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Debating 'Religious Violence' in Lebanon

A Comparative Perspective on the Mobilisation of Religious and Secular Militias
during the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990)

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THESIS ABSTRACT

In a world where collective violence seems increasingly mapped in relation to religions and religious actors rather than secular forces, to understand the potential of religion in promoting conflict has become a formidable and important goal. On the one hand, there are those that argue that 'religious violence' is not really religious and at most a perversion of religious teachings. On the other side of the spectrum, an increasing number of commentaries conclude with urgent warnings against religion's propensity for violence. Rather than taking sides in a debate characterised by sweeping generalisations, this dissertation aims to unravel how, when and at what levels religion can play a role in the social and political mobilisation towards violence, while comparing these mechanisms to non-religious equivalents. A Social Movement Theory (SMT) framework is adopted to analyse the mobilisation processes in four diversely oriented militia movements active in the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990): the Kataeb, the Amal movement, the Progressive Socialist Party and the Lebanese Communist Party. The thesis makes empirical and theoretical contributions on three analytical levels. At the macro-level, the thesis demonstrates how religion co-determined the character of the socio-political context, economic relations, foreign influence, and security issues, against which militia movements emerged as competing forces. The adaptation of critical realism aids in conceptualising the interdependence between these different factors as well as between the analytical levels. At the meso-level it shows how the cooperation and incorporation of religious resources involved significant re-imaginations of prevailing hierarchies and structures – an observation that should change the manner in which we theorise about religion as a resource for mobilisation. Analysing the speech of militia leaders, using the psychometric of integrative complexity, the thesis further demonstrates that no significant differences exist between the relative complexity of religious and non-religious idea structures. IC's focus on cognitive structures adds an innovative edge to SMT. At the micro-level, augmenting SMT by incorporating insights from the field of social psychology, the thesis evidences how religion played a role in social identification and a mediating role in existential anxiety. Simultaneously, the dissertation cautions that the role of religion is in most instances similar to the role of non-religious counterparts. The research thereby complicates generalising theories on 'religious violence', presenting the social mobilisation towards violence as contingent on a complex mix of religious and non-religious ideas, societal structures, available resources, leadership attitudes, social identifications and personal affections.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AUB	American University of Beirut
BBC SWB	BBC Summary of World Broadcasts
CR	Critical Realism
FBIS	Foreign Broadcast Information Service
IC	Integrative Complexity
IDF	Israeli Defense Forces
LCP	Lebanese Communist Party
LF	Lebanese Forces
LNM	Lebanese National Movement
MNF	Multinational Force
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
POS	Political Opportunity Structure
PSP	Progressive Socialist Party
RM	Resource Mobilisation
SMT	Social Movement Theory
TMT	Terror Management Theory
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES) transliteration guide has been utilised with a few exceptions. Where particular forms of transliteration have gained common usage in English, such as Quran, these spellings were adopted. Also cases where scholars or interviewees used a particular spelling of their name that did not conform to the IJMES system, their preferred choices were maintained. In order to appeal to both specialist and non-specialist readers, Arabic transliterations have been used sparingly.

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To my parents,

For allowing me to find strength in wonder

INTRODUCTION

"Within the histories of religious traditions – from biblical wars to crusading ventures and great acts of martyrdom – violence has lurked as a shadowy presence. It has colored religion's darker, more mysterious symbols. Images of death have never been far from the heart of religion's power to stir the imagination. One of the haunting questions asked by some of the great scholars of religion – including Émile Durkheim, Marcel Mauss, and Sigmund Freud – is why this is the case. Why does religion seem to need violence, and violence religion, and why is a divine mandate for destruction accepted with such certainty by some believers?"

- (Juergensmeyer 2003, 6–7)

1. Debating 'Religious Violence'

In a world where collective violence seems increasingly mapped in relation to religions and religious actors rather than secular ideas and secular actors, to understand the potential of religion in

promoting the mobilisation towards violence has become a formidable and important goal. In the words of the late Christopher Hitchens (2009), "religion poisons everything". Part of the mobilising power of religion, Hitchens argues, lies in its absolutist nature, in which believers claim to possess the grand interpretive scheme that allows them to decipher and judge all of social life. Religious authority is paramount to the extent that "those who decline to recognise it have forfeited their right to exist" (Hitchens 2009, 31). The enactment of deadly violence is the most dramatic expression of this denial of another person's right. Setting aside Hitchens famously provocative claims, the idea that religion has a stronger implicit tendency to inspire violence compared to secular counter-parts is sustained by a growing group of influential academics and popular commentators (Hick 1987; Laqueur 1999; Marvin and Ingle 1999; McCutcheon 2000; Cook 2003; Stern 2004; Sageman 2004). Critic William T. Cavanaugh (2009, 6) identifies three interrelated sub-arguments to this perspective, in which religion is believed to be more irrational (Parekh 1999, 72; Selengut 2008, 228; Toft 2007, 101), more socially divisive (Juergensmeyer 2003, 145–63; Hoffman 1995, 273; Ranstorp 1996, 51), and more destructive (Toft 2007, 98; Hoffman 2006, 86–88; Juergensmeyer 2003, 4).

On the other side of the spectrum, there is the view that 'religious violence'[1] is not really religious at all. In *Not in God's Name: Confronting Religious Violence*, Jonathan Sacks (2015) argues that 'religious violence' is symptomatic of something else, and at most a perversion of religious teachings. Comparably, in her best-selling book *Fields of Blood: Religion and the History of Violence*, Karen Armstrong (2014) maintains that when religious ideas seem to produce violence, in reality religious language is used to justify social confrontation in order to realise the real objective that is power acquisition. In a similar vein, Manni Crone (2016, 487–88) has claimed that the religious radicalisation towards violent mobilisation is not so much an individual process driven by religious ideology, "but […] a process of politicisation" that legitimises the use of violence.

Whereas the first set of arguments tends to contain essentialist undertones in which religion is depicted as inherently and necessarily violent, the latter set of perspectives takes a largely instrumentalist outlook in which religion is regarded as a malleable, manipulatable and mobilising device. Neither side of the spectrum seems able to capture the complexity of the 'religious violence' debate (Petito and Hatzopoulos 2003, 7); at most, it demonstrates the multi-generational ambivalence in which religion can present itself (Appleby 1999). Admittedly, there are voices that reflect more thoroughly on the relationship between religion and violence (e.g. Cavanaugh 2009; Gunning 2011; Sheikh 2016; Meral 2018). However, it remains difficult to do justice to the breadth

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[1] The phrase 'religious violence' will be bracketed throughout this thesis as a reminder that it does not refer to an objective reality but to a debate that has unfolded around a disputed causal relation.

of the topic, which would require the consideration of a wide range of religious formations across time and space, and their alignment with other social movements and socio-economic and political processes. Even if one was able to appreciate these wide-ranging confiding factors, it is questionable if universally valid claims could be deduced, holding true across geographical regions and historical times. The contribution this dissertation aims to make is therefore more humble. Following Scott M. Thomas's (2005) call for contextualisation and relationality, this thesis will investigate the study of 'religious violence' in a localised and contextualised setting, relating its expression to wider debates and dynamic forces.

Through the comparative study of four different secular and religious militia movements, all active during the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990), the dissertation aims to complicate generalising theories on 'religious violence', presenting the mobilisation towards violence as contingent on a complex mix of societal structures, available resources, leadership attitudes, social identifications and personal affections. Rather than asking if religion matters, this dissertation's main research question is concerned with how, when and at what levels religion can play a role in the mobilisation towards violence. More specifically, it will ask: *What role does religion play in the mobilisation towards violence and to what extent does its role differ from equivalent non-religious dynamics?* A like-for-like comparison is pursued to distil the deliberated uniqueness of religion in violent mobilisation processes. How, when and at what levels religion matters are important substantive and methodological questions, as they inform more specifically about the relationship between religion and violence within a given context.

Central in this discussion is how religion can be defined, how it can be methodologically assessed and whether there is validity in dividing it from secular categories. Although these definitional issues will be considered in more detail below (see page 39), in an effort to situate the main themes of the debate a synopsis is provided here. For operational purposes, this dissertation will adopt a substantive definition of religion with functionalist extensions. Religion is therein understood as a "complex of practices based on the premise of the existence of superhuman powers" (Gifford 2019, 3), in which particular attention is paid to how religion relates to militia movement organisation, community, identity and emotion. The combination of approaches is aimed at creating an operational conceptualisation that allows for the analytical distinction between the religious and the secular as well as their comparison, relating their impact to equivalent social and organisational behaviours at different levels of analysis. It treats religion as substantial and sui generis without becoming singular or reductionist.

The secular, in this perspective, is understood as the this-worldly (e.g. social, political, economic and geographical considerations and practices), whose basic operating principles are not

justified by religious conviction (Aminzade and Perry 2001, 156). The arguably artificial distinction between the two realms (for a critique see Asad 1993, 27–18; 2003, 22) is pursued because, at a minimum, the religious and the secular appear to be meaningful categories in everyday language, which popular boundary formations carry cognitive and political implications. I therefore choose to engage with these labels, taking common understanding seriously without taking it at face value. In an effort to avoid excessive dichotomisation between the religious and the secular I will try to refer to the non-religious (e.g. the absence of religious) rather than the secular (which term typically carries 'Western' presumptions about the desirable distinction between state and church (Asad 2003, 23-25, 191)) where I can.

Within the context of Lebanon, which geographical region constitutes the empirical focus of this thesis, it is also important to distinguish between the religious and the sectarian. A sect delineates a group of people who belong to a particular religion. Since the proclamation of the Lebanese Republic in 1926 and the formulation of the National Pact in 1943, the sect functions as a form of societal organisation, determining aspects of social (e.g. sectarian family law) as well as political (e.g. sectarian representation in government) life (Ofeish 1999, 100). These arrangements facilitated for political order and inclusivity but also resulted in social division and resentment. The Christian communities, who at the start of the 1920s constituted a majority in Lebanon, were given a large piece of the political pie with the presidential position reserved for a Maronite Christian. In the years leading up to the civil war, however, the percentage of Christians in Lebanon was declining in relative terms, causing their privileged position to be challenged by other sectarian groups.

In the 1960s and 1970s, for example, the smaller but growing Shiite sectarian community in Lebanon underwent a rapid process of politicisation, mirroring larger regional trends and making the sect acutely aware of their disadvantaged position in the political and economic system (Mishal and Goldberg 2015, 114). Meanwhile, elements within the Druze sect felt that a non-sectarian state would bring their small numbers more social and political opportunity (Rabah 2016, 124). As a consequence, certain sectarian communities and political currents started to push for social and political reforms, demanding a restructuring of the resources of power. The Lebanese Maronite community felt threatened by these demands, a sentiment that was paralleled with the perceived defence of Christian culture and faith in the wider Middle East (Henley 2008, 354–55).

Lebanon's history with formal sectarian representation make it a valuable prism through which to study the impact of religion on social identification, organisation and mobilisation. Although sectarian labels are political and do not necessitate social identification, the presence of sectarian labels often involve processes of reification (Weiss 2010, 9; Hashemi and Postel 2017, 4–

5). The concept of sectarianization helps in explaining these mechanisms and can be defined as "a process shaped by political actors operating in specific contexts, pursuing goals that involve popular mobilization around particular (religious) identity markers" (Hashemi and Postel 2017, 4). This perspective underlines the interconnectedness of religion and politics. In the public mind, Max Weiss (2010, 7) argues, the terms sect and sectarianization (just like the category of religion) are frequently linked to perceptions of rigid in-group identification and increased likelihood of violence.

This dissertation is not a defence of religion against the charge of violence. What I challenge, however, are the sweeping generalisations and simplifications that follow from arguments that present religion as a static category or a tool that necessarily leads to violence. I firmly believe religion can be an important source of peacebuilding and peacekeeping, even though the weight of this dissertation will be on religion's role in violent mobilisation. I choose to focus on the latter dynamic because I think there is ground to be gained with evolving the 'religious violence' debate with more nuanced theoretical perspectives and empirical insights. The perspective that allows for a more dynamic and focussed take on the actual role of religion in the mobilisation towards violence is better known as constructivism.

Constructivists take insight from both primordialist and instrumentalist perspectives, yet do so from a different angle. Primordialists and constructivists maintain that religion can be a sharpener of personal and social identity, while divergent religious identities can cause friction. The difference between the two schools lies in that primordialists perceive of identity as fixed, making it immutable for negotiation and compromise and therefore a source of conflict in inter-group settings; constructivists conceive of identity as malleable and contextualised, thereby complicating the relationship with conflict (Thomas 2005, 84). Constructivists see personal and collective identity as projects under continuous construction, as *becoming* rather than *being* (Adler 2002, 113).

While instrumentalists and constructivists agree on the existence of material drives and calculated motives, the latter embed power and interest in cognitive structures that give meaning to instrumental rationalisations (Wendt 1994, 389). While instrumentalists regard the religious legitimisation of violence as a largely rhetorical and elitist self-serving process, constructivists perceive it as dependent on social practise and discourse (Stein 2011, 25). The instrumental and rhetorical powers of political and religious elites are thereby socially constrained. Possible escalations of violence are explained as being dependent on the interpretations of religion by leaders within a given context and the specific identity that adherents derive therefrom, none of which are static or given (Hasenclever and Rittberger 2003, 642). In this way, the properties of

religion emerge through relational interactions, connecting both rational evaluations as well as emotive and personal interpretations (Hasenclever and Rittberger 2003, 649).

One academic discipline that has engaged with the study of religion and violence on a constructivist level is the field of Social Movement Theory (SMT). Because social movement 'theory' contains of a number of complementing theoretical tools, it offers an array of analytical options, ranging from macro-considerations to meso- and micro-level analyses. The richness of SMT and the relational dynamics between the different strands of thought (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 9–13) make it suitable for a comprehensive assessment of the role of religion in the social mobilisation towards violence, providing systematic means of analysis at multiple structural as well as agentic levels. Lastly, SMT was selected as a befitting theoretical perspective because it provides suitable grounds from which to compare and contrast both religious as well as secular movements, resources, organisations, motivations and emotions. In the next section these contributions will be deliberated, first from the SMT sub-field interested in religion and then from the sub-discipline that studies violence. In the third section of this introduction, the Lebanese militia movements will be introduced, which together guide empirical focus. Finally, the structure of the thesis will be detailed.

