively to Syrian sympathisers. The latter lived in town, integrated into the Baalbaki workforce, and benefited from the protection of Hezbollah. The chapter then describes how in addition to this concerning social record, Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian civil war induced large costs for its Baalbaki supporters. Hezbollah's clientelist contract was indubitably tarnished. The 2016 local elections echoed the Baalbakis' resentment towards the Islamic Resistance because political independents seriously challenged Hezbollah's leadership. Despite its victory, Hezbollah felt a need to urgently restore the loyalty of its disenfranchised supporters. The chapter outlines how, after 2016, the Islamic party missed compensatory material means and was thus compelled to rely upon its symbolic resources as to re-legitimise its local dominance. Accordingly, Hezbollah re-instated the symbolic violence of its combatant identity, both de facto and rhetorically. First, it securitised local communities to deter any opposition. Second, it formulated a warfare rhetoric to galvanise the support of Baalbaki Shias behind Hezbollah. It seems that these symbolically inflammatory and coercive strategies paid-off. Indeed, the chapter concludes with the 2018 parliamentary ballots, which confirmed Hezbollah's perpetuated dominance for its list won all the Shia seats in the constituency.

Chapter 7 presents the trajectory of local governance in the city of Tripoli, from 2010 to 2019. Tripoli was in the hands of Sunni oligarchs, including the Future Movement (FM), when the first Syrians found shelter in the Northern port. The city's grey urban margins facilitated the migrant workers' pervasion into the local economy and clientelist networks. As the oligarchic elites strived to exploit Syrian labour, the municipality of Tripoli adopted a "laissez-faire" policy which generated a devastating social impact for the local communities. Subsequently, the 2016 local elections signed an unprecedented electoral blow for oligarchic dominance in Tripoli. The Future Movement's list lost to a civil society bid backed by a political outsider, General Ashraf Rifi. In response, the Sunni party could not count on material leverages nor symbolic schemes. Thus, the chapter reveals that the FM designed a collective action strategy with fellow Sunni oligarchs, to recover their dominance in Tripoli. The oligarchs used two main tactics. First, they intentionally isolated Tripoli's municipality from the central administration's support to discredit the mayor and Rifi's leadership. Second, they internally obstructed the municipal

council's work, plunging the authorities into paralysis. Soon enough, the constituents' trust in the political independents vanished, as confirmed by survey data. Uncertain about its popularity, the Future Movement lashed out a symbolically incendiary sectarian rhetoric during the 2018 parliamentary elections. As a result, the FM won a majority of the Sunni seats which signalled its restored leadership over the largest Tripolitan community. The unexpected 2019 by-election further illustrated the strategic use of collective action in campaign, as all Sunni oligarchs backed the FM candidate against independent opponents, and the FM candidate won. The clientelist status quo prevailed again.

Chapter 8 concludes this dissertation. It summarises the main research findings detailed in the empirical chapters, in light of the expectations which were formulated in the theoretical argument chapter (chapter 3). The results are testimony to the strategic design of the clientelist actors' response to defiant loyalties, according to the resources they possess. Thus, the substitutive nature of the pillars of dominance explains the endurance of clientelist power in Lebanese municipalities, despite a major economic crisis. Then, the chapter considers the consequences of the perseverance of clientelist dominance in Lebanon in the aftermath of the 2019 October revolution and the 4th of August Beirut blasts. Subsequently, the chapter discusses how these results contribute to literature on local politics. Finally, the chapter elaborates on this thesis' impact beyond the academic world, especially for the humanitarian field, by suggesting that greater consideration of the informal actors of governance could sharpen aid and developmental support to the most vulnerable localities.

Chapter 2. Literature Review
The Durability of Clientelist Power from National to Local Governance

This chapter reviews the literature on consociational and local governance in Lebanon, to clarify how formal and informal institutions articulate a clientelist regime designed to preserve the dominance of political elites.

The first section of the chapter focuses on national governance. It details the components of consociationalism and considers how Lebanese elites intentionally drifted from the Lijparthian ideal type to institute a clientelist cartel. Then, the chapter delves into the meaning of clientelism in contemporary Lebanon. It emphasises how Lebanese elites' control of channels of welfare shapes the foundations of the clientelist social contract, which robustly ties them to their protégés and thus prevents electoral change. However, the structure of the clientelist social contract conversely implies that disrupted material access could question the durability of elite power.

In a second part of the chapter, I consider how this national clientelist regime is projected into local governance. I first outline the actors and prerogatives of local governance in Lebanon. Then, I proceed with a portrait of contemporary municipalism since the end of the civil war. Decades of power vacuum, from 1969 to 1998, enabled clientelist elites to take a full control of local governance. The resumption of electoral contests would theoretically not change their status of domination. Hence, the chapter illustrates how municipalities were integrated within the post-war clientelist regime. National elites succeeded in setting financial, administrative, and political constrains on municipal actors, drawing on the latter to look for a protective clientelist coverage. Hence, the autonomy of local governance remains limited and, similarly to the national institutions, decision making rests upon inter-elite cooperation. The chapter therefore concludes by observing how the local elites successfully erected a power structure limiting electoral unpredictability, therefore guaranteeing the stability and durability of their leadership.

National Governance

2.1. Consociationalism and the Constitution of a Clientelist Regime
2.1.a Consociationalism, a Definition

What is a consociational democracy? Andeweg defines consociationalism as a system of "power sharing by political elites in deeply divided societies" meant to "maintain a stable democracy."[32] The main purpose of this institutional framework is "to avoid broad and indefinite exclusion from power of any significant group."[33] Ethnic, religious, or linguistic cleavages, which represent ascriptive identity attributes, are politically institutionalised in order to guarantee their legal protection.

The consociational ideal-type entails four main characteristics according to Lijphart, who is considered the forefather of this power-sharing system:

(1) a grand coalition of elites from different groups;

(2) mutual veto rights for each group on decisive issues;

(3) proportional representation in the main political institutions and

(4) group autonomy (or federalism).[34]

These provisions entail that consociationalism assumes the conflictual character of plural societies, by segmenting political destinies in separate pillars. To ensure the stability of a fragmented polity, Lijphart's consensual vision of democracy relies on the pivotal role allocated to political elites. Governing elites are entrusted to cooperate rather than compete.[35] Indeed, each political representative finds their legitimacy within their own ethnic/religious/linguistic pillar. Thus, politicians should not endeavour to gain electoral support from out-group members which enables a peaceful dialogue amongst elected representatives. Lijphart even refers to

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[32] Rudy B. Andeweg, "Consociationalism," *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* 4 (2015): 692, doi:10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.93025-3.

[33] Larry Diamond, "Developing Democracy in Africa: African and International Imperatives," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (2000): 206, doi:10.1080/09557570008400337.

[34] Arend Lijphart, "Majority Rule versus Democracy in Deeply Divided Societies," *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* 4 (1977): 115, doi:10.1080/02589347708704717.

[35] Rudy B. Andeweg, "Consociational Democracy," *Annual Review of Political Science* 3 (2000): 532, doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.3.1.509.

consociationalism as "government by elite cartel."[36] Inter-ethnic compromises should theoretically contain the instability inherent to a divided society.

The institutionalisation of a form of elite cartel, however, represents a double-edged sword. Consensus governance implies an adversity to change. By granting veto rights to every ethnic group, the institutions of governance fall into deadlock.[37] Institutional reforms, which normatively adjust political institutions to societal change, are interpreted by political leaders as a threat to peaceful coexistence.[38] In order to avoid institutional fractures, a fragile "Nash equilibrium" ties political elites in a permanent status quo, which becomes the norm for consensus democracies.[39] This mode of governance therefore crystallises power amongst the ruling elites, and prevents the rise of any serious political alternative – as would be in a competitive electoral system.[40]

From Lijphart's ideal into the real world, consociational institutions were mainly adopted in European countries like Switzerland and Bosnia-Hercegovina. In the Near-East, Lebanon and Iraq stand as the only examples of consensus democracies.[41] Lebanon implements all the provisions conceptualised by Lijphart, even more so since the adoption of 2017 electoral reforms which (imperfectly) implemented the proportional representation system. Nevertheless, the weaknesses of consensus governance generated an impenetrable dynastic regime. Since 1926, Lebanese elites have used the façade of inter-religious dialogue to advance their private interests and lock a system of governance enshrining their domination.

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[36] Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," 216.

[37] Allison McCulloch, "The Use and Abuse of Veto Rights in Power-Sharing Systems: Northern Ireland's Petition of Concern in Comparative Perspective," *Government and Opposition* 53 (2018): 735-56, doi:10.1017/gov.2017.6.

[38] Imad Salamey, *The Government and Politics of Lebanon* (Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2014), 10.

[39] Eric A. Nordlinger, *Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972). Nash equilibrium is a concept derived from game theory. It implies that in an interaction between different actors, none of the participants earns any gain from changing their behaviour if the other participants' strategies remain in status quo (Oxford language dictionary).

[40] Benjamin MacQueen, "Consociationalism, Elite Autocracy and Electoral Reform in Lebanon," (paper presented at the International Congress on Political, Economic and Social Studies, Ankara, Turkey, November 9-11, 2017).

[41] Sam Dalla, « La constitutionnalisation du confessionnalisme, » [The Constitutionalisation of Sectarianism] *Revue française de droit constitutionnel* 3 (2015): 3.

As such, I describe in the next section of the chapter how the sectarianisation of consociationalism supports the exceptional endurance displayed by Lebanese clientelism in perpetuating its power.

2.1.b The Institutionalisation of Sectarianism Erects Elite Domination

The Lebanese nation is composed of an extremely diverse range of religious groups whom historically found refuge in its protective mountains. It was under the rule of the Ottoman empire that modern Lebanese consociation took shape. The *Sublime Porte* enacted the *millet* system in Mount-Lebanon to facilitate the non-territorial governance of religious minorities.[42] This institutional system empowered religious authorities, as legitimate political representatives of their respective denominations. Religious leaders were legally entrusted to "administer affairs pertaining to personal status" of their community members.[43] Up until today, religious authorities in Lebanon possess full authority over "15 different personal status codes."[44] This segmented legal system entails that religious tribunals regulate all matters concerning the civil life of their own sects.[45] In consequence, individual rights are silenced to uphold communal law. Therefore, each personal status code protects the legal predominance of the clergy, whose conservative power interests perpetuate the dominance of political elites.[46]

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[42] "The *millet* system is the general name given to [ad hoc agreements] between communities and the [Ottoman empire]. These principles affirm the protection of the communities and the organisational and cultural autonomy of each community in return for the payment of an extra tax burden, the *cizye*." In: Karen Barkey and George Gavrilis, "The Ottoman Millet System: Non-Territorial Autonomy and its Contemporary Legacy," *Ethnopolitics* 15 (2016): 25-6, doi:10.1080/17449057.2015.1101845.

[43] Tamirace Fakhoury, *Democracy and Power-Sharing in Stormy Weather: The Case of Lebanon* (Wiesbaden: Vs Verlag, 2009), 81.

[44] Rosita Di Peri, "Speaking Secular, Acting Sectarian. Lebanese Women's Rights beyond the Constitution," *Oriento Moderno* 98 (2018): 247, doi:10.1163/22138617-12340195.

[45] Jabbra and Jabbra detail the extensive and "sensitive" list of domains over which the religious tribunals "enjoy jurisdiction over their own laws," among them adoption, inheritance, marriage, divorce, and family life. Joseph G. Jabbra and Nancy W. Jabbra, "Consociational Democracy in Lebanon: A Flawed System of Governance," *Journal of Developing Societies* 17 (2001): 75, https://doi.org/10.1163/156914901753386976.

[46] Ahmad Beydoun, "Liban: Communautarisme et démocratie, » [Lebanon : Sectarianism and Democracy] *Les Cahiers de l'Orient* 2 (2009): 71; Raphaël Gourrada, « Agir en système pour conserver l'ordre social : le positionnement politique des élites religieuses au Liban, » [Acting as a System to Preserve Social Order: The Political Positioning of Religious Elites in Lebanon] (PhD Diss., EHESS Paris, 2018).

Despite the fall of the Ottoman empire, the newly empowered French mandate authorities perpetuated and even furthered the confessionalisation of the Lebanese polity. The enactment of the 1926 constitution anchored institutionally the Lebanese tradition of "elite accommodation."[47] In particular, article 95 recognises Lebanon's religious communities as the sole political agent, priming over individual rights.[48] The state officially lists 18 religious denominations which are therefore granted political representation rights.[49] In concrete terms, the demographic weight of each commune reflects the power-share obtained in the three powers. Demographic statistics convey the power dynamics at play between different religious groups. The French mandate authorities organised a census in 1932 which redistributed quotas and power-sharing amongst religious groups. Accordingly, major executive, legislative, and judiciary positions were allocated amongst sects to best represent the Lebanese religious mosaic.[50]

Resultantly, the presidency is attributed to Maronite Christians, the Sunnis inherit from the seat of the Prime Minister, whereas the Speaker and vice-Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies are respectively allocated to the Shia and Greek-Orthodox communities. In the legislature "each sectarian group has a quota of parliamentary seats."[51] Then, a customary practice equally divides cabinet positions between Christians and Muslims.[52] The same redistribution rules apply to the Lebanese judiciary and the bureaucracy.[53] However, not a single census occurred since the French left independent Lebanon.[54] The demography of the Lebanese society changed and thus affected the legitimacy of the country's institutions. Political elites

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[47] Fakhoury, "Democracy and Power-Sharing".

[48] Edmond Rabbath, *La formation historique du Liban politique et constitutionnel* [The Historical and Political Formation of Lebanon] (Beirut: Publications de l'Université libanaise, 1986): 55.

[49] Here is the detail of the 18 Lebanese communes: Christianity (Maronite, Greek-Orthodox, Greek-Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Armenian Catholic, Syriac Orthodox, Syriac Catholic, Roman Catholic, Chaldean Catholic, Assyrian Church of the East, Protestant, and Coptic Orthodox Churches), Islam (Alawite, Ismaili, Shia, and Sunni confessions) and the Druze faiths.

[50] Hoda Baytiyeh, "Has the Educational System in Lebanon Contributed to the Growing Sectarian Divisions?," *Education and Urban Society* 49 (2016): 549, doi:10.1177/0013124516645163.

[51] Salamey, "Government and Politics," 130.

[52] Fakhoury, "Democracy and Power-Sharing," 86.

[53] See the composition of the sectarian composition of the Constitutional Council in: Alexis Blouet, "The Constitutional Council in the Lebanese Political System: Insight into a 'Discreet' Institution," *Revue française de droit constitutionnel* 124 (2020): 993-1009, doi:10.3917/rfdc.124.0993.

[54] René Otayek, « Sécularisation et contre-sécularisation au Liban. Le système confessionnel à l'épreuve de l'improbable, » [Secularisation and Counter-Secularisation in Lebanon. The Denominational System put to the Test of the Improbable] *Confluences Méditerranée* 102 (2017): 148.

preferred to maintain the status quo rather than risk losing out from any institutional reform. This fragile equilibrium survived from the negotiation of the National Pact in 1943 until the eruption of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975. It was nonetheless updated and reinstated in 1989 through the adoption of the Taef agreements, which were signed at the end of the conflict.

What does this revered status quo offer to Lebanese elites? Very simply, the governing elites gain powerful leverage by controlling the recruitment of civil servants.[55] Indeed, vacancies in the administration or the security forces represent valuable rewards that political leaders bargain in favour of their most loyal supporters. Over time, the elites therefore consolidated their domination. Despite their religious divisions, the elites formed a unitary actor sharing similar interests. It is therefore a common practice to observe ideologically incoherent electoral alliances of rival sectarian actors opposing, in a cartel, any outer-systemic challenger. Since the end of the civil war, political elites have managed to keep opponents from anti-establishment parties and the civil society to the political margins by relegating the latter to niche activism.[56] Picard therefore designates the Lebanese elites as a "traditional bloc" hiding shared interests behind the façade of religious identities.[57] I take note that political elites can ally themselves to strategically defend their survival. Yet, keeping power does not just ensure the elites' political survival. Elites endeavour

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[55] Reinoud Leenders, *Spoils of Truce. Corruption and State-Building in Postwar Lebanon* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 224; Bassel F. Salloukh, "Taif and the Lebanese State: The Political
Economy of a Very Sectarian Public Sector," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 25 (2019): 43-60, doi:10.1080/13537113.2019.1565177.
[56] Paul W. T. Kingston, *Reproducing Sectarianism: Advocacy Networks and the Politics of Civil Society in Postwar Lebanon* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 2013). Examples of "niche" domains includes: the civil marriage (Otayek, "Sécularisation et contre-sécularisation," 161-163), the environment (Karam Karam, "Les associations: défense de l'environnement et recompositions d'un nouvel espace public," [NGOs: Defence of the Environment and Reconstruction of a New Public Space] In Reconstruction et réconciliation au Liban : Négociation, lieux publics, renouement du lien social, ed. Eric Huybrechts and Chawqi Douayhi (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo, 1999), 125-38), women's (Dalya Mitri, "From Public Space to Office Space: The Professionalization/NGOization of the Feminist Movement Associations in Lebanon and its Impact on Mobilization and Achieving Social Change," *Civil Society Knowledge Centre, Lebanon Support* (2015): 1-15.) and LGBTQI+ rights (Ghassan Makarem, "The Story of HELEM," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 7 (2011): 98-112.), and domestic workers' abuse (Lina Abu-Habib, "The Use and Abuse of Female Domestic Workers from Sri Lanka in Lebanon," *Gender and Development* 6 (1998): 52-6, doi:10.1080/741922630.).
[57] Elizabeth Picard, *Liban-Syrie. Intimes étrangers* [Lebanon-Syria. Intimate Strangers] (Arles: Sindbad-Actes Sud, 2016).

to stay in power in order to continue extracting public resources for their private benefits. The Lebanese state thus serves as a giant market of rewards for patronage.

I have not yet defined what clientelism means in contemporary Lebanon, which I will do so in the next section of the chapter. My intention is to refine our understanding of the conditions setting the clientelist social contract which provides the foundation for the durability of elite power. The patron-client relations, as described in the following section, resonate with informal practices of governance observed across continents reaching from Central Asia, Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean to Latin America. Thus, the study of the Lebanese clientelist social contract deepens the literature's knowledge on networks of patronage in wider contexts characterised (or not) by ethno-religious divisions.

2.2 Clientelism in Lebanon and Beyond
2.2.a Defining Clientelism

To counter the unpredictability of electoral outcomes, Lebanese elites needed to build sustainable allegiances with their electors. Therefore, they designed a clientelist social contract with their supporters. Far from a political party offering ideological meaning and values to seduce electors' favour, a clientelist network might not rely on ideology at all. Instead, clientelism is generally understood as a dyadic relationship between a "patron" – a sectarian leader in Lebanon, and his "clients" – voters. In this relationship, the elite offers protection to his protégés in the forms of access to resources and security, in exchange for their electoral and political loyalties.[58] I designate each entity of patronage comprising of its leadership and supporters as a clientelist network. In essence, the provision of physical and human security

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[58] Jordan Gans-Morse, Sebastian Mazzuca, and Simeon Nichter, "Varieties of Clientelism: Machine Politics during Elections," *American Journal of Political Science* 58 (2014): 415-32, doi:10.1111/ajps.12058; Samy Hermez, "On Dignity and Clientelism: Lebanon in the context of the 2011 Arab Revolutions", *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 11 (2011): 528, doi:10.1111/j.1754-9469.2011.01128.x.; Hans-Joachim Lauth, "Formal and Informal Institutions: On Structuring their Mutual Co-existence," *Romanian Journal of Political Sciences* 1 (2004): 67-89; Manfred G. Schmidt, *Wörterbuch zur Politik* [Dictionary of Politics] (Stuttgart: Alfred Kroener Verlag, 1995), 476; Susan C. Stokes, Thad Dunning, Marcelo Nazareno, and Valeria Brusco, *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism: The Puzzle of Distributive Politics* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

underpins the durability of a clientelist social contract between a leader and its supporter.

2.2.b Welfare Access and Safety, the two bases of the Clientelist Social Contract

In order to fulfil their material engagements, political elites in Lebanon relied on the constitutional allocation (article 95) of communal self-administration to build up privatised social services. Indeed, the responsibility of social care and education was diligently contracted to religious orders and political parties since Lebanese independence.[59] As a result, "70% of the education sector and most of the health structures [in Lebanon] are in the hands of private groups."[60] Meanwhile the Lebanese state was relegated by clientelist leaders to the role of a "contractual state", which overwhelmingly subsidises private welfare institutions.[61] State subsidies are captured by clientelist leaders to deliver welfare exclusively to their own clientele.[62]

Lebanese citizens consequently require brokerage from clientelist leaders to gain access to social welfare and services.[63] This customary system is called *wasta* in Arabic countries, which is commonly understood as servicing.[64] Undeniably, political elites meaningfully exploit their constituents' social insecurity in order to durably assert this rapport of dependence.[65] The usurpation of the state's public duties by

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[59] Rana Jawad, *Social Welfare and Religion in the Middle East. A Lebanese Perspective* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2009), 78.

[60] Fatiha Kaouès, « Les ONG au Liban : l'exemple de l'USAID, » [NGOs in Lebanon : The Example of USAID] *a contrario* 18 (2012): 128.

[61] Dalla, "La constitutionnalisation," 2.

[62] Stephen Deets, "Networks and Communal Autonomy as Practice: Health, Education, and Social Welfare in Lebanon," *Ethnopolitics* 14 (2015): 329-53, doi:10.1080/17449057.2015.1015322.

[63] Martyn Egan and Paul Tabar, "Bourdieu in Beirut: Wasta, the State and Social Reproduction in Lebanon," *Middle East Critique* 25 (2016): 249-70; Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon"; Suad Joseph, *Intimate Selving in Arab Families: Gender, Self, and Identity* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1999); Courtney C. Radsch, "From Cell Phones to Coffee: Issues of Access in Egypt and Lebanon," In *Surviving Research Field - Working in Violent and Difficult Situations*, ed. Chandra Lekha Sriram et al. (Oxon: Routledge, 2009), 91-107; Diane Singerman, *Avenues of Participation: Family, Politics, and Networks in Urban Quarters of Cairo* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996).

[64] The term *wasta* refers to a colloquial Arabic term frequently used in the Middle-East (Singerman, "Avenues of Participation"), which literally means 'to mediate' (Radsch, "Issues of Access," 95). I will rather use Egan and Tabar's ("Bourdieu in Beirut," 262) definition which understands *wasta* as "the use of connections to obtain scarce resources."

[65] Myriam Catusse and Karam Karam, « Les euphémismes de la résistance sociale au Liban, » [The Euphemisms of Social Resistance in Lebanon] *Alternatives Sud* 15 (2008) : 105; Thierry Kochuyt, «

clientelist leaders entrusts them as the only reliable means of accessing essential services. A clientelist leader uses official positions in cabinet and the administration to become an unavoidable broker of public goods between the state and prospective supporters localised in a regional stronghold.[66] He is therefore able to intercede for a supporter's request in obtaining a hospital bed, free private schooling or a position in the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). Thus, *wasta* epitomises a relation of trust and loyalty tying a network member to a patron.[67] The clientelist rewards then generate an endogenous reification of sectarian legitimacy amongst its beneficiaries.[68] Accordingly, Harris et al. demonstrate that the "bureaucrats hired through political (personal) connections into government" remain loyal to the leader who arranged their nomination.[69] Similarly, an emulation process unfolds amongst parents whose children are educated in clientelist-owned institutions.[70] A sense of reciprocity and mutual trust binds this community under a protective clientelist umbrella.

Regarding protection, the second engagement of the clientelist social contract is security. Some clientelist networks, especially during the civil war, developed private militias which defended the safety of their fighters' families in designated territorial strongholds.[71] After the end of the civil war, the Taef agreements entailed the dismantlement of all private para-military groups.[72] Nonetheless, Hezbollah, the Shia Islamic Resistance militia, managed to keep its military wing thanks to the Syrian

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La Misère du Liban : Une population appauvrie, peu d'état et plusieurs solidarités souterraines » [Misery in Lebanon: An Impoverished Population, a Missing State, and Several Underground Solidarities] *Revue Tiers Monde* 3 (2004): 516.

[66] Shawn Teresa Flanigan and Mounah Abdel-Samad, "Hezbollah's Social Jihad: Nonprofits as Resistance Organization," *Middle East Policy* 16 (2009): 130, doi:10.1111/j.1475-4967.2009.00396.xpp; Deets, "Networks and Communal Autonomy," 348; Elizabeth Picard, "Conclusion: Nation-Building and Minority Rights in the Middle East," In *Religious Minorities in the Middle East. Domination, Self-empowerment, Accommodation*, ed. Anh Nga Longva and Anne Sofie Roald (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 13.

[67] Radsch, "Issues of Access."

[68] Salloukh, "Taif and the Lebanese State."

[69] Adam Harris, Jan Meyer-Sahling, Kim Sass Mikkelsen, Christian Schuster, Brigitte Seim, and Rachel Sigman, "Political and Personal Connections, Bureaucratic Identities and Varieties of Corruption in Government," (paper presented at the Department of Political Science, University College London, London, March 18, 2019): 2.

[70] Deets, "Networks and Communal Autonomy."

[71] For an overview of the militias formed during the civil war see: Paul Kingston and Marie-Joelle Zahar, "Rebuilding A House of Many Mansions: The Rise and Fall of Militia Cantons in Lebanon," In *States-Within-States*, ed. Paul Kingston and Ian S. Spears (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004): 81-97, doi:10.1057/9781403981011_6; Marwan George Rowayheb, "Lebanese Militias: A New Perspective," *Middle Eastern Studies* 42 (2006): 303-18, doi:10.1080/00263200500417801.

[72] Augustus Richard Norton, "Lebanon after Ta'if: Is the Civil War over?," *Middle East Journal* 45 (1991): 468-9.

occupiers' approval.[73] Hezbollah today remains the only Lebanese political party officially possessing a weaponised faction, estimated to count 100 000 fighters.[74] Nevertheless, several clientelist networks have a capacity to ensure the safety of their sympathisers. This is especially true for elites who participated in the civil war, whose experiences of warfare constitute a solid basis of self-defence. For instance, the Christian party of the Lebanese Forces (LF), which is a former militia, maintains a latent but effective security guard constituted of devoted militants. A recent episode of sectarian violence in Beirut illustrated the resistance capacity possessed by the LF in Christian populated neighbourhoods.[75] Therefore, the promise of keeping sympathisers safe from external aggression remains a responsibility assumed by the clientelist leadership, even in post-war Lebanon.

2.2.c Symbolism in Clientelism

The dependability binding clientelist relationships also relies on familial allegiances transmitted across generations. Joseph considers that the survival of clientelist networks rests upon a political familial "kin contract" which prevails over other forms of adherence such as national citizenry.[76]

Taking the case of traditional clientelist leadership, which was the first type of clientelism seen in the Levant, illustrates the importance of blood ties in the durability of elite power. Indeed, traditional leaders carefully fed a powerful imagery made of familial legacy, customary traditions and religious symbolism to enshrine the salience of the social hierarchy.[77] Hence, traditional elites strived to entrench a path dependent social order where the transmission of power is hereditary. In a

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[73] Samantha May, "The Rise of the "Resistance Axis": Hezbollah and the Legacy of the Taif Agreement," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 25 (2019): 125, doi:10.1080/13537113.2019.1565184.

[74] Claire Grandchamps, « Nasrallah aux FL : Ne faites pas de mauvais calculs, le Hezbollah dispose de 100.000 combattants, » [Nasrallah to FL: Don't Miscalculate, Hezbollah has 100,000 Fighters] *L'Orient-le Jour*, October 18, 2021, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1278358/nasrallah-aux-fl-ne-faites-pas-de-mauvais-calculs-nous-avons-100000-combattants-a-notre-disposition.html.

[75] Zeina Antonios, « Qui a tiré sur qui hier à Tayouné ?, » [Who Shot who Yesterday in Tayouné?] *L'Orient-le Jour*, October 15, 2021, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1278124/qui-a-tire-sur-qui-hier-a-tayoune-.html.

[76] Suad Joseph, "Political Familism in Lebanon," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 636 (2011): 159.

[77] Robert Benedicty, *Société civile et communauté religieuse* [Civil Society and Religious Community] (Beirut: Dar el Machreq, 1986); Michael Gilsenan, "Domination as Social Practice: 'Patrimonialism in North Lebanon: Arbitrary Power, Desecration, and the Aesthetics of Violence,'" *Critique of Anthropology* 6 (1986): 17-37, https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275X8600600103.

society where sectarian affiliation has been instituted as the foundation of one's identity, the "basis of patronage [also] remains mainly confessional."[78] As with clans, clientelist networks are generally mono-sectarian. While cross-cutting solidarities were common in 19th century Mount-Lebanon, the religious homogenisation of the clientelist networks was accentuated with the sectarian pillarisation of the Lebanese polity during the 20th century.[79] I can therefore assume that beyond a material bargain (called *wasta*, meaning "servicing" in Arabic), a clientelist social contract essentially relies on symbolic schemes and sectarian identities to subsist over time. This explains the astonishing sustainability of Lebanese political dynasties, some of which have survived the devastation of wars and socioeconomic crises.[80]

In the next subsection I delve deeper into the internal hierarchy of a typical clientelist network to grasp how power and functional distributions are commonly allocated.

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[78] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 176.

[79] Anja Peleikis, "Shifting Identities, Reconstructing Boundaries. The Case of a Multi-Confessional Locality in Post-War Lebanon," *Die Welt des Islams* 41 (2001): 408.

[80] Joseph, "Political Familism," 155; Imad Salamey "Failing Consociationalism in Lebanon and Integrative Options," *International Journal of Peace Studies* 14 (2009): 84; Vloeberghs, "Dynamiques dynastiques," 10.

2.2.d The Internal Structure of a Clientelist Network

Figure 2.1 below sketches the actors which partake into a typical clientelist network in Lebanon.

Figure 2.1 Internal Structure of a Clientelist Network in Lebanon

Sources: Gubser, "The 'Zu'amā" of Zaḥlah," 179-81
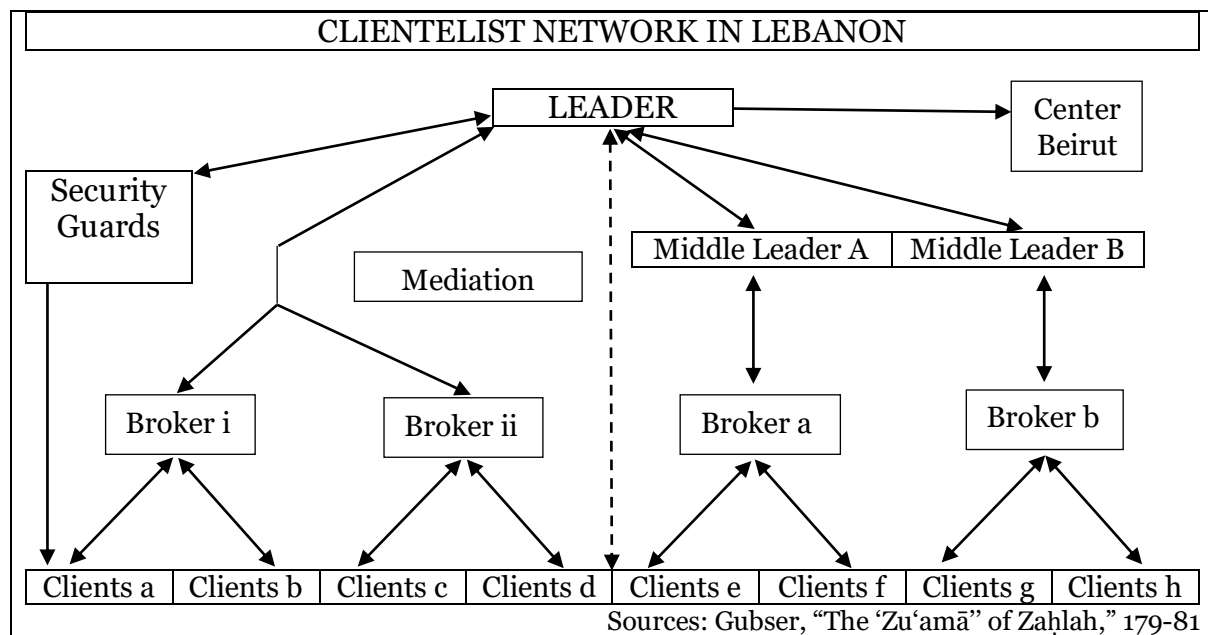
Gubser is a rare scholar, in producing a detailed description of clientelist networks. He argues that a leader with substantial revenues is at the top of the network.[81] In Lebanon this form of traditional leadership, that I mentioned earlier on, is referred to as a *zu'ama* (a political house), with the leader being individually designated as a *zaim*. This terminology is still used to refer to the most traditional (feudal) form of political leadership in Lebanon, inherited from Ottoman times. Hottinger defines in a more general acceptation a *zaim* as "a political leader possessing the support of a locally circumscribed community by fostering the interests of his clientele."[82] This definition accurately fits to all the contemporary forms of patronage in Lebanon. The network leader is not the sole dominating actor. He garners the support of local notables, who become themselves "middle" leaders or agents of the former's leadership. Middle leaders might have a small pool of followers, who then become

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[81] Peter Gubser, "The 'Zu'amā" of Zaḥlah: The Current Situation in a Lebanese Town," *Middle East Journal* 27 (1973): 179-81.

[82] Arnold Hottinger, "Zu'ama' in Historical Perspective," In *Politics in Lebanon*, ed. Leonard Binder (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966), 85.

loyal to the *zaim's* network. Then two sub-level groups maintain direct contact with the clientele: the security guards (*qabadat*) and the brokers (*makhtir*).[83] The security guards are local inhabitants responsible for the protection of the *zaim*. Brokers meanwhile monitor the loyalty of a designated pool of clients and provide information.[84] During elections, they mobilise the clientele, notably by transporting elders to voting stations. Finally, the clientele lies at the bottom of the network. Depending on the network typology (further detailed in the next sub-section), clients can directly access their *zaim* when he opens his residence for public consultations. This customary exercise is traditionally called *diwan* public discussions.[85] It is through these public sessions that clients can voice their personal needs to a leader whose authoritative figure grants him access to resources at the centre of the Lebanese regime. These consultations are also an occasion for the patron to foster intimate bonds with his core supporters. This political performance constructs the symbolic character of a leader.

This account of the meaning and organisation of patron-client relations in Lebanon is far from a locally exclusive politico-cultural system. In the next section I consider how the clientelist social contract, based on the provision of human and physical safety, is commonly practiced beyond the Lebanese context.

2.2.e Clientelism in Global Perspective

The extent and diversity of the forms of patronage observed in the Cedar State explain my selection of this crucial case for the comparative study of contemporary clientelism. However, clientelism is by no means exclusive to Lebanon. Resorting to prevalent informal institutions of patronage extends across continents in areas marked especially by ethno-religious divisions (not always, though), cultural peripherality, socioeconomic deprivation and formal institutional rigidity. I proceed hereby with an unexhaustive overview of clientelist practices in different regions of the world, from Central Asia, the Mediterranean, South-Caucasus, Latin America and

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[83] Gubser, "The Zu'ama of Zahlah'."

[84] Deets, "Networks and Communal Autonomy," 333.

[85] Isabelle Rivoal, « Intimité, mise en scène et distance dans la relation politique au Liban » [Intimacy, Staging, and Distance in the Political Relationship in Lebanon], In *Leaders et Partisans au Liban* [Leaders and Partisans in Lebanon] ed. Franck Mermier and Sabrina Mervin (Beirut: Karthala-IFPO-IISMM, 2012), 137-63.

sub-Saharan Africa, to convey how this research focused on Lebanon produces insights for wider contextualities.

Traditional Clientelism in Central Asia

In Central Asia, the collapse of communist ideology in the early 1990s, which had artificially tied communities under Soviet rule, allowed the nomadic and traditional character of these societies to resurface at the forefront of governance.[86] The literature on clientelism thus takes particular focus on the clan sociological roots of contemporary patronage in Central Asian States, especially in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.[87] Collins' definition of clans as "an informal organisation comprising a network of individuals linked by kin-based familial or ethnic bonds", resonates with my earlier definition of clientelism.[88] After the disintegration of USSR, clans instrumentally captured State power.[89] Similarly to clientelist networks in Lebanon, clans "[predated] the modern state" thanks to their "normative content, informal structure, and rational elements" which granted them with acute institutional adaptiveness.[90] They guarantee their "advancement and survival" by nurturing patron-client bonds determined by kinship.[91] Fumagalli establishes another parallel between clientelist practices in Lebanon and in Central Asia. He demonstrates how clan leaders in Kyrgyzstan use their formal positions to become indispensable "brokers" between their local clients (in the city of Osh) and national political structures.[92] Thus, these patrons manage to prevent the occurrence of inter-ethnic violence by policing tensions within their group of supporters. Overall, clan clientelism equates to patrimonial structures of power which are generally referred to

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[86] Edward Schatz, *Modern Clan Politics: The Power of "Blood" in Kazakhstan and Beyond* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 139.
[87] Kathleen Collins, "The Logic of Clan Politics: Evidence from the Central Asian Trajectories," *World Politics* 56 (2004): 224-61; David Gullette, "Theories on Central Asian Factionalism: The Debate in Political Science and its Wider Implications*," Central Asian Survey* 26 (2007): 373-87; Edward Schatz, "Reconceptualizing Clans: Kinship Networks and Statehood in Kazakhstan," *Nationalities Papers* 33 (2005): 231-54.
[88] Collins, "The Logic of Clan Politics," 231.
[89] Kathleen Collins, "Clans, Pacts, and Politics in Central Asia," *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2002): 144.
[90] Kathleen Collins, *Clan Politics and Regime Transition in Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 43.
[91] Collins, *Clan Politics*, ibid.
[92] Fumagalli, "Informal Ethnopolitics," 213.

as traditional clientelism in the Lebanese political literature.[93] In Southern-Europe, another form of clientelism integrated the political modernisation of these countries.

Political Clientelism in Southern-Europe

A politicised form of clientelism is also prevalent in the South of Europe in Spain, Italy, the Balkans, and Greece.[94] This modern face of clientelism differs from the traditional type seen in Central Asia, because kinship or ethnic identities are not the basis for setting patronage. Instead, political clientelism "involves mutual beneficial transactions that have political ramifications beyond the immediate sphere of dyadic relationships."[95] Ideology and values which transcend ethnic cleavages are the baseline of this type of clientelism. The case of Greece interestingly demonstrates the endurance of clientelist practices by competing political dynasties. Indeed, its democratisation in 1974 did not hinder the prevalence of patronage in Greek politics.[96] Clientelism was simply integrated into the new political system. New Democracy and the PASOK, the two leading Greek parties until the 2008 financial crisis, both founded their political domination in clientelist bonds with their electors.[97] Patronage is strategically used by parties to mobilise and discipline supporters in order to limit the uncertainty of electoral contests.[98] Consequently, Greek political elites display an exceptional durability mirroring the trans-generational dominance of their Lebanese counterparts.[99] In countries marked by

[93] Vladimir Khanin, "Kyrgyzstan: Ethnic Pluralism and Political Conflicts," *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 3 (2000): 126.

[94] Duzgun Arslantas and Senol Arslantas, "How does Clientelism Foster Electoral Dominance? Evidence from Turkey," *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics* (2020): 1-17, doi:10.1177%2F2057891120920718; Jonathan Hopkin, "A 'Southern Model' of Electoral Mobilisation? Clientelism and Electoral Politics in Spain," *West European Politics* 24 (2001): 115-36, doi:10.1080/01402380108425420; Gentiana Kera and Armanda Hysa, "Influencing Votes, Winning Elections: Clientelist Practices and Private Funding of Electoral Campaigns in Albania," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 20 (2020): 123-39, doi:10.1080/14683857.2019.1709698; Dorothy Louise Zinn, *Raccomandazione. Clientelism and Connections in Italy* (New York: Berghan Books, 2019).

[95] Rene Lemarchand and Keith Legg, "Political Clientelism and Development: A Preliminary Analysis," *Comparative Politics* 4 (1972): 151.

[96] Christos Lyrintzis, "The Changing Party System: Stable Democracy, Contested 'Modernisation'," *West European Politics* 28 (2005): 242-59, doi:10.1080/01402380500058845.

[97] Aris Trantidis, *Clientelism and Economic Policy. Greece and the Crisis* (London: Routledge, 2016).

[98] Takis S. Pappas, "Patrons against Partisans: The Politics of Patronage in Mass Ideological Parties," *Party Politics* 15 (2009): 329, doi:10.1177/1354068809102247.

[99] Stratos Patrikios and Michalis Chatzikonstantinou, "Dynastic Politics: Family Ties in the Greek Parliament, 2000–12," *South European Society and Politics* 20 (2015): 93-111, doi:10.1080/13608746.2014.942989.

civil wars, some former rebel or militia groups transitioned into political actors – which perpetuates clientelist practices into the democratic realm.

Rebel-to-Political Clientelism in Latin America and Africa

In post-conflict societies, another type of patronage typically emerged: rebel-to-political clientelism. In Latin America and Africa for example, many countries endured bloody civil wars pitting Marxist-Leninist rebel groups such as the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) or the Uruguayan Tupamaros (National Liberation Movement) against their respective state.[100] At the end of such conflicts, some of these rebel groups transitioned towards the political scene.[101] They became "rebel-to-political parties" which Ishiyama defines as "former rebel [groups] that [participate] in elections in an organised fashion."[102] Unlike traditional or religious clientelisms, patronage from rebel-to-political parties is generally not grounded in ethno-religious bonds. Instead, a shared combatant camaraderie and sometimes the radical imaginaries of socioeconomic and political transformation shapes the ties between supporters and their leadership.[103] The case of Uruguay illustrates the successful road to power of the Tupamaros rebels under the Left-wing alliance of the Frente Amplio (Broad Front).[104] This coalition became the largest political movement in the country and one of its guerrilleros, José Mujica, was later elected president in 2010. Though the Frente Amplio in Uruguay fully embraced democratic principles, many rebel-to-political parties continue to resort to practices of political violence, especially during elections. In sub-Saharan Africa, Ishiyama et al. demonstrate that rebel parties are more likely to engage in electoral violence than

[100] Dirk Kruijt, Eduardo Rey Tristán, and Alberto Martín Álvarez, *Latin American Guerrilla Movements. Origins, Evolution, Outcomes* (New York: Routledge, 2020); Justin Pearce, "From Rebellion to Opposition: UNITA's Social Engagement in Post-War Angola," *Government and Opposition* 55 (2020): 474-89, doi:10.1017/gov.2018.36.
[101] Kevin E. Grisham, *Transforming Violent Political Movements: Rebels Today, What Tomorrow?* (London: Routledge, 2014).
[102] John Ishiyama, "Identity Change and Rebel Party Political Success," *Government and Opposition* 54 (2019): 456, doi:10.1017/gov.2018.48.
[103] Devon E. A. Curtis and Gyda M. Sindre, "Transforming State Visions: Ideology and Ideas in Armed Groups Turned Political Parties – Introduction to Special Issue," *Government and Opposition* 54 (2019): 389, doi:10.1017/gov.2018.51.
[104] Martin Weinstein, "The Left's Long Road to Power in Uruguay," In *From Revolutionary Movements to Political Parties. Cases from Latin America and Africa* (ed.) Kalowatie Deonandan, David Close, and Gary Prevost (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 67-80, doi:10.1057/9780230609778_4.

others.[105] Therefore, the "violence capital" possessed by rebel-to-political parties certainly characterises this type of contemporary clientelism. In Lebanon, it is well represented by former war militias such as the Lebanese Forces (LF), which metamorphosed into political movements post-1990. In the Levant, another form of clientelism derives its authority from religious doctrine.

Religious Clientelism in the Middle-East

The Middle East is the birthplace of three monotheist religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Each of these theological doctrines emphasises the obligation to help the poor. For example, charity is called "*tzedakah*" in Judaism, while one of the five pillars of Islam institutionalises donations to the needy, "*zakat*".[106] Accordingly, religious orders have historically developed charitable institutions (faith-based organisations, FBOs) which in some cases became tools of political empowerment for a religious type of clientelism.[107] It is not specifically kinship nor ideological values which found the bond between a patron and clients, but a shared religious identity.[108] Religious clientelism thus strives to strengthen the "commitment of [...] voters by the use of religious symbols and appeals."[109] Israel exemplifies how Jewish religious political parties obtained tangible political strength thanks to sacred symbolism and their faith-based welfare institutions. Freedman demonstrates that Jewish religious parties significantly gain votes when they set-up

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[105] John Ishiyama, Michael C. Marshall, and Brandon Stewart, "Are Former Rebel Parties more likely to Engage in Electoral Violence in Africa?," *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* (2022): 1-22, doi:10.1080/17457289.2022.2051146.

[106] Peter Singer, *The Life You Can Save. How to do your Part to End World Poverty* (New York: Random House, 2009), 19-22.

[107] Sakine Arslan Köse, "Faith-Based Organizations in Turkey as Indirect Political Patronage Tools," *Palgrave Communications* 5 (2019): 1-12, doi:10.1057/s41599-019-0301-2; Janine Clark, "Social Movement Theory and Patron-Clientelism: Islamic Social Institutions and the Middle Class in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen," *Comparative Political Studies* 37 (2004): 941-68, doi:10.1177/0010414004267982; Janine Clark, "FBOs and Change in the Context of Authoritarianism: The Islamic Center Charity Society in Jordan," In *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations* ed. Gerard Clarke and Michael Jennings (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008): 145-70, doi:10.1057/9780230371262_7; Mohamed Fahmy Menza, *Patronage Politics in Egypt: The National Democratic Party and Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo* (London: Routledge, 2012); Ellen Lust, Kristen Kao, and Gibran Okar, "Voting for Islamists: Mapping the Role of Religion," In *The Oxford Handbook for Politics in Muslim Societies* ed. Melani Cammett and Pauline Jones (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2022), 213-38.

[108] Aiysha Varraich, "Religious Clientelism: A Theory," *The Quality of Government Institute Working Paper Series* 5 (2021): 3.

[109] Ina Kubbe and Edna Harel-Fisher, "Populism and Corruption in Israel – from a Clientelist Point of View," In *Populism and Corruption. The Other Side of the Coin* ed. Jonathan Mendilow and Eric Phélippeau (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2021), 121, doi:10.4337/9781839109676.00014.

social institutions in targeted communities.[110] The communal welfare groundwork deployed by religious parties like Shas, which has since the 1980s endeavoured to represent Sephardic religious Jews, allowed for their successful institutionalisation into the Israeli polity.[111] Shas replicates the path of the Sunni Muslim party of the Jamaa Ismaliyya in Lebanon, which gained political support thanks to religious doctrine and charitable work in poor Sunni communities.[112] As a result, religious patronage is certainly a form of clientelism in the Middle East and beyond which can attribute its endurance to symbolic (religious) capacity and well-structured welfare organisations.

Oligarchic Clientelism in South-Caucasus

Another form of clientelism influences the politics of post-Soviet states Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan in the South-Caucasus - oligarchism (or economic clientelism).[113] While in Central Asian societies clan politics returned to the fore of governance, South-Caucasian counterparts were rocked by the rise of a new economic elite informally meddling politically. A generation of businessmen made a fortune, either from the capture of former Soviet State-owned companies or by successfully exploiting local resources in close partnership with (corrupt) politicians.[114] The case of Georgia illustrates the takeover of the country's political destiny by the richest businessman in the country, Bidzina Ivanishvili, which closely mirrors the empowerment of oligarch Rafik Hariri in Lebanon. Since 2012, the party of Ivanishvili, Georgian Dream, leads the country and presides over an era of shadow oligarchic leadership. Indeed, Ivanishvili does not assume public office. Instead, he

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[110] Michael Freedman, "Vote with your Rabbi: The Electoral Effects of Religious Institutions in Israel," *Electoral Studies* 68 (2020): 1-9, doi:10.1016/j.electstud.2020.102241.
[111] Myriam Charbit, "Shas between Identity Construction and Clientelist Dynamics: The Creation of an 'Identity Clientelism'," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 9 (2003): 110, doi:10.1080/13537110412331301495.
[112] Robert G. Rabil, "Al-Jama'a al-Islamiyah and Fathi Yakan: The Pioneer of Sunni Islamic Activism in Lebanon," In *Religion, National Identity, and Confessional Politics in Lebanon. The Middle East in Focus* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 31-9, doi:10.1057/9780230339255_4.
[113] Milena Baghdasaryan, "The Practice of Political Rights and Patron–Client Relations: A Case Study of a Party in Armenia," *Citizenship Studies* 21 (2017): 1034-51, doi:10.1080/13621025.2017.1380603; Farid Guliyev, "Political Elites in Azerbaijan," In *Challenges of the Caspian Resource Boom. Domestic Elites and Policy-Making* ed. Andreas Heinrich and Heiko Pleines (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 117-30; Christoph H. Stefes, "Governance, the State, and Systemic Corruption: Armenia and Georgia in Comparison," *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 2 (2008): 73-83.
[114] Christoph H. Stefes, *Understanding Post-Soviet Transitions. Corruption, Collusion, and Clientelism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 97.

uses his "wealth and reputation to manipulate political processes from behind the scenes."[115] Through private charities and investments in local services and infrastructure, the oligarch's asymmetric wealth sustains electoral loyalties. The dominance of oligarchic leadership is most dependent upon material resources. Unlike political and religious clientelisms, the economic elites in Georgia (and elsewhere) did not even attempt to advance any "overarching vision" nor any ideological or symbolic imaginary to bind their clients.[116] The outpouring of money was deemed sufficient to maintain the loyalty of dependable communities. Nevertheless, Meissner already outlined in Azerbaijan the risks entailed by oligarchic elites' material-dependence for the durability of their power dominance in a context of sudden collapse of oil prices.[117]

This overview of the practices of patronage across the globe depict a typology of contemporary clientelism which resonates in contemporary Lebanon. The ideal types of clientelism just described - traditional, political, rebel-to-political, religious, and oligarchic forms of patronage, co-exist, overlap, and compete for power in settings often (but not always) characterised by ethno-religious divisions.

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[115] Bidzina Lebanidze and Kornely Kakachia, "Informal Governance and Electorate Perceptions in Hybrid Regimes: The 2016 Parliamentary Elections in Georgia," *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* 25 (2017): 532.

[116] David Aprasidze and David S. Siroky, "Technocratic Populism in Hybrid Regimes: Georgia on My Mind and in My Pocket," *Politics and Governance* 8 (2020): 583, doi:10.17645/pag.v8i4.3370.

[117] Hannes Meissner, "Azerbaijan Between Post-Socialist Crisis and Fragile Stability," In *Crises in the Post-Soviet Space: From the Dissolution of the Soviet Union to the Conflict in Ukraine* ed. Felix Jaitner, Tina Olteanu, and Tobias Spöri (London: Routledge, 2018), 225-38.

Table 2.1 below details the identification of each type of clientelism as observed in the previous sections.

Table 2.1 Typology of contemporary clientelism across the world

CLIENTELIST NETWORK TYPE	IDENTIFICATION	EXAMPLE
Traditional Clientelism	Patronage based on kinship transmitted hereditarily (especially present in rurality).	'Ru' and 'Zhuz' clans in Kazakhstan, Landowning elites in rural Nepal.
Political Clientelism	Patronage by a political party using ideology to tie supporters.	PASOK party in Greece, Partido Popular in Spain.
Rebel-to-political Clientelism	Patronage by a former paramilitary group transformed into a political party.	Tupamaros/Frente Amplio in Uruguay, Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in Rwanda.
Religious Clientelism	Patronage based on religious bonds often relying upon charitable organisations to mobilise supporters.	Shas party in Israel, Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.
Oligarchic Clientelism	Patronage performed by business elites which predate public resources for private ends.	Bidzina Ivanishvili in Georgia, Greek shipping oligarchs like Evangelos Marinakis.
Sources: Aprasidze and Siroky 2020; Freedman 2020; Joshi and Mason 2011; Mavrogordatos 1997; Pantín Morado 2020; Sairambay 2019; Weinstein 2007.		

The next section of the chapter operationalises these ideal-types of clientelism into the Lebanese historical and political context.

2.2.f A Contemporary Typology of Clientelism in Lebanon

In Lebanon, my interest lies with three types of clientelism: rebel-to-political, religious and oligarchic, which emerged during the Lebanese Civil War and became the most powerful forms of patronage in contemporary Lebanon. After reviewing the classifications of clientelism proposed by Hourani and Hamzeh, I operationalised the clientelist ideal-types observed across the world to reflect the leadership trends observed in contemporary Lebanon (see table 2.2 p.50).[118] The different forms of clientelism listed here are a reflection of the evolving profile of Lebanese elites over the span of Lebanon's modern history. The originally dominant form of traditional clientelism, inherited from Ottoman times, was succeeded by new forms of

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[118] Hourani, "Ideologies of the Mountain," 35; Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 176.

clientelism, mostly during and after the 1975-1990 civil war. Today, these different faces of clientelism coexist and compete for power within the same communities. It means that a Christian traditional leader may contest the power of a fellow Christian oligarch in the same municipality. Therefore, clientelist networks' areas of social control overlap while their respective electorates coexist.

Table 2.2 Typology of clientelism in contemporary Lebanon

CLIENTELIST NETWORK TYPE	IDENTIFICATION	EXAMPLE
PRE CIVIL-WAR		
Traditional Clientelism	Family controlled and hereditary transmission of power.	Talal Arslan, Walid Jumblatt
Political Clientelism	Political party with a cross-sectarian ideology.	Syrian Social National Party, Baath Party, Lebanese Communist Party
EMERGED DURING THE CIVIL WAR		
Militia-to-political Clientelism	Former paramilitary apparatus transformed into a political party.	Amal, Lebanese Forces
Islamic-communitarian Clientelism	Political party or charity using Islam as an ideological base for mobilising supporters.	Jamaa al-Islamiyya, Hezbollah
Oligarchic Clientelism	Lebanese businessman who made a fortune abroad, co-opting weak networks.	Najib Mikati, Rafik Hariri, Nicolas Fattoush
Sources: Hourani 1976; Hamzeh 2001		

Pre-war Lebanon was dominated by **traditional** clientelism or the so-called *zu'ama* (political houses).[119] Traditional leadership emerged under the Ottomans, and manifested a form of feudalism based either on landownership rights or tax-collection duties for the empire.[120] It was mostly associated with the domination of a family on a sect, which transmitted power hereditarily.[121] As I detailed previously, the

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[119] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 170.

[120] Dan Naor, "In the Arena of the Zu'ama – Reviewing Hizballah's Role in Lebanon," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 1 (2014): 9.

[121] For the 2018 general elections, the newspaper *L'Orient-le Jour* listed the candidates who represented a political house. Most of them could qualify as heirs of a traditional form of clientelism such as Myriam Skaff in Zahle, Teymour Jumblatt and Camille Chamoun in the Shuf mountains. The extent of the list is telling: Julien Abi Ramia, "Législatives 2018 : les « fils de » & Cie en campagne," [2018 Legislative Elections: The 'sons of' & Co in Campaign] *L'Orient-le Jour*, March 14, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1104757/legislatives-2018-les-fils-de-cie-en-campagne.html.

za'im bonds with his protégés through regular consultations at his residence (*diwan*) in order to strengthen his moral authority over local community members.[122]

The economic liberalisation in newly independent Lebanon facilitated the appearance of a new type of network, **political** clientelism. The 1950s and 1960s were the heyday of ideologies, from Liberalism, to Socialism, to Nasser's pan-Arabism. As the Lebanese middle-class took shape, politicised clientelist networks attracted members from diverging sects together behind shared ideologies.[123] In particular, several left-wing political parties flourished because of their rejection of clientelist and sectarian identities, such as the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP). LCP, Baath and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP). These parties have been since considered as outer-systemic, for their secular positioning in a confessional political system.[124] However, the eruption of the civil war in 1975 and later fall of the Soviet Union deeply weakened the salience of ideologies, and consequently political clientelism lost popularity.[125]

The Lebanese Civil War decisively transformed the profile of Lebanese decision makers. First and foremost, the conflict empowered an armed form of clientelism, militias. The sectarian cantonisation of the Lebanese territory led militias to develop social services for their own members.[126] Soon, militias formed small sectarian kingdoms which substituted state duties.[127] In the process, militia leaders created strong bonds with sympathisers. After the war, former militia leaders such as Samir

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[122] Rivoal, « Intimité, mise en scène. »

[123] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 173.

[124] It is worth noticing that only the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP) has always refused to comply with the sectarian regime by generally excluding electoral alliances with sectarian parties (this policy mostly applies to the legislative elections). Since 2005 they reject both 14th of March and 8th of March coalitions for their comparable intent to sectarianise the state and perpetuate their power (Rosa Velasco Muñoz, "The Lebanese Communist Party, Continuity against all odds," In Communist Parties in the Middle East ed. Laura Feliu and Ferran Izquierdo-Brichs (London: Routledge, 2019)). As a result, the LCP has never won a single seat at the Chamber of Deputies despite an enduring popularity notably amongst the Shia communities of the South and the Bekaa valley.

[125] This form of clientelism sees a resurgence of popularity since the 2019 revolution, notably through the resurrection of the National Bloc party in February 2019. See the following newspaper article which recalls the historical role played by this party during the post-independence years under the leadership of Raymond Eddé: Jeanine Jalkh, "Relance du Bloc national, un changement dans la continuité," [Relaunch of the National Bloc, A Change in Continuity] *L'Orient-le Jour*, February 8, 2019, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1156466/relance-du-bloc-national-un-changement-dans-la-continuite.html.

[126] Cammett and Issar, "Bricks and Mortar," 390.

[127] Harik, "Public and Social Services."

Geagea of the Lebanese Forces (LF), converted their military strength into political legitimacy, creating political parties thanks to the 1991 Law of Amnesty.[128] **Militia-to-political** clientelism was born in Lebanon.[129] These parties often convey combatant histories which evoke a shared symbolism amongst sympathisers. Their warfare experience also means that they have the propensity to resort to violent tools of governance and internal policing. This form of clientelism is one of the most powerful in Lebanon. That is why, I have selected **Zahle** as the first case city of this research because it is a stronghold of militia-to-political clientelism incarnated by the Lebanese Forces. Chapter 5 focuses on the governance of Zahle under militia-to-political elites.

In the meantime, the war prompted emergence of a second type of patronage, **religious** clientelism in its **Islamic-communitarian** form.[130] During the conflict, the Gulf states and Iran pushed money into charities and schools disseminating conservative Islamic doctrines in Lebanon. The provision of such services to neglected Muslim communities grounds the legitimacy of this typology. Despite their doctrinal antagonism, the Jamaa al-Islamiyya's care for urban Sunnis in Tripoli's poorest neighbourhoods mimics Hezbollah's historical support for the disenfranchised rural Shia communities in the Bekaa valley. This is undoubtedly the form of clientelism which best embodies the intimate relation between power and welfare.[131] Hezbollah remains the most influential Islamic political actor in Lebanon. I have therefore selected the city of **Baalbek** to be the second case of this research. The capital of the Baalbek-Hermel governorate is Hezbollah's historical heartland. Chapter 6 delves into Islamic-communitarian governance in Baalbek.

Finally, the war also propelled into the Lebanese polity an **oligarchic** face of clientelism. This form of patronage perfectly illustrates the transformation of

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[128] Sandra Geahchan, "Beyond the Failure of Justice: Lebanon's General Amnesty Law of 1991 and Access to Redress for Victims of the 1975-1990 Civil War," *SOAS Law Journal* 6 (2019): 17-86.

[129] I purposefully re-entitled this category as "militia-to-political" instead of the label used globally of "rebel-to-political" parties. During the Lebanese Civil War, from 1975 to 1990, the belligerent actors were qualified as "militias." For the sake of historical accuracy, I consequently decided to adopt this term in replacement of the word "rebel." They nevertheless correspond to the same general category of "rebel-to-political" clientelism which is especially present in post-conflict societies across the world.

[130] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 175.

[131] Melani Cammett, *Compassionate Communalism: Welfare and Sectarianism in Lebanon* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).

Lebanese elites during the 1980s, an era marked by the diffusion of neo-liberal ideas from Western economies. While Lebanon descended into a violent quagmire war, a range of Lebanese businessman living abroad, mainly in the Gulf monarchies, amassed fortunes. Some of these men then returned to their homeland and poured their wealth into private charities. Their intention was to co-opt political leaders weakened by war from the urban bourgeoisie whose wealth was based on real estate which had vanished in the ashes of Beirut.[132] Oligarchs like Rafik Hariri and Najib Mikati took control of the political elites' clientele. They built up power at an unprecedented pace thanks to their asymmetric financial assets. However, this material dependence seems to threaten the sustainability of their patronage when facing a sudden financial stress. Oligarchism is particularly prevalent in the Lebanese Sunni community. Accordingly, the third case city selected in this research is **Tripoli**. Chapter 7 exposes the governance of the Future Movement (FM), the largest Sunni party in Lebanon which is led by the oligarchic dynasty of the Hariri family.

In summary, I have set a comparative research design that I detail in chapter 3. The three selected municipalities: Zahle, Baalbek and Tripoli, represent power strongholds for the three forms of clientelism which emerged during the civil war (see table 2.3 below).

Table 2.3 Selection of clientelist typologies and empirical cases

Case City	Dominating Clientelist Network	Clientelist Typology
Zahle	Lebanese Forces	Militia-to-political clientelism
Baalbek	Hezbollah	Islamic-communitarian clientelism
Tripoli	Future Movement	Oligarchic clientelism

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[132] Hannes Baumann, "The Ascent of Rafik Hariri and Sunni Philanthropy," In *Leaders et Partisans au Liban* [Leaders and Partisans in Lebanon] ed. Franck Mermier and Sabrina Mervin (Beirut: Karthala-IFPO-IISMM, 2012), 81-106; Emmanuel Bonne, *Vie Publique, Patronage et Clientèle - Rafic Hariri à Saida* [Public Life, Patronage, and Clientele – Rafik Hariri in Saida] (Aix-en-Provence : Institut de Recherches et d'Etudes sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman, 1995); Victor Gervais, « L'ascension politique de Rafic Hariri : ampleur et limite de l'émergence d'un leadership sunnite unifié » [Rafik Hariri's Political Ascent : Scope and limits of the emergence of a united Sunni leadership], In *Leaders et Partisans au Liban* [Leaders and Partisans in Lebanon] ed. Franck Mermier and Sabrina Mervin (Beirut: Khartala-IFPO-IISMM, 2012), 107-36.

It is worth noting that some clientelist networks do overlap empirically between different typologies. Hezbollah is qualified in the Lebanese politics literature as an Islamic-communitarian form of clientelism. However, the party was also a militia which transitioned into politics after the end of the civil war. I consider Hezbollah to represent a form of religious clientelism, as the Shia party seeks to institute a society based on shared-theological principles. Though Hezbollah, as illustrated in chapter 6, perpetuates violent governance practices typical of rebel-to-political parties, it also retains a military wing and is the only civil war militia which did not surrender its weapons. It cannot therefore be categorised as a "militia-to-political" case because it remains an active paramilitary group. Indeed, some clientelist networks possess a security apparatus which contests the state's legitimate monopoly of violence on their territory of social control (e.g. Hezbollah in the Bekaa valley). Any such actor is consequently granted effective coercive means of in-group compliance that can prove especially useful at times of internal contestation. It is therefore essential to take into account this weaponised parameter to best assess the extent and distribution of a clientelist network's internal resources. In Lebanon, and amongst the selected case-studies, only Hezbollah sustains an extensive paramilitary organisation. It means that Hezbollah's symbolic domination can protect its legitimacy by resorting to coercion (intimidation, exclusion, or physical aggression). Chapter 6, on Hezbollah's local governance in Baalbek, illustrates the party's strategic use of both coercion and targeted physical violence.

Overall, the typology of contemporary clientelism in Lebanon outlined in this chapter is useful for establishing a comparative framework between empirically complex cases of patronage in the country. What is key from this categorisation, more than the labels themselves which may overlap, is to grasp the relative capacities allocated to each cases in terms of material, symbolic and collective resources. I will detail the three pillars of elite domination in chapter 3. Each type of clientelism is structured around a similar social contract tying patron-client relations. Nevertheless, some faces of clientelism seem more reliant on the redistribution of material rewards to entrench the loyalty of their protégés than others.

Figure 2.4 below represents an assumption on the relative material dependence of the three selected forms of clientelism.

Figure 2.4 Internal resource allocation between the selected clientelist typologies

Exclusive Material Dependence		Plurality of Internal Resources*
Oligarchism clientelism	Religious clientelism	Militia-to-political clientelism

* Including symbolic and coercive resources.
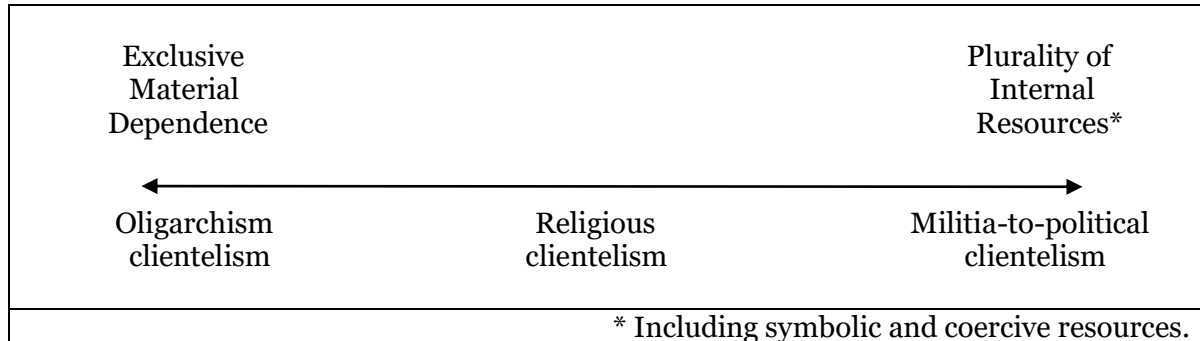
The allocation of internal resources (material, symbolic, and coercive) is not fixed in time and may evolve depending on the prevailing political and socioeconomic circumstances. Nonetheless, this categorisation illustrates lasting characteristics which distinguish the competing types of clientelist networks. As such, the spectrum above (figure 2.4) inductively identifies oligarchism as the typology of clientelism whose agency to respond to a material shock is most at risk. The empirical chapters dedicated to each clientelist network (chapters 5 to 7) will evidence whether the preceding inductive assumption proves significant.

To sum up, this first part of this chapter focused on national institutions, and how a clientelist regime was erected and achieved to monopolise state power through inter-elite agreement. Then, it defined the meaning of contemporary clientelism before exposing the characteristics of the clientelist social contract. This very contract enables political elites to weather the unpredictability of electoral change. Thus, the redistribution of human and physical safety constitutes the basis of the durability of elite power. Clientelism, however, is not monochrome. Therefore, I described the practices of clientelism globally, outlining different ideal-types of patronage. From this global review I established an updated and contextualised typology of contemporary clientelism in Lebanon. This led me to narrow the case selection of this comparative research by selecting municipalities dominated by the three most powerful forms of clientelism. In the second part of this chapter, I consider how this national clientelist regime is projected onto local governance. Most scholars working

on clientelism in Lebanon merely consider municipal governance as a dependent power echelon of the clientelist regime. This research contests this neglect for local politics. Central-to-local relations within the clientelist regime are more interrelated than the clientelist literature generally assumes. As Jabbra and Jabbra wrote in 1978, "influence is exercised in both directions" between the periphery and the centre.[133] Therefore, I illustrate in the following section how clientelist networks use the fragilities of local institutions to ground their authority. But subsequently, I also describe how mayors can build political autonomy within the clientelist regime.

Local Governance

2.3 Portraying Contemporary Municipalism in Post-War Lebanon
2.3.a Actors and Prerogatives of Municipal Governance

Local governance constitutes the fundamental basis of the clientelist regime. Without municipal control, clientelist networks would not have access to local resources, to information, to new recruits, and to power controls strategically protecting their domination. Thus, clientelist elites endeavour to replicate the pervasion strategy of state duties that we observed at the national level of governance, into the local realm to best protect their respective interests. To do so, the elites use legal largesse and ambiguities in municipal governance to allow them favourable influence over local decision making. I subsequently describe the actors, institutions, and prerogatives of a Lebanese municipality.

Article 7 of the Municipal Act mentions that a municipal body is constituted of a decision-making authority and an executive - the municipal council and the president of the municipal council.[134] The president of the municipal council or

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[133] Joseph G. Jabbra and Nancy W. Jabbra, "Local Political Dynamics in Lebanon the Case of 'Ain Al-Qasis," *Anthropological Quarterly* 51 (1978): 138, doi:10.2307/3317770.

[134] Government of Lebanon, "Municipal act 1977, Decree-law no. 118," *Ministry of Interior and Municipalities* (2009): 4, https://www.pseau.org/outils/ouvrages/Ministry_of_interiror_and_municipalities_1977.pdf. The president of the Municipal council is elected by his peers via an absolute majority vote for the whole duration of the six years mandate (art.11-3, Government of Lebanon, "Municipal act 1977," 5). Nonetheless, three years after the election of the mayor, the latter can be dismissed through another absolute majority of the council's members.

mayor is elected by the councillors. The municipal council is directly elected in a single round majoritarian election, with a mandate running for six years. The number of registered inhabitants on the electoral lists censed in 1932 determines the number of eligible municipal councillors.[135] Tripoli has 24 councillors, whereas Zahle and Baalbek both have 21. Unlike national institutions, there are no legally binding religious quotas guaranteeing the representation of minorities on municipal councils. As such, social norms of representation are informally negotiated among the most powerful political, religious, and familial actors in each municipality. It implies that religious representation is subject to evolving power interests.[136] Moreover, the empirical chapters on Baalbek (chapter 6) and Tripoli (chapter 7) outline how local majorities customarily marginalise the representation of minorities. Unlike national institutions, municipal bodies do not grant communal veto powers to political representatives of local minorities. It is certainly easier for local elites of majority groups to overlook the preferences of fellow councillors from smaller minorities than in cities where the demographic distribution is more even.

If we look at the distribution of power between municipal bodies we can see that most executive powers are concentrated in the hands of the mayor. He/she can escape from the oversight of the municipal council and other extraneous watchdog institutions. Accordingly, Al-Moussaoui and Harb observed that electoral "alliances between families of notables still predominate [thus favouring] the personalisation of power around the mayor."[137] Nonetheless, a closer look at the sociology of Lebanese mayors discloses a wide discrepancy in the municipal executives' cultural capital,

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[135] The number of municipal councillors ranges from 9 members for the municipalities counting less than 2000 inhabitants to 24 members for the largest Lebanese cities of Beirut and Tripoli (art.9, Government of Lebanon, "Municipal act 1977,"4).

[136] Illustratively, Tripoli's municipal council used to customarily comprehend the representation of Christian (Greek Orthodox and Maronites) and Alawite minorities up until the political upheaval of the 2016 municipal elections which removed all minorities' seats. See the following press articles for more details on the results of the municipal elections and for a detailed analysis of Christian perceptions on Tripoli's diversity: Tom Perry and Laila Bassam, "Sunni Hawk Wins Lebanon Vote, Risking New Tensions," *Reuters*, May 30, 2016, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-politics/sunni-hawk-wins-lebanon-vote-risking-new-tensions-idUSKCN0YL1VI; Ornella Antar, « Nous habitons Tripoli depuis le temps des apôtres, » [We Have Lived in Tripoli Since Apostolic Times] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 1, 2019, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1168599/-nous-habitons-tripoli-depuis-le-temps-des-apotres-.html.

[137] Abdelghani Abouhani, "Introduction," In *Municipalités et pouvoirs locaux au Liban* [Municipalities and Local Power in Lebanon] ed. Agnès Favier (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo, Institut français du Proche-Orient, 2001), 109.

professional experience, and politicisation.[138] Depending on one's profile, mayors are unequally armed to protect their independence against powerful clientelist actors. This gives plenty of room for clientelist networks to co-opt mayors in order to make sure their interests are well protected.

The extent of the prerogatives devolved to local authorities opens further avenues for clientelist networks to access resources and control their redistribution to loyal supporters. Indeed, Lebanese municipalities benefit from a rule of subsidiarity. Article 47 of the Municipal Act states that: "Each work of public character or interest, in the municipal area, falls within the scope of the municipal council's competence."[139] This law grants municipal bodies wide and intentionally vague responsibilities. Among them, municipal councils are in charge of: drafting a budget, enacting loans, levying municipal taxes, works, supplies and services, reconciliation, urban planning, regulating transportation, welfare support, schools and hospital administration etc.[140] Three types of municipal committees - administration, public services and infrastructure, and development committees - are the most frequent areas of municipal intervention in Lebanon.[141] This observation implies that municipal committees mainly perform servicing acts (provision of water, electricity, and waste management collection) which are core instruments of power legitimation in the context of local political struggles.[142] It is through the allocation of these public goods that clientelist elites fulfil their social contract towards their network members. Thereby, municipalities are key institutions of power competition because they can ensure the durability of local elites' power.