2. Theoretical Approach

2.1. Social Movement Theory and Religion

SMT is an umbrella term for a host of different sub-theories, making it neither homogenous in essence nor a theory in the strictest sense of the word. Instead, SMT contains a broad set of eclectic analytical frameworks that explore social movement dynamics. Social movements are usually defined as networks of individuals and organisations, with common identities and conflictual aims, that use unconventional means to pursue goals of social change or political recognition (Della Porta and Diani 2005, chapter 1). The 'social' in social movements can be misleading, as social movement theorist typically do not make sharp distinctions between the social and the political (Goldstone 2003, 2). With this observation in mind, research evaluates 'social' movements within the realm of politics, as movements take shape over time, emerging through a string of scattered social events and political structures. When times are tense, they have the potential to unsettle the norms and rules that had been established in times of tranquillity (Della Porta 2016, 2).

For decades, social movement scholars have examined the role of religion in social behaviour and mobilisation (for an overview see Hannigan 1991). The academic journey has been turbulent; one major obstacle being that the general relationship between ideology/belief/religion and behaviour is equivocal at best. McAdam (1986), in his study on civil rights activism in the US

in the 1960s, found that prospective members' commitments to the values of equality and freedom were a poor predictor of actual participation. Swidler (1986) showed that activists who mobilise most willingly and intensely are not necessarily those with the strongest set of beliefs and values, but those whose understanding and belief of the situation stipulates a clear rationale for action. Simply focussing on the content of beliefs, it seems, is inadequate to explain behaviour and mobilisation.

Within the dominant paradigms of SMT, authors have focussed on the macro-structural opportunities and constraints that guide collective interpretation and action (Garner 1997, 5). The *political opportunity structure* (POS) perspective emerged out of this rational groundwork (e.g. Tilly 1978; McAdam 1986; Mcadam and Tarrow 2010). POS aims to predict variance in the periodicity, style and content of social mobilisation by focussing on the political and social opportunities and constraints that surround a movement (Meyer and Minkoff 2004, 1458; Meyer 2004, 126). Conceptually, religion can constitute a component part of POS; for example, through levels of religiosity, degrees of religious diversity, varieties of religion-state relations and prevailing religious norms. All can influence how, when and if social movements mobilise their supporters for action.

The political opportunities for mobilisation are co-influenced by the resources accessible to a social movement, which elements are examined under the heading of *resource mobilisation* (RM) (Zald and McCarthy 1979; Zald and Ash 1966; Garner and Zald 2012). Aldon Morris, in the now archetypical example of how religion can function as a resource for social mobilisation, described how networks of black churches became politicised with the aim of mobilising the American Civil Rights Movement during the 1950s and 1960s (Morris 1981, 751). The availability of organisational (e.g. churches), human (e.g. black ministers), and symbolic (e.g. Christian creed) resources aided the mobilisation of constituencies. Also material (e.g. money donated by religious institutions) and moral (e.g. religious legitimisations of violence) resources can function as mobilisers for violent engagement (cf. Edwards and McCarthy 2004, 125, 128).

In 1999, Goodwin and Jasper critiqued students of social movements for their structural and instrumental bias. The deterministic underpinnings of POS and RM theory – to zoom in on the research interest – describe religion as a 'political opportunity/constraint' or a 'resource' within the setting of a rational struggle for power and recognition, thereby limiting the reach on the study of religious movements (Beckford 2003, 168). Within these perspectives, the definition of religion is so deeply rooted in the structure of rationality and institutions, that the concern of religion as a creed and community is greatly marginalised (Calhoun 1999, 237). In addition, Goodwin and Jasper (1999, 30) critiqued the structural perspectives that dominated SMT for encouraging the unattainable ambition of invariance and transhistoricity (cf. Tilly 1997). Particularly when

considering religion, we cannot expect to find a uniform perspective. In other words, the primordial and instrumental undertones of the grand theories of SMT were not able to capture the complex and multifaceted effects and affects of religion on social behaviour.

In taking these observations seriously, the mainstream of SMT has increasingly moved away from universal perspectives that ought to explain generalised trends across time and space, shifting emphasis to local specificities and variant models that explain constructed social realities. Simultaneously, micro- and meso-level analysis have become more prominent, in which three components have been studied above all else: *framing* (e.g. Benford and Snow 2000; Oliver and Johnston 2000; David et al. 2011), *collective identity* (e.g. J. Gamson 2009; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Robnett 2002; Stryker, Owens, and White 2000), and *emotions* (e.g. Goodwin and Pfaff 2001; Goodwin and Jasper 2004; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Calhoun 2001; Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001). These theory components allowed for the empirical exploration of religion's role in social mobilisation, looking at the manners in which religious frames were used and re-imagined for mobilisation purposes and the justification of violence (e.g. Fuist 2013; Harris 1994), the ways in which religion continuously forms and shapes social identity and differentiation (e.g. R. H. Williams 2002; Yavuz 2003), and the processes in which religion functioned as a personal mediator against the negative emotions flowing from social movement engagement in high-risk environments (e.g. Egiegba Agbiboa 2013; Harris 1994). Together, they re-evaluate the grand theories of social movements, providing theoretically informed tools with which to examine the individual and organisational perspectives on mobilisation (Jasper 2010, 965; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 126).

2.2. Social Movement Theory and Violence

Even though social movement theorists traditionally focused on non-violent forms of social protest, the link between social movements and violence has not gone unnoticed (Goldstone 2003, 10–11). The classical social science definition of violence refers to "behavior designed to inflict physical injury on people or damage to property" (Graham and Gurr 1969, xvii). Della Porta (2013, 19–21) adds that violence in SMT can further be understood as constructed, relational and emergent. Within this comprehensive perspective, violence is viewed as constructed by and constructing cognitive and affective process. The emotional intensity of violent participation is translated as a form of 'passionate politics' (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001). Additionally, violence is rarely adopted by social movements overnight; instead forms of action emerge and are transformed in the course of physical, symbolic and emotional interactions among social movements, the state, allies and opponents (Della Porta 2013, 19). The emergent character of

violence cannot be accounted for in a causal model. Violent forms of movement mobilisation, especially in the theatre of a civil war, are often the result of pre-existing popular alliances and identities, yet almost all these alliances and identities are (radically) transformed by conflict. New cleavages are shaped, identities are transformed, and interests are re-imagined (Kalyvas 2006, 3). Similarly, motivations change over the course of struggle or are politicised in new lights (Kalyvas 2006, 79). Violence, Della Porta argues, acquires a logic of its own, (re-)producing polarisations that fuelled its initial motivations (Della Porta 2013, 21). Assessing the role of religion in this dynamic process is thereby further complicated.

To comprehend the dynamics of violence, Della Porta continues, necessitates the bridging of macro-, meso- and micro-level perspectives (equal to the multi-levelled approach of the study of religion in social movement mobilisation). The previously mentioned dominant paradigm of POS explains violence to emerge through available structures of political opportunities, which can be defined by religious structures but also by historical conditions, the positioning of authorities, and the strength and bearing of prospective allies and opponents (McAdam 1982; Tarrow 2011; Tilly 1978). Violence tends to develop in periods of social unrest and transformation, which exacerbate the perception of grievances and opportunities (Della Porta 2013, 17). In relating violence to religion, violence is particularly expected when political strains are high (e.g. religious repression) and opportunities abundant (e.g. support from religious elites) (Della Porta et al. 2017, 9–10). The choice of a social movement to adopt violent repertoires of contention are also influenced by the resources available to them (Edwards and McCarthy 2004; Golhasani 2016). Social movements need to successfully mobilise resources in their environment, extending them to various organisational tasks.

The availability of resources and opportunities is thereby dependent on the interpretation of the cultural context and is expanded upon by framing theory (Klandermans 1984; Fuist 2013). SMT has adopted the concept of framing to address the way in which social movement actors make sense of their environment. Frames as "schemata of interpretation" that enable individuals or social movement actors to "locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly indefinite number of concrete occurrences", rendering meaning, organising experiences and guiding action (Goffman 1974, 21). The framing perspective in SMT perceives of frames as being under continual revision due to new occurrences, experiences and social interactions (Benford and Snow 2000, 613; Snow et al. 1986, 477). As the diagnoses of social problems change, so do the proposed solutions and the motivations offered to inspire violent action (Snow and Benford 1988, 202; Silver 1997, 489). This can include fluctuating understandings on the legitimacy of violence and the rewards or punishments attached to its pursuit. The framing perspective thus constitutes a vital component in

ensuring a constructivist and relational approach to the study of violent social movement mobilisation.

2.3. Social Movement Theory and 'Religious Violence'

The research presented in this thesis draws on both SMT studies focussed on religion as well as studies engaged with violence, directing attention to the role religion played in the social mobilisation towards violence in Lebanon. As demonstrated in the associated sections above, research on religion and violence call for multi-dimensional analyses while being sensitive to both objective reality (that is, "knowledge" about the world) and its subjective correlates (meaning, the modes in which the world is subjectively "real" to the individual) (Berger 1966). The concrete manners in which macro-, meso- and micro-perspectives can be merged and modularised for the assessment of diverse militia movements active in the Lebanese civil war will be elaborated upon in the theory chapter below. At this point, I merely wish to highlight why and when the SMT sub-fields of religion and violence joined and how this informs the theoretical foundations of this thesis.

As the references in the text above stereotypically demonstrate, the origins of the SMT field have a narrow thematic and geographical focus, concentrating mostly on secular and European/American social movements. Before the start of the new century, interest in other regions and religions increased, specifically the focus on the Middle East and the Islamic religion became more centrally featured (e.g. Parsa 1989; Kurzman 1996). Initially, typical publications on Middle Eastern and Islamic movements comprised of descriptive analysis of the ideology, history, and goals of various religious movements, while other sociological dynamics remained un(der)examined or were modulated as contingent upon the exceptional ideological orientation of Islam, thereby essentialising Islamic movements as unique in comparative (and rational) terms (Wiktorowicz 2003: 3).

These depictions underlined a secular bias, in which the separation of state and church is regarded as a necessary barrier against violence (for a critique see Laustsen and Wæver 2003; Cavanaugh 2009). Daniel Philpott (2007, 506–7), for example, argued that the lack of mutual autonomy between religious bodies and state institutions in Lebanon was a key contributor to the upsurge of political violence. Recent research projects have taken more comprehensive and culturally sensitive perspectives, moving beyond state-centric viewpoints and shedding a refreshing light on social movements in the Middle East and the possible role of (different) religion(s) within violent mobilisation processes (Hafez and Wiktorowicz 2003; Wiktorowicz 2003; Borum and Gelles 2005; Meijer 2005; Gunning 2009; Marsden 2014). Together they have pushed the empirical boundaries on the combined study of 'religious violence', while re-evaluating SMT tools.

Della Porta praises recent studies for their efforts to de-exceptionalise violence and religion, by locating them within broader contexts and complex processes (Della Porta 2013, 15). Despite these multiple and evolving perspectives, notable lacunae remain in the SMT sub-field. SMT still struggles to appreciate the non-instrumental aspects alongside the instrumental elements of religious behaviour and violent organisation, it has to reckon more structurally with the power and the malleability of religious ideas, as well as with its differential appeals, persuasiveness, and political salience and action over time. Moreover, the ontology of SMT's diversity needs to be addressed. Recent studies have acknowledged these weaknesses and oversights, yet few have moved beyond their own call for progress. There is an opportunity in front of us, to continue with the puzzle-driven research agenda set out by others, shedding light on how, when and at what level religion can lead to violent mobilisation.

3. Empirical Focus

In an effort to narrow some of the theoretical complexities of researching 'religious violence', I choose to focus on a historical event localised in a geographical region in which both religious as well as secular oriented militia movements mobilised towards violence. An empirical focus will allow for the tailoring of theoretical perspectives, thereby sidestepping unrealistic ambitions of finding universalities. The choice has fallen upon the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990),[2] with a specific focus on four militia/social movements:[3] the Kataeb party, the Amal movement, the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) and the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP).

The civil war started on April 13, 1975, when militiamen of the Kataeb clashed with militants of Palestinian armed groups in Lebanon. The incident quickly spiralled into a full-fledged civil war, with a myriad of militia movements mobilising towards violence. The escalation of violence cannot be explained without reference to larger socio-political and economic developments. Politically, Lebanon was based on a formula of consociationalism, in which societal differences were settled along sectarian lines. The overall economic prosperity of the country had resulted in a privileged group of merchant elite, while ever-larger portions of the population were suffering under the hardships of urbanisation processes and increasing inequalities. The political and economic tutelage of neighbouring countries added additional strains on a population already divided in feelings of identity and belonging. The interaction of these factors resulted in an

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[2] Lebanon has suffered other civil wars and conflicts over the course of its history. Unless stated differently, in these writings the 'Lebanese civil war' or the 'civil war' will refer to the conflict that took place between 1975 and 1990.

[3] Henceforth, the term 'social movement' and 'militia movement' will be used interchangeably, following the example of various contributors in the *Social Movements and Civil War: When Protests for Democratization Fail* (2017).

atmosphere of distress, distrust and disenchantment – in which different parts of the population envisioned divergent paths towards progress.

On the one hand, the empirical focus on the Lebanese civil war offers diversity, by being one of few conflicts in the world that harboured a diverse range of militia movements spread across different religious as well as secular orientations. The Kataeb party had a majority Christian Maronite constituency; the Amal movement found its strength in the Shiite stratum of Lebanese society; the PSP began the war in a mixed constellation focussing on a socialist agenda but became increasingly homogenised by the Druze sect; while the LCP was and remained mixed in terms of sectarian representation. For the purpose of this research, the Kataeb and the Amal movement will be regarded as religious militia movements; the LCP will be labelled as secular, while the PSP transformed from a secular militia that emphasised Socialism to a religious movement that represented the Druze. Religious and secular inclinations are thereby not understood as conceptual opposites; instead they represent ends on a theoretical spectrum. With the mixture of chosen militia movements – all of which violently engaged in the civil war – I hope to neither overemphasise nor ignore the religious element, instead treating it as an integral part of the movements' compositions.

On the other hand, the choice to focus on one country limits diversity. Although no country has a monolithic or objective history, the geographical and historical concentrations partially limit the noise of possible confounding variables and social understandings. Just like any other country, however, Lebanon's societal and ideational composition has been perpetrated and accentuated by longstanding myths (Ayoub 1994, 241). Especially Lebanon's connection to religious formations functioned as sources of imagination. The Lebanese myths relate to the country's relationship to religious communities, their historical trajectories in the region and their loyalties within the world stage. The plurality of religious representation, with eighteen different sects recognised by the state, has unquestionably contributed to the degree of bewilderment. Pope John Paul II referred to Lebanon's religious coexistence as "a message", setting a holy example for freedom and tolerance in both the East and the West (quoted in Hage 1992, 29–30). In *The Garden of the Prophet* (1943, 16), the Lebanese poet Khalil Gibran took an opposite stance when he cautioned his readers: "Pity the nation in which sects abound, but in which religion is little found". The religions of Lebanon have been both credited for coexistence as well as conflict. However, when it comes to reporting on the Lebanese civil war the "ambivalence of the sacred", to use Appleby's words (1999), has been underrepresented. Typically, religion's perceived violent inclination has been emphasised. The Lebanese economist Georges Corm argues that commentaries on the civil war demonstrated the "zenith of intellectual laziness" and one-sidedness (Corm 1994, 255).