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[138] Hassan Krayyem, "Les présidents de municipalité élus en 1998 au Liban : des « élites » locales non dirigeantes, » [Presidents of Municipalities Elected in 1998 in Lebanon: Non-leading Local "Elites"] In *Municipalités et pouvoirs locaux au Liban* [Municipalities and Local Power in Lebanon] ed. Agnès Favier (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo, Institut français du Proche-Orient, 2001), 35-60.

[139] Government of Lebanon, "Municipal act 1977," 11.

[140] Thomas W. Haase, "A Challenging State of Affairs: Public Administration in the Republic of Lebanon," *International Journal of Public Administration* 41 (2018): 797, doi:10.1080/01900692.2017.1387148.

[141] Ali Al-Moussaoui, « Le fonctionnement interne des conseils municipaux au Liban, » [The Internal Functioning of Municipal Councils in Lebanon] In *Municipalités et pouvoirs locaux au Liban* [Municipalities and Local Power in Lebanon] ed. Agnès Favier (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo, Institut français du Proche-Orient, 2001), 122.

[142] Christèle Allès and Joëlle Brochier-Puig, "Entre centralisation et appropriation locale : Une réforme de l'eau sous tension au Liban-Nord (Akkar), » [Between Centralisation and Local Appropriation: A Water Reform under Tension in North Lebanon (Akkar)] *Études Rurales* 192 (2013): 103.

2.3.b Post-War Reestablishment of Municipal Authorities

Municipalities are often perceived in Lebanon as weak institutional actors, devoid of any meaningful authority or clear agency. Nevertheless, municipalities represent for clientelist networks an essential power echelon to root their power in a given community. The previous subsection described the large extent of the prerogatives allocated to municipal authorities. Therefore, clientelist leaders strive to tightly monitor municipal decision making. This means that municipalities are a terrain of power competition between competing clientelist actors. As such, municipalities are used by clientelist leaders as a tool for controlling local resources rather than as an institution effectively responding to the needs of its constituents. The experience of the civil war produced varying dynamics of empowerment or collapse of the municipal bodies.

The last local elections held in Lebanon occurred in 1963. After 1969, the mandates of the local councillors and mayors were indefinitely prorogued (21 times precisely). During the war, some municipalities saw their institutions collapse and became "empty shells" divided between belligerent actors such as in the capital, Beirut, which was split by a so-called "green" line between its Western and Eastern districts.[143] Other municipalities were taken over by Lebanese paramilitary groups sharing territorial control in Lebanon. Wide internal displacement redesigned the demography of most Lebanese municipalities. Regional cities became more religiously homogeneous, thus constituting favourable grounds for the consolidation of seats by sectarian militias. There, militias relied on cooperative families of local notables and their own militants to organise local governance. De facto, many municipalities gained an unprecedented political autonomy by addressing prerogatives previously assumed by the central administration. I do take note of the local elites' wartime process of learning governance because it reflects on the former's contemporary behaviour, especially so in municipalities like Zahle and Baalbek, which were both strongholds of militias.

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[143] Bruno Dewailly, Agnès Favier, Karam Karam, Mona Harb el-Kak, Tristan Khayat, and Aude Signoles, « Pouvoirs locaux et décentralisation en période de (re)construction étatique. Les cas du Liban et de la Palestine ; Etude Comparée, » [Local Powers and Decentralisation in a Period of State (Re)construction. The Cases of Lebanon and Palestine; Comparative Study] (rapport sur les sites libanais et palestiniens préparé dans le cadre du Programme de Recherche sur l'Urbanisation et le Développement (PRUD), 2004): 8.

After the war, the Taif agreements in 1989 entrusted the post-war elites, first amongst others being Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, to revive Lebanese municipalism. The emergence of new local elites during fifteen years of conflict was perceived as a political threat by some national political leaders.[144] Central authorities' defiance towards municipalism explains that the government waited until 1998 to organise its first local elections.[145] National elites wanted to make sure that the local actors whom had seized power during the war would now be tamed under their authority. This is why national elites seized this historical transition in the restoration of municipal democracy to entrench the municipality as a monitored foundation of the clientelist regime. PM Hariri was charged of the delicate task of re-establishing the authority of the Lebanese state over municipalities which had exerted large sways of political autonomy for fifteen years. To do so, the government enacted constitutional amendments restoring public authority. Moreover, it instituted in 1993 a Ministry responsible for municipal and local affairs, purposefully incorporated within the powerful Ministry of Interior.[146] The government intended to keep a close eye on municipal affairs. Nonetheless, most of this legislative inflation turned into a political stalemate. The reform of "administrative decentralisation" entailed in the Taef agreements remained a void wish. As a result, municipalities continue to rely, up until today, on the outdated 1977 Municipal Act which maintains a legally hyper-centralised institutional hierarchy. Reflecting upon the governmental record, Favier considered that the reform of local governance endorsed by national elites epitomised a unilateral "imposition of a vertical power order."[147] In consequence, she estimated that the institutionalisation of municipal bodies remained "fragile and incomplete."[148] National elites purposefully left open institutional breaches within municipal institutions to facilitate their pervasion of local governance.

In the next section, I assess how the integration of municipalities into the foundation of clientelist regimes affects their political autonomy. My interest is to establish whether elected municipal actors represent reliable safeguards of clientelist elites'

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[144] Dewailly et al., « Pouvoirs locaux et décentralisation, » 21.
[145] Dewailly et al., « Pouvoirs locaux et décentralisation. »
[146] Dewailly et al., « Pouvoirs locaux et décentralisation, » 10.
[147] Agnès Favier, « Introduction, » In *Municipalités et pouvoirs locaux au Liban* [Municipalities and Local Power in Lebanon] ed. Agnès Favier (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo, Institut français du Proche-Orient, 2001), 18.
[148] Favier, « Introduction. »

power interests. Therefore, I expose the monitoring tools deployed by the clientelist regime to overlook municipal democracy, while considering the margins of independence that municipal actors retain.

2.4 Integrating Municipal Democracy into the Clientelist Regime
2.4.a Assessing the Autonomy of Local Governance

National elites wanted to entrench municipalities as the basis of the clientelist regime. To do so, clientelist leaders devised several tactics to keep local governance authorities under tight financial and administrative control. While municipal bodies are kept under close scrutiny from the clientelist regime, some mayors attempt to keep certain margins of autonomy. I therefore assess three domains: finances, administrative institutions and political engagement, which determine the level of political autonomy enjoyed by local governance actors. This evaluation allows to grasp the power of clientelist actors in determining local decision making.

Municipal Finances

Finances are a key determinant of a municipality's political autonomy. That is why the central administration endeavoured to be in control of Lebanese municipalities' sources of revenue. Lebanon implements a mixture of direct and indirect tax collection to budget its municipalities. On the indirect side, a set of taxes are first collected by the municipalities, then most of the revenues are sent to the Independent Municipal Fund (IMF). The IMF is under the control of the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) which "is responsible for planning, budgeting, and spending municipalities' revenues."[149] The MoIM is tasked to redistribute IMF funds to all municipalities every year.[150] In this way, municipalities are excessively

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[149] Mona Harb and Sami Atallah, *Local Governments and Public Goods: Assessing Decentralization in the Arab World* (Beirut: The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, 2015), 196.

[150] "The fund assigned to support the budget is distributed in the following way: 60% is based on registered population and 40% is based on the actual direct revenues collected during the two years prior." Sami Atallah, "The Independent Municipal Fund: Reforming the Distributional Criteria," *Policy Brief, The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies* 1 (2011), 2. However, members of the personnel of Ministry of Finance in Beirut mentioned a different repartition during an interview in spring 2018. They estimated that "90%of the IMF's revenues are allocated [to a municipality] on the basis of the number of its inhabitants (according to the personal registers of each region), and [the remaining

financially dependent upon the centre of the clientelist regime. The MoIM may intentionally paralyse municipal councils by delaying financial transfers. The Ministry customarily uses this tool against municipalities whose leadership competes or opposes with the Minister's political interests. The MoIM is not the sole institution using financial leverages to keep municipalities under their watch. Other state institutions similarly allocate public investments base on clientelist interests. State development agencies such as the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) and the Council for South Lebanon adopt a clientelist filter when deciding local funding priorities.[151] Thereby, local governance actors are financially reliant upon clientelist channels. As a result, mayors are institutionally incentivised to cultivate close bonds with the MoIM and other state agencies. As a result, Ishtay observed that the "proximity or distance of a municipal council vis-à-vis the central spheres of political power is the decisive criterion which facilitates and accelerates or blocks and even freezes the execution of projects."[152]

On the other hand, the law still allows municipalities to directly collect local taxes (law 60, 1988).[153] Municipalities can resort to direct tax collection to counter the distortions induced by the indirect mechanism of municipal funding. The three largest taxes levied by municipalities concern real estate (fees on rental value of built real estate, on construction permits and on sewerage and pavement maintenance).[154] However, most municipalities struggle to collect these taxes due to a lack of personnel. Harb and Atallah estimated a tax collection rate of 50% across Lebanese

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10%] on the percentage of the revenues that the municipality collected by itself." See *Mouna*'s interview (Anonymised name. Interview conducted in Beirut, in July 2018). Overall, this redistribution scheme favours the largest and wealthiest municipalities as they are the most capable of collecting a higher percentage of local taxes. Smaller, suburban and rural municipalities are clearly undervalued by the central administration.

[151] Both state agencies represent hotbeds of clientelism. The CDR fell under the control of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri after the end of the civil war, see in: Hannes Baumann, *Citizen Hariri. Lebanon's Neoliberal Reconstruction* (London: C. Hurst & Company, 2016), 169. In parallel, another pillar of the clientelist regime, the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and Amal leader, Nabih Berri took over the Council of the South which was active in his regional power stronghold. Paul Rijsel, « La Municipalité de Tripoli : Entre pouvoirs locaux et services de l'Etat, » [The Municipality of Tripoli: Between local authorities and state services] In Municipalités et pouvoirs locaux au Liban [Municipalities and Local Power in Lebanon] ed. Agnès Favier (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo, Institut français du Proche-Orient, 2001), 313.

[152] Chawqat Ishtay, « Les partis politiques dans les conseils municipaux. Nature et dimensions de la participation, » [Political Parties in Municipal Councils. Nature and Dimensions of Participation] In *Municipalités et pouvoirs locaux au Liban* [Municipalities and Local Power in Lebanon] ed. Agnès Favier (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo, Institut français du Proche-Orient, 2001), 73.

[153] Harb and Atallah, "Local Governments," 210.

[154] Harb and Atallah, "Local Governments."

municipalities.[155] It also means that larger, wealthier, and urban Lebanese municipalities should have a comparative advantage over smaller, poorer, and rural counterparts. In essence, locally collected revenues only represent a margin of the municipal budget. It is therefore impossible for most mayors to be financially self-reliant.

Relations between Municipalities and the Decentralised Administration

Finances grant the clientelist regime an indirect control of municipal affairs, and the decentralised state administration is similarly used by ruling elites to monitor local governance. Thanks to an extensive network of notaries (*makhatir*), national leaders can oversee the compliance of mayors to the former's preferences. A *mukhtar* (notary) oversees legal and notarial procedures. These local notables also exert discrete and successful communal mediation in their areas of jurisdiction.[156] Often, *makhatir* are instrumental members of clientelist networks themselves. By gate-keeping clientelist interests, *makhatir* personify the "eyes of the state."[157] Accordingly, notaries report all municipal activities to their superiors – for example the *qaymaqam* (administrative head of the *qada*, district), and most importantly to the *muhafiz* (regional governor). The head of the regional administration is a direct representative of Beirut's central administration. Regular meetings at the *sérail*, the seat of the regional governorate, are an occasion to share information, monitor and regulate municipal affairs. Thus, the state administration expresses the verticality of the clientelist power on local democracy. As a result, mayors' executive autonomy is restricted by the "hegemonic nature of the administrative control [...] exerted by the *qaymaqams* and *muhafizs*" which subjugates them "towards central powers and [national] political leaders."[158] Overall, it is particularly arduous for mayors to escape from the scrutiny of the national clientelist regime's civil servants.

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[155] Harb and Atallah, "Local Governments," 211.

[156] Nora Stel, "Mukhtars in the Middle: Connecting State, Citizens and Refugees," *Jadaliyya*, December 4, 2015, https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/32751/Mukhtars-in-the-Middle-Connecting-State,-Citizens-and-Refugees.

[157] Estella Carpi, Mariam Younes, and Marie-Noëlle AbiYaghi, "(In)Formal Hybrid Security in Lebanon," *Lebanon Support* (2016): 23.

[158] Krayyem, « Les présidents de municipalité, » 510.

Municipalities and Political Engagement

National elites do not only endeavour to monitor municipal bodies. They want to make sure that local authorities are integrated into the power echelons of the clientelist regime, to entrench the durability of their dominance.[159] To do so, clientelist elites use the power of blood ties (called *a'ila* in Arabic) in local politics to pervade municipal institutions from the inside. As I detailed earlier on, very few clientelist networks develop a coherent ideological program. This programmatic absence is obviously reflected at the local level of governance. Nevertheless, blood ties are an important political aspect of electoral attractiveness in many Lebanese municipalities. Obeid demonstrated that, despite the civil war, familial ties remained salient in many towns and villages at the 1998 local elections.[160] This is especially the case for the mid-size and small municipalities in peripheral areas of the country. Therefore, clientelist actors understood the necessity to benefit from the traditional influence exerted by local notabilities in order to successfully control municipal institutions. Thus, several clientelist networks customarily co-opt members of influential families which, in repercussion, increases the competitiveness of their own candidates. Illustratively, Daher exhibits how Hezbollah incorporated members of the most powerful tribal families in the Bekaa valley to finally win the majority at Baalbek's municipal council in 2004.[161] This strategy divided traditional local leaders who had previously enjoyed a certain level of political independence. The national elites' co-optation strategy, in conjunction with the financial leverages and administrative capacities described before, weighed heavily against the autonomy of local governance.

Most mayors effectively internalised the reach and strength of the clientelist regime when overseeing local governance. In order to preserve some margins of local power, mayors understood that paradoxically, the best way to remain slightly independent

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[159] Dewailly et al., « Pouvoirs locaux et décentralisation, » 8.

[160] Michelle Obeid, *Border Lives. An Ethnography of a Lebanese Town in Changing Times* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2019), 130.

[161] Aurélie Daher, "Hezbollah Facing the Clans and Major Families of Northern Bekaa: The 2004 Local Elections in Baalbeck," originally published in French: « Le Hezbollah face aux clans et grandes familles de la Békaa-Nord: les élections municipales de 2004 à Baalbeck », In *Leaders et Partisans au Liban* [Leaders and Partisans in Lebanon] ed. Franck Mermier and Sabrina Mervin (Beirut: Karthala-IFPO-IISMM, 2012), 419-33.

was to adhere to patronage. The public face of clientelism in Lebanon is incarnated by political parties which are, in fact, personalised entities serving the private interests of their leaders.[162] In consequence, political membership grants mayors with an access to material and physical protection, resources which are overwhelmingly redistributed from Beirut. Hence, the "politicisation" or rather the "clientelisation" of mayors protects them from being sanctioned by national elites. The political or clientelist coverage offered to a mayor by national leaders grants them with direct access and protection from the centre of the clientelist regime. As such, the clientelist umbrella, paradoxically so, gives mayors a certain political autonomy. Indeed, as long as the mayors dutifully fulfil the objectives set by their national (partisan) leadership, they can use this clientelist cover to attract more resources, and advance their private ends. This implies that political parties and local traditional leaders opposing or excluded from the clientelist regime struggle to ensure their political survival against almighty national political parties who defend clientelist interests.[163] For instance, the anti-sectarian Lebanese Communist Party (LCP) saw its municipal strongholds in South Lebanon isolated from governmental resources by competitors of the Amal party.[164] In essence, the "clientelisation" of municipal leaders is a necessary condition to ensure the durability of elite power both locally and nationally.

After this thorough evaluation of the autonomy of local politics, I conclude that municipal governance is fully integrated at the basis of clientelist regime's vertical of power.[165] National elites successfully shaped financial, administrative and even human controls to monitor and determine decision making in local governance. This achievement lays the ground for a highly stable "governmentality" of Lebanese municipalities. In the next section of the chapter, I explain how the norms of local

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[162] Arnold Hottinger, "Zu'amā' and Parties in the Lebanese Crisis of 1958," *Middle East Journal* 15 (1961): 139; Vloeberghs, « Dynamiques dynastiques, » 12.

[163] Melhem Chaoul, « Zahlé : De la Za'âma nationale à la za'âma dépendante, » [Zahle: From National Za'âma to a Dependent Za'âma] In *Leaders et Partisans au Liban* [Leaders and Partisans in Lebanon] ed. Franck Mermier and Sabrina Mervin (Beirut: Karthala-IFPO-IISMM, 2012), 435-59; Ishtay, « Les partis politiques, » 61.

[164] These tensions were reported by *Zaki* (anonymised name) who is a member of the political bureau of the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP) during an interview in Beirut, in spring 2018.

[165] See: Alena V. Ledeneva, *Can Russia Modernise? Sistema, Power Networks, and Informal Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

governance in the clientelist regime produce predictable electoral outcomes which symbolise the strength of elite power.

2.4.b The Electoral Predictability of Local Elections

Now that we know that national elites monitor and control municipal actors, I want to delve into the practices of local governance which ensure the stability of clientelist power. Looking at the norms of local governance mirrors the customs of informal compromises in national power-sharing institutions. Indeed, inter-elite cooperation is a key determinant of decision making in municipalities. It means that similarly to national governance, most decisions and reforms are informally agreed in the shadows of formal institutions. It is only once all the clientelist leaders and influential families have been consulted, and reached a consensus, that a decision is lawfully ratified in the municipal council or by the mayor.

The most illustrative example of the customs of local governance concerns the allocation of resources (access to water, land, electricity etc.). In many municipalities, the scarcity of resources generates communal tensions that local elites learnt to mitigate through informal negotiations. Competing clientelist leaders negotiate the redistribution of available resources based on local demographics, familial influences, and traditions.[166] Regardless of their respective interests, the local elites generally endeavour to preserve a status quo which safeguards social cohesion in divided communities. Once that an agreement is reached amongst local leaders, notables like clerics and *makhatir* (notaries) are charged with in-group policing responsibilities.[167] Their role is essential to ensure that each community abides to the compromise set by the local elites. This form of inter-elite coordination entrenches a stable and predictable "customary routine" which diffuses internal conflicts and thus legitimises the power of clientelist leaders.[168] De facto, most municipalities present a tightly knit social order where local affairs are characterised by their steady administration by local elite actors.

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[166] Joseph G. Jabbra and Nancy W. Jabbra, "Local Political Dynamics in Lebanon the Case of 'Ain Al-Qasis," *Anthropological Quarterly* 51 (1978): 137-51.
[167] See: James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation," *The American Political Science Review* 90 (1996): 715-35, doi:10.2307/2945838.
[168] Jabbra and Jabbra, "Local Political Dynamics," 141-2.

As promised by the clientelist social contract, patrons therefore incarnate essential shields for the preservation of safety and the redistribution of resources in Lebanese municipalities. For the elites, the purpose of this contract is to decrease the unpredictability of electoral outcomes. Social contracts would theoretically guarantee the durability of clientelist loyalties and protect the former from unfavourable electoral outcomes. In practice, the routine of local governance under the leadership of clientelist actors improves the predictability of electoral results. Customarily, if the social contract is effective, local communities demonstrate strong faithfulness to their clientelist leader. Benedicty's ethnographic work in a mountainous Lebanese village testifies the strength of communal loyalties to a patron: "The family and or the House, the bloc [meaning the connection to the land] and the religious community, fit into the unity of the municipality to form a coherent and very cohesive human group."[169] In these conditions, the familial unit constitutes a homogeneous voting agent devoted to their leader, generation after generation. This electoral dependability can be explained by the fact that elections are not perceived as a personal ideological choice between competing political manifestos and developmental agendas for the municipality. Instead, votes are acts of faithfulness in honour of a leading family which shields the moral integrity of the rest of its beneficiaries. As a result, elite familial negotiations precluding elections may result in a guaranteed victory for the mayor without even proceeding to a vote.[170] This pre-electoral entente generally occurs in small villages. If a local ballot is still organised, which is overwhelmingly the case, vote-buying practices reinforce the electoral advantage withheld by local clientelist elites.[171]

The price of a vote reflects the political competitiveness within a community.[172] The lower the political competition, the lower the price of a vote. This is the case of Tripoli, whose large Sunni community have a limited choice of oligarchic leaders

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[169] Robert Benedicty, *La Démocratie Interrompue – Expérience électorale d'un village du Mont-Liban 1998* [Interrupted Democracy – Electoral Experience in a Mount-Lebanon village 1998] (Beirut: Université Saint-Joseph, 2003), 91.

[170] Benedicty, « La démocratie interrompue. »

[171] Daniel Corstange, "Vote Trafficking in Lebanon," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44 (2012): 483-505, doi:10.1017/S0020743812000438.

[172] Daniel Corstange, *The Price of a Vote in the Middle East* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 1-2.

(Saad Hariri's Future Movement party or eventually Najib Mikati's *al Azm* party). In comparison, Zahle's extreme religious diversity generates a competitive market for patronage in which clientelist leaders need to seek the support of out-group voters. As a result, votes tend to reach high values in the capital of the Bekaa. Undeniably, the vote-buying "norm" sets high barriers to non-clientelist entrants. It is nearly impossible for political outsiders to either win a municipal majority, nor gain a seat in the Chamber of Deputies. In consequence, I conclude that the strength of the loyalties generated by the clientelist social contract and the strategic use of vote-buying rewards enshrine the predictability of local electoral outcomes in Lebanon. The clientelist regime rests upon a highly stable local foundation which secures the durability of elite political dominance.

Conclusive remarks

In this chapter reviewing the literature on consociational power-sharing institutions and local governance in contemporary Lebanon I established how the national political elites successfully erected a clientelist regime which protects their dominance.

The chapter delved deeper into the meaning of clientelism. Subsequently, I clarified how clientelist elites legitimise and perpetuate their power by offering a social contract ensuring the physical and human needs of their protégés. This social contract is at the foundation of clientelist dominance. The literature review revealed that the contract is not solely based on a material exchange. Clientelist elites strategically rely on symbolism (ideology, leadership charisma, religious doctrine etc.) to strengthen the loyalty of their protégés. Moreover, the chapter also outlined instances where clientelist networks act collectively to defend the legitimacy of their power. Overall, material, symbolic, and collective resources protect clientelist elites from unpredictable electoral outcomes.

Afterwards, the chapter illustrated how clientelism possesses several faces. I described the typologies of clientelism which compete for power in Lebanese municipalities. This led me to express an interest in the most powerful forms of

patronage in contemporary Lebanon, which justified the following case selection: Militia-to-political clientelism incarnated by the Lebanese Forces in the city of Zahle, Islamic-communitarian clientelism performed by Hezbollah in the municipality of Baalbek, and oligarchic clientelism represented by the Future Movement party in the Northern port of Tripoli. Each selected form of clientelism offers the same type of clientelist social contract but they exhibit a variance of material, symbolic and collective resources, that I will assess in the next chapter.

Indeed, uncovering the foundations of clientelist dominance also exposes the limits of its social contract. The literature on local politics has not yet examined how clientelist elites respond to a major shock on their material capacity in order to perpetuate their local dominance. That is the task of this project. The material shock on the resources possessed by clientelist actors came from an external conflict which spilled over into an unprecedented wave of migration beginning in 2011.

Next, I introduce the ensuing theoretical argument chapter (chapter 3) on the sudden inflow of thousands of Syrian families into Lebanon seeking to shelter from Assad's brutal repression. The chapter exposes how clientelist social contracts were unprecedently broken, constituting a rare challenge to the local dominance of clientelist elites in the 2016 local elections. Accordingly, the theoretical chapter endeavours to explain how the elites could survive to the defiance of their own supporters. Based on the theoretical ideas outlined in the literature review, the chapter then formulates three expectations representing the elites' substitutive resort to three types of power strategies (materialism, symbolism, and collective action) employed to survive to a material crisis.

Chapter 3. Theory
Theorising the Substitutive Power Strategies of Elite Domination

This chapter provides a socioeconomic explanation for the breakage of clientelist loyalties observed in the 2016 local elections. To explain elite reactions to this unprecedented challenge, the chapter then formulates three theoretical expectations justifying the choice of power strategies employed by clientelist elites to maintain or recover their political domination.

The first section briefly outlines the structural deficiencies of the Lebanese political economy, before considering how an external shock generated socioeconomic conditions favouring the destabilisation of elite power. This "shock" on local governance took the form of an unprecedented wave of migration. From 2011 onwards, more than a million Syrians and Palestinians sought to shelter in neighbouring Lebanon after fleeing the horrors of the Syrian conflict.[173] A socioeconomic crisis ensued in Lebanon.[174] Facing financial scarcity themselves, clientelist elites commodified Syrian migrants into an exploitable resource - to dampen the anxieties of local communities. Nevertheless, the chapter emphasises how this new political economy had a dramatic social impact upon those Lebanese unable to exploit Syrians. As clientelist leaders could not address rising social demands, patrons decided to rupture clientelist social contracts with these depreciated members. In consequence, the chapter explains how socially excluded Lebanese defected from their clientelist oath and opened up political competition for otherwise political outsiders. The 2016 local election results consequently expressed, across the three case cities, the disruption of clientelist loyalties towards incumbent elites. This was the first instance since the end of the civil war that patronage saw its local power being seriously contested by political independents rejecting clientelism.

The second section of the chapter theorises the local elites' choice of power strategies aimed at responding to the defiance of former core supporters. Following the findings in the literature review (chapter 2), this research assumes that clientelist

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[173] UNHCR, "Lebanon. Operational Update," January-December, 2019, https://www.unhcr.org/lb/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2020/07/UNHCR-Lebanon-2019-Q4-Operational-Update.pdf.

[174] Cherri, Arcos González, and Castro Delgado, "The Lebanese-Syrian Crisis."

power rests upon three pillars of domination: materialism, symbolism, and collective action. However, each form of clientelism has varying material, symbolic and collective capacities. Therefore, the chapter defends that the endurance of elite power derives from the substitutive character of the pillars of domination. When the power of a clientelist network is being challenged by sudden material loss, its clientelist leader can devise a power strategy based upon its network's material, symbolic and/or collective leverages. Thereby, I formulate three expectations specifying the decision-making options at the disposal of local elites facing a context of financial strain: material alleviation (E1), symbolic substitution (E2) or collective action (E3).

3.1 Understanding the Post-Syrian Migration Socioeconomic Order
3.1.a Lebanon's Post-War Political Economy

By the end of the civil war in 1990, the industrial and banking sectors, which were the backbone of the Lebanese economy during the first Republic, were in ashes. From 1992, the new Prime Minister Rafik Hariri oriented the reconstruction of the country's economy in favour of the liberalisation of capital.[175] An oligarch himself who made a fortune in Saudi Arabia in construction, Hariri opened Lebanon to Gulf investors to rebuild the country's financial and touristic attractiveness.[176] His government (especially his minister of finance, George Corm) and the director of the *Banque du Liban*, Riad Salameh, designed a deregulated and neoliberal political-economy, integrating Lebanon into global economic systems enshrining a "development model focused on finance, real estate and services."[177] To do so, Hariri enforced a range of privatisations, grandiose real estate projects in downtown Beirut (or its "Dubaisation"), and public investments which primarily benefited private companies.[178] The purposive absence of "effective control and supervision" enabled the colluded business and political elites to use public-goods provision as "a tool for

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[175] Baumann, *Citizen Hariri.*
[176] Fabrice Balanche, *The Reconstruction of Lebanon or the Racketeering rule. Lebanon after the Cedar Revolution* (London: C. Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2012), 146.
[177] Joseph Daher, "Lebanon: How the Post War's Political Economy Led to the Current Economic and Social Crisis," *Robert Schuman Center, Research Project Report* 3 (2022): 6.
[178] Hicham Safieddine, *Banking on the State: The Financial Foundations of Lebanon* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019), 175, doi:10.1515/9781503609686-010.

nepotism and rent seeking."[179] Thereby, a small dominant class extracted profitable resources from state contracts. Collateral damage of this "rentierisation" of the economy was the decline experienced by the industrial, merchant and landowning bourgeoisie, who had sustained the Lebanese economy up until the civil war. By 1999, the Lebanese middle class had shrunk to only 29.3 per cent of the population, compared to 68 percent of the nation in 1973.[180] This social re-ordering of society especially affected the "periphery" and its regional capitals, as the Hariri government further centralised administratively and focused public/private investments onto Beirut. For instance, most of the formerly flourishing furniture, food and textile industries in Tripoli's Bahsas neighbourhood ceased to operate after the war and were never replaced.[181] Lebanon's economic engines of prosperity like the Bahsas industries became pools of urban precarity.

The financialization of the Lebanese economy accentuated social inequalities and regional disparities. Indeed, Lebanon shined out as one of the countries with the highest levels of income inequality in the world.[182] Wealth was extremely concentrated at the top of the social ladder while masses of Lebanese remained at the bottom in extreme poverty, an observation which remains more valid than ever. In 2014, the top 2 percent income group captured a share of income almost as high as that of the bottom 60 percent.[183] Social indicators reflect the disproportionate distribution of wealth in the Lebanese society. Poverty was a chronic scourge in the state-abandoned peripheral regions of the country. In 2011, the North and Bekaa governorates (Baalbek-Hermel became an independent governorate in 2003 but was effectively administered since 2014 only), which are the two areas of selected for this

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[179] Nisreen Salti and Jad Chaaban, "The Role of Sectarianism in the Allocation of Public Expenditure in Postwar Lebanon," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42 (2010), 641, doi:10.1017/S0020743810000851.

[180] Are John Knudsen, "Precarious Peacebuilding: Post-war Lebanon, 1990-2005," *Chr. Michelsen Institute Working Papers* 12 (2005): 3, https://open.cmi.no/cmi-xmlui/handle/11250/2435894.

[181] Bruno Dewailly, « Tripoli: de la prospérité à la pauvreté, » [Tripoli: From Prosperity to Poverty] *Travaux et Jours* 94 (2019): 59, https://journals.usj.edu.lb/travauxetjours/article/view/96.

[182] Lydia Assouad, "Rethinking the Lebanese Economic Miracle: The Extreme Concentration of Income and Wealth in Lebanon 2005-2014," *WID.world Working Paper* No. 13 (2017): 2.

[183] Edwin Saliba, Walid Sayegh, Talal Sal, "Assessing Labor Income Inequality in Lebanon's Private Sector," *UNDP Fiscal Policy Advisory and Reform Project at the Lebanese Ministry of Finance* (2017): 2, https://www.undp.org/lebanon/publications/assessing-labor-income-inequality-lebanon%E2%80%99s-private-sector.

comparative research, presented the highest poverty rates in Lebanon.[184] These two regions "[accounted] for about 77 percent of all poor people in the country" (36 percent in the North and 38 percent in the Bekaa).[185] In the North, it is not even poverty but its more extreme form which plagued Tripoli and some of its disenfranchised urban neighbourhoods. In 2004/5, "the North [had] 20.7 percent of Lebanon's population but 46 percent of the extremely poor population and 38 percent of the entire poor population."[186] Not only did the Northerners and Bekaais suffer from underdevelopment, but an accumulation of structural factors impeded the improvement of their welfare. The dominant economic activities in these regions, agriculture and construction, meant concentrated masses of flexible, non-salaried daily workers.[187] Hence, these border areas amassed pools of the working poor struggling to make ends meet whilst the most profitable economic activities favoured Beirut (and Mount-Lebanon). The successors of Hariri pursued similar neoliberal policies, which perpetuated the dominance of the political and business elites.[188]

In summary, Lebanon's post-war political-economy produced structural socioeconomic inequalities, unconditionally favouring a small ruling elite at the expense of a fairer and sustainable development of the national welfare.[189] Consequently, Lebanon's service-economy, which extensively relied on tourism and financial services, was especially vulnerable to any exogenous and unexpected pressure.[190] The impact of the 2006 war with Israel already demonstrated Lebanon's weakness to external political shocks.[191] Only a few years later, Syrian migration into

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[184] Najwa Yaacoub, Maysaa Daher, Dean Jolliffe, and Aziz Atamanov, "Snapshot of Poverty and Labour Market Outcomes in Lebanon Based on Household Budget Survey 2011/2012," *World Bank Working Paper* No. 102819 (2015): 2, https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/23797.
[185] Yaacoub, Daher, Jolliffe, and Atamanov, "Snapshot of Poverty and Labour Market Outcomes," ibid.
[186] Heba Laithy, Khalid Abu-Ismail, and Kamal Hamdan, "Poverty, Growth, and Income Distribution in Lebanon," *International Poverty Centre UNDP, Country Study* 13 (2008): 9-10, https://ipcig.org/publication/27281?language_content_entity=en.
[187] Laithy, Abu-Ismail, and Hamdan, "Poverty, Growth, and Income Distribution," 13-14.
[188] Sami E. Baroudi, "Continuity in Economic Policy in Postwar Lebanon: The Record of the Hariri and Hoss Governments Examined, 1992-2000," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 24 (2002): 63-90.
[189] Lydia Assouad, "Lebanon's Political Economy: From Predatory to Self-Devouring," *Malcom H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center Working Paper* (2021): 11, https://carnegie-mec.org/2021/01/14/lebanon-s-political-economy-from-predatory-to-self-devouring-pub-83631.
[190] Eric Le Borgne and Thomas J. Jacobs, "Lebanon: Promoting Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity. Systematic Country Diagnostic," *World Bank* (2016): 1, https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/23102.
[191] Le Borgne and Jacobs, "Lebanon: Promoting Poverty Reduction," 5, 16.

Lebanon proved another major stress-test for the country's political-economic system.

In the following sections of this chapter, I explain how the Syrian migration into Lebanon disrupted the socioeconomic order of the most affected border municipalities. However, I want to make clear that though the Syrian migration was indeed an exponential accelerator of structural deficiencies characterising the Lebanese political-economy, it was not its main cause.

3.1.b Lebanese Municipalities Facing the Syrian Migration

The "customary routine" which had characterised local politics since the end of the civil war was suddenly upset by external pressure which spilled over into Lebanese municipalities at the border with Syria. The bloody repression of peaceful demonstrations by the regime of Bashar el-Assad pushed more than a million and a half Syrians to seek shelter in neighbouring Lebanon since 2011.[192] The regional capitals of the Bekaa valley and Northern governorates, Zahle, Baalbek and Tripoli, which are the closest to the Syrian border, were logically the largest hosts of displaced communities.[193] Lebanese in many surrounding villages were soon demographically outnumbered by displaced Syrians.[194] Displaced families joined relatives, settled in informal camps on agricultural fields, or rented any type of housing (from flats to sub-standard shelters in the margins of urban areas). The extent of the Lebanese "hospitality" can be explained by the sincere compassion shared initially by the communities living at the border with Syria for their displaced neighbours.[195] Indeed, the inhabitants of the regions of the Bekaa valley and North Lebanon are intimately historically and economically tied to the communities inhabiting the Syrian hinterland. Moreover, many inhabitants of the Bekaa valley fled from Israeli bombardments in 2006 to Syria where their relatives and

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[192] UNHCR, "Lebanon. Operational Update."
[193] UNHCR, "Lebanon. Operational Update."
[194] Kelley 2017, 86. Ninette Kelley, "Responding to a Refugee Influx: Lessons from Lebanon," *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 5 (2017): 86, doi:10.1177/233150024700500105.
[195] Estella Carpi, "The Everyday Experience of Humanitarianism in the Akkar Villages," *Civil Society Knowledge Center, Lebanese Support* (2014): 1-20; Nasser Yassin, Tarek Osseiran, Rima Rassi, and Marwa Boustani, *No Place to Stay? Reflections on the Syrian Refugee Shelter Policy* (Beirut: The Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI), American University of Beirut (AUB), 2015), 15.

acquaintances sheltered until the end of the 33 days.[196] Thus, these Lebanese citizens replied to their former Syrian hosts with the same duty of hospitality at the start of the Syrian conflict in 2011. As Chatty explains, the principle of *karam* (translated as generosity or hospitality) is enshrined in customary practices in the Levant.[197]

The "hospitality" of the Lebanese communities was however nevertheless tainted with suspicion. The rhetoric of *karam* signifies that Syrians were considered as temporary guests who were meant to return home. Indubitably, the dark memories of 29 years of Syrian occupation easily resurfaced amongst Lebanese hosts.[198] This led Longuenesse to qualify the Syro-Lebanese relationship as an "ambiguous" one.[199] She especially observed the paradoxical coexistence of conflictual behaviours between the two peoples "made of familiarity and mistrust, proximity and discrimination, solidarity and hostility."[200] Latent communal tension was further exacerbated by the failures of the international humanitarian response.

As displaced Syrians settled in border areas, the Lebanese government intentionally adopted a policy of humanitarian inaction.[201] Political divides on the Syrian conflict paralysed the power-sharing institutions.[202] This is why Lebanon did not create official refugee camps - unlike Turkey and Jordan, the two other largest hosts of displaced Syrians.[203] It is also important to remember that Lebanon did not ratify the

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[196] Filippo Dionigi, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon: State Fragility and Social Resilience," *LSE Middle East Centre Paper Series* 15 (2016): 19; Hugh Eakin, "Hezbollah's Refugee Problem," *The New York Review of Books*, August 12, 2013, https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2013/08/12/hezbollahs-humanitarian-game/; Karim el Mufti, "Official response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon, the disastrous policy of no-policy," *Civil Society Knowledge Center, Lebanon Support* (2014): 2.

[197] Dawn Chatty, "The Duty to be Generous (karam): Alternatives to Rights-based Asylum in the Middle East," *Journal of the British Academy* 5 (2017): 178, doi:10.5871/jba/005.177.

[198] Estella Carpi and Pınar Şenoğuz, "Refugee Hospitality in Lebanon and Turkey. On Making 'The Other'," *International Migration* (2018): 127, doi:10.1111/imig.12471.

[199] Elisabeth Longuenesse, « La société libanaise à l'épreuve du drame syrien – introduction, » [Lebanese Society facing the Syrian Tragedy – introduction] *Confluences Méditerranée* 92 (2015): 13.

[200] Longuenesse, "introduction."

[201] Lama Mourad, "'Standoffish' Policy-making: Inaction and Change in the Lebanese Response to the Syrian Displacement Crisis," *Middle East Law and Governance* 9 (2017): 249-66; Sanyal 2018.

[202] Maja Janmyr, "UNHCR and the Syrian Refugee Response: Negotiating Status and Registration in Lebanon," *The International Journal of Human Rights* 22 (2018): 398, doi:10.1080/13642987.2017.1371140.

[203] Romola Sanyal, "A No-Camp Policy: Interrogating Informal Settlements in Lebanon," *Geoforum* 84 (2017): 117-25, doi:10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.06.011; Yassin, Osseiran, Rassi, and Boustani, "No Place to Stay."

Geneva convention of 1951 on civilian refugees.[204] Therefore, the incoming populations from Syria are labelled as "displaced" and do not benefit from a formal refugee status. De facto, the Lebanese government devolved the management of the migration crisis to UN agencies (mainly the UNHCR) and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs).[205] The latter inappropriately by-passed the feedback from local authorities, and consequently reproduced emergency programs implemented in other terrains. As such, international humanitarian actors compelled NGOs to exclusively focus on the emergency relief of Syrian migrants' primary needs at the expense of developmental projects designed for locals.[206] The UNHCR and other INGOs critically missed the social deprivation characterising "host" Lebanese communities. Thereby, international humanitarian actors aided displaced Syrians inhabiting with Lebanese relatives while the latter were enduring increasingly severe living conditions. Soon, the neglect of local communities ignited feelings of resentment towards both foreign aid actors and displaced Syrians.[207]

As tensions rose, Lebanese mayors fell to the forefront of the mitigation of a tremendous social crisis, in regions of Lebanon which were the most deprived in the country.[208] They had then to administer inflated resident populations and their unmet basic needs without the support from international aid actors. Mayors were not only confronted by a humanitarian emergency affecting displaced communities. Locals were soon affected by the consequences of a socioeconomic crisis too.[209] The economy of the Lebanese border regions of the North and Bekaa valley historically relied upon informal transnational exchanges.[210] Smuggling activities of drugs,

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[204] Maja Janmyr, "No Country of Asylum: 'Legitimizing' Lebanon's Rejection of the 1951 Refugee Convention," *International Journal of Refugee Law* (2017): 1-28, doi:10.1093/ijrl/eex026.

[205] Marwa Boustani, Estella Carpi, Hayat Gebara and Yara Mourad, "Responding to the Syrian Crisis in Lebanon Collaboration between Aid Agencies and Local Governance Structures," *IIED Working Paper* (2016): 2.

[206] Juline Beaujouan and Amjed Rasheed, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Jordan And Lebanon: Impact And Implications," *Middle East Policy* 27 (2020): 82.

[207] Carpi, "The Everyday Experience"; Rabih Shibli, " Reconfiguring Relief Mechanisms: The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon," *The Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI), American University of Beirut (AUB)* (2014): 10.

[208] Alexander Betts, Fulya Memişoĝlu, Ali Ali, "What Difference do Mayors Make? The Role of Municipal Authorities in Turkey and Lebanon's Response to Syrian Refugees," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 34 (2021): 491-519, doi:10.1093/jrs/feaa011; Boustani, Carpi, Gebara, and Mourad, "Responding to the Syrian Crisis."

[209] Cherri, Arcos González, and Castro Delgado, "The Lebanese-Syrian Crisis," 168-69.

[210] Chalcraft, John T., *The Invisible Cage – Syrian Migrant Workers in Lebanon* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2009); Jamil Mouawad and Myriam Périer, « La région libanaise de Wadi Khaled à la frontière avec la Syrie: Quelles transformations économiques en temps de paix et de

medicines and other goods customarily sustained the livelihoods of many Lebanese inhabitants.[211] The war in Syria put a decisive halt to most cross-border trades which deeply depressed local economies in Lebanese border municipalities.[212] In consequence, the mayors of these localities, from the smallest villages to large urban areas, all experienced challenges of governance. Their previously tight-knit social orders were suddenly under pressure to re-allocate access to essential services like water and electricity. However, municipalities in the Eastern and Northern governorates generally lacked sufficient means to serve local populations even before the start of the Syrian displacement. In addition, the central government's vacuum then further depleted municipalities' meagre budgets. Financial transfers from the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) to municipalities were decreased and delayed, even though they often constitute the overwhelming share of a municipality's budget.[213] Mourad noted that "in 2013, transfers to municipalities dropped [by] 11.7% compared to the prior year."[214] Indeed, some mayors waited for years before receiving their dues. Without reliable sources of funding, municipal services collapsed. Seventy nine percent of municipalities in Lebanon stated in 2014 that "providing services was their greatest challenge and directly affected the Lebanese population."[215]

It seemed that every echelon of the Lebanese Sate had failed to protect Lebanese communities in the peripheral regions. Inexorably, the first signs of the limits of hospitality amongst host communities appeared.[216] The disrupted delivery of welfare in deprived municipalities triggered social discontent amongst local populations.

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guerre ? » [The Lebanese Region of Wadi Khaled on the Border with Syria: Which Economic Transformations in Times of Peace and War?] *Critique internationale* 80 (2018): 67-88.

[211] Nicholas Blanford, "Case Study: The Lebanon-Syria Border," (paper presented at the conference "Rethinking International Revolutions after the Arab Revolutions" at the Université Saint-Joseph, Beirut, April 16, 2016): 16; Carpi and Şenoğuz, "Refugee Hospitality," 127; Royce Hutson and Taylor Long, "Features of Smuggling in Wadi Khaled, Lebanon," *Conflict, Security & Development* 11 (2011): 385-413, doi:10.1080/14678802.2011.614126.

[212] Ianchovichina and Ivanic 2016. Elena Ianchovichina and Maros Ivanic, "Economic Effects of the Syrian War and the Spread of the Islamic State on the Levant," *The World Economy* 39 (2016): 1584-627.

[213] Boustani, Carpi, Gebara, and Mourad, "Responding to the Syrian Crisis," 12.

[214] Mourad, "'Standoffish' Policy-making," 264.

[215] Anne Marie Baylouny and Stephen J. Klingseis, "Water Thieves or Political Catalysts? Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon," *Middle East Policy* 25 (2018): 112-13. Data extracted from a report from Mercy Corps, "Engaging Municipalities in the Response to the Syria Refugee Crisis in Lebanon," *Policy Brief* (2014): 1.

[216] Cathrine Thorleifsson, "The Limits of Hospitality: Coping Strategies among Displaced Syrians in Lebanon," *Third World Quarterly* 37 (2016): 1071-82.

Mayors and councillors, who were at the frontline of the social reality plaguing their constituents, channelled to the national clientelist elites the necessity to tackle the socioeconomic anxieties upsetting locals. It was about time that the ruling elites stood up to defend the legitimacy of the clientelist regime.

3.1.c The National Elites Commodify Syrians into a "Resource"

For the governing elites, the presence of new actors in the Lebanese polity, including displaced Syrians and foreign humanitarian organisations, challenged the status quo. Therefore it was necessary for clientelist leaders to amend the former equilibrium thanks to the institutional hybridity characterising elite domination in Lebanon.[217] Indeed, the most pressing issue for clientelist leaders was to monitor the presence of these new actors on their respective territories of power to ensure that their interests were preserved. The extent of the Syrian presence was so considerable that the borders of social closure between displaced and host communities were faltering.[218]

As the migration inflow continued, the Lebanese government enacted the official closure of the borders with Syria in 2015, and requested that the UNHCR stopped the registration of displaced Syrians.[219] This decision implied that the Syrian displaced communities residing in Lebanon were not ephemeral guests. De facto, Syrians represent a permanent factor to be taken into account by the Lebanese clientelist regime because they were likely to stay in the country. If the displaced presence was unavoidable, then the national elites endeavoured to make the Syrian communities an economic opportunity benefiting their protégés. The description of a changing socioeconomic order in the preceding section of the chapter acknowledged the severity of resource scarcity in the most hospitable municipalities. Therefore, the national elites endorsed a policy of commodification of the displaced Syrians with the

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[217] Sara Fregonese, "Beyond the 'Weak State': Hybrid Sovereignties in Beirut," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 30 (2012): 655-74, doi:10.1068/d11410. In this article, Fregonese contests the notion of "weakness" attributed by scholars in international relations to the Lebanese state because the domestic sovereignty of the latter is challenged by non-State actors. She explains that the "distinctions between accepted binaries, such as state/nonstate, legitimate/illegitimate, security/insecurity, and domestic/foreign" are often blurred when looking empirically. "Both state actors and nonstate militias [perform] sovereignty practices increasingly resembling each other, and coconstituting each other." She conceptualises this dynamic practice of power as an institutional "hybridity."

[218] Charles Tilly, *Identities, Boundaries, and Social Ties* (London: Routledge, 2005), 72.

[219] Janmyr, "UNHCR and the Syrian Refugee," 396.

aim to reduce their own financial strain and the pressures weighing on local communities. Commodification means the "transformation of forcibly displaced populations [...] into commodities subject to negotiation and trade in the marketplace."[220] In other words, it implies that displaced individuals become exploitable resources to the benefit of the local economy.

The Lebanese government implemented two strategies of commodification of the displaced communities since 2014:

First, the cabinet resorted to geopolitical leverage which entailed that international partners would grant Lebanon with large sums of donations in exchange for the country's "hospitality" with displaced Syrians.[221] In 2014, Lebanon signed a first package deal with the European Union resulting in the overall allocation, up until 2020, of 402.3 million Euros in bilateral assistance to support growth and job creation in Lebanon.[222] In parallel, the government negotiated a so-called "Compact" agreement with the EU in 2015 which, since then, channelled 955 million euros to the Lebanese coffers in order to weather the migration crisis.[223] Overall, the Lebanese government has obtained since 2011 more than 2.4 billion euros just from the EU.[224] The ratification of these lucrative packages testimonies that the Lebanese government "acquired a prominent role both as a gatekeeper and an interlocutor in the governance of the refugee flows."[225] This gatekeeping status guaranteed that the national elites remained in control of the allocation of resources which defines the viability of the clientelist regime. Nevertheless, many foreign governments were reluctant to directly subsidise a state known for its endemic corrupt practices, and preferred to allocate funds to NGOs instead.[226] Indeed, local populations rarely saw

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[220] Freier, Micinski and Tsourapas, "Refugee Commodification," 2748.
[221] Tamirace Fakhoury, "Refugee Return and Fragmented Governance in the Host State: Displaced Syrians in the Face of Lebanon's Divided Politics," *Third World Quarterly* 42 (2021): 167, doi:10.1080/01436597.2020.1762485.
[222] "European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations. Lebanon," https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/european-neighbourhood-policy/countries-region/lebanon_en.
[223] "European Neighbourhood Policy."
[224] "European Neighbourhood Policy."
[225] Tamirace Fakhoury, "Leverage and Contestation in Refugee Governance. Lebanon and Europe in the Context of Mass Displacement," In *Resisting Europe: Practices of Contestation in the Mediterranean Middle East* ed. Raffaella Del Sarto and Simone Tholens (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2020): 144.
[226] Boustani, Carpi, Gebara and Mourad, "Responding to the Syrian Crisis," 15.

these international donations. For this reason, national elites envisaged another path in commodifying the Syrian migrants.

Second, national elites decided to commodify Syrian migrants themselves into an exploitable "resource", generating compensative rents for the Lebanese population.[227] This strategy institutionalised inequalities between the Lebanese and Syrian residents of Lebanon.[228] Instituting legal boundaries between coexisting communities primarily reflects a governmental willingness to protect local communities from the negative externalities driven by immigration. Especially, the rising rates of unemployment in the Lebanese youth were of particular concern to local populations.[229] At the same time, this legal inequality was purposefully designed by the ruling elites to drive the displaced populations into a situation of inextricable uncertainty and precariousness. Such an "institutional ambiguity" consequently made the Syrians vulnerable to (labour) exploitation. So, after four years of crisis, the government finally detailed its first guidelines to manage the Syrian migration in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (2015-2016). The first LCRP plan mainly clarified the prerogatives delegated by the government to international aid actors. However, my interest lies with the regulations which domestically drew legal inequalities between Lebanese and Syrian residents. Specifically, the Lebanese government enacted several circulars in 2014 which erected a "discriminatory" legal framework affecting the labour and residency status of the Syrian citizens in Lebanon (see in appendix A).[230]

I detail in the following section the provision entailed by these new laws which have decisively affected the daily lives of displaced Syrians in Lebanon since their implementation in 2015.

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[227] Freier, Micinski and Tsourapas, "Refugee Commodification."
[228] Charles Tilly, *Durable Inequality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 6.
[229] Carpi and Şenoğuz, "Refugee Hospitality," 127.
[230] Assaf Dahdah and Nicolas Puig, *Exils syriens: parcours et ancrages (Liban, Turquie, Europe)* [Syrian Exiles: Journeys and Anchoring (Lebanon, Turkey, Europe)] (Paris: Editions Le passager clandestin, 2018), 75.

3.1.d 2015 Restrictive Labour and Residency Laws

Labour laws intended to limit the legal employment of Syrian workers into three economic sectors where they traditionally worked before the Syrian war: agriculture, construction, and cleaning (see the translation of the 2015 labour laws in appendix A).[231] This meant that the Syrians who had already found a job in retail, healthcare, hospitality or manufacturing industries were set to fall into an illegal category by 2015. To makes matters worse for Syrian workers, the law established a *kafala* system of business sponsorship (which is the literal translation of the term in Arabic).[232] After six months of residency in Lebanon, any Syrian intending to work in the three aforementioned legal sectors needed to benefit from the financial and administrative support of their Lebanese boss. Finally, the labour laws delineated a clear legal distinction between "displaced" Syrians (de facto refugees) and the Syrian "migrant" workers. A displaced Syrian, who benefited from the financial support of the Ministry of Social affairs (MoSA), UN agencies, and INGOs, was forbidden to legally work in Lebanon. Accordingly, displaced Syrians officially receiving aid had to "pledge not to work in order to regularise their situation."[233]

All these legal provisions demonstrate the government's intention to push the displaced Syrians into a dire level of precarity and uncertainty rendering their long-term settlement in Lebanon an impossible prospect.[234] In the meantime, as Syrians still needed to survive, they were forced into illegal labour. Their legal vulnerability favoured their exploitation by unscrupulous employers, which "in some cases may even amount to forced labour and human trafficking."[235]

In parallel to these strict measures concerning the labour sector, residency regulations were also tightened. Syrians holding residency permits would have to pay

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[231] Maja Janmyr, "Precarity in Exile: The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 35 (2016): 58-78, doi: 10.1093/rsq/hdw016.

[232] Filippo Dionigi, "Rethinking Borders: The Dynamics of Syrian Displacement to Lebanon," *Middle East Law and Governance* 9 (2017): 232-48.

[233] Dahdah and Puig, "Exils syriens," 76.

[234] Jessy Nassar and Nora Stel, "Lebanon's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis – Institutional Ambiguity as a Governance Strategy," *Political Geography* 70 (2019): 51, doi:10.1016/j.polgeo.2019.01.005.

[235] Janmyr, "Precarity in Exile," 71.

a supplementary fee of 200 American dollars per person to renew their visa.[236] In the case of large families, the cost of renewing residency permits reached thousands of dollars. Very few Syrian families could afford such costs, while their living standards were falling at the same time. After several years of crisis, most displaced Syrians had no choice but to accept their illegal status and exploitation.

The labour and residency laws were implemented in 2015. By the end of that year, already "two thirds of Syrian refugees [were] in a situation of illegality."[237] In essence, the 2015 laws therefore formalised the precarity of the Syrian presence and established the exploitability of displaced workers in Lebanon.

3.1.e New Rents, New Societal Cleavage

The post-2015 legal framework created two main rents from the commodified displaced Syrians: a disposable low-cost workforce, and dependable house rent payers.

First of all, Syrian labourers offered a flexible and cheap reserve of disposable workers in a sluggish economy. Before 2011, Syrian workers were traditionally reduced to performing seasonal, menial and unskilled jobs in Lebanon.[238] Nevertheless, the extent of Syrian migration into the country after 2011 led to the diversification of economic activities in which Syrians were finding work. Many of them were highly skilled labourers possessing a "productive force" benefiting the Lebanese economy.[239] As a result, Lebanese (and Syrian) business owners extensively relied on the displaced workforce despite (or even thanks to) its illegal status.[240] Syrians integrated into the economy to the benefit of their employers who

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[236] Jonathan Hassine, *Les réfugiés et déplacés de Syrie. Une reconstruction nationale en question* [Refugees and Displaced Persons from Syria. A National Reconstruction in Question] (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2015), 176.

[237] Hassine, *Les réfugiés et déplacés de Syrie*, 177.

[238] Chalcraft, *The Invisible Cage*, 17.

[239] Yassin, Osseiran, Rassi, and Boustani, "No Place to Stay," 63.

[240] Raed H. Charafeddine, "The Impact of the Syrian Displacement Crisis on the Lebanese Economy," *Banque du Liban* (2016): 7, http://www.databank.com.lb/docs/Impact%20of%20Syrian%20Displacement%20on%20the%20Economy-BDL-2016.pdf.

offered discounted wages.[241] As such, many Syrians became "part of the social fabric" in their host communities.[242] From the village grocer in Akkar, high end restaurants in Beirut, hospitals of Baalbek, to the agroindustry in the Bekaa valley, a wide range of companies could weather the economic crisis thanks to their low-cost displaced personnel. This labour especially benefited the clientelist leaders who are themselves businessman employing workers in different sectors of the Lebanese economy.

The second rent extracted from the commodification of the Syrian migrants was related to housing. As the Lebanese government excluded the creation of official camps, hundreds of thousands of displaced individuals needed shelter in Lebanon. According to the UNHCR's 2015 "Shelter survey", only 18.4% of Syrians living in Lebanon resided in informal camps while 79% of Syrians resided in apartments and substandard buildings.[243] Syrians represented a large market of potential house letters desperately ready to pay for the most unusual and unsafe "homes".[244] Thus, any Lebanese owner of any kind of property opportunistically attempted to literally extract new rents from their goods. Landlords "[divided] their apartments into separate dwellings, to add a floor to their buildings and to build garages or cellars in shops or workshops for rent."[245] In this way, Lebanese property-owners could maximise their earnings from unworthy sub-standard shelters that should have never been rented. In the villages and urban suburbs of the Bekaa and North governorates, Syrian families piled-up in unfinished buildings without access to drinkable water or electricity. This new rent created unexpected revenues in these areas where the demand for housing was extremely marginal before the Syrian migration.

Overall, I conclude that these two rents drew a divide in the Lebanese society between the citizens able to exploit the Syrian resources and the ones who could not do so. I could simplify this cleavage by labelling these two separate groups as either

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[241] Charafeddine, "The Impact of the Syrian Displacement."
[242] Lama Mourad, "Brothers, Workers or Syrians? The Politics of Naming in Lebanese Municipalities," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 34 (2021): 1397, doi:10.1093/jrs/feab012.
[243] Yassin, Osseiran, Rassi and Boustani, "No Place to Stay," 50.
[244] Hisham Askhar, "Benefiting from a Crisis: Lebanese Upscale Real-Estate Industry and the War in Syria," *Confluences Méditerranée* 92 (2015): 95.
[245] Thierry Boissière and Annie Tohmé Tabet, « Une économie de la survie au plus près de la guerre. Stratégies quotidiennes des réfugiés syriens à Nabaa, » [An Economy of Survival close to the War. Daily Strategies of Syrian Refugees in Nabaa] *Critique internationale* 3 (2018): 97-8.

the "winners" or the "losers" of the Syrian settlement's exploitation. Interestingly, the beneficiaries of the Syrian resources are not solely located at the helm of Lebanese social hierarchy. Instead, many Lebanese with particularly low incomes were able to levy new sources of subsistence thanks to the Syrian migration. A poor villager having small fields of orchards could sublet his land to Syrian families who would then be charged to collect crops at an extortionate price. Therefore, the "winners" of the post-migration socioeconomic order are the ones holding the means of exploitation over displaced Syrians. The rents created by the national elites are intended to reinforce each other.[246] The legal precarity weighing on the livelihoods of displaced communities dually enticed Syrians to offer their malleable workforce while at the same time forced them to pay for home lets as there were no official camps in Lebanon. In essence, the national elites achieved to anchor a new political-economy based on the exploitability of the Syrian resource.

In the next section of the chapter, I consider how this new socioeconomic order generated the breakage of clientelist social contracts with the "losers" of Syrian exploitability.

3.2 The Breakage of Clientelist Social Contracts
3.2.a The Changing Profile of Clientelist Outsiders

With this new societal cleavage emerged new dynamics in the social hierarchy of the Lebanese society. My interest therefore is to understand how the transformation of the socioeconomic order under Syrian migration affected the endurance of clientelist loyalties. In this section of the chapter, I identify the profile of the Lebanese who lost out from the delineation of the Syrian exploitability cleavage since 2015. To do so, I first describe how clientelist elites select their members and attribute them a particular value. From this selection stems the rejection of some citizens from patronage. Therefore, I define the meaning of social exclusion in Lebanon which

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[246] Lewis Turner, "Explaining the (Non-)Encampment of Syrian Refugees: Security, Class and the Labour Market in Lebanon and Jordan," *Mediterranean Politics* 20 (2015): 397, doi:10.1080/13629395.2015.1078125.

enables me to consider how the identity of deprived Lebanese evolved before and after the Syrian migration.

Clientelist Insiders Pre-Migration Crisis

As established in the literature review chapter (chapter 2), clientelist "insiders" are the protégés of a patron who benefit from exclusive access to public goods in exchange for their votes. Nevertheless, all network members do not benefit from a similar support by their patron. Indeed, clientelist leaders distribute unequal benefits to network members – *wasta* (servicing) – in proportion of their estimated value or social capital.[247] Instead of using Tilly's oppositional social categories (black/white, skilled/unskilled etc.) I adopt a dynamic analogy to differentiate the "value" of each actor.[248]

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[247] Mohamed A. Ramady, *The Political Economy of Wasta: Use and Abuse of Social Capital Networking* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2016).
[248] Tilly, *Durable Inequality*, 8.

The social hierarchy internally characterising a clientelist network can be represented on a ladder of social capital which includes a range of elements best reflecting an individual's attractiveness (see figure 3.1 below).

Figure 3.1 A Social Capital Ladder of Clientelist Network Members' Value
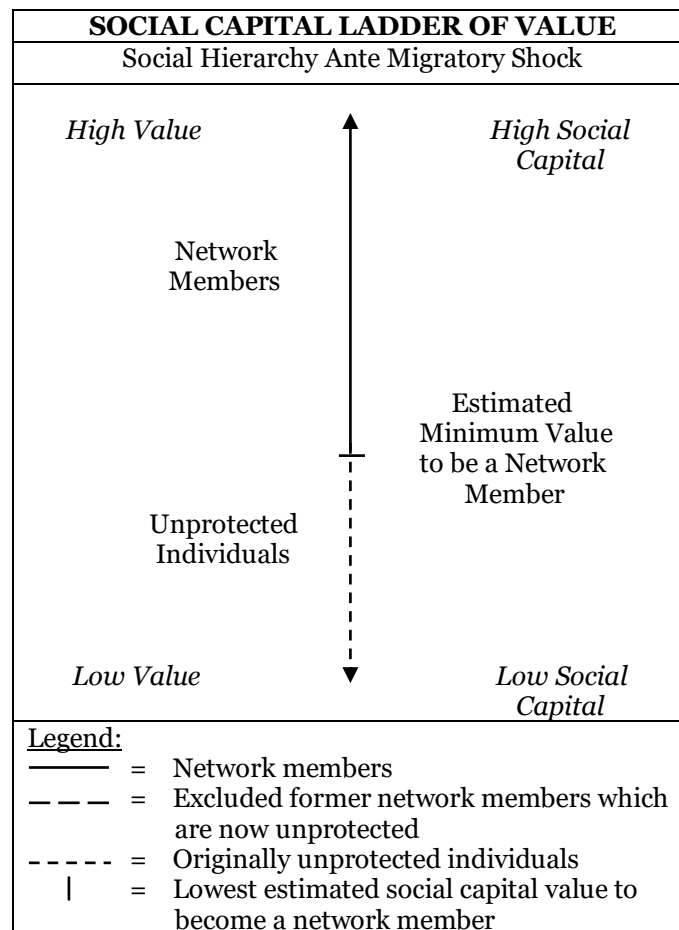
I assume from clientelist literature that an individual's social capital is determined by his/her social connections, societal reputation, financial assets, political activism, and cultural heritage.[249] Incomes do matter, but are not a sufficient qualifying factor to gain patronage. Indeed, Cammett highlights that an individual's demonstrated political activism similarly represents a source of esteem within their respective clientelist network.[250] Hence, members of a relatively modest household could still hope to benefit from patronage if they deploy their activism and social network to the benefit of their patron. Accordingly, a network leader estimates how much protection

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[249] Pierre Bourdieu, "The forms of Capital," In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* ed. John Richardson (New York: Greenwood, 1986), 248.
[250] Melani Cammett, "Partisan Activism and Access to Welfare in Lebanon," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 46 (2011): 70-97, doi:10.1007/s12116-010-9081-9.

to allocate to an individual depending on the individual's social capital. The higher an individual's social capital, the more likely he/she will benefit from the coverage of a clientelist network.

Then, clientelist leaders "direct different baskets of rewards to different types of supporters", in relation to one's relative value to their network.[251] Once a family is deemed as electorally attractive by a patron, their clientelist bond relies on a durable mutual dependability.[252] Consequently, the selection of clientelist members implies that certain pools of individuals are left at the margins of the clientelist regime.

Defining Social Exclusion

The concept of social exclusion is therefore key for this research, because it represents a measure of the robustness of clientelist social contracts over time. Considering the clientelisation of welfare access in the Lebanese society, social exclusion results from "structural, institutional or agentive processes of repulsion or obstruction."[253] The institutional setting and the agents holding power within it are constraining forces on one's access to care. In Lebanon, clientelist leaders have the agency to decide upon one's social status, as they dually control the formal (state) and informal (clientelist) accesses to welfare. Therefore, social exclusion can be defined by one's rejection from human and physical protection both by state and clientelist institutions. This definition implies that "social exclusion is an outcome of [strategic] political processes."[254] This observation implies that social exclusion is a tool which helps clientelist leaders safeguard the sustainability of their system of patronage. Before the eruption of the Syrian migration into Lebanon, clientelist "outsiders" were deemed unattractive to clientelist membership for reasons that I review in the following section.

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[251] Corstange, "Vote Trafficking in Lebanon," 488.
[252] Benedicty, « La démocratie interrompue »; Hermez, "On Dignity and Clientelisn"; Christian Thuselt, "We Wander in your Footsteps'— Reciprocity and Contractility in Lebanese Personality-Centred Parties," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 44 (2017): 194-210, doi:10.1080/13530194.2017.1281573.
[253] Andrew M. Fischer, "Reconceiving Social Exclusion," *Brooks World Poverty Institute Working Paper* 146 (2011): 3.
[254] Lefteris Tsoulouvis, "Urban Planning, Social Policy and New Forms of Urban Inequality and Social Exclusion in Greek Cities," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 20 (1996): 726, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2427.1996.tb00344.x.

Clientelist Outsiders Pre-Migration Crisis

Customarily, two attributes: one's internal displacement and one's poverty, disqualified some Lebanese from benefiting from patronage. Indeed, these two characteristics made a Lebanese citizen electorally unworthy for clientelist leaders.

The literature on clientelism assumes that a necessary condition to access patronage rests upon the possession of voting rights, which can be traded for clientelist rewards.[255] In brief, no voting rights means no patronage. Therefore, the numerous cases of internal displacement engendered by the civil war or rural exodus de facto created unprotected individuals. Due to their territorial uprooting, these Lebanese citizens were not registered electorally in their new areas of residence. Lebanese citizens are enlisted based on their families' original residence - recorded at the last national census performed by the French mandate authorities in 1932. Therefore, displaced citizens are registered electorally in their familial hometown/village, which differs from their actual residence.[256] In consequence, the electoral registers' inflexibility towards territorial mobility led to the "massive exclusion" of Lebanese from patronage.[257] The social precarity of these displaced communities, which are numerous in Lebanon, is "abandoned to its own fate" by the clientelist regime.[258]

A second criteria deterred clientelist leaders from grating their protection to many Lebanese - (extreme) poverty. The financial capital possessed by a family decisively determined its worth to integrate a clientelist network. Poverty or modest incomes is not a factor sufficient to exclude a family from patronage. Nevertheless, the poorest families often lack social networks or the cultural capital to be politically engaged which could have compensated their financial unattractiveness.[259] In consequence, the most deprived families might sell their vote during electoral campaigns, in order

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[255] Gans-Morse, Mazzuca, and Nichter, "Varieties of Clientelism"; Hermez, "On Dignity and Clientelism," 528; Michael Johnson, *Class and Client in Beirut: The Sunni Muslim Community and the Lebanese State 1840-1985* (London: Ithaca Press, 1986); Lauth, "Formal and Informal Institutions," 27; Schmidt, *Wörterbuch zur Politik,* 476; Stokes, Duning, Nazareno, and Brusco, "Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism."

[256] Benedicty, *La démocratie interrompue*, 67.

[257] Kochyut, « La misère du Liban, » 527-8.

[258] Kochyut, « La misère du Liban. »

[259] Bradley Chen and Melani Cammett, "Informal Politics and Inequity of Access to Health Care in Lebanon," *International Journal for Equity in Health* 11 (2012): 1-8, doi:10.1186/1475-9276-11-23.

to grab some ad hoc benefits. Yet, when one sells its vote to a leader, he/ she is customarily barred from a leader's welfare protection in return.[260] Thus, vote-selling populations are excluded from the clientelist regime's services (except during electoral campaigns).

Overall, displaced and impoverished communities, which often sociologically overlap, were most likely to be socially deprived in Lebanon before the start of the Syrian migration in 2011. Since 2015, the political-economy of the municipalities receiving large migrant populations was drastically transformed in ways which I described in the preceding sections of this chapter. The delineation of Syrian exploitability cleavages generated new entrants and outsiders to networks of patronage.

Clientelist Insiders and Outsiders Post-Migration Crisis

Even though clientelist literature assumes that voting rights are a necessary condition to foment a clientelist social contract, the Syrian migration crisis in Lebanon contradicts this. Despite their lack of voting rights, some Syrian migrants benefitted from patronage. Displaced individuals could not offer their political rights to lure the good favours of a clientelist leader. Instead, Syrians traded their labour in exchange for patronage.

The most telling example of how Syrians integrated the Lebanese clientelist regime is one of the informal tented settlements (ITSs) located in the farmlands of the Bekaa valley and Akkar. After 2011, many displaced families erected their tents on land rented from Lebanese landowners. However, these migrants' refuges effectively represented territories of lawlessness. The state was not responsible for these lands, whilst international aid providers were only guests on private properties. In these territories where clientelist elites intentionally implemented a "politics of uncertainty", Syrian migrants became entirely dependable on their landowners for

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[260] Gubser, "The "Zuʿamāʾ" of Zaḥlah," 183; Kochyut, « La misère du Liban, » 529.

accessing welfare and protection.[261] The landowners were themselves middle leaders contributing to larger clientelist networks which controlled local power.[262] Displaced Syrians fell into a clientelist trap. On their side, clientelist elites increased the capital of their respective networks at a modest cost (by provision of limited services to migrants) while the exhaustion of migrant families decreased their expenses.[263]

The integration of displaced Syrians into local networks of patronage was balanced with the loss of attractiveness of some Lebanese clients. The Syrian exploitability cleavage offered unexpected rental incomes to Lebanese host communities. Nonetheless, many were not in capacity to exploit these Syrian "resources". The massive introduction of Syrian workers into the Lebanese labour market ignited an unseen level of job competition in post-war Lebanon. According to the World Bank, "the labour supply [in Lebanon] expanded by 30% in 2013, and was expected to increase to 54% in 2014."[264] The black market of Syrian workers induced a "deflationary pressure on wages" and thereby a "non-national labour force [increased] the economic precarity of nationals and non-nationals alike."[265] The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimated that Syrians working in Lebanon "[earned] 40% less than their Lebanese counterparts."[266] In the agricultural sector, salaries even decreased by 50% from 2011 to 2013.[267]

The Lebanese exclusively depending upon their sole labour for capital were undeniably the most impacted by the affordability of the Syrian workforce.[268] Accordingly, the Lebanese lower middle class was especially vulnerable to the attractiveness of cheap Syrian labour. An unexhaustive lists of professional

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[261] Nora Stel, "Uncertainty, Exhaustion, and Abandonment beyond South/North Divides: Governing Forced Migration through Strategic Ambiguity," *Political Geography* (2021): 5, doi:10.1016/j.polgeo.2021.102391.
[262] Nassar and Stel, "Lebanon's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis."
[263] Stel, "Uncertainty, Exhaustion," 6.
[264] Luigi Achilli, Nasser Yassin, and M. Murat Erdoğan, "Neighbouring Host-Countries' Policies for Syrian Refugees: The Cases of Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey," *Papers IEMed* (2017): 28.
[265] Turner, "Explaining the (Non-)Encampment," 399.
[266] Yassin, Osseiran, Rassi, Boustani, "No Place to Stay," 44.
[267] IRC, "Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) of the Construction Labor Market System in North and Bekaa, Lebanon," International Rescue Committee, April 30, 2013, https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/emergency-market-mapping-and-analysis-emma-construction-labor-market-system-north-and; Shibli, "Reconfiguring Relief Mechanisms," 10.
[268] Estella Carpi, "Learning and Earning in Constrained Labour Markets: The Politics of Livelihoods in Lebanon's Halba," In *Making lives. Refugee Self-Reliance and Humanitarian Action in Cities*, ed. Juliano Fiori and Andrea Rigon (London: Save the Children Press, 2017), 27.

occupations including social care workers, shopkeepers, taxi drivers and independent craftsman were unexpectedly confronted by a foreign and illegal labour competition. Many of them living in urban areas were unlikely to possess real estate which could have brought them extra revenue. Disaggregated quantitative studies confirmed that the medium skilled Lebanese labourers were as likely as the low skilled workers to suffer from a jump in unemployment since 2013.[269] The lower skilled workers usually did not benefit from patronage before the start of the migration crisis. However, the medium skilled Lebanese workers of the lower middle class were more evenly protected by clientelism.

If we look at the situation on a macro level, the unemployment rate of the Lebanese workforce jumped from 11% in 2011 to more than 20% in 2013.[270] In the regions most affected by the Syrian migration, unemployment ranged between 23% (Bekaa) to 58% (Wadi Khaled, Akkar) in 2014.[271] Young Lebanese workers from the lower middle class were acutely sensitive to the competitiveness of migrant labour. Finally, the World Bank estimated that 170 000 Lebanese were pushed below the poverty line by 2014.[272] These different indicators demonstrate the dramatic pace at which the Lebanese lower middle class declined socially and economically.

Unlike displaced communities, the Lebanese lower middle class could not rely on international aid for subsistence through the economic crisis. In parallel, local Lebanese NGOs had drastically reduced their support for locals in order to address the emergency needs of displaced Syrians.[273] Therefore, the Lebanese in acute social need channelled their demands to their respective clientelist leaders. Patrons were therefore in a delicate position. Their own material resources were limited, while

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[269] Anda David, Mohamed Ali Marouani, Charbel Nahas, and Björn Nilsson, "The Economics of the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Neighbouring Countries: The Case of Lebanon," *Economics of Transition and Institutional Change* 28 (2020), 104.

[270] David, Marouani, Nahas, and Nilsson, "The Economics of the Syrian Refugee Crisis," 95; World Bank, "Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict," *World Bank*, September 20, 2013, 1, https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/16790.

[271] Charles Harb and Rim Saab, "Social Cohesion and Intergroup Relations: Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Nationals in the Bekaa and Akkar," *Save the Children Report* (2014): 4, https://lebanon.savethechildren.net/sites/lebanon.savethechildren.net/files/library/AUB%20SCI%2 0Social%20cohesion%20final%20report%20May%202014.pdf.

[272] World Bank, "Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact."

[273] Estella Carpi, "Rethinking Lebanese Welfare in Ageing Emergencies," In *Lebanon Facing the Arab Uprisings. Constraints and Adaptation*, ed. Rosita Di Peri and Daniel Meier (Cham, Switzerland: Springer Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 121.

their core supporters expressed increasing demands. Clientelist leaders were forced to make tough decisions to ensure the financial sustainability of their networks. Pushing unattractive members into social exclusion was deemed as the only viable way to safeguard their local dominance.

3.2.b Social Exclusion and the Disruption of Clientelist Loyalties

The attractiveness of a social network depends on its capital, which "is a function of the number and availability of network members, of their network capital, and of the resources members possess."[274] Since the start of the Syrian displacement into Lebanon, clientelist leaders were afflicted by rising social demands expressed both by their protégés and by displaced communities, which heightened pressure on (scarce) local resources. Meanwhile, the commodification of Syrians into exploitable resources (labour, rents etc.) metamorphosed the social hierarchy amongst hosting Lebanese communities.

Clientelist leaders re-estimated the value of their network members, in light of the latter's capacity to increase their capital through the exploitation of the Syrians. They aimed to maintain the financial sustainability of their network of supporters, to guarantee their power dominance. A new social hierarchy integrating this new cleavage downgraded a share of the former lower middle-classes who relied solely on their labour capital. The lower middle classes attractiveness suffered from the flexible and informal competition of Syrian workers and they were therefore less valuable to the network. Meanwhile, other network members owning means of exploitation of the Syrian "resource" eventually gained in value (see figure 3.2 p.93).

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[274] Endre Sik, "Network Capital in Capitalist, Communist, and Post-Communist Societies," *The Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies*, Working Paper (1995): 4.

Figure 3.2 Re-estimating Clientelist Network's Internal Social Hierarchy

SOCIAL CAPITAL LADDER OF VALUE	
Social Hierarchy Ante Migratory Shock	Social Hierarchy Post Migratory Shock

High Value — High Social Capital

Network Members

Estimated Minimum Value To be a Network Member

Unprotected Individuals

Low Value — Low Social Capital

High Value — High Social Capital

Network Members

Former Clients Excluded from their Network

New Minimum Value

Former Minimum Value

Unprotected Individuals

Low Value — Low Social Capital

Legend:
——— = Network members
— — — = Excluded former network members which are now unprotected
- - - - - = Originally unprotected individuals in a gap of uncertainty
| = Lowest estimated social capital value to become a network member

In a context of acute resource scarcity, clientelist leaders had to consider ways to preserve the loyalty of their members by providing the highest amount of capital to the network, while reconsidering their support (*wasta*) to the ones who had lost attractiveness after the migratory shock. Subsequently, if a patron estimates that the internal demands outweigh the network's available capital, he can either reduce the level of access to services or more radically implement an exclusionary mechanism. Social exclusion means that the least-valued members lose patronage for the sake of ensuring the material sustainability of the network.

Patterns of a downgraded material redistribution were widespread across all forms of clientelism in Lebanon, including for the selected case-studies. To perpetuate their dominance at the top of the social hierarchy, clientelist elites assumed the social exclusion of a share of their supporters. A share of the lower middle class of Zahle, Baalbek and Tripoli therefore regressed into seeking protection where both formal

and informal institutions were missing.[275] Such a level of material dissatisfaction was a clear breach in the social contract conventionally tying a client to his or her leader. This rise of social exclusion was measured by the diffusion of unemployment and poverty in the three case cities which signalled the breakage of clientelist contracts.

Underappreciated former network members were distraught by their social exclusion, as they were unaccustomed to the daily strain of human insecurity. Their isolation from clientelism was "physically and psychologically draining" and their "lack of certainty" a "persistent source of anxiety."[276] Additionally, exclusion was perceived as a form of "social disqualification" which damaged the reputation of Lebanese families concerned.[277] For these reasons, social discontent rose amongst the lower middle classes of the selected municipalities against their clientelist elites, whose behaviour was perceived to be a betrayal of their protective promise. Clientelist loyalties were distinctly disrupted. In consequence, these dissatisfied clients were ready to defect from their original clientelist allegiance at the ballot box.

The terrible experience of social declassification for newly unprotected individuals turned into an exceptional political opportunity for outer-systemic leaders. Outer-systemic leaders refers to politicians who are not part of the clientelist regime and do not have the capacity to redistribute resources to their electors. Former clients competed for patronage which consequently reduced their expectations in terms of the rewards they could gain from a new leader. As a result, power competition opened to political challengers disposing of low material means. The widened pool of unprotected voters increased the number of patronage-seeking voters. Desperation and anger drove some of these voters to support anti-establishment political figures often lacking substantial clientelist channels of welfare redistribution (see figure 3.3 p.95).

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[275] Benjamin Barthe, « L'empire industriel des Hariri vacille en Arabie saoudite, » [The Hariri's Industrial Empire wavers in Saudi Arabia] *Le Monde*, February 25, 2016, http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2016/02/29/l-empire-industriel-des-hariri-vacille-en-arabie-saoudite_4873546_3218.html#TGcQOf7i35ipUFtf.99; Chloé Domat, « Le milliardaire libanais Saad Hariri affaibli par le déclin du soutien saoudien, » [Lebanese billionaire Saad Hariri weakened by decline of Saudi support] *France 24*, October 15, 2016, http://www.france24.com/fr/20161014-liban-le-milliardaire-saad-hariri-affaibli-financierement-politiquement.
[276] Cammett, "Sectarianism and the Ambiguities of Welfare," 82.
[277] Hermez, "On Dignity and Clientelism"; Cammett, "Sectarianism and the Ambiguities of Welfare."

Figure 3.3 Excluded clients defect to empower new challengers

DISRUPTED CLIENTELIST LOYALTIES EMPOWER CHALLENGERS

Conflictual relations

Centre - BEIRUT

NEW LEADER CHALLENGER

INCUMBENT LEADER

Security Guards

Security Guards

Middle Leader A

Middle Leader B

Broker x

Broker a

Broker b

Broker c

Clients a + b (Excluded from former network)

Clients c | Clients d | Clients e | Clients f | Clients g | Clients h

Legend :

⟶ = Links of subordination

- - -▶ = Public consultations between the leader and his clients

······▶ = Conflictual relations

— ▶ = Consensual relations

Political challengers, such as independents and civil society activists, could build up their own electoral base from the ashes of clientelist elites' failures. High barriers to entry had fallen because the redistribution of expensive material services was no longer expected by the voters. But the incumbent local elites did not grasp the extent of discontent diffusing amongst some of their supporters. In the three case cities, incumbents defended classic electoral campaigns, because they assumed that their dominance was not under threat.

The results of the 2016 local elections expressed, to the surprise of the incumbent elites, the effective disruption of some clientelist loyalties. Many voters took the unusual decision to empower political challengers. In Zahle, the incumbent municipal majority lost power to a coalition of Christian political parties led by the Lebanese Forces. In the neighbouring city of Baalbek, a list uniting political independents gathered more than 35% of the votes and sent a defiant message to Hezbollah. Finally, the Northern capital of Lebanon, Tripoli, was the scene of an unprecedented electoral upheaval against oligarchic elites who lost power in favour of political independents supported by an outsider Sunni leader, General Ashraf Rifi.

I study in greater detail these electoral results and how elections are instrumental measures of clientelist loyalties in the methodological chapter of the thesis (chapter 4).

These electoral results marked an unprecedented rupture to the status quo in Lebanese local politics. It is not unusual in Lebanese politics that a form of patronage is challenged and replaced by another one. In fact, it fully reflects the sociological evolution of the dominant elites in the country. However, in 2016, it was really unusual to see independent political movements rejecting the clientelist regime, and competing with a noticeable electoral appeal against established clientelist actors. Facing a rare challenge of their political dominance, how would concerned clientelist elites attempt to retain or recover their grip on local power until the next elections in 2018? My interest lies with the agency of local clientelist actors in responding to this new power contest. This thesis then explains how local elites' chose their own counter strategy of power perpetuation.

In the subsequent second section of the chapter, I first describe the three pillars of dominance sustaining elite power in Lebanon. I then outline that each typology of clientelism possesses a variation of material, symbolic and collective capacities. These internal resources constrain the choice of strategy adopted by clientelist elites. Therefore, I formulate three expectations representing the elites' substitutive resorting to three types of power strategies (materialism, symbolism, and collective action) employed to survive a material crisis. Finally, I conclude this second section of the chapter by anticipating how the selected forms of clientelism are each best equipped to weather financial shock.

3.3 Theorising Substitutive Elite Strategies of Power Dominance
3.3.a Three Pillars of Elite Domination

The literature review chapter (chapter 2) established that a clientelist social contract primarily relies upon the redistribution of material resources. A clientelist leader guarantees access to welfare and other services to its protégés in exchange for their electoral loyalty. However, clientelism is not exclusively a material trade-off. The

preceding chapter mentioned that symbolism plays a role in perpetuating the leadership of clientelist elites.[278] Moreover, the chapter recalled instances of collective action amongst political elites, which suggested a capacity to defend shared clientelist interests against potential threats. Next, I discuss the meaning and identification of the three pillars: materialism, symbolism, and collective action, through which elite power is reproduced over time. These pillars are essential theoretical elements of elites support in this thesis. They represent the playbook of power strategies exerted by clientelist elites to maintain the loyalty of their partisans in Lebanon. In the next section, I describe the necessary but insufficient pillar of clientelist elites' domination, materialism.

Materialism

The material pillar of elite domination pertains to all the goods and services that a leader uses to satisfy the demands expressed by his protégés (see the detailed identification of materialism in table 3.1 below).[279] Clientelist elites use their network's official positions in cabinet, parliament, and the central administration to extract material rewards directly from Lebanese state coffers. Hence, clientelist leaders endorse the role of "brokers serving as gatekeepers" who divert public goods for the contentment of their own clientele.[280]

Table 3.1 Identifying the material pillar of elite domination

Meaning	Identification	Example
Clientelist elites discriminately redistribute material resources to partisans in order to justify a favourable social hierarchy.	o Institutional welfare support; o Vote-buying rewards.	The Speaker of the House allocating public offices' jobs to his electors.[281]

Patrons generally offer regular access to prospective and permanent members of their network at their own private residences or in the headquarters of their affiliated political party. It is there that most clientelist social contracts are tied. Visitors

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[278] Hermez, "On Dignity and Clientelism," 532.
[279] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 172.
[280] Deets, "Networks and Communal Autonomy," 333.
[281] Salloukh, "Taif and the Lebanese State," 48.

negotiate the material transaction which binds or renews their loyalty to a leader (and his party). As I detailed before in this chapter, the rewards granted by the leader are proportionate to the value (social capital) required for recruiting or keeping a protégé loyal. These open consultations, where a leader hosts his protégés, are traditionally called *diwan*, which is a custom dating back from Ottoman times.[282]

Recent forms of patronage, like oligarchism and Islamic-communitarianism, often lack this level of physical intimacy between a leader and their protégés. They prefer to create "bricks and mortar" welfare institutions which allocate clientelist rewards themselves.[283] In consequence, the rewards redistributed by a network leader can either take the form of "publicly" accessible or individualised services.[284]

"Public" access in fact refers to a service offered to all the clientelist members in an area of influence for their patron. For instance, it entails the provision of essential services like education in affiliated schools or primary healthcare services in dispensaries. Conversely, individualised services are tailored to the private demands expressed by protégés. The type of individualised rewards redistributed is comprehensive. Farmers in the Bekaa may ask for a more generous allocation of water access. A father in Tripoli could ask for a position in the civil service for his freshly graduated daughter, and so on. Indeed, political elites use the public administration as an "allotment state."[285] By offering jobs in the administration, clientelist leaders dually satisfy their clientele while at the same time constituting faithful bastions of civil servants within ministries.[286] A cycle of recruitment, servicing and material extraction is thereby completed.

Overall, the material foundation of elite domination removes clientelism from simply political meaning.[287] If a shared ideology is generally missing in most forms of clientelism, some clientelist actors develop strong symbolic identification to ground their dominance. I subsequently explore the functions assumed by symbolism in preserving the power of elites.

[282] Rivoal, "Intimité, mise en scene," 152.
[283] Cammett and Issar, "Bricks and Mortar Clientelism."
[284] Gubser, "The "Zuʻamāʼ" of Zaḥlah," 180.
[285] Leenders, *Spoils of Truce*, 232.
[286] Leenders, *Spoils of Truce*, 225.
[287] Corstange, "Vote Trafficking in Lebanon," 488.

Symbolism

The second pillar of elite domination, symbolism, refers to the capacity of a clientelist social contract to be transcended beyond purely material exchange to shape enduring loyalties (see the detailed identification of symbolism in table 3.2 below).[288]

Table 3.2 Identifying the symbolic pillar of elite domination

Meaning	Identification	Example
Clientelist elites' appropriation and transmission of social, cultural, and religious practices in order to justify a favourable social hierarchy.[289]	○ Leader's cult of personality; ○ Shared ideology; ○ The usage of religious ceremonies for political signalling etc.	Hezbollah's appropriation of the Shia celebration of Achoura.[290]

This symbolic pillar of domination is directly inspired by the sociological "theory of society" developed by Pierre Bourdieu. The French sociologist analyses and deconstructs the domination of elite power through the lens of the distribution of species of capital(s) ("accumulated labour" by social agents).[291] For Bourdieu, symbolic capital is the "fourth general type of capital [...] together with cultural, economic, and social capital."[292] He assumes that symbolism is an asymmetric type of capital which provides value, recognition, and prestige to the three other forms of capital. As Bourdieu explained: "Symbolic capital is nothing more than economic or cultural capital, which is acknowledged and recognised" by a community in a specific context.[293] Material wealth (economic capital in Bourdieusian lexicon) is by itself insufficient to generate a perception of legitimate power amongst the "dominated."

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[288] Cammett, "Sectarianism and the Ambiguities of Welfare," 85.

[289] Andreas Schmitz, Magne Flemmen, and Lennart Rosenlund, "Social class, Symbolic Domination, and Angst: The Example of the Norwegian Social Space," *The Sociological Review* 66 (2018): 623-44, doi:10.1177/0038026117738924.

[290] Michel Tabet, « Les rituels de Achoura à Nabatiyé : institutionnalisation et rivalités politiques, » [Ashura Rituals in Nabatiye: Institutionalisation and Political Rivalries] In *Leaders et Partisans au Liban* [Leaders and Partisans in Lebanon] ed. Franck Mermier and Sabrina Mervin (Beirut: Karthala-IFPO-IISMM, 2012), 399-415.

[291] Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," 241-58.

[292] Frédéric Lebaron, "Symbolic Capital," In *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research* (ed.) Alex C. Michalos (Dordrecht: Springer, 2014), 6537-8, doi:10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_2961.

[293] Pierre Bourdieu, *In Other Words: Essays towards a Reflexive Sociology* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 135.

Bourdieu consequently emphasises that symbolic capital is necessary to produce and sustain social hierarchies over time.[294] Without symbolism, elite domination exclusively based on materialism would return to a simple "transactional obligation, rather than a form of confessional loyalty."[295] So what is symbolism, in concrete terms? Symbolic capital can be defined as the "resources available to an individual on the basis of esteem, recognition, status, or in respect to a particular social setting."[296] I consider in this research that symbolic resources entail the ideological, mythical, and religious imaginary designed and publicised by clientelist elites to entrench the legitimacy of their political dominance.

In Lebanon, clientelist elites shape this symbolic transcendence by sacralising some communal themes inspired by the "land, village and religion", which bind a community as an integrated socio-religious unit.[297] Hence, some leaders adopt a political rhetoric aimed at publicising their defence of a locality and its inhabitants in a nearly feudal reminiscence. In addition to pastoral and communal traditions, patronage can develop a cult of leadership, its own ideology and religious temporality that it endeavours to transmit to younger generations to justify its domination. For instance, clientelist networks use religious ceremonies – from Achoura to the celebration of Virgin Mary – to sanctify patronage in equation with religious devotion.[298] The cult of the leader thus becomes inextricable from pious adoration. A form of intimacy results from the appropriation of religious traditions by clientelist leaders. It is not unusual to see the portrait of a clientelist leader hung in the kitchen of a family. This private display of empathy testifies to the depth of the social identification embraced by some clientelist members towards their patron.[299] These

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[294] David L. Swartz, *Symbolic Power, Politics, and Intellectuals. The Political Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2013).

[295] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon."

[296] Shane Francis Conway, John McDonagh, Maura Farrell, and Anne Kinsella. "Cease Agricultural Activity Forever? Underestimating the Importance of Symbolic Capital," *Journal of Rural Studies* 44 (2016): 165, doi:10.1016/j.jrurstud.2016.01.016.

[297] Robert Benedicty, *Société civile et communauté religieuse. Expérience culturelle d'un village chrétien dans la société arabe contemporaine* [Civil Society and Religious Community. Cultural Experience of a Christian Village in Contemporary Arab Society] (Beirut: Université Saint-Joseph, dar el machreq, 1986), 70-1.

[298] Chantal Mazaeff, « L'action politique des Forces Libanaises à Ain al-Remmané : un intense travail de réhabilitation et de socialisation politique, » [The Lebanese Forces' Political Action in Ain al-Remmané: an Intense Work of Rehabilitation and Political Socialisation] In *Leaders et Partisans au Liban* [Leaders and Partisans in Lebanon] ed. by Franck Mermier and Sabrina Mervin (Beirut: Karthala-IFPO-IISMM, 2012), 263-83; Tabet, « Les rituels de Achoura à Nabatiyé. »

[299] Rivoal, « Intimité, mise en scène. »

examples demonstrate that the strength of symbolism rests upon the "perception" of honour and authority (akin to symbolic capital) felt by a circumscribed community towards a leader who skilfully displays different resources of representation.[300]

Overall, resorting to these different symbolic schemes generates a psychological communion amongst clientelist network members. Thus, symbolism serves to legitimise the discriminated allocation of resources in a locality where several communities coexist. The network members forget about their "precarious lives" and feel the benefit of a "sense of security and psychological comfort."[301] It is on this feeling of group unity that clientelist leaders intend to secure the lasting faithfulness and consent of their protégés. Nevertheless, symbolic resources like ideologies and myths can be altered by socioeconomic adversity or political crises affecting the community of protégés. When perceptions of legitimate authority fade, a clientelist leader can ultimately rely on their "monopoly" of the legitimate use of physical and symbolic violence to restore their symbolic dominance.[302] As I explained in chapter 2, some clientelist networks possess an organised security apparatus capable of coercing the compliance of their clients. In consequence, the "misrecognition" eventually expressed by some clientelist network members can be policed through intimidation, coercion or even exclusion from communities of patronage. As such, violence and symbolism are inherently related. Indeed, symbolic dominance can be perpetuated by the fear of physical force, and/or the pressure exerted by accepted social norms in the community (obedience by the dominated to the dominant), which are further enforced by local institutions (excluding the unfaithful). If these expressions of symbolic violence prove insufficient to maintain the loyalty of clientelist members, then the direct use of physical violence can deter any defection from the clientelist network.[303]

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[300] Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant, "Symbolic Capital and Social Classes," *Journal of Classical Sociology* 13 (2013): 297, doi:10.1177/1468795X12468736.

[301] Cammett, "Sectarianism and the Ambiguities of Welfare," 85.

[302] On Bourdieu's conceptualisation of symbolic violence, see Karl von Holdt, "The Violence of Order, Orders of Violence: Between Fanon and Bourdieu," *Current Sociology* 61 (2012): 115, doi:10.1177/0011392112456492.

[303] See the complementarity of symbolic and physical violence in the study of female homicides in migrant communities in Europe by Magdalena A. Grzyb, "An Explanation of Honour-related Killings of Women in Europe through Bourdieu's Concept of Symbolic Violence and Masculine Domination," *Current Sociology* 64 (2016): 1036-53, doi:10.1177/0011392115627479.

Certainly, the resort to coercion (including intimidation, exclusion or any other form of physical and symbolic violence) acknowledges the failures of a clientelist actors' symbolic dominance. However, if the "interplay" of physical and symbolic violence successfully re-establishes the compliance of all protégés, and silences internal contestation, it then demonstrates its efficacy in managing a potentially irreversible threat to the political dominance of clientelist elites.[304] The consent of the dominated does not need to be "the result of a free, voluntary act."[305] In fact, "the state of compliance is not a 'voluntary servitude' that is consciously granted."[306] Bourdieu has a more subtle and socially embedded understanding of the power of coercion induced by symbolic violence. He considers that "it is itself the effect of a power, which is durably inscribed in the bodies of the dominated, in the form of schemes of perceptions and dispositions (to respect, admire, love)" which draws an individual to change his/her behaviour and conform to the exerted domination.[307] Thereby, the dominant elites' cognitive or physical leverages against some community members' misrecognition of the social order exemplifies how violence allows elites to restore and sustain symbolic domination through a crisis of legitimacy.

The description of the material and symbolic pillars of elite domination gives the impression that clientelist actors are isolated in secluded spheres of power. Nevertheless, clientelist networks cohabit in a national regime which sustains their dominance. I next explain how elite domination is also supported by strategic and coordinated acts of solidarity amongst clientelist elites.

Collective Action

The third pillar of elite domination is collective action. The reproduction of clientelism also depends upon a collective dimension which emphasises the strategic behaviour of clientelist actors in defending shared interests (see table 3.3 p.103).

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[304] von Holdt, "The Violence of Order," 114.

[305] Gisèle Shapiro, "Bourdieu, Pierre (1930–2002)," *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* 2 (2015): 777-83, doi:10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.61167-4.

[306] Suruchi Thapar-Björkert, Lotta Samelius, and Gurchathen S. Sanghera, "Exploring Symbolic Violence in the Everyday: Misrecognition, Condescension, Consent and Complicity," *Feminist Review* 112 (2016): 156, doi:10.1057/fr.2015.53.

[307] Pierre Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 171.

Table 3.3 Identifying the collective action pillar of elite domination

Meaning	Identification	Example
The reproduction of power by a dominant class persists thanks to the unconditional support of fellow clientelist members in defence of shared extractive interests.	o Electoral slates uniting clientelist rivals; o Administrative obstruction against outer-systemic political actors etc.	Clientelist parties unite against independents at the election of the syndicate of engineers in Beirut.[308]

As the literature review chapter (chapter 2) explained, the religious segmentation of power in the Lebanese consociational system vertically entrenches the hegemonic power of the clientelist leaders within their respective confessional groups.[309] This power-sharing system implies that the political elites are not meant to compete, but to foster their cooperation. Hence, the Lebanese polity does not favour the emergence of modern political parties supporting cross-cutting societal demands.[310] Effectively, the Lebanese political parties generally present an ideological façade which hides the defence of clientelist interests (except for rare exceptions like Hezbollah which developed a clear ideology). The political elites do more than just cooperate. They have erected a clientelist regime which preserves their segmented power. As such, clientelist elites participate in a common political-economy, notably relying on the privatisation of public goods.[311] Several scholars outline the neo-liberal character of the system of rent extraction. which nourishes the wealth of Lebanese elites.[312] This sustains the idea that clientelist leaders share similar interests which are more important than their religious or political rivalries.

In order to protect their shared interests, political elites have devised an institutional design which deters the empowerment of outer-systemic political challengers.

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[308] Jeanine Jalkh, "Élections à l'ordre des ingénieurs : un espoir pour le mouvement de contestation ?" [Elections to the Order of Engineers: Hope for the Protest Movement?] *L'Orient-le Jour*, June 29, 2021, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1266731/elections-a-lordre-des-ingenieurs-un-espoir-pour-le-mouvement-de-contestation-.html. Despite their alliance, the clientelist parties endured a bitter defeat on the 27th of June 2021 as the civil society and independents won 15 out of 20 seats of representatives.

[309] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 173.

[310] el Khazen, "Political Parties in Postwar Lebanon," 618-19.

[311] Daher, "Lebanon: How the Post War's Political Economy," 9-10.

[312] Baumann, *Citizen Hariri*; Kamal Dib, "Predator Neoliberalism: Lebanon on the Brink of Disaster," *Contemporary Arab Affairs* 13 (2020): 3-22, doi:10.1525/caa.2020.13.1.3; Khattab 2022; Mouawad and Baumann, "Wayn al-Dawla?: Locating the Lebanese State."

Challengers are especially feared for their capacity to durably delegitimise the foundations of the clientelist regime. Electoral law is therefore one of the major instruments of the elites' protective scheme. The latest amendment of the law in 2017 (in prevision for the 2018 parliamentary elections) especially amended districting boundaries, and set a new electoral quotient. According to Geha, this reform was intentionally "designed [by the political elites] to enhance the chances of candidates within the [systemic] political alliances."[313] These institutional hurdles indubitably protect the status quo of elite representation. Moreover, national elites can also count on a supportive central administration, which they have filled with their own protégés. This means that civil servants have the capacity to implement obstructive administrative measures against outer-systemic political challengers.[314]

The collective action capacity of Lebanese elites is not only expressed through the protective institutional design that they have set for themselves. The socialisation and emulation of clientelist leaders over the years also generates instances of strategic coordination. Such collective behaviour is especially expected when the legitimacy of the clientelist regime is at stake. For instance, national elites demonstrated their ability to thwart the electoral appeal of civil society opponents by strategically co-opting some of their members to divide their electorate.[315] It is also a very common practice to see officially bitter clientelist rivals uniting in constituencies where their shared leadership is contested. Therefore, both the state institutions and the behaviour of the clientelist elites confirm that their power is ultimately defended by collective strategies.

In conclusion, the material, symbolic, and collective action pillars of elite domination constitute the foundations of enduring clientelist power in Lebanon. Thanks to this structure, in the next section of the chapter I discuss three expectations regarding the substitutive character of the choice of elite power strategies in a context of material scarcity.

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[313] Carmen Geha, "The Myth of Women's Political Empowerment within Lebanon's Sectarian Power-Sharing System," *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 40 (2019): 504, doi:10.1080/1554477X.2019.1600965.

[314] Leenders, *Spoils of Truce*, 231.

[315] Janine A. Clark and Bassel F. Salloukh, "Elite Strategies, Civil Society, and Sectarian Identities in Postwar Lebanon," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45 (2013): 732, doi:10.1017/S0020743813000883.

3.3.b Conditioning & Characterising Elite Power Strategies

The three pillars of elite domination are the foundation for the perpetuation of clientelist power. However, these capacities are not evenly distributed amongst all forms of clientelism. Each clientelist network possesses different material, symbolic, and collective resources. As a reminder, I explained in the introductory chapter (chapter 1) that the research puzzle of this thesis was to inquire whether and how the internal characteristics possessed by the selected clientelist typologies mattered to explain the resilience of clientelist power in Lebanese municipalities. This research considers how a clientelist network's agency depends upon these internal characteristics to respond to a power contest. Consequently, I formulate in this section of the chapter three theoretical expectations distinguishing the power strategies derived from a clientelist network's internal resources. But before that, I posit a set of assumptions helpful to best understand the conditions framing the clientelist leadership's internal decision-making process in its choice of response to a material shock.

Theoretical Assumptions on Clientelist Leadership's Decision-making

First, I assume in this research that the three pillars of clientelism have a **substitutive** character. This implies that a clientelist network can compensate a loss of internal resources in either materialism, symbolism, or collective action - with another pillar. In chapter 2 I emphasised that a clientelist social contract is not solely constituted by material exchange. Instead, I illustrated how symbolism facilitates the durability of the bonds tying a pool of protégés to their patron. Thereby, this research contends that a clientelist network's symbolism (identity, history, and ideology) and collective endeavour can be just as potent in cementing the faith of clientelist members than their material benefits. The empirical chapters on Baalbek and Tripoli (respectively chapters 6 and 7) both showcase the successful substitution of material scarcity with symbolic or collective resources. Overall, this assumption grants the clientelist networks possessing a diversity of internal resources with the largest capacity to resiliently respond to a power challenge or socioeconomic crisis affecting their political domination. Conversely, patrons dependent upon a single pillar of domination might be in difficulty finding alternate resources at times of crisis.

Second, this research assumes that elite power strategies devised in reaction to a major political challenge result from a **rational** calculus based on the resources available to the clientelist network. The post-2011 Syrian migration into Lebanon especially affected the material capacity of each clientelist network. The influx of hundreds of thousands of migrants generated a steep demand for local resources which soon became scarce. Therefore, clientelist networks would strive to find compensations for their diminished finances. In this situation, patrons assess their internal resources and the potential leverages at their disposal to rationally select the power strategy maximising their chances of survival at the top of the social ladder. They would determine their choice of strategy by favouring the resort to the pillar of domination: (1) having the largest available resources (or the most leverageable from external actors), (2) that is most efficient in maintaining the loyalty of their supporters, and (3) whose resources are the least expensive (not just financially but also in terms of their own reputation). In essence, a patron will prefer to resort to a material compensation (Expectation 1, detailed in the next section of the chapter) because it addresses the primary concerns of its protégés and thus brings the highest insurance upon their loyalty. If material compensation is not an option, clientelist leaders would then attempt to mobilise symbolic schemes (Expectation 2) to reify inter-sectarian boundaries and galvanise the support of their community. This second power strategy involves certain reputational costs for both in and out-group community members, by fuelling a radical rhetoric instigating communal fears. This may even engender instances of political violence. Finally, it is only as an ultimate resort that a patron considers launching a collective defence (Expectation 3) of his leadership by allying himself with rival leaders. This third power strategy risks angering the patron's own supporters who might strongly resent a deceitful political alliance.

Third, this rational calculus also implies that a patron may conclude that a **multi-dimensional** approach, resting upon the mobilisation of the resources from two different pillars of domination, offers the highest utility to safeguard the loyalty of his core supporters at times of economic crisis. The power strategies that I operationalise into three expectations in the next section of the chapter are not mutually exclusive. They can overlap or be sequenced in time. Indeed, a clientelist

leader might select two different power strategies which he dually implements to best ensure the durability of his political domination. If not, a patron might decide to tactically order the usage of the selected strategies to best address the urgency of pressures weighing on their network. For instance, as the empirical chapter on Zahle reveals (chapter 5), a clientelist network can decide to dichotomise its governance and electoral priorities into two different and sequenced power strategies. Once elected in 2016, the Lebanese Forces-led municipality of Zahle first strived to alleviate the socioeconomic pressures weighing on the Zahlawis, and only later the party resorted to symbolic schemes during the electoral campaign to further mobilise its core supporters in the ballots.

Therefore, the theoretical argument formulated in this chapter on elite behaviour in a context of material shock rests upon three main assumptions of substitutivity, rationality and multi-dimensionality, which are listed in table 3.4 below.

Table 3.4 Theoretical assumptions on clientelist leadership's decision-making

Assumption	Meaning
Substitutivity	A clientelist leader can substitute the resources derived by each pillar of domination to maintain the loyalty of its supporters.
Rationality	A clientelist leader selects the power strategy/ies which maximise his capacity to maintain the loyalty of its supporters and thus preserve his political dominance.
Multi-dimensionality	A clientelist leader can select several power strategies that he might implement either simultaneously or in a tactically designed sequencing.

I subsequently formulate and operationalise three expectations which describe each step of the rational calculus devised by clientelist elites to determine the chosen power strategies in response to a context of economic crisis.

Expectations of Elite Behaviour under Strain
Expectation 1: Material Alleviation

The first expectation (E1) supports that with a lack of material resources a clientelist network could attempt to contain financial pressures in order to maintain the loyalty of its network members.

E1: *When a clientelist network encounters a material loss, its leadership endeavours to **alleviate** financial pressures in order to maintain the loyalty of its clientele.*

To do so, the clientelist leadership can resort to two tactics. First, it can contain financial pressures by implementing local policies designed to limit the diffusion of negative socioeconomic externalities on its clientele. Secondly, the clientelist leadership can attract compensatory financial means from external sources of funding (like the diaspora or incoming humanitarian actors) to continue servicing the needs of its protégés.

This is therefore an expectation which grants agency to clientelist actors in facing the consequences of an economic crisis, notably through the implementation of protectionist policies. This expectation also emphasises the role played by external relations in local governance. Cities nourish extraneous ties with state and non-state actors. Thus, municipalities enter into transnational spaces of governance which could offer leverages of financial support at times of crisis.[316] This is especially true in post-war countries where populations were displaced and formed global diasporas which remain connected to their hometowns.[317]

Expectation 2: Symbolic Substitution

Subsequently, the second expectation (E2) posits that if a clientelist network cannot alleviate financial burdens, it could substitute its material scarcity by mobilising

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[316] Wendy Pearlman, "Competing for Lebanon's Diaspora: Transnationalism and Domestic Struggles in a Weak State," *The International Migration Review* 48 (2014): 34-75, doi:10.1111%2Fimre.12070.

[317] Dalia Abdelhady, *The Lebanese Diaspora. The Arab Immigrant Experience in Montreal, New York, and Paris* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2011); Mara A. Leichtman, "Migration, War, and the Making of a Transnational Lebanese Shi'I Community in Senegal," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42 (2010): 269-90, doi:10.1017/S002074381000005X.

communal symbolism with the hope to galvanise core supporters behind its leadership.

E2: *When a clientelist network is not in capacity to alleviate material pressures, its leadership substitutes financial scarcity with* **symbolic schemes** *shared by its clientele in order to maintain their loyalty.*

To do so, clientelist networks benefiting from a combatant identity inherited from the Lebanese Civil War can resort to two tactics. First, clientelist networks resort to the use of political violence (via coercive measures) to repress defectors and political challengers and protect the inviolability of its combatant symbolic power. Second, clientelist elites can adopt a radical political rhetoric resurrecting antagonistic cleavages (based on ethnic, religious, or cultural differences) to "other" their opponents. In this way, patronage aims to reify in-group identities as to secure the loyalty of their core supporters. Symbolic substitution therefore offers to clientelist leaders rather costless power tactics designed to sustain the social cohesion amongst their network members, either through coercion or inflammatory words.

It is an expectation which also emphasises how shared identities and histories generate path dependent behaviours when a clientelist network feels threatened.[318] Former rebel groups or militias, which turned into political parties after the civil war, could be especially keen to resurrect their combatant symbolism and governance practices experienced at war to beat off a democratic power contest.[319] This elite power strategy could consequently endanger peaceful coexistence amongst local communities.

Expectation 3: Collective Defence

Finally, the third expectation (E3) considers that a clientelist network lacking both material and symbolic resources could resort to collective action to reinstate its legitimacy against political outsiders. This is a power strategy which, this time, is not

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[318] Curtis and Sindre, "Transforming State Visions," 389.
[319] Benedetta Berti, "Rebel Politics and the State: Between Conflict and Post-Conflict, Resistance and Co-Existence," *Civil Wars* 18 (2016): 131, doi:10.1080/13698249.2016.1205560.

performed by a single clientelist actor. To be effective, it requires the solidarity and coordinated action of clientelist rivals competing in the same municipality.

E3: *When a clientelist network is not in capacity to either alleviate material losses nor substitute them with symbolic schemes, the leadership resorts to an ultimate collective strategy to **defend** the legitimacy of the clientelist regime and thus recover the loyalty of its clientele.*

Thereby, united clientelist leaders can adopt two tactics. First, they can use state institutions and the civil administration under their control to obstruct the governing potential of political outsiders.[320] This tactic is designed to alter the credibility of any non-clientelist political offer. Second, clientelist elites can shape a single electoral alliance intending to thwart political outsiders to gain or renew their representation.

These tactics can be employed to recover the loyalty of dissatisfied supporters who already defected to outsiders. That is why I consider this power strategy to be the ultimate choice made by a weakened clientelist network. It is an expectation which represents the force of the clientelist regime in Lebanon whose elites are ready to defend their shared interests.

Overall, these three inductive expectations illustrate the substitutive capacity of the three pillars of clientelism. These expectations imply that the identity, history, and structure of the form of clientelism matters to predict the resilience of elite power over time. If these expectations were empirically supported, it would constitute a significant explanation for the endurance of clientelism in local politics, despite a major economic crisis.

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[320] Leenders, *Spoils of Truce*, 231.

Table 3.5 below lists the expected tactics employed by clientelist networks to retain the loyalty of their disenfranchised supporters. Each tactic contributes to a binary outcome of either elite power endurance or vulnerability.

Table 3.5 Identifying elite power strategies

| Power Strategy | Tactic | Elite Dominance | |
		Endurance	Vulnerability
E1: Material Alleviation	Protectionism	Protectionist local policies	Absence of protectionist local policies
	External Funding	Compensative external funding	Lack of external funding
E2: Symbolic Substitution	Coercion	Coercive security measures	Absence of coercive security measures
	Political Rhetoric	Radical in-group political rhetoric	Moderate political rhetoric
E3: Collective Defence	State Obstruction	Coordinated obstruction	Uncoordinated obstruction
	Electoral Alliance	Clientelist rivals unite against challengers	Clientelist rivals divide against challengers

In the methodological chapter (chapter 4), I further detail these tactics in relation to a set of observable indicators. They are designed to facilitate the empirical measurement of the power strategies adopted by the selected clientelist networks.

Conclusive remarks

This theoretical argument chapter first explained how clientelist loyalties were disrupted in the aftermath of the Syrian migration into Lebanon. Second, it provided a clientelist playbook of substitutive power strategies that endangered elites could adopt to retain their local political dominance.

In the first section of the chapter, I described how Lebanon's changing socioeconomic order induced the breakage of clientelist social contracts in municipalities at the forefront of the migration influx. Following years of inertia, the chapter details how clientelist elites designed a legal framework commodifying displaced Syrians as an exploitable resource. Elites and other cross-cutting layers of Lebanese society found compensatory revenues from this system of rent extraction.

However, the delineation of the Syrian exploitability cleavage also marginalised Lebanese communities unable to extract resources from migrants. In parallel, some Syrians integrated into the systems of patronage of local clientelist leaders. The chapter then emphasised how these internal dynamics within clientelist social hierarchies led to the social exclusion of a share of the Lebanese lower middle class. These disenfranchised and abandoned former clients expressed their despair in the 2016 local election ballots. The empowerment and even the victory in Tripoli of political challengers demonstrated the disruption of clientelist loyalties which had otherwise durably protected the dominance of clientelist elites for decades.

The second part of the chapter endeavoured to theorise the agency at disposal of clientelist elites in response to such an unprecedented challenge to their local power. Firstly, it established that elite power relies upon three pillars of domination: materialism, symbolism, and collective action. I subsequently explained that each form of clientelism possesses a variation of internal resources which determine the agency of clientelist networks. The power strategies derived from the three pillars of domination hold a substitutive character. Therefore, I formulated three theoretical expectations justifying the choice of power strategies employed by clientelist elites to maintain or recover their political domination. When facing a loss of material means, a clientelist leader could find material compensations (E1), use symbolic schemes to galvanise supporters (E2) and/or attempt to collectively defend their leadership thanks to the support of other patrons (E3).

In the following methodological chapter (chapter 4), I outline the rationale of the case selection implemented in this thesis. I then examine each of the case cities, to grasp the identities of local power as performed by different clientelist elites before the Syrian migration. The chapter then establishes the small-N comparative research design structuring this thesis. It also details the mixed qualitative and quantitative sources of data collected in fieldwork, which will offer a robust triangulation of observations. Finally, the chapter concludes with ethical and safety reflections on the fieldwork experience in Lebanon.

Chapter 4. Methodology
Comparative Research in Lebanese Border Municipalities

This chapter lays out the methodological approach designed to answer the research question framing this project. The research question is: "Why did clientelist elites encounter a disruption of their leadership and then how did they comparatively perpetuate (or recover) their local power in a context of stark material scarcity?" To address this question, I established a small-N comparative research design which relies on original qualitative and quantitative data collected during fieldwork in Lebanon.

The first section of the chapter presents the comparative research design of the thesis. It details the 2016 local elections results, which initiated my inductive scientific inquiry setting this research. Seeing clientelist elites challenged by political outsiders made me question whether the different typologies of clientelism mattered when explaining the endurance of elite power in local governance. In answer to this puzzle, I present in this chapter a cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis of three strongholds of clientelist power in Lebanon that experienced the material shock of the Syrian migration from 2011 to 2019. This chapter outlines how descriptive inference enables me to compare how local clientelist elites endeavoured to maintain their power after electoral challenge in 2016. The first section of this chapter concludes by describing the scope of this research. The goal of the research is to explain and even predict political behaviours in divided communities dominated by informal actors of governance when they are faced with a sudden shock on local resources.

The second section of this chapter delves into the case selection of this comparative research project. I selected three border cities: Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli, whose geographical marginalisation empowered clientelist elites. I selected these municipalities because they were ruled by a different type of clientelism which had emerged during the Lebanese Civil War. This selection enables me to compare how the internal material, symbolic and collective resources possessed by each network determines their agency in designing power strategies of domination after 2016. Subsequently, the chapter portrays the identity of the three municipalities to best

capture the characteristics of local politics before the start of the Syrian migration in 2011.

The third section of the chapter considers the process of data collection in fieldwork. I collected most of the empirical data while undergoing fieldwork research in Lebanon in 2018 and 2019. I combine qualitative and quantitative research methods. The chapter then details the contribution of each source of data to reveal the social reality in the case cities. I also observed the daily life of young Syrians in Beirut and Lebanese parliamentary candidates in 2018 to prepare the running of 105 semi-structured elite interviews and 210 surveys from Lebanese and Syrian communities living in the three case cities. The chapter outlines how observations were operationalised into a set of indicators, which I used to measure three power strategies employed by clientelist elites to retain or recover their local dominance (these were described in the theoretical chapter, chapter 3). The coding derived from these sets of indicators identifies patterns of endurance or vulnerability of elite dominance. These then inform the empirical analysis in the following chapters, each dedicated to each case city. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the ethical, access and safety implications of doing fieldwork research in "risky" environments.

4.1 Research Design
4.1.a The Premises of an Inductive Scientific Inquiry

This research began in response to the unexpected results of the 2016 local elections in Lebanon (which are detailed in table 4.1 p.115). I was intrigued by the electoral challenges and even upheavals faced by some clientelist networks in several large Lebanese municipalities. As I explained in the literature review chapter (chapter 2), Lebanese consociationalism customarily ensures a paramount political stability for the local clientelist elites. However, these 2016 elections signalled a disruption of the expected behaviour of a sizeable share of the Lebanese electors. Indeed, many voters defected from incumbent clientelist elites to competing patrons and more unusually to independent political challengers. Three municipalities especially caught my attention. In the next section I outline in more detail the rationale for this case selection.

Table 4.1 2010 and 2016 local elections results in the case cities

Competing Clientelist Elites	Zahle 2010 Seats*	Zahle 2016 Seats	Zahle 2016 Vote%	Baalbek 2010 Seats*	Baalbek 2016 Seats	Baalbek 2016 Vote%	Tripoli 2010 Seats	Tripoli 2010 Vote%	Tripoli 2016 Seats	Tripoli 2016 Vote%
Traditional	**19/21**	0/21	29.5%							
Militia-to-Political	2/21	**21/21**	37.8%							
Islamic-communitarian				**21/21**	**21/21**	55.2%				
[Independents]				0/21	0/21	35.2%				
Oligarchic							**24/24**	38.3%	8/24	34%
[Independents]							0/24	0%	**16/24**	36.3%
Outcome:		**Status quo**			**Challenge**				**Change**	

Sources: Information International 2016
*Electoral results only available in municipal council seats.

In May 2016, the citizens of Zahle turned against their incumbent traditional elites. Electoral change empowered a coalition of Christian political parties led by the Lebanese Forces (which incarnates a form of militia-to-political clientelism). As such, Zahle embodies a case of status quo in the electoral outcomes of the 2016 local elections. It is indeed not unusual in Lebanese politics to see some form of patronage decay over time and being replaced by another type of clientelism. This is exactly what happened in the Bekaa capital in 2016. Traditional patronage gave way to militia-to-political clientelism. Interestingly, political independents were astonishingly absent in the Zahlawi ballots in comparison to the two other case-cities. However, a few kilometres away in the city of Baalbek, Hezbollah faced a united list of political independents and civil society activists. The powerful Islamic-communitarian clientelist network saw its domination unexpectedly challenged in the ballots. Finally, in the Northern municipality of Tripoli, which had been held by Sunni oligarchs including the Future Movement, that party was badly defeated. The Tripolitans took their nation by surprise in electing a new majority of political independents (supported by a Sunni political dissenter, General Ashraf Rifi) to the municipal council.[321] The Tripolitan vote thus broke away from the electoral predictability carefully protected by the clientelist regime.

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[321] Knudsen, "Competitive Clientelism in Secondary Cities," 10.

How could we explain these three local trajectories? Above all, since 2011 more than 1.5 million displaced Syrians have entered Lebanon. Does this context of stark migratory pressure affect and transform the strategies of power domination used by local actors? And if yes, how are local political dynamics reframed in a situation of material scarcity? In consequence, I was interested to observe how, in preparation for the 2018 parliamentary elections, locally dominant clientelist elites attempted to maintain or restore the loyalty of their core supporters, considering that the socioeconomic crisis limited their material capacity. This initial research puzzle represents the start of my inductive scientific inquiry.[322]

4.1.b Setting a Comparative Research Design

This comparative research design is focused on Lebanon because this country can be categorised as a crucial study. Lebanon hosts the largest ratio of displaced populations per national residents in the world.[323] This exceptional migratory pressure on local communities leads to reactive, exploitative. and even radical governance of local clientelist actors.

The level of analysis of this comparative research is therefore located at the sub-national level, or the municipal echelon, which is a micro-level of scrutiny in the hierarchy of state institutions. The selected municipalities of Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli are the case-studies observed and then analysed in this thesis. According to Gerring, the purpose of analysing case-studies is to draw descriptive inferences which talk to a wider population of – quite – similar units.[324] I provide further detail on this aspect in the second section of the chapter.

I define the local governance of the selected case cities as the unit of analysis in my research design. Local governance can be described in broad terms as the "management of their affairs by the people of the locality where they are."[325]

[322] Todd Landman and Edzia Carvalho, *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 20.
[323] UNHCR, "Lebanon. Operational Update," 1.
[324] John Gerring, "What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for?," *The American Political Science Review* 98 (2004): 341.
[325] Aurora Ndreu, "The Definition and Importance of Local Governance," *Social and Natural Sciences Journal* 10 (2016): 7, doi:10.12955/snsj.v10i1.730.

Essentially, in this comparative project it is the "object" of local politics, as executed by the ruling elites. on which data is collected. Local governance is performed by a set of power actors ranging from elected officials (deputies, mayors, municipal councillors and *mukhtars*), civil servants (regional – *muhafiz* – and sub-district – *qaimaqam* – governors), political actors (party leaders, officials and militants), religious leaders and civil society activists (from NGO members to unions and business leaders). These actors are the observable faces and shapers of local governance and, indirectly, of clientelism. This holistic definition is useful because it allows me to approach clientelism as a closely interconnected wide range of elite profiles at the municipal level. Accordingly, I sample the elite interviewees (detailed in the third section of this chapter) to reflect this large conceptualisation of "local governance".

There are several challenges facing my comparative research design. One of the challenges is that local governance in municipalities governed by clientelist elites is a hidden process. The sudden migratory shock on Lebanese municipalities since 2011 is a rare opportunity to reveal this shadow governance. An external factor, like a migratory wave or a natural disaster, exerts pressure across the case cities. In this similar context of migratory burden, the comparison of the selected municipalities "allows for control" of other variables.[326] I acknowledge that the adoption of a Most Similar Systems Design, as I do in this thesis, presents "overdetermined" outcomes as all variables cannot be hold constant in the real world.[327] Thus, several explanatory factors remain unexplored. But the power strategies used by local elites to mitigate the effects of the Syrian displacement provide us with valuable scientific observations about the contextuality, meaning, and practices of clientelist governance at times of crisis.

That is why I implement in this research a small-N inductive comparison which systematically analyses observational data across three selected municipalities over

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[326] Giovanni Sartori, *Comparative Constitutional Engineering: An Inquiry into Structures, Incentives, and Outcomes* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 16.
[327] Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune, *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1970); David Collier, "New Perspectives on the Comparative Method," In *Comparative Political Dynamics: Global Research Perspectives* ed. Dankwart A. Rustow and Kenneth P. Erickson (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1991), 17.

time.[328] More precisely, I compare similar municipalities (cases), which vary mainly in terms of the typology of clientelism dominating each of them, with the intention to assess whether this difference affects the type of strategies endorsed by local elites to maintain or recover the loyalty of their core electors in the aftermath of the 2016 local elections. This comparative research design corresponds to a most-similar comparison.[329]

The descriptive inferences conducted in this thesis rely on a combination of qualitative and quantitative sources of data, mostly collected in fieldwork. Qualitative evidence; semi-structured interviews and observations, offer the empirical depth required to unveil, through descriptive inference, the behind-the-scenes strategies of clientelist governance. Quantitative data; self-generated surveys with Lebanese and Syrian communities in each case city, presents wider socio-political trends reflecting the public opinion of the "governed".

This research design proceeds with a comparison of three city case studies during the same period. It is also a longitudinal analysis, because each municipality is analysed over time within a precise timeframe. The occurrence of elections in 2016 and in 2018 offer a measure of the endurance or disruption of clientelist loyalties.

4.1.c Timeframe: Using Elections to Measure Clientelist Loyalties

Overall, this comparative research covers the years between 2010 to 2019. The year 2011 symbolises the start of the Syrian revolution when the first peaceful street demonstrations erupted in the city of Deraa, Syria. Only a few months later the first displaced families crossed the Lebanese border seeking shelter after the violent repression from the al-Assad regime. The peak of Syrian migration for most Lebanese border municipalities occurred between 2013 and 2015. The 2011 to 2016 period represents a time of mounting pressure on municipalities. Clientelist networks in the selected case cities endured a rise in social exclusion, as explained in the theoretical argument chapter (chapter 3).

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[328] Landman and Carvalho, *Issues and Methods in Comparative*, 32.
[329] Jay Steinmetz, *Politics, Power, and Purpose: An Orientation to Political Science* (Hays, KA: Fort Hays State University, 2021), 176-8.

I use elections as proxies for measuring the steadiness of clientelist loyalties. The comparative scrutiny of this research is therefore set between two electoral contests in-between the 2016 local elections and the 2018 parliamentary elections. First, the year 2016 represents an essential signal of alarm to clientelist elites in several municipalities across Lebanon. The defection of a share of voters from incumbent clientelist networks towards competing patrons or independent political challengers incarnates the disruption of clientelist loyalties in 2016. My interest is then to compare in each selected municipality the type of power strategies implemented by the dominant clientelist elites in preparation for and during the 2018 legislative campaign. The "black box" of informal governance becomes observable thanks to the context of material scarcity and political threat in-between these two ballots.

I explain how in two years all the three compared clientelist actors in their respective Lebanese municipalities achieved, through diverse power strategies, to perpetuate or restore their power domination.

4.1.d Theoretical Contribution to the Clientelist Literature

The theory generated in this thesis contributes to the literature on contemporary clientelism and the practices of power by informal actors in a situation of stress. It informs the scholarship's capacity to explain the use and predict the impact of the different types of defensive strategies that political patrons adopt to keep their clientele in the event of a shock on material resources (which might be caused by an exogeneous pressure such as a migration wave or a natural disaster).

Ellen Lust considers that in a situation when clientelist elites are unable to deliver resources to their protégés, elections could open a process of democratisation.[330] She precisely envisaged this possibility in countries where "competitive clientelism" dominates the polity (e.g., in the Middle East). In consequence, Lust predicts that dissatisfied customers would defect to new and independent political entrepreneurs whose alternative political offer would decisively delegitimise the leadership of the

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[330] Ellen Lust, "Democratization by Elections? Competitive Clientelism in the Middle East," *Journal of Democracy* 20 (2009): 133. Lust defines the process of "competitive clientelism" as follows: "Elections provide elites and their supporters an opportunity to compete over special access to a limited set of state resources that they can then distribute to their clients," 122.

incumbent clientelist elites.[331] In this sense, her theoretical argument rightly, but only partially, applies to the three cases of clientelism studied in this thesis. Indeed, the scarcity of resources induced by the Syrian migration into Lebanon generated a disruption of clientelist loyalties as many patrons failed to redistribute the same level of resources to their protégés. It led during the 2016 local elections to an unprecedented wave of defection from clientelist members towards other clientelist networks (see chapter 5 on Zahle) or, more unusually, towards independent lists (especially so in Baalbek and Tripoli as outlined in chapters 6 and 7). However, this research demonstrates that clientelist elites possess defensive agency enabling them to retain or recover their position of political dominance, even when they encounter a sudden loss in finances. As the dominant clientelist networks confirmed their power dominance in the 2018 parliamentary elections, patronage was once again almighty. Therefore, the destabilisation of the foundations of the clientelist social contract did not successfully engender a democratisation of the Lebanese polity as Lust had hoped for. This central finding constitutes the main contribution offered by this research to the literature on clientelism.

This thesis therefore conceptually develops and empirically details the playbook of power strategies at the disposal of political patrons to maximise their chances of survival at the helm of the social ladder when facing a financial loss. Hence, it generates a theory on clientelist elite behaviour in a context of material scarcity. Specifically, the rich empirical data collected for this research on three different cases allows me, first to provide an analytical description of how clientelist elites choose the most rational defensive strategy(ies) at their disposal, and second to assess how each selected strategy performs in preserving (or reinstating) the dominance of clientelist elites in local politics.

4.1.e The Methodological Approach of "Analytic Narratives"

In order to address these two questions, this research resorts to the "analytic narratives" approach conceptualised by a group of economists and political scientists

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[331] Lust, "Democratization by Elections?," ibid.

in 1998.[332] "Analytic narratives" entail the selection of a research puzzle, then the generation of a "model" or theory providing an explanation to the question posed by the puzzle.[333] This approach is generally set in a single case study. In essence, this methodological approach attempts to tackle the potential methodological trade-off between empirical richness and causal generality.[334] It defends that a combination of narratives, exposing in-depth "stories, accounts and context" of a particular case, coupled with the analytic, extracting "explicit and formal lines of reasoning", facilitate the development of explanation.[335] Said shortly, Bates and the authors who conceptualised "analytic narratives" approach defend that "theory linked to data is more powerful than either data or theory alone."[336] Based on the narratives collected on a case-study, the researcher "suggests a model" (or theory) whose explanation produces generalisable outcomes for the "structure of relationships" between the actors and institutions concerned by the events under scrutiny.[337]

The example of the municipality of Tripoli and the unusual electoral defeat encountered by the dominant oligarchic networks in the 2016 local elections too demonstrates how analytic narratives generate relevant implications for other contexts. Lust's theoretical argument would assume that clientelist elites' loss in the ballots would have opened a process of democratisation where Tripolitan political independents legitimise their own political offer while oligarchs decay. However, the narratives from elite interviewees in Tripoli reveal that the Future Movement implemented a coordinated strategy of obstruction and cross-partisan alliance against the independent led-municipal council, to thwart the latter's credibility and reinstate its own influence (see in chapter 7). The in-depth analysis of these stories exposes a power strategy of collective defence which entails that rival clientelist leaders unite to protect their political dominance against independent challengers. It is true that the three cases selected in this research, like the Future Movement in

[332] Robert H. Bates, Avner Greif, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, and Barry R. Weingast, *Analytic Narratives* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).
[333] Margaret Levi and Barry R. Weingast, "Analytic Narratives, Case Studies, and Development," *Social Science Research Network* (SSRN) (2016): 1, doi:10.2139/ssrn.2835704.
[334] Nicholas Pedriana, "Rational Choice, Structural Context, and Increasing Returns: A Strategy for Analytic Narrative in Historical Sociology," *Sociological Methods & Research* 33 (2005): 349, doi:10.1177/0049124104265996.
[335] Bates, Greif, Levi, Rosenthal, and Weingast, *Analytic Narratives*, 10.
[336] Bates, Greif, Levi, Rosenthal, and Weingast, *Analytic Narratives*, 3.
[337] Robert H. Bates, Avner Greif, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, and Barry R. Weingast, "'Analytic Narratives' Revisited," *Social Science History* 24 (2000): 687.

Tripoli, remain unique. Nonetheless, each case sheds light on the puzzle of the variation of the defensive strategies adopted by clientelist elites to perpetuate or reinstate their political domination. In this sense, the analytic narrative approach implemented in this thesis "[illuminates] the particular by way of the general and [finds] the general in a close examination of the particular."[338]

4.1.f Scope of the Research

The scope of this research consequently extends far beyond the context of Lebanese local governance under the post-2011 Syrian migratory crisis. The clientelist playbook of defensive power strategies provides a rational explanation for the behaviour of clientelist elites under stress but also helps to predict their actions. Landman and Carvalho recognise that this attempt at generalising the outcomes and behaviours observed from an initial comparison to a larger set of cases (municipalities, regions or countries) is the final and most difficult task for comparative scientists.[339] Nevertheless, the theoretical assumptions of substitutivity, rationality, and multi-dimensionality (detailed in chapter 3) determining the decision-making of political patrons facing a financial loss offer a consistent basis for wider comparative research designs.

It is therefore not surprising that the defensive power strategies revealed in this research resonate with governing practices of patronage observed across the globe. Accordingly, chapter 2 provides a general, and relatively brief, account of the typologies, characteristics, and practices of clientelism observed across the world. In essence, the theory generated in this research is especially relevant to plural and post-conflict societies where informal institutions prevail in local governance and face a sudden shock on their internal resources. These cases and settings are numerous notably in the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and Central Asia. In these regions, there is a clear opportunity for clientelist literature to take a deeper look at the shadows of local governance, which has been theoretically neglected by the scholarship. For instance, the case of religious clientelism performed by Jewish religious parties in Israel, such as Shas and United Torah of Judaism, reveals the

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338 Peter J. Boettke, "Analytical Narratives," *Constitutional Political Economy* 11 (2000): 377.
339 Landman and Carvalho, *Issues and Methods in Comparative*, 10.

rational use of defensive power strategies in a context of political crisis. Religious parties are over-represented in the governance of ethnically and religiously diverse communities in Israel, especially so in the city of Jerusalem.[340] During the 2018 local elections, ultra-Orthodox parties adopted what I have conceptualised in this thesis as a strategy of collective defence (E3, see in chapter 3). They forged an alliance with a conservative rival to thwart the election of a coalition of secular parties threatening the former's privileged access to state resources through the municipal council.[341]

The preceding example demonstrates how the varied defensive power strategies detailed in the empirical chapters (chapters 5, 6 and 7) are not specific to a Lebanese context. Overall, the typologies of contemporary clientelism and the theoretical assumptions posited in this research open wide avenues of research in other regions of the world to deepen the literature's understanding of how clientelist elites' agency determines political domination.

In the second section of the chapter, I clarify the rationale justifying the case selection of the localities of Zahle, Baalbek and Tripoli which present historical, contextual, and political similarities.

4.2 Case Selection
4.2.a Borderland Cities in Migratory Shock

In order to set a most-similar cases comparison I have selected case cities located in border areas because they are similar in key historical (1), socioeconomic (2) and political (3) dimensions, while they differ in the typology of the locally dominant clientelist network (4). My attention was therefore caught by the three regional capitals of Zahle and Baalbek in the Bekaa valley, and Tripoli in the North.

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[340] Nissim Leon, "An Uneasy Stability: The Haredi Parties' Emergency Campaign for the 2013 Elections," *Israel Affairs* 21 (2015): 230-44, doi:10.1080/13537121.2015.1008241.

[341] Csaba Nikolenyi, "The 2018 Municipal Elections in Jerusalem: A Tale of Fragmentation and Polarization," *Contemporary Review of the Middle East* 7 (2020): 6-24, doi:10.1177/2347798919889762.

First, the histories of the selected municipalities are ones of post-conflict cities, marked by internal divisions and the scars of violent memories.[342] Each of these municipalities' populations experienced forced displacement during the Lebanese Civil War. Thanks to their diasporas, these cities nourish external relations with state and non-state actors (diasporic communities, religious orders etc.). As a result, these municipalities engage in transnational spaces of governance.

Second, the three case cities share a geographic and socioeconomic peripheral status within the Lebanese state. The North and Bekaa regions were historically neglected by the Lebanese state, which underinvested in these areas. As an illustration of the state absence, the respective poverty rates of the regional capitals were well above Beirut in 2016. When 9% of the Beirutis were living below the poverty line, 21% of Zahlawis, 30% of Tripolitans and 41% of Baalbakis were in extreme vulnerability (at the municipal district level).[343]

Third, the case cities are consequently three strongholds of clientelism in Lebanon. Since the country's independence, Zahle, Baalbek and Tripoli were constituted as the foundations of several clientelist networks. The latter flourished thanks to the very marginalisation of these cities by a hyper-centralised state. The brokerage of welfare exacerbated the local communities' reliance on patronage to access essential public goods and services.

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[342] On the consequences of urban landscape on inter-ethnic dynamics see: Nadia Charalambous, "Spatial Forms of Ethnic Coexistence in Ottoman Cyprus: The Role of Urban Form in Patterns of Everyday Life," *Journal of Urban History* 46 (2020): 579, doi:10.1177/0096144218816652.; On divided cities see: Jon Calame and Esther Charlesworth, *Divided Cities. Belfast, Beirut, Jerusalem, Mostar, and Nicosia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

[343] OCHA, "Bekaa and Baalbek/Hermel Governorates Profile," *OCHA*, May 12, 2016, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/43480; OCHA, "North and Akkar Governorates Profile," OCHA, August 4, 2016, https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-north-and-akkar-governorates-profile-august-2016.

Finally, one main dissimilarity remains between the case cities. Each municipality is the heartland of a different form of clientelism which emerged during the Lebanese Civil War and dominate Lebanese politics since then (see table 4.2 below). This difference allows me to understand exactly how variations in clientelism matter in the persistence of local governance structures during times of crisis.

Table 4.2 Case cities' data on clientelist elites' profile

Elites Profile	Zahle	Baalbek	Tripoli
Leading patron	Samir Geagea	Hassan Nasrallah	Saad Hariri
Network name	Lebanese Forces (LF)	Hezbollah (HEZ)	Future Movement (FM)
Clientelist typology	**Militia-to-political**	**Islamic-communitarian**	**Oligarchism**
		Sources: Dewailly, 2012; Hourani 1976; Hamzeh 2001.	

Hamzeh's historiography of contemporary clientelism in Lebanon, enables me to categorise clientelist elites into separate typologies (the different forms of clientelisms are defined in the literature review chapter, chapter 2).[344] Since the war, **Zahle** has favoured the Lebanese Forces (LF), a former Christian militia which turned into a party after the end of the conflict. It conforms to a type of militia-to-political patronage.[345] **Baalbek** was the birthplace of the Islamic Resistance also known as Hezbollah in 1982. Since then, the city has been controlled by this form of Islamic-communitarianism.[346] **Tripoli** was one of the municipalities launching oligarchism in Lebanon.[347] The Sunni leadership of Rafik Hariri, later succeeded by Saad, his son, represents the Northern-capital.

Most importantly, these three governorate capitals were then hit by a similarly considerable wave of migration. As border cities, their populations are intimately connected with Syrian kin communities. These tight Syro-Lebanese bonds relate to why the selected regional capitals were the largest urban areas in Lebanon hosting

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[344] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon."
[345] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 174.
[346] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 175.
[347] Dewailly, "Transformations du Leadership Tripolitain."

displaced Syrians (see table 4.3 below which presents the demographics of the local and displaced communities in the case cities).

Table 4.3 Case cities' data on local demographics

Demographics	Zahle	Baalbek	Tripoli
Lebanese inhabitants (per district)	150,000	82,000	264,895
Displaced Syrians (per district)	167,174	119,447	55,006[348]
Largest religious groups (per city)	30% Greek Catholic 22% Maronite 12% Greek Orthodox	61% Shia 34% Sunni 5% Greek-Catholic	82% Sunni 11% Alawite 3.5% Greek Orthodox
Sources: Daher, 2012; LocaLiban, 2016a, 2016b; Information International, 2016; UNHCR, 2017			

Following this case selection, the next chapter sketches brief portraits of each selected municipality before the start of the Syrian displacement in 2011. These city profiles are useful to grasp the characteristics of local politics at the eve of a major destabilisation of elite power.

4.2.b City Portraits
Zahle: A Heartland of Christian Militia Mythology

The first case city, Zahle, is hidden in an enclave in the centre of the Bekaa valley. This topography forged Zahle's identity as a city of refuge which successively sheltered different religious minorities in the Levant.[349] Three Christian denominations constitute the largest religious groups in the city: Greek Catholics, Orthodox, and Maronites. They were later joined by Armenians and Syriacs fleeing from genocide in South-Eastern Turkey in 1915.[350] Thus, Zahle is undeniably one of the most religiously diverse cities in Lebanon. While being a city of refuge for

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[348] The UNHCR stopped registering displaced Syrians in 2015. In Tripoli, most Syrians settled in the city, in relatives' homes, flats and sub-standard shelters. Unlike informal tented settlements which were well screened by UN agencies and INGOs, Syrians living in urban areas were largely overlooked by humanitarian actors. OCHA data under-evaluates the number of Syrians living in Tripoli.

[349] Melhem Chaoul, « Zahlé : De la Za'âma nationale, » 435-6.

[350] Marcello Mollica and Arsen Hakobyan, "Religious Affiliation and the Armenian Diaspora in the Middle East," In *Syrian Armenians and the Turkish Factor. Kessab, Aleppo and Deir ez-Zor in the Syrian War* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 71-99.

Eastern-Christians, Zahle dually became a place of emigration. Since the end of the 19th century, the Zahlawis (Zahle's inhabitants) disseminated diasporic communities all over Europe and the Americas.[351] The extent of this migrant history distinguishes the Bekaa capital from the other selected municipalities. As a result, Zahle engages into a transnational space which could constitute decisive leverage of external material support from the diaspora (remittances) when the city falls into an economic crisis.

Like all other case cities, the civil war changed the profile of the local elites in power in Zahle. Before the conflict the city was dominated by the traditional leadership of the Skaff family.[352] The 1981 siege of the city by the Syrian army marked the dusk of their influence. The Lebanese Forces were then the largest Christian militia. Its fighters, the so-called *fedayins* ("one who sacrifices his life voluntarily"), defended the city and acquired a mythicised status of martyrdom. Lebanese Forces gained tremendous popularity from this traumatic experience.[353] The Forces' combatant identity produced powerful symbolism, shared by its supporters. Once the war was over, the militia became a party. It therefore represents a case of militia-to-political clientelism. The LF had to wait for the end of the Syrian occupation in 2005 to freely compete for power in Zahle. During the 2009 parliamentary elections, the Lebanese Forces led the 14th of March (pro-Western, pro-independence) list which won all deputy seats in the constituency.[354] But in 2010 the municipal council remained in the hands of a list backed by traditional leader, Elias Skaff.[355] The empirical chapter (chapter 5) on Zahle describes how the traditional mayor's inertia in managing the Syrian migration into Zahle led to a breakage of clientelist loyalties favouring the empowerment of the Lebanese Forces in the 2016 local elections.

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[351] Nancy W. Jabbra, "Globalization and Christian Practice in Lebanon's Biqa' Valley," *Middle East Critique* 18 (2009): 287, doi:10.1080/19436140903237079.

[352] Peter Gubser, "The Politics of Economic Interest Groups in a Lebanese Town," *Middle Eastern Studies* 11 (1975): 264, doi:10.1080/00263207508700299.

[353] Nader Moumneh, *The Lebanese Forces. Emergence and Transformation of the Christian Resistance* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2019), 75.

[354] The date of the 14th of March corresponds to a demonstration held in Beirut after the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005. It became a banner of the pro-independence and anti-Syrian regime parties in Lebanon, which include the Lebanese Forces.

[355] Chaoul, « Zahlé : De la Za'âma nationale. »

A few kilometres away from Zahle stands the second case city of this research, Baalbek, which also saw the rise of a new form of clientelism during the Lebanese war, Islamic-communitarianism.

Baalbek: A Stronghold of the Shiite Communitarian Society of 'Resistance'

The ancient city of Baalbek stands at the footsteps of mountains of Anti-Lebanon, only a few kilometres away from Syria. Various clans and tribes controlled Baalbek until the eruption of the civil war. Then, the newly founded Islamic Republic of Iran supported the formation of a combatant militia to defend Lebanese Shias. The "Islamic Resistance in Lebanon" (IRL), better known as Hezbollah, was created in Baalbek in 1982.[356] The party of God's (literal translation of Hezbollah) ideology (literal translation of Hezbollah) established a combatant identity of resistance (called the *muqawama*) targeting both Western imperialism and Israel.[357] The party tightened the loyalty of its members by developing extensive welfare institutions inspired by the Iranian regime.[358] Hezbollah thus exemplifies a form of Islamic-communitarian clientelism.[359] By the end of the war, the Islamic Resistance engaged in a process of political normalisation. Despite being the last weaponised militia in the country, Hezbollah has been since 1992 the largest Shia party in Lebanon.

The regional capital of the Baalbek-Hermel governorate is nonetheless not united behind Hezbollah. The municipality exemplifies the case of a post-war divided city. While a majority of the Baalbaki (inhabitants of Baalbek) population is Shia (61%), large Sunni (34%) and Christian minorities (5%) counter the former's slim majority according to the 2016 electoral registries.[360] This sectarian divide projects a political cleavage splitting Lebanese society since the end of the Syrian occupation in 2005. Thereafter, the Lebanese polity split between a pro-Syrian/Iranian camp led by

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[356] Daher, "Hezbollah Facing the Clans," 419.
[357] Marco Nilsson, "Hezbollah and the Framing of Resistance," *Third World Quarterly* 41 (2020): 1595-1614, doi:10.1080/01436597.2020.1779587.
[358] Cammett, *Compassionate Communalism*.
[359] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 175.
[360] In 2016, 31,510 voters were registered in the Baalbek municipality. Among them, 19,190 Shia citizens, 10,700 Sunnis and 1,620 Greek-Catholic and Christian voters. Information International, "The Results of the Municipal Elections. Lebanon 2016," *The Monthly Magazine* 164, (2016): 18, https://monthlymagazine.com/article-desc_3924_.

Hezbollah, the so-called 8th of March coalition, and a pro-Western camp led by Sunni leader Saad Hariri (Future Movement), the 14th of March alliance.[361] Baalbek is the city where majority/minority distribution is the most equal. Political tensions are frequent between the two communities. In this heated political context, Hezbollah uses its combatant identity to securitise opponents and ensure the loyalty of the Shia community. The party learned to tame local contestation by co-opting rivals (especially from the formerly influential tribal families) after an unexpected electoral defeat at the 1998 local elections.[362] Since then, Hezbollah won all the subsequent local and legislative elections (Bekaa III constituency) in Baalbek.

The third portrait depicts the empowerment of Sunni oligarchism in the largest urban area selected for this comparative research, Tripoli, the capital of the North governorate.

Tripoli: A Fading and Divided Capital of Sunni Oligarchism

Tripoli, the second capital of Lebanon, is historically one of the largest ports of the Eastern Mediterranean. A merchant city historically populated by Sunni and Greek Orthodox communities, it was reluctantly drawn into the Lebanese state project in 1920. Since then, the city was dominated by traditional clientelist elites, especially the Karami family, who paradoxically provided a dynasty of Lebanese Premiers while defending a Pan-Arab ideology in resistance to Lebanese nationalism.[363] Accordingly, traditional leaders built up their community of followers (called *asabiyyah* which qualifies a group sharing an *esprit de corps*) in the "negation of the [Lebanese] state" which had deprived Tripoli from its regional attractivity.[364] Like all the case cities, the civil war fundamentally changed the profile of local elites.[365] A generation of Lebanese businessmen who had made a fortune abroad attempted to gain political

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[361] The date of the 8th of March corresponds to a demonstration organised in Beirut, in 2005, after the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. The demonstrators expressed their support to the Lebanese-proxies/allies of the Syrian regime, like Hezbollah.

[362] Daher, "Hezbollah Facing the Clans."