Despite the immense complexity of the situation and brutal outside interference, the international press complacently accepted the split between "Christians" and "Muslims" as the sole explanation of the conflict. This simplistic perspective justified all the violence, while the criminal aspect of the attacks on the civilian population was never mentioned, or only very selectively. The prevailing view cast the Lebanese as being locked in an innate, quasi-biological struggle between Christians and Muslims, with each militia only doing its best to defend "its" community against the savage attacks of the others […] Even academic analysis tended to reflect this bias, or at least increasingly accepted the idea that the militias were the legitimate organs of their religious communities, and that these communities were the sole socio-political reality in Lebanon. Thus, despite all the evidence on the contrary, the complexities of the conflict were reduced to a simple war between Christians and Muslims (Corm 1994, 225)

In other words, the Lebanese civil war has been typically portrayed as an example of primordialist 'religious violence', in which different religious communities instrumentalised religion in a predestined clash of ideas. This simplification, although convenient and understandable for some parts of the political and public audience, masked the stakes of economic gain and political power plays. At the same time, it maintained the ideal image of the Western nation-state, in which the separation of religion and politics was presented as the antidote to violence. While it would be a vast oversimplification to maintain that the conflict was inherently religious/sectarian, religion can equally not be ignored from analysis. The Lebanese were characterised by a widespread religiosity (Hanf 2015, 281–82), religious narratives were employed by militia leaders (e.g. Jumblatt 1978; Hage 1992; Picard 1993) and religious resources were instrumentalised for social mobilisation (e.g. Henley 2008, 356–58; Corm 1994, 222; Richani 1998, 63). The starting point of this dissertation is therefore not whether religion played a role in social mobilisation; instead, it is interested in where and when it played a role and how it was constructed over time.

4. Structure of Thesis

The thesis will start with laying out the theoretical foundations (chapter 2) and methodological considerations (chapter 3) for the study of 'religious violence' in the Lebanese civil war from the perspective of SMT. In an effort to structure analysis, the theoretical framework will be sub-divided into three analytical levels, these include: (i) militia movements, (ii) militia leaders and (iii) militants. Each analytical level will be assessed in relation to corresponding theoretical constructs. Militia movements will be analysed through the perspective of POS in combination with framing, the role

of militia leaders will be assessed through RM theory and Integrative Complexity (IC) (a psychometric borrowed from the field of social psychology) and militants' view on the topic will be analysed through the constructs of social identity and existential anxiety (both of which are informed by SMT and social psychology). Together they model a variant, constructivist, emergent and relational framework to assess the role of religion in the mobilisation towards violence. Critical realism (CR) will function as the ontological foundation needed for the analysis and comparison of the multi-levelled reality that SMT presents, constituting a novel angle for the field.

The methodology and methods will progress from this theoretical positioning and will be presented in chapter 3. The primary research sources (including 69 semi-structured interviews, international and national news reports, official militia propaganda and recorded leadership speeches) and methods (including archival procedures and interview guidelines) will be elaborated upon, describing how sources were selected and analysed with the aim of uncovering the religious and non-religious structures, organisation, resources, motivations and emotions associated with violent mobilisation. The chapter further justifies the choice to focus on four Lebanese militia movements (the Kataeb, the PSP, the Amal movement, and the LCP), which together represent a mixture of religious and secular orientations, allowing for a comparative analysis.

The succeeding six empirical chapters are subdivided into three sections, following the structure of the theoretical framework. Each section will investigate a different level and dynamic of the possible role of religion in the social mobilisation towards violence. Chapters 4 and 5, which go together under the section title *Militias*, provide a structural perspective on the crossroads towards and through the Lebanese civil war. To understand the origins and developments of militia movements, they will be introduced within their historical and contextual setting. To facilitate for a constructivist assessment, the chapters will build upon the SMT perspective of POS in combination with framing, allowing for divergent and changing interpretations on the opportunities and constraints of the Lebanese scene. The perspective of militia movements, as assessed through the communications of their respective newspapers, will stand central in analysis.

Specifically, chapter 4, outlining the crossroads towards civil war, will concentrate on four macro-processes of change that have been explicitly cited in the SMT literature as sources of conflict. The impact of these features will be discussed in association with religion/sectarianization as well as with their subjective interpretation. Correspondingly, the chapter is divided into four parts: (a) religion and the socio-political context, (b) religion and the economy, (c) religion and foreign influence, and (d) religion and security. Chapter 5 extends analysis into the warring years, building upon the same categories, while detailing the main phases of the civil war.

Chapters 6 and 7, which together go under the heading *militia leadership*, pay particular attention to the leadership positions of Bashir Gemayel in Kataeb and Lebanese Forces (LF), Imam Musa al-Sadr of the Amal movement, Walid Jumblatt of the PSP and George Hawi of the LCP. All too often, religion is portrayed as a tool – both used and abused by militia leaders – to mobilise constituencies in times of crisis. Although there are valuable lessons in these observations, many of them are expressed in one-dimensional argumentations, undermining the complexities of religious structures, including their susceptibility to change and diversity as well as their interconnectedness with non-religious dynamics. Chapter 6 aims to re-orientate essentialist or instrumentalised discussions on religion in relation to militia leaders, by taking a constructivist and comparative perspective on RM. The chapter establishes that the religious resources employed by militia leaders were not substantively different from non-religious equivalents, and that the former set was not a necessity for successful mobilisation. Moreover, both religious and non-religious resources were typically re-imagined in order to fit the purpose of the militia leaders rather than the beliefs of the religious leaders. Findings challenge the idea of religion as a primary or primordial resource, push beyond pure instrumental conceptualisations and suggest that binary religious-secular typologies are of limited use.

In chapter 7 the focus will shift to the speeches delivered by these militia leaders. Some of the militia leaders in the Lebanese civil war used religious narratives to mobilise their constituencies and to legitimise the use of violence. One of the questions addressed is whether these narratives were more socially divisive and less complex in argumentative structure compared to non-religious orientated narratives – as proponents of the 'religious violence' thesis regularly maintain. By using the psychometric of IC, borrowed from the field of social psychology, the speeches of four militia leaders will be analysed for complexity of information processing. The social psychological approach of IC offers innovative tools for the study of ideas in social movements, proposing leading-edge directions for SMT. Through quantitative analysis, it is demonstrated how the militia's constituencies and speech content do not affect complexity of speech; instead, the time settings during which militia leaders deliver speeches are better indicators of fluctuations in argumentative and social complexity. IC thereby redirects attention from content to structure and from ideology to context, broadening as well as deepening knowledge on the impact of religion on mobilisation processes.

Where chapters 6 and 7 adopt a more formulaic type of argumentation, chapters 8 and 9 focus on agentic forces by analysing the testimonies of *militants,* trailing how they perceived the role of religion to influence their violent mobilisation and how these factors compared to non-religious motivations. Public memoirs of Lebanese militiamen recollecting the strife of civil war are

rare. Their testimonies, however, are pivotal in understanding the emergence of violent mobilisation, because personal narratives disclose part of the militants' emotional worlds that lay underneath the rationale of militias. Their voices do not necessarily conform to the rationale of their militias or the encouragements of their leaders. Instead, testimonies demonstrate how people were both subjects and objects of the social mobilisation process towards violence.

For the purpose of this research, over sixty different militia leaders, religious leaders and militants were interviewed. Some of these testimonies will be presented in this dissertation, disclosing in-depth patterns of interaction, cooping and evolvement. Chapter 8 will focus on the role of religion in identity formation, as viewed from the perspective of the militants (some of whom were or became militia leaders) affiliated with the PSP and the Amal movement. Chapter 9 engages with the testimonies of militants (and some militia leaders) who fought for the Kataeb and the LCP, focussing on the existential anxieties that resulted from the proximity of death, including the fear of dying, the sadness and anger experienced over loss, and the mental preparations to kill. Social identity and existential anxiety are typical topics in which religion can play a regulating role. By comparing the narratives of religiously inspired militants with those of non-religious militants (across and within militia movements) we can consider the impact of religion in identity formation and emotional calibration in high-risk environments. Religion, it will be demonstrated, is neither exclusive in its power to socially connect militants into cohesive wholes, nor is it exclusive in preparing adherents for overcoming the fear of death. The occasional reference to the narratives of militia leaders further highlights that they too were guided by emotional and affective motivations (balancing the partial rational perspective of chapters 6 and 7).

Throughout, it is important to keep in mind that the aim of this dissertation is not to provide a comprehensive historical overview of the Lebanese civil war, the details of which are shared elsewhere (Salibi 2003; Haugbolle 2010; Traboulsi 2012; Hanf 2015). Rather, the theoretical aim is to demonstrate how SMT can help in making sense of the role of religion in the social mobilisation of Lebanese militias movements and their collective move towards violence. The impetus behind this concentration comes in part from the observation that much empirical and descriptive work has been provided on the topic, while systematic and theoretical approaches are underdeveloped. Although recent interest in the study of 'religious violence' has had notable impact on the development of SMT, there remains an urgent need to progress dynamic perspectives that combine both structure and agency and incorporate primary data sources.

The thesis aims to contribute to the theoretical objective of advancing SMT in regard to the study of 'religious violence', by taking a deeper and more nuanced look at militia movements active in the Lebanese civil war. I thereby aim to bring analytical and empirical contributions to the

study of religion in relation to violent mobilisation. On a societal level, I am motivated by the blame directed at religion, portraying it as a fuel for war – a crude vision, which causes social division, religious prejudice and policy mishaps. In the concluding chapter, these theoretical, empirical and societal considerations will be discussed, reflecting on how the Lebanese case study can inform the theoretical possibilities of SMT as well as the wider 'religious violence' debate. The Afterword will reflect upon the 2019-2020 protests in Lebanon from the narrative of the post-war legacy and the perceived danger of religious diversity and violence.

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

"Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler"

- (Albert Einstein)

1. Theory and Aim

The goal of this chapter is to develop a theoretical framework that enables the systematic and comparative analysis of the conditions and mechanisms through which religion can play a role in

the social mobilisation towards violence. It aims to offer 'simple' grounds of comparison, through which the religious markers of militia movements can be compared and contrasted to non-religious equivalents. These ambitions urge for the consideration of a number of pointers. Firstly, definitional quests – as already touched upon in the introduction – will be further detailed, aiming to offer operational categories of comparison. Secondly, an ontological perspective in the format of CR is proposed to bridge the anticipated insights of social structure and agency.

Building upon these conceptual and ontological orientations, a theoretical framework is crafted that takes into account emergence, multiple determination as well as the characteristics of the Lebanese civil war, creating a variant and multi-levelled model to the general academic interest in 'religious violence'. To fulfil these tasks, the theoretical framework is built upon the lessons of SMT. The framework is subdivided into three analytical parts, corresponding with three levels of social reality. Firstly, on the analytical level of the *Militia*, the tools needed to examine structural contexts and their interpretation will be discussed, bringing to the fore the social movement theories of POS and framing. Coming to the level of *Militia Leaders*, organisational and leadership dynamics will be examined through a RM lens, while the psychometric of IC will be introduced to analyse the structure of leaders' speeches. Lastly, in an effort to bring out the voices of the *Militants*, SMT perspectives will be combined with the insights of social psychology, allowing for intimate assessments on social identity and emotions. Across the levels, particular attention will be paid to the ways in which conditions are activated and individual motivations transformed through the interactions of social movement players and structures.

2. Overcoming Shortcomings
2.1. Conceptualising 'Religious Violence'

In debating religion,[1] it is helpful to delineate the boundaries of the phenomenon. The deliberation on the proper definition has occupied the attention of social scientists for many decades without coming to a general consensus (e.g. Durkheim 1915; Smith 1962; Idinopulos and Wilson 1998; Asad 1993; Peterson and Walhof 2002; Greil and Bromley 2003; Fitzgerald 2007; Dubuisson 2007; Cassell 2015; Allen and Allen 2016). It is neither my task nor aim to provide a comprehensive history on the meaning of religion or the field that has unfolded around this theoretical pursuit. Instead, my aim is to find a workable conceptualisation on religion, to study its conditions and effects on collective behaviour and the transformation towards violent engagement – one that fits the multi-levelled reality that SMT proposes and that is suitable to the Lebanese experience. In that manner, I search for a constructivist and ideal type definition (Weber 1963, 1) that enables the

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[1] The definition and boundaries of 'violence' have been elaborated in the introduction, on page 26.

scholarly study of religion (J. Z. Smith 1982, xi) in a localised expression (Asad 1993, 8), reminding that the term is used as an analytical category rather than a reflection of reality.

In what follows I will adopt Paul Gifford's substantive definition, who maintains that: "Religion is a complex of practices based on the premise of the existence of superhuman powers" (Gifford 2019, 3).[2] In building upon this understanding, I relate the substantive definition to functionalist qualities, e.g. the manners in which religion relates to social movement organisation, community, identity and emotion. The adopted definition is localised and analytical, rather than universal and real (see page 73 for an explanation of the real). The secular, in this perspective, should not be thought of as the space in which real human life gradually emancipates from the controlling power of religion thereby relocating the latter (Asad 2003, 191), but as the basic operating principles that are not justified by religious conviction (Aminzade and Perry 2001, 156). The secular is a way of thinking, both formative of and consequent on 'Western' or Judeo-Christian historical narratives of collective being, in which the this-worldly is emphasised (Asad 2003, 64). Just like the religious, the secular can impact the functions and qualities of a group or a movement, providing rationales and means for organisation, community, identity and emotion.

The choice to adopt substantive and functionalist conceptualisations is guided and justified by two theoretical purposes. On the one hand, a substantive basis allows for the analytical distinction between the religious and the secular; on the other hand, the functionalist extension enables for their comparison within the framework of SMT. Together they treat the categories of religion and secular as substantial and sui generis without becoming singular or reductionist.