[363] Ward Vloeberghs, *Architecture, Power and Religion in Lebanon. Rafiq Hariri and the Politics of Sacred Space in Beirut* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016), 11.

[364] Michel Seurat, « Le quartier de Bâb Tebbâné à Tripoli (Liban) : Etude d'une 'asabiyya urbaine, » [The Bab Tebbane Neighbourhood in Tripoli (Lebanon): Study of an Urban Asabiyya] In *Syrie, l'État de barbarie* [Syria: The State of Barbarism] (ed.) Michel Seurat (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2012): 235, 240.

[365] Dewailly, « Transformations du Leadership Tripolitain. »

influence in their homeland by the end of the war. Unlike the dominant clientelisms in Zahle and Baalbek, Sunni oligarchs were no warlords. These businessmen founded oligarchic clientelist institutions exclusively relying on the redistribution of welfare. Like other businessmen, Rafik Hariri poured his wealth into a generous philanthropic institution (the Hariri Foundation) designed to tie the loyalty of impoverished Sunni communities behind him.[366] Symbolism was fully missing from this form of clientelism. Yet, Hariri's political strategy successfully took him to the Premiership of the country after the end of the war until his assassination in Beirut in February 2005. Thereafter, his son, Saad, took over his father's leadership. Saad created in 2007 the Future Movement (*al mustaqbal*), a party designed to perpetuate his family's control over the Lebanese Sunni community.[367]

Since then, the Future Movement has jockeyed for the control of Tripoli with other Sunni oligarchs. The civil war not only changed the profile of the local elites but also transformed the demographics of the city. As Christians fled the conflict in 1976, Tripoli became one of the most religiously homogenous cities of Lebanon (82% of the registered electorate in 2016 is Sunni, 11% Alawite, 3.5% Greek-Orthodox and 2% Maronite).[368] In addition to this demographic criteria, extreme poverty in the city generated by rural exodus and a collapsed economy facilitated the diffusion of oligarchic patronage. There was even sufficient room for competition between several oligarchic networks who strategically coalesced during most elections to ensure their "fair" share of the local power. The oligarchs captured the majority at the municipal council in 2004. For 12 consecutive years following, allied Sunni oligarchs headed by Saad Hariri ruled Tripoli.

These three city portraits lay the empirical background justifying the case selection. The themes of war trauma, socioeconomic, and territorial marginality and clientelist power are similarly prevalent amongst these border municipalities. However, these descriptions illustrate how the demographic and political characteristics in each terrain might weigh on the determination of elite power strategies in a situation of

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[366] Baumann, *Citizen Hariri. Lebanon's Neoliberal Reconstruction*, 48-50.
[367] Sami Hermez, "Major Political Parties and Political Blocs," In *War is Coming. Between Past and Future Violence in Lebanon* ed. Sami Hermez (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017): xiii.
[368] Information International, "The Results of the Municipal Elections," 15.

material scarcity. The next section of the chapter details the strategy of data collection in fieldwork implemented in this research project.

4.3 Fieldwork Data Collection and Analysis
4.3.a Mixed-Methods & Triangulation of Data

When I started my research inquiry in 2016, the selected Lebanese municipalities and their practices of local governance were scarcely studied in the comparative politics literature. Moreover, there were no comparative attempts to observe the impact of the Syrian migration on local politics in Lebanon. This is why this thesis relies on original data collected in fieldwork from 2018 to 2019.

In order to gather a thick description of the case cities, I adopt a triangulation approach for collecting data. "The concept of triangulation means that an issue of research is considered – or in a constructivist formulation is constituted – from (at least) two points or perspectives."[369] It is a data collection strategy which endeavours to multiply and mix the sources and angles of observation to "[produce] a comprehensive empirical record about a topic" of research.[370]

This comparative research design intends to unveil the power of informal institutions at times of crisis. I combine qualitative (semi-structured interviews, observations and field notes), quantitative (survey data), and secondary sources of data (official speeches and newspaper articles) to produce rich empirical observations. While semi-structured interviews reflect the rationale of the decisions made by the local elites, the survey data highlights how their administrates appreciate the former's governance. Axinn and Pearce consider that mixed methods counterbalances the weaknesses of each method of data collection.[371] "Rather than being mutually exclusive, these different forms of data can feed and inform each other in productive

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[369] Uwe Flick, "Triangulation in Data Collection," In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection* ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018), 445.
[370] William G. Axinn and Lisa D. Pearce, "Motivations for Mixed Method Social Research," In Mixed Method Data Collection Strategies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 2, doi:10.1017/CBO9780511617898.002.
[371] Axinn and Pearce, "Motivations for Mixed Method," 2.

ways."[372] Furthermore, the adjunction of multidimensional angles of observation enhances the validity of the research findings.[373]

The focus on local governance in under-researched Lebanese municipalities is very well suited to the generation of data through fieldwork collection. Wood defines fieldwork as "research based on personal interaction with research subjects in their own setting."[374] This human character of data collection in fieldwork requires a high level of preparation, to preserve the safety of all participants. Therefore, I submitted a comprehensive fieldwork application which was approved by the Research Ethics Committee at UCL in January 2018. I was then able to proceed with seven months of fieldwork data collection in Lebanon from February to September 2018. Two follow-up research visits ensued in November 2018 and April 2019. Overall, I conducted 105 elite interviews, collected 210 surveys (99 with Syrian households and 111 Lebanese participants), and wrote personal field notes (mainly voice memos).

The next subsection explains the use of participant observations and focus groups to best prepare the interviewing and survey processes.

4.3.b Sources of Data
Participant Observation, Focus Groups & Field Notes

Participant observation can be defined as "a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture."[375] Such a data collection process requires deep involvement from the researcher and close attention to the researched-researcher relational dynamics. In parallel, focus groups are a "kind of group interview" where the "researcher asks a set

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[372] Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. MacLean and Benjamin L. Read, *Field Research in political Science. Practices and Principles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 269.
[373] Sandra Mathison, "Why Triangulate?," *Educational Researcher* 17 (1988): 13, doi:10.3102/0013189X017002013.
[374] Elisabeth Jean Wood, "Field Research," In *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, ed. Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 123.
[375] Kathleen Musante DeWalt and Billie R. DeWalt, *Participant Observation. A Guide for Fieldworkers* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2011), 1.

of targeted questions designed to elicit collective views about a specific topic."[376] My interest for these data collection methods relied on the possibility to create the space for unexplored research pathways to appear inductively. Moreover, they allowed me to revise the semi-structured interviews and survey questionnaires to correct, in anticipation, any wording, meaning or cultural biases.

Over the seven months of my main fieldwork research in 2018 in Lebanon, I experienced daily encounters with a wide set of actors. I first wanted to observe the behaviour of political actors on the campaign trail to improve my understanding of how local politics is performed, embodied, and symbolised. Influential party candidates were not ready for such a level of transparency with a foreign, young and unknown early career scholar. That is why I directly and iteratively observed two women who, for the first time, entered the political arena in attempting to be elected at the Chamber of Deputies in May 2018. *Nour* was already a close acquaintance of mine.[377] She invited me to participate to her campaign consultations in Mount-Lebanon in March 2018. Then, I met *Paula* when attending her party's electoral conference. After a first interview, she proposed me to follow her during the campaign. I was notably present at her main political meetings in Beirut.[378] I was actively involved with the campaign of both candidates as they asked for my personal advice on their communication skills or on the local political context. These two experiences decisively deepened my understanding of the processes of party competition and political loyalties in Lebanon. These two candidates were both marginalised in the political competition for their gender status and their lack of sectarian coverage. The intersection of these campaign hurdles emphasised how the clientelist actors of local governance thwart competition from alternative candidates.

Then, I had the occasion to spend time with a group of young Syrian and Palestinian-Syrian men living in Beirut. I was soon spending my evenings with them. From the onset I was transparent about my status of researcher. I organised a focus group with them to present them the purpose of my presence and learn more about their

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[376] Norman K. Denzin and Katherine E. Ryan, "Qualitative Methodology (Including Focus Groups)," In *The SAGE Handbook of Social Science Methodology*, ed. William Outhwaite and Stephen P. Turner (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2007), 584.
[377] Anonymised name. Interview conducted in Mount-Lebanon, in March 2018.
[378] Anonymised name. Interview conducted in Beirut, in April 2018.

personal trajectories. The setting of a shared conversation around a hospitable and socialising tea draws informants to "feel greater confidence in a group setting, which may encourage them to offer comments and discuss matters they wouldn't in a one-on-one interview."[379] These young men, despite the apparent normalcy of their casual behaviour, revealed deep psychological and human traumas during this collective exercise. They were instrumental in preparing me before the survey data collection with their compatriots living in informal camps in the Bekaa. This observation allowed me to appreciate the complexity of the Syrian settlement in Lebanon and to draw first inferences on how one's access to urban areas permeates local social boundaries. Above all, this observational experience generated deep friendships for which I will always be grateful.

Through these different qualitative data collection methods, I wrote up notes every evening to remember and reflect on the day's events. I gathered my thoughts on the research experience, the behaviour of the participants and inferred on the empirical findings. Phillipi and Lauderdale consider that field notes ensure that the rich fieldwork context "persists beyond the original research."[380] However, I soon felt fieldwork fatigue driving me towards an easier solution, recording voice memos. Instead of taking long field notes, it soon became a habit to talk to my phone in order to keep glimpses of inspiration or reflect on the context of an interview. I later transcribed these voice memos.

In the next section I detail the interviewing method which constitutes the core of the data collected for this thesis research.

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[379] John Knodel, "The Design and Analysis of Focus Group Studies: A Practical Approach," In *Successful focus groups: Advancing the state of the art*, ed. David L. Morgan (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE, 1993). Cited in Axinn and Pearce, "Motivations for Mixed Method Social Research," 7.
[380] Julia Phillipi and Jana Lauderdale, "A Guide to Field Notes for Qualitative Research: Context and Conversation," *Qualitative Health Research* 28 (2018): 381, doi:10.1177%2F1049732317697102.

Semi-Structured Elite Interviews

This project focuses on clientelist elites' agency in local governance under strain. To understand the rationale of the local leaders' policies, I chose the interviewing method. The usage of in-depth interviews means that explaining a political phenomenon "involves describing and understanding people as conscious and social human beings."[381] This implies that interviewees, through their inherent human character, are strategic actors. In consequence, it is only through "face-to-face interactions" that the "strategic context can be discussed, inconsistencies probed, and alternative motivations raised."[382]

In preparation for the interviewing process, I proceeded with a theoretical and purposive sampling of potential elite interviewees participating to the formulation, moderation, or enforcement of local politics. I compiled an extensive list of elite members to draw a representative profile of local power holders in each case city. I used four main general profiles of potential interviewees to generate a representative sample offering a variation of perspectives: (1) politicians (from political party officers, municipal councillors, mayors, deputies), (2) religious leaders, (3) civil society activists (Lebanese and foreign NGOs' personnel, trade union members, entrepreneurs, and artists), and (4) experts (Lebanese academics, diplomats, civil servants and journalists). I was careful to meet with representatives from all the main political parties with a special consideration for the parties of small sectarian communities. Appendix B (p.263) presents the samples of interviewees who participated to this research in each case city. I should mention that several interviewees were iteratively met on the course of the fieldwork and therefore provided several transcripts. I targeted samples of 20 to 30 participants in each municipality. Overall, I met with 105 elite interviewees across Lebanon in 2018 and 2019.

I proposed to the participants a semi-structured questionnaire whose questions (written both in French and in English) had been proofread by Lebanese scholars,

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[381] Fiona Devine, "Qualitative Analysis," In *Theories and Methods in Political Science*, ed. David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (London: Macmillan, 1995), 140.
[382] Wood, "Field Research," 126.

notably Dr. Nadim el Khoury, to avoid any misunderstanding.[383] The questionnaire was designed according to essential themes which should systematically be covered during the discussion. The pre-set interview guide included themes on:

(1) local authorities' management of the Syrian migration crisis,

(2) the socioeconomic status of local Lebanese communities and,

(3) the latest local political trends in relation to the 2016 and 2018 electoral campaigns.

The main objective of the questionnaire was to gather data revealing the governance strategies implemented by clientelist actors to mitigate social demands and maintain the loyalty of their core supporters in this context of material scarcity.

To do so, the interview questionnaire was designed to address a subset of queries raised by the inductive aspects of this research that I detail below in table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Research queries addressed by the interview questionnaire

Research Queries
o   Profiling the interviewee; o   Understanding the new socioeconomic order; o   Assessing the sources of elite dominance; o   Identifying and justifying local governance strategies.

In order to probe the validity of the narratives from elite interviewees I first needed to profile the interviewee. This first step was necessary to clarify the role played by the participant in shaping local decision making strategies. It also enabled me to picture how the interviewee related to other local actors of power. Envisioning the social web of the local elites would inform me on the ties of dependability and the social hierarchy prevalent in the city. Subsequently, the questionnaire inquired about the consequences of the Syrian settlement on local communities and on the political

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[383] On semi-structured interviews see: Svend Brinkmann 2020, "Structured and Semi-Structured Interviews," In *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Patricia Leavy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020): 424-56.

dynamics in the municipality. In this way, I aimed to assess how different strata of local society responded to the delineation of the Syrian exploitability cleavage. For instance, I attempted to evaluate whether the material capacity of the interviewee or his/her organisation had been affected by the Syrian displacement (party, NGO, religious order etc.) by asking indirect questions on the evolution of the offer of services. This step would be key to identify the populations suffering from rising social exclusion which might consequently cause defection from their clientelist social contract. Afterwards, the questionnaire addressed how ideological and symbolic schemes (characterising the interviewee's organisation) represent substitutive elements of in-group mobilisation at times of crisis. Finally, I intended to probe the interviewee on the type of decisions he/she assumed to navigate through the migratory crisis and maintain the loyalty of their supporters. Here my willingness was to extract a narrative justifying the choice of a power strategy in comparison with other potential tactics.

Logically, I adapted the type of questions asked to the participant's profile and anticipated area of expertise. The anonymity of the interviewees was guaranteed under the UK Data Protection act (1998) and UCL Data regulations, which were reviewed and validated by the UCL Research Ethics Committee in January 2018. Appendix C (p.264) presents the interview questionnaire used during fieldwork. The interviews were recorded with the informed and written consent of participants to allow a full transcription of the dialogue. All the data collected from interviews was stored in Nvivo software to ease the empirical analysis. I then manually transcribed the saved recordings of 105 elite interviews.[384] For the data analysis, I inductively created nodes to classify the main themes, actions or policies defended by the interviewees. Each interview was subsequently coded in order to categorise the selected quotes referring to dynamics, strategies, or observations at play in each municipality.

In conclusion, the 105 semi-structured interviews generated a wealth of data feeding the expected thickness required for the empirical analysis. I complemented these qualitative research methods with self-generated survey data with Lebanese and

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[384] I iteratively met with several participants so there were more than 105 interviews to transcribe manually. I did meet twice with at least 15 of the participants.

displaced communities inhabiting the case cities to grasp their general views on local governance.

Surveys with Local Populations

I considered that for a thorough understanding of local political dynamics, the opinion of the "governed" - which encompasses the local Lebanese and displaced communities - would respond to the ruling elite interviews' justifications of their decision making. Indeed, the large-N data generated from surveys "might correct for unconscious biases colouring the qualitative work, such as a tendency to place excessive weight on the views of elites and the holistic fallacy."[385] The narratives of the elite interviewees can be nuanced by counterbalancing views from the general public. Therefore, I have designed two separate surveys, one addressed to the Lebanese inhabitants and one to the migrant communities recently settled in Zahle, Baalbek and Tripoli (overwhelmingly Syrians and Palestinian-Syrians). Instead of an interview guide, survey questions were standardised. However, it is delicate to compile a survey questionnaire in an inductive research design. The focus group experience with young urban Syrians helped identify key themes to be addressed in the Syrian survey questionnaire. As for the Lebanese survey questionnaire, the feedback on my research from Lebanese politics experts at the onset of my fieldwork in Beirut laid the groundwork for the choice of questions. After drafting the surveys, I required the service of a Lebanese translator to generate a suitable Levantine Arabic version. Dr. Nadim el Khoury proof-read the surveys, too.

Considering the time constrains setting my fieldwork research, I was not able to randomise the sample of participants. The goal of using surveys in this research was to maximise the information collected from a participant with the same questionnaire. Then, by expanding the number of participants, I could more easily compare the data collected. Therefore, I do not claim representativeness from these surveys. Instead, the observations extracted from the surveys capture a wider variety of perspectives which allowed me to compare experiences across different populations in the three case cities. I aimed to reach 30 participants per case city for

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[385] Kapiszewski, MacLean and Read, "Field Research in Political Science," 272.

each community (30 Lebanese and 30 displaced individuals) in order to gather a minimum sample of the local populations. For the Lebanese survey, I accomplished this objective in all selected municipalities except for Zahle, where only 12 respondents filled-in a questionnaire. For the displaced communities' survey, the targeted number of respondents was attained in all case cities except for Tripoli, where 20 respondents participated. I then faced the obstacle of accessing communities which were sometimes difficult for me to locate and interact with.

To address this issue of access for the Lebanese survey, I mobilised local agents including reliable gatekeepers, such as local Lebanese NGOs like the *Rassemblement démocratique de la femme libanaise* (RDFL) in Baalbek and a research assistant in Tripoli. I selected each of them to diffuse the surveys amongst their closest social networks or communities attending their social activities.

For the displaced communities' survey, I used the intermediary of an established INGO, the Danish Refugee Council's Bekaa office, to gain access to four randomly selected informal tented settlements (ITSs) in the vicinity of the case cities of Zahle and Baalbek. We performed a pilot with a few participants to test the formulation and comprehension of the questionnaire.[386] Before the data collection, I trained several research assistants to guarantee that all participants were well informed about the purpose of this research and felt safe about their participation so that they could give their confident consent. The participants were randomly selected through a "snowballing" sampling technique. A first pool of identified participants are "asked to recommend other contacts who fit the research criteria and who potentially might also be willing participants, who then in turn recommend other potential participants, and so on."[387] In our case, a first family nod recruited another neighbouring household. In Tripoli, the central antenna of DRC spread the survey during its social activities with vulnerable communities and students.

Overall, 111 Lebanese respondents and 99 displaced individuals and their household members answered to their respective survey questionnaires. The number of

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[386] Kapiszewski, MacLean and Read, "Field Research in Political Science," 281.
[387] Charlie Parker, Sam Scott and Alistair Geddes, "Snowball Sampling," *Sage Research Methods* (2019): 3, doi.org/9781529747614.

respondents remains limited to draw reliable inferences from. Still, Axinn and Pearce support that "nothing about a survey is inherently numeric. Highly structured questionnaires can be administered to an extremely small number of people" and still produce highly informative observations.[388] The detail of the interviews is available in appendix D (p.267). The background data on the profile of the participants is available in appendix E (p.270). The survey questionnaires are also available in appendix F (Lebanese respondents, p.272) and G (Displaced respondents, p.281).

Fieldwork in Lebanon also opened avenues to access valuable secondary sources of data covering areas of research and actors of local governance which were inaccessible to me in a face-to-face setting.

Secondary Sources

The Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University in Louaize (Mount-Lebanon) disposes of an exhaustive data bank covering all types of perspectives on migration issues in Lebanon and abroad. LERC kindly granted me the access to a complete record of academic, humanitarian and think tanks' reports on the Syrian migration in Lebanon. This data was particularly valuable to design the theoretical argument (detailed in chapter 3) which emphasises the role of social exclusion in perpetuating elite domination.

Secondary sources of data are especially essential when a researcher cannot produce primary data, for a range of personal or contextual limitations. Undeniably, it was particularly tricky for me to gain access to the leadership of the selected clientelist networks. A young, foreign, and unknown PhD candidate like me certainly lacks the networks and credibility necessary to open doors and bind a trustful relationship with such elite interviewees. However, the language used by these elites in a speech or in writing represents a "social practice" which informs the agency of these actors.[389] Thereby, I relied on secondary sources of data like official speeches, social

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[388] Axinn and Pearce, "Motivations for Mixed Method Social Research," 5.
[389] Ruth Wodak and Norman Fairclough, "Critical Discourse Analysis," In *Discourse as Social Interaction*, ed. Teun. A. van Dijk (London: SAGE, 1997), 258.

networks' publications and newspaper articles retrieving the discourses of clientelist leaders to garner an understanding of the rhetoric, justifications and strategies adopted by these actors of power.

In the literature review (chapter 2) I categorised and defined different forms of clientelism which emerged during the Lebanese Civil War. Amongst the three compared forms of clientelism in this research, I have identified *oligarchism* as the one seemingly lacking substantial symbolic and ideological foundations. For this reason, clientelist leaders' rhetoric in campaign speeches in 2018 valuably informs the thesis' empirical analysis in outlining the strategic use, or the lack of thereof, of symbols, myths, leadership cults and ideology to galvanise the support of (unsatisfied) core supporters. The full transcription of official party speeches is rare in Lebanon. Nonetheless, while conducting fieldwork I filed printed and online Lebanese newspaper articles (in Arabic, French and English) reporting on campaign events. This archival effort generated an empirical record enabling me to proceed with a discourse analysis of partisan speeches.

Overall, I believe that these different sources of data offer a multi-dimensional (triangulating) outlook on local politics which will feed into the comparison of the case cities shadow governance during the migration crisis. In the next section, I develop a set of indicators to operationalise the case cities comparison.

4.3.c Operationalisation

"All systematic research begins with good description" explain Landman and Carvalho.[390] The data collected through fieldwork in Lebanon is self-generated and therefore unique. From these varied points of views ranging from the local elites to the wider populations, I can draw descriptive inferences on the strategies of power domination developed in a context of material scarcity. In essence, I use the "facts we know to learn something about facts we do not know."[391]

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[390] Landman and Carvalho, "Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics," 4.
[391] Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 119.

The elite narratives and stories extracted from case-studies provide an observational database from which I can design a systematic framework of comparison. I generated a set of indicators measuring the types of power strategies enabling local elites to perpetuate their political domination. These indicators therefore identify whether the local elites have implemented one of the three power strategies of material alleviation (E1), symbolic substitution (E2), and/or collective defence (E3) - which theoretically protects their local domination (see in chapter 3). I then structured these indicators into a coding scheme which dichotomously classifies the effect of the local elites' strategies under two labels: "endurance" or "vulnerability" of clientelist domination.

The *endurance* of local elites' political dominance means that a measured indicator alleviates the material pressure weighing on the local elites and thus preserves or even emboldens their power grip in a municipality. For instance, a municipality where the mayor achieves to attract external sources of support in the form of developmental projects indicates the mayor's enduring authority over his or her community in effectively reducing the financial strain on local infrastructures and services. In contrast, a municipality where the authorities do not strictly implement the law regarding displaced communities' labour and business activities demonstrates their political *vulnerability* as they do not protect local communities from the consequences of social dumping.

These "data containers" enabled me to organise the empirical evidence collected into a systematic assessment of the performance of local governance under stress.[392] I detailed a coding scheme listing three types of power strategies and their respective indicators, which is available in appendix H (p.288). It does not mean that all local actors of power acted upon all the listed public policy areas. Instead, I attempted to generate an exhaustive coding scheme allowing me to systematically identify, categorise and therefore compare local elites' strategies of survival.

I explain below the research assumptions guiding the classification of the indicators in the coding scheme.

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[392] Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review* 64 (1970): 1039.

The first type of power strategy, material alleviation (E1), encompasses two main tactics allowing to mitigate the material pressure of a municipality in crisis. First, the municipal policies of migration management can moderate the financial burden weighing on the municipality. I formulate the assumption that protectionist policies externalising the migration settlement away from the urban boundaries diminish the potential of social dumping affecting the Lebanese communities. Thus, strictly law-abiding municipalities are more likely to encounter lower financial pressure than their "laissez-faire" counterparts. Second, I also assume that municipalities which are in capacity to leverage financial resources from external providers (from state and non-state actors) can also limit the spread of social exclusion amongst local communities.

Then, I supported in the theoretical argument chapter (chapter three) that symbolism can substitute an ailing material dominance (E2). That is why I coded how symbolic schemes indicate the local elites' capacity to rely on ideological communal markers when financial means are missing. The main purpose of using symbolism is to preserve the social cohesion of clientelist network members. To do so, I assume that clientelist leaders whom benefit from powerful symbolism can resort to a radical political rhetoric for galvanising in-group members. Moreover, patrons can use the power of symbolism to impose the securitisation of clientelist network members and other minorities, to prevent defections at a moment of financial crisis.

If both material mitigation policies and symbolic substitution are not sufficient to weather the storm or are absent, then the last option for threatened local elites is to resort to a form of collective action amongst clientelist actors (E3). This strategy is aimed at delegitimising non-clientelist opponents like independents and civil society movements to reassert the legitimacy of a clientelist regime towards dissatisfied supporters. I assume that clientelist leaders successfully mobilising the support of their sectarian counterparts can thwart the competition from political challengers and restore their dominance over local governance.

From this classification of evidence, I can infer an explanation for the observed political outcomes in the three selected municipalities.[393] This allows me to theorise why a clientelist actor opts for a certain strategy of local governance in crisis instead of another one in the empirical chapters (chapters 5, 6 and 7).

The last section of the chapter presents considerations upon several key aspects of fieldwork research. I first review the ethical provisions and safety measures taken to prepare data collection in a "risky" research environment.

4.4 Reflections on Fieldwork Research in the Levant
4.4.a Ethics and Safety in a "Risky" Research Environment

As I mentioned earlier, this fieldwork research project was approved by UCL's Research Ethics Committee in January 2018. I hereby briefly reflect on this process of preparation for the fieldwork to ensure its compliance with ethics and safety conditions in Lebanon.

One of main ethical principles that a researcher must respect while undergoing research with human beings is doing no harm to participants. The protection of the respondents' safety is primarily determined by the research setting. That is why careful preparation "helps [the researcher] to think through the unforeseen issues, questions, and trade-offs – and smoothly handle unanticipated contingencies, obstacles, and challenges" which can unexpectedly occur during fieldwork.[394] In order to avoid unintentional harm to participants, researchers in fieldwork should rely on their reflexive capacity to weather unanticipated situations. This intellectual vigilance is certainly exacerbated in an environment qualified as "risky" for research. The threat did not come then from Lebanese authorities, who remained amongst the most open to foreign researchers in the Levant. However, Lebanon is a country where a latent political instability might erupt at any moment in communal confrontations. The takeover of Beirut in 2018 by Hezbollah militants or the intra-

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[393] Gabriel A. Almond, "Political Science: The History of the Discipline," In *The New Handbook of Political Science*, ed. Robert E. Goodin and Hans-Dieter Klingemann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 52.
[394] Kapiszewski, MacLean and Read, "Field Research in Political Science," 119.

Druze fights in the Shuf mountains in 2019 illustrate the vividness of this violent reality. For the sake of being transparent with the Lebanese authorities, I obtained a professional research visa at the Lebanese Consulate of Marseille to make sure that my presence in Lebanon would not create any misunderstandings with the security forces.

In this context, I tried to limit all predictable situations putting the participants in morally and physically potentially hazardous conditions. It meant that I had to find a solution to guarantee the inviolability of the anonymity of the participants. Usually, interviewees and survey respondents are asked, after being informed about the intent of a research project and its diffusion mechanisms, to provide their written consent on a pre-set document. However, Muller-Funk considers that written consent brings an issue of sensitivity. "A personal signature and name would [raise] suspicion among respondents if their names were truly kept anonymous" she explains.[395] Therefore, I excluded the usage of a written consent form which could potentially unveil the participant's identity if leaked. It was replaced by an anonymous cross in a box written by myself after clear oral consent from the interviewee. Moreover, I devised a coding system to protect the secrecy of the interviewee's name. The meaning of the codes was only known to myself, and was never written nor divulgated to anyone else. Furthermore, I uploaded all the collected data to UCL's desktop on a daily basis to avoid any data leakage while working in the case cities.

In order to ensure my safety while working in Lebanon, the research ethics application entailed that I could only reside in green zones as established by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). After staying in Beirut to observe the parliamentary campaign, I then moved to Zahle, the only case city in this research categorised as a safe place. From there I could proceed with my research in the city. Tripoli and Baalbek were both categorised as orange zones "advised against all but essential travel" by the FCO. Therefore, I exclusively accessed these cities for day visits and then resided in nearby towns in green zones. Finally, I dutifully shared my

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[395] Lea Müller-Funk, Osama Alaa Aldien, Arij Basrak, Weam Ghabash, Mustafa Hatip, Rand Shamaa, Mouran Tourkmani, "Researching Urban Forced Migrants in Turkey and Lebanon: Alternative Ways to Study a Vulnerable Population in Fragile Political Contexts," *Working Paper* 152 (2019): 14, https://www.migrationinstitute.org/publications/researching-urban-forced-migrants-in-turkey-and-lebanon-alternative-ways-to-study-a-vulnerable-population-in-fragile-political-contexts.

work schedule on a weekly basis with my supervisors and French consular authorities.

Beyond these safety provisions, this research also entailed numerous issues of access. In consequence, I would like to stress in the next section of the chapter the importance of internalising local norms to entrust potential interviewees.

4.4.b Negotiating Local Norms of Access

For a successful collection of data, a social network is an essential asset to reach a representative sample of interviewees. Suleiman and Anderson acknowledge the utter "importance of building networks of personal contacts within the region both before and after arrival in the field, in order to gain access to information and institutions."[396] However, I did not benefit from a large web of elite contacts in Lebanon when I arrived there in February 2018. To counter this limitation, I affiliated myself to two local academic institutions, the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the *Institut français du Proche-Orient* (Ifpo Beyrouth) to socialise with academics. I was looking for gatekeepers who I could define as reliable observers of their own communities. Such sponsors can help open doors which otherwise would be inaccessible to a foreign researcher. I contacted Lebanese academics, journalists and politically engaged artists to build up my network. But I soon realised that I would not secure appointments by resorting to formal modes of communication. Most interlocutors did not respond to the modelled emails submitted and reviewed by the research ethics committee at UCL. This channel of communication was simply not adapted to the social practice of Lebanese elites who more casually resort to social networks messaging applications like WhatsApp. I also understood the prevalence of orality in the customs of communication and adapted myself to this environment. After several weeks of uncertainty and missed opportunities in Beirut, several academics from the Lebanese American University (LAU) and the Université Saint-Joseph (USJ) opened their doors. They were decisive gatekeepers for my research project, who shared invaluable advice and contacts in the case cities.

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[396] Yasir Suleiman and Paul Anderson, "'Conducting Fieldwork in the Middle East': Report of a Workshop held at the University of Edinburgh on 12 February 2007," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 35 (2008): 151, doi:10.1080/13530190802180571.

Once in the case cities, some clientelist actors like Hezbollah politicians and members were particularly reluctant to offer interviews with a foreign researcher. Lob, who unsuccessfully attempted to reach Hezbollahis, explains that "like any military and guerrilla organisation — especially one that is subjected to Western terrorist designations and economic sanctions — [Hezbollah] is innately and justifiably secretive, vigilant, and suspicious of foreigners and outsiders, including academics, scholars, and researchers."[397] It would be impossible to access officials of the Islamic Resistance without intercession from an established political personality in Baalbek. At the end of an interview with a former Christian deputy from Baalbek I secured his mediation to inform Hezbollah of my interest to set an interview. This practice is called purposive snowballing. It took several weeks to gain the trust of Hezbollah. After tens of calls repetitively detailing my research interests and close surveillance in the streets of Baalbek I was finally granted with a first appointment.

The meeting with the Hezbollah party official perfectly illustrated how I used the malleability of the notion of "belonging" to entice the trust of some participants. Indeed, I anticipated that my French nationality could deter some interviewees from participating or sharing genuine observations. However, I soon understood that shared cultural values with Lebanese francophones shaped a common space of "belonging" crossing national identities. Introductory discussions on the latest novel from Amin Maalouf,[398] the architectural beauty of Bordeaux or the Lebanese diaspora in Dakar (Senegal) helped create trust even with the most difficult parties to access to. Hence, the Hezbollah party official recalled his memories of student life in France before opening a frank discussion on the party of God's management of the Syrian migration into Baalbek.

Overall, this experience illustrates one of the main lessons extracted from this fieldwork research. I understood that researching human beings in their own living

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[397] Eric Lob, "Researching Hizbullah in Lebanon," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49 (2017): 521, doi:10.1017/S0020743817000393.
[398] Amin Maalouf is a French-Lebanese author (novelist and essayist). He is the first ever elected Lebanese member of the *Académie française*, which gathers francophone writers from all over the world and is the most revered institution regulating the use of the French language.

environment necessitates an inherent scientific perseverance, while also demonstrating a constant capacity of human flexibility.[399]

Conclusive remarks

I introduced this methodological chapter by outlining the inductive scientific inquiry underpinning this research. The 2016 local election results empirically broke with the norm of the expected durability of elite power in some Lebanese municipalities. Electors expressed their anger in the ballots by defeating incumbent clientelist elites in Zahle and Tripoli or strongly challenging them in Baalbek. In these three regional capitals, the customary routine of clientelist elite dominance was unexpectedly disrupted in the North capital where, unlike in Zahle, incumbents were not replaced by another patron but by a group of political independents. In order to address this research puzzle I set out a comparative research design which intended to unveil why the disruption of clientelist loyalties occurred and then how the dominant local elites in the three selected case-cities attempted to maintain or restore their leadership. Hence, the unit of analysis of this research is local governance as exerted by the dominating clientelist networks in the case cities. This research is both cross-sectional and longitudinal because the selected municipalities are studied simultaneously and over time. In order to compare the trajectory of elite dominance in each city, the chapter explained how elections are used as a measure of the endurance of clientelist loyalties. The 2016 local elections demonstrated the challenge to clientelist power. Then the 2018 parliamentary elections serve as a test of the success or failure of the power strategies put in place by local clientelist elites to retain or recover their hold on power.

The second part of the chapter clarified the rationale of the case selection. This research compares the three Lebanese border municipalities of Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli because they share key historical, socioeconomic and political dimensions, while at the same time differing on the typology of clientelism dominating local power. This focus evaluates whether the material, symbolic and collective internal

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[399] Lob, "Researching Hizbullah in Lebanon."

resources possessed by clientelist networks prove determinant in ensuring their power endurance. The chapter then depicted a portrait of the three selected cities before the Syrian migration. It outlined how their local demography and political characteristics might also affect the decision making of the local elites.

A third section of the chapter then described the process of fieldwork data collection. This research mainly relies upon original qualitative and quantitative data generated in the three Lebanese case cities from 2018 to 2019. The 105 elite interviews and 210 survey questionnaires, participant observations and secondary sources produce an empirical thickness which enables an unveiling of local governance strategies in crisis. Subsequently, the chapter described the coding scheme devised to identify the power strategies implemented by local elites under strain. This systematic categorisation intends to assess whether the observed elite strategies after 2016 contributed to the endurance or vulnerability of their dominance, or restoration of dominance over time. Finally, the chapter concluded on the ethical and safety provisions entailed by fieldwork research in a "risky" environment.

The three following empirical chapters separately focus on a single case city: chapter 5 on Zahle, chapter 6 on Baalbek and chapter 7 on Tripoli, and each is structured around four main sections. The first section of the chapters describes how the changing socioeconomic order gradually broke clientelist social contracts for local communities from 2011 to 2016. After exposing the electoral expression of voters' discontent in 2016, the empirical chapters delve into the identification of the power strategies implemented by local elites to retain or recover power between 2016 and 2018. The chapters close on the electoral test of the 2018 parliamentary elections, to assess the efforts of elites to perpetuate their political dominance in the context of a major material crisis.

Chapter 5. Zahle
The Protective Governance of Militia-to-political Clientelism

This first empirical chapter, which focuses on the city of Zahle, reveals how traditional elites lost local power in 2016. They were then replaced by militia-to-political clientelist elites which, after 2016, retained the loyalty of their protégés by implementing a power strategy of material alleviation (E1).

The first section of the chapter describes how the traditional leadership of Zahle, represented by the Skaff family, ended up losing the loyalty of a fringe of its clientele from 2010 to 2016. Before the eruption of the Syrian conflict, the municipal council of the capital of the Bekaa governorate was indeed dominated by traditional clientelism, held by the Skaff family. These traditional elites, which dynastically ruled Zahle, suddenly found themselves on the front lines of the management of the Syrian displacement after 2011. As I detailed in the theoretical chapter (chapter 3), a new socioeconomic order based on the exploitability of the Syrian "resource" emerged in Zahle, as in other migrant-hosting cities. However, the chapter explains that the municipality was particularly passive in attempting to regulate the migrant presence. Indeed, many members of the traditional elite personally benefited from new rents extracted from the Syrians, notably large landowners in the Bekaa valley. In consequence, the livelihoods of the Zahlawi (Zahle's inhabitants) lower middle class, who could not exploit the Syrians, were seriously damaged while their leadership did not even attempt to protect them. It was then clear that clientelist social contracts tying the traditional leadership with some of their core supporters were broken.

The second section of the chapter explains how in the 2016 elections Zahlawi voters expressed their social anger towards incumbent traditional elites. The Skaff family lost the municipality of Zahle that it had controlled since the first post-war election of 1998. The Lebanese Forces (LF) were the winners of that election. The LF is the political heir of the Christian militia which had defended Zahle against the Syrian army's siege of 1981. The Lebanese Forces represent a form of militia-to-political clientelism as defined in the literature review chapter (chapter 2). The LF therefore are active members of the clientelist regime and thus did not represent any threat to the prevalence of patronage in Zahle. The Lebanese Forces had made a coalition with

other fellow Christian parties to compete against the incumbent traditional elites. Their electoral bid was fully successful as they won a complete victory at the municipal council in 2016. Hence, the LF and its allies replaced traditional clientelism with their own patronage system. This clientelist turnover is not unusual in Lebanon, and simply reflects the evolution of the dominant profile of the country's elites. Nevertheless, pressure was high on the elected coalition of Christian parties, as the Syrian presence acutely affected the livelihoods of the Zahlawi population. Therefore, how would militia-to-political elites durably retain the loyalty of their electors?

In response to this question, the third section of the chapter presents the power strategy adopted by the newly elected militia-to-political municipality to hold the reins of power. The Christian parties had the capacity to implement a power strategy based on material alleviation. The chapter then describes the two main tactics of material alleviation (E1) implemented in the municipality of Zahle since 2016. First, the militia-to-political municipality strictly implemented restrictive residency and labour laws on Syrian migrants to contain financial pressures weighing on their protégés. Secondly, the municipality attracted compensatory financial means from external sources of funding (from Zahlawi diaspora and incoming humanitarian actors) to maintain the servicing of its constituents. Trends extracted from surveys with local residents confirm a feeling of protection from the municipality's policies of management of the Syrian migration.

The fourth section of the chapter consequently demonstrates through the 2018 parliamentary vote that militia-to-political clientelism successfully held its political dominance over Zahle. It highlights that in addition to the materially protectionist policies of the municipality of Zahle, Lebanese Forces candidates relied on the combatant symbolism inherited by their party to galvanise their supporters. As a result, the Lebanese Forces won several Christian deputies in 2018. The material alleviation power strategy (E1) proved to be an instrumental tool of power perpetuation in the midst of a stark economic crisis.

This chapter is based on fieldwork data generated in Zahle from June to September 2018. The empirical analysis relies on the elite narratives extracted from 28

interviews conducted with local decision makers (including deputies, the mayor, municipal councillors, religious leaders, and civil society activists). To probe the effects of municipal governance on local communities, I use 12 survey questionnaires filled by Lebanese residents of Zahle and 40 surveys answered by displaced Syrians living in the Bekaa governorate in 2018. Despite their lack of randomisation, these surveys outline interesting trends in the public opinion. Moreover, I did observe the parliamentary elections' voting process in Zahle on the 6th of May 2018 and conducted 4 exit polling stations interviews. Finally, I also used Lebanese newspaper articles and social media publications to document this dramatic chain of events.

In the following section, I first explain that traditional elites were dominant in Zahle before the Syrian displacement. I illustrate their grip on Zahle's parliamentary and municipal representation in the elections held since the end of the civil war.

2010-2016
5.1 Zahle's Traditional Elites: From Power Control to Demise
5.1.a Chronicle of the Local and Parliamentary Elections in Zahle

In Zahle, the Skaff family (Popular Bloc party) firmly controlled the city before the civil war (1975-1990).[400] But during the war, militias defending Lebanese Christians against the Syrian occupants and other Lebanese belligerents took power in Christian populated areas - like Zahle.[401] The largest Christian militia then was the Lebanese Forces. At the end of the conflict, the leader of the Lebanese Forces (Samir Geagea) transformed the militia into a political party.[402] However, the political ambitions of the Lebanese Forces were dashed by the Syrian occupants. Indeed, even after the end of the civil war, Lebanon was still under the tutelage of Syria (it started in 1976 and ended in 2005, after twenty-nine years of occupation). As the Lebanese Forces did

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[400] Chaoul, « Zahlé : De la Za'âma nationale, » 439-47.
[401] William Harris, "The View from Zahle: Security and Economic Conditions in the Central Bekaa 1980-1985,"
Middle East Journal 39 (1985): 271.
[402] Hamzeh, "Clientalism, Lebanon," 174.

not comply to the Syrian rule, the party was banned from Lebanon and its leader jailed for war crimes in 1994.[403]

This national context artificially protected the dominance of the Skaff family, which was spared from the competition of popular Christian parties like the Lebanese Forces. Electoral results are useful measures to capture the power dynamics amongst local clientelist elites in Zahle. In table 5.1 below, I present a chronological display of the evolution of parliamentary and municipal representation in Zahle from the end of the war until 2010 (right before the start of the Syrian migration crisis).

Table 5.1 Parliamentary and local elections results in Zahle, 1992-2010

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS RESULSTS						
Party name/Leader	Clientelist type	\<Deputy Seats Won per Election\>				
		1992	1996	2000	2005	2009
Lebanese Forces (LF), Samir Geagea	**Militia-to-political**	-	-	-	0 ⎪7	3 ⎪7
Kataeb (KB), Samy Gemayel	Militia-to-political	-	-	-		1
Free Patriotic Movement (FPM), M. Aoun	Political	-	-	-	1 ⎪7	0 ⎪7
Popular Bloc (PB), Elias Skaff	Traditional	2 ⎪7	5 ⎪7	6/7	4	
Elias Hrawi	Traditional	1 ⎪	1 ⎪	1/7	-	-
Other parties and independents	-	4/7	1/7	1/7	3/7	4/7

LOCAL ELECTIONS RESULTS				
Party name/Leader	Clientelist type	\<Municipal Council Seats Won per Election\>		
		1998	2004	2010
Lebanese Forces (LF), Samir Geagea	**Militia-to-political**	-	-	2/21
Popular Bloc (PB), Elias Skaff	Traditional	15/21	20/21	19/21
Elias Hrawi	Traditional	7/21	1/21	-

Legend:
- = party not competing
/ = single party list
⎪ = coalition list of several parties

This table represents all the parliamentary and local elections organised in Lebanon since the end of the civil war in 1990. Some elections were delayed because of national political stalemates.

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[403] Marwan G. Rowayheb, "Lebanese Leaders: Are They a Factor of Political Change?," *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 5 (2014): 186, doi:10.1080/21520844.2014.961396.

For background information, the municipality of Zahle is located within a Bekaa constituency (today Bekaa I) granted 7 deputies in the Chamber: 2 Greek Catholics, 1 Maronite, 1 Greek Orthodox, 1 Armenian Orthodox, 1 Shia and 1 Sunni. In parallel, the city of Zahle is allocated 21 municipal councillors by the Municipal Act (1977), which is quite a high number of representatives considering that it is one of the largest urban centers in the country. There is no formal sectarian distribution of councillors, which is a matter of negotiation amongst the largest power holders (for more details see in chapter 2).

The allocation of parliamentary seats since 1992 illustrates how the Syrian occupation artificially maintained the power of the more cooperative traditional leadership of the Skaff family. The Skaff's developed, over the years, ambiguous relations with the Syrian occupants. The withdrawal of the last Syrian troops from the Bekaa valley in 2005, ending 29 years of occupation, made Zahle's traditional elites vulnerable to an open power competition.[404] The political context swiftly changed with the departure of the Syrians. The Cedar revolution in 2005 reframed the Lebanese polity into bipolarism.[405] On one side stood the pro-Western, pro-independence 14th of March coalition of Lebanese parties.[406] This was mainly constituted by Sunni and Christian parties, including the Lebanese Forces. On the other hand, an alliance of pro-Syrian regime parties formed the 8th of March opposition.[407] It primarily gathered Shia and Christian parties as well as the Skaff family.[408]

The **2009 parliamentary elections** in Zahle were consequently shaped by this new political cleavage. The Lebanese Forces, alongside other Christian parties and the largest Sunni party (the Future Movement) provided to the Zahlawis a united list

[404] Abbas Assi, *Democracy in Lebanon. Political Parties and the Struggle for Power since Syrian Withdrawal* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 1-2.
[405] Tamirace Fakhoury, "Lebanon's Versatile Nationalism," *Working Paper EUI RSCAS Mediterranean Programme Series* 13 (2008): 12.
[406] Amaia Goenaga and Elvira Sanchez Mateos, "Elites, power and political change in post-war Lebanon," In *Political Regimes in the Arab World. Society and the Exercise of Power*, ed. Ferran Izquierdo Brichs (London: Routledge, 2012).
[407] Goenaga and Sanchez Mateos, "Elites, power and political change."
[408] Chaoul, « Zahlé : De la Za'âma nationale, » 453.

representing the 14th of March.[409] Against them, the incumbent deputies representing the traditional elites and other Christian parties ran together under the banner of the 8th of March alliance.[410] It was a rare instance when the electoral choice of the Zahlawis was not exclusively determined by kinship but was also based on ideological and regional preferences. The ballots granted a total victory to the Lebanese Force and allies.[411] Conversely, the traditional elites were defeated and thus lost any parliamentary representation in 2009. This electoral defeat signalled the weakening influence of traditional leadership in Zahle and across Lebanon as militia-to-political leadership gained influence.[412]

Decades of tight grip on local power yet did not fully disqualify the traditional elites from the power competition in Zahle. The local elections results, as shown in table 5.1, demonstrate that the Skaff family successfully maintained a majority on the municipal council up until the **2010 local elections**. Then, the Lebanese Forces wished to replicate their successful 2009 legislative bid at the municipal power echelon. The LF failed to present a united front and the Christian parties divided themselves into several lists.[413] This division gave a major boost to the incumbent traditional majority. Even more, the traditional leadership of Zahle understood that ideological confrontations did not benefit them. Therefore, the Skaff house

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[409] For the complete list of candidates see: « Liban/législatives : la liste du 14 Mars dans la circonscription de Zahlé rendue publique, » [Lebanon/Legislative Election: The March 14 List in the Constituency of Zahle is Made Public] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 17, 2009, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/618378/Libanlegislatives_%253A_la_liste_du_14_Mars_dans_la_circonscription_de_Zahle_rendue_publique.html.

[410] For the complete list of candidates see: « Liban/législatives : Skaff annonce la liste du Bloc populaire à Zahlé, » [Lebanon/Legislative Election: Skaff Announces the List of the Popular Bloc in Zahle] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 27, 2009, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/619579/Libanlegislatives_%253A_Skaff_annonce_la_liste_du_Bloc_populaire_a_Zahle.html.

[411] « La majorité du 14 Mars remporte les législatives à Zahlé, selon des résultats officieux, » [The March 14 Coalition Wins the Legislative Elections in Zahle according to Unofficial Results] *L'Orient-le Jour*, June 9, 2009, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/620891/La_majorite_du_14_Mars_remporte_les_legislatives_a_Zahle%252C_selon_des_resultats_officieux.html.

[412] Myriam Catusse and Jamil Mouawad. « Les choix de Jbeil : Notabilité locale, mobilisations nationales et réalignements, » [Jbeil's Choices: Local Notability, National Mobilisations and Realignments] In *Métamorphoses des figures du leadership au Liban. Champs et contrechamps des élections législatives de 2009*, [Evolution of Leadership Figures in Lebanon. Scopes and Reverse Shots of the 2009 Legislative Elections] ed. Myriam Catusse, Karam Karam, and Olfa Lamloum (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo/Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, 2011), 33-77.

[413] Scarlett Haddad, « Zahlé, bataille pour « l'honneur bafoué » des Skaff … » [Zahle, Battle for the "Contempted Honor" of the Skaff …] May 5, 2010, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/656092/_Zahle%252C_bataille_pour_%253C%253C%2Bl%2527honneur_bafoue%2B%253E%253E_des_Skaff....html.

attempted to depoliticise and localise the electoral campaign.[414] This electoral strategy proved successful, probably for the last time. The Skaff list won 19 councillors while 2 were taken by the sole Lebanese Forces.[415] Subsequently, the Skaff's enabled the election of Joseph Diab Maalouf as the mayor of Zahle.

Table 5.2 below presents the list of the main protagonists competing for power in Zahle.

Table 5.2 Main protagonists of power competition in Zahle

Clientelist Network	Clientelist typology	Protagonist	Position	Confession
Popular Bloc (PB)	Traditional	Elias Skaff	Leader (1992-2015)	Greek Catholic
		Myriam Skaff	Leader (2015-_)	Greek Catholic
		Joseph Diab Maalouf	Mayor of Zahle (2010-16)	Greek Catholic
Lebanese Forces (LF)	Militia-to-political	Samir Geagea	Leader (1986-_)	Maronite
		Assad Zoghaib	Mayor of Zahle (2016-22)	Greek Catholic
		George Okais	Deputy (2018-_)	Greek Catholic

The Skaff's did not know yet that, only a year later, they would be confronted with the most severe social and political crisis in Zahle since the end of the civil war. In the next section of the chapter, I describe how Syrian settlement into Zahle laid the conditions for a drastic socioeconomic change affecting the durability of clientelist loyalties towards the governing Skaff family.

5.1.b Zahle, A City of Refuge for Syrian Christians

As I explained in the city-portrait of Zahle (in chapter 4), the capital of the Bekaa governorate is one of the most religiously diverse urban centre in Lebanon. It hosts a mosaic of Eastern Christian communities and their respective regional dioceses. Five different religious groups respectively account for more than 10% of the Zahlawi population (at the district level).[416] Some of these Christian communities, including

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[414] Chaoul, « Zahlé : De la Za'âma nationale, » 452-3.
[415] « Brèves municipals. Les résultats non officiels à Zahlé, » [Local News in Brief. The Unofficial Results in Zahle] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 11, 2010, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/656770/Breves_municipales.html.
[416] Data extracted from: "Registered Voters by Confession," Lebanese Association for Democracy of Elections (LADE) and Lamba Labs, 2017, http://lebanonelectiondata.org/confessions.html.

the largest one in town, the Greek Catholics, originate from Syria.[417] In the meantime, large Christian minorities populate the neighbouring Syrian governorates of Homs and Hama. For generations, Syrian Christians have been intimately and socioeconomically connected to Zahlawi relatives and/or business partners. Therefore, Zahle presents a transnational "web of populations that have a very strong fabric of relationships, marriage, and economic exchanges between them," according to Chaoul, a Zahlawi sociologist.[418]

In 2012, Syrian civilians including large Christian populations living in Homs, were turned into deliberate targets by the Assad regime.[419] For them, neighbouring Zahle represented a refuge of choice in a familiar country.[420] As the conflict intensified, thousands of Syrian families, including many Christians, flowed into the Bekaa valley to look for a shelter.[421] It was a very sudden migration movement.

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[417] Nancy W. Jabbra, "Traditions in Transition: Change in Vernacular Religion in Lebanon's 'Bekaa Valley'," *Western Folklore* 77 (2018): 142.
[418] Interview conducted in Zahle, in August 2018.
[419] Fabrice Balanche, *Sectarianism in Syria's Civil War* (Washington D.C: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2018), 24.
[420] Hassine, *Les réfugiés et déplacés de Syrie*, 70.
[421] "Lebanese Border-Town Receives up to 10 000 Syrian Refugees Overnight," *Norwegian Refugee Council*, November 25, 2013, https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanese-border-town-receives-10-000-syrian-refugees-overnight.

The chronological review below represents the annual settlement of the surveyed Syrians living in the Bekaa governorate (see chart 5.1 below).[422] In 2012, 43% of the surveyed Syrians were already sheltering in the Bekaa. The Syrian influx peaked in May 2013. The UNHCR's registration centre in Zahle estimated then a daily average of 1'200 to 1'300 people showing-up in their office.[423]

Chart 5.1 Chronology of Syrian settlement in the Bekaa governorate
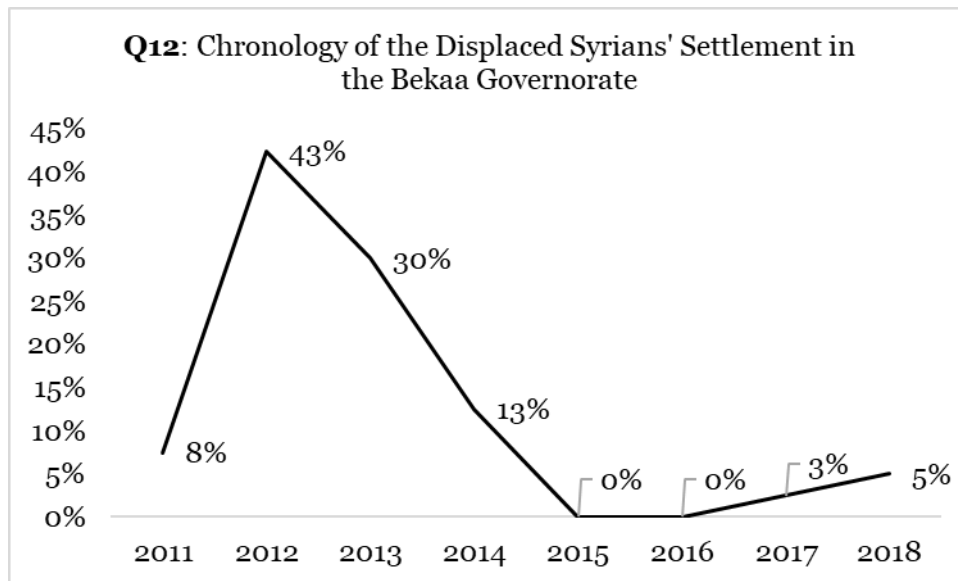
The leadership of the Skaff family in Zahle was taken aback by the scale of Syrian displacement into their city. The mayor of Zahle (Joseph Diab Maalouf, Skaff house), expressed his dismay in the Lebanese francophone daily L'Orient-le Jour regarding the extent the migration crisis affected his municipality: "It is even difficult to establish an accurate census of refugees, as the influx is large and differs every month."[424] Nevertheless, the mayor projected that approximately 25,000 Syrians were living inside the municipality of Zahle. 51% of the surveyed Syrians in the Bekaa explained that having local relatives justified their location of settlement.[425] To put things in perspective, the average resident population of Zahle reaches nearly 72,000

[422] Jean Allegrini, "Survey on Displaced Communities: Livelihoods and Inter-Sectarian Relations," *University College London* (2018): question 12.

[423] Greg Beals, "UNHCR Ramps up Registration of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon," *UNHCR*, May 27, 2013, https://www.unhcr.org/51a35bdd9.html.

[424] Soraya Hamdan, « À Zahlé, un malaise bien plus social qu'économique, » [In Zahle, A Much More Social Malaise than an Economic One] *L'Orient-le Jour*, March 12, 2014, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/858344/a-zahle-un-malaise-bien-plus-social-queconomique.html.

[425] Allegrini, "Survey on Displaced Communities," question 13.

inhabitants.[426] The Bekaa capital expanded its population by more than a third within a matter of months.

In reaction to this unprecedented migratory challenge, the municipality of Zahle did not act to regulate the settlement of the displaced communities. Political alliances most likely explained its decision to follow a policy of inaction. Since 2005, the Skaff family had forged a partnership with the pro-Syrian parties of the 8th of March camp, and especially so with Hezbollah.[427] The Shia militia denied the very existence of a conflict in Syria during the first years of the conflict. In consequence, it prevented Zahle's Skaff leadership from deploying its own humanitarian policy. Doing so would have been a concrete recognition of the reality of the Syrian war. Consequently, Local political opponents accused the municipality of Zahle of being indifferent to the severity of the crisis affecting the city.[428]

The inertia of the Skaff leadership in Zahle had direct consequences on the characteristics of the Syrian migration into the Bekaa capital. Above all, it facilitated the unmonitored urban settlement of incoming migrants. Syrian Christians having Zahlawi relatives or supported by their respective parish generally found "decent" homes in the municipality. However, those lacking local contacts, who often were not Christians, rented any kind of sub-standard shelter ranging from empty garages to unfinished buildings.[429] Many of these desperate Syrian families clustered into Zahle's working-class neighbourhood of the *cité industrielle* (industrial city). This demographic concentration in the grey margins of urban Zahle further exacerbated tension on local resources in already modest communities. From garbage collection to electricity to water access, the municipality's capacity to ensure public services in the most pressured areas was deeply challenged.[430] These tensions on local resources laid the ground for drastic socioeconomic changes in the city.

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[426] Jihad Farah, Rasha Ghaddar, Elie Nasr, Rita Nasr, Hanan Wehbe, and Eric Verdeil, "Solid Waste Management in Lebanon: Lessons for Decentralisation," *Democracy Reporting International* (2019): 24.

[427] Chaoul, « Zahlé : De la Za'âma nationale, » 453.

[428] See the transcript of *Elie's* (anonymised name) follow-up interview conducted by phone in August 2021.

[429] Lisa Pearce, "Zahle dispatch: Life among Syria's Christian refugees," *World Watch Monitor*, May 1, 2013, https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2013/05/zahle-dispatch-life-among-syrias-christian-refugees/.

[430] Hamdan, « À Zahlé, un malaise bien plus social qu'économique. »

In the next section of the chapter, I review how the new cleavage of Syrian exploitability untied the loyalty of core supporters from the Skaff leadership.

5.1.c 2011-2016: A Socioeconomic Order in Transition

The Syrian displacement into Zahle deeply affected the political-economy from which the Skaff leadership extracted its material resources. In a matter of months, Zahle transitioned from an agro-industrial economy to a migrant exploitative economy. Indeed, the Bekaa valley is historically the agricultural powerhouse of Lebanon. In 2013, 40% of the fertile land in the Bekaa belonged to Zahlawis.[431] First amongst others, Zahle's traditional leader Elias Skaff, owed his fortune to the ownership of vast pieces of land in Zahle's suburban territories.[432] Alongside Zahle's local elites, there were several small farmers and landowners, sometimes forming food cooperatives, which structured the Zahlawi economy.[433] The Bekaa capital therefore built its prosperity as a regional trading crossroads of agroindustry.[434] The Syrian migration into the Bekaa valley turned this political-economy upside down.

Thousands of Syrians who formerly worked in the fields of the Bekaa fled to Lebanon. They found refuge on the very lands which they used to cultivate every season.[435] Zahlawi landowners approved the creation of informal tented camps on their fields in exchange for the payment of monthly rent. Payments ranged between 75 to 100 American dollars per month with added expenses for electricity or water supply. As a result, the presence of displaced communities on agrarian lands enabled the transformation of Zahle's agro-industrial economy towards an economy of Syrian

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[431] Muriel Rozelier, « Zahlé : à la recherche d'un nouveau souffle, » [Zahle: In Search of a New Breath] *Le Commerce du Levant*, May 31, 2013, https://www.lecommercedulevant.com/article/22085-zahl-la-recherche-dun-nouveau-souffle.

[432] Muriel Rozelier, « Propriété Skaff, » [Skaff Property] *Le Commerce du Levant*, January 31, 2013, https://www.lecommercedulevant.com/article/21548-proprit-skaff.

[433] See: Rita Jalkh, Marc Dedeire, Melanie Requier Desjardins, "An Introduction to Food Cooperatives in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon: Territorial Actors and Potential Levers to Local Development Through Culinary Heritage," *Food Ethics* 5 (2020): 20, doi:10.1007/s41055-020-00079-0.

[434] The Bekaa governorate is the largest agricultural area in Lebanon and has the second highest share of industrial companies with 41% of industrial firms operating in the food and beverage sectors. IDAL, "Bekaa Governorate," *Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL),* 2022, http://investinlebanon.gov.lb/en/lebanon_at_a_glance/invest_in_regions/bekaa_governorate.

[435] Carpi, "Learning and Earning in Constrained Labour Markets," 19.

"rent" exploitation. Indeed, the "hospitality" business proved far more lucrative for the landowners than the revenues earned from farming.[436]

As large landowners, the Skaff family were amongst the first to benefit from this exploitative economy. The elite members of their political house are also large landowners. With vast lands now covered with thousands of displaced families, they rapidly accumulated unprecedented sums of money.[437] Even more, displaced Syrians (from grandmothers to children) provided a malleable, often mistreated, workforce for the remaining cultivated fields. Costs of farming had rarely been so low. Certainly, the Skaff leadership of the Zahle enjoyed an unprecedented profit from this post-migration economy. The wealthiest members of Zahlawi society were not the only ones to extract new rents from commodified migrant populations. As I explained in the theoretical chapter (chapter 3), all citizens with the means to exploit the Syrian "resource" benefited from this new exploitative socioeconomic order. The Lebanese having small properties or lands to sublet to migrants raised new revenues. So did the business owners who replaced their Lebanese employees with illegal Syrian workers. A share of the Zahlawi lower middle class, however, was not in a position to benefit from the Syrian exploitability cleavage.

It is here that the characteristics of the migration into Zahle matters. The urban settlement of the Syrians into Zahle created the conditions for strong labour competition with Zahlawi employees and companies. For many Syrian migrants, Zahle represented an attractive urban centre offering a variety of flexible work opportunities. The extent of the Syrian presence meant that the migrants expanded their customary sectors of activity to semi-skilled professions performed by the Lebanese. An economist at the chamber of commerce (*Chambre de commerce d'industrie et d'agriculture de Zahlé*, CCIAZ) explained that the diversification of the type of jobs filled by displaced workers enhanced the impact of the migrant labour

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[436] Asaad Zoghaib, the mayor of Zahle (2016-2022), explained me the "maths" of the hospitality business. He estimated that per year a landowner subletting a thousand tents on a territory of 50'000 square meters (which he considers the average size of the land owned by Bekaa farmers) earns "eight hundred thousand dollars" per year.[436] He then calculated that, as a farmer, "if he [was] successful and he plants something that makes a good profit, he would make about forty thousand dollars a year. Compare forty thousand dollars to eight hundred thousand dollars!" See the transcript of Asaad Zoghaib. Interview conducted in Zahle, in April 2018.

[437] See the transcript of the then municipal councilor (and future mayor of Zahle), Asaad Zoghaib. Interview conducted in Zahle, in April 2018.

competition in Zahle.[438] Zahlawi craftsmen, shopkeepers, and hairdressers faced an unmatchable price competition from Syrian workers. Displaced workers thus prompted the social decline of Zahle's lower middle class.[439] As a measure of the profound social transformation experienced by Zahlawi society, 55% of the Lebanese survey respondents estimated in 2018 that their livelihood had been directly and negatively impacted by Syrian settlement since 2011.[440] This is the highest level of anxiety expressed across the three case cities compared in this research.

The Skaff's remained complacent with an economy serving their private interests. Inexorably, social anger raised amongst the Zahlawis feeling abandoned by their own authorities, who they blamed for not even attempting to protect them from the negative externalities induced by Syrian migration. The mayor of Zahle miscalculated that a confrontation would erupt between Lebanese and Syrians.[441] Instead, Zahlawi discontent was not mainly targeted at the displaced communities, but at their traditional leadership. Dissatisfied inhabitants staged spontaneous demonstrations of outrage on Zahle's main *boulevard* (principal high street).[442] Workers blamed their (former) employers for firing them to employ cheap Syrian employees. Small business-owners accused the municipality of failing to protect them from competition from illegal businesses. Indeed, the municipality of Zahle did not implement the restrictive residency and labour laws concerning Syrian migrants who had been residing in Lebanon since 2015. The Skaff's remained deaf to the demands expressed by some of their core supporters in these public rallies. They clearly made the choice of preserving the interests of Zahle's business elites. In consequence, many Zahlawis felt betrayed by a traditional leadership unwilling to protect them. The clientelist social contracts tying them to the Skaff family suffered a serious blow. In the political opposition within the clientelist regime, the Lebanese Forces gambled that the population's resentment towards unprotective traditional elites could bring them to power.

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[438] Anonymised name. Interview conducted in Zahle, in July 2018.

[439] Fabrice Balanche and Eric Verdeil, « L'insertion des réfugiés au Liban : une grande précarité, » [The Integration of Refugees in Lebanon: A Great Precariousness] In *Atlas du Liban. Les nouveaux défis*, ed. Eric Verdeil, Ghaleb Faour and Mouin Hamze (Beirut: Presses de l'Ifpo, CNRS Liban, 2018), 32.

[440] Jean Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities: Livelihoods, Politics and Inter-Sectarian Relations since 2011," *University College London* (2018), question 45.

[441] Soraya Hamdan, « À Zahlé, un malaise bien plus social qu'économique. »

[442] See Melhem Chaoul's transcript. Interview conducted in Zahle, in June 2018.

The second section of the chapter therefore illustrates how the breakdown of clientelist social contracts reverberated in the Zahlawi ballots in the 2016 local election.

2016 Local Elections
5.2 The Renewal of the Ruling Clientelist Elites
5.2.a Political Context and Competing Lists

The 2016 local election was the first vote organised in Lebanon since the start of the Syrian migration. Zahle's incumbent municipal majority, backed by the Skaff family, hoped to perpetuate their historic leadership in the Bekaa capital. However, the context of this campaign presented considerable obstacles to the customary reproduction of their local dominance.

First, the record of the outgoing municipality was seriously contested on social media by many Zahlawis. The presumed inaction of the Skaff leadership brought strong criticisms, especially on the absence of municipal management of migration issues, infrastructural decay, and environmental pollution. These accounts raised the question of the reliability of the Skaff's clientelism in addressing the material needs of the community while the city faced unprecedented socioeconomic challenges. Second, the death of Elias Skaff in 2015 further destabilised the traditional political house.[443] His wife, Myriam, took succession of the Skaff house. The new leader certainly lacked political experience, which alarmed some core supporters about her capacity to preserve the cohesion of the clientele.

In parallel, the Lebanese Forces, who were leading the municipal opposition to the Skaff majority, benefited from a favourable national context. Since the end of the war, the Christian political scene had been bitterly divided after a bloody intra-Christian war in 1989-1990. However, in January 2016 the Forces formalised a

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[443] Joëlle Seif, « Elias Skaff terrassé par la maladie à 67 ans. Zahlé éplorée après la mort du bey, » [Elias Skaff Struck Down by Illness at 67. Zahlé Grieving After the Death of the Bey] *Magazine le Mensuel*, October 16, 2015, https://magazine.com.lb/2015/10/15/elias-skaff-terrasse-par-la-maladie-a-67-ans-zahle-eploree-apres-la-mort-du-bey-2/.

historical reconciliation with their past rivals (the Free Patriotic Movement).[444] They agreed on a compromise of governance guaranteeing ministerial positions to the LF if the latter supported the election of General Aoun at the Lebanese presidency. Such a strategy of electoral alliance was designed to contain any political alternative within Christian communities.[445] It therefore granted a competitive advantage to the Lebanese Forces in their battle with the Skaff family.

Table 5.3 Local elections in Zahle, 2016

List Name	Clientelist typology	Sponsors/Backers	Votes	Seats	Council
			Election Results		
"Honesty"	Traditional	Skaff family (Popular Bloc)	7,930	0	0/21
"Zahle Development"	**Militia-to-political** Militia-to-political Political	**Lebanese Forces** (LF)*, Kataeb (KB), Free Patriotic Movement (FPM).	10,157	**21**	**21/21**
"Zahle Deserves"	Oligarchic	Fattoush family	6,005	0	0/21
"Citizens in a State"	[Independents]	Charbel Nahas	361	0	0/21

*= **Christian parties coalition** including the Lebanese Forces, the Kataeb, and the Free Patriotic Movement.
⏐ = coalition list of several parties.

Sources: Information International, "The Results of Municipal Elections. Lebanon 2016," 10.

As displayed in table 5.3 above, the Lebanese Forces slated a list of coalition with the largest Christian parties called "Zahle Development."[446] They ambitioned to take over the majority at Zahle's municipal council. Three other lists competed for local representation. The incumbent Skaff political house, which was ruling Zahle since the end of the civil war, presented the "Honesty" list.[447] Noticeably, the departing mayor of Zahle was absent from the list of candidates, as he had decided to withdraw from political life.

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[444] Sandra Noujeim, « L'alliance Aoun-Geagea suscite à la fois exaltation et craintes, » [The Aoun-Geagea Alliance Arouses both Excitement and Fears] *L'Orient-le Jour*, January 19, 2016, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/965644/lalliance-aoun-geagea-suscite-a-la-fois-exaltation-et-craintes.html.

[445] Jeffrey G. Karam, "Beyond Sectarianism: Understanding Lebanese Politics through a Cross-Sectarian Lens," *Brandeis University, Middle East Brief* 107 (2017): 3.

[446] Jeanine Jalkh, « À Zahlé, trois listes et un maître de jeu, le panachage, » [In Zahle, Three Lists and a King Master, List Mixing] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 5, 2016, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/984392/a-zahle-trois-listes-et-un-maitre-de-jeu-le-panachage.html.

[447] Jeanine Jalkh, « À Zahlé, trois listes et un maître de jeu. »

5.2.b The Christian Parties' Coalition Campaign

In this febrile context for the outgoing Skaff-led majority, the coalition of clientelist Christian parties based its campaign on its capacity to protect the livelihoods of the Zahlawis. The future mayor of Zahle, Asaad Zoghaib, promised policies which would define the Lebanese Forces' power strategy of material alleviation (E1) once elected at the municipal council (as defined in the theoretical chapter, chapter 3). The Christian coalition promoted two main policies designed to respond to the socioeconomic crisis affecting Zahle: enforcing the rule of law restricting migrant labour and offering reliable access to material support for Zahle.

Christian parties pledged that they would have the might to enforce the rule of law in the city. This demand, expressed by many Zahlawis, was purposed to counter the labour and business competition exerted by migrant workers in Zahle. Illustratively, candidate Zoghaib made clear during a TV interview that he would unequivocally implement the law once elected.[448] This was a direct reference to the incumbent mayor who did not enforce the residency and labour laws restricting the activities of displaced Syrians in Lebanon since 2015. The future mayor justified the implementation of these restrictive laws as a protective tool to "preserve our healthy living with our people in our neighbourhood" against changing demographics.[449]

In addition, Christian parties promised that their own clientelist networks could offer guaranteed access to material leverages from the central administration, unlike the decaying Skaff political house. The three national parties constituting the coalition had direct connections to state resources either from the cabinet or the Chamber of Deputies. Candidate Zoghaib publicly defended this comparative advantage. He tweeted on the eve of the election that: "The presence of the political parties on our side makes all ministries open to us, especially in light of the quotas in forming governments in Lebanon."[450] These open channels would therefore support the large

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[448] See Asaad Zoghaib's interview: MTV, "البلدية الإنتخابات," [Municipal Elections] *mtv*, May 4, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&feature=youtu.be&v=1uIKuy1tQP0.

[449] Asaad Zoghaib, "We Affirm.," *Twitter*, April 19, 2016, https://twitter.com/AsaadZoghaib/status/722410579273523200.

[450] Asaad Zoghaib, "The Presence of the Political Parties," *Twitter*, May 7, 2016, https://twitter.com/AsaadZoghaib/status/728944886704021505.

infrastructural upgrade of Zahle's city centre promised by the coalition.[451] Conversely, the Skaff's could not offer such material guarantees to their supporters. The Skaff family had lost all seats in parliament since 2009. In light of their policy of inaction since the start of the migration crisis in Zahle, many (formerly) loyal supporters to the Skaff house were therefore ready to defect to a more protective form of patronage. The ballots unequivocally reflected this marked disruption in the clientelist loyalties towards the Skaff family.

5.2.c Zahle's Electoral Results

With 29.5% of the electorate the Skaff list was defeated for the first time since the end of the civil war.[452] The Skaff family then dramatically lost both its parliamentary and municipal representation in Zahle. The election therefore confirmed the anticipated disruption of clientelist loyalties amongst a share of the core supporters of Zahle's Skaff political house. Such a vote of defiance towards the incumbent traditional clientelist elites enacted the dominance of militia-to-political clientelism in Zahle represented by the Lebanese Forces. The unity of the three leading clientelist Christian parties paid-off in the ballots. The Lebanese Forces and their allies earned their first victory at the municipality of Zahle. 37.8% of the electors voted in favour of their Christian coalition, which granted them a full takeover of the 21 seats of municipal councillors.[453] As the participation reached 41.6%, a rate resembling previously observed turnout, the new municipal majority led by the Lebanese Forces benefited from secure political legitimacy.[454] In consequence, militia-to-political clientelism then controlled both the parliamentary and municipal representation of the Christian communities of Zahle. The Zahlawi electorate formalised the decay of traditional clientelism by fully empowering the clientelist Christian parties. Such a clientelist turnover between two different forms of patronage is not unusual in Lebanese local politics and certainly demonstrates the evolving profile of the dominant elites in the city.

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[451] See the campaign ad presenting the project of the Christian parties' list: Asaad Zoghaib, "Asaad Zoghaib - Municipal Campaign 2016," *Youtube*, May 1, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=jQP2kMe02aM.
[452] Information International, "The Results of Municipal Elections. Lebanon 2016," 10.
[453] Information International, ibid.
[454] Information International, "The Results of Municipal Elections. Lebanon 2016," 9.

This electoral victory for the Lebanese Forces and its allies meant that the pressure on their capacity to deliver their promises to Zahlawi voters was acutely strong. Would the Lebanese Forces be capable of alleviating the socioeconomic pressures induced by the migratory shock on Zahle? The following third section of the chapter therefore details the power strategy of material alleviation (E1) adopted by the Christian parties once running the municipality of Zahle.

2016-2018
5.3 Protectionist Governance in Mitigation of the Syrian Settlement
5.3.a Choosing Material Alleviation (E1)

The Lebanese Forces and its allies, now at the head of the municipality of Zahle, benefited from a rare alignment of power holders at the top of the clientelist regime. As I explained in the literature review chapter (chapter 2), the president in Lebanon must belong to the Maronite confession. In late October 2016, two years of power vacuum finally ended with the election of General Aoun. [455] The president's party (the Free Patriotic Movement) partakes into the ruling coalition at the municipal council in Zahle. Less than two months later, Saad Hariri formed a new government granting four ministries to the Lebanese Forces and eight to its Christian allies.[456] The LF controlled key ministries such as the Ministry of Social Affairs which is charged to allocate state subsidies to welfare providers.[457] For the municipality of Zahle, these different cabinet and executive positions handed to allied ministers represented direct and reliable access to material resources extracted from the central administration.

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[455] L'Orient-le Jour, « Michel Aoun élu président de la République, » [Michel Aoun Elected President of the Republic] *L'Orient-le Jour*, October 31, 2016, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1015657/michel-aoun-elu-president-de-la-republique.html.

[456] L'Orient-le Jour, « Le gouvernement Hariri voit le jour : voici sa composition, » [The Hariri Government is Born: Here is its Composition] *L'Orient-le Jour*, December 18, 2016, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1023661/le-gouvernement-hariri-voit-le-jour-voici-sa-composition.html.

[457] LBC, "Who is the new Minister of Social Affairs Pierre Abi Assi?" *LBC*, December 19, 2016, https://www.lbcgroup.tv/news/d/breaking-news/294889/who-is-the-new-minister-of-social-affairs-pierre-a/en.

Beyond a potentially facilitated access to public goods, it is important to note that the Lebanese Forces benefited from the valuable experience of self-rule during the civil war. Then, the LF governed their own state-within-the-state, in total autonomy.[458] This means that the former militia internalised practices of governance which were designed to secure the livelihoods and safety of their protégés during the most uncertain times. Therefore, the municipality of Zahle was very much aware that its constituents expected protectionist rule from the Christian parties.[459] To fulfil expectations, the municipality of Zahle was quite well equipped in terms of administrative and servicing capacity relative to the other case cities. For instance, the city prided itself on its reliable provision of electricity supplied by its very own company, *Electricité de Zahlé*.[460] The Zahlawi local authorities therefore enjoyed a sensible level of political autonomy. As a result, these conditions laid a favourable ground for militia-to-political elites to implement a power strategy of material alleviation (E1).

This power strategy materialised in two general policies: first, the municipality enforced restrictive laws conditioning the livelihoods of displaced communities. Second, it leveraged external funding to compensate for the Zahlawis' rising socioeconomic anxieties.

The first policy involved the implementation of the residency and labour laws concerning displaced Syrians residing in Zahle.[461] This legal framework was not enforced by the incumbent Skaff-backed municipality. On one hand, the labour laws were designed to curb the illegal competition exerted by informal Syrian workers and business-owners.[462] On the other hand, the residency laws notably barred displaced

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[458] Anne Marie Baylouny, "Born violent: Armed political parties and non-state governance in Lebanon's civil war," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 25 (2014): 333, doi:10.1080/09592318.2013.866432.

[459] See the transcript of the mayor of Zahle, Assad Zoghaib. Interview conducted in Zahle, in April 2018.

[460] Éric Verdeil, "Securitisation of Urban Electricity Supply. A Political Ecology Perspective on the Cases of Jordan and Lebanon," In *Routledge Handbook on Middle Eastern Cities*, ed. Haim Yacobi and Mansour Nasasra (London: Routledge, 2019), 246-64.

[461] See: Janmyr 2016, "Precarity in Exile."

[462] On labour laws in Lebanon see: Lea Bou Khater, "Labour Policy and Practice," *The Peace Building in Lebanon* (2017): 4.

Syrians lacking a formal tenancy agreement from enjoying legal residence.[463] In essence, this legalist policy sought to alleviate the socioeconomic pressures weighing on the Zahlawis by pushing "negative externalities" induced by the Syrian migration out of the city.

The second policy entailed to leverage external sources of funding in order to compensate for the rising social demands in the city. The municipality of Zahle attracted funds from humanitarian and cooperation actors in order to fulfil projects servicing the needs of its constituents. In parallel, the local parishes, which are in charge of delivering social welfare, mobilised resources from their respective diasporas to address the vulnerabilities of the local (and displaced) communities. Overall, this external fundraising policy intended to appease socioeconomic anxieties encountered by the Zahlawis.

In the next subsections of the chapter, I detail how the municipality of Zahle implemented each policy. First, I consider how the local authorities controlled the displaced communities to proceed with the closure of informal businesses and the eviction of illegal migrants, in order to protect Zahle's constituents.

5.3.b The Policy of Stringent Law Enforcement

As promised during the 2016 local elections campaign, the newly elected mayor of Zahle Asaad Zoghaib endeavoured to implement the 2015 residency and labour laws concerning displaced Syrians living in Zahle.[464] He justified this motivation by assuming that restricting the displaced communities' access to employment and housing would limit the impact of the migration's aftershocks on the livelihoods of the Zahlawis. To do so, the mayor benefited from the "hostile" legal framework towards displaced communities set by the Lebanese state since 2015.[465] This

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[463] Faten Kikano, Gabriel Fauveaud, and Gonzalo Lizarralde, "Policies of Exclusion: The Case of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon," *Journal of Refugee Studies* (2021): 2, doi:10.1093/jrs/feaa058.

[464] See the transcript of the mayor of Zahle, Assad Zoghaib. Interview conducted in Zahle, in April 2018.

[465] ICJ, "Unrecognized and Unprotected. The Treatment of Refugees and Migrants in Lebanon," *International Commission of Jurists* (2020): 4, https://www.icj.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Lebanon-Migrant-rights-Publications-Reports-Thematic-reports-2020-ENG.pdf.

framework mainly relied upon the enactment of restrictive residency and employment laws for Syrians established in Lebanon.[466]

At the regional level, the Governor of the Bekaa supplemented this framework in 2016 with several circulars which formalised the close monitoring of displaced communities by municipalities (see the governor's circular at appendix I, p.291).[467] The circulars specifically requested municipalities to "start and regularly update databases on the refugees they were hosting and urged them not to recognise any birth certificate, rent or shelter agreement for any refugee not registered with the municipality."[468] Therefore, the municipality of Zahle used these legal bases (which were contested by humanitarian agencies) to seize power that the central administration had voluntarily devolved to local authorities. In order to execute these powers systematically, the municipality endorsed stringent control of the displaced communities living inside the city of Zahle.

Monitoring Displaced Communities

To control local populations, demographic data is a powerful and necessary asset for local authorities. In late 2013, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM), set out a security plan which encouraged municipal police to collect statistics on displaced Syrians.[469] The Christian parties coalition had to start from scratch because its predecessors were reluctant to perform a similar monitoring of displaced Syrians. Therefore, a municipal councillor confirmed that the municipal police expanded its collaboration with the Internal Security Forces (the ISF is a security agency controlled by the Ministry of Interior) to extract accurate data on migrant communities.[470] The councillor explained that displaced individuals had to register with the municipality of Zahle to legalise their stay. In consequence, the municipality

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[466] On the residency laws concerning Syrians established in Lebanon and enacted since 2015 see: Janmyr, "Precarity in Exile," 68-70.

[467] Sourced from UNDP, "The Burden of Scarce Opportunities: The Social Stability Context in Central and West Bekaa," *Conflict Analysis Report* (2017): 28, https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/burden-scarce-opportunities-social-stability-context-central-and-west-bekaa-conflict.

[468] UNDP, ""The Burden of Scarce Opportunities," 8-9.

[469] The MoIM security plan called for: "the arming of municipal police and for their joint patrols with the Internal Security Forces under the authority of mayors and heads of security, and for confiscating Syrians' documents and overseeing aid and assistance." MOIM Circular 11/09/2013 in Mourad, "'Standoffish' Policy-making," 264.

[470] See *Elie's* transcript (anonymised name). Interview conducted in Zahle, in June 2018.

of Zahle was able to compile a comprehensive statistical record on the Syrians living inside the city.[471] 58% of Zahlawis were apparently aware that their municipality gathered data on displaced communities (according to the survey questionnaires that I conducted with local residents).[472] This is by far the highest rate amongst the compared case cities which supports the observation of a systematic and organised administrative effort from the municipality of Zahle.

The next step implemented by the municipality was to enforce stringent controls on the displaced communities' freedom of movement. The city of Zahle accordingly recruited more police personnel to fulfil this policing strategy. Mayor Zoghaib stated that the number of municipal policemen increased from fifty-six officers at the start of his mandate to "about two hundred".[473] He estimated that the municipal budget devolved to the security forces reached an unprecedent amount of 1.5 million American dollars per year.

Armed with reinforced municipal police, the municipality instated a curfew exclusively targeting displaced individuals in Zahle. A Zahlawi fruit producer, who employs Syrian workers in his orchard, assured that since 2017 the municipality "forbade Syrian workers to circulate after 6pm."[474] Curfews were indeed the most frequent policing tool used by Lebanese municipalities to administer displaced individuals in their community.[475] In Zahle, 92% of the surveyed residents reported the imposition of a curfew in their home town.[476] It is the only case city which employed this measure across the whole municipal territory.[477]

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[471] Makki interviewed the municipal police commissioner who provided precise data on the Syrian presence in Zahle. His services numbered 17'000 displaced individuals in the municipality in 2018. See: Diala Ali-Mohamed Makki, "Actors, Governance and Modalities of Sanitation Services: Informal Tented Settlements in Zahleh (Lebanon)" (Master diss., American University of Beirut, 2018): 30.

[472] Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities," question 64.

[473] See the transcript of the mayor of Zahle, Assad Zoghaib. Interview conducted in Zahle, in April 2018.

[474] See *Nader's* transcript (anonymised name). Interview conducted in Zahle, in May 2018.

[475] UNICEF, OCHA, and REACH, "Defining Community Vulnerabilities in Lebanon, Assessment Report: September 2014-February 2015," *REACH* (2015): 9, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/reach_lbn_report_defining_commuity_vuln erabilities_cc_0.pdf.

[476] Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities," question 64.

[477] The municipality of Baalbek imposed a curfew in a Sunni populated neighbourhood of the city where many Syrians found a shelter. Tripoli did not impose any curfew. See: Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities," question 64.

Once displaced communities living in Zahle were accounted for and contained by a curfew, the municipality was able to strictly enforce labour and residency laws concerning the displaced Syrians living in Zahle.

Law Enforcement

The mayor made the position of the Lebanese Forces and its allied Christian parties very clear during my interview with him. He stated: "I took the Lebanese law and applied the Lebanese law, very simple!"[478] Accordingly, the municipal police systematically verified the legal compliance of Syrians living in Zahle at least in two main areas: the housing conditions and employment status of these displaced communities.

The housing laws entail that only the family members mentioned on a legal tenancy agreement are allowed to live in the property.[479] However, most rental contracts concerning displaced Syrians were informal.[480] The remaining few legal ones only covered a limited number of tenants. A municipal councillor of Zahle added that the rental contract tying a displaced family with a Lebanese landlord should be registered at the municipality so that the tenants would pay local taxes at a rate of 6.5%.[481] Accordingly, only the displaced Syrians benefiting from the intermediation of either local relatives or their parish were conforming to these legal rules. De facto, it was mostly Syrian Christians who benefited from these legal protections.

The municipality consequently concentrated its efforts on the grey urban margins of the city where most impoverished Syrians had found a shelter in sub-standard properties. The working-class neighbourhood of the *cité industrielle* was designated as a municipal priority for legally screening the rental contracts of migrant residents. This area is an historic stronghold of the Lebanese Forces. There, the locals' discontent towards the anarchic settlement of displaced communities was especially

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[478] See the transcript of the mayor of Zahle, Assad Zoghaib. Interview conducted in Zahle, in April 2018.

[479] Kikano, Fauveaud, and Lizarralde, "Policies of Exclusion," 2, 10.

[480] Danièle Bélanger, Myriam Ouellet and Cenk Saraçoglu, "Syrian Trajectories of Exile in Lebanon and Turkey: Context of Reception and Social Class," *Population, Space and Place* 27 (2021): 5, doi:10.1002/psp.2474.

[481] This local tax rate is referenced in Makki, "Actors, Governance and Modalities," 41.

sharp. Thereby, the Zahle municipality "ordered evictions of [displaced individuals] living in the industrial zone" who did not fulfil the required legal conditions."[482] These evictions intended to push away from the city centre the pressure exerted by low-skilled informal migrant workers on the Zahlawi labour market.

75% of the surveyed Zahlawis knew that their city thoroughly verified the legality of the rental contracts of displaced individuals settled in-town.[483] It is again the only case city in this research which proceeded with orderly checks and evictions of Syrians not complying with residency laws.

In terms of labour laws, the municipality of Zahle implemented a distinctively stringent policy of exclusion of displaced Syrians from legal employment within the city. Once again, the mayor defended a purely legalist approach. He explained the Christian parties' position in the following terms: "No Syrians are allowed to work in the area. No Syrians are allowed to open any shops. So, every time I go to a shop opened by a Syrian, I close the shop."[484]

The municipality swiftly closed illegal businesses owned or managed by displaced Syrians which had flourished in some areas of the city. Lebanese employers were also warned about the consequences of hiring illegal workers. As a result, the local authorities efficiently restricted informal employment and illegal retail activities within Zahle. Indeed, only 17% of the surveyed Zahlawis mentioned having regular encounters with Syrians working in local shops.[485] This is the lowest level across the three case cities in this thesis. 58% of the respondents were informed that their municipality polices the opening of Syrian businesses.[486] Zahle is the only case city systematically proceeding with these legal checks amongst the compared municipalities.

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[482] UNDP, "Zahle and Bar Elias: Municipality-Led Evictions in Central Bekaa," *Conflict Analysis Report* (2018): 6, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/71589.
[483] Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities," question 64.
[484] See the transcript of the mayor of Zahle, Assad Zoghaib. Interview conducted in Zahle, in April 2018.
[485] Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities," question 69.
[486] Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities," question 64.

Table 5.4 Identifying the migration policies of Zahle's elites, 2016-2018

Type of Power Strategy	Policy	Elite Domination	
		Endurance	Vulnerability
Material Alleviation (E1) Urban Migration Management	Monitoring/securitising of the migrants	✓	
	Selectivity of migrants	✓	
	Enforcement of the labour laws (2015)	✓	
	Enforcement of the residency laws (2015)	✓	

In summary, table 5.4 above lists the range of policies practiced by Christian parties to contain socioeconomic pressures induced by the Syrian migration into Zahle. It indicates the coherent stringency of legal procedures used by militia-to-political elites to protect the clientelist social contracts tied with their protégés.

A complete strategy of material alleviation also encompassed local elites' efforts to attract new financial means necessary to address the scarcity of local resources. The next subsection of the chapter subsequently outlines how Zahle's Christian parties strived to leverage cooperation and diasporic funding to appease the pressured livelihoods of their constituents.

5.3.c The Policy of Leveraging External Material Compensations

The municipality of Zahle managed to contain the extent of the illegal Syrian presence into Zahle, but more than 17,000 displaced Syrians still resided in the city, according to the municipal police.[487] This level of demographic density implied an increased need for jobs in the resident population of Zahle and a considerable strain on municipal services (from electricity, water to sewage). Therefore, the Christian parties' majority at the municipal council endeavoured to mobilise external funding to support the local economy and alleviate the anxieties affecting constituents. Consequently, the municipality of Zahle implemented two main policies: first, the municipality attracted capital from cooperation agencies to boost the local economy.

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[487] Makki, "Actors, Governance and Modalities," 30. The mayor of Zahle shared a higher number of migrants living in his municipality. He estimated that 33,000 Syrians lived inside the Bekaa capital. See the transcript of the mayor of Zahle, Assad Zoghaib. Interview conducted in Zahle, in April 2018.

Second, it mobilised diasporic resources to support local welfare providers aiding vulnerable Zahlawis.

Funding from Cooperation Agencies

This first policy exemplifies the experience of the Christian parties in using external partners like foreign cooperation agencies to finance local development projects benefiting their own protégés. The mayor of Zahle knew well that UN agencies and international humanitarian agencies were not concentrating their interventions on development projects. Moreover, these actors predetermine their programs with foreign donors and consequently lack agency to negotiate tailored projects with local governing actors. Conversely, bilateral cooperation agencies are established actors of development in Lebanon. These agencies are state-funded organisations promoting development and distribution of humanitarian aid. Some of them were active for decades in the country.[488] They have tied long-term relations with political and civil society members. Therefore, cooperation agencies were privileged partners for the municipality of Zahle with whom to negotiate subsidies for projects with a "real impact on people," as explained the mayor.[489] I have selected the example of bilateral cooperation between the municipality of Zahle and the British Department for International Development (DFID). The DFID-Zahle partnership illustrates how the Christian parties have vigorously fulfilled this policy of capital extraction from foreign partners since the start of their mandate in 2016.

DFID developed a project in Lebanon which was entitled "Improved Networks, Training and Jobs" (INTAJ). It aimed to "address underlying causes of instability [..] by responding to the economic needs of target communities by building stronger businesses and increasing employment."[490] The cities benefiting from British

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[488] See for instance the cases of two agencies working in Lebanon: USAID (the American cooperation agency) in Kaouès, « Les ONG au Liban : l'exemple de l'USAID »; and ACIS (the Italian cooperation agency) in OCDE, « Annexe D. Visite sur le terrain au Liban, » [Annex D. Field Visit to Lebanon] *Revue de l'OCDE sur le développement* 10 (2009): 167-76.

[489] See the transcript of the mayor of Zahle, Assad Zoghaib. Interview conducted in Zahle, in April 2018.

[490] Mercy Corps, "INTAJ Stability Paper. Evidence from the SME Component," *Mercy Corps* (2017): 2, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/60797.

subsidies were selected by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and UNDP. [491] As a reminder, MoSA was then led by a minister from the Lebanese Forces. The ministry designated the Bekaa governorate a priority for the second round of DFID investments (2016-2017).

The municipality of Zahle could therefore benefit from a range of projects designed to support local businesses. For instance, the energy supplier *Electricité de Zahlé* (EDZ) improved its power generation thanks to temporary units from a British company (AGGREKO).[492] Regular visits from the then British Ambassador inaugurated UK-funded infrastructures. On these occasions the Ambassador met with the mayor and Christian parties' deputies of Zahle who could then channel their demands.[493] In 2017, the Ambassador paid a visit to two Zahlawi agro-industrial companies which hired employees thanks to British aid. His Excellency Hugo Shorter then declared that: "[The UK is] keen to continue working [..] on opportunities that are making a real difference in people's daily lives [...]. By March 2018 the UK would have invested £12.7m in this programme targeting much needed economic opportunities."[494] The Ambassador even concluded his speech by formulating a clear statement of support to the local authorities: "You have asked, and we are delivering."

The municipality of Zahle dutifully replicated similar partnerships with other established cooperation agencies in Lebanon, in order to attract subsidies from France, Italy and USA.[495] Development projects funded by foreign actors concretely

[491] See: UNDP, "Lebanon Host Communities Support Programme (LHSP)," *UNDP*, December, 2012, https://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/projects/SupportLebaneseHostCommunities.html.

[492] Verdeil, "Securitisation of Urban Electricity Supply," 19. See the Ambassador's visits reported by the National News Agency: NNA, "Shorter Visits Zahle. UK Strong Partner in Supporting Lebanese Communities," *National News Agency*, 2016, http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/64650/Shorter-visits-Zahle-UK-strong-partner-in-supporting-Lebanese-communities; and NNA, "Shorter Inaugurates Additional UK Funded Projects in Bekaa under Partnership between Ministry of Social Affairs and UNDP," *National News Agency*, 2017, http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/71891/Shorter-inaugurates-additional-UK-funded-projects-in-Bekaa-under-partnership-between-Ministry-of-Social-Affairs-and-UNDP.

[493] NNA, "Zaheleh Bloc MPs-Shorter Hold Talks," National News Agency, 2017, http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/76303/Zaheleh-bloc-MPs-Shorter-hold-talks.

[494] NNA, "Shorter Visits Agrifresh and Kayssar Atta Businesses in Zahle Benefitting from INTAJ Project," *National News Agency*, 2017, http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/76322/Shorter-visits-Agrifresh-and-Kayssar-Atta-businesses-in-Zahle-benefitting-from-39-INTAJ-39-Project.

[495] France's AFD selected Zahle, amongst 8 other Lebanese urban centers to benefit from its "Program for Economic and Urban Resilience in Lebanon" which was inaugurated in 2016. UPFI, "Program for

improved municipal services, and provided stable jobs for locals. Despite these tangible boosts for the local economy, many Zahlawis were however still feeling the strain of socioeconomic uncertainty. Thus, the city of Zahle relied on diasporic support to fund religious welfare programs addressing the needs of insecure populations.

Funding from the Diaspora

In Lebanon, welfare is largely distributed by private, mostly religious, organisations (see the literature review chapter, chapter 2, for more details).[496] Each religious order either possesses its own welfare department or a parent faith-based organisation (e.g., Caritas, for Lebanese Catholics). During the civil war, many militias also used the networks possessed by religious institutions in their strongholds to offer care to their supporters. The end of the conflict did not change this structure of welfare distribution in Lebanon.

In Zahle, the municipality consequently devolved social care responsibilities to the largest parishes in the city, which cater for their respective communities of believers. The beginning of the migration crisis put the Churches to the forefront of aid management. Therefore, local authorities, deputies, and religious leaders met on a regular basis to coordinate the welfare policies in the city. The Zahlawi religious orders faced an explosion of needs from both displaced and local communities, which challenged their relief capacity.

Despite this shock of social demands, two Zahlawi parishes, the Greek Catholic Archeparchy and the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchal-Vicariate, decided to implement holistic policies of care addressing both the primary and secondary needs of

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Economic and Urban Resilience in Lebanon," *UPFI Urban Projects Finance Initiative*, 2020, http://upfi-med.eib.org/en/projects/multi-city-urban-development-programme-in-lebanon/; Italy inaugurated a sewage treatment plant in Zahle in 2019, after investing more than 22 million euros in this project see: Giornale Diplomatico, "Libano: Italia sostiene impianto per trattamento acque reflue a Zahle, inaugurato oggi," [Lebanon: Italy Supports Wastewater Treatment Plant in Zahle, Inaugurated Today] *Giornale Diplomatico*, July 19, 2019, https://www.giornalediplomatico.it/Libano-Italia-sostiene-impianto-per-trattamento-acque-reflue-a-Zahle-inaugurato-oggi.htm.
[496] See: Rana Jawad, *Social Welfare and Religion in the Middle East – a Lebanese Perspective* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2009).

beneficiaries.[497] I only focus here on the example of the Greek Catholic Church because the narratives from the Syriac Orthodox clergy are similar.[498] he largest parish of Zahle understood that the sources of anxiety amongst local and displaced communities were often shared by both populations. As such, the welfare programs granting access to education, employment, or social care to the elderly became unique programs, mixing local and displaced beneficiaries.

To fulfil this welfare ambition, the diasporic leverage possessed by each parish was a strategic asset in the hands of the ecclesiastical orders. The Greek Catholic Archbishop explained that "friends from everywhere", from Australia to Europe, answered his calls for help.[499] Illustratively, international Christian FBOs like Aid to the Church in Need contributed to the creation of a soup kitchen serving 1400 meals per day (called *la table de Saint-Jean le miséricordieux*).[500] Overall, the Greek Catholic Archeparchy of Zahle managed to care for more than 2000 Syrian families and many more Lebanese residents, thanks to the support received from foreign donors.[501] Diasporic funding hence compensated for the scarcity of resources in Zahle and, and appeased anxieties perceived by the Christian parties' protégés.

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[497] See the transcripts of the Greek Catholic Archbishop of Zahle, Rev. Issam Darwish, and *Aya* (anonymised name). Interviews conducted in Zahle, in July 2018.

[498] See the transcript from *Rami* (anonymised name), a volunteer at the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchal-Vicariate of Zahle. Interview conducted in Zahle, in July 2018.

[499] The Greek Catholic Archbishop, Rev. Issam Darwish, was at the head of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Sydney, Australia, from 1996 to 2011. Patriarcat Grec Melkite Catholique, « Église Grecque-Melkite Catholique. Archiéparchie de Zahlé, Fourzol et la Békaa, » [Greek-Melkite Catholic Church. Archbishopric of Zahle, Fourzol and the Bekaa] *Patriarcat Grec Melkite Catholique*, November 28, 2011, http://www.melkitepat.org/melkite_greek_catholic_church/Archeparchy-of-Zahle-Bekaa-and-Fourzol.

[500] Kirche in Not, „Libanon: ‚Zahl der Flüchtlinge ist problematisch groß,'" [Lebanon: 'The Number of Refugees is Problematically Large'] *Kirche in Not ACN Deutschland*, June 29, 2020, https://www.kirche-in-not.de/allgemein/aktuelles/libanon-die-zahl-der-fluechtlinge-ist-problematisch-gross/.

[501] Data mentioned by *Rami* (anonymised name), a volunteer at the Syriac-Orthodox Patriarchal-Vicariate in Zahle. Interview conducted in Zahle, in July 2018.

Table 5.5 Identifying the fundraising policies of Zahle's elites, 2016-2018

Type of Power Strategy	Policy	Elite Domination	
		Endurance	Vulnerability
Material Alleviation (E1) Attraction of Compensative Resources	Welfare support from local aid providers	✓	
	Appropriation of humanitarian resources	✓	
	External sources of financial support	✓	

In summary, table 5.5 above lists the range of policies practiced by Christian parties and devolved religious orders to leverage external sources of funding. It indicates that militia-to-political elites comprehensively coordinated the attraction of new resources, designed to address the social needs of the Zahlawi population.

These empirical findings mainly presented elite narratives. For this reason, the next section of this chapter evaluates how the militia-to-political elites' governance strategy was perceived by their constituents.

5.3.d Assessing the Performance of Zahle's Elite Governance

The municipality of Zahle consistently adopted a power strategy alleviating material pressures weighing on the Zahlawis (E1). We saw in the preceding subsections that the Christian parties first endeavoured to contain the negative externalities caused by Syrian migration, and second leveraged external funds to cater for the needs of their constituents. How did the Zahlawis respond to these municipal policies?

I met with social workers working for an established secular Lebanese NGO in the centre of Zahle. They confessed that the policies implemented by the municipality of Zahle had produced concrete protective effects for the livelihoods of the inhabitants.

One of the social workers declared that: "The municipality of Zahle has done a lot of work so that there aren't many problems. […] Everything was very supervised. [The municipality was] very severe on the movements of the Syrians, the camps, and their

location. There is competition but the municipality has done what it can to prevent the Syrians from coming to Zahle. And so that eased that competition."[502]

In support of the social workers' views, an outstanding rate of 84% of the surveyed Zahlawis estimated in 2018 that the municipality's policies were either fairly or very efficient in protecting local communities (see chart 5.2 below).[503] It is however important to keep in mind the limited number of sampled respondents which nuances this observation.

Chart 5.2 Lebanese citizens' perceptions of local governance in Zahle, 2018
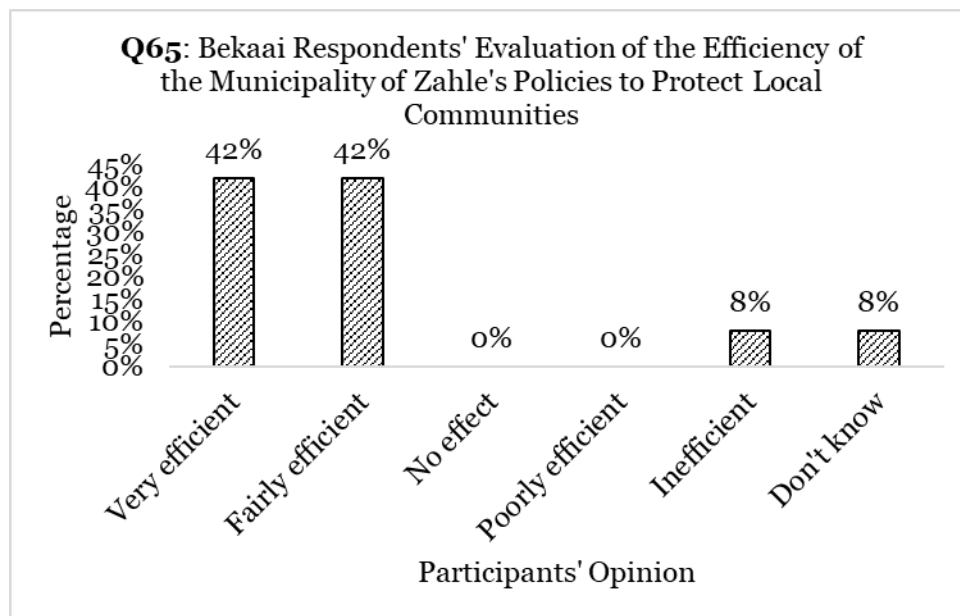
Nevertheless, this level of confidence in local authorities' protection considerably exceeds the trends noticed in other case cities. Only 24% of the surveyed Baalbakis and 7% of the Tripolitans expressed a similar positive judgement towards their own municipal authorities' action. This data is not representative of the Zahlawis' opinion, but it comforts the qualitative findings supporting a sense of relief at the measures taken by the militia-to-political clientelist authorities' protective measures in Zahle.

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[502] See *Maria's* transcript (anonymised name). Interview conducted in Zahle, in July 2018.
[503] Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities," question 65.

The 2018 parliamentary election serves as a test of the perpetuation of clientelist loyalties towards Zahle's militia-to-political clientelism. The fourth section of the chapter thus measures whether the power strategy of material alleviation defended by Christian parties maintained durable electoral support for the Lebanese Forces. It outlines that the Lebanese Forces' election of two Christian deputies successfully expressed the perpetuation of the party's dominance in the city.

2018 Parliamentary Elections
5.4 The Defensive Symbolism of the Lebanese Forces in Zahle
5.4.a Political Context and Competing Lists

The parliamentary elections held on the 6th of May 2018 were, by their own being, an achievement. The elections were postponed since 2013 because the country was politically paralysed by the Syrian migration into Lebanon. In the meantime, a new electoral law was painstakingly negotiated and enacted in 2017.[504] This law enacted a proportional representation system in Lebanon. Still, Lebanese lawmakers negotiated a mixed electoral system designed to preserve the power of clientelist elites. In this system each voter holds two votes: (1) a first vote for a party list competing in an electoral constituency and then (2) a "preferential vote" for a favourite candidate on the list who originates from the elector's district (*qada*). The preferential vote represents a tangible obstacle for the smaller candidates.

In Zahle, the battle for the leadership of the city is determined by the Greek Catholic representation. Greek Catholics are indeed the largest community in the city and the historic holders of the reins of power. In the Bekaa I constituency, there are two Greek Catholic deputies up for grabs. Overall, five lists competed for the seven deputy seats allocated to the Bekaa I constituency in parliament.[505] However, this time the Christian parties which were united to govern the municipality of Zahle since 2016 decided to run on different slates.

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[504] Ministry of Information, "Lebanese Electoral Law 2018," *Ministry of Information, Republic of Lebanon*, April 4, 2018, https://www.ministryinfo.gov.lb/en/22598.
[505] L'Orient-le Jour, « Les listes en présence à Zahlé, » [The Competing Lists in Zahle] *L'Orient-le Jour*, April 11, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1109631/les-listes-en-presence-a-zahle.html.

The two leading executive parties, the president's Free Patriotic Movement (the largest Christian party in Lebanon then) and the Prime Minister's Sunni party (the Future Movement) united to form the "Zahle for everyone" list which defended their shared record at the head of the country.[506] Considering the large Sunni populations in the suburbs of Zahle, the list was predestined to gain a majority of seats in parliament.

On their side, the Lebanese Forces presented a list of union with another Christian militia-to-political party, the Kataeb, and a few independent candidates.[507] The "Zahle our cause" list aimed mainly at keeping the Christian leadership of the Bekaa capital, through gaining seats for Christian deputies and primarily the Greek Catholic representation.

Finally, Myriam Skaff, the deceived leader of the Skaff house which lost all its MPs in 2009 and the municipality of Zahle in 2016, also wished to gain a Greek Catholic seat at the chamber of deputies.[508]

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[506] L'Orient-le Jour, « La liste CPL-Futur formée à Zahlé..., » [The FPM-Future List Formed in Zahle] *L'Orient-le Jour*, March 24, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1106903/la-liste-cpl-futur-formee-a-zahle.html.

[507] L'Orient-le Jour, « Zahlé : les FL et Kataëb annoncent leur liste (avec une polémique à la clé)... » [Zahle: The FL and Kataëb Announce their List (with a Controversy)...] *L'Orient-le Jour*, March 19, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1105651/-les-fl-et-kataeb-la-leur-a-zahle-avec-une-polemique-a-la-cle.html.

[508] L'Orient-le Jour, « Les candidats du Bloc populaire de Myriam Skaff à Zahlé, » [The Candidates of Myriam Skaff's Popular Bloc in Zahle] *L'Orient-le Jour*, March 26, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1107114/les-candidats-du-bloc-populaire-de-myriam-skaff-a-zahle.html.

Table 5.6 Parliamentary elections in Zahle (Bekaa I), 2018

List Name	Clientelist typology	Sponsors/Backers	Election Results Votes	Seats	Chamber
"Zahle our Cause"	**Militia-to-political** Militia-to-political	**Lebanese Forces** (LF), Kataeb (KB)	18,702	**2** 0	**2/7**
"Zahle for everyone"	Political Oligarchic Militia-to-political	Free Patriotic Movement (FPM), Future Movement (FM), Tachnag (TA)	36,391	2 1 0	3/7
"Choice and Decision"	Islamic-communitarian Oligarchic	Hezbollah (HEZ), Fattoush family	23,546	2 0	2/7
"Popular Bloc"	Traditional	Skaff family (Popular Bloc)	10,885	0	0/7
"Kuluna Watani"	[Independents]	Green Party (GP), Sabaa (SA)	1,599	0	0/7

Sources: UNDP, "2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections. Results and Figures," 8.

In summary, table 5.6 above lists all the contenders for the 2018 parliamentary election in the Bekaa I constituency.

5.4.b The Lebanese Forces Campaign Themes

Observation of the Lebanese Forces' campaign in Zahle reveals that the party asserted its combatant identity (E2) to reinforce the material alleviation power strategy (E1) that it enforced in Zahle after 2016. Hence, symbolism came as a complementary appeal to Zahlawi voters.

The party promoted three highly symbolic themes reminiscent of the combatant identity of the Lebanese Forces: a striving Christian youth, the vividness of a shared memory, and a defended identity. I especially scrutinised the campaign (and social network activity) of the Lebanese Forces' Greek Catholic candidate, George Okais, who was attempting to win the Christian leadership of the city's parliamentary representation.

Relative to other parties, the Lebanese Forces devoted special attention to the Lebanese (Christian) youth. It is especially interesting when we consider that the youth in Lebanon are rarely an electoral segment of interest amongst clientelist networks. Traditionally, it was the head of the family who decided the electoral

preferences of all the social unit.[509] Therefore, the youth, who generally lack in financial means, are not a primary target for most networks of patronage. This observation outlines that the Lebanese Forces endeavoured to transmit their values to the younger generations to ensure the durability of their political dominance.[510] This ambition was particularly acute in the Bekaa where Christian communities had fled the socioeconomic depression in the region for years. Candidate Okais explained during the campaign that it was his priority to limit the exodus of Zahlawis to Beirut and abroad.[511] For him, the future of Lebanese Christian communities in the Bekaa depended upon the successful regeneration of local demographics. Therefore, the LF's party manifesto "[encouraged] the younger generation to cling to the land that [they] valiantly defended."[512] This is a clear reference to the Lebanese Civil War. The party hereby made a transgenerational link between its militia fighters defending Zahle in 1981 and contemporary Zahlawi youth striving to find a sustainable future in their hometown.

This plea resonates with a powerful memory shared by many Zahlawis. The militia-to-political candidates dutifully integrated into their parliamentary campaign a combatant rhetoric and a temporality inherited from the civil war. For instance, the LF candidates invited their partisans to join them to a mass commemorating the death of their civil war martyrs on the 14th of April 2018.[513] The party leader, Samir Geagea, attended this religious ceremony held in Zahle.[514] Interestingly, Geagea did not come to participate to a campaign meeting. Instead, the LF president used a memorial and religious event as a campaign event.

The party leader then positioned himself, and his candidates, as the political heirs of the party's martyrs for their shared belief in the defence of Lebanon's identity.

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[509] Benedicty, *La Démocratie Interrompue*.

[510] Mazaeff, « L'action politique des Forces Libanaises. »

[511] George Okais, "George Okais: I Consider Myself a Son of Zahle," *Mon Liban*, February 12, 2018, http://www.monliban.org/monliban/ui/topic.php?id=3536.

[512] Lebanese Forces, "Electoral Program of the Lebanese Forces Parliamentary Bloc," *Lebanese Forces* (2018): 2.

[513] George Okais, "Invitation for a Mass to the Lebanese Forces' Martyrs," *Facebook*, April 11, 2018, https://www.facebook.com/okaisgeorge/videos/397641850700367/.

[514] See the photo of the mass with all the LF candidates and Samir Geagea attending the mass: George Okais, "Photo of the LF Candidates Attending the Martyrs' Mass," *Facebook*, April 14, 2018, https://www.facebook.com/okaisgeorge/photos/pcb.399106890553863/399106830553869.

Picture 5.1 Street placard of Samir Geagea and Bashir Gemayel in Zahle [515]

The LF leader was thus pictured as a protective figure evocative of Bashir Gemayel, the assassinated president of the Lebanese Forces militia, who is seen as a hero for generations of Lebanese Christians. Several placards in the streets of Zahle represented both leaders together under a Christian cross representing the party (see picture 5.1 above). Hence, the symbolic of Christian resistance (E2), which resurrects the Lebanese Forces' combatant identity, constituted an essential component of the party's electoral communication.

This type of rhetoric did inevitably affect the serenity of the voting process in Zahle. The Bekaa capital is famous in Lebanon for its electoral tensions, and the use of a radical combatant rhetoric (E2) inevitably exacerbated the political rivalries, especially amongst Christian parties seeking to take the leadership of the city.

5.4.c 2018 Bekaa I Results

On election day, the 6th of May 2018, I observed marked political tensions in several areas of the city, especially so in the working-class neighbourhood of the *cité industrielle*, which is an electoral stronghold of the Lebanese Forces.

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[515] The picture was taken on the 6th of May 2018 by myself (own copyrights).

The militia-to-political clientelist network there demonstrated an impressive partisan organisation. Many youngsters loudly chanted their support for the LF candidates and their party leader. Little booths representing the contending party lists lined the street, each aiming to give to their core supporters the latest advice on the party's recommended "preferential vote". Then, heated confrontations erupted between the Lebanese Forces' youth and the supporters of the Skaff family.[516]

Despite these customary tensions, 53.57% of the Bekaa I constituents participated to the vote.[517] This was slightly higher than in the rest of Lebanon with a 49.68% turnout.[518] The Lebanese Forces won their electoral gamble. The militia-to-political network gained 2 deputies, one Greek Catholic (George Okais) and one Greek Orthodox (César Maalouf). Most importantly, the LF gathered the highest number of preferential votes of any Greek Catholic candidates in the election.[519] Thus, the party's leadership over this key community was consequently reaffirmed in the ballots. Conversely, the list of the executive parties (FPM-FM), disappointingly for them, won only 3 seats. The FPM, which was governing the municipality of Zahle in coalition with the Lebanese Forces since 2016, grabbed two Christian seats, including the second Greek Catholic deputy.[520]

In essence, the Christian parties confirmed their power at the helm of the Bekaa capital in 2018 by winning over the Christian representation of Zahle. The power strategy of material alleviation (E1) and the rhetorical use of combatant symbolism (E2) in campaign paid-off for the local elites. Despite the considerable challenge caused by the Syrian migration on local governance, the Lebanese Forces proved the durability of their leadership by strategically using their material and symbolic means to weather this shock. The militia-to-political form of clientelism therefore

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[516] Anne-Marie el Hage, « À Zahlé, un scrutin d'une grande lenteur et des échauffourées interchrétiennes, » [In Zahle, A Very Slow Poll and Inter-Christian Clashes] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 7, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1114105/a-zahle-un-scrutin-dune-grande-lenteur-et-des-echauffourees-interchretiennes.html.

[517] UNDP, "2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections. Results and Figures," *UNDP*, September 4 (2018): 9, https://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/library/democratic_governance/2018Lebanese ParliamentaryElectionsResultsandFigures.html.

[518] UNDP, "2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections," 6.

[519] UNDP, "2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections," 8.

[520] UNDP, ibid.

presents a strong level of electoral endurance, even under uncertain socioeconomic conditions.

Conclusive remarks

This first empirical chapter studied the governance of the city of Zahle from 2010 to 2018. It demonstrated that the Lebanese Forces party maintained its political dominance acquired in 2016 thanks to a comprehensive strategy of material alleviation showcased in the municipality of Zahle (E1), and their resorting to combatant symbolic schemes (E2) during the 2018 campaign.

The first section of the chapter considered the progressive downfall of the formerly dominating Skaff family in Zahle up until 2016. The chapter established that the Skaff's intentionally adopted a passive management of the Syrian migration to favour the private economic interests of its wealthy sympathisers. This choice of policy inaction induced an unregulated pressure from Syrian workers on local communities. As a result, many members of the Zahlawi lower middle classes felt abandoned by the Skaff leadership, and broke their clientelist social contract.

The second section presented the electoral demise of the Skaff political house in the 2016 local elections. Since the end of the war, the Skaff leadership dominated the political representation of the Bekaa capital. The disruption of clientelist loyalties amongst core supporters of the Skaff family led to the empowerment of an alliance of clientelist Christian parties led by the Lebanese Forces. Exemplifying a classic clientelist turnover, militia-to-political clientelism seized power from the incumbent traditional elites in Zahle in 2016.

The third section of the chapter subsequently demonstrated that the newly elected militia-to-political elites intended to retain the loyalty of their protégés thanks to the implementation of a power strategy of material alleviation (E1). The chapter first specified two main policies that the municipal authorities used to protect their constituents from the socioeconomic pressures induced by the Syrian migration on their livelihoods. First, the Christian parties adopted a rigorously legalist approach

enforcing the labour and residency laws concerning displaced Syrians in Lebanon. This policy was meant to limit informal labour competition weighing on Lebanese workers in Zahle. Second, the municipality endeavoured to attract external sources of funding, especially from foreign cooperation agencies and diasporic communities, to continue servicing rising social needs in Zahlawi society. The comprehensive effort of militia-to-political elites in containing the negative externalities of the Syrian migration and leveraging compensative resources for the benefit of their protégés was seemingly well perceived by local residents.

The fourth section consequently observed how the Zahlawi electors responded to the governance of the Lebanese Forces and its allied Christian parties since 2016. The 2018 parliamentary elections served as a measure of the durability of the clientelist loyalties towards the Lebanese Forces party. The chapter illustrated how the Lebanese Forces used their combatant symbolism (E2) during the electoral campaign to ensure the cohesion of core supporters. This electoral strategy apparently paid-off. The militia-to-political clientelist network successfully secured in the ballots the Greek Catholic representation of the city. The chapter concluded that the 2018 vote signalled the endurance of the political dominance of the Lebanese Forces in Zahle, despite challenging economic and political conditions.

The next chapter (chapter 6) focuses on the case city of Baalbek. The capital of the Baalbek-Hermel governorate is an historic stronghold of Hezbollah, a religious Shia political party embodying a form of Islamic-communitarian clientelism in Lebanon. The chapter outlines how the politicised character of the Syrian migration into Baalbek weighed on the Islamic party's capacity to fulfil its clientelist obligations. This led in 2016 to a strong electoral challenge against ruling Hezbollah elites in Baalbek. The chapter then illustrates how the Shia party adopted a power strategy of substitute symbolism (E2) to retain the loyalty of the Baalbaki (inhabitants of Baalbek) Shia community. Hezbollah resorted to its combatant identity to justify the securitisation and violent repression of potential defectors. Then, it outlines how during the 2018 campaign the Islamic party expressed this violent symbolism through a radical rhetoric designed to reify sectarian identities and galvanise its supporters. The chapter concludes on the Islamic-communitarian clientelist network's successful grip on power over the Shia representation in the 2018 vote in

Baalbek. Hence, the Shia party showed impressive resilience to hold local power, despite the considerable impacts on local communities raised by the party's involvement in a regional conflict.

Chapter 6. Baalbek
The Combatant Symbolism of Islamic Clientelism

This second empirical chapter focuses on the city of Baalbek, the capital of the Baalbek-Hermel governorate. It discusses how the Shia party Hezbollah, representing a form of Islamic-communitarian clientelism, retained the loyalty of its protégés by implementing a power strategy of symbolic substitution (E2) since 2016.

The first section of the chapter describes how Hezbollah faced in Baalbek a mounting defiance from a share of its supporters up to 2016. Demographically, the Baalbek-Hermel capital is a highly politically divided society. Hezbollah's historic capital is politically split between a Lebanese Shia pro-Assad majority historically holding control of local power, and a Sunni anti-Assad minority. In this heated terrain, Syrian settlement in Baalbek was characterised by its politicisation. Syrians settled along sectarian and political lines within neighbourhoods of the city. In response to the migration crisis, this chapter emphasises how the municipality of Baalbek segregated the distribution of emergency relief solely to the Syrian sympathisers of the Assad regime. Moreover, Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian conflict laid the ground for the exacerbation of internal tensions rifting Baalbaki society. The war soon spilled over in the streets of Baalbek. The chapter outlines how many Baalbakis (inhabitants of Baalbek) felt that Hezbollah prioritised its regional interests at the expense of their well-being and safety. As a result, distrust grew in the ranks of the Islamic party's supporters, which threatened the viability of clientelist social contracts.

The second section of the chapter subsequently illustrates how electors in Baalbek expressed their dissatisfaction towards Hezbollah in the 2016 local elections. The party of God (literal translation of Hezbollah) faced an unusually strong competition from a coalition list formed by political independents. Even though the independents were defeated in the ballots, they still gathered the support of 35% of the electorate as a new political force. This performance signalled to Hezbollah that some Shia voters broke their clientelist loyalties and defected. Thus, the Islamic-communitarian network grasped the urgency of acting to retain the faith of its supporters.

The third section of the chapter then exposes how Hezbollah chose to implement a power strategy of symbolic substitution (E2) after 2016. Unlike the Christian parties governing Zahle, the Islamic Resistance party lacked the capacity to alleviate the material pressures weighing on the livelihoods of its constituents. Therefore, Hezbollah employed a substitutive symbolic strategy as the party could rely on its combatant identity of "Resistance" inherited from the civil war.[521] This symbolic power strategy came in two main policies: the coercive control of local populations and a radical rhetoric reifying sectarian identities. Hezbollah first expressed this warrior symbolism coercively, which entailed the communal securitisation of Baalbek. The process of securitisation means that "state or non-state actors [...] portray certain issues, persons, groups, or entities as existential threats to a target [...] community."[522] To complete this process, the target population should believe that a politicised issue or group of persons effectively poses an existential threat to them. This policy enables to deter internal defections, by imposing heavy social pressure on local communities and thus clearing the ground for a non-competitive electoral campaign in 2018.

The fourth section of the chapter presents how the Shia party employed the second policy of symbolic substitution in formulating a radical combatant rhetoric breaking with the norms of party competition. This rhetoric justified the use of violence against serious political challengers in Baalbek. Thus, the chapter reveals how Hezbollah divided, "othered", and assaulted political opponents which the Islamic party treated as "enemies." The ballots confirmed the political dominance of Hezbollah in Baalbek, which won all the Shia representation in the constituency. The symbolic power strategy (E2) certainly enabled the party of God to maintain the loyalty of its protégés despite limited material means.

This chapter is based on fieldwork data generated in Baalbek from July to September 2018. Using the transcripts of 21 interviews conducted with local decision makers (including deputies, mayors, municipal councillors, religious leaders, and civil society activists) in summer 2018 and April 2019. To counterbalance these elite

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[521] Nilsson, "Hezbollah and the Framing of Resistance."
[522] Ralf Emmers, "Securitization," In *Contemporary Security Studies*, ed. A. Collins (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 109.

narratives, I rely on survey questionnaires filled by 47 Lebanese residents of Baalbek and 36 surveys answered by displaced Syrians living in the outskirts of Baalbek in 2018. Moreover, I observed the parliamentary election voting process in Baalbek on the 6th of May 2018. Finally, I also use Lebanese newspaper articles and social media publications to reference the events marking local governance in Baalbek.

In the following section of the chapter, I explain that Islamic-communitarian elites dominated the political scene in Baalbek before the start of the Syrian displacement. I use parliamentary and local elections results in Baalbek since the end of the civil war to document the wavering trajectory of Hezbollah's power grip in its founding city.

2010-2016
6.1 The Challenged Power of Baalbek's Islamic-communitarian Elites
6.1.a Chronicle of the Local and Parliamentary Elections in Baalbek

From the end of the civil war, Hezbollah enjoyed a secure political dominance in Baalbek. However, the Shia militia's path to local power was not as smooth as expected. In the following section I trace the degree of support for Hezbollah in Baalbek by relying upon the parliamentary and local elections results since the end of the conflict in Lebanon.

Table 6.1 below presents a chronological review of the electoral performance of the main clientelist contenders in Baalbek from 1992 to 2010.

Table 6.1 Parliamentary and local elections results in Baalbek, 1992-2010

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS RESULSTS

Party name/Leader	Clientelist type	Deputy Seats Won per Election				
		1992	1996	2000	2005	2009
Hezbollah (HEZ), Hassan Nasrallah	**Islamic**	8/10	6	5	4	4
Amal (AM), Nabih Berri	Militia-to-political	-	1 |10	1 |10	1 |10	1 |10
Pro-Syrian Parties*	Political	-	3	4	5	5
Bekaai independent clans**	Traditional	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10
Other parties and independents	[Independents]	2/10	0/10	0/10	0/10	0/10

LOCAL ELECTIONS RESULTS

Party name/Leader	Clientelist type	Municipal Council Seats Won per Election		
		1998	2004	2010
Hezbollah (HEZ), Hassan Nasrallah	**Islamic**	5/21	21 |21	
Pro-Syrian Parties*	Political			21 |21
Amal (AM), Nabih Berri	Militia-to-political	16 |21	0 |21	
Islamic Sunni Parties***	Islamic			-
Bekaai independent clans	Traditional			0/21

Legend:
- = party not competing
/ = single party list
| = coalition list of several parties
* = Refers to the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) and Baath (BAA).
** = Refers to the influential families which traditionally compete for power in Baalbek-Hermel.
*** = Refers to the Jamaa Islamiyaa (JI) and the Ahbash movement which are both Sunni religious parties.

As background information, the municipality of Baalbek is located within a Bekaa constituency (today called Bekaa III), with 10 deputies in the Chamber: 6 Shias, 2 Sunnis, 1 Greek Catholic and 1 Maronite. At the level of local power, Baalbek has 21 municipal councillors which reflects its status as one of the largest urban capitals in the country.

Baalbek holds a special place in Hezbollah's historiography. It is in this city, in 1982, that Hezbollah was clandestinely created to formulate a combatant answer against

the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.[523] The Baalbek-Hermel capital was thus the first stronghold of the Shia militia in the country. It remained so until the end of the civil war when the militia pursued its political normalisation.[524] Hezbollah then endeavoured to become a Lebanese party while paradoxically illegally maintaining its military wing.[525] However, the Lebanese Shia militia was not fully confident about its capacity to transform its military control into democratic representation in its war strongholds of Baalbek, Beirut and South-Lebanon. After much hesitation, Hezbollah put forward candidates at the **1992 parliamentary elections**, the first to be held in post-war Lebanon.[526] The new party won twelve deputies, most of whom came from Baalbek-Hermel.[527] This victory comforted Hezbollah that the Shia party would smoothly secure its control of local power as well. Nevertheless, Hezbollah faced competition from another form of clientelism which prevailed in Baalbek before the civil war – that of the traditional elites.

The pre-war political stage in Baalbek-Hermel was a playground for traditional elites, which present a tribal sociological structure. They were the ones which customarily controlled power in this agricultural and impoverished region of Lebanon. When the civil war ceased, traditional clientelism was ready to return via political competition. The **1998 local elections** were the first electoral confrontation between new and the old clientelist actors. Hezbollah then faced a comprehensive coalition of opponents including traditional elites.[528] The campaign revealed how the leaders of the traditional "families" skilfully mastered the intricacies of local politics relative to the young Islamic-communitarian party. Indeed, the traditional leaders, and their allies, successfully defeated the municipal ambitions of the party of God by winning a

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[523] Daher, "Hezbollah Facing the Clans," 419.

[524] May, "The Rise of the 'Resistance Axis'."

[525] Farid el Khazen, *Lebanon's First Postwar Parliamentary Election, 1992: An Imposed Choice* (Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1998), 14

[526] Nizar A. Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Hizbullah: From Islamic Revolution to Parliamentary Accommodation," *Third World Quarterly* 14 (1993): 323-4, doi:10.1080/01436599308420327.

[527] Augustus R. Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 89.

[528] Paul Khalifeh, « Retombées de l'affaire Toufayli, relations avec les sunnites et les chrétiens, lutte contre les leaderships traditionnels De Baalbeck à Brital : l'heure de vérité pour le Hezbollah (photos), » [Fallout from the Toufayli Affair, Relations with Sunnis and Christians, Struggle against Traditional Leaderships From Baalbeck to Brital: The Moment of Truth for Hezbollah (photos)] *L'Orient-le Jour*, June 15, 1998, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/277916/Retombees_de_laffaire_Toufayli%252C_relations_avec_les_sunnites_et_les_chretiens%252C_lutte_contre_les_leaderships_traditionnels_De_Baalbeck_a_Brital_%253A_.html.

majority of councillors in 1998.[529] From this experience, the Islamic party learned to adapt its power strategies to the sociological characteristics of Baalbek-Hermel. It customarily co-opts political rivals from the most influential traditional families to divide their opponents' electoral support.[530] This electoral strategy grants the party a rooted legitimacy amongst Baalbaki communities. In the **2004 local elections**, Hezbollah flatly won all the seats at the municipal council. Since then, the party has continued to co-opt opponents to secure large electoral victories.

The year 2005 marked the end of twenty-nine years of Syrian occupation in Lebanon. Syrian tutelage had until then protected its Lebanese proxies, including Hezbollah, from an open and fair electoral competition. Consequently, the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon could have seriously destabilised the political dominance of Hezbollah in Baalbek. It did not do so. The Lebanese parties defending Lebanon's sovereignty formed the 14th of March camp. In response, Hezbollah shaped the counter coalition of the 8th of March alliance supporting Lebanon's close partnership with Syria and Iran.[531] Thanks to the union of major pro-Syrian clientelist actors in Baalbek-Hermel, Hezbollah and its allies ensured complete victories in all the subsequent parliamentary and local elections (see table 6.2 p.196). The last election organised before the Syrian conflict was a local ballot held in 2010. Baalbaki electors granted Hezbollah a total grip on municipal and parliamentary representation in Baalbek. Dr. Hamad Hassan, a sympathiser of Hezbollah was elected mayor of Baalbek.

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[529] Nizar A. Hamzeh, "Lebanon's Islamists and Local Politics: A New Reality," *Third World Quarterly* 21 (2000): 754.
[530] Daher, « Le Hezbollah face aux clans. »
[531] Goenaga and Sanchez Mateos, "Elites, power and political change in post-war Lebanon."

Table 6.2 below presents some of the main protagonists of power competition mentioned in this chapter.

Table 6.2 Main protagonists of power competition in Baalbek

Clientelist Network	Clientelist typology	Protagonist	Position	Confession
Hezbollah (HEZ)*	**Islamic**	Hassan Nasrallah	Secretary-General	Shia
		Dr. Hamad Hassan	Mayor of Baalbek (2010-16)	Shia
		Gen. Hussein Lakkis	Mayor of Baalbek (2016-22)	Shia
[Independents]	-	Abbas Jahwari	Sheikh, independent politician	Shia
		Yahya Shams	Independent politician	Shia
Legend:				
*= The list of protagonists includes sympathisers who are not official members of the party.				

In 2011, Hezbollah was therefore in charge of the management of an embarrassing migration crisis inflicted by its regional ally, the Syrian regime of Bashar el Assad. In the next section of the chapter, I describe how the politicised character of the Syrian settlement into Baalbek laid the conditions for a severe destabilisation of the clientelist social contract promised by the party of God.

6.1.b The Politicised Settlement of Displaced Syrians in Baalbek

In 2012, the reaction from Hezbollah's party officials to the first signs of a major human catastrophe at the Syrian border signalled the highly political sensitiveness of the issue. The Hezbollahi (members of Hezbollah) elites were in denial. Their close ally, the president of Syria Bashar el Assad, was not facing a peaceful insurgency. Therefore, there was no humanitarian crisis to manage. In consequence, Hezbollah categorically refused the creation of refugee camps in Lebanon.[532] The Lebanese government at the time was backed by Hezbollah and its pro-Syrian allies. Thus, the Prime Minister followed-suit and not a single official camp was erected in the country, unlike in Turkey and Jordan.[533] Hezbollah's "no-camp" policy resulted from its fear of seeing pockets of Syrian Sunni rebels mushroom on its territorial

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[532] Daily Star, "Hezbollah Rejects Syrian Refugee Camps in Lebanon," *Daily Star Lebanon*, March 10, 2012, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2012/Mar-10/166204-hezbollah-rejects-syrianrefugee-camps-in-lebanon.ashx#axzz33f1dpl5Z.
[533] Turner, "Explaining the (Non-)Encampment of Syrian Refugees."

strongholds in Baalbek-Hermel – where a majority of Lebanese Shias cohabit alongside Sunni minorities.

I interviewed the then mayor of Baalbek (2010-2016), Dr. Hamad Hassan. He was a Hezbollah sympathiser who justified the non-encampment position of his party by invoking a security reason.[534] The mayor specified that Hezbollah was not ready to host communities whose members were fighting against its own fighters in Syria. Therefore, it was important for Hezbollah to "minimise the contacts between [the Shia] community and the Syrian [Sunni] refugees" in Baalbek.[535] The no-camp policy was therefore politically motivated. In consequence, the municipality's voluntary inaction generated a natural triage of in-group settlement. Displaced Syrians sheltering in Baalbek's urban centre did so in the homes of their relatives, who dually shared their sectarian and political identities. Anti-Assad Syrian Sunnis found safety in the anti-Assad Lebanese Sunni neighbourhood of Baalbek. In the meantime, Pro-Assad Syrian Alawites were protected by their Lebanese Shia Hezbollahi kin in the rest of the city. The politicised character of the Syrian settlement into Baalbek was observed in other cities of Lebanon. But in the capital of the Baalbek-Hermel governorate, the migration influx risked exacerbating intra-Lebanese political divides which frequently risk imploding in communal violence.

The paradox of the Hezbollah-led municipality's reluctance to create camps was that it "did not prevent the emergence of thousands of informal camps, or 'tented settlements' that spread across [...] the Bekaa in an unorganised manner."[536] Indeed, the extent of the Syrian influx was such that the displaced families lacking a supportive social network in Baalbek had no choice but to settle in suburban areas politically hostile to their presence. The director of a Lebanese secular NGO confirmed that not a single neighbourhood of Baalbek was spared from the settlement of displaced communities.[537] The mayor of Baalbek estimated that at the beginning of 2014 there were between 50'000 to 60'000 displaced individuals living in Baalbek and its nearest suburban areas. This number reached 127'959 displaced individuals registered in Baalbek's district (the *qada* level is larger than the

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[534] See the transcript of Dr. Hamad Hassan's interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.
[535] See the transcript of Dr. Hamad Hassan's interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.
[536] Nassar and Stel, "Lebanon's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis," 49.
[537] See the transcript of *Nora's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

municipal boundaries) in 2015.[538] In comparison, there were 214'600 Lebanese residents living in the Baalbek district by 2018.[539] Therefore, Syrian families and Lebanese residents of Baalbek lived in close proximity. Of the surveyed Baalbakis, 76% declared having displaced individuals living in their own neighbourhood.[540]

In response to this tremendous influx of displaced populations, the municipality of Baalbek pledged that it welcomed everyone. A party official of Amal (Amal is a Shia party allied to Hezbollah with municipal councillors in Baalbek) in the Baalbek-Hermel governorate reiterated this officially empathic reception of displaced Syrians.[541] For him, "[Syrians] are not foreigners. Syrians are our brothers. We try to help them as best as we can." But in reality, Baalbek's municipal authorities reproduced the governance practices of in-group favouritism internalised by Hezbollah during the civil war.[542] In essence, local authorities operated a segregated delivery of aid which contradicted official policy. Hezbollah and its partners assumed a humanitarian aid policy which solely helped kin members and political sympathisers. This means that Syrian Alawites (Shias) supporting Assad were the only beneficiaries of aid. Local political actors, among them a communist party member (LCP), witnessed the municipality's skewed emergency relief policy.[543]

Paradoxically, Hezbollah's choice of a segregation policy restricted the political leverage of the municipality of Baalbek. In fear of targeting Syrians protected by Hezbollah, the local authorities refrained from enforcing laws regulating the displaced Syrians' residency and labour in Lebanon (officially lawful since 2015). A civil society activist in Baalbek confirmed that the municipality was unable to lay down strict legal rules on the presence of Syrians because it would involve sensitive political struggles regarding Hezbollah's alliance with the Assad regime.[544]

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[538] UNHCR, "Syria Refugee Response. Bekaa & Baalbek-El Hermel Governorate. Distribution of the Registered Syrian Refugees at the Cadastral Level," *UNHCR*, January 31, 2015, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/44813.

[539] ILO, "Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey (LFHLCS) in Lebanon 2018–2019," *International Labour Organization and Central Administration for Statistics*, December 18, 2019: 4, https://www.ilo.org/beirut/publications/WCMS_732567/lang--en/index.htm.

[540] Allegrini, "Survey on Displaced Communities," question 59.

[541] See the transcript of *Faraj's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

[542] On the deployment of intra-sectarian solidarity by Lebanese militias during the civil war (1975-1990) see: Harik, "The Public and Social Services of the Lebanese Militias."

[543] See the transcript of *Bachar's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in August 2018.

[544] See the transcript of *Chantal's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

Effectively, local authorities were disempowered by their own segregated relief policy. The Hezbollah-led municipality therefore accepted an inert and passive management of the Syrian presence. The application of the rule of law was inevitably sacrificed to protect amicable foreign migrants at the expense of the interests of Baalbaki constituents. In essence, the trustworthiness of the local authorities was stained by political biases assumed by the municipal council.

The next subsection of the chapter describes how Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian conflict threatened the viability of its clientelist social contracts in Baalbek. It exposes the severe deterioration of the safety and livelihoods endured by the Baalbakis as the conflict spilled over in their city.

6.1.c 2011-2016: A Divided City Embroiled in the Syrian Conflict

The decision made by Hezbollah to give up regulation of the Syrian presence in Baalbek had serious consequences for the livelihoods of its protégés. Similarly to the other case cities in this research, the Baalbaki economy endured a profound transformation induced by the entry into the labour market of a considerable number of illegal migrant workers. However, the passiveness of the local authorities further enhanced the competitive impact of informal Syrian labourers on the legal Lebanese workforce. Considering the extent of the Syrian presence in Baalbek, the employment of Syrian workers rapidly spread to all the sectors of the local economy. The subsequent pressure on salaries affected all jobs, even in the most qualified professions. A general practitioner witnessed that the city's hospitals employed Syrian doctors and nurses in order to reduce their expenses in wages.[545]

Inexorably, many locals lost their jobs. 22% of the surveyed Lebanese participants in Baalbek reported that they were fired at least once since 2014 (compared with 0% in Zahle and 26% in Tripoli).[546] Therefore, a large share of the Baalbaki middle-class, not used to facing cheap labour competition, fell into precarity.[547] Social exclusion spread at a fast pace. Established local aid providers experienced a booming demand

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[545] See the transcript of *Charbel's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.
[546] Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities," question 27.
[547] Laurie Georges, "Disentangling Lebanon from Regional Wars: Re-thinking Hezbollah," *Journal of Public and International Affairs* (2018): 146.

for welfare support from families who had never previously knocked at their door. The Greek Catholic bishop of Baalbek, Elias Raal, confirmed that his parish doubled its aid to serve both displaced Syrians and a growing number of Baalbakis in need.[548] Overall, these observations express the depth of the new socioeconomic anxiety plaguing local communities which included Hezbollah supporters.

Hezbollah was not able to fully address the socioeconomic stress that its own political decisions generated. The imploding social demands channelled by local communities came at a moment when Hezbollah's finances were already squeezed. The party of God had been embroiled in an expensive military intervention in Syria since 2012. Such a large-scale armed deployment induced important costs for Hezbollah.[549] Moreover, the US Congress enforced sanctions in 2015 targeting Hezbollah's banking facilities, which further increased the pressure weighing on the party's resources. The intervention of Hezbollah in the Syrian conflict did not solely cause a heavy economic cost for the Baalbakis. It threatened their safety as well, as outlined below.

Unexpectedly so for many Baalbakis, Hezbollah, the party protecting Baalbek since the civil war, brought the Syrian conflict into the streets of their city. In 2013, the fighters of the Lebanese Shia party proved decisive in reconquering the Syrian city of Qusayr for the Assad regime.[550] Subsequently, the defeated Sunni Jihadists (al-Nusra Front and ISIS) hiding in the mountains overlooking Baalbek identified it, as the historic capital of the party of God, as a punitive target. In June 2013, the Jihadists fired 3 rockets from Syria onto the centre of Baalbek.[551] The Syrian (and foreign) Sunni rebels also won the support of some marginal radicalised elements within the Baalbaki Sunni community. In summer 2013, violent confrontations erupted between Hezbollah militants and Lebanese Sunni supporters of the Syrian rebellion.[552] Some Baalbaki Sunnis even created a militia aligned with to the Islamic

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[548] See the transcript of Rev. Elias Raal's interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

[549] Nicholas Blanford, "Hezbollah's Evolution: From Lebanese Militia to Regional Player," *Middle-East Institute Counterterrorism Series* 4 (2017): 22.

[550] Matthew Levitt, "Hezbollah's Syrian Quagmire," *PRISM* 5 (2014): 102-3.

[551] France 24, « Des roquettes tirées de Syrie frappent la ville libanaise de Baalbek, » [Rockets fired from Syria Hit the Lebanese Town of Baalbek] *France 24*, June 6, 2013, https://www.france24.com/fr/20130606-roquettes-tirees-syrie-frappent-ville-libanaise-baalbek-liban-bachar-al-assad-hezbollah.

[552] On the 28th of September 2013, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported the death of four Hezbollah fighters in violent clashes with "anti-Assad" Sunni armed men: SOHR, "4 Hezbollah

State (ISIL) called the Free Sunnis of Baalbek Brigades, which committed in 2014 several suicide bombings targeting Hezbollah fighters in Baalbek.[553]

The Baalbakis were dismayed by this swift turn of events. Hezbollah's decision to prioritise the defence of regional interests over the lives of its protégés confused even the most loyal supporters of the Shia party. Hezbollah sent thousands of young Lebanese Shias from Bekaa to fight the Syrians, not against their demonised Israeli enemy. This decision did not seem coherent with the foundational "resistance" ideology giving a raison d'être to the party.[554] Several Hezbollahi militants endured "a real [sense of] ideological disarray."[555] But these loyal partisans silenced their scepticism towards their party's defence strategy. In Baalbek, confusion soon gave way to tears (of anger). Many Shia families paid a heavy human price for this military effort. Their sons died in Syria, and returned home as glorified martyrs.[556] The faces of these young men were featured on placards in the streets of Baalbek. Paradoxically, they reminded the population that Hezbollah's warfare effort exposed the city to the belligerence of Syrian rebels.

In essence, the party of God breached its own clientelist social contracts in risking the livelihoods and safety of the party's protégés. Social exclusion was rampant in Baalbek and many communities lived in fear of even leaving their homes. Hence, the loyalty of many core Hezbollah supporters came to be in doubt.

The second section of this chapter observes how Baalbakis expressed their anxieties at the 2016 local elections, the first vote held since the beginning of the Syrian

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Militants Killed in Lebanon Shiite-Sunni Clashe," *Syrian Observatory for Human Rights*, September 28, 2013, https://www.syriahr.com/en/3771/.

[553] Jennifer Cafarella, "Syrian Jihadists Signal Intent for Lebanon," *Institute for the Study of War* (2015): 5, https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syrian-jihadists-signal-intent-lebanon; Marc André Siegrist, "Lebanon – Can the Islamic State Set the Cedar Country Aflame?" *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 7 (2015): 15.

[554] Nilsson, "Hezbollah and the Framing of Resistance."

[555] Erminia Chiara Calabrese, « La Cause c'est Nous » : Militants du Hezbollah au Liban face à la Guerre en Syrie, » ['We are the Cause': Hezbollah Militants in Lebanon Facing the War in Syria] *Confluences Méditerranée* 98 (2016): 107.

[556] In 2016 1 005 Hezbollah fighters had died since the start of the war in Syria. 247 of them came from the Bekaa. See: Ali Alfoneh, "Hezbollah Fatalities in the Syrian War," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, February 22, 2016, https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/hezbollah-fatalities-syrian-war.

migration. This election posed a serious challenge to Hezbollah's political dominance in its historic stronghold of Baalbek.

2016 Local Elections
6.2 Hezbollah's Leadership under Pressure
6.2.a Political Context and Competing Lists

The 2016 local election was marked by a rare tone of defiance in Baalbek towards Hezbollah's local governance. The party had assumed a complete grip on local power since 2004. It was consequently difficult for municipal incumbents to defend a contested record while Hezbollah had held the reins of power for twelve years. Many Baalbakis, even amongst Hezbollah's core supporters, criticised the passiveness of the municipality in regulating the Syrian presence in their city. Even more of them questioned the justifications for the Shia party's intervention into a foreign conflict which dramatically backlashed on the local economy in Baalbek.[557]

However, the party of God did not sense the depth of the social discontent mounting amongst its members and sympathisers. Hezbollah assumed that its political dominance was not under threat. Therefore, the party adopted a similar electoral strategy to the one implemented in 2010, which had so successfully maintained its grip on local power. It allied with its main pro-Syrian allies to provide a united list to the Baalbaki electorate.

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[557] Sandra Noujeim, « À Baalbeck-Hermel, le « mécontentement » atteint les rangs du Hezbollah, » [In Baalbeck-Hermel, "Discontent" Reached the Ranks of Hezbollah] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 6, 2016, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/984594/a-baalbeck-hermel-le-mecontentement-atteint-les-rangs-du-hezbollah.html.

Table 6.3 Local elections in Baalbek, 2016

List Name	Clientelist typology	Sponsors/Backers	Election Results Votes	Seats	Council
"Development and Loyalty"	**Islamic** Militia-to-political Political	**Hezbollah** (HEZ), Amal (AM), Pro-Syrian parties*	7,404	**21**	**21/21**
"Baalbek Madinati"	[Independents] Oligarchic	Civil society activists Future Movement (FM)	5,058	0	0/21
"Citizens in a State"	[Independents]	Charbel Nahas	320	0	0/21

Legend:
*= Refers to the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) and Baath
| = coalition list of several parties

Sources: UNDP, "The Results of Municipal Elections. Lebanon 2016," 18.