Although various authors have demonstrated that the lines that ought to cut between the religious and secular spheres are imaginary and illusive in reference to reality (Asad 2003; Greil and Bromley 2003; Norris and Inglehart 2004; Fitzgerald 2007; Cavanaugh 2009), for the purpose of this research we need to make an initial analytical distinction (cf. Hall 2015, 366). After all, it is exactly these popular and unimaginative labels that have described Lebanon's civil war as religious and that have coloured the 'religious violence' debate more generally. At a minimum, the religious and the secular appear to be meaningful categories in everyday language, which popular boundary formations carry cognitive and political implications. I choose to engage with these labels and understandings, taking common understanding seriously without taking it at face value.

Within the context of Lebanon, which geographical region constitutes the empirical focus of this thesis, I will refer to the Maronites, Shiites and Druze as religious, as they presuppose the

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[2] Gifford's substantive definition, emphasising the supernatural, is narrow and inflexible when considering religion as a global phenomenon, for example by excluding Buddhism from its definitional reach. However, the definition fits the religions of Lebanon as well as the variant (rather than universal) approach of this thesis.

existence of superhuman powers, while Communism and Socialism[3] will be labelled as secular, as they discount these superhuman dimensions. The militia movements under scrutiny in this thesis will equally be labelled under these binaries, following popular (though not uncontested) understanding. The Maronite Christian dominated Kataeb and the Shiite dominated Amal will be referred to as religious, the LCP will be labelled as secular, while the PSP transformed from a secular militia that emphasised Socialism to a religious movement that represented the Druze sect (e.g. Hanf 2015; Fisk 2001; Traboulsi 2012).

Admittedly, these adaptations are problematic, as none of these militia movements were homogenous with respect to their support bases or ideological objectives. To accommodate for this heterogeneity, I will evaluate the use of the categories religious and the secular at each step of analysis, while highlighting the many ways in which religious and secular forces interact and possibly overlap. I will therefore avoid excessive dichotomisation by actively searching for crossover elements from the antithesis of a phenomenon's label, afflicting contradictions without prematurely solving them. For example, where possible and coherent, I will refer to non-religious (e.g. the absence of religious) rather than secular (which term typically carries 'Western' presumptions about the desirable distinction between state and church (Asad 2003, 23-25, 191)) dynamics.

In the case of Lebanon, it is also important to distinguish between the religious and the sectarian. A sect delineates a group of people who belong to a particular religion. Initially, the term sectarian was used to describe differences *within* a particular religion (e.g. Catholics vs. Protestants), while the term was later adopted to distinguish *between* religions (e.g. Christian vs. Islam or Maronite vs. Shiite). In Lebanon, the term sect is used to differentiate both within and between religions. It functions as a form of social and political organisation, informing consociational power sharing arrangements and personal status law (Ofeish 1999, 100; Corstange 2012, 123). Although sectarian labels are political and do not necessitate social identification, the presence of sectarian labels often involve processes of reification (Weiss 2010, 9; Hashemi and Postel 2017, 4–5). To underline these undercurrents, this thesis will build upon the concept of sectarianization, a concept developed in *Sectarianization: Mapping the New Politics of the Middle East* (Hashemi & Postel 2017).

Sectarianization is defined as "a process shaped by political actors operating in specific contexts, pursuing goals that involve popular mobilization around particular (religious) identity markers" (Hashemi and Postel 2017, 4). Religion is bracketed in the previous sentence, because it would be artificial to try and distinguish too sharply between religious and non-religious dynamics

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[3] Groups categorised under the label of religious (e.g. Druze or Christian) and secular (e.g. Communism or Socialism) are both written with capital letter.

in these complex processes (Little 2011, 9–28). Identity politics, communal configurations, state systems, geopolitical rivalries, class dynamics, and security concerns co-determine the sectarianization process, in which the sect can become perceived as socially real (Weiss 2010, 3).

By adopting sectarianization rather than sectarianism, research is forced to place the religious and sectarian markers of mobilisation into localised and historical perspectives, overcoming potential primordialist undertones (e.g. V. Nasr 2007; Lewis 1994; Huntington 1993). This is an important point of nuance, as it forces the researcher to acknowledge malleability, seeing beyond the sole instrumental aspects of organisations, while accepting religion's political salience and application over time (Bellin 2008: 316). These reflections share in another reminder, namely that religion - inside or outside of the sectarianization process – comes to life in the minds of the people, and thereby religion has a role to play on the micro-level of social mobilisation. More time and effort should be spent on assessing the individual and intimate workings of the religious in social mobilisation, as compared against equivalent non-religious and secular dynamics. The key to this multi-dimensional and constructivist approach lies in its robustness, exploring movements and their relation to the religious "in their own terms" (Eyerman and Jamison 1991: 2). I will reserve a further evaluation on the meaning and function of religion in Lebanon – and how/if it differs from the secular/non-religious – for the conclusion of my study.

2.2. Ontological Considerations

In order to ontologically connect social movement members to their respective social movements, while remaining attentive to the structural and ideational application and impact of religion in social mobilisation processes, this thesis will build upon the lessons of CR (e.g. Bhaskar 2008; Elder-Vass 2011). The addition of CR to the study of social movements adds an innovative edge to SMT, without resulting in a theoretical revision. CR is engaged in order to clarify the relations between the militia movement, militia leadership and militants, as it provides insight into how causal forces operate between these levels and how they interact (Kurki 2007, 361). The critical realist orientation is multi-directional and multi-causal, integrating facts and value, rejecting the idea that there are "hard-and-fast" dividing lines between social phenomena, focussing on social relations, and paying attention to past, present and future dynamics (Ritzer 2007: 162). The vocabulary of CR is not steered at reaching the bedrock of Reality with a capital 'R', rather it offers a contingent theoretical system of interpretation.

In coming to the core of CR, it is essential to understand that an entity (or a whole[4]) can have properties that are not possessed by the sum of its parts. Such properties are called emergent properties (Elder-Vass 2011: 4). John Stuart Mill famously explained emergent properties by comparing them to the properties of water (Mill 1899: 289). The properties of water (e.g. it freezes at zero degrees Celsius and it can extinguish fires) are different from those of its components, oxygen and hydrogen (e.g. oxygen will fuel fire and hydrogen freezes at approximately minus two-hundred and sixty degrees Celsius). The particular configurations of the parts make possible the emergent powers of the whole. For example, the parts constituting H_2O (dihydrogen monoxide, or, more commonly, water) and $HO-$ (hydroxide) are the same, yet their emergent properties are different due to the differences in the relations between their parts. Similarly, any group of five people can result in a variety of social compositions; for example, relations can make people family or co-workers, hierarchies can result in domination or subordination, familiarity or enmity can result in different emotional attachments.

For our purpose, the twin-value of the concept of emergence lies in its "justification for treating the emergent properties of higher-level entities [the whole] as causally effective in their own right, while at the same time allowing us to explore the ways in which these properties are produced as a consequence of the properties of the parts and the way in which they are organised to form this particular sort of higher-level entity" (Elder-Vass 2011: 193). This is important as we are looking at social movements (e.g. collectives engaged in violence) as expressed through the voices of their parts, its leaders and members (e.g. people involved in violence), but also as influenced by social structures (e.g. socio-political circumstances and configurations). All of these entities constitute different ontological realities, while they are related through a complex mechanism of emergent properties. In order to explain these entities, relations and properties, we need to identify the mechanisms by which the parts and relations produce emergent powers, and the sources that bring this set of parts into this set of relations in the first place.

These observations are essential for the study of concepts like religion and social movements. Emergence theory implies that one should not think of religion and social movements as phenomena that could be studied 'on their own level' (Cassell 2015: 161).[5] Instead, the approach

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[4] Theoretically, it is important to keep in mind that any whole is composed of parts and each whole is the part of a bigger whole. As such, 'whole' and 'part' are analytical and relative concepts rather than empirical and immediate realities. As a thought-experiment, for this section, try to conceive of 'wholes' as social movements and 'parts' as individual members of that social movement.

[5] This thesis is not the first to argue that emergence theory might be relevant to explain religion. Emile Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* and David Rappaport's *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* both explicitly rooted their analysis of religion in earlier forms of emergence theory (Cassell 2015: 6). They provided sound argumentation for thinking that the emergent powers of religion had significant

focuses on the structure and interconnectedness of the causal properties of religion and social movements at various ontological levels, while analysed in one coherent ontological framework. Religion and social movements should therefore be assessed on the micro-level, looking into how religious rules, norms and values aid in the internalisation, rationalisation and legitimisation on the individual path towards violent mobilisation. On the meso-scale, the emergent properties that arise when individuals are combined in religious or sectarian movement settings will be analysed. On the macro-scale, the interaction between socio-economic stratification, religio-political legacies, foreign influence and security concerns are important but should equally be assessed through the experiences and interpretations of militia movements. Agency and social structure are therein ends on a spectrum that stand in dynamic connection at each of the analytical levels. It is the properties expressed at these different levels, as well as their interactions, that inform the complex role of religion in the social mobilisation towards violence.

Coming to terms with the ontologically laminated and emerging nature of religion and social movements is important, as it informs methods and methodology. Moreover, it can help deepen, localise and personalise accounts on religion and its relations to social mobilisation, while grounding and embedding mainstream and marginal voices. As such, emergence theory represents a comprehensive way to unravel the impact of religion on social behaviour.

The ontology of CR does not presuppose a complete re-articulation of theories; various religious studies authors have already pointed in the direction of critical approaches (though not necessarily in the explicit terms of CR). Most significant here are Wilfred Cantwell Smith's plea for historical integration (W. C. Smith 1962), Talal Asad's critical note on the social and political dimensions of power (Asad 1983: 237; cf. Asad 2001: 220-222), and Daniele Hervieu-Léger's refreshing look on a union that stretches through time (Hervieu-Léger 2000) – all of them contribute to a dynamic and multi-levelled perception of religion within the social world. They remind us that religion changes throughout history, echoing the demands and challenges of the time and paralleling interpretative and constructed variations of intellectual, political and scriptural authorities. Every religion should therefore be understood as a "living tradition" (Gelvin 2015: 152), shaped by both social structure and personal perspective. Similarly, Della Porta, one of today's most influential social movement theorists, has started to adopt the terminology and conceptualisations of emergence in her assessment of social movement dynamics (Della Porta 2013; Della Porta et al. 2017). Together, these works suggest that the place of religion and social movements cannot be understood in essentialist terminologies or flat ontologies (Carlson 2011: 8).

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psychological and social affects, focussing on the 'inter-individual social mind' (Durkheim 1915) as well as 'long-lived systems of human interaction' (Rappaport 1999).

A dynamic, constructivist and relational framework is required, one that is offered by SMT and tied together by CR.

3. A Social Movement Theory Framework to Analyse Religion in Lebanon

The theoretical framework developed in the subsequent sections is built on SMT literature, strengthened by insights from the field of social psychology. The lessons of both academic fields are directed at finding a systematic and relational way to develop understanding on the possible role of religion in the mobilisation towards violence during the Lebanese civil war, taking into account, amongst others, emergent processes, social structure and agency, religious plurality, and geographic particularity. To cater for the locality of Lebanon and the dynamism of militia movements, a variant and relational approach to emergence is proposed. The objects of study are the militias that partook in the events of the civil war. The caveat is of course that a 'militia' is an elusive concept. We cannot talk to a militia. Though we can talk with its leaders and members, read its newspapers and listen to its radio broadcasts, all of which constitute some of the physical attributes of a militia movement. This requires the conduct of in-depth interviews and the search of archives. We can also look at the infrastructures that underpin militias, and how these were affected by the socio-political circumstances in which they emerged and developed. This requires an exploration of both primary and secondary literature.

In order to organise data analysis, the theoretical framework will be divided into three parts, focussing on (i) militias, (ii) militia leaders and (iii) militants. Each analytical level will be analysed in relation to suitable theoretical constructs. After all, each level has the potential to uncover a distinct characteristic on the role of religion in the mobilisation process towards violence. The analytical levels will be assessed in relation to (but are not completely overlapping with) macro-, meso- and micro-dynamics (cf. Zartman and Khan 2011, 27). The macro-, meso-, and micro-levels reflect commonly made distinctions in the study of sociology, in which each level represents specific emergent properties. That being said, the different levels are not being regarded as empirically valid distinctions that are readily identifiable in social reality. In fact, differentiating between the levels is analytically convenient at best, and analytically obscuring at worst. Application does not equal reification. Most academics accept that the levels are conceptual tools rather than social realities (e.g. Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001; Della Porta and Diani 2005; Goodwin and Jasper 2009). I will use the distinctions with the aim of structural organisation and analytical clarity, while I will constantly point out were overlap exists and fluidity pervades. SMT acknowledges that some dynamics appear at more than one analytical level, while CR adds that the mechanisms that connect the different levels inform emergent properties. Both contributions will be addressed in

writing. The combination of approaches constitutes new ground for the study of social movement mobilisation, providing invaluable guidelines for the application of multi-dimensional analyses.

Within the framework of laminated foci, the thesis proposes an elastic and variable mechanism to bridging macro-, meso- and micro- dimensions of social movements, seeking for the interactive, reciprocal, and emerging relationships between militia movements, militia leaders and militants. This is important, as social movement theorists are regularly criticised for not systematically integrating macro-, meso- and micro-level analysis, even though calls for integration have become increasingly common (e.g. Gunning and Baron 2013; Della Porta et al. 2017). Whereas all three levels have been expended upon separately, most studies fail to incorporate a multi-level and relational perspective (Zald and McCarthy 1979; Platt and Williams 2002). This dissertation will actively search for the multi-levelled and relational dynamics between the differentiated levels of reality, thereby harnessing the potential of SMT (see also McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001).