As displayed in table 6.3 above, Hezbollah coordinated the "Development and Loyalty" list in coalition with its traditional allies, Amal and other pro-Syrian parties.[558] The main opponents to this Hezbollah's list were an unusual coalition of civil society actors and political independents. The Baalbek Madinati list (Baalbek our city) was an off spring of other comparable independent lists competing for power in an unprecedented number of municipalities across Lebanon. In Baalbek, the independents were mostly supported by the largest Sunni party (the Future Movement).[559]

6.2.b Hezbollah's Campaign

This electoral campaign was characterised by continuing security concerns which impaired the daily lives of the Baalbakis. As a matter of fact, Hezbollah was itself embroiled in regional warfare strategies. The Lebanese-Syrian border still hosted Sunni Jihadists battling against Hezbollah. At the heart of the municipal campaign, in early April 2016, the party of God launched an attack in the mountains of North-Bekaa to contain ISIS fighters based in the region.[560]

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[558] Nidal Al-Solh, "Families to Battle Parties in Bekaa Elections," *Daily Star Lebanon*, May 6, 2016, https://www.pressreader.com/lebanon/the-daily-star-lebanon/20160506/282071981107375.
[559] Nidal Al-Solh, "'Baalbek Madinati' Announces Candidates for Next Week's Vote," *Daily Star Lebanon*, May 1, 2016, https://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2016/May-01/35011.
[560] L'Orient-le Jour, « Le Hezbollah attaque une base de l'EI dans le jurd de Ras Baalbeck, » [Hezbollah Attacks ISIS Base in the Jurd of Ras Baalbeck] *L'Orient-le Jour*, April 4, 2016,

In the meantime, the united list of political independents (Baalbek Madinati) actively challenged Hezbollah on its local record after twelve years at the head of the municipality of Baalbek. They exploited the party of God's poor socioeconomic performance to appeal to disenfranchised Baalbakis.[561] In a press conference, an independent candidate declared that: "The target of [Baalbek Madinati's electoral] battle is how to work on developing Baalbek... after years of neglect and marginalisation."[562] The political independents flatly blamed Hezbollah for disregarding the improvement of the Baalbakis' livelihoods.

To makes matters worse for the party of God, serious allegations of corruption further tarnished the party's image of pious modesty.[563] Nepotism and corruption bred "resentment and disrespect from [Hezbollah's] cadres and supporters alike," according to Blanford.[564] These revelations even altered the party's "strong sense of discipline and obedience."[565] It was even less palatable for the Baalbakis, who suffered from harsher living conditions due to Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian conflict. Still, the party of God underestimated all these concerning signs. Hezbollah and its allies assumed that they remained the irreplaceable defenders of Baalbek and its Shia community. As such, they estimated that voters would not risk empowering political independents who could not offer them physical nor human protection. Hezbollah nevertheless miscalculated the dissatisfaction of its own members. Although the election ballots maintained Hezbollah's list in power, it also conveyed a powerful message of defiance from the Baalbakis.

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https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/979100/le-hezbollah-attaque-une-base-de-lei-dans-le-jurd-de-ras-baalbeck.html.

[561] Al-Solh, "'Baalbek Madinati' Announces Candidates."

[562] Al-Solh, ibid.

[563] See: Sandra Noujeim, « À Baalbeck-Hermel, le « mécontentement » atteint les rangs du Hezbollah, » [In Baalbeck-Hermel, 'Discontent' Reached the Ranks of Hezbollah] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 6, 2016, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/984594/a-baalbeck-hermel-le-mecontentement-atteint-les-rangs-du-hezbollah.html.

[564] Nicholas Blanford, "Hezbollah's Evolution: From Lebanese Militia to Regional Player," *Middle-East Institute Counterterrorism Series* 4 (2017):14.

[565] Nicholas Blanford, "Hezbollah's Evolution," 14.

6.2.c Baalbek's Electoral Results

On the 15th of May 2016, a relatively low turnout of 44% of Baalbaki voters tangibly marked the gloomy context of the election (in comparison 52% of Baalbakis participated at the previous local election in 2010).[566] Many electors "voted with their feet", and stayed home to express their dissatisfaction with the party of God's governance. It was indeed a tense election for Hezbollah. As the hours passed, Hezbollahi partisans in polling stations noticed that many loyal voters were not showing up or, worse, had defected to the independents. The election ended up with a controversial vote-counting process, which was tarnished by accusations of fraud from supporters and candidates of the independents' list.[567]

Hezbollah and its allies formally registered another total victory in Baalbek. The party of God's "Development and Loyalty" list retained the 21 councillor seats at stake, thanks to a share of 55.2% of votes.[568] General Hussein Lakkis became the new mayor of the municipality of Baalbek succeeding Dr. Hamad Hassan, who later became president of the Union of Baalbek Municipalities. But this firm success for Hezbollah was however overshadowed by the defection of a fringe of core Shia supporters in favour of the independents list. Indeed, the independents list won the support of 35.2% of the Baalbaki electorate.[569] The last and only time Hezbollah was defeated in a local election was 1998. Such a score meant that it was not solely Sunni and Christian minorities who cast a ballot for the independents, but Baalbaki Shias as well. This shift in loyalties was a very concerning sign for Hezbollah. It meant that some clientelist loyalties within the party vanished, which directly threatened the durability of Hezbollah's dominance in Baalbek. The party of God thus grasped the urgency of acting to retain the loyalty of its supporters.

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[566] Information International, "The Results of Municipal Elections. Lebanon 2016," 18; L'Orient-le Jour, « Conférence de presse de Baroud : Taux de participation : Beyrouth 21%, Békaa 49%, » [Baroud's Press Conference: Turn Out : Beirut 21%, Bekaa 49%] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 9, 2010, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/656544/Conference_de_presse_de_Baroud_%253A_Taux_d e_participation_%253A_Beyrouth_21%252C_Bekaa_49.html.
[567] See the transcript of *Mirna's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.
[568] Information International, ibid.
[569] Informational International, ibid.

The third section of the chapter thus outlines the power strategy of symbolic substitution (E2) employed by Hezbollah since 2016 to counter the defections of its Shia protégés.

2016-2018
6.3 The Might of Hezbollah's Symbolic Violence
6.3.a Choosing Symbolic Substitution (E2)

The previous empirical chapter on Zahle (chapter 5) demonstrated the comprehensive use by the Lebanese Forces (LF) of a power strategy of material alleviation. This form of governance in crisis was primarily designed to protect the livelihoods of the Zahlawis and sustain their loyalty to the Christian leadership. After the tremendous electoral challenge posed by the 2016 local elections in Baalbek, could Hezbollah replicate a similar strategy, focusing on the material sustainability of its clientelist contracts?

The following empirical findings from Baalbek show that the party of God encountered substantial financial limitations, leading it to employ a substitutive power strategy of symbolic violence (E2). Indeed, the Islamic-communitarian clientelist network rationed its welfare delivery to contain its budget – burdened by the Syrian war and the rising social needs of its protégés in Lebanon. However, Hezbollah was not able to find sufficient material resources to compensate from humanitarian or foreign partners, unlike its neighbouring counterparts in Zahle. In the following subsection, I describe how Hezbollah's financial rationing proved insufficient to ensure the satisfaction of its clients, thus forced the party to choose a substitutive symbolic power strategy.

Rationing Welfare

The political dominance of Hezbollah is historically based on an impressive institutional capacity to deliver welfare to impoverished Shia communities.[570] The

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[570] Cammett, *Compassionate Communalism: Welfare and Sectarianism in Lebanon.*

party relies upon a highly vertical internal structure which guarantees the efficient delivery of welfare in the most disciplined manner.[571] Hence, Hezbollah offers a comprehensive social offer caring for its members "from the cradle to the grave," akin to European Communist parties at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is a clientelist structure which more than any other type of patronage in Lebanon bases its power upon the social dependence of its supporters.

An NGO worker in Baalbek reminded me that Hezbollah maintains the faithfulness of disenfranchised Shia communities in the region by being more than an ideological offer or a welfare provider, but also an employer.[572] In Baalbek-Hermel, Hezbollah employs and thus pays more than 26,000 people according to a leading independent opponent to the party of God in Baalbek.[573] These employees and their families are evidently the primary beneficiaries of Hezbollah's Iranian-inspired welfare apparatus.[574] In deprived regions of Baalbek-Hermel, Hezbollah therefore possesses an unparalleled monopoly on welfare – from education, to healthcare, to pension benefits – as tens of thousands of households directly depend upon the party's welfare institutions.[575]

Whilst the Baalbakis endured the socioeconomic shock of the Syrian migration, they inevitably channelled their rising needs to Hezbollah's social institutions. I explained in the first section of the chapter that labour competition especially affected the lower middle class in Baalbek (an empirical finding that is similar across the three case cities). This population, unfamiliar with those suffering from essential needs, shared their anxiety with Hezbollah party members and their allies. A party official of Amal (AM), Hezbollah's main ally, confirmed this dramatic social decline affecting his loyal members who then came to his office "asking for help."[576]

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[571] Aurélie Daher, *Le Hezbollah - Mobilisation et Pouvoir* [Hezbollah – Mobilisation and Power] (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2014), 213.

[572] See the transcript of *Amer's* (anomymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

[573] See the transcript of *Hussein's* (anomymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

[574] Adham Saouli, *Hezbollah. Socialisation and its Tragic Ironies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 93.

[575] For a comprehensive exposé of the party of God's welfare institutions and the social communal role assumed by Hezbollah see: Cammett, *Compassionate Communalism: Welfare and Sectarianism in Lebanon.*

[576] See the transcript of *Faraj's* (anomymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

To answer this pressing social crisis, Hezbollah could not rely on new humanitarian resources, as most foreign NGOs avoided settling in Baalbek for fear of being politicised by the Shia party. The former mayor of Baalbek, Dr. Hamad Hassan, confided that Hezbollah suffered from the absence of large international humanitarian organisations in Baalbek which, conversely, were more at ease in neighbouring Zahle.[577] Indeed, the humanitarian spectrum of actors in Baalbek is limited to Lebanese associations possessing far more restricted means than their transnational counterparts. Moreover, Hezbollah's welfare monopoly in Baalbek means that it cannot rely on local parent welfare providers as in Zahle, where the Lebanese Forces partially devolve communal care to local ecclesial orders.

To makes matters worse for Hezbollah, the party suffered another blow through the enforcement by the Trump administration of a set of sanctions on the financial markets targeting its sources of revenue.[578] Suddenly, sympathisers to the party of God had their foreign assets frozen all over the world, which somewhat disrupted Hezbollah's fruitful transnational drug business.[579] These financial restrictions also curtailed Iran's capacity to finance Hezbollah. A senior party official of Hezbollah admitted during a first interview that the party's dependence on Iranian funding backlashed upon its finances when Iran fell under tough American sanctions.[580] "I tell you frankly, the problem [comes from] Iran because Iran helps us a lot," he declared. In parallel to these financial constraints, Hezbollah's military operations in Syria were costing the Shia party greatly.[581]

In such a fragile financial context, the party of God rationed its welfare redistribution in Baalbek and other regions of Lebanon, in spite of the acute social crisis affecting its members. Hezbollah's senior party official admitted that his party had no choice but to "ration" its allocation of services in an attempt to weather limited financial

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[577] See the transcript of Dr. Hamad Hassan's interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

[578] The Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act was enacted in 2015 and further restrictions were added by the House of Representatives in 2017. Georges, "Disentangling Lebanon from Regional Wars," 133; Oxford Analytica, "Sanctions could prompt Hezbollah backlash in Lebanon," *Expert Briefings* (2016), doi:10.1108/OXAN-DB212509.

[579] On Hezbollah's foundational drug connection in the Bekaa see: Daniel O. Shaw, "Beyond Necessity: Hezbollah and the Intersection of State-Sponsored Terrorism with Organised Crime," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 12 (2019): 592, doi:10.1080/17539153.2019.1592074.

[580] See the transcript of *Hassan's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Beirut, in July 2018.

[581] Blanford, "Hezbollah's Evolution," 22.

means with rising expenses.[582] Therefore, it was clear that the party was unable to compensate the material loss induced by the Syrian migration with external sources of funding as the Zahlawi elites had done. Table 6.4 below summarises Hezbollah's limited material alleviation agency which deterred the Shia party from using such a power strategy after 2016.

Table 6.4 Hezbollah's record in attracting compensatory resources

Type of Power Strategy	Available Policy	Elite Domination	
		Endurance	Vulnerability
Material Alleviation (E1) Attraction of Compensative Resources	Limited welfare support from local aid providers		✓
	Limited influence on humanitarian resources		✓
	Limited External sources of support		✓

The Shia militia consequently resorted to a substitutive symbolic power strategy (E2) to protect its threatened political dominance. The purpose of this strategy was to retain the loyalty of core supporters by resorting to symbolic schemes (ideology, cult of leadership, or a collective memory) to reify in-group identities. Subsequently, supporters are expected to bolster their allegiance to the clientelist leadership. It is therefore a costless tool designed to counter internal potential defections from the clientelist network.

Hezbollah possesses a combatant identity inherited from its warring experience during the Lebanese civil conflict.[583] Clientelist networks having a warrior identity such as Hezbollah express their combatant symbolism not only through a rhetorical radicality but also by adopting coercive policies (as explained in the theoretical chapter, chapter 3). First, a clientelist network can use violence to repress potential defectors from breaking their clientelist social contract. Second, a clientelist network can resort to a radical rhetoric which galvanises supporters behind their leadership.

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[582] See the transcript of *Hassan's* (anomymised name) interview conducted in Beirut, in July 2018.
[583] Benedetta Berti, "War, Resistance, and 'Combatant Identity:' Hezbollah's Political Identity and the Legacy of Conflict," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (2020): 1-16, doi:10.1080/09546553.2020.1810026.

This second policy especially comes into play during elections. I detail it in the fourth section of the chapter, focusing on the 2018 electoral campaign.

Overall, these policies endeavour to securitise local communities in order to secure their faithfulness. Based on its identity and warfare history, Hezbollah surmised that this symbolically violent power strategy could weather the defiance of some of its supporters. The next subsection describes how the party of God enforced a coercive policy of communal securitisation in Baalbek after 2016.

6.3.b The Coercive Policy of Communal Securitisation

Hezbollah knew that the use of coercion established its symbolic dominance. It is thanks to its weaponization that it gained the allegiance of Lebanese Shia communities in the 1980s. The Shia militia was founded upon a "counter hegemonic project" of "resistance" (*al muqawama* in Arabic) inspired by the 1979 Iranian revolution.[584] This warrior identity aims to fight against a wide array of so-called imperialist "oppressors" including Israel and its protector, the United States of America.[585] This combatant ideological basis, which bonded the partisans of Hezbollah across generations, faced a major challenge in 2016. Indeed, what was the symbolic worth of the "resistance" identity if Hezbollah could not ensure the safety of its own protégés in Baalbek-Hermel?

In 2016, neither Hezbollah nor the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) possessed stable control of the Lebanese border with Syria. Sunni Jihadist rebel groups continued to support small insurgencies into Lebanese territory, and especially in nearby Baalbek. Therefore, the priority for the party of God was to recover the "monopoly" of violence on its territory of control. In so doing, Hezbollah would revive the meaning of "resistance" to its own supporters. Moreover, the pacification of the border regions would be a first step towards the securitisation of Sunni minorities in Baalbek whose armed rebellion challenged Hezbollah's local dominance. I next describe how

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[584] Abed T. Kanaaneh, *Understanding Hezbollah: The Hegemony of Resistance* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2021), 213.
[585] Nilsson, "Hezbollah and the Framing of Resistance," 1596.

Hezbollah endeavoured in the summer of 2017 to recover this "monopoly" of violence.

Recovering the "Monopoly" of Violence

After several years of insecurity, Hezbollah wanted to re-establish its full sovereignty on the border with Syria. The party aimed to cut relations between the Sunni rebellion in Baalbek-Hermel and their Syria-based comrades. To do so, Hezbollah resumed military cooperation with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) in 2017. The secretary general of the party, Hassan Nasrallah, justified this decision by emphasising that the "doctrine of complementarity [..] between the [resistance] and the Lebanese army [was] the only formula to protect Lebanon from external threats."[586]

From the 21st of July to the 28th of August 2017, the so-called war of the *Jurd* (mountains) successfully demonstrated the hybrid military cooperation between the Lebanese army and Hezbollah's sectarian militia. A senior civil servant in the regional administration of Baalbek-Hermel governorate considered that the war "succeeded in pushing the terrorists, killing and arresting several [of them]."[587] The operation thus restored stability at the border with Syria.

It may seem paradoxical that Hezbollah recovered its "monopoly" of violence in Baalbek-Hermel thanks to the support of the Lebanese armed forces. In fact, Hezbollah emphasised similarities between the Lebanese army and its fighters to demonstrate that the party of God had returned to its ideological essence. The war was a statement made by Hezbollah to its supporters that the Shia militia had relinquished its Syrian "Jihad" (religious war), to instead concentrate on the "resistance" against Lebanon's enemies.[588] The Lebanese army's participation in the

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[586] Marina Calculli, "Hezbollah's Lebanese Strategy in the Syrian Conflict," In *The Syrian Imbroglio: International and Regional Strategies*, ed. Ioannis Galariotis and Kostas Ifantis (Florence: European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, 2017), 43.

[587] See the transcript of *Walid's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in April 2019.

[588] Elena Aoun and Didier Leroy, "Crossed Views on Jihadism in the Middle East: The Engagement of Lebanese Fighters in Syria," *Royal Higher Institute for Defence, Center for Security and Defence Studies* (2019): 3, https://www.defence-institute.be/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ss-140.pdf.

war of the *Jurd* made this symbolic enterprise even more credible to the targeted audience of Lebanese Shia communities in Baalbek.

Securitisation of Local Communities

Once the "monopoly" of violence was restored, the party of God could then proceed with the securitisation of the local communities, especially the Sunni populations of Baalbek. The securitisation of a group necessitates constructing and depicting the latter as an existential security threat for the rest of the community. Hence, securitisation is a "speech act."[589] Once an issue is declared to be "a matter of security, its urgency and priority becomes established."[590] This sense of urgency therefore justifies the use of normatively unacceptable methods, encompassing coercive and violent measures, to address this issue.

In Baalbek, Hezbollah primarily targeted local out-group members, specifically Lebanese Sunnis living in town, and foreign migrants (also mostly Sunnis) residing in suburban camps. Considering the number of violent incidents perpetrated in Syria by Syrian (and foreign) Sunni Jihadists, it was not difficult for Hezbollah to develop a rationale justifying its need to keep an eye on Lebanese and Syrian Sunnis residing in Baalbek. For the party of God, the rare attacks perpetrated by Baalbaki Sunnis against Hezbollah illustrated the vividness of the threat weighing on Baalbaki Shias. A senior official of the largest Lebanese Sunni party in Baalbek recalled that Hezbollah accused his fellow Sunni citizens of support for Islamic State.[591] It was therefore Hezbollah's responsibility, as the self-proclaimed protector of the city, to securitise these communities in order to restore the safety of its own protégés.

The range of securitisation policies endorsed by Hezbollah in the municipality of Baalbek included enhanced data collection, the enforcement of a night curfew for designated areas, and frequent police raids to arrest terrorists.[592] The mayor of

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[589] Anne Hammerstad, "The Securitization of Forced Migration," In *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*, ed. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Gil Loescher, Katy Long, and Nando Sigona (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 267.

[590] Hammerstad, "The Securitization of Forced Migration," 267.

[591] See the transcript of *Rafik's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in April 2019.

[592] Dolf te Lintelo, Rajith Lakshman, Wissam Mansour, Emma Soye, Teo Ficcarelli and Will Woodward, "Wellbeing and Protracted Urban Displacement: Refugees and Hosts in Jordan and

Baalbek, General Lakkis, notably justified the execution of night curfews in the Sunni neighbourhoods of the city and in suburban informal camps as a temporary and proportionate measure to guarantee the security of all communities.[593] The vulnerable displaced communities suffered from serious violations of their human rights and dignity. The Internal Security Forces (ISF) regularly launched raids in tented settlements in the periphery of Baalbek. A third of the displaced individuals surveyed who were residing in Baalbaki's informal camps reported repetitive instances of violent searches in their respective settlements (this proportion is far higher than in Tripoli and more modestly so with the Bekaa governorate).[594]

As a result, Hezbollah did reach its initial goal of re-legitimising the "resistance" identity. The party asserted its symbolic dominance in Baalbek by re-establishing order after several years of instability. Local civil society actors witnessed how Baalbaki Sunni rebels ceased their fight against Hezbollah and other Lebanese proxies of the Assad regime.[595]

Table 6.5 Identifying Hezbollah's coercive policies, 2016-2018

Type of Power Strategy	Policy	Elite Domination	
		Endurance	Vulnerability
Symbolic Substitution (E2) Coercion	Possessing the monopoly of violence	✓	
	Securitising local communities	✓	
	Exerting a targeted use of violence against political rivals	✓	

In summary, table 6.5 above lists the coercive policies implemented by Hezbollah to project its symbolic dominance in Baalbek. It indicates that the party of God endorsed a comprehensive use of intimidatory practices, inherited from its warfare history, which demonstrated to its protégés that Hezbollah was the sole actor capable of ensuring their safety.

Lebanon," *Institute of Development Studies Research* (2018), 34, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/13709.

[593] See the transcript of General Hussein Lakkis' interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

[594] Allegrini, "Survey on Displaced Communities," questions 35a and 35b.

[595] See the transcript of *Chantal's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

Thus, the securitisation of Baalbek prepared the ground for the incoming 2018 parliamentary elections. The discriminate use of violence against out-group communities sent a clear message to Baalbaki Shias, too. The party of God demonstrated that it fully possessed the means to violently intimidate both its members tempted to defect, and political rivals desiring to compete against the sole legitimate representative of the Shia community.

Before delving into the 2018 parliamentary campaign, the next subsection of the chapter evaluates how the coerciveness of Hezbollah's symbolic power strategy was perceived by citizens in Baalbek.

6.3.c Assessing the Performance of Hezbollah's Governance in Baalbek

We saw in the preceding subsections that Hezbollah assumed a range of coercive policies designed to re-assert its symbolic dominance over local communities (E2) and especially its own protégés tempted to defect from the party of God. But how did the Baalbakis respond to these coercive and often violent policies enforced by Hezbollah?

Chart 6.1 Lebanese citizens' perceptions of local governance in Baalbek, 2018

Q65: Baalbaki Respondents' Evaluation of the Efficiency of the Municipality of Baalbek's Policies to Protect Local Communities

Very efficient: 0%
Fairly efficient: 7%
No effect: 16%
Poorly efficient: 19%
Inefficient: 40%
Don't know: 19%

Percentage (y-axis: 0% to 45%)
Participants' Opinion (x-axis)
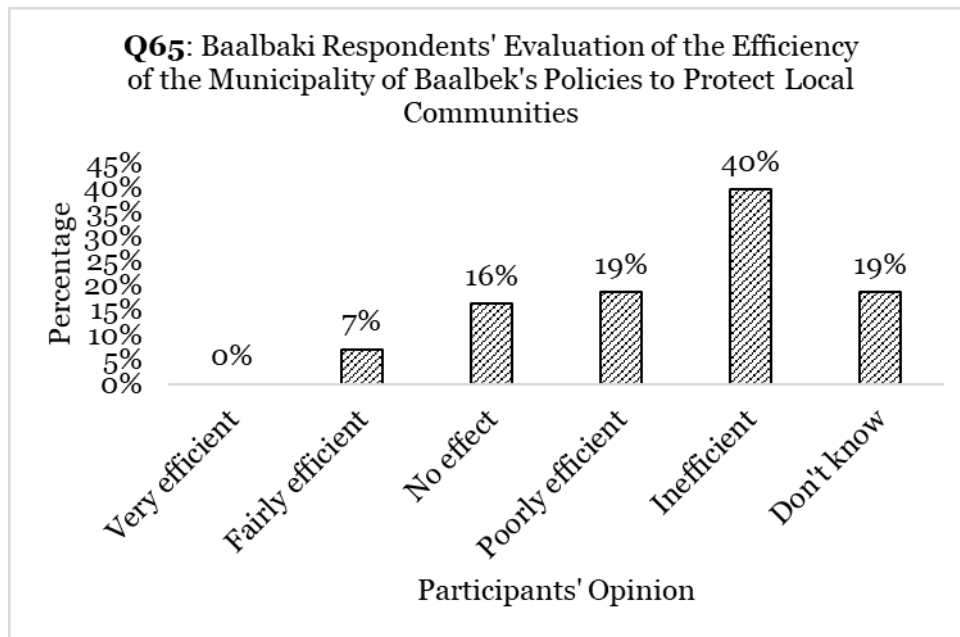
Unlike the residents of Zahle, it is interesting to notice that the Baalbakis surveyed did not feel that their municipality had protected them. Chart 6.1 above indicates a distinct lack of confidence in their local authorities. Only 7% of the participants considered that the municipality of Baalbek had adopted efficient protective measures in the midst of the socioeconomic crisis. This finding is not really surprising. This chapter has previously described that for political reasons Hezbollah did not adopt adequate legal and social protective measures to enable the local population to weather the pressures weighing on their livelihoods. The party's protection of Syrian sympathisers deterred any regulative action from the municipality of Baalbek.

However, Hezbollah's enforcement of coercive policies in the Baalbek-Hermel capital helped ensure electoral success. These policies instigated fear amongst the Baalbakis. Indeed, the subject of safety seems a recurring object of concern for the surveyed Baalbakis. The respondents consistently expressed the lowest perceptions of security across the three case cities. Of the surveyed Lebanese citizens, 33% did not feel safe in Baalbek, while these numbers were just 16% in Tripoli and 8% in Zahle.[596]

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[596] Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities," question 62.

Moreover, 56% of the participants estimated that their safety in Baalbek had been worsening since 2011.[597] This is the most severe trend amongst the case cities.

These local perceptions do not mean that there was no order in Baalbek. Instead, they conveyed a prevalent feeling shared by many inhabitants that they feared the behaviour of the actor possessing the "monopoly" of violence in Baalbek, which is Hezbollah. The instigation of fear is a powerful tool used by clientelist networks to tighten their grip on communal members. I interviewed many local Shia political actors who confirmed this atmosphere of suspicion not only towards out-group communities like the Baalbaki Sunnis, but also within the Shia community itself.

For instance, a senior member of the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP) confessed that many people in Baalbek were not satisfied with Hezbollah's governance. However, he stated that in Baalbek "no one can say anything, no one can do anything" against the party of God.[598] Another sympathiser of the communist party then added that a Baalbaki Shia would not dare to compete with Hezbollah in an election. "He would be afraid to do so," she declared.[599] In essence, the party of God's coercive policies enshrined the symbolic domination of Hezbollah in order to clear its path for a secured win at the 2018 parliamentary elections.

The 2018 parliamentary election serves as a test of the perpetuation of clientelist loyalties towards Baalbek's Islamic-communitarian clientelism. The fourth section of the chapter therefore measures whether the power strategy of symbolic substitution defended by Hezbollah maintained a durable electoral support to the party.

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[597] Allegrini, "Survey on Lebanese Communities," question 63.

[598] See the transcript of *Bachar* and *Sandra's* (anonymised names) interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

[599] Ibid.

2018 Parliamentary Elections

6.4 Hezbollah's Symbolically Radical and Intimidatory Campaign

6.4.a Political Context and Competing Lists

In Baalbek, the battle for the leadership of the city is determined by Shia representation. The Shias are indeed the largest community in the city and their elites historically dominate local power structures in Baalbek-Hermel. The electoral law allocates six Shia deputies to the Bekaa III. Overall, five lists competed for winning one of the ten seats representing the Bekaa III constituency at the Chamber of Deputies.[600]

Once again, Hezbollah endeavoured to unite the political front of the pro-Syrian parties to secure widespread support from the Lebanese Shia community. The party of God formed the "Hope and Loyalty" list with fellow Amal and Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) allies.[601] Hezbollah's incumbent and new candidates shared a similar profile at least in one respect, in that all of them were experienced party officials whose discipline to the "resistance" ideology was unquestionable.[602] This selection of candidates was another sign of the party's willingness to value the significance of its combatant identity and thus coerce core supporters to remain loyal.

The main Shia contenders of Hezbollah's list, former MP Yahia Shams (1992-1996) and former mayor Ghaleb Yaghi (1998-2004), united with the remaining largest parties of Baalbek-Hermel. These represented the Sunni (the Future Movement) and Christian (the Lebanese Forces) minorities. Together they formed the "Dignity and Development" list.

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[600] L'Orient-le Jour, « Législatives : les cinq listes qui croiseront le fer à Baalbeck-Hermel, » [Legislative Elections: The Five Lists that will Cross Swords in Baalbeck-Hermel] *L'Orient-le Jour*, March 27, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1107324/les-cinq-listes-qui-croiseront-le-fer-a-baalbeck-hermel.html.

[601] L'Orient-le Jour, « Hajj Hassan annonce la liste du Hezbollah à Baalbeck-Hermel, » [Hajj Hassan Announces Hezbollah's List in Baalbeck-Hermel] *L'Orient-le Jour*, March 19, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1105652/-et-hajj-hassan-celle-du-hezbollah-a-baalbeck-hermel.html.

[602] Michel Hajji Georgiou, « Les candidatures d'Amal et du Hezbollah aux législatives : beaucoup de partisans, peu de changements, » [The Candidacies of Amal and Hezbollah in the Legislative Elections: Many Supporters, Few Changes] *L'Orient-le Jour*, February 20, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1100794/les-candidatures-damal-et-du-hezbollah-beaucoup-de-partisans-peu-de-changements.html.

Table 6.6 Parliamentary elections in Baalbek, 2018

			Election Results		
List Name	Clientelist typology	Sponsors/Backers	Votes	Seats	Chamber
"Hope and Loyalty"	**Islamic** Militia-to-political Political	**Hezbollah** (HEZ), Amal (AM), SSNP	140,747	**6** 1 1	**8/10**
"Dignity and Development"	Militia-to-political Oligarchic [Independents]	Lebanese Forces (LF), Future Movement (FM), Yahya Shams	35,607	1 1 0	2/10
"The Independent"	Political Political [Independents]	Baath (BAA), Free Patriotic Movement Civil society activists	5,470	0 0 0	0/10
"Development and Change"	[Independents]	Civil society activists	4,053	0	0/10
"National Cedars"	[Independents]	Civil society activists	491	0	0/10

Sources: UNDP, "2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections. Results and Figures," 12.

In sum, table 6.6 above lists all the contenders for the 2018 parliamentary election in the Bekaa III constituency.

I describe in the next subsection of the chapter how Hezbollah conveyed its combatant symbolism into a radical rhetoric which purposefully "othered" political rivals. The categorisation of democratic competitors as "enemies" of the "resistance" even justified the resort to violence against Shia challengers, to silence them and deter any political alternative to Hezbollah in Baalbek.

6.4.b Hezbollah's Campaign Themes

During the 2018 parliamentary campaign, Hezbollah implemented the second step of its symbolic power strategy (E2) by intensifying the radical nature of its political rhetoric. The adoption of a radical rhetoric is a direct legacy from the party's warrior history. It usefully projects into democratic times the combatant identity which originally bound the Shia community to Hezbollah.

This policy of rhetorical radicalisation was intended to galvanise the Lebanese Shia's support for the party of God by reifying sectarian identities. At the same time, a

radicalised rhetoric "others" and even dehumanises all the individuals that are unfaithful to Hezbollah. It automatically essentialises out-group communities as "enemies" and categorises in-group political rivals and defectors as "traitors." Thus, the process of "othering" democratic challengers and voters justifies the party of God's use of targeted violence against these individuals. Violence legitimises the symbolic dominance of a combatant clientelist network. In other words Hezbollah violently intimidated Shia rivals to deter them from campaigning and to silence any critiques against the party.

I next define and illustrate how Hezbollah formulated a warrior campaign rhetoric which "othered" its competitors and even led to violent intimidations.

"Othering"

Even though the civil war ended in 1990, Hezbollah intentionally placed the 2018 electoral campaign into a warrior context. The party wanted to dramatize the electoral stakes in order to "existentialise" the act of voting. Therefore, Hezbollah's first ambition was to infuse an anxious atmosphere which resurrects collective memories and traumas. To do so, the party relied on its combatant identity and the symbolic narratives and schemes inherited from its warfare experience.

For instance, the proliferation of campaign advertisements in Baalbek-Hermel qualified the vote as an act of resistance against "enemies" (see picture 6.1 below).

Picture 6.1 Hezbollah and Amal campaign placards, Bekaa highway [603]

"Hand in hand we resist deprivation as we resist enemies",

read one of Hezbollah's slogans.

Hezbollah candidates and party officials formulated a radical rhetoric deliberately reopening the wounds of war which marked the Lebanese Shia collective memory. I draw on the campaign speech of Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, made at a rally for the Bekaa communities on the 1st of May 2018, one week before the vote, to illustrate the discursive construction of the "Other".[604] In his introduction Nasrallah attempted to diffuse a sense of threat in order to gain the attention of his partisans and persuade them to support the party.[605] He then qualified the 2018 elections as a "battle."[606] This term conveyed a sense of existential urgency to the audience. The leader's speech was punctuated by military rhetoric, including the following expressions which stirred sectarian memories: "Ancestors' swords", "bloods of our

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[603] The picture was taken on the 24th of April 2018 by myself (own copyrights).
[604] Alahed News, "Sayyed Nasrallah's Full Speech at the 'Loyalty to Land' Electoral Rally in Baalbek, Zahle on May 1st, 2018," *Alahed News*, May 1, 2018, https://www.english.alahednews.com.lb/43111/594.
[605] Jacques Gerstlé and Alessandro Nai, "Negativity, Emotionality and Populist Rhetoric in Election Campaigns Worldwide, and their Effects on Media Attention and Electoral Success," *European Journal of Communication* 34 (2019): 413; Alessandro Nai, Yves Schemeil and Jean-Louis Marie, "Anxiety, Sophistication, and Resistance to Persuasion: Evidence from a Quasi-Experimental Survey on Global Climate Change," *Political Psychology* 38 (2017): 137-156.
[606] Alahed News, "Sayyed Nasrallah's Full Speech."

sons", "martyrs of the Bekaa", and "shields of the resistance".[607] Afterwards Nasrallah stated that the Shia community is tied by fundamental bonds to the party of God. "Our strength is in our path that has been united by faith, blood and martyrdom," he declared.[608] This statement also implied that Hezbollah considered a defection to another party to be a betrayal of this indefectible oath, tying the Lebanese Shia community to the party.

Then, the leader of Hezbollah adopted a demonising tone to designate the Shia rivals, defectors and out-group communities he wished to "other." He especially targeted the party's main contenders in Baalbek uniting Shia independents to Christian (Lebanese Forces) and Sunni (Future Movement) parties on the "Dignity and Development" list (see table 6.6 p.197). Nasrallah declared that this list "stood alongside terrorist groups who wanted to invade the entire Bekaa".[609] Candidates competing against Hezbollah were thereby reduced to the status of "traitors" accused to threaten the safety of Baalbakis for supporting the rebellion against Assad's regime.[610] This example of public smearing, which breaks away from moderate democratic debate, encapsulates the heavy pressure that Hezbollah inflicted upon its political rivals in the Bekaa III constituency. A Christian candidate to the Chamber of Deputies in Baalbek-Hermel confessed that voting or campaigning against Hezbollah diminished his/her safety.[611] To make this message clear, the street placards of the candidate were noticeably burnt down on the first day of his campaign.

For the candidates who had not yet withdrew from the competition and who had not silenced their critiques against Hezbollah's governance, this "othering" of political rivals was intended to justify violent intimidations.

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[607] Alahed News, ibid.
[608] Alahed News, ibid.
[609] L'Orient-le Jour, « Baalbeck-Hermel : La liste du Courant du Futur comprend ceux qui ont conspiré avec les terroristes, accuse Nasrallah, » [Baalbeck-Hermel: The Current of the Future List Includes those who Conspired with Terrorists, Accuses Nasrallah] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 1, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1113263/baalbeck-hermel-la-liste-du-courant-du-futur-comprend-ceux-qui-ont-conspire-avec-les-terroristes-accuse-nasrallah.html.
[610] Alahed News, ibid.
[611] See the transcript of *Simon's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Mount-Lebanon, in August 2018.

Violent Intimidation

As I explained in chapter 3, clientelist network possessing a security apparatus, such as Hezbollah, has the capacity to protect the legitimacy of their symbolic dominance by resorting to coercion (intimidation and physical violence). The party of God considered that a credible political alternative for the Lebanese Shia community threatened the credibility and authority of the "resistance" paradigm on which its dominance relied. Indeed, if some members of the community, especially Shia politicians, "misrecognised" the symbolic power of the Islamic Resistance over the Baalbakis, Hezbollah's domination was at risk of losing its prestige. As such, intimidating a single candidate challenging Hezbollah's symbolic dominance suffices to send a warning message to all its prospective opponents. The message being that the Shia party cannot accept any open contestation of its founding ideology on its territory of social control, the Bekaa valley. Accordingly, the party of God clearly identified potential targets in the 2018 campaign. The Hezbollah-leaning newspaper *Al Akhbar* revealed on the 24th of April 2018 that the party of God compiled a blacklist of twenty-eight Shia political independents in Lebanon.[612] These Shia political activists were presumed to be funded by the United Arab Emirates, which qualified them as betrayers of the society of "resistance." Among them, Sheikh Abbas Jawhari is a Baalbaki Shia cleric supporting a sovereign Lebanese voice within the Shia community. His powerful figure represented an ideal target, to provide an example in order to silence other Shia independents in Baalbek-Hermel.

Less than two months before the elections, Sheikh Jawhari was arrested on presumed drugs charges by the General Security.[613] The head of General Security, General Abbas Ibrahim, is known for his acquaintances with the Shia militia.[614] Therefore, Hezbollah's leadership is able to make (false) accusations against rival candidates to General Security, which can then indict and arrest the targeted

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[612] L'Orient-le Jour, « Le Hezbollah enferme ses opposants dans une 'liste noire', » [Hezbollah Locks its Opponents into a 'Blacklist'] *L'Orient-le Jour*, April 25, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1112280/le-hezbollah-enferme-ses-opposants-dans-une-liste-noire-.html.

[613] NNA, "(Update) General Security Apprehends Sheikh Abbal Jawhari," National News Agency, March 22, 2018, http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/89418/nna-leb.gov.lb/es.

[614] Joe Macaron, "Lebanon's Oligarchy Consolidates Control over the Security Establishment," *Arab Center Washington D.C.*, March 22, 2017, https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/lebanon-sec-establishment/.

opponent. Subsequently, Hezbollah's media dutifully tarnished the public figure of Sheikh Jawahri. After several days in custody, the Shia cleric regained freedom when the charges against him were found to be unsubstantiated. Despite his dedication to putting forth a political alternative, the Sheikh decided to abort his campaign bid. During our interview, Sheikh Jawhari justified his decision to withdraw from the campaign by recounting an example of violent intimidation. On the 2nd of April 2018, armed men stopped his driver's car. They "were looking for me. It was a message to be sent to me. They wanted me to get out of the country," declared Sheikh Jawhari.[615]

As a result, Hezbollah's resort to a combatant rhetoric which otherised and justified violent intimidations against political rivals fulfilled its goal. Sheikh Jawhari withdrew from the electoral contest, while other candidates muted their opposition to Hezbollah's "resistance" paradigm. Hence, the coercive capacity of the party of God successfully protected the symbolic dominance of the Shia party by inducing through threats and force the compliance of the Baalbakis. The "misrecognisers" (the individuals contesting the legitimacy of the social order enshrined by symbolic resources) were brutally intimidated or excluded from the community. Though, it does not mean that the former's ideological disapprobation of the "resistance" ideology was shattered once and for all. But the party of God succeeded in postponing the spread of this crisis of legitimacy amongst supporters. It may erupt later during another electoral contest, but for the time being the "misrecognisers" know that they are up against the coercive power of the party.

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[615] Interview conducted in Baalbek, in July 2018.

Table 6.7 Identifying Hezbollah's rhetorical radicalism, 2016-2018

Type of Power Strategy	Policy	Elite Domination	
		Endurance	Vulnerability
Symbolic Substitution (E2) Political Rhetoric	Formulating a radical rhetoric breaking with norms of democratic competition	✓	
	Rhetorical "othering" of political rivals, defectors and out-group communities	✓	
	Rhetorical "othering" justifies violent intimidations against political rivals, defectors and out-group communities	✓	

In sum, table 6.7 above lists the different rhetorical attributes of Hezbollah's leadership in campaign. It indicates a comprehensive effort by the party to strategically express, during the 2018 campaign, the power of combatant symbolism into a radicalised rhetoric. Hezbollah thus intentionally reified sectarian identities to galvanise, at a low cost, its core supporters. In this way, the party demonstrated its readiness to instigate communal fears in order to retain its grip on local power.

6.4.c 2018 Bekaa III Results

As in other elections, partisans of Hezbollah paraded through the streets of Baalbek to entice the inhabitants to participate to the elections. It seems that Hezbollah's existentialisation of the vote persuaded many citizens to express their views on Baalbek-Hermel's parliamentary representation. The ballots of the Bekaa III constituency presented one of the highest turnouts in the country with 60.28% voters, while only 46.79% Lebanese casted their vote.[616]

Hezbollah's power strategy of symbolic substitution paid off in the ballots. The party of God's list gained 76% of the votes and won all the six Shia seats, one Sunni deputy and the only Greek Catholic representative in the constituency. Conversely, Hezbollah's main competitors grabbed one Sunni seat and one Maronite seat.[617] The Shia independents on the list failed to attract sufficient votes to gain a single deputy.

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[616] UNDP, "2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections," 6, 13.
[617] UNDP, "2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections," 12.

Hezbollah's endeavour to galvanise its supporters through a combatant rhetoric produced impressive results in the ballots. In the Bekaa III constituency, 91% of the Shia electors voted for a co-sectarian candidate.[618] Among them, very few Shia voters opted for an independent list. This means that most Shia voters remained tremendously loyal to Hezbollah.

In essence, Hezbollah successfully perpetuated its political dominance over Baalbek in 2018 by retaining all the Shia seats and more (with its allies) in the constituency. The power strategy of symbolic substitution (E2) conveying a combatant rhetoric retained the loyalty of Hezbollah's protégés, despite challenging socioeconomic conditions. Therefore, this Islamic-communitarian form of clientelism possesses a durable capacity to preserve its leadership even in the most uncertain times.

Conclusive remarks

This second empirical chapter studied the governance of the city of Baalbek from 2010 to 2018. It revealed that the Shia party Hezbollah, which represents a form of Islamic-communitarian clientelism, successfully maintained its power dominance by implementing a strategy of symbolic substitution (E2).

The first section of the chapter illustrated how Hezbollah initially prioritised its military intervention in Syria at the expense of the livelihoods and safety of its protégés in Baalbek. The capital of Baalbek-Hermel is a highly divided society where the settlement of displaced Syrians is intensely politicised. The chapter then illustrated how the municipality of Baalbek, led by Hezbollah, exclusively helped Syrian sympathisers of the Assad regime. Consequently, the municipality adopted a passive attitude regarding the regulation of the Syrian presence, due to fear of the targeting of Syrians protected by Hezbollah. The chapter revealed how the livelihoods and the safety of the Baalbakis was impaired by Hezbollah's political

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[618] Georgia Dagher, "The 2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections: What Do the Numbers Say? Bekaa 3 Electoral District: Baalbek-Hermel," *Lebanese Center for Policy Studies* (2021): 26-27, https://www.lcps-lebanon.org/articles/details/2488/the-2018-lebanese-parliamentary-elections-what-do-the-numbers-say-bekaa-3-electoral-district-baalbek-hermel.

choices. Many supporters of the party of God were ideologically confused and angered by their leadership's neglect for their clientelist social contracts.

The second section of the chapter subsequently outlined how the related disenfranchisement of a share of Hezbollah's clients generated powerful defiance in the ballots of the 2016 local elections. The party faced unusual competition from a list of political independents who garnered more than 35% of the votes. The chapter observed that this performance implied that some Baalbaki Shia voters reduced their loyalty to Hezbollah in favour of political challengers. Thus, the Shia party seized the urgency of the threat looming over its political dominance in the Baalbek-Hermel capital.

The third section of the chapter then explained how, following this election, Hezbollah endeavoured to regain the loyalty of its protégés by implementing a power strategy of symbolic substitution (E2). Unlike the Lebanese Forces in the neighbouring city of Zahle (see chapter 5), the party of God did not have the capacity to alleviate the material pressures weighing on the Baalbaki population. The party's war duties in Syria especially squeezed its finances, while at the same time it was not capable of leveraging sources of funding to compensate. Therefore, the power strategy of Hezbollah relied upon its combatant symbolism (E2) inherited from the Lebanese Civil War. The chapter then described how after 2016 the party first aimed to re-legitimise the meaning of its "resistance" identity by securitising Baalbaki communities. These methods of governance demonstrated to the Lebanese Shia community that Hezbollah was the sole possessor of the monopoly of violence in its territories of control.

The fourth section of the chapter demonstrated the second step induced by the power strategy of symbolic substitution (E2): the radicalisation of political rhetoric. In the heated context of the parliamentary elections, the party of God's leadership assumed a warrior rhetoric, intentionally reifying sectarian identities with the hope of mobilising the Shia community behind their "sole" protector (Hezbollah of course). The chapter explained how this rhetoric "othered" Hezbollah's political rivals by resurrecting memories and expressions inherited from the civil war. The party thus wanted to make clear that it would not allow critiques against the "resistance"

paradigm on which its symbolic domination rests. The chapter illustrated how the "othering" of political rivals justified targeted intimidations against vocal opponents. In consequence, several Shia independents withdrew from the competition, and others silenced their opposition to Hezbollah. Overall, the 2018 ballots confirmed that Hezbollah's substitutive symbolic power strategy, expressed both coercively and rhetorically, paid off. Hezbollah's list (with pro-Syrian allies) won all the Shia parliamentary seats in the Bekaa III constituency. As such, the party of God demonstrated its capacity to compensate for ailing material means thanks to the violent expression of its combatant symbolism. This empirical analysis conclusively testifies to the resilience of Islamic-communitarian patronage in Baalbek.

The next chapter (chapter 7) focuses on the case city of Tripoli. This capital of the North governorate is the largest Sunni populated city in Lebanon. At the onset of the Syrian migration into Lebanon, this port city was dominated by a coalition of oligarchic clientelist networks led by the Sunni leader Saad Hariri and his party, the Future Movement (FM). The municipality of Tripoli then endorsed, in the name of "Sunni brotherhood," a laissez-faire policy towards Syrian settlement in the city. This outwardly moral decision in fact benefited the Sunni oligarchs who could then exploit a malleable migrant workforce during uncertain financial times. Consequently, the oligarchs' governance generated tremendous socioeconomic pressures on the Tripolitan population. This shift ruptured the population's clientelist social contracts with the Sunni oligarchy during the 2016 local elections, by electing a list of independents at the municipal council. Ousted from local power, the Future Movement, which lacked material and symbolic means, resorted after 2016 to a power strategy of collective action (E3) to recover its dominance on Tripoli. In using administrative obstructions and paralysing the Tripolitan municipal council, the Sunni oligarchs assumed that the failure of the independent-led municipality would re-legitimise the clientelist regime in the view of their former protégés. The chapter concludes with the 2018 parliamentary elections and the 2019 by-election. The Tripolitan votes granted the Future Movement and its oligarchic counterparts' a complete victory of Tripoli's legislative representation. Thus, the ballots demonstrated that the Future Movement's power strategy of collective action (E3) enabled the Sunni party to recover its local dominance in Tripoli.

Chapter 7. Tripoli
The Collective Defence of Sunni Oligarchic Power

The third empirical chapter of this thesis focuses on the city of Tripoli. It reveals how oligarchic clientelist elites, represented by the Future Movement party, recovered their political dominance in Tripoli by implementing a power strategy of collective defence of the clientelist regime (E3) after 2016.

The first section of the chapter describes how the ruling oligarchic elites lost the support of a sizeable share of their core supporters from 2010 to 2016. Tripoli is a city where Sunni Oligarchs have competed for power since the end of the civil war. When the Syrian conflict erupted in 2011, a coalition of Oligarchic parties controlled the municipality. This coalition included Saad Hariri's Future Movement (FM), the largest Sunni party of Lebanon, controlled the municipality of Tripoli. After 2011, Tripoli was the largest host of displaced Syrians in Lebanon. The chapter explains how many Syrians found protective invisibility in the urban margins of Tripoli. However, it also made them vulnerable to labour exploitation which benefited Sunni Oligarchs in the city. The municipality of Tripoli thus adopted a laissez-faire policy to preserve the interests of the local elites. As a result, a large portion of Tripolitans fell into social exclusion. Many blamed their oligarchic leadership for failing to fulfil their clientelist social contracts. Tripoli was the selected municipality in this thesis most affected by this social decline.

The second section of the chapter shows how dissatisfaction with some of the Tripolitan lower middle-class backlashed onto the Sunni oligarchic elites at the 2016 local elections. The incumbent coalition of Sunni oligarchic parties, led once again by the Future Movement, lost their majority on the municipal council to a list of political independents. This was an exceptional electoral upheaval in an otherwise very stable Lebanese political order. The victory of political independents and civil society activists who challenged the legitimacy of the clientelist regime posed a direct threat to the durability of oligarchic power in Tripoli. The Future Movement then urgently needed to devise a strategy of power recovery before the 2018 parliamentary elections.

The third section of the chapter then outlines why and how the oligarchic elites resorted to a power strategy of the collective defence of their shared clientelist regime (E3) after 2016. The chapter explains that the Future Movement lacked both material and symbolic resources, leading the oligarchic network to use a last resort strategy of collective defence (E3). When the power domination of a clientelist actor is threatened, clientelist elites unite to defend the legitimacy of their political-economic order. The Future Movement and its oligarchic allies adopted this strategy to recover their political dominance in Tripoli after 2016. This power strategy came in the form of two main policies. First, the oligarchs used administrative means to obstruct the rule of the independent-led municipality of Tripoli. In so doing, they paralysed the governance of their municipal opponents, which demonstrated to their former protégés that only the clientelist regime could deliver for their needs. I will discuss the next policy below.

The fourth section of the chapter illustrates how the Future Movement and other Sunni oligarchic parties then won the 2018 parliamentary elections in Tripoli. The political independents were defeated, but a by-election was organised in 2019 after the cancellation of the election of one Future Movement deputy. The oligarchic elites then implemented the second policy expressing their collective defence of clientelist power (E3): the formation of a comprehensive electoral alliance. The coalition of oligarchs was easily victorious against the weakened independents in this 2019 by-election. As a result, the Future Movement and its oligarchic allies recovered their political dominance in Tripoli. The power strategy of collective defence successfully thwarted the credibility of political independents in the city and re-legitimised the power of the clientelist regime.

This chapter relies on fieldwork data generated in Tripoli in August and November 2018, and April 2019. Overall, I conducted 20 elite interviews with the mayor of Tripoli, several deputies, party members, municipal councillors, religious leaders, academics, and civil society activists. I also observed the 2019 by-election campaign and performed exit poll interviews with campaign officials. To counterbalance these elite views, 34 Lebanese and 20 displaced individuals residing in Tripoli completed survey questionnaires during the summer of 2018. I supplemented this information with secondary sources such as Lebanese newspaper articles, social media

publications, and reports from NGOs, regarding Tripoli's local governance since 2010.

In the following section of the chapter, I outline how the oligarchic elites held onto the reins of local and parliamentary power in Tripoli before the beginning of the Syrian conflict in 2011.

2010-2016
7.1 The Downfall of Tripoli's Oligarchic Elites
7.1.a Chronicle of the Local and Parliamentary Elections in Tripoli

Since the end of the civil war, Tripoli has been at the heart of power competition between oligarchic clientelist networks.[619] The capital of the North governorate is predominantly populated by Lebanese Sunnis, as detailed in the methodological chapter, chapter 4. Therefore, Tripoli is a prised power base for any Sunni politician wishing to conquer the national leadership of the Lebanese Sunni community.

Before the civil war, Tripoli was in the grip of traditional Sunni elites represented by the Karami family.[620] The power of this dynastic leadership waned during the civil war. Then, unlike the Christian and Shia communities respectively studied in chapter 5 and 6, Lebanese Sunnis were undefended by a national armed group. This aspect is important when considering the symbolic resources possessed by the Future Movement (FM), as analysed later in this chapter. Instead, a set of wealthy Lebanese businessman living abroad built their own clientelist networks in Lebanon atop the ashes of the war. Among them, Rafik Hariri soon took the leadership of the Sunni community – thanks to his expansive use of philanthropy fuelled by Saudi subsidies.[621] Hariri became Lebanon's post-war Prime Minister in 1992, in a country that was still occupied by the Syrian armed forces (from 1976 to 2005).

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[619] Bruno Dewailly, « Transformations du Leadership Tripolitain : Le Cas de Nagib Mikati, » [Transformations of Tripolitan Leadership: The Case of Nagib Mikati] In *Leaders et Partisans au Liban* [Leaders and Partisans in Lebanon] ed. Franck Mermier and Sabrina Mervin (Beirut: Karthala-IFPO-IISMM, 2012), 165-85.
[620] Tine Gade, "Sunni Islamists in Tripoli and the Asad regime 1966-2014," *Syria Studies* 7 (2015): 21.
[621] Baumann, "The Ascent of Rafik Hariri."

Hariri's leadership relied on the co-optation of former clientelist networks from the Sunni bourgeoisie, who ceded their clientele in exchange for large financial rewards.[622] While the first parliamentary elections in 1992 granted Hariri the control of his home city of Sidon and the capital, Beirut, his movement faced more competition in Tripoli.[623] For background information, at the parliamentary level the municipality of Tripoli is located within a constituency called North II, which holds 8 deputies at the Chamber including 5 Sunnis, 1 Alawite, 1 Greek Orthodox and 1 Maronite representative. At the municipal level, the municipality of Tripoli is the only city in Lebanon, alongside Beirut, which elects 24 municipal councillors, the highest number in the country.

In post-war Lebanon, Tripolitan traditional elites attempted to resist the oligarchic wave sweeping the Lebanese Sunni leadership. During this attempt they were often supported by Syrian occupants.[624] Moreover, other Sunni oligarchs from Tripoli, like Najib Mikati, posed serious obstacles to Hariri's local ambitions.[625]

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[622] Victor Gervais, « L'ascension politique de Rafic Hariri : ampleur et limite de l'émergence d'un leadership sunnite unifié, » [Rafik Hariri's Political Ascent: The Extent and Limits of the Emergence of a Unified Sunni Leadership] In *Leaders et Partisans au Liban* [Leaders and Partisans in Lebanon] ed. Franck Mermier and Sabrina Mervin (Beirut: Karthala-IFPO-IISMM, 2012), 118.
[623] On the entrenchment of Hariri's power in Sidon see: Emmanuel Bonne, *Vie Publique, Patronage et Clientèle - Rafic Hariri à Saida* [Public Life, Patronage, and Clientele – Rafik Hariri in Saida] (Aix-en-Provence: Institut de Recherches et d'Etudes sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman, 1995).
[624] Ido Yahel and Or Honig, "The Father's Success and the Son's Failure: Explaining the Growth of Lebanon's Resistance to Syria's Invisible Occupation," *Digest of Middle East Studies* 26 (2016): 145, doi: 10.1111/dome.12097.
[625] Dewailly, « Transformations du Leadership Tripolitain, »; Gade, "Sunni Islamists in Tripoli," 62-3; Ward Vloeberghs, "The Hariri Political Dynasty after the Arab Spring," *Mediterranean Politics* 17 (2012): 244, doi:10.1080/13629395.2012.694046.

Table 7.1 Parliamentary and local elections results in Tripoli, 1998-2010

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS RESULSTS					
		Deputy Seats Won per Election			
Party name/Leader	Clientelist type	2000	2005	2009	
Future Movement (FM), Rafik/Saad **Hariri**	**Oligarchic**	0/8	4/8	3/8	
Al Azm (AZM), Najib Mikati	Oligarchic	1/8	0/8	2/8	
Tripoli Bloc (TB), Mohammad Safadi	Oligarchic	3/8	2/8	2/8	
Al Karama (KAR), Omar/Faysal Karami	Traditional	1/8	0/8	1/8	
Other parties and independents	-	3/8	2/8	0/8	

LOCAL ELECTIONS RESULTS				
		Councillor Seats Won per Election		
Party name/Leader	Clientelist type	1998	2004	2010
Future Movement (FM), Rafik/Saad **Hariri**	**Oligarchic**	4/24	0/24	
Al Azm (AZM), Najib Mikati	Oligarchic	0/24		
			15 | 24	24 | 24
Tripoli Bloc (TB), Mohammad Safadi	Oligarchic	0/24		
Al Karama (KAR), Omar/Faysal Karami	Traditional	12/24	9/24	
Jamaa Islamiyya (JI)	Islamic	8/24	0/24	0/24

Legend:
- = party not competing
/ = single party list
| = coalition list of several parties

The review of Hariri's parliamentary and local election performances in table 7.1 (above) illustrates his initial difficulty in scoring substantial victories in the Tripolitan ballots. From 2003-2004, Rafik Hariri's vocal disagreements with the Syrian occupants decisively increased his popularity in the Tripolitan population.[626] However, Hariri would not live long enough to see his leadership take hold of the political representation of the North capital. Rafik Hariri was assassinated on the 14th of February 2005 by Hezbollah members.[627] This attack led to unprecedented street demonstrations in Beirut, the so-called Cedar revolution, which successfully forced the Syrian occupying forces to withdraw from Lebanon.[628] The Lebanese polity was consequently fully reconfigured into a binary political confrontation based on

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[626] Gade, "Sunni Islamists in Tripoli," 54.
[627] Are John Knudsen, "Acquiescence to Assassinations in Post-Civil War Lebanon?," *Mediterranean Politics* 15 (2010): 1, doi:10.1080/13629391003644611.
[628] Joseph Bahout, « Liban 2005 : décompositions et recompositions, » [Lebanon 2005 : Disintegration and Reconfiguration] *Critique internationale* 2 (2006): 39.

"competing national projects."[629] The 14th of March camp (named after the largest demonstration held in Beirut, in 2005, in support of Lebanon's sovereignty) defended the "emancipation of Lebanon from Syria's tutelage."[630] Sunni and Christian parties were the main components of this movement. Saad Hariri, the grieved son of Rafik, took the lead of this coalition to pursue his father's ambitions for Lebanon. Conversely, they were opposed by the 8th of March camp (also named after a massive counter demonstration organised in Beirut in 2005 by pro-Syrian parties), which supported close relations with Syria.

Subsequently, Saad Hariri created the Future Movement (FM) party in 2007 with the desire to win the representation of the Sunni community.[631] In Tripoli, the young oligarch's popularity was bolstered by the martyrdom of his father, Rafik. Therefore, the performance of Hariri's list at the **2005 parliamentary election** is testimony to the gradual empowerment of this oligarchic network in Tripoli.[632] From that point on, the Future Movement (FM) became the leading Sunni party in Tripoli.

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[629] Tamirace Fakhoury, "Debating Lebanon's Power-Sharing Model: An Opportunity or an Impasse for Democratization Studies in the Middle East?," *The Arab Studies Journal* 22 (2014): 242.

[630] Fakhoury, "Debating Lebanon's Power-Sharing Model," 242.

[631] Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, "Political Party Mapping in Lebanon Ahead of the 2018 Elections," *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung*, April 20, (2018): 23, https://www.kas.de/documents/252038/253252/7_dokument_dok_pdf_52383_1.pdf/d5efc091-a9b8-4357-36f6-7717164c277e?version=1.0&t=1539647502522.

[632] Are John Knudsen, "Precarious Peacebuilding: Post-war Lebanon, 1990-2005," *Chr. Michelsen Institute Working Papers* 12 (2005): 9.

Table 7.2 below presents some of the main protagonists of the Sunni power competition in Tripoli.

Table 7.2 Main protagonists of power competition in Tripoli

Clientelist Network	Clientelist typology	Protagonist	Position	Confession
Future Movement (FM)	**Oligarchic**	Saad Hariri	Leader, Prime Minister (2016-19)	Sunni
		Dima Jamali	MP (2019-22)	Sunni
Al Azm (AZM)	Oligarchic	Najib Mikati	Leader, MP (2000-22)	Sunni
Al Karama (KAR)	Traditional	Faysal Karami	Leader, MP (2018-22)	Sunni
[Independents]	-	General Ashraf Rifi	Leader	Sunni
		Ahmad Qamereddin	Mayor of Tripoli (2016-18)	Sunni

Legend:
*= The list of protagonists includes sympathisers who are not official members of the party.

The two last parliamentary and local elections preceding the Syrian migration influx confirmed the strength of oligarchic clientelism in Tripoli. In the **2009 parliamentary election**, the oligarchic leaders of the city including Saad Hariri and Najib Mikati, which all have their own clientelist networks, decided to present a united list to the Tripolitans.[633] This electoral strategy is typical of the Lebanese clientelist regime. The ruling elites prefer to negotiate their respective share of power before the elections, and thus ensure their power equilibrium is not threatened by an unexpected electoral outcome. This was secured, and the list swiped all the 8 deputy seats.

A year later, the oligarchs repeated the same electoral tactic for the **2010 local election** to maintain their majority at the municipal council of Tripoli that they had acquired in 2004 (without the Future Movement then, see table 7.1). This time, the

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[633] L'Orient-le Jour, « Mikati rend publique sa liste commune avec Hariri et Safadi à Tripoli « pour l'édification d'un État fort, » [Mikati Releases Joint List with Hariri and Safadi in Tripoli "for Building a Strong State"] *L'Orient-le Jour*, April 23, 2009, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/615764/Mikati_rend_publique_sa_liste_commune_avec_Hariri_et_Safadi_a_Tripoli_%253C%253C%2Bpour_l%2527edification_d%2527un_Etat_fort%2B%253E%253E.html.

Sunni oligarchs were also joined by the traditional elites of the Karami family.[634] Subsequently, the lack of an alternative political offer demobilised many Tripolitan voters, who considered the match over before the vote – only 26% of them casted a ballot.[635] Low participation is a defining characteristic of Tripolitan ballots in post-war Lebanon. The oligarch led list won all the 24 seats at the municipal council, with 20 Sunni, 2 Alawite and 2 Christian councillors.

These electoral performances meant that in 2010 the Sunni oligarchs, and especially the Future Movement party, possessed total control of Tripoli's politics. A year later, oligarchic elites were thus at the forefront of the management of the Syrian migration crisis, which deeply affected the Northern capital.

In the next subsection of the chapter, I describe the characteristics of Syrian settlement in Tripoli, whose informality in the urban "grey zones" of the city generated considerable social pressure on local communities.

7.1.b The Urban "Invisibility" of Displaced Syrians in Tripoli

The Northern metropolis of Tripoli is certainly the Lebanese city the most historically, culturally, and socioeconomically connected to neighbouring Syria's regions.[636] A senior Lebanese scholar from Tripoli expressed, in a few words, the intimacy of the bonds tying the Tripolitans to the Syrians. "In reality, deep down, we are Syrians. Palestinians and Syrians are not strangers to me, not at all. Their misfortune is our misfortune," he confided.[637]

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[634] Jeanine Jalkh, « Une pléthore de candidats à Tripoli, mais pas de véritable bataille en vue, » [A Plethora of Candidates in Tripoli, but No Real battle in Sight] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 28, 2010, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/658819/Une_plethore_de_candidats_a_Tripoli%252C_mais_pas_de_ve ritable_bataille_en_vue.html.

[635] Jeanine Jalkh, « À Tripoli, la liste de l'Unité donnée gagnante malgré la contestation, » [In Tripoli, the List of Unity Given as a Winner Despite the Challenge] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 31, 2010, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/659378/A_Tripoli%252C_la_liste_de_l%2527Unite_donnee_gagnante_ malgre_la_contestation.html.

[636] Elizabeth Picard, *Liban-Syrie, intimes étrangers. Un siècle d'intéractions sociopolitiques* [Lebanon-Syria, Close Foreigners. A Century of Sociopolitical Interactions] (Arles: Sindbad-Actes Sud, 2016), 82.

[637] See the transcript of *Boutros'* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

Thus, when the Assad regime violently repressed peaceful demonstrators, many of them longed for safe sanctuary in their relatives' homes in Tripoli.[638] The hospitality of the Tripolitans resonated with their own history. Indeed, the trauma of the Syrian occupation (1976-2005) remained particularly vivid amongst most Tripolitan communities.[639] Accordingly, the Lebanese of the North generally hosted with sincere enthusiasm and solidarity their Syrian (Sunni) neighbours who were encountering the indiscriminate violence of the Assad regime.

The city of Tripoli, which includes a sizeable Palestinian-Syrian community, soon became the first recipient in Lebanon of displaced populations from Syria.[640] In 2019, the UNHCR counted more than 58,000 Syrians residing in the municipalities of Tripoli, Beddawi, and Mina. However, this number excludes the thousands of Syrians who could not register with the UNHCR, as they ceased operations under the request of the Lebanese government from January 2015.

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[638] Khaled Ismail, Claire Wilson, and Nathan Cohen-Fournier, "Syrian Refugees in Tripoli, Lebanon," *The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, Tufts University*, March, 2017, 4, https://fic.tufts.edu/assets/Tripoli.pdf.

[639] For more details on the repression in 1986 of the *Tawhid* partisans (Sunni radical militia) by the Syrian army in Tripoli, see: Gade, "Sunni Islamists in Tripoli," 42-3.

[640] Sam van Vliet and Guita Hourani, "Regional Differences in the Conditions of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon," Civil Society Knowledge Center, Lebanon Support (2014): 4, https://civilsociety-centre.org/paper/regional-differences-conditions-syrian-refugees-lebanon; UN Habitat estimates that more than 30,000 Palestinian-Lebanese live in Tripoli in the tough living conditions of over-densified urban camps, notably in Beddawi: UN Habitat, "Tripoli City Profile," *UN Habitat*, 2016, https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/download-manager-files/TCP2016.pdf.

According to the surveys collected in 2018 with 99 Syrian participants, 23% of the respondents across Lebanon were not registered with the UNHCR, but this rate reaches 40% amongst Tripolitan-based respondents (see chart 7.1 below).[641]

Chart 7.1 UNHCR Registration Status of Surveyed Syrians in 2018
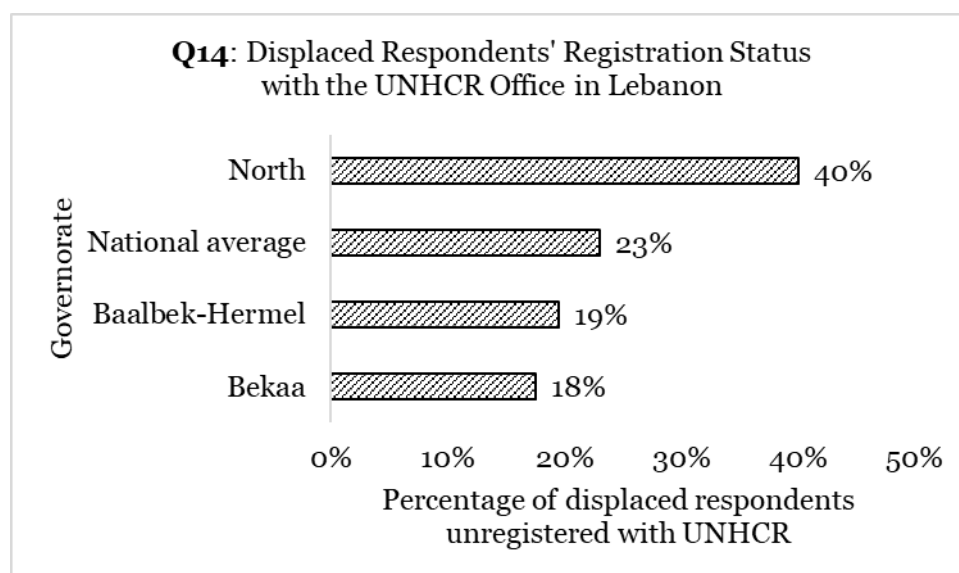
These results illustrate a noticeable trend. The data provided by UNHCR grossly underestimates the real number of displaced communities residing in Tripoli and its surroundings. In contrast to their numbers, El Khouri estimated that 259,000 displaced individuals resided in the Union of Municipalities of Al Fayhaa (which includes the municipality of Tripoli), while approximately 264,895 Lebanese resided in Tripoli's district.[642]

One of the most defining features of the displaced settlement in Tripoli is not only its size but also the urban character of migrants' shelters. In comparison to the two other case cities observed in this research, where Syrians inhabited tented settlements in suburban areas, Tripoli exclusively hosted migrants within its metropolitan boundaries. Of Syrians surveyed across Lebanon, 77% declared in 2018 that they resided in informal camps.[643] But in the urban North governorate, these camps were absent from the streets of the large Tripolitan metropolis. There, Syrians

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[641] Allegrini, "Survey on Displaced Communities," question 14.
[642] Dima el Khouri-Tannous, Nicolas Bautès et Pierre Bergel, « Les réfugiés de guerre syriens au Liban (2011-2016). Quel accès à la ville pour des citadins indésirables ?, » *Espaces et sociétés* 1 (2018): 39.
[643] Allegrini, "Survey on Displaced Communities," question 18.

found temporary homes through private lettings of sub-standard urban shelters, like collective shelters in shared flats, garages, or even abandoned warehouses. Chart 7.2 below presents an overview of the surveyed Syrians' type of housing in Tripoli. All of the respondents declared living in an urban shelter.

Chart 7.2 Displaced Syrians' type of housing in Tripoli, in 2018
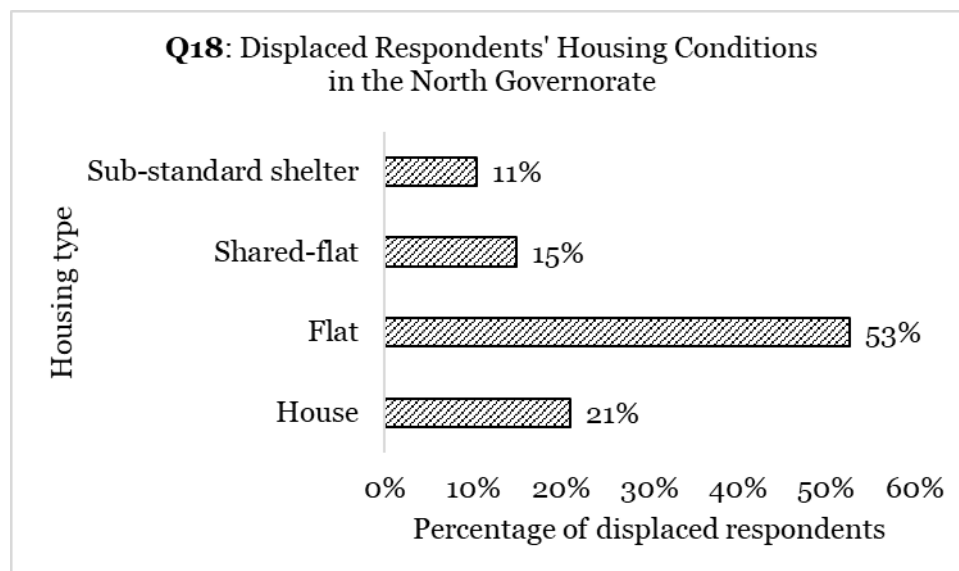
Large metropolises offer urban spaces where "stigmatised" displaced communities find precious anonymity.[644] The Syrians settling in Tripoli therefore strived to become invisible. The densely populated neighbourhoods of the city represent anonymous "urban margins" for displaced individuals aiming to escape from municipal monitoring in the tightly securitised towns of Akkar and Bekaa.[645] Tripoli was perceived by many migrants as a more secure destination within Lebanon, according to a humanitarian worker in North Lebanon.[646] He explained that Syrians intentionally sought refuge in "the most vulnerable neighbourhoods inside Tripoli where no one can actually see them." As these displaced communities are not registered to the UNHCR, they do not receive any aid. Thus, humanitarian actors in

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[644] Marianne Madoré, "The Peaceful Settlement of Syrian Refugees in the Eastern Suburbs of Beirut: Understanding the Causes of Social Stability," *Civil Society Knowledge Center, Lebanon Support* (2016), 16.

[645] Emmanuelle Durand, « Des routes migratoires aux rues marchandes. Vendeurs de rue syriens à Beyrouth, » [From Migratory Routes to Market Streets. Syrian Street Vendors in Beirut] *hommes & migration* 1319 (2017): 127, doi:10.4000/hommesmigrations.3986.

[646] See the transcript of *Kadir's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in August 2018, in Tripoli.

Tripoli call these displaced Syrians the "ghost refugees," because they cannot be seen by institutional radars.[647]

This invisibility of the Syrians residing in Tripoli deepened the city's structural vulnerabilities. The communities that settled in Tripoli were relatively the poorest amongst the Syrians living in Lebanon. They were notably attracted by the cheap rents offered in the most disenfranchised areas of Tripoli.[648] Subsequently, the decayed infrastructures of the poorest neighbourhoods of the metropolis was overwhelmed by pressing demands from new residents.[649] As a result, the Syrian settlement in Tripoli exacerbated deeply rooted socioeconomic inequalities plaguing the city.

In response to this major humanitarian challenge, the municipality of Tripoli, led by a coalition of Sunni oligarchs (see table 7.1), adopted a clear policy of inaction, as confirmed by a senior Future Movement party official.[650] Indeed, the municipality voluntarily made the choice to let the displaced Syrians settle in Tripoli without imposing any regulations. This decision channelled the willingness of the Sunni oligarchic elites to show empathy for their Syrian "Sunni brothers" suffering from the tyranny of the Assad regime.[651] At the time of the onset of the Syrian conflict, the Tripolitan public opinion was enthused by the prospect of seeing the fall from power of the Syrian president.[652] Thus, the Future Movement and the rest of the Sunni oligarchic elites assumed a similarly empathic approach supported by their own electors.[653]

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[647] See the transcript of *Kadir's* (anonymised name) interview, ibid.
[648] See: Thierry Boissière and Annie Tohmé Tabet, « Une économie de la survie au plus près de la guerre. Stratégies quotidiennes des réfugiés syriens à Nabaa, » [An Economy of Subsistence at War. Syrian Refugees' Daily Strategies in Nabaa] *Critique internationale* 3 (2018): 96.
[649] UN Habitat, "Tabbaneh Neighbourhood Profile. Tripoli, Lebanon," *UN Habitat*, August 14, 2018, https://unhabitat.org/tabbaneh-neighbourhood-profile-2018-tripoli-lebanon; UN Habitat, "El-Qobbeh Neighbourhood Profile. Tripoli, Lebanon," *UN Habitat*, August 31, 2018, https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/el-qobbeh-neighbourhood-profile-2018-tripoli-lebanon-august-2018.
[650] See the transcript of *Baha's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.
[651] Future Movement local officials helped the displaced communities settle in their respective neighbourhoods with sincere empathy according to a Lebanese humanitarian worker then in charge of the distribution of aid to Syrians in Tripoli. See the transcript of *Najat's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.
[652] James Brooke, "Lebanese Take Sides in Syrian Civil War," *Voice of America*, December 18, 2012, https://www.voanews.com/a/lebanese-take-sides-in-syrian-civil-war/1567647.html.
[653] Dionigi, "Rethinking Borders," 241.

This municipal laissez-faire approach also reflected the fact that the oligarchic clientelist networks endeavoured to informalize the Syrian presence. As one indicator of this, the municipality of Tripoli did not collect any data on the displaced communities living in the city (unlike Zahle for instance, chapter 5). Moreover, the security forces like the Gendarmerie, deeply corrupted by Sunni oligarchs, refrained from enforcing restrictive residency and housing laws (2015) concerning the Syrians living in Lebanon.[654] As a result, the management of Syrian migration in Tripoli became an issue of shadow governance. The oligarchs were then in a situation to freely exploit the labour of the displaced communities made vulnerable by their own invisibility.[655]

The next subsection of the chapter explains how the oligarchic elites of Tripoli profited from the new migrant-exploitative economy, at the expense of their own original protégés.

7.1.c Protecting Oligarchic Elites' Domination through Social Exclusion

The process of the commodification of displaced Syrians which I detailed in the theoretical chapter (chapter 3) unfolded in all the case cities studied in this research. Where Tripoli differs amongst the three compared municipalities is the extent of the penetration of the Syrian workforce within the local economy. The nearly exclusively urban character of the Syrian settlement in Tripoli and the limited provision of humanitarian aid in the city incentivised displaced communities to find work.[656] Many Syrians wanted to trade their labour in exchange for the protective umbrella of oligarchic patronage. On their side, oligarchic leaders, themselves business owners and employers, could extract unexpected sources of rent from the migrant communities in a scarce material context. The Future Movement faced serious financial problems in Saudi Arabia where most of Saad Hariri's investments were located.[657] For this reason, the malleable migrant workforce, capable of performing

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[654] On the corruption of the gendarmerie and the Internal Security Forces by clientelist networks (ISF) see: Leenders, *Spoils of Truce*, 45, 50; and the transcripts of *Jabr's* and *Talal's* (anonymised names) interviews which were conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

[655] See: Maja Janmyr and Lama Mourad, "Categorising Syrians in Lebanon as 'vulnerable'," *Forced Migration Review* 57 (2018): 21, https://www.fmreview.org/syria2018/janmyr-mourad.

[656] Thorleifsson, "The Limits of Hospitality," 1072.

[657] Tom Perry, "Cash Crunch at Saudi Firm Casts Shadow over Lebanon's Hariris," *Reuters*, September 5, 2016, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-politics-idUSKCN11B1X7.

all kinds of jobs in the local economy, was an essential "resource" for the oligarchic elites.

The pre-existence of "extensive and long-standing informal [employment] networks between Syrians and Lebanese" facilitated the integration of migrant workers into Tripoli's local economy.[658] Syrians thus easily pervaded the Tripolitan labour market on an unprecedented scale. Nearly all the economic sectors were affected by the availability of cheap, informal, and flexible labour. The strikingly low level of migrant workers' median income in Tripoli is testimony to the degree of competitiveness exerted against the local employees. In Tripoli, Syrians would earn 100 dollars per month, whereas in Beirut they could expect 490 dollars.[659] This dynamic threw thousands of Lebanese into unemployment. Tellingly, the director of a pastry shop in central Tripoli (Azmi) confessed that his competitors laid off their Lebanese personnel to save on their fixed wage costs.[660] In 2015, OCHA estimated that 35% of the Tripolitans were looking for a job.[661] In a matter of months, Tripoli reached concerning levels of social distress. Poverty was rampant even in the most modest neighbourhoods of the city. Even before the Syrian migration in 2008, more than 55% of the Tripolitan population were living in poverty, while only 5.9% of the Beirutis faced the same fate.[662] The situation dramatically worsened after 2011, as unanimously confirmed by all the social workers interviewed in Tripoli.[663]

The Tripolitan lower middle class became increasingly impoverished. However, poverty is not bad news for everyone. For the oligarchic elites poverty, and cynically

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[658] The 1993 bilateral agreements between Lebanon and Syria facilitated work mobility between the two countries. Especially, hundreds of thousands of Syrian seasonal workers customarily performed menial jobs in Lebanon. Therefore, migrant workers often tied durable bonds with their Lebanese employers. Betts, Ali and MemiŞoĞlu, "What Difference do Mayors Make?," 17.

[659] Robert Forster, "No City is the Same: Livelihood Opportunities among Self-Settled Syrian Refugees in Beirut, Tripoli and Tyre," *CMI Insight* 1 (2021), 4, https://www.cmi.no/publications/7709-no-city-is-the-same-livelihood-opportunities-among-self-settled-syrian-refugees-in-beirut.

[660] See the transcript of *Adir's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

[661] IDAL, "Challenges and Developmental Opportunities for Tripoli," *Invest Development Authority in Lebanon* (IDAL), February 27, (2016): 8, https://investinlebanon.gov.lb/Content/uploads/Publication/160302024035341~Invest%20in%20Tripoli.pdf.

[662] Laithy, Abu-Ismail, and Hamdan, "Poverty, Growth, and Income Distribution," 11; Catherine Le Thomas and Bruno Dewailly, *Pauvreté et conditions socio-économiques à Al-Fayhâ'a : Diagnostic et éléments de stratégie*, [Poverty and Socioeconomic Conditions in Al-Fayhâ'a: Diagnosis and Elements of Strategy] (Paris: Institut Européen de Coopération et de Développement (IECD), 2009), 16.

[663] See the transcripts of *Safa, Sabri, and Najat's* (anonymised names) interviews conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

so, is one of their "main sources" of power in Tripoli.[664] To sum-up the situation, the Lebanese Tripolitans fell into acute social distress, while some Syrians competed for entry into the clientelist market. These changes meant that the pool of patronage-seeking populations, local and displaced, expanded considerably.[665] Oligarchs could use social exclusion as a tool to weather the dire material conditions affecting their networks, and choose who they would exclude from their protection in this new socioeconomic order.

The least valuable network members in this post-migration order were those who only owned their own labour capital and could not extract rents from the Syrian "resource." Many Tripolitans of the lower middle class who lost their jobs and did not dispose of real estate were part of this losing camp. As a result, the Future Movement either curtailed their services or simply excluded them from the party's patronage.[666] The Future Movement could weather these dire material pressures by resorting to the social exclusion of their least attractive protégés. This mechanism of social exclusion was without doubt the most extreme in Tripoli relatively to the other case cities, due to the depth of the interpenetration of displaced communities within the clientelist systems there.

The Future Movement's intentional resorting to social exclusion inevitably broke the clientelist social contracts tying Saad Hariri to some of his (former) supporters in Tripoli. The excluded individuals experienced a feeling of betrayal as they fell into the anguish of social exclusion. In this context, "the void between the Sunni political elite and the grassroots" was profound.[667] These former clients were thus ready to open the market of patronage to new political actors. The expectations and demands from impoverished electors were so low that new challengers, like political independents and civil society activists, could enter the electoral competition without promising many rewards to voters.

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[664] Pierre-André Chabrier, « La 'guerre des pauvres' à Tripoli (Liban) asabiyyat urbaines à l'épreuve de la crise syrienne, » [The 'War of the Poor' in Tripoli (Lebanon) Urban Asabiyyat and the Syrian Crisis] *Confluences Méditerranées* 2 (2013): 91.

[665] See the concept of ethnic monopsony used by Corstange to designate the type of market of patronage seen in Tripoli. Corstange defines it as "a political constituency defined along communal lines that is dominated by a single, vote-buying patron or party." Daniel Corstange, *The Price of a Vote in the Middle East* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2016), I.

[666] See the transcript of *Baha's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

[667] Knudsen, "Competitive Clientelism in Secondary Cities," 5.

In the next section of the chapter, I outline how the breakage of the clientelist social contract within the Future Movement generated the unprecedented electoral defeat of Sunni oligarchic elites at the 2016 local elections.

2016 Local Elections
7.2 The Sunni Oligarchs' Electoral Fall
7.2.a Political Context and Competing Lists

After a six-year mandate, the incumbent municipal majority led by a coalition of Sunni Oligarchs entered the 2016 electoral competition with a tarnished record. The Future Movement and allied Sunni Oligarchs did not yet foresee that they would soon face a rare electoral defeat in their Tripolitan power base. But the ghastly and deteriorating socioeconomic situation in Tripoli weakened the authority of oligarchic elites. The Tripolitan population did not understand why the wealthiest men of Lebanon, namely Saad Hariri and Najib Mikati, had failed to bring prosperity to their home city.

Saad Hariri, the leader of the largest Sunni party, the Future Movement, was designated by dissatisfied Tripolitans as the primary cause of the oligarchs' ruling fiasco. Indeed, Hariri made a set of politically symbolic mistakes, which added to the disappointment of his (former) sympathisers. In particular, Hariri endorsed in December 2015 a pro-Syrian regime Christian candidate, Sleiman Frangieh (Marada party), for the vacated presidency of Lebanon. During the civil war, the militia of this Christian leader fought against Tripolitan Sunni rebels. Hariri's choice of support reopened these traumatic memories and was met with surprise by many Tripolitan Sunnis. Even more, the interim government of Lebanon, then led by a member of the Future Movement, did not condemn the Iranian attacks against the Saudi Embassy in Tehran in February 2016.[668] These political compromises assumed by the Sunni leader, Saad Hariri, were unpalatable to many Tripolitans. As a result, divisions split the Future Movement. The Future Movement's then Minister of Justice, General

[668] Ben Hubbard, "Saudis Cut Off Funding for Military Aid to Lebanon," *New York Times*, February 19, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/20/world/middleeast/saudis-cut-off-funding-for-military-aid-to-lebanon.html.

Ashraf Rifi (who is a Tripolitan Sunni), resigned from the government and the party.[669] Rifi then returned to his hometown, Tripoli, to attempt an electoral "coup" in the 2016 local elections against the established Sunni oligarchs. Table 7.3 below depicts the three lists competing for the municipal council in May 2016.

Table 7.3 Local elections in Tripoli, 2016

List Name	Clientelist type	Party/Backers	Election Results		
			Votes	Seats	Council
"For Tripoli"	**Oligarchic** Oligarchic Traditional Islamic Islamic	**Future Movement** (FM)/S. Hariri, Al Azm (AZM)/N. Mikati, Al Karama (KAR)/F. Karami, Jamaa Islamiyya (JI), Ahbash (AHB).	15,427	8	8/24
"Tripoli's Choice"	[Independents]	Civil society movements/Ashraf Rifi	16,475	16	16/24
"Tripoli Capital"	[Independent]	Democratic Renewal/Misbah Adhab	1,975	0	0/24

Legend:
| = coalition list of several parties
Sources: UNDP, "The Results of Municipal Elections. Lebanon 2016," 15-7

Ashraf Rifi did not compete himself, but supported a list of civil society activists and political independents.[670] Many of the candidates on Rifi's "Tripoli's Choice" list had a modest background and came from some of the poorest neighbourhoods of the city.[671] On the other side, Saad Hariri's Future Movement and fellow Sunni oligarchs did not take Rifi and the political independents seriously. The oligarchs replicated their previously successful strategy of coalescing their forces, which had granted them complete victory on the municipal council in 2010. As a result, all the biggest clientelist players in Tripoli were allied on the "For Tripoli" list (see in table 7.3 p.245).[672]

7.2.b The Alliance of Oligarchs in Campaign

The coalition list of Sunni oligarchs, led by the Future Movement, ran a minimal campaign in Tripoli which they assumed that would precede a smooth victory. One

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[669] Reuters, "Lebanese Justice Minister Resigns, Blames Hezbollah over Deadlock, Court Case," *Reuters*, February 21, 2016, https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-lebanon-idUKKCN0VU0GA.
[670] Knudsen, ibid.
[671] See the transcript of General Ashraf Rifi's interview conducted in Beirut, in November 2018.
[672] Knudsen, "Competitive Clientelism in Secondary Cities," 10.

candidate on the list remembered that the oligarchs told him that the local election was "a guaranteed win," so that it was not necessary to "bother" campaigning.[673] This statement illustrates the social disconnect between the oligarchic leadership and their Tripolitan voters who were embroiled in challenging socioeconomic issues. The oligarchs did not yet grasp that their record at the head of the municipality had left a sour taste for many Tripolitans. So, when the team of Sunni oligarchs slated another unity list, many impoverished constituents who felt marginalised by a selfish Sunni leadership rejected this clientelist electoral tactic.

On the other side, the list of political independents, led by General Ashraf Rifi, fought an asymmetric battle. They lacked an experienced and organised partisan structure and the reliable finances relative to the wealthy Sunni oligarchs. Nevertheless, Rifi seized the social distress afflicting the most disadvantaged Sunni communities in the city. Rifi-backed independent candidates worked tirelessly in these urban margins where the state is largely absent, and the oligarchs only show up a few days before the elections. Many of these candidates lived in these poor districts themselves and were able to channel local populations' disgruntlement towards the Future Movement and the club of Sunni oligarchs.[674] The slogan of the Rifi-backed independents' list, "Beware of the Anger", tellingly pointed at the oligarchic elites' deplorable economic and security records.[675] The dispossessed Tripolitan Sunni youth and the anxious working class found a champion in Rifi's movement, while the oligarchs' candidates quickly toured the streets of the poorest neighbourhoods of the metropolis in their black limousines. Rifi's outspoken rejection of the Sunni clientelist leadership posed a direct threat to the durability of the oligarchic elites' dominance in Tripoli. But the oligarchic coalition only realised the depth of the risk weighing on their power when they lost it in the ballots.

7.2.c Tripoli's Electoral Results

The social despair plaguing many Tripolitan families discouraged several citizens from participating in the local election. Only 25.8% of eligible voters turned out on

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[673] See the transcript of Jabr's (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.
[674] See the transcripts of *Talal's* (anonymised name) interviews conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018 and in Beirut, in November 2018.
[675] Knudsen, "Competitive Clientelism in Secondary Cities," 10.

the 29th of May 2016.[676] However, even a quarter of the electorate was enough to defeat the incumbent coalition of Sunni oligarchs led by the Future Movement. This electoral outcome certainly represented an unprecedented upheaval in Lebanon's customarily stable local politics. The oligarchic coalition (the list "For Tripoli") garnered only 34% of the votes, which granted them only 8 councillors in the municipal opposition. Conversely, the unexpected winners were the independent candidates backed by Ashraf Rifi ("Tripoli's Choice" list). They won a majority of sixteen seats at the municipal council, thanks to 36.3% of the Tripolitans' ballots.

Rifi, as a dissenter of the Future Movement, demonstrated that the legitimacy of oligarchism embodied by the leading Sunni party was not simply contested but already broken for many Tripolitan electors. Indeed, the vote revealed that Sunni voters from the poor districts of the city significantly defected from the oligarchs' list to the independents' list (backed by Ashraf Rifi). The latter garnered more Sunni votes (38.3%) than the coalition of Sunni oligarchs (31.5%).[677] This observation firmly signalled the considerable disruption of clientelist loyalties within the Future Movement and allied oligarchic parties.[678] This electoral outcome consequently generated a major crisis of leadership for Saad Hariri and his party, as his former minister of Justice had succeeded in defeating him in a constituency supposedly loyal to the FM. The results came as a shock to the Future Movement and allied Sunni oligarchs. A senior political advisor of Najib Mikati qualified the vote a "*gifle*", or a slap on the face for the Sunni oligarchs.[679] A newly elected councillor from the oligarchs list acknowledged the momentous nature of this vote. He declared that: "This [was] the first time that Tripolitans said to all politicians: 'No, that's enough. We've had enough of you!' So it really was a revolt."[680] The political dominance of oligarchism in Tripoli was under threat. But this vote sent shockwaves beyond local politics.

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[676] Information International, "The Results of Municipal Elections. Lebanon 2016," 15.
[677] Information International, "The Results of Municipal Elections. Lebanon 2016," 17.
[678] Tine Gade, "The Reconfiguration of Clientelism and the Failure of Vote-Buying in Lebanon," In *Clientelism and Patronage in the Middle East and North Africa. Networks of Dependency*, ed. Laura Ruiz de Elvira, Christoph H. Schwarz, and Irene Weipert-Fenner (Oxon: Routledge, 2019).
[679] See the transcript of *Daud's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Beirut, in August 2018.
[680] See the transcript of Jabr's (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

Through this electoral upheaval, the Tripolitans sent a nationwide signal unequivocally demonstrating that clientelist elites were not electorally invincible, even in their territorial strongholds. Certainly, electoral change from patronage to an anti-clientelist political movement represents as an anomalous outcome in the Lebanese clientelist regime. Therefore, clientelist leaders, in Tripoli and across the country, perceived the risk of seeing a credible alternative political offer challenge the viability of their own political dominance. Conversely, political independents were the legitimate holders of a major municipality for the first time in post-war Lebanon. This electoral outcome had the potential to galvanise mobilisation of all the political activists rejecting the clientelist regime, and thus posed a durable threat to patronage in local politics.

In response to this unprecedented electoral defeat, the Future Movement had two years left before the upcoming 2018 parliamentary elections, to win back the loyalty of its former Tripolitan members. Accordingly, the third section of this chapter describes the power strategy of collective defence of clientelist leadership (E3) employed by the Future Movement after 2016, to recover the trust of its former Tripolitan Sunni protégés.

2016-2018
7.3 The Sunni Oligarchs Collective Obstruction of the Independent Municipality
7.3.a Choosing Collective Defence

The previous empirical chapter on Baalbek (chapter 6) illustrated how Hezbollah substituted its missing material means with a symbolic power strategy (E2). This strategy was primarily designed to coerce the loyalty of Shia communities by securitising them and by reifying sectarian identities. After the electoral defeat endured in the 2016 local elections, could the Future Movement use a similar strategy to rely upon the symbolic means possessed by the oligarchic network?

Events in Tripoli demonstrate that the Future Movement continued to face deep financial troubles. However, unlike Hezbollah, the Sunni oligarchic party was unable

to substitute ailing material means via a power strategy based on symbolism. Indeed, the Future Movement is not a party born though warfare and thus does not possess a combatant identity. This means that it did not hold any substantial coercive capacity to control the loyalty of its protégés. Moreover, the Future Movement had not built up a consistent ideological character which could durably bind its supporters through socioeconomic uncertainty. The largest Sunni party assumed a moderate mainstream political position under Saad Hariri's leadership, which distanced it from any defining symbolic element. Therefore, as the Future Movement and their oligarchic allies were in the opposition at the municipal council of Tripoli, the Sunni party needed another power strategy to recover the loyalty of its disillusioned voters. In the following subsection, I explain how the Future Movement lacked both material and symbolic resources, which drove the party to instead choose a collective defence power strategy.

The Future Movement's Limited Material Capacity

After 2016 the Future Movement continued to face dire finances. Saad Hariri's Saudi-based mega-contractor company collapsed in 2017.[681] Thousands of employees lost months of salaries and waged judicial appeals against the Lebanese leader.[682] Hariri's business debacle unfolded at a time when he fell in disgrace from the largest foreign patron of the Lebanese Sunni political elites' favour – the Saudi monarchy. The Saudis blamed Hariri for his governmental compromises with pro-Iranian Hezbollah, so they turned their back on their former Lebanese proxy.[683] As a result, the Future Movement lost a reliable source of funding, as most Gulf Monarchies withdrew their subsidies to the Sunni party.

In compensation, could the Future Movement attempt to attract external funding from the Lebanese Sunni diaspora? This strategy was successfully implemented by

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[681] Matthew Dalton and Niolas Parasie, "With Saudi Ties Fraying, Lebanese Premier's Construction Empire Crumbles," *Wall Street Journal*, November 24, 2017, https://www.wsj.com/articles/with-saudi-ties-fraying-lebanese-premiers-construction-empire-crumbles-1511519402.

[682] Marc Daou, « Saudi Oger : l'empire Hariri refuse de les payer, des salariés français contre-attaquent, » [Saudi Oger: The Hariri Empire Refuses to Pay Them, French Employees Counterattack] *France 24*, July 24, 2017, https://www.france24.com/fr/20170724-saudi-oger-empire-saad-hariri-salaires-impayes-francais-justice-arabie-saoudite-btp.

[683] Samia Nakhoul, Laila Bassam, and Tom Perry, "Exclusive: How Saudi Arabia turned on Lebanon's Hariri," *Reuters*, November 11, 2017, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-politics-hariri-exclusive-idUSKBN1DB0QL.

the Lebanese Forces in Zahle (see in chapter 5). But the Lebanese Sunni diaspora did not have the capacity to provide substantial resources to the Future Movement. Many Lebanese Sunnis reside in the Arabian Peninsula. At that time, these communities were seriously impacted by the economic crisis affecting the region after the fall in oil prices. Consequently, remittances from Lebanese Sunnis to their families living in Tripoli declined, according to a European academic researching Tripoli.[684] Data provided from the World Bank on personal remittances backs this observation. Indeed, the share of the Lebanese GDP owed to remittances dropped from 14.8% in 2016 to 12.6% in 2018.[685]

The cumulation of these adverse financial events led to the faltering political standing of Saad Hariri.[686] Accordingly, the Future Movement party did not have the capacity to attract compensative material resources to regain its former Tripolitan protégés.

Table 7.4 The Future Movement's record in attracting compensatory resources

Type of Power Strategy	Available Policy	Elite Domination	
		Endurance	Vulnerability
Material Alleviation (E1) Attraction of Compensative Resources	Limited welfare support from local aid providers		✓
	Limited influence on humanitarian resources		✓
	Limited External sources of support		✓

In summary, table 7.4 above lists the policies of material alleviation available to the Future Movement after 2016. It indicates that the Sunni party possessed limited agency in leveraging compensatory resources.

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[684] See the transcript of *Eric's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Beirut, in March 2018.
[685] World Bank, "Personal remittances, received (% of GDP) - Lebanon," *The World Bank Data*, 2020, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=LB; and for more details on the impact of oil prices on remittances to Lebanon see: IMF 2017.
[686] Strassmaier and Nassif, "Lebanese Municipality Elections," 3.

The Future Movement's Limited Symbolic Means

Lacking material means, the Future Movement then assessed whether it could rely on its symbolic identity to arouse the support of the Lebanese Sunni community. Chapter 6 illustrated how Hezbollah strategically used its combatant symbolism to galvanise flagging supporters, and thus guarantee victory at the 2018 parliamentary elections. However, the Future Movement did not benefit from equivalent symbolic resources to substitute for its stalled redistributive capacity.

Unlike the Lebanese Forces (chapter 5) and Hezbollah (chapter 7), the Future Movement did not inherit a combatant identity, as the Sunni party is not the political heir of a former rebel group active during the Lebanese Civil War. Therefore, supporters of the Future Movement are not bonded by a shared collective memory and temporality. Moreover, this lack of warfare experience reduced the party's potential to have meaningful coercive agency. It is true that in recent years the Hariri's have co-opted the leadership of the Internal Security Forces (the police) to have access to security intelligence and protect their interests.[687] Nevertheless, the partisans of the Future Movement are not experienced fighters. The founder of the movement, Rafik Hariri, staunchly advocated against any use of political violence by the Sunni community.[688] Thus, the Future Movement was unable to seriously police local Sunni communities like Hezbollah did in Baalbek (chapter 6). The Future Movement thus lacked a combatant imagery and a coercive capacity which could mobilise a common identity behind its leadership. Could the party then build up a non-combatant identity to anchor the social identification of its protégés?

During the late 1980s, Rafik Hariri enshrined his leadership in the ideological neoliberal precepts in vogue in the West.[689] After his assassination in 2005, his son Saad missed an opportunity to build a central ideological movement in Lebanese politics. The martyrdom of Rafik initially granted Saad with a rare national aura even

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[687] Simone Tholens, "Practices of Intervention: Assembling Security Force Assistance in Lebanon," *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 15 (2021): 656, doi:10.1080/17502977.2021.1987851.
[688] Marwan G. Rowayheb, "Political Change and the Outbreak of Civil War: The Case of Lebanon," *Civil Wars* 13 (2011): 423, doi:10.1080/13698249.2011.629871.
[689] Baumann, *Citizen Hariri. Lebanon's Neoliberal Reconstruction.*

surpassing the sectarian lines of the Sunni community.[690] But Saad remained loyal to his father's deregulated market economy (which fuelled his clientelist interests) without modernising nor clarifying his ideological views.[691] He designed the Future Movement as a "catch-all" "movement" (in the English translation of *al Mustaqbal*), not a "party", which was meant to represent the whole Lebanese Sunni community. According to a senior official in the Future Movement, this mainstream electoral strategy justified the party's ideological vagueness.[692] As an expression of the movement's ideological volatility, it presents an especially "weak institutionalisation."[693] As a result, Hariri's Sunnism resembles a soft centrism incapable of arousing the fervour of the masses in a polarising political context.

Table 7.5 The Future Movement's capacity to mobilise Symbolism after 2016

Type of Power Strategy	Available Policy	Elite Domination	
		Endurance	Vulnerability
Substitutive Symbolism (E2) Political Rhetoric	Moderate political rhetoric respecting democratic norms of competition		✓
	Absence of coercive (securitisation) capacity towards supporters		✓
	Absence of violent political acts against political rivals		✓

In summary, table 7.5 above lists the symbolic policies available to the Future Movement after 2016. All these elements show that the party possessed limited symbolic means, preventing it from employing a symbolic strategy of power recovery in Tripoli.

The last strategy left to the Future Movement was the collective defence of the legitimacy of the clientelist regime. This strategy means a threatened leader, like Saad Hariri, invoking the solidarity of his counterparts (regardless of their religious

[690] On the process of "beatification" of Rafik Hariri after his assassination in 2005 see: Are John Knudsen, "Death of a Statesman – Birth of a Martyr Martyrdom and Memorials in Post–Civil War Lebanon," *Anthropology of the Middle East* 11 (2016): 1–17, doi:10.3167/ame.2016.110202.

[691] Illustratively, the Hariri's, father and son, staunchly defended the governmental sub-contract with the controversial cleaning company Sukleen responsible for garbage collection in Beirut. Sukleen was owned by a close friend of Rafik Hariri and charged heavier costs to the state than what the municipality of Beirut did when it ensured this public service by itself. This case illustrates the dubious private-public "collusions" entertained by the Hariri dynasty. See: Jamil Mouawad, "Unpacking Lebanon's Resilience: Undermining State Institutions and Consolidating the System?," *Istituto Affari Internazionali Working Papers* 17 (2017): 6-7.

[692] See the transcript of *Baha's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

[693] Knudsen, "Competitive Clientelism in Secondary Cities," 5.

identity) to protect his leadership against political challengers. This last resort card for the Future Movement reminds us that clientelist actors defend a common regime. Any alternative political offer that delegitimises the rule of clientelism must consequentially be halted to preserve the durability of the system.

This collective defence power strategy comes in the form of two main policies. First, the Future Movement and allied Sunni oligarchs use the state's administrative means in their possession to obstruct the governance of the municipality of Tripoli. This policy is designed to demonstrate the political inadequacy of political challengers who are not part of the clientelist regime. Second, the Future Movement can shape an electoral alliance with rival clientelist leaders to tame critiques of its leadership, and ensure that the alternative political offer is defeated in the elections. I detail this second alliance policy for the 2019 parliamentary by-election.

The next subsection of the chapter first outlines how the Future Movement and its Sunni oligarchic allies obstructed the governance of the independent-led municipality of Tripoli after 2016.

7.3.b The Policy of Obstruction of Tripoli's Governance

Saad Hariri was elected Prime Minister of Lebanon in December 2016. From then on, both the cabinet and the presidency of Lebanon were headed by politicians hostile to Ashraf Rifi's sovereigntist Sunni leadership.[694] Therefore, the Future Movement seized central powers to obstruct the governance of Tripoli's municipality. Ministers of the Future Movement could use their administrative power to isolate Tripoli from state subsidies. In particular, the party controlled the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM). This ministry is in charge of redistributing large shares of municipalities' finances (through the Independent Municipal Fund) and overlooks municipal spending, specifically in the largest cities (see the literature review chapter for more details).[695] The previous mayor of Tripoli estimated that "73% of the decisions of the municipal council [required] the approval of the

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[694] The president Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement was allied to Hezbollah. Rifi built his authority amongst Tripolitans for its clear stances against Iranian influence in Lebanon. The former minister of justice was therefore seen by the new president has an opponent.
[695] Dewailly, Favier, Karam, Harb al-Kak, Khayat, and Signoles, « Pouvoirs locaux et décentralisation, » 20.

[regional governor] or the minister of interior and municipalities."[696] The Minister of Interior was, consequently, able to set administrative obstacles to thwart municipal decision making in Tripoli.

Isolating Tripoli from State Cooperation

The independent mayor of Tripoli elected in 2016, Ahmad Qamereddin, reluctantly recognised that his administration's relations with "Beirut" were conflict-laden at the onset of his mandate. He admitted that: "After the [2016 local] elections there were tensions." But the mayor preferred not to elaborate on this sensitive matter. A political advisor of General Ashraf Rifi explained that Saad Hariri and the Tripolitan Sunni oligarchs "enclosed the municipality so that [the municipal council] could not make any decision."[697] Thus, they opened an asymmetric power struggle against Tripolitan municipal authorities. All ties to sources of finance in Beirut were cut, if Tripoli's municipality persevered in "defying" the clientelist establishment. Hence, the Future Movement endorsed a policy of sanctioning Tripolitans for their political emancipation. A member of Tripoli's chamber of commerce observed that the consequences of the Sunni oligarchs' policy of obstruction were felt by all inhabitants. He observed that: "Unfortunately, the loss was to all the city because of [the Tripolitans electoral] challenge. We paid the price, we paid a high price!"[698]

The mayor of Tripoli assumed during our interview that the central administration successfully deterred private investors from developing projects in the city. The president of Tripoli's Special Economic Zone (TSEZ) confirmed in 2019 that the "unfavourable political environment" affecting Tripoli in recent years had badly hurt private investments in the Northern capital.[699] As Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) decreased in Lebanon from 2016 to 2018, Tripoli further lost economic attractiveness.[700] The Future Movement and its oligarchic allies' policy of administrative obstruction was apparently effective. Even a deputy at the chamber of

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[696] Harb and Atallah, *Local Governments and Public Goods*, 214.
[697] See the transcript of *Raji's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Beirut, in August 2018.
[698] See the transcript of *Raji's* (anonymised name) interview, ibid.
[699] Rayya Haffar el Hassan, « Tripoli : Une future plaque tournante, » [Tripoli: A Future Hub] *Travaux et Jours* 94 (2019): 19-29, https://journals.usj.edu.lb/travauxetjours/article/view/93.
[700] World Bank, "Foreign Direct Investment, Net Inflows (% of GDP) – Lebanon," *The World Bank Data*, 2019, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.KLT.DINV.WD.GD.ZS?end=2019&locations=LB&start=2015&view=chart.

parliament from Najib Mikati's party admitted that without the support of the Hariri-led government it was impossible to advance a local political agenda.

Capturing the Municipal Administration

To make matters worse for the independent-led municipality of Tripoli, Sunni oligarchs internally captured the work of the municipal council to fully discredit the non-clientelist leadership. After several successive mandates of Sunni oligarchic majorities at the municipal council, these clientelist actors successfully pervaded the new administration. Saad Hariri and Najib Mikati mainly used the recruitment of personnel in varied municipal departments to reward loyal members of their respective networks.[701] In return, these employees remained faithful to their patron. Entire municipal services were controlled by the Future Movement and its oligarchic allies. [702] They thus became instrumental assets of disturbance against the operation of municipal services. Sunni oligarchs incited social movements, strikes and demonstrations, to challenge the authority of the mayor.[703]

In a parallel move, the Future Movement and its allies used breaches within the independent majority at the municipal council to further exploit internal divisions. The heterogeneous profiles of political independents originating from civil society and often lacking in political experience created opportunities of co-optation for Sunni oligarchs. Political infighting prompted by Hariri's and Mikati's councillors followed suit and successfully paralysed the municipal council. According to a municipal councillor, the municipal majority "couldn't solve even a single problem." He added that: "Problems [came] from all directions, from the left, from the right, from above, from below, with the politicians, with the military etc."[704] Therefore, the municipality fell into a state of inertia preventing any concrete policy implementation, only a year after the new government's installation.

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[701] Obeida Takriti, "A City Ground to a Halt: Policymaking in Tripoli and the Reality of Promises," (Master Diss., American University of Beirut, 2019), 53.
[702] Chrystèle Allès, "The Private Sector and Local Elites: The Experience of Public–Private Partnership in the Water Sector in Tripoli, Lebanon," *Mediterranean Politics* 17 (2012): 394-409.
[703] Illustratively, the municipality of Tripoli was crippled by a strike when I met with mayor Qamereddin in November 2018.
[704] See the transcript of *Jabr's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

Table 7.6 Identifying the Future Movement's obstructive policies after 2016

Type of Power Strategy	Observed Policy	Elite Domination	
		Endurance	Vulnerability
Collective Defence (E3) Obstruction	United coalition of clientelist leaders	✓	
	State administrative obstruction of political challengers	✓	
	Internal political obstruction of local governance	✓	

In summary, table 7.6 (above) references a set of obstructive policies waged by the Future Movement and its oligarchic partners against the independent-led municipality of Tripoli after 2016. It shows a comprehensive collective strategy of obstruction aimed at defending the legitimacy of clientelism to the Tripolitans who had defected to political independents in the 2016 local elections.

The Future Movement thus demonstrated that it was the only party, alongside other oligarchic clientelist networks, with the capacity to ensure stability and prosperity for Tripoli. Any other political alternative external to the clientelist regime in Tripoli was doomed to fail against the collective endeavour of the Future Movement.

Before delving into the 2018 parliamentary campaign, the next subsection of the chapter considers how the Future Movement's policy of obstruction affected the Tripolitans' perception of their independent municipal authorities

7.3.c Assessing the Performance of Independent Governance in Tripoli

The previous subsection of the chapter detailed the various policies of obstruction employed by the Future Movement and its allies to collectively thwart the governance of the independent-led municipality of Tripoli. However, these policies had a direct economic impact upon Tripolitan society – which was already suffering from severe socioeconomic conditions. So, how did the Tripolitans evaluate the performance of their independent municipal authorities?

The trend extracted from the surveyed Tripolitans undeniably conveys the disappointment of the local population. In 2018, 69% of the Tripolitan participants

who answered the survey questionnaire considered that the municipality of Tripoli inefficiently protected them. The complete results are displayed below in chart 7.3. This the most negative record amongst the three compared case cities.

Chart 7.3 Lebanese citizens' perceptions on local governance in Tripoli, 2018
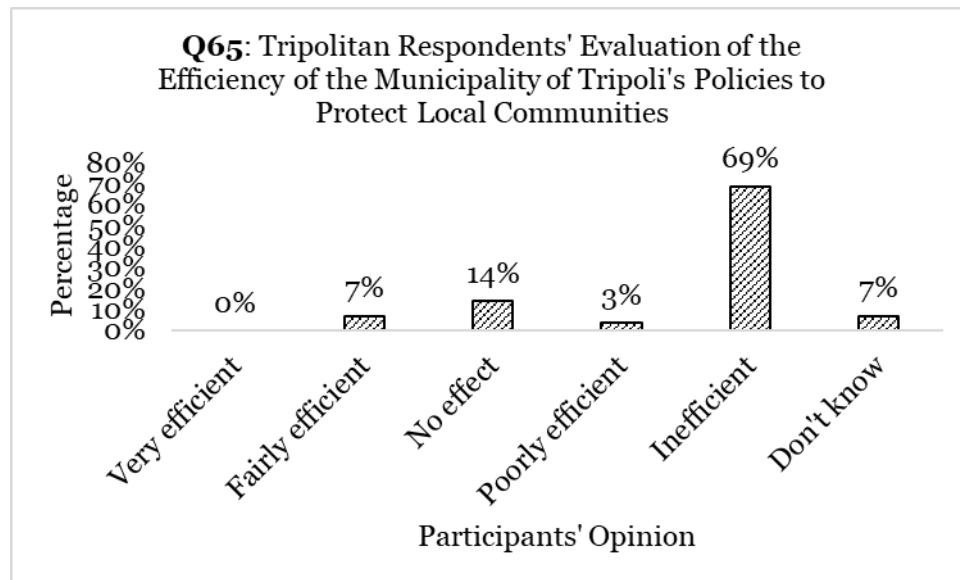
The Future Movement's power strategy of collective defence, which decisively paralysed the governance of the municipality, generated anticipated consequences on the Tripolitans' opinion of their local authorities. The municipality's inertia was resented vehemently by many constituents. In the meantime, poverty plagued local communities – 65% of the population was unemployed in the North governorate in 2018.[705] This was by far the highest rate across Lebanese regions. A charity officer in Tripoli therefore considered that the political independents at the municipality represented an unsuccessful political experience for the city. She stated that: "The municipality failed in everything. They couldn't do anything."[706] Accordingly, the tarnishing of the mayor of Tripoli, was criticised for his lack of resistance against Sunni oligarchic pressure, reverberated on Ashraf Rifi too. Rifi's leadership was severely shadowed by the failure of municipal majority that he had supported in the

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[705] OECD, "Country Case Studies: Building Economic Resilience in Lebanon and Libya," *MENA-OECD Economic Resilience Task Force, Background Note*, December 4-5, 2018, 21, https://www.oecd.org/mena/competitiveness/ERTF-Jeddah-2018-Background-note-Case-studies-Lebanon-and-Libya.pdf.
[706] See the transcript of *Safa's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

elections of May 2016. In essence, the independent political alternative to the oligarchic elites in Tripoli was shattered after only two years of its mandate.

The Future Movement and other oligarchic elites successfully thwarted the independents local rule. However, their ambition produced a concerning outcome too. Any hope of democratic change vanished in the eyes of many Tripolitans. A Tripolitan businessman summed-up this mood by formulating a logical deduction. "[Tripolitans] wanted change. They tried the change. [...] You can't [bring change here]!" he stated.[707]

Tripolitans gradually came to terms with their political emancipation from the clientelist regime. In acute social distress, disenfranchised families begged for help from their immovable patron. Paradoxically, the socioeconomic fall out in Tripoli suited the restoration of oligarchic dominance in the city, as clientelist servicing had never been so necessary to vulnerable communities. In one of the poorest neighbourhoods of Tripoli, a social worker observed that Sunni oligarchs successfully re-established the full social dependence of their traditional supporters.[708] The clientelist status quo prevailed once again. Tripolitan communities simply gave up, and apathy resurged. It was in such a context of deep political aversion that the population was called to choose its parliamentary representation the spring of 2018.

The 2018 parliamentary election serves as a test of the perpetuation of clientelist loyalties in Tripoli's oligarchic clientelism. The fourth section of the chapter discusses how the power strategy of collective defence implemented by the Future Movement allowed the party to recover its political dominance in Tripoli.

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[707] See the transcript of *Adir's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.
[708] See the transcript of *Sabri's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

7.4 The Recovery of Tripolitan Oligarchism
7.4.a Political Context and Competing Lists

The context of the 2018 parliamentary elections was relatively more favourable to the Sunni oligarchic elites than to their independent competitors. After two years of their mandate, the governance of the political independents at the head of the municipality of Tripoli had dashed the electoral prospects of its own candidates. This was especially true for General Ashraf Rifi. Conversely, the Future Movement was then able to recover its leadership in the Tripolitan Sunni community. However, Saad Hariri's party remained a weak clientelist network. Under pressure from the Saudi Arabian authorities, Hariri was compelled to resign from his premiership in 2017.[709] In response to this exceptional event, Lebanese Sunnis expressed their empathy and support to their mistreated leader.[710] Hariri was released thanks to French mediation and then retook his position as Premier of Lebanon. This unusual episode further exposed Hariri's political weakness and his failure to maintain confident relations with a key foreign patron. But at the same time, Hariri was politically surviving.

As the legitimacy of the clientelist regime was no longer threatened, Sunni oligarchic elites did not feel the need to adopt a collective defence strategy (E3) which could have materialised into an electoral alliance. In fact, the 2018 parliamentary campaign launched an intra-Sunni competition for the national leadership of Lebanon.[711] The ballots of the Tripolitans would thus only determine the relative power amongst Sunni oligarchic leaders who aimed to gain the premiership of the nation (the prime-ministerial office is reserved to the Sunni community, see chapter 2). The battle for the Lebanese Sunni leadership pitted two oligarchs against each other: Saad Hariri (Future Movement) and Najib Mikati (al Azm party), the wealthiest men in the country. This political rivalry meant that for this election, each contender would run on a separate list.

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[709] Jeffrey G. Karam, "Lebanon's Civil Society as an Anchor of Stability," *Brandeis University, Middle East Brief* 117 (2018): 1.
[710] L'Orient-le Jour, « Saad Hariri de retour au Liban, » [Saad Hariri Returns to Lebanon] *L'Orient-le Jour*, November 21, 2017, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1082719/saad-hariri-de-retour-au-liban.html.
[711] Yara Abi Akl, "Tripoli : on y voit un peu plus clair, » [Tripoli : We See a Little More Clearly] *L'Orient-le Jour*, March 16, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1105193/tripoli-on-y-voit-un-peu-plus-clair.html.

Table 7.7 Parliamentary elections in Tripoli, 2018

List Name	Clientelist type	Party/Backers	Election Results		
			Votes	Seats	Council
"The Future is For the North"	**Oligarchic**	**Future Movement** (FM)/S. Hariri,	51,937	3	3/8
"Determination"	Oligarchic	Al Azm (AZM)/N. Mikati	42,019	4	4/8
"National Dignity"	Traditional	Al Karama (KAR)/F. Karami	29,101	1	1/8
"A Sovereign Lebanon"	[Independent]	Ashraf Rifi	9,656	0	0/8

Legend:
⎮ = coalition list of several parties

Sources: UNDP, "2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections," 22-3

Table 7.7 above lists the main protagonists seeking to win the Sunni representation of the city. Overall, there were 8 lists in competition (4 more "smaller" independent lists completed the competition).

The legislative campaign in Tripoli was consequently marked by bitter accusations between the two leading oligarchs, Hariri and Mikati.[712] But these two leaders often campaigned and governed together in Tripoli when their alliance suited their contextual interests. Tripolitans seemed especially exhausted by this intra-Sunni confrontation. The promises made by the Hariri administration for the development of the city (in relation to the CEDRE conference) were met with distrust by many voters.

An interesting aspect of this electoral campaign is the fact that it led exceptionally to the cancellation of one of the "elected" Future Movement deputies. This outcome is a rarity in Lebanese local politics. I explain it in greater detail in the next subsection, which also presents the election results.

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[712] Yara Abi Akl, "À Tripoli, « une guerre d'élimination » intersunnite, » [In Tripoli, An Intra-Sunni 'War of Elimination'] *L'Orient-le Jour*, April 18, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1111132/a-tripoli-une-guerre-delimination-intersunnite.html.

7.4.b 2018 North II Electoral Results

The performative display of the Sunni leadership's internal splits failed to draw the interest of most Tripolitans. Only 38% of registered voters within the North II district of Tripoli, Minniyeh, and Dinniyeh, participated in the election.[713] In comparison, in 2009 45.82% of the Tripolitan electorate had cast a ballot.[714]

The list winning the highest number of seats was that of Najib Mikati. The Sunni oligarch won four MPs in the Chamber (including himself). His campaign spending was undoubtedly the highest amongst the Sunni competitors.[715] The Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA) confirmed that cash payments and medical bill reimbursements were extensively used as electoral rewards in this 2018 vote-buying.[716] Mikati also won all the "minority" seats of the Christian and Alawite communities.

For the Future Movement, the Tripolitan ballots were either slightly disappointing or half satisfactory, depending on one's viewpoint. On the negative side, the Future Movement lost a sizeable share of its electorate, which either preferred to stay home or defect to oligarchic rivals like Mikati. A senior party official of the Future Movement in Tripoli estimated during a post-electoral interview that Hariri's party had lost nearly half of its core electorate in 2018, relative to the 2009 legislative election. He further reflected upon the Future Movement's loss in popularity and considered that Saad Hariri's altered material dominance probably caused this electoral fallout. "Probably people expected that they were going to take some money, some pennies... and they didn't take any," he commented.[717] On the positive side, the Future Movement gathered the largest number of votes, and especially Sunni votes, in the district. The party won three Sunni deputies out of five in Tripoli. Therefore,

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[713] Jeanine Jalkh, « Législatives libanaises : Anatomie du vote à Tripoli-Minié-Denniyé, » [Lebanese Legislative: Anatomy of the Vote in Tripoli-Minié-Denniyé] *L'Orient-le Jour*, May 29, 2018, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1118049/anatomie-du-vote-a-tripoli-minie-denniye.html.
[714] Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, ""Political Party Mapping in Lebanon," 104.
[715] See the transcript of *Safa's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.
[716] NDI, "Lebanon 2018 Parliamentary Elections. Final Report," *National Democratic Institute* (2018), 17, https://www.ndi.org/publications/ndi-lebanon-2018-parliamentary-elections-international-observation-mission-final-report.
[717] See the transcript of *Baha's* (anonymised name) interview conducted in Tripoli, in August 2018.

Saad Hariri could claim that he had recovered the legitimate representativeness of the Tripolitan Sunnis, after having lost in 2016.

The electoral results, however, produced an unexpected outcome. A candidate on the traditional leader Faysal Karami's list claimed that the count was mired in fraud and filed an appeal to the Constitutional Council in June 2018. In response, the Council invalidated the election of a new Future Movement deputy, Dimal Jamali (the daughter of a former mayor of the city).[718] This decision alleged that serious irregularities had stained the Tripolitan electoral process. There were many claims of fraud across Lebanon which were submitted to the Constitutional Council. But only this deputy seat was invalidated, one of the Future Movement.

As a result, a by-election was organised on the 14th of April 2019 for the invalidated seat of the Future Movement, as discussed below.

7.4.c Tripoli's April 2019 By-Election Campaign

This unexpected ballot was perceived by Saad Hariri as a dual attack against his own leadership at the head of the Lebanese government and also against the dominance of the Future Movement in Tripoli. At this time, Hariri was facing serious attacks from Hezbollah, which attempted to diminish the influence of the Sunni-led Premiership in Lebanon. To pressure Saad Hariri, Hezbollah closely supported pro-Syrian Tripolitan Sunnis in their opposition to the Future Movement. Hezbollah even successfully backed the formation a group of pro-Syrian Sunni deputies at the chamber of deputies after the 2018 parliamentary elections. This was a clear attempt to delegitimise the Sunni representativeness of the Future Movement.

This national context – which threatened this time not simply the viability of the Future Movement's leadership in Tripoli but also the power-share of the Lebanese Sunni community in Lebanon – weighed heavily on electoral alliances in Tripoli. Indeed, it is exactly in such a menacing context to one's clientelist legitimacy that a strategy of collective defence becomes relevant. The Future Movement needed to

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[718] NDI, "Lebanon 2018 Parliamentary Elections," 28.

form an electoral alliance with all the largest Sunni political contenders in Tripoli. A united group of Sunni leaders would make credible the claim that it was an "existential" vote for the Sunni community which was being attacked by Sunni proxies embodying the Iranian threat against Lebanese Sunnis.

Accordingly, Najib Mikati gave his support to the Future Movement's candidate. The oligarch justified rallying to his rival's camp by the necessity of unifying ranks to face external threats on Sunni leadership.[719] The time had come for reconciliation between the dissenter of the Future Movement, General Ashraf Rifi, and Hariri's leadership. General Rifi was certainly tempted to run against the Future Movement's candidate, Dima Jamali – as he believed he was popular in the poorest neighbourhoods of Tripoli.[720] However, the General knew that he could not risk tarnishing his integrity by competing against the Future Movement, given the high stakes of the delegitimising campaign run by Hezbollah. Rifi and PM Saad Hariri formalised their reconciliation on the symbolic eve of the 14th of March 2019, a day which commemorates the 2005 Cedar Revolution. They invoked the importance of unifying the Tripolitan Sunnis against the Iranian threat looming on Tripoli to justify their reconciliation.[721] This collective defence strategy materialised in the formation of a single list backed by Hariri, Mikati and Rifi in support for the Future Movement's candidate Dima Jamali.

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[719] L'Orient-le Jour, « Législatives partielles à Tripoli : Mikati renouvelle son soutien à Hariri, » [By-Election in Tripoli: Mikati Renews its Support for Hariri] *L'Orient-le Jour*, February 23, 2019, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1158675/legislatives-partielles-a-tripoli-mikati-renouvelle-son-soutien-a-hariri.html.
[720] See the transcript of General Ashraf Rifi's interview conducted in Beirut, in November 2018.
[721] L'Orient-le Jour, « Rifi soutient Jamali pour « faire échec au projet iranien », » [Rifi Backs Jamali to 'Defeat the Iranian Project'] *L'Orient-le Jour*, March 19, 2019, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1162368/rifi-soutient-jamali-pour-faire-echec-au-projet-iranien-.html.

Table 7.8 Parliamentary by-election in Tripoli, 2019

| Candidate Name | Clientelist type | Party/Backers | Election Results | | |
			Votes	Seats	Council
Dima Jamali	**Oligarchic** Oligarchic [Independent]	**Future Movement** (FM)/S. Hariri, Al Azm (AZM)/N. Mikati, Ashraf Rifi	19,387	1	1/1
Yahya Mawloud	[Independent]	Kulluna Watani/independents	3,295	0	0/1
Misbah Ahdhab	[Independent]	Democratic Renewal Movement	2,590	0	0/1

Legend:
| = coalition list of several parties

Sources: UNDP, "2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections," 22-3

Table 7.8 above lists the three main competitors for the Sunni deputy seat and their respective sponsors. The electoral contest was especially asymmetric, between a list uniting the most powerful political actors in town, and candidates supported by much smaller independent political organisations.

As a result, the display of an allied front of Sunni elites effectively deterred serious contenders from the electoral competition. Even the initial complainant against electoral frauds himself withdrew from the race.[722] The Tripolitan Sunni proxies of Hezbollah did not even compete. This would not stop the Future Movement from insisting on the symbolic threat looming over the Sunni community in Lebanon. Consequently, the road seemed so clear for the Future Movement that the party's politburo worried that the Tripolitan electorate would ignore the by-election. In response, PM Hariri toured Tripoli on the weekend of the election to make sure that Future Movement supporters would cast their ballot. The main event of the campaign was a rally for Dima Jamali organised in Tripoli at the Quality Inn Hotel on the 12th of April 2019, that I attended.

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[722] LBC, "Taha Naji Says He Will Not Run for Tripoli's By-Elections," *Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC)*, March 29, 2019, https://www.lbcgroup.tv/news/d/lebanon-news/435725/taha-naji-says-he-will-not-run-for-tripolis-by-ele/en.

The Hotel displayed a large placard representing the face of Saad Hariri, not Jamali (see picture 7.1 below).

Picture 7.1 Campaign rally of the Future Movement, Tripoli [723]

Entryway of the Quality Inn Hotel where hundreds of FM sympathisers massed to attend Saad Hariri and Dima Jamali's campaign meeting, Tripoli, 12th of April 2019.

The narrative developed by the Future Movement candidate herself existentialised the invalidation of her election into a vote for or against Saad Hariri's national leadership.[724] What mattered was the protection of the standing of the Sunni Premiership in Lebanon against rising Iranian influence, a subject which Saad Hariri strongly emphasised. If his figure was attacked, then all the Lebanese Sunnis were attacked. This rhetorical "existentialisation" of the vote was meant to secure the reconciliation of former supporters of the Future Movement with their embattled Sunni leader.

As a result, the 2019 by-election campaign exemplified the implementation by the Future Movement of a policy of electoral alliance, enforcing a strategy of collective defence (E3) of a threatened clientelist leader.

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[723] The picture was taken on the 12th of April 2019 by myself (own copyrights).
[724] See the declarations of Dima Jamali: L'Orient-le Jour, « Rifi soutient Jamali pour « faire échec au projet iranien ». »

Table 7.9 Identifying the Future Movement's Electoral Policies after 2016

Type of Power Strategy	Observed Policy	Elite Domination	
		Endurance	Vulnerability
Collective Defence (E3) Electoral Alliance	United electoral alliance of intra-sectarian clientelist leaders	✓	
	United electoral alliance of inter-sectarian clientelist leaders		✓
	Rhetorical "existentialisation" of the vote	✓	

In sum, table 7.9 above details the set of electoral policies adopted by the Future Movement to enforce a collective defence of its leadership. The party did not need to foment alliances with leaders representing other minorities, because of the demographic dominance of the Sunni community in Tripoli. In other municipalities characterised by religious diversity (like Zahle for instance), a similar context would have drawn the threatened leader to shape alliances with other religious groups. Overall, the Future Movement consistently attempted to unite its political rivals in order to credibly "existentialise" the election. The vote was then turned into a referendum in defence of the "rights" of the Lebanese Sunni community, incarnated by the political destiny of the Future Movement's candidate in Tripoli.

The next subsection of the chapter discusses the electoral results of the 2019 by-election which, unsurprisingly, led to the victory of the Future Movement. But the "existentialisation" of the election did not bring desperate electors en-masse to polling stations.

7.4.d Tripoli's April 2019 Electoral Results

On election day, the polling stations in Tripoli that I visited were literally deserted. There were more partisans of the Future Movement and al Azm (Mikati) parties than voters themselves at the entrance of a polling station in al Mina (the old port of Tripoli). The former rivals where once again united and received common instructions by senior Future Movement party officials. A few sandwiches and telephone cards were distributed to rare passers-by, in a desperate attempt to drive them to the voting booths.

By the end of this quiet Sunday, the exceptionally low participation signalled the disinterest of the Tripolitans in this electoral contest. Only 13.65% of eligible voters turned out.[725] As expected, the Future Movement candidate was elected with a comfortable margin, garnering more than 62% of the vote. For Hariri and his fellow oligarchs, the 2019 by-election marked the recovery of the legitimacy of clientelism, and thus ending of a political cycle in which their authority was contested by outer-systemic actors. The clientelist status quo was fully restored, after two years of unexpected change.

At the same time, the poor showing of the Future Movement's sympathisers at the 2018-2019 parliamentary election demonstrates the fragility of this oligarchic clientelist network. Saad Hariri's party was so lacking in material and symbolic means that it had to resort to defensive collective action to protect its eroding dominance over Tripoli. These strategies of power do not represent durable solutions to maintain the credibility of a clearly weakened clientelist network.

The Future Movement's circumvention of any alternative political offer further delegitimised the democratic character of the clientelist regime in Tripoli. The dominance of oligarchic clientelism was electorally defeated in 2016. This grassroots defiance could transpire again through means other than in the ballots. Waning hopes of democratic change convinced the Tripolitans to shift away from their strategy of contestation. Some might join the inflating ranks of thousands of emigrants who had given up on Lebanon's elites and decided to pursue a fairer life abroad. Others would use their voice in the streets of the city in October 2019 to channel their despair against their predatory clientelist leadership, the wealthiest in the country in the poorest city of Lebanon.

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[725] Ibrahim Jouhari, "Analysis of Tripoli's By-Election Results," *128Lebanon*, August 20, 2019, https://128lebanon.wordpress.com/2019/08/20/analysis-of-tripolis-by-election-results/.

Conclusive remarks

This third empirical chapter analysed the governance of the city of Tripoli from 2010 to 2019. It demonstrated that the Sunni Future Movement party, which represents a form of oligarchic clientelism, successfully recovered its power dominance by implementing a strategy of collective defence (E3).

The first section of the chapter outlined the gradual demise of Sunni oligarchic elites under the Syrian migratory shock, culminating in the local elections of 2016. The Future Movement and other Sunni oligarchic parties dominated the second largest city of Lebanon when the Syrian forced displacement began to take place and then directly affected Tripoli. In settling there, the Syrians longed for an anonymous and invisible status in this large city. But this also made them acutely vulnerable to labour exploitation. The Future Movement and other oligarchic elites used their cheap Syrian workforce as a tool to sustain the material viability of their leadership. Consequently, their former Lebanese protégés were abandoned and angered by the breach of their clientelist social contract.

The second section of the chapter described the unprecedented electoral defeat of the Future Movement and its allied oligarchic parties in the 2016 local elections in Tripoli. This electoral outcome was perceived as a rupture in the stable routine of local politics in Lebanon. The chapter described how former supporters of the Future Movement defected to a list formed by political independents. Ousted from local power, the party of Saad Hariri was under threat of definitively losing its legitimacy as the first representative of the Lebanese Sunnis.

The third section of the chapter explained how the Future Movement resorted to a power strategy of collective defence to recover the loyalty of its former protégés (E3). The party lacked both sufficient material leverage and symbolic means to be able to replicate the power strategies observed respectively in Zahle (chapter 5) and in Baalbek (chapter 6). As last resort, the Future Movement rallied rival oligarchic leaders to devise a collective defence of the clientelist regime. This power strategy materialised as a policy of obstruction used by the Future Movement to derail the governance of the independent-led municipality of Tripoli. This policy was designed

to invalidate any alternative political offer challenging the durability of clientelist leadership in Tripoli. Thanks to this disruption of state administrative means and the capture of the municipal council's work, Tripolitan local authorities fell into deadlock. The Future Movement achieved its goal when the Tripolitan population overwhelmingly conveyed its bitter disappointment towards its independent municipal government only two years after its inception.

The fourth section of the chapter described how this independent political offer lost its electoral appeal in Tripoli during the 2018 parliamentary elections. The divided independent lists did not win a single deputy. Conversely, the Future Movement recovered its primacy as recipient of the Tripolitan Sunni vote after losing it in 2016, and gained three Sunni deputies out of five. However, the election was tarnished by fraud allegations and the election of one Future Movement deputy was later invalidated by the Constitutional Council – a rare event in Lebanese politics. It was therefore perceived as an affront made by the Future Movement's main national opponents, Hezbollah, who used this moment as an opportunity to delegitimise the Sunni leadership. When a resulting by-election was organised in April 2019, the Future Movement used a policy, that of a collective defence power strategy (E3) – the formation of an electoral alliance with Sunni rivals. The Future Movement gained the support of its main Sunni opponents to collectively "existentialise" the vote. This proved successful as the Future Movement candidate was elected, though on a very low turnout. The Future Movement could finally claim its unchallenged representation of the Lebanese Sunni community. However, this power strategy came at a heavy cost for Tripolitans, whose paralysed local governance was unable to address imploding social needs. A few months later, Tripolitans would take an active leadership in the street demonstrations (the so-called *thawra*, the revolution) which shook the foundations of the clientelist regime.

The next chapter concludes this thesis. It summarises the main research findings detailed in the empirical chapters, considering the expectations formulated in the theoretical argument chapter (chapter 3). The results are testimony to the strategic design of the clientelist actors' response to defiant loyalties, according to the resources they possess. The substitutive nature of the pillars of dominance explains the endurance of clientelist power in Lebanese municipalities, in spite of a major

economic crisis. I also consider the consequences of clientelist dominance in Lebanon in the aftermaths of the 2019 October revolution and the 4th of August Beirut blasts. I conclude with a reflection on its impact beyond the academic world, especially for the humanitarian field. A greater consideration of informal actors in governance could sharpen aid and developmental support to the most vulnerable localities.

Chapter 8. Thesis Conclusion

In this thesis I analysed and compared the durability of elite domination in the three Lebanese municipalities of Zahle, Baalbek, and Tripoli, from 2010 to 2019, in the midst of the Syrian migration crisis. In particular, I considered how these clientelist actors endeavoured to retain (or recover) local power after facing an unprecedented electoral challenge during the 2016 local elections. In this closing chapter, I review the main research findings presented in the empirical chapters (chapter 5, 6 and 7), each of which focused on a different case-city. I also consider the consequences of clientelist dominance in Lebanon in the aftermath of the 2019 October revolution and the 4th of August Beirut blasts. I then present how this thesis contributes to academic literature, notably in the fields of local politics and more recently emerging research on rebel governance in divided societies. Afterwards, I close this chapter with a consideration of how this thesis provides valuable insights beyond academia, particularly for the humanitarian sector and its management of emergency crises in relation to local actors.

8.1 Research Findings

The research question driving this thesis was: "Why did clientelist elites encounter a disruption of their leadership and then how did they comparatively perpetuate (or recover) their local power, in a context of stark material scarcity?". This research question emerged from observing an empirical oddity. In 2016, while Lebanon was embroiled in a serious migration crisis, incumbent municipal majorities in large Lebanese municipalities faced unprecedented electoral competition from political challengers, such as in Baalbek. Some clientelist elites even lost local power, like in Tripoli and Zahle. Such a breakage of dynastic clientelist rule is a rare occurrence in a regime designed to preserve the customary dominance of clientelist elites in local politics.

Given this research question, I sought to explain how clientelist elites perpetuate their political dominance when they encounter stark material conditions. To answer this question, this thesis led to the collection of original qualitative and quantitative

data in fieldwork. It generated a rich and unique empirical record of local governance practices in three Lebanese municipalities after the Syrian migratory shock, beginning in 2011.

The most important finding extracted from this research is that clientelist elites perpetuate their grip on local power thanks to their ability to resort to material, symbolic and collective power strategies, and to substitute one for another. The resilience of clientelism in Lebanon is therefore grounded in the exceptional agility of patronage in deploying strategies of dominance which can compensate for a sudden loss in material means.

This potential to shift among strategies implies that clientelist elites facing a power contest choose a power strategy designed to maintain the loyalty of their protégés according to the internal resources that they possess. This research found that elite power is founded upon three pillars of domination: materialism, symbolism, and collective action. Accordingly, I formulated three expectations which displayed the set of power strategies theoretically available to clientelist elites facing a power contest (see chapter 3).

- o The first expectation (E1) posited that clientelist elites can attempt to alleviate material pressures on their protégés, to weather harsh socioeconomic conditions.

- o The second expectation (E2) argued that clientelist elites lacking the means to alleviate the material pressures weighing on their clients could instead mobilise communal symbolic schemes to galvanise the support of their members.

- o The third expectation (E3) presumed that clientelist actors lacking both material and symbolic resources could resort to collective defensive actions to reinstate the legitimacy of their leadership against political challengers.

The empirical analysis of the different clientelist elites across chapters 5 to 7 consistently confirmed that each of them opted for the power strategy that

maximised their available and leverageable assets. In other words, Lebanese clientelist elites proved to be rational political actors when subject to adverse material conditions which threatened the reproduction of their power. I insist on the "leverageable" capacity of clientelist actors, because this research illustrated how the endurance of local clientelist elites can depend on the attraction of external sources of support.

Zahle's Protectionism

In Zahle, Lebanese Forces seized local power from decaying traditional elites in May 2016 (see chapter 5). The new municipal government then implemented a comprehensive power strategy of material alleviation (E1) to protect the Zahlawis from socioeconomic pressures induced by Syrian migration. Specifically, the Lebanese Forces enforced restrictive labour and residency laws toward Syrians living in Lebanon, in order to contain job competition affecting Lebanese workers. The city engaged in the eviction of illegal migrant workers to protect the Zahlawis' livelihoods. Then, as mentioned above, the Lebanese Forces endeavoured to attract external sources of funding to compensate for the rising needs being channelled by their supporters. The religious diversity of the Bekaa capital and its network of local faith communities made an unprecedented effort to address the anxieties of both local and displaced communities. This chapter thus emphasised the importance of city-external relations to support the agency possessed by local clientelist elites.

This power strategy of material alleviation was genuinely appreciated by the local populations. In consequence, Lebanese Forces retained their leadership of the Greek Catholic representation of the city in 2018. This electoral outcome confirmed the dominant status of this clientelist network despite the serious socioeconomic transformations endured by the Zahlawis.

Baalbek's Combatant Symbolism

In Baalbek, Hezbollah narrowly maintained its grip on the municipal council of the city in 2016. However, the party faced strong electoral challenge from a list uniting political independents. In response to the defection of former Shia supporters of

Hezbollah, the party adopted after 2016 a power strategy of symbolic substitution, aimed at rhetorically and coercively ensuring the loyalty of its supporters. The party possesses a combatant identity inherited from the Lebanese Civil War which provides it with powerful ideological and memory resources. But at the same time, Hezbollah's "resistance" ideology which assumes the defence of Shia communities in Lebanon was seriously tarnished by the spilling-over of the Syrian conflict into Baalbek's streets. The party thus aimed to restore security at the Syrian border in 2017, to best securitise local communities in Baalbek. In doing so, Hezbollah paved the way for the "existentialisation" of the 2018 electoral campaign. During this campaign, the party leadership and its candidates formulated a radical rhetoric purposefully "othering" the party's political rivals as "traitors" of the resistance. This radicalised rhetoric, breaking away from the democratic norms of party competition, was used to justify targeted intimidation of the party's rivals who had not yet withdrawn from the electoral contest.

This power strategy of symbolic substitution (E2), which materialised into the securitisation of the city, effectively restored order but also instigated fear amongst local communities (including both Shia and Sunni Baalbakis). This fear was an essential component to render credible the "existentialised" threat that Hezbollah invoked during the electoral campaign. In an act of communal defence, the Baalbek-Hermel Shia communities granted Hezbollah a large victory in the 2018 parliamentary elections. The party retained all the Shia seats, demonstrating the strength of its political dominance in Baalbek.

Tripoli's Collective Defence

In Tripoli, the incumbent coalition of oligarchic Sunni parties lost their power in the municipal council in 2016, to a list of political independents who assumed local governance for the very first time. In response to this exceptional breakage of clientelist loyalties, the leading party in the Sunni community, the Future Movement, devised a last resort power strategy of collective defence (E3) of the clientelist regime. The party lacked sufficient material and symbolic means to use the power strategies already observed in the other case-cities. Its agency was therefore quite limited. In essence, the strategy of collective defence aimed to demonstrate the

enduring importance of clientelist elites to former protégés – by tarnishing the political alternative offered by the independents leading the municipality of Tripoli. This power strategy required the collective endeavour of leading clientelist actors in Tripoli to be successful. The Future Movement and its oligarchic rivals united to obstruct the governance of the independent-led municipality, thanks to their control of state administrative means. In parallel, the Sunni oligarchic elites hampered the work of the municipal council to push the independent municipality into a state of political paralysis.

The Future Movement's power strategy of collective defence (E3) successfully changed the Tripolitans' view of their new local authorities. In only two years, the hopes of political change brought by the election of political independents at the municipality of Tripoli were dashed by the collective action of the Sunni oligarchic elites. Thus, the Future Movement and its clientelist rivals won all the deputy seats allocated to Tripoli in 2018. The independents did not win any. However, one Future Movement deputy's election was cancelled by the Constitutional Council. This led the party to implement a policy of electoral alliance with Sunni leaders of Tripoli, to collectively defend Sunni leadership in Lebanon. This event was another example of the collective defence power strategy (E3). As a result, the Future Movement's candidate was easily (re)-elected. This victory signalled the recovery of the party's dominance in Tripoli.

Overall, the three empirical chapters of this thesis demonstrate that each clientelist actor successfully addressed the political and material challenges disrupting its capacity to fulfil its clientelist social contracts. The substitutive character of the power strategies detailed in this research granted clientelist elites the sufficient agency to retain or recover the loyalty of their former protégés. Even a seriously weakened clientelist network, like the Future Movement in Tripoli, managed to thwart the alternative independent political offer which had defeated it in the 2016 ballots. This thesis thus is a demonstration of the exceptional resilience of clientelism.

8.2. Clientelism in Lebanon since 2019

The resilience of Lebanese clientelist networks generated a high social cost for many Lebanese. This thesis demonstrates that social exclusion was a voluntary policy endorsed by clientelist leaders to preserve their dominance in Lebanese society. As a consequence of elites' preferences, many Lebanese endured severe economic hardship. Some originated from the lower middle classes. They had enjoyed comfortable livelihoods before the Syrian migration. Now they were unprepared to fall into the trap of economic precarity. Poverty had not been so high since the civil war.[726] Social discontent targeted at the elites' behaviour emerged from across the country's diverse communities.

The surprisingly low participation in the 2018 parliamentary ballot was certainly a sign of profound disconnect between the population and its elites – only 49.68% of electors cast a ballot, even though the elections had been delayed since 2013.[727] In 2009, 54.08% of Lebanese had participated in the vote.[728] Instead of fostering electoral enthusiasm, the elections renewed the posts of the same leaders; including some who had already been in power before the civil war. Only a single independent deputy passed all the obstacles set by the clientelist regime to reach the chamber.[729] This electoral situation was demoralising for many independent hopefuls. Bringing political change from the ballots would have to wait. The social needs of the population demanded a proportionate governmental answer. After the 2018 elections, political elites were torn from their customary negotiations of power sharing. It took them more than eight months to form a new cabinet, in January 2019 and led by Prime Minister Saad Hariri.[730] All this time was lost to implement emergency policies of social care towards the most vulnerable in the Lebanese society.

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[726] ESCWA, "ESCWA Warns: More than Half of Lebanon's Population Trapped in Poverty," *ESCWA*, August 19, 2020, https://www.unescwa.org/news/lebanon-population-trapped-poverty.

[727] UNDP, "2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections," 6.

[728] L'Orient-le Jour, « Législatives : taux record de participation : 54,08%, » [Parliamentary Elections: Record Turnout: 54,08%] *L'Orient-le Jour*, June 7, 2009, https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/620854/Legislatives_%253A_taux_record_de_participation_%253A_54%252C08.html.

[729] The name of this MP is Paula Yacoubian (Armenian Orthodox confession). She was elected in the Beirut I constituency for the Sabaa party.

[730] BBC, "Lebanon Forms New Government after Long Delay," *BBC News*, February 1, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-47080597.

The complacency of clientelist elites only deepened social angst in society. In this context a spark came from the government's discussion of the enforcement of a new tax via WhatsApp messaging.[731] Discontent erupted into a massive social movement which began on the 17th of October 2019.[732] Protestors from all walks of society, in nearly all the cities of the country, took to the streets of their towns to reject the rule of clientelist elites. Demonstrators chanted a slogan which became a symbol of this mobilisation: *kellon yani kellon* (everyone means everyone).[733] This message clearly denounced Lebanese elites as a caste and neo-liberal cartel, who were readily pushing the rest of society into social decline as to preserve their own dominant status.[734] This movement was commonly called by the protestors as the *thawra*, the revolution (literal translation).

This popular mobilisation was not simply exceptional for the size of its demonstrations, which gathered hundreds of thousands of people in a nation of 4 million. This revolution was also a rebellion of the "losers" of the clientelist regime. The Lebanese youth, the poor, and women are three social categories which are generally most unattractive to clientelism. These neglected groups were the engines of the revolution attempting to change the Lebanese political system for good.[735] In Tripoli, focus groups' data and testimonies confirmed the significant engagement with the protests of the youth, women, disenfranchised Tripolitans and even non-Lebanese communities representing the poorest social strata in the city.[736] Therefore, this social movement was not, for once, driven only by the small bourgeois Christian society of East Beirut, which routinely engages in contestation. It was a revolution of the Lebanese nation, which took clientelist elites by surprise. Protestors in Baalbek chanted slogans against Hassan Nasrallah, the secretary-general of Hezbollah.[737]

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[731] BBC, "Lebanon Protests: How WhatsApp Tax Anger Revealed a Much Deeper Crisis," *BBC News*, November 7, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-50293636.

[732] Rima Majed and Lana Salman, "Lebanon's Thawra," *Middle East Report* 292/293 (2019): 6-9.

[733] Geha, "Politics of a Garbage Crisis," 85.