The multi-levelled approach will overcome many of the separate shortcomings associated with single perspectives, while it yields a richer understanding of SMT and all it has to offer. It is this weaving and knitting, this blending and mingling of strands of history, political and organisational dynamics and conceptions of identity and emotions that constitute the core of the processes of SMT inclusion and elasticity. Conversely, it is the systematic untangling of these complex weaves that will give interpretable insight into the separate strands and strategies leading to the mobilisation towards violence, and the possible role of religion within this process. In considering these points, the dissertation presents the main theoretical characteristics as follows:

- *Variant*: Rather than developing a universal framework to analyse the role of religion in social mobilisation, this framework is tailored to the particularities of the Lebanese militia movements and their socio-political and religious context

- *Constructivist*: The study takes into account not only the external factors of opportunities and constraints, but also recognises that social reality is socially constructed and interpreted by the various actors that are part of the conflict (Hasenclever and Rittberger 2003, 647–50)

- *Emergent*: The framework aims at reconstructing the causal mechanisms that link the macro-level in which the social mobilisation towards violence develops, the meso-level formed by militia movements and their leaders, and the micro-level of identity building and emotional worlds within militant networks (Elder-Vass 2011, 6; Della Porta 2013, 5)

- *Relational*: The dissertation takes a relational approach to emergence, arguing "that

emergent properties arise because of the particular relationships that hold between the parts in a particular kind of whole" (Elder-Vass 2011, 20). In other words, the mobilisation towards violence is located within the social processes that relate various actors and factors, both structural and agentive (Della Porta et al. 2017, 2; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 24)

As a last note of caution, this dissertation will utilise the interrelated concepts of framing, culture and ideology. Although these concepts find similar roots and are mutually constitutive, they are not the same. Frames refer to "schemata of interpretation" that enable individuals to "locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences" in reference to their personal life and life at large (Goffman 1974, 21). Frame analysis, Della Porta and Diani argue (2005, 74), allow researchers "to capture the process of the attribution of meaning which lies behind the explosion of any conflict". Within the framing perspective, culture is used as a point of orientation, providing a set of values, according to which leaders shape their frames and formulate plans of (violent) engagement (Johnston 2008). Culture thereby provides a 'tool kit' of habits, skills, and styles from which people construct strategies of action (Swidler 1986, 273). Lastly, ideology, being a partial product of culture, is shaped and framed by a much more conscious process, often initiated by social movement entrepreneurs. Within the field of SMT, ideology is typically defined as "a relatively stable and coherent set of values, beliefs, and goals associated with a movement or a broader, encompassing social entity […] assumed to provide the rationale for defending or challenging various social arrangements and conditions" (Snow 2004, 396). Ideologies can be religious as well as non-religious. It is important to keep in mind that all three concepts are social constructions used for analytical purposes, they are neither static nor beyond the reach of human manipulation and manoeuvring.

3.1. Militia Movements

At the heart of any enquiry into the functioning of social movements, we find the broader and more structural views on social mobilisation. Structural factors, here referred to as factors that are relatively stable over time and largely outside the control of social movement actors (Goodwin and Jasper 1999, 29), describe the complex social and political environments in which social movements take form. Thanks to the prolific efforts of scholars such as Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, Charles Tilly, Bert Klandermans and Hanspeter Kriesi the associated POS perspective has become one of the most dominant paradigms in SMT. Macro-structures are regarded as pertinent in setting the stage and conditions for social movements to emerge and develop.

Nevertheless, POS have also been criticised. The weakness of POS originate from the same source as its popularity, namely its macro-structural emphasis (Goodwin and Jasper 1999, 28). Some authors have pointed out that the impact of POS are not only dependent on their real attributes, but also on their socially constructed and strategically assessed interpretations, which latter remark adds fluidity to a theoretical notion previously regarded as relatively static. Goodwin and Jasper (1999, 29) have therefore guided attention towards balancing social structure with agency/strategy, "which have to do with the active choices and efforts of movement actors as well as of their opponents and other players in the conflict, and cultural factors that deal with the moral visions, cognitive understandings, and emotions that exist prior to a movement but which are also transformed by it". In these writings, framing theory will function as the bridge to dynamically connect structure and agency, operationalising some of the theoretical links in a stratified reality, linking the militia movements with their leaders and followers. More specifically, the connection between POS and framing theory allows for the structures that affect social movement mobilisation to be assessed through the eyes of their beholders – the Lebanese militia movements.

The first part of this thesis, entitled *Militias*, consists of two chapters that deal with two distinguishable historical periods. The first chapter investigates the structural causes that led to the start of the Lebanese civil war in April 1975, including the social-political, economic, geo-political and security contexts in which militia movements emerged as contesting forces. Particular attention will be paid to how religious factors affected these structures. The second chapter, adopting the same theoretical framework, is focussed on the sectarianization process that affected the warring years (1975-1990). The theoretical framework formulated in this section seeks to describe the tools needed to answer the following sub-research questions, corresponding with chapter 4 and 5:

- What were the structural opportunities and constraints that co-influenced the start of the Lebanese civil war? How did these intersect with religious factors? And how did militia movements assess these interactions?
- What were the structural opportunities and constraints that co-influenced the evolution of the Lebanese civil war? How did these intersect with religious factors? And how did militia movements assess these interactions?

3.1.1. Militia Movements and Political Opportunities

The most prominent SMT approach to the structural analysis of mobilisation has come from the perspective usually defined as Political Process, the mainstay of which is the aforementioned POS (e.g. McCarthy 1996; Meyer and Minkoff 2004). This approach takes a rational and structural view

on mobilisation, paying attention to the environment in which social movements originate and evolve (Della Porta and Diani 2005, 16). Within the classical POS literature (e.g. McAdam 1996; Tarrow 1989), political factors are usually distinguished from broader socio-economic variables, such as levels of unemployment, access to education, waves of urbanisation and perceptions on security. In the more Marxist approaches of POS, however, the interplay between economic and political factors is central, both theoretically (cf. McAdam 1982) and empirically (cf. Piven and Cloward 1992). These latter connections resonate with the relational and emergent approach taken within this thesis. Only in relation to each other, and as assessed in their historical context, can emergent properties be understood more comprehensively.

Borrowing from the richness of the literature, this thesis yielded a list of four political opportunity structures important for the assessment of the Lebanese condition: (a) perspectives on the organisation of the socio-political system (e.g. J. Gamson 2009; Polletta and Jasper 2001), (b) views on the economic situation (Kousis and Tilly 2004), (c) the alleged influence of transnational powers (e.g. Lake and Rothchild 1998), and (d) perceived security concerns (e.g. Egiegba Agbiboa 2013). For the purpose of the Lebanese case study, all four factors will be assessed in their potential connection to religious dynamics as well as in relation to each other. This results in the following four areas of interest.

Firstly, in understanding the particularistic connection between religion and *socio-political* structures in Lebanon, it is important to understand the geographical and historical opportunities and constraints in which these relations emerged. Geographical considerations and historical events can help in elucidating sectarian distributions and political solutions, laying out some of the emergent mechanisms that effect mobilisation. As Paul Routledge argues (2015, 383 italics added): "Movements act *from* space, politically mobilizing from the material conditions of their (local) spaces; movements act *on* space, appropriating it with a group identity; movements act *in* space, such as taking to the streets for protests". From a material point of view, the land of today's Lebanon has for centuries been inhabited by a multitude of religious communities, informing the dynamic evolvement of social relations and political structures. Lebanon's consociational system is therein particularly noteworthy. Within this perspective the effects of sectarian diversity and political accommodation will be deliberated, as the probability of civil war has been theorised to increase with perceived long-lasting senses of misrecognition in sect, community or region (Wilkinson 2008; Fraser and Honneth 2003).

Secondly, on an *economic level*, levels of poverty, unemployment and economic stagnation will be assessed in relation to sectarian groups, as some conflict researchers have argued that the mobilisation towards violence is most expected when assets are immobile and/or unequally

distributed between communities (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Della Porta and Diani 2005, 36). Several Lebanon experts have claimed that the civil war was is in essence a fight between Rightist and Leftist movements, who had diverging views on the country's economic future (e.g. S. Nasr 1978; N. Hourani 2010; 2015; Traboulsi 2014; Gilmour 1984). The ebbing and flowing of economic prosperity, a prosperity that was not equally distributed, therefore opened and closed opportunities for social movement mobilisation (cf. Tarrow 2011, 29, 33).

It is important to assess both above-mentioned dynamics in relation to *transnational factors*, in which foreign influences can put additional opportunities and strains on sectarianization processes. This viewpoint builds on the notion that foreign (as well as domestic) allies and opponents are important in spurring mobilisation (e.g. Tarrow 1988: 429; Meyer and Minkoff 2004: 1478; Troost van, Klandermans, and Stekelenburg van 2018: 457). Particularly in Lebanon, foreign alliances are critical components for analysis, as Lebanon is regularly portrayed as a playground for other countries or as a microcosm for geopolitical powerplays (Khalaf 2012). Allies, in this case, are understood as foreign players that form ideological, political or economic alliances with social movements (Kriesi et al. 1995: 53), while opponents work against the manifestation of (continued) mobilisation.

Lastly, all grievances are connected to *security concerns*, in which sectarian/religious understandings of past events, economic affairs and political allies will be analysed. Rather than treating concern as a constraint or as the flipside of political opportunity, the grievances that flow from security concerns will be treated as relational factors whose dynamics can greatly influence how social movements act in a variety of conflict situations (Goldstone and Tilly 2001, 181; Tarrow 2011, 160). Opportunities and constraints can direct mobilisation processes, but they do not determine them. The activation of violent mobilisation is dependent upon the interpretation of contextual factors, of which security concerns compose an important one (W. Gamson and Meyer 1996, 275).

As implicit in all of the above-mentioned layers of POS, opportunities and constraints are both interpreted as well as crafted by movement entrepreneurs and followers. Sidney Tarrow (2011, 12), writes in the introduction to *Power in Movement:*

"objective" opportunities [do not] automatically trigger episodes of contentious politics or social movements, regardless of what people think or feel. Individuals need to perceive political opportunities and to be emotionally engaged by their claims if they are to be induced to participate in possibly risky and certainly costly collective actions; and they need to perceive constraints if they are to hesitate to take such actions

In other words, we need to distinguish between what Tarrow refers to as "objective" reality and the militia movements' social construction of that reality. Real changes in POS do not influence the actuality of movements unless associated members are aware of the existence of these opportunities and feel as if they can bring about change within these structures (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 46–50). Structural opportunities are filtered through a process of 'cognitive liberation', constructing visions for possible social mobilisation (McAdam 1982, 48–51).

In making this interpretivist deliberation more explicit, this research will incorporate the theory of framing. The notion of framing, originally derived from the work of Erving Goffman (1974), is instrumental to SMT. Early forays of the framing perspective perceived of social movements as navigators in a complex social world, focussing on the manners in which movement leaders articulated problems, solutions and motivations for mobilisation. Johnston and Klandermans (1995, 218) later critiqued the traditional and largely rational perspective for excluding ideology and culture. Instead, they described social movements as ideological and cultural carriers as well as being partial reflections of social structures, with the caveat, Oliver and Johnston (2000, 48) added, that frames are under continual revision due to new occurrences, experiences and social interactions. With these reflections, focus shifted from social structure to the cognitive appraisal of structure (e.g. Benford and Snow 2000, 613–14; Snow et al. 1986, 477).

The core framing task is thereby action-oriented, in that it is intended to mobilise potential and loyal supporters within a structural setting (Benford and Snow 2000: 614-615). There are three stages to the process of frame analysis. Snow and Benford (1988) defined these three steps as the (1) diagnostic, (2) prognostic, and (3) motivational dimensions of framing. Diagnostic frames facilitate consensus mobilisation, by identifying certain structural events, features of social life or governmental systems as problematic/unjust and in desperate need of change (Snow and Byrd 2007, 124–26). In the diagnostic phase, the wrongs of the existing social structures are elaborated. For example, political inequality is identified through leadership speeches or economic grievances are protested in the streets. Prognostic framing involves the search for a solution, hypothesising new patterns of social conduct, postulating novel ways of regulating inter-group relations, and articulating a renewed consensus on power (Snow and Byrd 2007, 126–28). The security situation, for instance, can be framed as needing improvement, or foreign influence can be portrayed as necessary or illegitimate.

Motivational framing entails the "elaboration of a call to arms or rationale for action that goes beyond the diagnosis and prognosis" (Snow and Benford 1988, 202). Strategies of

mobilisation are also referred to as 'repertoires of contention',[6] and can be defined as the "whole set of means [a group] has for making claims of different types on different individuals" (Tilly 1986: 2). Here the focus lies on perceptions of repertoires of contention. In order for frames and their proposed repertoires to resonate with the lived experiences of social movement followers, they need to be endowed with complex cultural knowledge and emotional intelligence (Aminzade and McAdam 2001, 34). As such, repertoires are finite, constrained in both time and space. They are by-products of everyday experiences (Tilly 2003: 45) and rooted in the myths and heroes of the past (Della Porta and Diani 2005: 78). The mobilisation towards violence, in this case, can be actualised through legitimisation processes, including religious histories or secular myths.

The empirical data that is analysed from the viewpoint on these theoretical foundations will look into how militia movements perceived the problems and solutions to conflict (including the socio-political structures, economic grievances, foreign influence and security concerns), and whether and how religion featured within the associated diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames. The combination of POS with framing thereby provide the required tools needed to assess the subjectively interpreted macro-structures in which militia movements evolved as contesting forces.

3.2. Militia Leaders

Through communal linkages, such as a social movement, social life emerges, becoming socially real and normatively articulated (Smelser 1997, 32; cf. Elder-Vass 2004). Leaders, who have the mediated power to influence the direction of movements, typically head the articulation and organisation of these forms of social life. This section seeks to explore the theoretical tools needed to analyse the role of militia leadership in the mobilisation towards violence, building on the social movement sub-theory of RM as well as the psychometric of IC, borrowed from the field of social psychology.

Firstly, we will look at the theoretical constructs that can guide research to the level of resource mobilisation. Five different, though partially overlapping, resources (moral, cultural, social-organisational, material and human) will be introduced, while their relation to the religious will be both sought and questioned. Particular attention will be paid to the human resource of militia leadership and their conceivable connections to religious authorities. Secondly, the framing perspective will be revisited, but bringing it to a new height by steering attention to IC in order to investigate the complexity that underlies the speech acts articulated by militia leaders. Framing

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[6] Repertoires of contention are about strategy as well as behaviour. This dissertation will mainly focus on the framing processes behind contentious strategies (and thus less on actual behaviour).

allows for the differentiation between specific religious and non-religious ideas, by way of exploring in which textual and verbal manner problems, solutions and calls for action are framed. IC will provide tools of comparison by focussing on the structures in which religious and non-religious ideas are presented, the analytics of which go beyond the ideas as such, concentrating on the relative complexity of argumentation. This procedure adds an innovative and quantitative perspective to the study of ideas in social movements. With this theoretical cross-fertilisation, the thesis will be venturing into new grounds.

Together these perspectives enable comparative and empirical assessments on the militia leadership level, taking a constructivist approach to the instrumentalisation of religious resources and speech. Corresponding to chapter 6 and 7 the sub-research questions are:

- How did militia leaders interact with possible religious authorities for the purpose of violent mobilisation? How did religious resources (including moral, cultural, social-organisational, material and human resources) influence the mobilisation towards violence compared to non-religious counterparts?

- How did the structure of frames and their relative complexity influence the mobilisation towards violence? To what extent can we say that the religiously oriented idea-structures presented by militia leaders were less rational and/or more socially divisive compared to non-religious idea-structures?