[734] Assouad, "Lebanon's Political Economy," 10.

[735] Elias Dahrouge, Jihad Nammour, and Ahmed Samy Lotf, "The 17 October 2019 Protests in Lebanon: Perceptions of Lebanese and non-Lebanese Residents of Tripoli and Surroundings," *Global Campus Human Rights Journal* 4 (2020): 512, http://doi.org/20.500.11825/2035.

[736] Dahrouge, Nammour, Lotf, "The 17 October 2019 Protests," 510-1.

[737] Sunniva Rose, "Protests in Hezbollah stronghold continue despite intimidation," *The National News*, November 7, 2019, https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/mena/protests-in-hezbollah-stronghold-continue-despite-intimidation-1.934136.

Others in Tripoli tore placards depicting Sunni oligarchic figures in the city.[738] In this sense, it was an unprecedented mobilisation in Lebanese modern history.

Saad Hariri's resignation from the cabinet at the end of October 2019 did not stop the mobilisation.[739] Protestors demanded serious change, such as the nomination of an ad-interim government of experts and the organisation of new parliamentary elections. None of these demands were met by the aging president of Lebanon. Other clientelist elites were busy transferring their assets into foreign banks. Elites pursued a defensive collective strategy to protect the clientelist regime. They simply, cynically, waited for the economy to collapse, as the fallout would return dissatisfied clients back to clientelist leaders.[740] A set of economic crises ensued. The Lebanese state was in financial default, which induced a stark fall in the Lebanese lira's value.[741] Then, the Covid-19 pandemic's pressure on depleted healthcare facilities put an end to months of demonstrations.[742] The clientelist regime was still holding on.[743] In the meantime, the country's impressively rapid economic decline stunned many Lebanese who did not remember living through such harsh conditions, even during the civil war. Emigration became an imperative for the youth, the educated, and the wealthy.[744] Active members of civil society were leaving the country to join the country's expanding diaspora. The clientelist regime had time in its favour. Soon only the most dependable and loyal clientelist members in Lebanon would remain.

At the point when the Lebanese thought that they had reached unprecedented lows, there came an unexpected event at the heart of Beirut. On the 4th of August 2020, 2750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate stored at the Port of Beirut produced one of the largest explosions in modern history.[745] The blasts devastated Beirut and killed more

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[738] Clothilde Facon, "Tripoli, 'The Bride of The Revolution'," *Orient XXI*, January 8, 2020, https://orientxxi.info/magazine/tripoli-the-bride-of-the-revolution,3543.

[739] BBC, "Lebanon Crisis: PM Hariri Offers Resignation Amid Protests," *BBC News*, October 29, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-50225100.

[740] Assouad, "Lebanon's Political Economy," 10.

[741] AFP, "Lebanon to Default on Debt for First Time Amid Financial Crisis," *The Guardian*, March 7, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/07/lebanon-to-default-on-debt-for-first-time-amid-financial-crisis.

[742] Jim Muir, "Lebanon, The Political Class Saved (provisionally?) by Covid-19," *Orient XXI*, April 22, 2020, https://orientxxi.info/magazine/lebanon-the-political-class-saved-provisionally-by-covid-19,3818.

[743] Rosita di Peri, "A Sectarianised Pandemic: COVID-19 in Lebanon," *Istituto Affari Internazionali Commentaries 20* (2020): 1-6, https://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/iaicom2071.pdf.

[744] Anchal Vohra, "Lebanon Is in Terminal Brain Drain," *Foreign Policy*, August 9, 2021, https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/08/09/lebanon-terminal-brain-drain-migration/.

[745] Samar Al-Hajj, Ali H Mokdad, Amin Kazzi, "Beirut Explosion Aftermath: Lessons and Guidelines," *Emergency Medicine Journal* 38 (2021), doi:10.1136/emermed-2020-210880.

than 200 people. The nation was shocked and sank into despair. The French president proposed a comprehensive initiative to support Lebanon's recovery from all these crises. However, Emmanuel Macron set conditions on the international community's financial support: essential systemic reforms of the economic and political system.[746] Clientelist elites, despite the pressure from public opinion and the French lobby, delayed and finally rejected the French offer. Once again, the clientelist regime stood up to defend its political economy of rent extraction from State coffers. It would not accept reforms which would put an end to their privatised systems of leadership. In parallel, clientelism fully adapted to the new Lebanese reality of complete economic collapse.[747] The economic fall of Lebanon dragged 82% of the population below the poverty line in 2021.[748] Clientelist leaders now only needed very cheap rewards to maintain the loyalty of their clientele. Consequently, clientelism continues to maintain a tight grip on local power.

Recent events in Lebanon confirm the necessity that to best understand the agency possessed by clientelist elites, requires understanding the social constraints weighing on local communities. Grasping this dynamic is especially important for understanding divided societies, where elite governance can lead to the exacerbation of inter-ethnic tensions.

In the next subsection of the chapter, I consider the different contributions that this thesis offers to the academic literature.

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[746] Nicolas Falez, « Crise au Liban: de l'«initiative française» aux sanctions, » [Crisis in Lebanon: From the "French Initiative" to Sanctions] *Radio France Internationale*, August 3, 2021, https://www.rfi.fr/fr/moyen-orient/20210803-crise-au-liban-de-l-initiative-fran%C3%A7aise-aux-sanctions.

[747] Salah Hijazi, « Bassel Salloukh : « Le clientélisme s'est adapté à la situation économique au Liban », » [Bassel Salloukh: 'Clientelism has Adapted to the Economic Situation in Lebanon'] *Le Commerce du Levant*, January 27, 2021, https://www.lecommercedulevant.com/article/30205-bassel-salloukh-le-clientelisme-sest-adapte-a-la-situation-economique-au-liban-.

[748] ESCWA, "Multidimensional poverty in Lebanon (2019-2021) - Painful reality and uncertain prospects," *ESCWA*, September 3, 2021, https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/multidimensional-poverty-lebanon-2019-2021-painful-reality-and-uncertain-prospects.

8.3 Contributions to the Literature and Future Research Avenues

This research presents several contributions to different streams of the academic literature.

First, this thesis contributes to the literature on contemporary clientelism, in several different ways.[749] Clientelist literature assumes that without rights, internally displaced Lebanese citizens and foreigners like Palestinians and Syrians are barred from accessing patronage (see chapter 3).[750] However, this research proves that theoretically excluded individuals, like displaced communities, can exceptionally obtain the protection of a clientelist network by changing the terms of their patron-client exchange. Instead of offering their vote, displaced Syrians provided their affordable, flexible, and exploitable labour capital to benefit from clientelist coverage in Lebanon. The adjustment of the patron-client transaction results from the commodification of Syrian migrant communities, which ensued after the enforcement of the 2015 labour laws. As I explained in chapter 3, ruling clientelist elites decided to transform displaced Syrians into an exploitable resource to dampen the socioeconomic pressures weighing on their protégés in the most affected "host" communities. In consequence, vulnerable Syrians were able to trade their labour with Lebanese patrons, with the intention of marginally improving their precarious livelihoods. The case of displaced families working for Lebanese famers in the Bekaa valley best illustrates this Syrian integration into clientelist networks.[751] In parallel, clientelist elites conceded to new terms of transaction because they endured serious scarcity of material resources in these border regions. Indisputably, strained political patrons in the Bekaa and North governorates welcomed another source of capital, like exploitable labour, to weather the rising needs of their network members. In summary, this thesis proves that one's legal status does not irremediably bar its access to patronage. Moreover, these findings demonstrate that clientelist networks readily reconsider the terms of their patron-client relations when facing

[749] Deets, "Consociationalism, Clientelism, and Local Politics in Beirut"; Gade, "The Reconfiguration of Clientelism"; Geha ""Co-optation, Counter-Narratives, and Repression"; Knudsen, "Competitive Clientelism in Secondary Cities".

[750] Are John Knudsen, "Widening the Protection Gap: The 'Politics of Citizenship' for Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, 1948-2008," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 22 (2009): 64.

[751] Jacob Cassani, "Bread and Salt: Labour, Reputation, and Trust between Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Hashish Farmers in the Northern Biqa'a," *GLD The Program on Governance and Local Development, Working Paper* 43 (2021): 1-33.

socioeconomic pressures threatening the survival of their leadership.[752] Hence, they demonstrate an exceptional adaptivity to adverse conditions.

Second, this research makes another meaningful contribution to clientelist-focused literature. It represents an original attempt to uncover the agency of clientelist actors in local governance. In doing so, this thesis formulated an updated categorisation of contemporary typologies of clientelism. It identifies five main profiles of clientelism: traditional, political, rebel-to-political, religious, and oligarchic clientelisms, which are widely represented in many countries. The review of clientelist practices across the globe, which are embodied by competing networks of patronage in Lebanon, illustrates the generalisability of the findings outlined in this research. Clientelism is far too often analysed under culturally specific prisms, which deter systematic and comparative research designs. However, this thesis defends that all the faces of the clientelist spectrum rest upon similar clientelist social contracts (clientelist elites' provision of human and physical safety to their supporters in exchange for the latter's electoral backing). Such a shared foundation suffices to lay the ground for cross-country comparisons which would analyse and improve our understanding of informal governance in different parts of the world.

Third, this thesis confirms the potential for further sociological and critical research into elite dominance in divided societies. The material, symbolic and collective dominance pillars outlined in this project were inspired by Pierre Bourdieu's disaggregated analysis of elite domination into capitals (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic). However, the literature on clientelist leadership in Lebanon still rarely analyses the accumulation of capital by sectarian elites to explain and predict

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[752] This thesis therefore challenges the research findings from Michael Johnson, see in: *Class and Client in Beirut*. Johnson took the example of internally displaced Lebanese Shias and Palestinian refugees, who settled in Beirut before the start of the civil war, to support the claim that these communities deprived of voting rights could not benefit from a clientelist coverage. Nevertheless, these communities did not destabilise the socioeconomic order of the Lebanese Sunni bourgeoisie which was then leading the informal governance of Beirut. The secluded territoriality and limited demographic weight of the Shias and Palestinians refugees never threatened the foundations of Sunni elites' power. Palestinians lived in separate camps controlled by Palestinian factions. In parallel, Shias concentrated in the Southern suburbs of the city, far away from the Sunni bourgeoisie's territorial strongholds. This context was very different from the situation described in the border regions (in chapters 5, 6 and 7) where migrant communities outnumbered the resident populations and fully reshaped the local economy. The porosity of the displaced and resident communities' livelihoods directly endangered the viability of patronage in these areas. Conversely, the Sunni bourgeoisie in Beirut did not reconsider the terms of patron-client relations because it simply did not need to do so to preserve its political dominance.

the latter's political behaviour. As Mouawad and Baumann observed in 2017, the need for "grand theories" such as neo-Marxist theory on neoliberal practices in state-elites relations and a Foucauldian approach to state-society relations has rarely been so acute as to analyse clientelism in Lebanon.[753] Accordingly, a recent article from Khattab implements a class-based approach to deconstruct the neoliberal political economy which engendered the 17th of October 2019 revolution.[754] This article participates in an emerging critical outlook in literature on contemporary political dynamics in Lebanon.[755] In this thesis, I offer a preliminary contribution to Bourdieu's "theory of society" by demonstrating that elite actors tactically substitute their internal resources (capitals) to legitimise their dominance in a context of crisis. It therefore outlines that the "dominant" are strategic actors skilfully employing their accumulated capital to weather crises of legitimacy. Moreover, this research further reveals that collective action amongst clientelist leaders expresses a social class struggle dynamic where political elites defend, at all costs (social exclusion of the lower middle class), a neoliberal political economy sustaining their domination in the social order. Thus, a Bourdieusian approach of elite domination in Lebanon (and beyond) valuably counters the cultural relativism often attached to clientelist practices and thus sets the ground for further comparative research designs on elite power.

Fourth, this thesis contributes to very recent literature on hybrid forms of institutional governance.[756] It especially relates to research on "institutional ambiguity", a concept developed in Nora Stel's recent works.[757] Stel illustrated how the Lebanese government strategically remained vague on the legal conditions framing the lives of the displaced Syrians in Lebanon, as to satisfy the diverging

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[753] Mouawad and Baumann, "Wayn el Dawla?," 67.
[754] Khattab, "The Genealogy of Social and Political Mobilization."
[755] Hannes Baumann, "The Causes, Nature, and Effect of the Current Crisis of Lebanese Capitalism," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 25 (2019): 61-77, doi:10.1080/13537113.2019.1565178; Dib, "Predator Neoliberalism"; Bassel F. Salloukh, Rabie Barakat, Jinan S. Al-Habbal, Lara W. Khattab, and Shoghig Mikaelian, *The Politics of Sectarianism in Postwar Lebanon* (London: Pluto Press, 2015), doi:10.2307/j.ctt183p3d5.
[756] Sara Fregonese, "Beyond the 'Weak State': Hybrid Sovereignties in Beirut," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 30 (2012): 655-74; Mona Harb, "Urban Governance in Post-War Beirut: Resources, Negotiations, and Contestations in the Elyssar Project," In *Capital Cities: Ethnographies of Urban Governance in the Middle East*, ed. S. Shami (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2001), 111-33; Kristin V. Monroe, *The Insecure City: Space, Power, and Mobility in Beirut* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016). Mouawad and Baumann, "Wayn al-Dawla?: Locating the Lebanese State in Social Theory."
[757] Nassar and Stel, ""Lebanon's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis"; Stel, "Uncertainty, Exhaustion, and Abandonment."

interests of traditional sectarian actors. In this thesis, I dug deeper into the margins of power devolved to municipalities by these purposefully vague laws. As such, Zahle's governance illustrates how municipalities could have a propensity for institutional expansion and appropriation of state duties if the livelihoods of their constituents were threatened. Municipalities are the ones assuming the charge of the state's "democratic" responsiveness when power-sharing national institutions are far too rigid to do so. Zahle therefore contradicts a deterministic Weberian view contending that state weakness concern the whole power hierarchy of a country. Instead, Zahle proceeded with a de facto power capture, replacing a hollow state.

Fifth, this thesis aligns with emergent literature focusing on rebel governance, which notably demonstrates the path-dependent behaviour of "rebel-to-political parties."[758] Former rebel groups seeking to retain representative power after a civil conflict, as exemplified in Central Africa, can diffuse combatant norms which considerably "militarise" the society at the expense of essential freedoms.[759] In this thesis, the case of Hezbollah in Baalbek demonstrates how this former rebel group resurrected governance practices and a radical rhetoric from its war faring past to sustain its dominance. Hezbollah was ready to break democratic norms of party competition to perpetuate its power. This finding illustrates how divided societies transitioning from a civil war are institutionally vulnerable to the deployment of coercive and violent behaviours internalised by former rebel groups turned political parties.

Sixth, this thesis complements literature focusing on the neoliberal roots of contemporary clientelism.[760] Oligarchism has been a dominant variant of clientelism in several regions of the world.[761] However, the impact on local governance of the political economy defended by neoliberals remains an area of scientific exploration. Did neoliberalism reinforce the power of local leaders, or weaken it? The empirical

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[758] John Ishiyama, *From Bullets to Ballots: The Transformation of Rebel Groups into Political Parties* (Oxon: Routledge, 2018); Michael C. Marshall, "Foreign Rebel Sponsorship: A Patron–Client Analysis of Party Viability in Elections Following Negotiated Settlements," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63 (2019): 555-84, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002717744862.

[759] Andrea Purdeková, Filip Reyntjens Filip and Nina Wilén, "Militarisation of Governance after Conflict: Beyond the Rebel-to-Ruler Frame – the Case of Rwanda," *Third World Quarterly* 39 (2018): 158-74; Gervais Rufyikiri, "The Post-wartime Trajectory of CNDD-FDD Party in Burundi: A Facade Transformation of Rebel Movement to Political Party," *Civil Wars* 19 (2017): 220-48.

[760] Assouad, "Lebanon's Political Economy"; Baumann, *Citizen Hariri. Lebanon's Neoliberal Reconstruction*; Dib, "Predator Neoliberalism: Lebanon on the Brink of Disaster."

[761] Edward Aspinall, "A Nation in Fragments. Patronage and Neoliberalism in Contemporary Indonesia," *Critical Asian Studies* 45 (2013): 27-54, doi:10.1080/14672715.2013.758820.

analysis of Tripolitan politics in the context of the Syrian displacement shows that it initially weakened them. The neoliberal power structure fuelled social exclusion to perpetuate the power of oligarchic elites. However, the social violence of neoliberal patronage unexpectedly backlashed onto local elites, and disenfranchised communities managed to topple their domination at one point. In essence, the socioeconomic inequalities that the neoliberal system has generated and exacerbated under stress represent a considerable threat to the durability of oligarchic power.

In the next section of the chapter, I explain how this thesis contributes beyond academia, notably to improving the preparation of emergency responses in divided societies.

8.4 Contributions Beyond Academia

This research also has impacts beyond the academic world. In particular, the research findings in this thesis identified the resources which help clientelist actors manage a major external shock such as a migratory wave or natural disaster. This thesis supports the more precise and tailored preparation of emergency relief responses at the community level.

The evidence presented in this dissertation demonstrates that some local actors of governance are better prepared to weather the consequences of a rise in social needs in their community. In Lebanon, oligarchic clientelist networks are comparatively more vulnerable to material losses than Islamic-communitarian and Militia-to-political forms of clientelisms. These categories of informal actors are present in many other countries, and potentially replicate similar behaviours and weaknesses. Consequently, humanitarian actors should incorporate an assessment of the resilience of informal clientelist elites to best target their developmental support for cities affected by an emergency crisis.

Finally, this thesis advocates for the integration of local aid providers into the programming and governance of humanitarian assistance programs. Many local NGOs, faith-based organisations (FBOs), and civil society movements deployed an

exceptional social care effort in the Lebanese municipalities studied in this research. However, they were overwhelmingly marginalised by international humanitarian aid actors. Local aid providers possess a knowledge of their communities which INGOs lack, and are therefore often ephemeral actors in the country facing a humanitarian crisis. The resentment generated in the Lebanese population by INGOs' exclusively servicing the emergency needs of Syrians at the expense of the social needs expressed by the local communities could have been avoided by integrating local aid actors into the preparation of aid assistance.

Conclusive remarks

In conclusion, this thesis revealed how Lebanese clientelist elites perpetuate their control of local power, despite adverse material conditions. In the context of the Syrian migration crisis, this research compared the three Lebanese municipalities of Zahle, Baalbek and Tripoli, which were confronted by a major shock to their political economy. These border municipalities were controlled by differing forms of clientelism, the reason for their selection. The unprecedented electoral challenges in these three municipalities during the 2016 local elections indicated the disruption of clientelist loyalties towards dominant elites. This thesis comparatively analysed how each clientelist actor determined their power strategy, with the aim of retaining or recovering the faith of former protégés. This research fills a gap in the literature of local politics by showing the internal conditions determining clientelist decision-making. The empirical findings presented here demonstrate that each clientelist actor rationally adopts a power strategy based on the material, symbolic and collective action resources which it possesses. The thesis observed the resilience of clientelist elites in keeping the reins of local power, even in the context of considerable material and political pressures. The findings presented in this research contribute to comparative political literature focusing on the local governance of divided societies. It also opens further research avenues for exploration of the behaviour of other clientelist actors when confronted by a sudden material shock, which can occur in several other countries. We can thus see how clientelist organisations use identity and internal resources to perpetuate their grip on local power.

Appendix A.

2015 Labour laws updated in 2017

UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION

Decision number 1/41
31/1/2017

Related to businesses, occupations and crafts, and jobs that must be limited to Lebanese only

The Minister of Labour
Based on the decree number 3, dated 18/12/2016 (the formation of the Government)
Based on the law issued on 10/07/1962, relevant to the entry to and exit of Lebanon
Based on the decree number 17561, date 18/9/1964 and its amendments, in particular Art 8 and 9
(regulating the work of foreigners)
Based on the requirements of the public interest and the principle of reciprocity
Based on the suggestions of the General Director

The following is decided upon:

Article 1: Decision nb 1/218 dated 19/12/2015 is revoked

Article 2: The right to practice the following business, professions, crafts and jobs shall be confined
solely to Lebanese citizens:

A- For employees:
All types of administrative, banking, insurance and educational businesses and in particular the following business, occupations, jobs and crafts:
Chairperson/president – Dean – Manager - Deputy Manager – Chief of staff – Treasurer – Accountant – Secretary – Clerk – Documentation Officer – Archive officer – Computer – Commercial Representative – Marketing Representative – Supervisor – Storekeeper – Merchant/sales person – Jeweller – Tailor – textile repair and restoration – Electrical installations – Mechanics and Maintenance – Painter – Glasswork/glass installation– Janitor – Guard – Driver – Waiter – Barber – Electronics – Oriental Chef – Technical professions in the field of construction and its derivatives, such as flooring, tiling, plastering, gypsum boards, aluminum, iron, wood and decoration, and equivalent – Teaching elementary, middle and secondary cycles with the exception of teaching foreign languages when necessary – Various engineering works of all specializations – Smithery and upholstery – Nursing - All types of pharmaceutical, medical stores/warehouses and medical laboratory professions – Measuring and land survey – Makeup and beauty centers – Fishing and, in general, all business, jobs, professions and crafts and teaching works for which Lebanese candidates are available.

B- For employers
All types of trade professions – money exchange – Finance and accounting – Mediation – Insurance –All types of engineering professions – Jewellery - Printing, publishing and distribution – Dressmaking and clothing repair – Hairdressing/barber – Ironing, pressing and laundry - car repairs (smithery, painting, mechanics, glazing, upholstery and electricity) – Self-employment/free professions (engineering, medicine, pharmaceutical industry, law, etc.) and other organized professions by law are prohibited for non-Lebanese, as well as any profession or job which proves to compete or harm any Lebanese employers.

Article 3: Taking into account the principle of preference for Lebanese to work on Lebanese territory and equivalent rules:

1. Palestinians born on the Lebanese territory, who are officially registered within the Lebanese Ministry of Interior and Municipalities registry, are not subjected/are exempted to the provisions of Article 2, except with regards to free professions (self-employment) and other organized professions by law legally prohibited for non-Lebanese.

2. Syrian workers are not subjected/are exempted to the provisions of Article 2 for fields/work related to agriculture, environment and construction sectors.

3. The Minister of Labour may exclude some foreigners from the provisions of this Decision if they meet any of the conditions set out in Article 8 of Decree No. 17561, dated on 18/09/1964, as per following:

- Expert or Technical expert whose job may not be filled by a Lebanese as long as this is proven through a statement issued by the National Employment Office, after the person requesting the foreigner presents evidence that he/she failed to find a Lebanese for this position after 3 months of searching.
- Manager or representative of a foreign company registered in Lebanon.
- Residing in Lebanon since birth.
- From Lebanese origin or born to a Lebanese mother.
- The State/country of origin of the foreigner allows Lebanese to exercise the same job or profession that the foreigner is recruited for/request to occupy in Lebanon.

Article 4: The Decision shall be disseminated and notified as required.

To be notified to:
- Presidency of the Council of Ministers
- Council of civil service
- Central inspection
- Administrative office
- Labour force department
- Official gazette
- Announcement boards
- Archive

Minister of Labour,
Mohammad Kabbara

Appendix B.

CASE CITIES' SAMPLES OF ELITE INTERVIEWEES

CASE CITY	INTERVIEWEES' PROFILE				SECT			GENDER		LANGUAGE SPOKEN			TOTAL
	Politicians	Religious Leaders	Civil Society	Experts	Muslim	Christian	Other	Female	Male	Arabic	French	English	
ZAHLE	10	3	12	5	4	25	1	9	21	1	16	13	30
	33.3%	10%	40%	16.7%	13.3%	83.3%	3.4%	30%	70%	3.4%	53.3%	43.3%	28.6%
BAALBEK	12	2	6	1	16	4	-	5	16	4	13	4	21
	57.1%	9.5%	28.6%	4.8%	80%	20%	-	23.8%	76.2%	19%	62%	19%	20%
TRIPOLI	8	1	7	4	17	3		2	18	1	8	11	20
	40%	5%	35%	20%	85%	15%	-	10%	90%	5%	40%	55%	19%
BEIRUT	5	-	8	11	9	13	1	14	10	-	10	14	24
	20.8%	-	33.3%	45.9%	39.1	56.5%	4.4%	58.3%	41.7%	-	41.7%	58.3%	22.9%
REST OF LEBANON	5	1	3	1	-	9	1	4	6	-	5	5	10
	50%	10%	30%	10%	-	90%	10%	40%	60%	-	50%	50%	9.5%
TOTAL	40	7	36	22	46	54	3	34	71	6	52	47	105
	38.1%	6.7%	34.3%	21%	44.7%	52.4%	2.9%	32.4%	67.6%	5.7%	49.5%	44.76%	100%

Appendix C.
Semi-Structured Interview Questionnaire in the Case Cities

Reference: [   ]
<u>**QUESTIONNAIRE**</u>

A. <u>Profile of the interviewee</u>

Agreed used public denomination in the thesis:
Pseudonym:
Gender:
Age:
Citizenship (Lebanese vs. Foreign):
Faith:
Professional occupation:
Spoken language during interview:

Syrian settlement in Baalbek:

- Could you explain how the settlement of the Syrian refugees unfolded in Baalbek and the characteristics of the Syrians who settled here? (Do they live in town, did they work in Baalbek before the war, do they perform low/skilled jobs, do they live with Lebanese relatives)

Local Governance's reaction:

- How would you assess the role played by local governance (Municipal council and Mukhtar) to manage the Syrian crisis? Curfew or collection of information?

- Do local authorities: the Municipal council and Mukhtar, propose dedicated social assistance to Lebanese with low incomes?

Socioeconomic Impact of the Syrian Settlement:

- Since the settlement of Syrian displaced populations in Lebanon, could you broadly describe the social consequences for the Lebanese citizens living in Baalbek?

- How would you rank the evolution of the socioeconomic well-being of Lebanese individuals in your locality since the start of the settlement of Syrians?

1	Significantly worsened	2	Slightly worsened	3	Unchanged	4	Slightly improved	5	Significantly improved

- What do you think of the concurrence for work between Syrians and Lebanese? What is the situation in Baalbek?

- Relations between Syrians and Lebanese: In the area many Syrians work as daily workers in agriculture, is the presence of the refugees a positive point for the local Lebanese employers?

Access to Welfare:

- According to you, in terms of access to public services and welfare, which part of the Lebanese society has most been impacted by this humanitarian crisis?

- Do you think that the pressure exerted by the refugees and the scaling down of the Lebanese socioeconomic status meant that Lebanese citizens have had higher hurdles to access services such as healthcare?

- Which actors are the most active in terms of social welfare in your locality?

Local Politics and the Syrian Refugees:

- How did local political movements react to this presence of Syrians and integrated it in their local politics? Do Syrians participate in local politics (member of parties or mobilisation etc.)

- Do you think that because of the social despair of many Lebanese citizens, the recourse to wasta has increased since the start of the crisis (increased need for an external support – politician, religious, communitarian – to access public good)?

- How did the settlement of Syrian displaced populations in your locality impact your role as a deputy? Increase of wasta from desperate Lebanese in need to access public good?

- Impact on the funding of political parties?

2018 elections:

- Did the questions of the Syrian refugees or the socioeconomic crisis induced by the Syrian presence impact on the 2018 elections? Was it an important subject of debate among Lebanese electors?

- Do you believe that the socioeconomic crisis had an impact on the 2018 election in the sense that vote-buying was enhanced because people are in need for extra-money?

Relations between Lebanese and International NGOs:

- How do you assess the work done so far by NGOs (relations between Lebanese and foreign NGOs)?

Inter-sectarian Relations:

- Many Syrian refugees in the area are of Sunni faith, do you believe that it made it difficult to forge relations of understanding between the two people?

- According to you, did the settlement of Syrian displaced populations in your local community impacted on the quality of peaceful coexistence among Lebanese communities?

- How would you qualify the evolution of the quality of inter-sectarian dialogue among Lebanese confessions since the start of the Syrian settlement in your locality?

1	Significantly worsened	2	Slightly worsened	3	Unchanged	4	Slightly improved	5	Significantly improved

- What is the most important area of intervention to improve or at least maintain a peaceful level of coexistence in your municipality? Which local Institutional reform would you implement?

Appendix D.
Interviews details

The anonymity of my interviewees is guaranteed in line with UCL Data Protection policy.

Project Reference No 11997/001
Enquiries to: data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

There were 105 elite interviewees who participated to this research.
The transcripts of the interviews are available upon request.

	Anonymised name of the interviewee	Position	Date of the interview	Location of the interview
1	*Aimée*	Academic, Université Saint-Joseph	02/03/2018	Beirut
2	*Armen*	Official, Ramgavar party	02/03/2018	Beirut
3	*Ghanem*	Academic, Notre Dame University	05/03/2018	Mount-Lebanon
4	*Reza*	Academic, Lebanese American Uni.	06/03/2018	Beirut
5	*Chaima*	Candidate, Green Party	06/03/2018	Beirut
6	*Caroline*	Officer, Feminist NGO	07/03/2018	Mount-Lebanon
7	*Issa*	Director, Human rights NGO	07/03/2018	Beirut
8	*Zaki*	Official, Lebanese Communist Party	08/03/2018	Beirut
9	*Mansour*	Director, Human Rights NGO	09/03/2018	Beirut
10	*Paula*	Candidate, Ramgavar Party	11/03/2018	Beirut
11	*Eric*	Academic, Ifpo Beyrouth	12/03/2018	Beirut
12	*Esma*	Candidate, Independent	12/03/2018	Beirut
13	*Ihab*	Senior officer, UN agency	13/03/2018	Beirut
14	*Moncef*	Academic, Lebanese-American Uni.	13/03/2018	Beirut
15	*Nour*	Candidate, Independent	13/03/2018	Aley
16	*Sadek*	Political advisor, Independent	13/03/2018	Aley
17	*Yakub*	Officer, Civil rights NGO	14/03/2018	Beirut
18	*Nancy*	Academic, Lebanese-American Uni.	14/03/2018	Beirut
19	*Abdo*	Senior officer, Social welfare NGO	15/03/2018	Hazmieh
20	*Teymour*	Political advisor, Lebanese Forces	15/03/2018	Jounieh
21	*Rafiq*	Academic, American Uni. of Beirut	15/03/2018	Beirut
22	*Soraya*	Municipal councillor (FM)	16/03/2018	Beirut
23	*Vanda*	Academic, Université Saint-Joseph	16/03/2018	Beirut
24	*Sofia*	Officer, Civil rights NGO	19/03/2018	Furn el Chebbak
25	*Mina*	Academic, American Uni. of Beirut	19/03/2018	Beirut
26	*Gretta*	Diplomat, Cooperation agency	21/03/2018	Beirut
27	*Yara*	Officer, Social care NGO	18/04/2018	Taanayel
28	*Jumana*	Former officer, USAID	24/04/2018	Beirut
29	Asaad Zoghaib*	Mayor of Zahle	27/04/2018	Zahle
30	*Clara*	Academic, Université libanaise	27/04/2018	Zahle
31	*Lina*	Civil society activist, Independent	30/04/2018	Beirut
32	*Namer*	Officer, International NGO	03/05/2018	Tripoli
33	*Eliane*	Officer, International NGO	04/05/2018	Zahle
34	*Jan*	Director, International NGO	04/05/2018	Zahle

35	Yusuf**	Elector	06/05/2018	Zahle
36	Arieh**	Elector	06/05/2018	Zahle
37	André**	Elector	06/05/2018	Zahle
38	Jeanne**	Elector	06/05/2018	Zahle
39	Abo	Former officer, USAID	25/05/2018	Zahle
40	Nicolas	Diplomat, Cooperation Agency	28/05/2018	Chtaura
41	Alma	Senior civil servant, Ministry of finance	30/05/2018	Beirut
42	Mouna	Civil servant, Ministry of finance	30/05/2018	Beirut
43	Michel	Director, Social care NGO	08/06/2018	Zahle
44	Melhem Chaoul*	Sociologist, Université Saint-Joseph	08/06/2018	Zahle
45	Nader	Former journalist	09/06/2018	Zahle
46	Mona	Former candidate, Independent	12/06/2018	Jdita
47	Paul	Former deputy, Lebanese Forces	13/06/2018	Zahle
48	Wael	Former candidate, Lebanese Forces	13/06/2018	Chtaura
49	Ibrahim	Politician, Future Movement	14/06/2018	Chtaura
50	Elie	Municipal councillor	15/06/2108	Zahle
51	Faad	Former deputy, Lebanese Forces	18/06/2018	Zahle
52	Rami	Volunteer, Syriac Orthodox Patriarcal-Vicariate	19/06/2018	Zahle
53	Emile	Politician, Lebanese Forces	21/06/2018	Zahle
54	Maria	Social worker, Social care NGO	21/06/2018	Zahle
55	Gabriel	Priest, Maronite Eparchy	22/06/2018	Ksara
56	Gebran	Economist, Chamber of Agriculture, Commerce and Industry (CCAZ)	02/07/2018	Zahle
57	Thérèse	Volunteer, Christian faith-based Organisation	02/07/2018	Zahle
58	René	Politician, Free Patriotic Movement	04/07/2018	Ksara
59	Jad	Former deputy, Pro-Syrian party	13/07/2018	Baalbek
60	Faysal	Officer, Social care NGO	16/07/2018	Baalbek
61	Chantal	Civil society activist	16/07/2018	Baalbek
62	Faraj	Official, Amal	16/07/2018	Baalbek
63	General Hussein Lakkis*	Mayor of Baalbek	17/07/2018	Baalbek
64	Mirna	Civil society activist	17/07/2018	Baalbek
65	Charbel	Former candidate, Independent	17/07/2018	Baalbek
66	Anwar	Politician, Baath party	18/07/2018	Nabi Chit
67	Mounir	Officer, Social care NGO	19/07/2018	Qaa
68	Sandra	Volunteer, Social care NGO	19/07/2018	Qaa
69	Abbas Jawhari	Sheikh, Independent politician	20/07/2018	Baalbek
70	Amer	Officer, Social care NGO	25/07/2018	Baalbek
71	Rev. Elias Raal	Greek Catholic Bishop	25/07/2018	Baalbek
72	Nora	Director, Feminist NGO	26/07/2018	Baalbek
73	Dr. Hamad Hassan*	Former mayor of Baalbek (2010-2016)	26/07/2018	Baalbek
74	Simon	Politician, Lebanese Forces	06/08/2018	Mount-Lebanon
75	Dima	Former candidate, Independent	07/08/2018	Ras Baalbek
76	Père Edouard	Priest	07/08/2018	Ras Baalbek
77	Medi	Mayor of a village	07/08/2018	Ras Baalbek

78	*Hassan*	Official, Hezbollah	08/08/2018	Beirut
79	*Christian*	Municipal councillor	10/08/2018	Baalbek
80	*Annie***	Elector	10/08/2018	Baalbek
81	*Bachar*	Official, Lebanese Communist Party	10/08/2018	Baalbek
82	*Sandra*	Member, Lebanese Communist Party	10/08/2018	Baalbek
83	*Elias*	Official, Syrian Social Nationalist Party	11/08/2018	Zahle
84	Rev. Issam Darwish*	Greek Catholic Archbishop	11/08/2018	Zahle
85	*Aya*	Teacher, Sainte Rita Primary School	11/08/2018	Zahle
86	*Talal*	Political advisor, Ashraf Rifi	13/08/2018	Tripoli
87	*Père Marcus*	Greek Catholic Priest	14/08/2018	Tripoli
88	*Safa*	Political Advisor, Faysal Karami	14/08/2018	Tripoli
89	*Raji*	Academic, Université libanaise	14/08/2018	Tripoli
90	*Kamil*	Member, Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP)	15/08/2018	Tripoli
91	*Najat*	Officer, Feminist NGO	15/08/2018	Tripoli
92	*Edgar*	Former Banker	15/08/2018	Tripoli
93	*Adir*	Business owner	16/08/2018	Tripoli
94	*Jabr*	Municipal councillor, al Azm party	20/08/2018	Tripoli
95	*Bara*	Officer, International NGO	21/08/2018	Tripoli
96	*Najm*	Politician, al Azm party	21/08/2018	Tripoli
97	*Kadir*	Officer, UN agency	21/08/2018	Tripoli
98	*Boutros*	Academic, Université Libano-française	22/08/2018	Tripoli
99	*Daud*	Official, Al Azm party	30/08/2018	Beirut
100	*Baha*	Official, Future Movement	30/08/2018	Tripoli
101	*Sabri*	Social worker, Social care NGO	31/08/2018	Tripoli
102	General Ashraf Rifi*	Independent Sunni leader, former Minister of Justice	01/11/2018	Beirut
103	Ahmad Qamereddine*	Mayor of Tripoli	02/11/2018	Tripoli
104	*Nour****	Politician, Independent	07/04/2019	Aley
105	*Gaby*	Business owner	08/04/2019	Zahle
106	*Hanna*	Senior officer, International NGO	08/04/2019	Zahle
107	*Nasrallah*	Mayor of a village	09/04/2019	Baalbek
108	*Rafiq*	Official, Future Movement	09/04/2019	Baalbek
109	*Walid*	Civil servant, Governorate	10/04/2019	Baalbek
110	*Teymour****	Political advisor, Lebanese Forces	11/04/2019	Beirut
111	*Sanya*	Member, Independent movement	14/04/2019	Tripoli
112	*Wasek*	Official, Future Movement	14/04/2019	Tripoli
113	*Hassan****	Official, Hezbollah	15/04/2019	Beirut
114	*Elie****	Municipal councillor in Zahle	14/08/2021	By phone

Legend:
*   = Full name disclosed in approval with the interviewee.
** = Electors are not categorised as "elite interviews".
*** = Follow-up interview with a participant.

Appendix E.

LEBANESE SURVEY RESPONDENTS'
BACKGROUND DATA

CASE CITY	GENDER		SECT			EDUCATION		WAGE			SYRIAN RELATIVES		TOTAL
	Female	Male	(1)	(2)	(3)	Below Second. Sch.	Above Second Sch.	None	Below Min. Wage	Above Min. Wage	Yes	No	
ZAHLE	9	3	8 Mar.	3 G-C	1 Shia	3	9	1	4	5	2	10	12
	75%	25%	66.6%	25%	8.4%	25%	75%	10%	40%	50%	16.7%	83.3%	10.8%
BAALBEK	28	20	23 Shia	22 Sun.	3 Other	31	17	4	25	14	6	36	48
	58.3%	41.7%	47.9%	45.8%	6.3%	64.6%	35.4%	9.3%	58.1%	32.6%	14.3%	85.7%	43.3%
TRIPOLI	15	19	31 Sun.	1 Alaw.	1 Other	14	20	3	9	17	11	22	34
	44.1%	55.9%	94%	3%	3%	41.2%	58.8%	10.4%	31%	58.6%	33.3%	66.7%	30.6%
REST OF LEBANON	11	6	9 Sun.	5 Shia	2 Ala.	7	10	2	8	7	13	4	17
	64.7%	35.3%	56.25%	31.25%	12.5%	41.2%	58.8%	11.8%	47%	41.2%	76.5%	23.5%	15.3%
TOTAL	63	48	63 Sun.	32 Shia	11 Chri.	55	56	10	46	43	32	72	111
	56.7%	43.3%	59.4%	30.2%	10.4%	49.5%	50.5%	10.1%	46.5%	43.4%	31%%	69%	100%

	GENDER		RANKED REGIONS OF ORIGIN IN SYRIA			EDUCATION		HOME TYPE IN LEBANON			RESIDENCY STATUS		TOTAL
DISPLACED SURVEY RESPONDENTS' BACKGROUND DATA													
DISTRICT	Female	Male	(1)	(2)	(3)	Below Second. Sch.	Above Second. Sch.	ITS	Sub-Standard	Flat - shared	Valid Visa	No Visa	
ZAHLE	24	16	20 Homs	12 Aleppo	4 Damas	36	4	39	-	1	8	31	40
	60%	40%	50%	30%	10%	90%	10%	97.5%	-	2.5%	20.5%	79.5%	40.4%
BAALBEK	20	16	21 Rakka	15 Homs	-	33	3	36	-	-	8	28	36
	55.6%	44.4%	58.3%	41.7%	-	91.7%	8.3%	100%	-	-	22.2%	77.8%	36.4%
TRIPOLI	12	8	8 Homs	4 Aleppo	4 Damas	5	14	-	2	17	7	12	20
	60%	40%	40%	20%	20%	26.3%	73.7%	-	10.5%	89.5%	36.8%	63.2%	20.2%
REST OF LEBANON	1	2	2 Damas	1 Sweyda	-	-	3	-	-	3	2	1	3
	33.3%	66.7%	66.7%	33.3%	-	-	100%	-	-	100%	66.7%	33.3%	3%
TOTAL	57	42	43 Homs	21 Rakka	16 Aleppo	74	24	75	2	21	25	72	99
	57.6%	42.4%	43.4%	21.2%	16.2%	75.5%	24.5%	76.6%	2%	21.4%	25.8%	74.2%	100%

Appendix F.

Lebanese Respondents Survey Questionnaire

Questions:

Please check the most appropriate answer for each of the following questions.

The term "displaced individuals" refers to the Syrian, Syrian-Palestinian or Iraqi populations who have settled in Lebanon since 2011 with the start of the civil war in Syria.

If a question does not correspond to your own situation, that none of the answers are relevant to your case, or if you don't understand the meaning of a question please do answer with the "*Not applicable*" option.

Remember that you are always free to skip any question if you feel uncomfortable with its subject.

a. YOUR PROFILE AND FAMILY

1	*What is your nationality?*
	Lebanese ( ); Iraqi ( ); Syrian ( ); Palestinian of Syria ( ); Palestinian of Lebanon ( ); Other ( )
2	*What is your gender?*
	Female ( ); Male ( )
3	*What is your age?*
	18 to 24 ( ); 25 to 34 ( ); 35 to 44 ( ); 45 to 54 ( ); 55 to 64 ( ); 65 to 74 ( ); 75 years or older ( )
4	*What is your civil status?*
	Single ( ); Married ( ); Divorced ( ); Widow(er) ( )
5	*Do you have children?*
	Yes ( ); No ( )
6	*If yes, how many children do you have?*
	None ( ); 1 ( ); 2 ( ); 3 ( ); 4 ( ); 5 ( ); More than 5 ( )
7	*What is your faith?*
	Alawite ( ); Armenian-Orthodox ( ); Armenian-Catholic ( ); Druze ( ); Evangelical Protestant ( ); Greek-Catholic ( ); Greek-Orthodox ( ); Maronite ( ); Minority ( ); Shia ( ); Sunni ( ); Other ( ); None ( ); Not applicable ( )

b. YOUR HOME AND YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

8	*Where do you live in Lebanon?*
	Governorate: Akkar ( ); Baalbeck-Hermel ( ); Beirut ( ); Bekaa ( ); Mount-Lebanon ( ); Nabatieh ( ); North ( ); South ( ) District:.. Municipality: ....

9	*For how long have you lived in your neighbourhood?*
	Less than 7 years ( ); More than 7 years ( ); Forever ( ); Not applicable ( )
10	*How would you qualify your neighbourhood's diversity in terms of the inhabitants' religious communities?*
	Very diverse ( ); Low diversity ( ); Mainly one religious community ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
11	*In what kind of housing do you live in?*
	House ( ); Apartment ( ); Shared apartment ( ); Place below standards ( ); Homeless ( ); Other:……..
12	*Do you own or rent your housing?*
	- I own my housing ( ); - I rent my housing ( ); - I live with relatives ( ); - Not applicable ( )
13	*If you own a property (house, flat or a piece of land with tents for displaced populations), do you rent it to get some earnings?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( );
	If yes, do you rent it to displaced individuals or to Lebanese citizens?
	I rent my property to: - Displaced individuals from Syria, Iraq or Palestine ( ); - Lebanese citizens ( ); - Foreigners ( ); - I don't know ( ); - Not applicable ( )
14	*How many persons are living in your own housing?*
	Less than 2 ( ); 2 to 5 ( ); 5 to 10 ( ); 10 to 15 ( ); More than 15 persons ( )
15	*Could you estimate in average the number of hours per day you lack electricity supply at your housing?* *Please circle below the most relevant answer.*
	0h 1h 2h 3h 4h 5h 6h 7h 8h 9h 10h 11h 12h 13h 14h 15h 16h 17h 18h 19h 20h 21h 22h 23h 24h
16	*Do you have a generator to palliate electric shortages?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
17	*Could you estimate in average the number of hours per day you lack tap water supply at your housing?* *Please circle below the most relevant answer*
	0h 1h 2h 3h 4h 5h 6h 7h 8h 9h 10h 11h 12h 13h 14h 15h 16h 17h 18h 19h 20h 21h 22h 23h 24h
18	*Do you regularly order drinkable water from a private supplier?*

	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
19	*Do you have access to internet at your housing?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
20	*Is there a regular service of garbage and waste collection organised by the municipality in your neighbourhood?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )

c. YOUR EDUCATION

21	*What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?*
	- No schooling completed ( );
	- Primary school degree ( );
	- Secondary school degree ( );
	- High school degree ( );
	- Professional/Training degree ( );
	- University degree ( );
22	*Did you attend private or public schools?*
	Private schools only ( ); Public schools only ( ); Both private and public schools ( ); Not applicable ( )
23	*Do you think it is better to attend private schools or public schools?*
	- I prefer private education ( );
	- I prefer public education ( );
	- I have no preference ( );
	- Not applicable ( )
24	*If you attended a private school, was it a school managed by your religious community?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
25	*If you have children, do they attend a private or a public school?*
	Private school ( ); Public school ( ); No schooling ( ); Not applicable ( )
26	*If applicable, do your children attend public school because it is too expensive to register in a private school?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )

d. YOUR WORK

27	*In the last four years, have you been fired of your job?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
28	*If applicable, what is the most relevant reason explaining that you lost your employment?*
	Select a maximum of two relevant answers and rank them from (1) to (2), (1) being the most relevant answer and (2) the

	second most relevant answer.
	- The lack of demand/consumption due to the economic crisis ( );
	- My company fell in bankruptcy or had to fire some staff ( );
	- Cheaper concurrence from displaced individuals ( );
	- The increased weight of taxes and the inflation of prices made my job/business unprofitable ( );
	- The closure of the Syrian border destabilised my job/business ( );
	- Not applicable ( )
	Other:..
29	*If you lost your job, have you tried to contact anyone from your social network to try to find a new job?*
	Please check a maximum of three answers.
	I contacted someone from:
	- my family and/or from my friends( );
	- my religious community ( );
	- a political party/or my deputy ( );
	- my Municipal council ( );
	- I didn't contact anyone ( );
	- Not applicable ( )
30	*Today, do you have a professional occupation in Lebanon?*
	Yes ( ); No, I am unemployed ( ); Not applicable ( )
31	*Today if you have a job, what is your employment's status and conditions? (please do check all relevant answers)*
	- Fixed term contract ( ) or Temporary contract ( );
	- Full-time ( ) or Part-time ( );
	- Legal contract ( ) or Unofficial contract (verbal contract) ( );
	- Not applicable ( )
32	*Please write the name of the profession you currently practice below:*
33	*Does any member of your household ever worked for a local or international NGO or a United Nations agency since 2011?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
34	*Does any member of your household works for the public sector (municipality, ministries, electricity provider, public school)?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
35	*If applicable, how did you find your job?*
	You can select several answers if relevant, with a maximum of three responses. Please rank your answers in order of importance with #1 being the most important answer to #3 being the least important answer.

	I found my job thanks to:
	- myself without any external help ( );
	- the help of my relatives (family or friends) ( );
	- the help of a political leader ( );
	- the help of my religious community ( );
	- the help of a UN agency or an international or local NGO ( );
	- the help of my local Lebanese municipality ( );
	- Not applicable ( )
36	*Do you agree with the following statement that "Syrian workers represent a threat to my job"?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
37	*Do you agree with the following statement that "displaced Syrians have the legal right to work in Lebanon"?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
38	*Do you agree with the following statement that "the Lebanese economy needs Syrian workers for jobs that Lebanese do not want to do themselves"?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
39	*How would you assess the evolution of your professional opportunities since 2011?*
	Improved ( ); Slightly improved ( ); Same ( ); Slightly deteriorated ( ); Deteriorated ( ); Not applicable ( )
40	*How would you assess the evolution of professional opportunities for the Lebanese youth in your municipality since 2011?*
	Improved ( ); Slightly improved ( ); Same ( ); Slightly deteriorated ( ); Deteriorated ( ); Not applicable ( )
41	*Do you think that your professional conditions and opportunities will improve in the near future?*
	Improve ( ); Slightly improve ( ); Same ( ); Slightly deteriorate ( ); Deteriorate ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )

e. YOUR INCOME AND SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

42	*How many people work in your household?*
	None ( ); 1 ( ); 2 ( ); 3 ( ); 4 ( ); More than 4 persons ( ); Not applicable ( )
43	*What is your monthly salary range?*
	As an indicator the minimum wage in Lebanon for a full time fixed term contract is set at 675,000 LBP or 450 USD per month.
	No wage ( ); Less than the minimum wage ( ); Minimum wage level ( ); More than the minimum wage ( ); Not applicable ( )
44	*How as your monthly household income evolved since 2011?*
	Improved ( ); Slightly improved ( ); Stagnated ( ); Slightly deteriorated ( ); Deteriorated ( ); Not applicable ( )
45	*Do you think that your level of life has been directly and negatively impacted by the settlement of displaced populations in your municipality?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )

46	*In the last few years, if you have ever faced a delicate socioeconomic situation, have you ever benefited from any kind of support by your family, religious community or political leader?*
	Please check all relevant answers.
	I was supported by:
	- my family and close friends ( );
	- my religious community ( );
	- a Lebanese local association ( );
	- a political party or a political leader ( );
	- my municipality ( );
	- the Ministry of Social affairs or the Ministry of health ( );
	- No one helped me, I only relied on myself ( )
	- Not applicable ( )
47	*Do you receive some financial support from your relatives (family or close friends) living abroad?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
48	*Have you considered to emigrate abroad in the near future?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
49	*If applicable, do you think that for the future of your children it is better for them to live abroad or to stay in Lebanon?*
	- I would prefer my children to move abroad ( );
	- I would prefer my children to stay in Lebanon ( );
	- I don't know ( );
	- Not applicable ( )

f. YOUR ACCESS TO SOCIAL SERVICES AND HEALTHCARE

50	*In the last few years, have you been treated as a patient in a Lebanese hospital?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
51	*If yes, did you go to a hospital managed by your religious community?*
	For instance, if you are Greek-Orthodox did you go to a Greek-Orthodox hospital like St-George hospital in Beirut?
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
52	*If yes, did you receive any help to access this healthcare facility? Check all relevant answers.*
	I received the help from:
	- my religious community ( );
	- a religious charity organisation ( );
	- a political leader or member of a political party ( );

	- a secular Lebanese association ( );
	- an international NGO or a UN agency ( );
	- no one helped me, I simply went to the hospital by myself ( );
	- Not applicable ( )
53	*Do you have a private healthcare insurance?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
54	*Do you think that you have a good access to social services such as healthcare (medicine, hospitals) in Lebanon?*
	Very Good ( ); Good ( ); Fair ( ); Poor ( ); Very bad ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
55	*How would you assess the evolution of your access to social services (healthcare) since the settlement of Syrian displaced populations in your locality from 2011?*
	Improved ( ); Slightly improved ( ); Same ( ); Slightly deteriorated ( ); Deteriorated ( ); Not applicable ( )
56	*Do you think that displaced Syrian patients have a better access than Lebanese to healthcare services?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )

g. YOUR RELATIONS WITH DISPLACED INDIVIDUALS

57	*Do you have close relatives (family or friends) living in Syria?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
58	*Is anyone from your family married to a Syrian (or Palestinian-Syrian) citizen?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
59	*Did displaced individuals settle in your neighbourhood since 2011?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
60	*Do you share your housing with relatives (family, friends or employees) from Syria, Iraq or Palestine?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
61	*Do you live in a neighbourhood mostly populated by local Lebanese communities or by displaced individuals?*
	I live in a neighbourhood:
	- mostly populated by local Lebanese inhabitants ( );
	- mostly populated by displaced individuals ( );
	- where both Lebanese and displaced individuals are mixed ( );
	- Not applicable ( );
62	*How safe do you feel in your neighbourhood?*
	Safe ( ); Relatively safe ( ); Relatively not safe ( ); Not safe ( ); I don't know ( )
	Do you feel safer to live in a neighbourhood predominantly populated by Lebanese citizens or it does not matter?
	- I feel safer living in a predominantly Lebanese neighbourhood ( );

	- I feel safer living in a neighbourhood predominantly populated by displaced individuals ( );
	- The presence of displaced individuals in my neighbourhood does not impact on my safety ( );
	- I don't know ( )
63	*Since you arrived in Lebanon, how would you assess the evolution of your level of safety in Lebanon?*
	Improved ( ); Same ( ); Worse ( ); I don't know ( )
64	*Please check below all the measures taken by your municipality to regulate the settlement of displaced populations:*
	My municipality implemented the following measures: - Implementation of a curfew on the mobility of displaced individuals ( ); - Collection of information on the of displaced individuals ( ); - Restrictions on the opening of shops and businesses by displaced individuals ( ); - Verification of the legality of the rental lease contracts of displaced individuals residing in apartments/houses ( ); - I don't know ( ); - Not applicable ( )
65	*Do you believe that the measures taken by your municipality were efficient to protect local Lebanese communities?*
	Very efficient ( ); Fairly efficient ( ); No effect ( ); Poorly efficient ( ); Inefficient ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
66	*Are you satisfied with the measures taken by your municipality to regulate the settlement of displaced populations?*
	Satisfied ( ); Fairly satisfied ( );
67	*During the 2006 war with Israel did you (or a member of your close family) go to Syria to shelter from bombardments?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
68	*In your daily life, how often do you personally interact (discuss, exchange etc.) with displaced individuals?*
	Every day ( ); Sometimes ( ); Rarely ( ); Never ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
69	*For which purposes do you mostly interact personally with displaced individuals?* *Please select three main reasons and places of interaction and rank them from the most frequent reason to interact (1), to the less frequent one (3). For example: For studies (1); Religious celebrations (2); In Hospital (3)*
	- Familial and friendship relations ( ); - Humanitarian and charitable activities ( ); - In Hospital or with a Doctor ( ); - Religious celebrations ( ); - In shops and restaurants ( ); - For Studies ( ); - At Work ( ); - Not applicable ( )
70	*Did you make friends with displaced individuals?*

	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
71	*Do you personally work in direct contact (boss, colleague, clients) with displaced individuals?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
72	*If applicable, do(es) your child(ren) study in a school where displaced children are also studying?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
	If yes, do(es) your child(ren) studies in a class mixing Lebanese pupils with displaced kids or in separate classrooms?
	Mixed classrooms ( ); Separate classrooms ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
	If applicable, how do you feel about the fact that your child(ren) study in the same school as displaced kids?
	Very satisfied ( ); Satisfied ( ); Indifferent ( ); Unsatisfied ( ); Very unsatisfied ( ); Not applicable ( )

Appendix G.

Displaced Respondents Survey Questionnaire

<u>**Questions:**</u>

Please check the most appropriate answer for each of the following questions.

Remember that you are always free to skip any question if you feel uncomfortable with its subject.

a. Your profile and family

1	*What is your nationality?*
	Lebanese ( ); Iraqi ( ); Syrian ( ); Palestinian of Syria ( ); Palestinian of Lebanon ( )
2	*What is your gender?*
	Female ( ); Male ( )
3	*What is your age?*
	18 to 24 ( ); 25 to 34 ( ); 35 to 44 ( ); 45 to 54 ( ); 55 to 64 ( ); 65 to 74 ( ); 75 years or older ( )
4	*What is your civil status?*
	Single ( ); Married ( ); Divorced ( ); Widow(er) ( )
5	*Do you have children?*
	Yes ( ); No ( )

b. Your life in Syria

The following questions are related to your life in Syria before you moved to Lebanon.

6	*Where did you live in Syria before your move to Lebanon?*
	Governorate: Aleppo ( ); Damascus ( ); Daraa ( ); Deir ez-Zor ( ); Hama ( ); Al-Hasakah ( ); Homs ( ); Idlib ( ); Latakia ( ); Quneitra ( ), Raqqa ( ); Rif Dimashq ( ); As-Suwayda ( ); Tartus ( ); Other ( )
7	*In what kind of housing did you live in?*
	House ( ); Apartment ( ); Collective shelter ( ); Tent in a camp ( ); Place below standards ( ); Homeless ( );
8	*Did you have a professional occupation in Syria?*
	Yes ( ); No ( )
9	*What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed in Syria?*
	- No schooling completed ( ); - Primary school degree ( ); - Secondary school degree ( ); - High school degree ( ); - Professional/Training degree ( ); - University degree ( );

c. Your move to Lebanon

The following questions focus on your migration to Lebanon and your relationship with this country before the start of the civil war in Syria in 2011.

10	*Did you visit Lebanon before the start of the civil war in Syria in 2011?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
11	*a. Did you have relatives (family or friends) living in Lebanon before the start of the civil war in Syria?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
	b. If yes, did you move to Lebanon closer to your relatives after the start of the war in Syria?
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
12	*When did you arrive in Lebanon?*
	2011 ( ); 2012 ( ); 2013 ( ); 2014 ( ); 2015 ( ); 2016 ( ); 2017 ( ); 2018 ( )
13	*Why did you decide to settle in your current neighbourhood in Lebanon?*
	You can select a maximum of three answers. Please rank your answers in order of importance with #1 being the most important answer to #3 being the least important answer.
	- I have relatives living in this area ( );
	- I did work in this area ( );
	- I did study in this area ( );
	- I feel closer to the local Lebanese community because we share the same faith ( );
	- I was forced to settle here by the Lebanese authorities ( );
	- I moved here because there are job opportunities ( );
	- I moved here because it is close to Syria ( );
	Other:..
14	*Are you registered with the UNHCR as a refugee living in Lebanon?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
15	*Do you have a valid legal residency permit/visa to stay in Lebanon from the General Security?*
	Remember that you can always skip a question if you do not feel comfortable with it.
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )

d. Your residence in Lebanon

The following questions are about your housing and your neighbourhood in Lebanon.

16	*Where do you live in Lebanon?*
	Governorate: Akkar ( ); Baalbeck-Hermel ( ); Beirut ( ); Bekaa ( ); Mount-Lebanon ( ); Nabatieh ( ); North ( ); South ( )
	District:..
	Municipality: ....

17	*When you first arrived in Lebanon, did the Lebanese municipality where you intended to settle-in help you find a housing?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
18	a. *In what kind of housing do you live in Lebanon?*
	House ( ); Apartment ( ); Shared apartment ( ); Collective shelter ( ); Tent in a camp ( ); Place below standards ( ); Homeless ( ); Other:……
	b. *Where is your housing located within your Lebanese Municipality of residence?*
	- I live in the urban centre (downtown) of a Lebanese municipality ( ); - I live at the periphery of a Lebanese municipality ( ); - I live in a tent in a refugee camp located on agricultural land outside of a Lebanese municipality ( ); - Not applicable ( );
	c. *Do you live in a neighbourhood mostly populated by local Lebanese communities or by refugees?*
	- I live in a neighbourhood mostly populated by local Lebanese inhabitants ( ); - I live in a neighbourhood mostly populated by refugees ( ); - Not applicable ( );
	d. *Do you live in a housing provided by Lebanese relatives (family, friends or work colleagues)?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
	e. *Do you pay a rent for your housing to a Lebanese landlord?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( );
	f. *If you live in a tent in a refugee camp, is there a Shaouish to represent your interests?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
	g. *If you have a Shaouish in your camp, please check all relevant characteristics below to describe him:*
	My Shaouish is : - a Lebanese national ( ) or a Syrian national ( ) or a Palestinian-Syrian ( ) or Other ( ); - appointed by the refugees living in the camp ( ) or selected by the Lebanese municipality ( )
19	*How many persons live in your housing?*
	Less than 2 ( ); 2 to 5 ( ); 5 to 10 ( ); 10 to 15 ( ); More than 15 persons ( )
20	*For how long have you permanently lived in this neighbourhood?*
	Less than 1 year ( ); From 1 to 3 years ( ); From 3 to 5 years ( ); More than 5 years ( )
21	*Have you ever been expulsed form your housing by the Lebanese authorities (Police, General Security, Army or municipality) or by your Lebanese landlord?* Remember that you can always skip a question if you do not feel comfortable with it.
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )

e. Your professional occupation in Lebanon

The following questions relate to your employment status in Lebanon.

22	*a. Do you have a professional occupation in Lebanon?*
	Yes ( ); No ( );
	b. If yes, what is your employment's status and conditions? (please do check all relevant answers)
	- Fixed term contract ( ) or Temporary contract ( );
	- Full-time ( ) or Part-time ( );
	- Legal contract ( ) or Unofficial contract ( )
	c. Please select (or name) the profession you currently practice in Lebanon from the list below:
	Businessman ( ); Carpenter/Craftsman ( ); Civil servant ( ); Construction worker ( );
	Cleaning worker ( ); Doctor ( ); Farmer/Field worker ( ); Housewife ( ); Lawyer ( );
	Office-employee ( ); Pharmacist ( ); Porter ( ); Technician/Electrician/Plumber ( ); Retired ( );
	Sales-Manager ( ); Self-employed ( ); Shopkeeper ( ); Upper-Manager ( ); NGO employee ( );
	Other:…………………………………………………………………………………………………
23	*Have you ever worked for a local or international NGO or a United Nations agency since you settled in Lebanon?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); Not applicable ( )
24	*If applicable, how did you find your job in Lebanon?*
	You can select several answers if relevant, with a maximum of three responses. Please rank your answers in order of importance with #1 being the most important answer to #3 being the least important answer.
	I found my job thanks to:
	- a Syrian connection living in Lebanon ( );
	- a Lebanese connection living in Lebanon ( );
	- a UN agency or an international or local NGO ( );
	- the local Lebanese municipality ( );
	- the help of my religious community in Lebanon ( );
	- I looked for a job by myself without any external help ( );
	- Not applicable ( )
26	*Do you believe that Lebanon can offer you better professional opportunities than Syria?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( )

f. Your access to services in Lebanon

The following questions emphasise on your access to social services and healthcare in Lebanon.

27	*Do you have access to services (social assistance, education, healthcare etc.) in Lebanon?*

	Always ( ); Most of the time ( ); Sometimes ( ); Never ( ); I don't know ( )
38	a. *Have you ever used healthcare services (dispensary or hospital) in Lebanon?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( )
	b. *If yes, did you use a healthcare facility provided by your religious community in Lebanon?* *For example: If you are Greek-Orthodox, did you go to a Greek-Orthodox hospital in Lebanon?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
	c. *If yes, did you receive any help from your Lebanese religious siblings to access this healthcare facility?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
29	*Since you arrived in Lebanon, have you ever received any help (social assistance) from a Lebanese non-governmental organisation?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( )
30	*Could you assess how you are treated when you access services in Lebanon?*
	Same as Lebanese ( ); Same as foreigners ( ); Worse than others ( ); No access to services ( ); I don't know ( )

g. Your relations with local communities

The following questions emphasise on your daily relations with Lebanese citizens.

31	a. *Do you feel welcome in Lebanon?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ).
	b. *Do you believe that your relations with Lebanese citizens have improved since your arrival in Lebanon?*
	Relations improved ( ); Same relations ( ); Relations deteriorated ( ); I don't know ( )
32	*Do you personally work in direct relation (boss, colleagues, clients etc.) with Lebanese individuals?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( ); Not applicable ( )
33	a. *In your daily life, how often do you personally interact (discuss, exchange etc.) with Lebanese individuals?*
	Every day ( ); Often ( ); Sometimes ( ); Rarely ( ); Never ( ); I don't know ( )
	b. *For which purposes do you mostly interact personally with Lebanese individuals?* *You can select a maximum of three answers. Please rank your answers in order of importance with #1 being the most important answer to #3 being the least important answer.*
	- Familial and friendship relations ( ); - Humanitarian and Benevolence activities ( ); - Market and shopping ( ); - Religious celebrations ( ); - Sport ( ); - Studies ( );

	- Work ( );
	c. *Did you make friends in Lebanon?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( )
	d. *How would you assess your relations with your Lebanese neighbours?*
	Very good ( ); Normal ( ); Good ( ); Bad ( ); Very bad ( ); No relations ( ); I don't know ( )
34	*Have you ever encountered religious tensions or misunderstandings with your Lebanese neighbours?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( )

h. Your safety in Lebanon

The following questions are meant to assess your perception of safety in Lebanon.

35	a. *How safe do you feel in your neighbourhood in Lebanon?*
	Safe ( ); Relatively safe ( ); Relatively not safe ( ); Not safe ( ); I don't know ( )
	b. *Do you feel safer to live in a neighbourhood predominantly populated by refugees rather than in a Lebanese community?*
	- I feel safer living in a predominantly Lebanese neighbourhood ( );
	- I feel safer living in a neighbourhood inhabited by other refugees ( );
	- The nationality of my neighbours do not impact on my safety ( );
	- I don't know ( )
36	*Have you had any bad experience being assaulted in Lebanon?*
37	*In the Lebanese municipality where you reside, or in your camp, did the Lebanese authorities ever impose a curfew on your mobility?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( )
38	*Did the Lebanese municipality where you reside ever collect information on you?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( )
39	*What worries you most during your stay in Lebanon?*
	For example: You might fear to be alienated by the Lebanese society or you might worry to lack access to professional

	training.
	You can select a maximum of three answers. Please rank your answers in order of importance with #1 being the most important answer to #3 being the least important answer.
	- Access to Education/Professional training ( );
	- Access to healthcare ( );
	- Alienation ( );
	- Economy and your job ( );
	- Housing ( );
	- Legal papers (residency and working permits) ( );
	- Providing food to your family ( );
	- Security ( );
40	*Do you believe that having legal papers to reside and work in Lebanon can improve your safety?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( )
41	*Since you arrived in Lebanon, how would you assess the evolution of your level of safety in Lebanon?*
	Improved ( ); Same ( ); Worse ( ); I don't know ( )

i. Your children's education

The following section relates to children you might have. You can of course skip this part if you do not feel comfortable answering it or if it is not applicable to your situation.

42	*If your children go to school in Lebanon, are they studying with Lebanese children?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( )
43	*Do they follow the Lebanese educational program?*
	Yes ( ); No ( ); I don't know ( )
44	*Do you prefer that your children study the Lebanese educational program or the Syrian educational program?*
	- I prefer that my children study the Lebanese educational program ( );
	- I prefer that my children study the Syrian educational program ( );
	- I have no preference ( );
	- I don't know ( )
45	*If your children are going to school with Lebanese children, are you satisfied by this situation?*
	Satisfied ( ); Fairly satisfied ( ); Indifferent ( ); Poorly satisfied ( ); Dissatisfied ( ); I don't know ( )

Appendix H.

Data Analysis Coding Scheme

Type of Power Strategies	Policy	Elite Domination		Example
		Endurance	**Vulnerability**	
Material Alleviation (E1) Urban Migration Management	Selectivity of Migrants	✓		"Zahle exclusively received Syrian-Christians in the municipality."
	Non-Selectivity of Migrants		✓	"The municipality did nothing to organise, to make statistics, to register where [Syrians] live, how many they are, where they work."
	Suburban settlement of the migrants	✓		"In some regions like here in Zahle the [Syrians] were hosted in refugee camps. »
	Urban settlement settlement of the migrants		✓	"In Baalbek there aren't any refugee camps, the [displaced] peoples live with the inhabitants."
	Strict enforcement of the law	✓		"I took the Lebanese law and applied the Lebanese law, very simple! You know. No Syrians are allowed to work in the area. No Syrians are allowed to open any shops."
	Non-implementation of the law		✓	"No, it is not our job [to police Syrians]. It is the job of the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of the economy."
	Close monitoring of the migrants	✓		"We have statistics on the municipality. [Displaced Syrians] have to register at the municipality and we give them cards in return."
	Laissez-faire of the migration presence		✓	"To be honest with you, the municipality did not produce any database on Syrians living in Tripoli."
Material Alleviation (E1) Attraction of Compensative Resources	Capacity to exploit Syrian "resource(s)"	✓		"Some people benefited. People who had flats and houses and shops which were empty for years in areas that were not economically attractive they benefited from the [Syrian] rent."
	Limited capacity to exploit Syrian "resource(s)"		✓	"The ones who benefited from the crisis are too few to say that it is a new societal cleavage. It is a crisis which unanimously affects the Lebanese people."
	Appropriation of humanitarian jobs & resources	✓		"Imagine now that more than 50% of my friends are working now with INGOs. Even if they are studying business or I don't know... I am chemist!"
	Limited influence on humanitarian		✓	"For me there is one more point unfortunately, where Hezbollah is, where Shias are, for [INGOS] there is no

	jobs & resources			"problem if there is a problem between refugees and people."
	External sources of support	✓		"When USAID came and they wanted to spend about 4.5 million dollars. So I told them ok I want to make this bigger so that I can receive the garbage of nearby municipalities. They accepted."
	Lack of External Sources of support		✓	"The security tensions which rose after the settlement of the Syrians in Tripoli deterred foreign investments in a municipality whose economy rests on trade..."
Substitutive Symbolism (E2)	Transmission of ideology	✓		"Hezbollah organises regular summer camps with its scout movement to teach the Shia youth the spirit of the Islamic Resistance."
	Lack of ideological conveyance		✓	"This party has not structured and organised any form of inter-generational educational training."
	Intimate bonds with clientelist leader	✓		"Familial pictures of the leader are ornamenting the kitchen of the interviewee."
	Loose bonds with clientelist leader		✓	"The leader is not regularly present in the city nor does he organises scheduled open discussions with his core supporters."
	Structured ideological program	✓		"The Lebanese Forces designed an electoral program transcribing liberal economic policies."
	Vague formulation of an ideological program		✓	"In the Future Movement we have slogans but we do not have any political philosophy."
	Formulation of a combatant rhetoric in campaign	✓		"If we didn't have this resistance in Lebanon, we couldn't be here. And the Lebanese army. Three factors. The Lebanese army, the Islamic resistance and the Syrian army."
	Political rhetoric missing a combatant imagery		✓	"Words in reference to political 'moderation', 'union' and inter-faith 'dialogue' characterise the rhetoric of the leader."
Collective Defence (E3)	Re-Unification of the intra-sectarian leaderships	✓		"Ashraf Rifi pacifies his relations with al Mustaqbal's party leadership and supports the movement's candidate for the Tripolitan by-election."
	Divided intra-sectarian leadership		✓	"The Sunni za'ims of Tripoli missed an opportunity to reach a consensus on the parliamentary lists."
	United coalition of traditional	✓		"The leaders of the main political parties in Tripoli agreed to support the

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	bloc leaders			candidacy of Dima Jamali."
	Lack of unity amongst traditional leaders		✓	"The city's political scene remains deeply divided despite the rising competition from independent movements."
	Administrative obstruction of outer-systemic challengers	✓		
	Lack of a systemic obstruction of outer-systemic challengers		✓	
	Targeted smearing and division of outer-systemic challengers by traditional bloc leaders	✓		"The ministry of interior [which is controlled by a Future Movement politician] used a Syrian technique to instigate fear amongst our candidates and potential voters."
	Lack of smearing and division attempts at outer-systemic challengers by traditional bloc leaders		✓	"The campaign focused on different developmental agendas for the municipality of Tripoli. The parliamentary candidates confronted each other on their vision of the industrial and trading perspectives for the second port-city of Lebanon."

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Appendix I.

Circular of the Bekaa Governor, Antoine Sleiman, enacted in 2016

الجمهورية اللبنانية
وزارة الداخلية وَالبلديات
مُحافظة البقاع

تعميم رقم ٤٥ / ١ / ٢٠١٦

حيث ان ظاهرة نزوح اللاجئين السوريين تتفاقم بشكل مضطرد،

وتأكيدا'' للتعميم رقم ٢٠١٤/١/٢١ تاريخ ٢٠١٤/٥/١٢ المبلغ أصولا''

وحيث ان البلديات واتحادات البلديات تلجأ الى تسهيل اقامة مخيمات للنازحين السوريين

بالتنسيق مع بعض المنظمات المحلية او المنظمات الحكومية التي تتعامل مع جهات مختلفة

داخل لبنان وخارجه، ولما كان مجلس الوزراء لم يقر حتى الأن اقامة مخيمات للاجئين

السوريين،

لـذلك

يطلب الى جميع البلديات واتحادات البلديات عدم السماح بإقامة ونقل مخيمات للاجئين

السوريين ضمن نطاقها ، وابلاغنا عن اي مشروع بإنشاء مخيم او اي طلب يقدم بهذا

الخصوص وبالتالي عدم الترخيص بإقامة اي خيمة او تجمع خيم جديد%

محافظ البقاع
القاضي انطوان سليمان

يبلغ الى:
- قائمقامي البقاع الغربي وراشيا
- بلديات قضاء زحلة واتحاداتها
- المحفوظات

٢١ تموز ٢٠١٦

٢١ تموز ٢٠١٦

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