3.2.1. Militia Leaders and Resource Mobilisation

Among those scholars who envision there to be firm links between religion and violence, there is an assumption that the tangible and intangible resources made available through religious figures, infrastructures and institutions enable religiously associated social movements to mobilise more efficiently and grow into more destructive forces compared to non-religious counterparts (e.g. Fox 1999; 1997; Toft 2007). In SMT, resources have typically been evaluated in rational and structural terms, while more recent work has started to assess resources in more dynamic and relational manners (Della Porta and Diani 2005, 15–16), explaining differences in access across and within groups (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, 118). In building upon these works, Bob Edwards and John McCarthy developed a fivefold typology on RM, differentiating between moral, cultural, social-organisational, material and human resources (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). This broad conceptualisation takes us beyond narrow economic perspectives (e.g. Lin 2002; Putman 1995).

Moral resources include legitimacy, solidarity and support (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, 125–26). Of these resources, legitimacy has received the most attention, as it links the structural

contexts with organisational processes and affective dynamics. The resource of legitimacy can be powerful, as it can sanction particular kinds of action, while censuring others (e.g. violence and non-violence). Moral resources tend to originate outside a social movement (e.g. legitimacy is often bestowed by external sources, e.g. religious leadership);[7] nevertheless, some social movements succeed in the difficult task of creating moral resources in their own right (e.g. by creating sources that have the power to grant legitimacy).[8] Social movements, Golhasani (2016, 2) maintains, are more prone to employ existing resources as they can more intuitively capture existing solidary incentives, tapping into existing identifications and loyalties. Regularly, this has proven a more effective and efficient strategy compared to the complicated and costly mass communication techniques needed to create new sources.[9]

Cultural resources are defined as "artefacts and cultural products such as conceptual tools and specialised knowledge that have become widely, though not necessarily universally, known" (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, 126). Cultural resources are set apart from moral resources in that the former is more readily available and accessible than the latter. The cultural category includes repertoires of contention, organisational templates and technical or strategic know-how (Oliver and Marwell 1992, 251). Repertoires of contention, to name just one of the elements listed, are cultural because they are shaped by the shared subculture of social movement members (rather than an external or crafted source), informing them about what repertoires are available, practical, and, not least important, which are considered to be right (Della Porta et al. 2017, 11). Some repertoires might not even be considered as resources for mobilisation, as their moral implications are considered culturally wrong (e.g. is the practice of suicide attacks permissible?). Cultural resources are tied to both moral resources and larger frames of interpretation.

Social-organisational resources deal with spreading the message of a social movement, which can take shape through newly established or pre-existing infrastructures (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, 127). Examples include the distribution of newspapers, flyers and radio broadcasts as well as hosting community meetings. The SMT literature has pointed towards the importance of social-organisational resources for successful social mobilisation (e.g. Jenkins and Perrow 2009; Amenta et al. 2009). Although there are books on the Lebanese militias' use and spread of these resources (e.g. Maasri 2008; Jabre 2012), none of them employed a SMT framework. A systematic

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[7] For example, by referring to the established sources of Tanakh, Bible, or Quran.

[8] For example, think about how the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant built upon the established source of the Quran, while issuing an extensive body of *fatwas* that defined behavioural norms and values in a contemporary setting (Uddin 2017).

[9] Though this observation might be critiqued for being too rational.

analysis of social-organisational resources could bring valuable knowledge to the study of social mobilisation across diversely oriented militia movements.

Fourthly, "the category of material resources combines what economists would call financial and physical capital, including monetary resources, property, office space, equipment, and supplies" (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, 128). Of those, money has received most consideration, predominantly because money is a necessity for any movement. The bills need to be paid. As social movements often emerge within and with the help of indigenous institutions and organisations (Morris and Staggenborg 2004, 184), it is important to analyse the possible material resources made available through pre-existing religious and secular institutions. Additionally, it has to be asked whether these resources included spatial variations, in which the militias in some geographical locations were better able to access resources than others (e.g. urban versus rural).

Lastly, social movements are in need of human resources, that can come in the form of labour, skills, experience and expertise (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, 127–28). Through social movement participation members make their resources available. It is important to keep in mind that participation and commitment are co-shaped by spatial and economic factors, social relationships, competing obligations, and, not least important, personal considerations and motivations. Leadership is also included in the category of human resources (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, 127). In some ways and in some circumstances, leadership can be become the embodiment of the intangible moral resources mentioned above. Although the leadership role in social movements is regarded as significant, it has not always been adequately theorised (Morris and Staggenborg 2004, 171). By explicitly incorporating leadership into the framework of RM, Edward and McCarthy place the leader within the wider SMT framework (Edwards and McCarthy 2004, 136). Movement leaders, in this case, are defined "as strategic decision-makers who inspire and organize others to participate in social movements" (Morris and Staggenborg 2004, 171).

Leaders, trying to hold on to their source of power, attempt to maintain and possibly boost the image of threat (Herriot 2007, 115). For as long as there is a threat, there is a need for leaders to herd movements to change. Their subjective role is therefore the emergent product of relational factors. Leaders are in themselves a human resource, while they can mediate moral resources (e.g. religious or ideological legitimacy) and encourage the activation of cultural resources (e.g. repertoires of contention), drawing on social-organisational (e.g. newspapers and flyers) and material resources (e.g. money). Subsequently, comparing the leadership roles and positions of the diverging militias active in the Lebanese civil war can prove important in tying together several strands of resources, while placing them in their larger structural context. Additionally, it provides

a systematic way to analyse whether resources were connected to and constrained by religious sources of power and influence.

3.2.2. Militia Leaders and Integrative Complexity

Social movement leaders typically dominate the most visible parts of the framing field, communicating their views on the social structural constraints and opportunities out there. The content of frames informs about the possible direction of conflict, by focussing on inside understandings of the issues at stake and repertoires of contention connected to perceived solutions. But the substance of verbal and textual thoughts do not necessarily result in participation (McAdam 1986), as the power of an idea is not only linked to content but equally to the context in which it is expressed (Swidler 1986) and its structural representation (Suedfeld, Leighton, and Conway 2005). While context can be made interpretable through a wider SMT perspective, this section seeks to explore the impact of the structural presentations of ideas on the social mobilisation towards violence through the quantitative social psychological perspective of IC.

At first glance, the phrase 'the structural presentation of ideas' might seem vague or even irrelevant. However, the structures in which ideas are presented are in particular literatures associated with the (de-)escalation of violence. Academics frequently warn that when religious speech is articulated in theatres of war this is likely to be done in less complex argument structures, exhibiting black-and-white articulations on the social world. In turn, this is linked to more divisive comprehensions of communitarian compositions and a greater likelihood of violent engagement compared to non-religious speech counterparts. Toft, for example, argues that religious actors (or states) are less rational in their calculation of war efforts (Toft 2007, 101). Hoffman reiterates this idea, describing the motives of "religious terrorists" as "first and foremost a sacramental act or divine duty" (Hoffman 2006, 88). This transcendental motivation, Hoffman expands, results in the perpetrators of violence to be less calculated in their "political, moral or practical" considerations (Hoffman 2006, 88). Juergensmeyer repeats these ideas, but adds that religious worldviews have the unique capacity to divide communities, setting the scene for an ultimate cosmic war (Juergensmeyer 2003, 145–63).

The claim that the religious creeds and motivations that lead to violence are less rational than equivalent secular motivations carries significant social and political consequences; [10] nevertheless, the manner in which this distinction is drawn remains elusive. This section will present a theoretical tool which can structurally cross-examine the role of religious and non-

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[10] All scholars mentioned here have provided descriptively rich data but failed to present their readers with analytical reflections. Nevertheless, they have come to represent a central voice in the religious violence/terrorism literature.

religious rationality and cognitive complexity in the speech associated with violent mobilisation. A systematic analysis is achieved through the appliance of the cognitive psychometric of IC. [11] IC is an empirical, quantified, peer-reviewed, cross-culturally validated measure of the complexity of thinking (Nemr and Savage 2019, 2). The incorporation of the social psychological approach of IC into the overarching framework of SMT is pursued for three different reasons. Firstly, as IC is not measured against the content of an idea but against its structure, it provides a different angle to belief compared to SMT. Secondly, the psychometric can provide insight into the activation of behaviour, a dynamic that SMT struggles to analytically assess. Lastly, the IC approach allows for a more systematic and comparative analysis on religious and non-religious beliefs structures. All in all, IC analysis provides a stimulating and invaluable additional tool to the study of ideas in social movements.

Over the last three decades a rich and sustained body of literature surrounding IC took shape in the realm of political psychology (Suedfeld 2010; Suedfeld, Leighton, and Conway 2005). This knowledge has also been applied in the social psychology of religion and the study of extremism (Jose Liht, Savage, and Williams 2013; Savage, Liht, and Williams 2012). IC is a measure of the cognitive structure that underlies information processing (Suedfeld 2010). IC has two components: (a) differentiation (the acknowledgement of more than one relevant view or dimension on a topic), and (b) integration (the recognition of relationships between the differentiated items; e.g. through interaction, incorporation, synthesis or trade-off within a higher level system) (Suedfeld, Cross, and Brcic 2011: 1009). IC can be quantitatively studied and scored[12] (Baker-Brown et al. 1992: 401-418) in order to monitor or track changes in complexity of thought.

Suedfeld and colleagues have shown that complexity in thought manifests in behaviour (Suedfeld, Cross, and Brcic 2011: 1010). High IC is associated with problem solving, fine distinctions, flexibility and an extensive information search and usage (Suedfeld and Tetlock 1977: 169) which can result in higher levels of rationality. Low IC is manifested through social tension, gross distinctions, rigidity and a limited usage of information (José Liht, Suedfeld, and Krawczyk 2005; Suedfeld, Guttieri, and Tetlock 2003), indicating higher levels of social divisiveness. Decades of research have demonstrated that fluctuations in IC levels are strong psychological predictors of violence and inter-group conflict, including ideologically motivated conflict (Nemr and Savage 2019, 2). As shown in more than three hundred articles, a significant decrease in the IC of social movement leaders involved in intergroup conflict constitutes a stable indicator of ensuing war endeavours within weeks (Suedfeld and Tetlock 1977; Suedfeld, Leighton, and Conway 2005;

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[11] For a more detailed explanation see chapter 7.
[12] More details on the scoring practices and considerations of IC are provided in Chapter 7.

Suedfeld and Leighton 2002; Guttieri, Wallace, and Suedfeld 1995). Studies have additionally shown that extremist ideologies that adopt violence are even lower in complexity than non-violent extremist ideologies (Nemr and Savage 2019, 2).

Suedfeld (2010) has noted that decreases in IC preceding conflict may reflect the increased levels of stress associated with a developing crisis; such as the perceived threat to important values (see also Tetlock 1986), an alleged attack on a social identity or lifestyle (Jose Liht, Savage, and Williams 2013, 37–38), the hostile activities of the 'other' (see also Holsti 1972), or, a leader's inability to continue the exploration of negotiated settlements due to the exhaustion of cognitive resources (Suedfeld 2010, 1989). Alternatively, Suedfeld debates, "the decision to go to war may be arrived at through complex information processing, but the decision itself may make further resource investment in such a process unnecessary" (Suedfeld 2010, 1690). To avoid cognitive dissonance, an actor might (consciously or unconsciously) lower complexity of thought, thereby affirming rather than questioning the call to war. In addition to Suedfeld's observations, portraying the social world in more black-and-white terminologies could be perceived as a more effective cognitive strategy for social mobilisation. Through social divisiveness, seen through a lens of binary categorisation, the in-group is seemingly naturally pitted against an out-group. On an emotional level, it is easier to fight the all bad rather than the partially bad. Although this reflection is worth consideration, it might be difficult to relate an unconscious cognition to calculated strategic intent.

In one seminal study the enduring conflict between Israel and the Arab states was tracked through the study of UN speeches (Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Ramirez 1977). Complexity of information processing was significantly reduced in speeches made in the months preceding the start of war; in 1948 when the Arab coalition attacked the newly established state of Israel; in 1956 before the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of the Suez Canal area; in 1967 before the Six-Day War; and in 1973 before the October War. Another drop was recorded at the end of the data collection period in 1977. Consequently, the authors predicted another period of violence (Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Ramirez 1977, 427). Indeed, a few months after the publication of the article, Israel launched the 'Operation Litani' incursion into Lebanon.

Although the basic components of IC have been well documented over the last decades, there remain some common misconceptions that need clarification at the outset of this work. Firstly, high IC is not intrinsically more advantageous. Whereas the costs of low IC include biases, overlooking trade-offs, vulnerability to conflict and lack of empathy; the benefits are that low IC provides quick responses to crises while minimising cognitive dissonance. In acute or threatening situations - e.g. when a car is speeding your way - it is of no adaptive value to ponder the alternative options available before jumping to safety. Certain situations demand quick and rigid choices

(Suedfeld 1986, 8). Similarly, high IC is double-edged. Indeed it fosters awareness of trade-offs, minimises biases and seeks for negotiated solutions; nevertheless it is time consuming, causes cognitive strains, promotes 'passing the buck' and can result in indecisiveness (Tetlock and Boettger 1989, 388).

A second misreading concerns the object of reference. IC measures the structure of thought, not its content (Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Streufert 1992, 393). Structure here entails an author's ability to structurally differentiate and integrate between different perspectives. In other words, IC is interested in *how* people think, not *what* they think. Any particular idea, belief or thought can be expressed at any level of cognitive complexity. No political, religious, or ideological opinion is inherently low or high in IC. We therefore cannot set aside certain ideologies as less cognitively complex (as is frequently insinuated with religious ideologies). Mainly because of this vantage point, IC seems particularly well equipped to facilitate the comparative study of religious and non-religious movements.

Although the content of an idea does not affect complexity levels, we could say that individuals may be prone to think more simply about any set of beliefs to the extent that maintaining those beliefs or values are central to their identity (Pancer et al. 1995, 229). Social and existential anxieties, for example, can yield the perceived need for the dogmatic interpretation of belief. The dogmatisation of belief can provide a more stable ground for cognition in an uncertain situation. This is an important consideration for conflict/war settings.

A third fallacy involves the impression that higher IC can be equated with higher morality. The contrary is exemplified in the different stances towards slavery in mid nineteen-century America (Tetlock, Armor, and Peterson 1994). Political moderates, who tried to negotiate between the values of human freedom and the preservation of the Union, who thereby, as a compromise, were willing to condone slavery in some parts of the United States, demonstrated higher levels of IC compared to abolitionists, who firmly insisted on the instant and total elimination of slavery. Echoing the above-mentioned point: IC concerns structure, not content. As such, IC cannot be equated with morality.

Fourthly, IC is not only derived from stable personality traits. IC fluctuates in accordance with a number of factors, including cognitive capacity, time setting, content domain, social (in)security and external constraints (Tetlock, Peterson, and Lerner 1996; Meyer and Minkoff 2004; Atran and Ginges 2012; Klandermans 1984; W. Gamson 1991). Judges of the Supreme Court, for instance, might employ high IC reasoning in work related cases, while arguments with their spouse can still elicit sharp IC reductions. Similarly, times of peace may allow for higher levels of cognitive complexity, while stressors in times of war often produce lower levels of complexity (Suedfeld,

Tetlock, and Ramirez 1977, 427).

Lastly, it is important to recognise that the functioning of our brain is partially dependent on categorisations and simplifications (Savage 2008a, 85–87). We categorise all objects we encounter in order to identify and understand them; for this we use schemas and stereotypes. We also categorise people with the aim of comprehending the social environment. We assign people to certain groups in the hopes of predicting their behaviour. In a similar vein we define appropriate behaviour for ourselves, adjusting and tailoring it to 'our' group (Tajfel and Turner 1979, 34–35). Although categorisation is part and parcel of resourceful and efficient cognition, "there is nothing inevitable about the particular categories, or the content of those categories, which are relied upon in any instance" (Augoustinos and Walker 1998, 648). Likewise, there is nothing inevitable about the structural components of any such categorisation; although POS, available resources and repertoires of contention might influence directions.

In sum, the frames that are uttered by social movement leaders to mobilise their constituencies towards violence should not only be analysed in content, but also in structural presentation. Whereas, the content of ideas might shed light on the direction of behaviour, structure will enlighten the likelihood of the activation of behaviour. Together they answer when and why social mobilisation takes place, and how religious and non-religious beliefs influence processes of action orientation and action activation. Analysing the rationality and complexity levels of the idea structures of diverging social movement orientations can provide valuable insight to discriminate the risks of religious and non-religious speech. Given that all human beings at times display low IC in response to certain stimuli, we need to contextualise the instances in which these occur. Some contexts can be particularly receptive for high or low IC reasoning, instances that SMT can help identify.

3.3. Militants

The critical realist approach adopted, emphasises the importance of paying attention to the parts that make up the whole. In our case this means assessing the testimonies of the social movement members that make up the social movement. Through the voices of militia and religious leaders as well as lower-ranking militants, a more dynamic and intimate take on the mobilisation towards violence can be crafted. Especially some more recent works have highlighted the importance of micro-level analysis when researching social movements and/or 'religious violence' (e.g. Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001; Aminzade et al. 2001; Flam and King 2005; Hegghammer 2017; Clauss and Friedman 2018). These studies, amongst others, have contributed to a better visibility of identity and emotions and bestowed the necessary legitimacy on research dedicated to micro-

dynamics. This is an important stride in the study of social movements, Eyerman (2005, 41) argues, as affective elements put the 'move' into the social *move*ment.

This thesis will not exhaust all the micro-perspectives available; instead it will focus attention on two key micro-dynamics: identity formation and emotions. Both are inherently connected to framing processes, as they are believed to shape perceptions of reality and commitment to social action (Della Porta and Diani 2005; W. Gamson 1992; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 41). Frame analysis allows for the assessment of the attribution of affection and identity, a process that lies at the root to any build-up to conflict and underlines the cognitive elements of culture (Della Porta and Diani 2005, 73–85), creating a sturdier consideration vis-à-vis agency. Identity and emotions are not only indirectly connected through framing, they are also directly connected to each other. Social identity influences the manners in which we feel about the world, and emotions guide social identification.

The dual-focus of the militant section is pursued for two main reasons. Firstly, both identities and emotions are important components contributing to movement mobilisation and members' continued engagement in violent activities (Goodwin and Jasper 1999, 50). Second, religion has the potential to root social identity, attributing a sense of belonging and meaning, while religious ideas can manage the emotions associated with the high-risk environment of a civil war, including the fear of death, the sadness/anger felt after the loss of loved ones, and the mental preparations to kill. These mechanisms will be explored, while their uniqueness in comparison to non-religious equivalents will be questioned.

It is important to note that identities and emotions do not exclusively belong to the realm of micro-politics; instead they affect and are affected by macro- and meso-dynamics. Few social movement theorists have interacted with identity and emotion on a relational level (a notable exception includes Gould 2004, 172). The connections and relations between the analytical levels are in particular what I seek to shed light on. In order to prevent a cacophony of diverging identity and emotional fields, only a handful of interest areas are pursued, which are selected to fit the case study of the Lebanese civil war and the quest to identify possible religious markers within a larger meso- and macro-context. The two inroads of exploration (matching the themes of chapters 8 and 9) seek to answer the following sub-research questions:

- To what extent did religious identities play into individual mobilisation processes towards violent engagement? To what extent do religious identities result in more socially divisive perceptions on the social world and the conflict compared to secular or non-religious identities?

- To what extent does religion play a regulating role in managing the negative emotions associated with high-risk violent mobilisation? In particular, how are the emotions elicited by the proximity of death mediated by religious versus non-religious norms, rules and roles?

3.3.1. Militants and Social Identity

Social movement theorists have turned to social identity[13] to fill the gaps left behind by meso- and macro-level research on social movements. According to Francesca Polletta and James Jasper, social identity has often been treated as an alternative to structural accounts on why people mobilise and participate in social movements (Polletta and Jasper 2001, 283). This section will elaborate on the theory of social identity, which is seen as one of the relational elements that contribute to the emergence of the social mobilisation towards violence (cf. Post 2007; Jones 2015). To avoid overextension of the concept, social identity will be defined as "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution" (Polletta and Jasper 2001, 285). It is a perception of a shared relation or identity marker (Flam 2005, 24), which may be imagined rather than experienced directly. Social identity is not a context-free or intellectual act but internalises ethical, philosophical, religious and political commitments arising from the culture people live in and the social movements they are part of. Or, as critical realist Margaret Archer puts it:

> We do not make our personal identities under the circumstances of our own choosing. Our placement in society rebounds upon us, affecting the persons we become, but also and more forcefully influencing the social identities which we can achieve (Archer, quoted in Elder-Vass 2011: 103)

In line with this reasoning we understand that macro-structures and settings (e.g. the sectarian organisation of the Lebanese political system) as well as meso-dynamics (e.g. religious or secular ideologies of militia movements) can have a significant effect on how people come to perceive themselves and their social surroundings. Social psychologists argue that social structures both rebound upon and ground our experiences. Social identity grounds us by creating a feeling of belonging (Hogg and Vaughan 2008: 125), boosting self-esteem (Tajfel 1974; Davie 2013), while protecting against self-definitional uncertainty (Tajfel and Turner 1979; Turner 1987). Self-proclaimed fighters of God, for example, find strength, esteem and meaning in their belief of being chosen by God (Herriot 2007, 118). They fight for God and in His name. Concurrently, social

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[13] Others employ the term 'collective identity' (e.g. Polletta and Jasper 2001; Gongaware 2011).

movements, of all sorts, try to re-socialise their potential members. They teach their members emotional rules in regard to themselves and others (Brewer 2001, 19), for example, by building on religious or secular creed, rhetoric and symbolism (Erikson 2001, 58).

But social structures also rebound upon identity formations by being co-dependent on external sources that are not of an actor's own choosing. For instance, in times of perceived affluence (experienced through political opportunity, social approval and personal affirmation), people are likely to adopt multiple – and at times more fluid – social identities (e.g. Shia *and* Lebanese *and* leftist), resulting in a more diverse network of social relations and a more complex set of values (Nemr and Savage 2019, 2). Conversely, in times of perceived threat, such as a civil war, the complexity of a social identity tends to decrease (Roccas and Brewer 2002, 88). One identity is affirmed above all others, which can result in a decrease of value-complexity (e.g. religious ideals are valued over national sentiments or socio-economic principles), which, as argued above, can predict the likelihood of violence to ensue (Tetlock 1986). Social psychologists refer to these natural alternations as Social Identity Complexity (Roccas and Brewer 2002).

In the case of the Lebanese civil war, sectarian identities came to dominate national identities (e.g. Druze above Lebanese), while sectarian identities became more narrowly expressed (e.g. Maronite Christians rather than Christian) (Salibi 2003: 216-218). The literature tells us that if social identity becomes more exclusive and salient, it is more likely to effect the adherent's mindset in a wide variety of situations, directing cognition and behaviour (Herriot 2007, 117). Narrow identity formations are prone to affect the allocation of trust and feelings of belonging, re-directing positive emotional resources to an increasingly constricted in-group (Brewer 2001, 21). I will look into the emotional significance of loyalty within these new social formations. Loyalty, is, as Simmel (1999) argues, among the main emotions cementing social relations and contributes to the transformation of identities into institutions. This resembles the idea of Weber, who characterises loyalty as intrinsic to systems of domination, interpreting it as an effect of an already ongoing institutionalisation in which loyalty aids in the submission of the powerless to the powerful (Weber 1930, 99). I will explore the role of religious and non-religious identity and loyalty in regard to diverse militia movements.

Social identity is often pitted against an imagined out-group, a constructed 'other', who is assessed by a different set of emotions. Fear, distrust and anger are regularly directed towards these 'others', blaming them for the lack of physical and emotional safety. The ritual of social comparison is important, Herriot (2007, 111) maintains, as "social comparison with other groups enable members to differentiate their own social identity clearly. The more clear and distinct their identity, the less uncertainty they feel about themselves". Writers on 'religious violence', including Ranstorp,

Hoffman and Juergensmeyer, perceive religion as being uniquely capable of conveying to militants that they are 'morally pure' (Ranstorp 1996, 54)*, while they are fighting a group of 'infidels', 'unbelievers' or 'children of Satan' (Hoffman 1995, 273), within the setting of a cosmic war (Juergensmeyer 2003, 145–63). Depersonalisation, to the extent of the dehumanisation of 'them' and the glorification of 'us', enables this process. Increasingly, an all-good 'us' is pitted against an all-bad 'them'.

In chapter 8, drawing on interview data with militants engaged in violent battle, I will analyse the extent to which religious identities played a role in mobilisation processes and whether differences can be observed between militants inspired by religion and those inspired by non-religious ideas and ideologies.

3.3.2. *Militants and Emotions*

Although the study of identities is becoming increasingly common within SMT, the study of emotions remains marginal (exceptions include Goodwin and Pfaff 2001; Jasper and Poulsen 1995; Gould 2004; Gunning and Baron 2013). In these writings, emotions are understood as structurally generated as well as socially constructed (Summers-Effler 2005, 136). Cognition, symbols, and culture set the stage for the social interactions that create the emotional aspects of social movements; in turn the emotions within a social movement have significant cognitive, symbolic, and cultural implications (Summers-Effler 2005, 137; cf. Weiss 2018). Of interest are the many ways in which social movements re-define dominant feelings.[14] In the next section we will, once again, walk through the three stages of framing, this time connecting framing activities to emotional dynamics. It has to be more widely recognised that the social incentives that flow from these 'framing activities' include strong emotional components (V. Taylor and Whittier 1995; Goodwin and Jasper 2004). "Every cognitive frame implies emotional framing", Flam argues (Flam 2005, 24; cf. Clauss and Friedman 2018, 6–7). The inclusion of emotions thereby adds significant depth and triangulation to the study of violent mobilisation.

Diagnostic frames, the first of the three framing components, not only attribute blame and responsibility, they also direct anger, instigating fear or sowing mistrust (Snow et al. 1986, 477; Snow 2004, 395; Flam 2005, 24). In order for a frame to resonate with a social movement member, narratives[15] have to connect with personal feelings and experiences, making framing inherently intimate and personal (Young 2001, 99–114). Social movement members are encouraged to re-appropriate the negative feelings of anger, making it an energiser for the powerless (Flam 2005, 26;

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[14] The terms 'emotions' and 'feelings' are used interchangeably.
[15] The terms 'frames' and 'narratives' are used interchangeably.

Glazer 1999, 289–91). Or, as Gamson puts it, it is the "hot emotions" that "put fire in the belly and iron in the soul" (W. Gamson 1992, 32). Prognostic framing includes attempts to find new ways of defining the world. Revisions of world/societal order almost necessarily contain strong utopian dimensions, transmitting emotions like hope, loyalty, perseverance and commitment (Della Porta and Diani 2005, 77; Aminzade and McAdam 2001, 31–32). These frames produce a new sense of collective solidarity, one that favours collective action (Della Porta and Diani 2005: 78-79). From this vantage point, framing strongly connects with identity-building (Gamson 1992: 84-109).

Thirdly, and most important for our considerations here, motivational framing involves the construction of 'vocabularies of motive' (Mills 1940, 904) that offer encouragements for action by overcoming the fear of risk and death concurrent with collective action in the theatre of war (a topic curiously understudied, exceptions include Snow and Byrd 2007, 128–30; Gunning and Baron 2013, 204–11). Over thirty years of experimental research in the field of Terror Management Theory (TMT) – a field that is closely connected to social psychology – has shown that reminders of mortality can cause social and existential anxiety (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, and Solomon 1986; Griffin 2012, 28–30). A shift from personal to social identity, as we have seen in the previous section, might prove an important psychological strategy to reduce associated fears (Castano 2004, 376). People might romanticise their commitment to the group, causing a social clinging and group glorification (Jonas and Fischer 2006, 554). Simultaneously, individuals might start to treat their worldviews as absolute, reducing the complexities of their social world (equalling a reduction in IC) (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, and Solomon 1986, 189). Through these academic engagements TMT bridges a wide range of academic disciplines, tying together some of the SMT inroads detailed above.

At its core, TMT maintains that cultures have developed symbolic conceptions of reality that help individuals in managing the terror of death (Greenberg et al. 1992, 212).

> Culture minimizes this anxiety by providing a conception of the universe (cultural worldview) that imbues the world with order, meaning, and permanence; by providing a set of standards of valued behavior that, if satisfied, provide self-esteem; and by promising protection and, ultimately, death transcendence to those who fulfill the standards of value (Greenberg et al. 1992, 212)

When the cultural worldviews and standards of the in-group are upheld, they confer self-esteem and meaning to individuals (Savage 2008b). "Although we typically take our cultural worldview for

granted", Solomon et al maintain, "it is actually a fragile human construction that people spend great energy creating, maintaining, and defending" (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015, 9). When perceived to be under threat, people will go to great lengths to defend their cultural worldview, thereby seeking to uphold feelings of belonging, meaning and esteem.

The same can be said of religious worldviews. They transfer a sense of order to the world, presenting their adherents with a set of norms and values that manage against social and self-existential uncertainty. Nevertheless, in line with common perceptions on the 'religious violence' debate, several authors of TMT have maintained that there is something that sets religious worldviews apart from non-religious worldviews:

> Religion serves to manage the potential terror engendered by the uniquely human awareness of death by affording a sense of psychological security and hope of immortality. Although secular beliefs can also serve a terror management function, religious beliefs are particularly well suited to mitigate death anxiety because they are all encompassing, rely on concepts that are not easily disconfirmed, and promise literal immortality (Vail et al. 2010, 84)

Religions have the potential to provide all-encompassing protective frames to manage the fear of death, for example, through the promise of salvation – i.e. afterlife, reincarnation, soul, or nirvana (Jonas and Fischer 2006, 553; Omelicheva 2016, 145). Different religious orientations provide unique benefits and costs for their adherents in managing the terror of death (see James 1902).

Omelicheva reminds us, however, that religious ideas and praxis are malleable, answering to the needs of the time (Omelicheva 2016, 145). In other words, the centrality of salvation and the mediation of death can become more important in stressing times, for instance, through the disorder of a civil war. In one study, it was demonstrated how Iranian students in relatively peaceful situations strongly preferred fellow students who claimed that Islam was a peaceful religion. However, when reminded of death, these same students shifted their preferences to peers who advocated for divinely ordained martyrdom missions (Pyszczynski et al. 2006). Our preferences and needs fluctuate with time and setting. Religion, in this regard, does not escape the practice of interpretation. Of course, the same holds true for non-religious beliefs and praxes, which can similarly be reinvented within changing social situations (Griffin 2012, 47–66).

When stressors become high, religions have the power to promise a perception of 'literal immortality', which is the promise that some vital aspect of the self will survive death (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015, 84, 122, 221). People have pursued literal immortality, for

example, because of beliefs about living on in heaven, paradise or through reincarnation (Vail et al. 2010, 85). Non-religious beliefs can only provide 'symbolic immortality', "whereby people construe themselves as valuable and enduring parts of an eternal natural or social entity greater than themselves" (e.g. being internalised in the 'red cause' or dying for one's country) (Vail et al. 2010, 85).

> This is why we strive to be part of meaningful groups and have a lasting impact on the world – whether through our creative works of art or science, through the buildings and people named after us, through the possessions and genes we pass on to our children, or through the memories others hold of us … We "live on" symbolically through our work, through the people we have known, through the memorials marking our graves, and through our progeny (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015, 8)

Solomon et al. argue that although the belief in symbolic immortality protects us from the notion that we are merely purposeless animals that no longer exist upon death, it might not provide as strong a stamina for violent mobilisation in comparison to those that believe in literal immortality. In chapter 9 this observation will be critically examined through the analysis of interview data with militants, who identified with different militia movements and who maintained different religious or non-religious ideas concerning the meaning of death.

4. Conclusion

The theoretical framework set out above enables researchers to systematically engage with the 'religious violence' debate, laying the groundwork to compare and contrast religious and non-religious social movements in their move towards violent engagement. The framework systematised and operationalised ways to explore the emergent properties of religion in the social mobilisation towards violence at the level of the militia movements, militia leaders and militants. At the same time the interactive, reciprocal, and emerging relationship between these analytical levels was emphasised. On the one hand, CR helps in making sense of connections and relational emergence. On the other hand, SMT was explored and exploited in its long history and latest research lessons in order to inform a rich and dynamic theoretical perspective, while the social psychological theories of IC, social identity, emotions and TMT were added to the tool set. Through this theoretical framework, the thesis aims to bring nuance to the public, political and academic debate on what role religion does and does not play in violent mobilisation. More specifically, it will help in analysing what role religion played in the mobilisation of diverging militia

movements, leaders and militants in the setting of the Lebanese civil war, a war that has regularly been described as religious or sectarian. But before delving into empirical analysis, the methodological considerations and methods that guided the collection of data will be elaborated.

3.

METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

"There are so many ways to account for negative outcomes that it is safer to doubt one's methods before doubting one's subjects"

- (De Waal 2016, 157)

1. Methodology, Methods and Sources

Before assessing the possible role of religion in the social mobilisation towards violence in relation to the Lebanese case study and its component subjects, we need to critically reflect upon the methodology, methods and sources of research. This chapter will methodologically elaborate upon the framework described in the previous chapter, including how we can uncover the knowledge underneath the stratified, differentiated and structured view on reality that SMT and CR propose. Although the propositioned framework might be described as theoretically rich and ontologically bold, it can also be categorised as methodologically cautious. Exactly because of the multi-levelled representation of reality, a humble attitude in the pursuit of knowledge is maintained. After all, if we assume that social science studies are conducted in open systems with emergent powers while facts are understood as theory-laden, a moderate and systematised choice of design and method has to be adopted (Danermark et al. 2002: 150). This leads to a number of careful methodological considerations.

To address these, the chapter is divided into three main parts. In the first section, the methodological considerations concerning generalisation and causality will be elaborated. The second part is sub-divided into three parts, delineating the orientation towards the units of analysis: the militia movements, the militia leaders and the militants. First, the choices that led to the focus on the Kataeb party, the Amal movement, the PSP and the LCP will be detailed. Secondly, the rationales behind choosing Bashir Gemayel, Imam Musa al-Sadr, Walid Jumblatt and George Hawi as their respective representative militia leaders will be justified. Lastly, the selection of interviewed militants will be explained. In the third part of the chapter, the four main research sources and their interpretation will be discussed, explaining how they are to enlighten the three differentiated analytical levels.

2. Methodological Considerations

Methodological considerations are generally regarded as forthright in the natural sciences. In the social sciences, however, application is less straightforward. Whereas the objects of natural scientists are naturally produced but socially defined, the objects of social science research are both socially produced and socially defined (Danermark et al. 2002, 16). In other words, the social sciences are carried out on hermeneutic and linguistic premises, which have consequences in regard to methodology and knowledge. In addition, methodological considerations are dependent on theoretical directions and ontological orientations. In our case, the theoretical alignment with SMT and social psychology and the ontological orientation of CR result in at least two methodological considerations: generalisation and causality.

2.1. Considerations towards Generalisation

All sciences are aimed at uncovering generalising claims. However, the discovery and disposition of generalisation may take different forms across the sciences. Scientists are expected to apply well-reasoned and well-founded methods in their effort to uncover a generalisation. In the natural sciences, empirical experimentations are a conventional route to reveal 'empirical generalisations', the results of which are confined to the empirical domain (Danermark et al. 2002, 76). Scientists that rely on CR often rely on inference and thought operations in their endeavour to discover a "realist concept of generalizability", thereby digging deeper into the structures of reality (Danermark et al. 2002, 77). Or, as Bhaskar expresses, "scientific significant generality does not lie on the face of the world, but in the hidden essence of things" (Bhaskar 2008, 217). In an effort to uncover these hidden essences one must rely on the logical and inferential faculties of the researchers. This type of research conduct has consequences for reliability of generalizability. Within the set-up of this thesis that results in two important considerations.

Firstly, as the orientation towards the selection of case studies will demonstrate, care is taken in not treating any of the militia movements as monolithic, acknowledging, for example, that militias hold more heterogeneous beliefs than official ideological scripts can account for (Gunning 2012, 219). Even though a group might be categorised as religious, this label seems to be typically interwoven with other, worldly motivations (Gunning 2011, 518). The character of a militia is complex and cannot be reduced to generalising markers. Moreover, the character of a militia as a whole cannot be generalised across the militants who make up the parts of any militia movement. They represent a spectrum of diversity and individuality. Proposed generalisations about militia movements should therefore be understood as prevailing patterns rather than universal signifiers. Similarly, the religious or sectarian communities associated with certain militias should not be regarded as uniform. Sectarian markers are political realities in Lebanon, but they do not infer an agreed-upon social identity or religious belief necessarily.

Secondly, while there is practical value in generalisations, it is beyond the ability of this dissertation to provide a grand theoretical or empirical conclusion on religious/secular inspired militia violence. Instead a variant model has been offered to assess the specifics of Lebanese militia movements in their move towards violent mobilisation. As such, the conclusions that flow from the proposed theoretical framework are rooted in the particular instances of time (1975-1990) and space (Lebanon). Alongside this particularistic empirical focus, it is beyond the ontological and epistemological orientation of a critical realist to aspire for an eternal truth. Instead, patterns and regularities are to be understood within their specific frame of reference. However, although time-

and space-specific, the findings of this thesis have broader implications for thinking about the relations and patterns of 'religious violence'.

2.2. Considerations towards Causality

Causality is the agent that connects one process (the cause) with another process or state (the effect), where the first is understood to be (partly) responsible for the second, and the second (partly) dependent on the first. David Hume called the idea of causation "the cement of the universe" (quoted in Keuth 2005, 52). However, the recipe of this cement is not agreed upon amongst the "science of man" (Hume 1738, x–xii). Depending on perceptions of reality, various conceptualisations on causality have been articulated. Critical theorists have expressed scepticism towards those that maintain that there is an objective way to establishing causality or truth. For Adorno (1976, 27), the sciences can never be entirely separated from the hegemonic visions of society. Horkheimer and Adorno (2002, 1–34) illustratively argued that Enlightenment thinkers only focus on those parts of nature that can be calculated and formalised, thereby excluding a whole range of topics from their rational picture of the world. That has included the exclusion of religion (Horkheimer and Adorno 2002, 2). In moving against the Enlightenment bias, critical realists have instead pressed for the incorporation of the real and actual domains – in which, amongst others, the unobservable factors of religion, cognition and affection are located – in addition to the empirical domain.

Elder-Vass (2011, 45) explain these as follows: "The *empirical* domain includes those events that we actually observe or experience and the *actual* is the domain of material existence, comprising things and the events they undergo. The *real* also includes 'structures and mechanisms' that generate those events". In this way, the domain of the empirical is a subset of the domain of the actual, which in turn is a subset of the domain of the real. The resulting picture is much more 'messy', but it also allows for deeper forms of analysis.

As stated in the theoretical framework, critical realists believe that events are not produced by a single cause, but by a complex interaction of the causal powers of the entities involved. Elder-Vass illustrates this point with a metaphor: "Gravity operates on the leaf and tends to make it fall directly towards the surface of the Earth [the empirical], but few leaves fall in the straight line this might lead us to expect, since the aerodynamics properties of the leaf and the resistance of the air (magnified enormously when there happens to be a wind blowing) [the actual] tend to alter the direction of fall [the real]" (Elder-Vass 2011, 47). In other words, we cannot understand the real path taken by the leaf unless we recognise that actual events are the product of a complex and indeed messy interaction between different power mechanisms, only some of which are empirically

observable.

This means that a critical realist cannot be dependent on perception alone. Instead, in causal analysis the researcher seeks to describe observable patterns, while accounting for underling causal powers that explain why an observable pattern or fact exists. This requires a 'deep ontological enquiry' (Kurki 2007, 365), which, in the case of assessing Lebanese militias, will involve the analyses of social structures, organisational dynamics, and affective dispositions. Some of these mechanisms reinforce one another, while others frustrate the manifestation of each other. Consequently, rather than establishing rules of causation, critical realists formulate arguments of 'actual causation', which describe the tendencies of objects to act or behave a certain way (Elder-Vass 2011, 47). But whether it will actually act in this manner, and not another, is a different matter. A particular mechanism can produce different outcomes at different times and in different places. This sentiment was echoed by one of the interviewees when he stated:

> So if you add all these factors together […] the economic situation, the heritage of my family and grandfathers, the ideology that I gained after so many clashes, so all these factors, you can know how I chose. Are these reasons enough to make this choice? No. Because my other brother, he had the same situation, but he didn't choose that. And if you ask anyone, they have their own reasons, why he took his way in life. But in the end, I am an individual and that is, I think, that is my reasons why I took that direction (interview with Ziad Saab, 2017-04-26, Beirut)

Two things can be deduced from this statement. Firstly, Ziad's once empirically observable involvement in the civil war was co-determined by a set of actual events and factors that generated his real experiences of that war. Secondly, the statement highlights the importance of the agency-structure spectrum. Although social structures can condition people's actions, they cannot determine them. People have a mind of their own, they can choose to deviate, challenge, oppose or change. If people were to be leaves – to continue the previous metaphor – they could to an extent determine their real 'fall'. The parts (members) making the whole (social movements) have emergent powers, making it impossible to predict with precision their individual cognition and behaviour. As such, the knowledge flowing from this research shall not be defined by definite claims of causality; rather it aims to deduce patterns and tendencies.

These methodological considerations inform the choice and treatment of case studies as well as the identified sources and their interpretation, as described in the following two sections.

3. Orientation towards Case Studies

3.1. Orientation towards Militia Movements

In the run up to Lebanese civil war, a large part of the population was mobilised. It was a chaotic scene with competing visions and loyalties. Over a hundred Lebanese militias eventually became engaged in the civil war (Baylouny 2014, 333), some of these were marginal forces, others had significant influence; some were sustained throughout the war, while others dismantled midway through; there were schisms and coalitions, coup d'états and brutal massacres. Only twelve militias would persist until the end of the war in 1990. Four of these militias will be discussed in this dissertation: the Kataeb party, the Amal movement, the PSP and the LCP. The four militias have been chosen for (a) their relevance in the civil war, (b) their mixture in religious representation, and (c) their complexity regarding religious and non-religious beliefs and constituencies. This section seeks to elaborate on these selection choices.

The first criterion concerns representation. Rather than choosing militias on the margins of Lebanese history, militias were selected on the basis of their enduring role in the development, direction and articulation of the civil war. All four selected militia movements constituted sizeable movements, who had substantial impact on Lebanese history. Three out of these four movements (the Kataeb, PSP and LCP) were part of the two major power blocks – the Lebanese National Movement (LNM) and the Lebanese Front (for more detail see Appendix 2, section Warring Coalitions). The Amal movement was one of the most significant forces outside these power constellations. The significance of the militias is beneficial on a social, academic and practical research level. On a social level, their stories, legends and myths continue to resonate with Lebanese society, as these militias' legacies are carried in the hearts and minds of the people. Because of this social influence, academics have devoted attention and time to analyse these militia movements (with the exception of the LCP, which has received little academic reflection (exceptions include Abisaab and Abisaab 2017; Ismael and Ismael 1998)). This thesis will contribute to that development. Lastly, on a practical level, due to widespread membership bases, the recruitment of interviewees became more realistic.

Secondly, to guard this research from falling prey to signalling out one religious tradition as particularly violent, both Christian and Islamic militia movements have been included. This is an important component to neutralise, as contemporary Western or Judeo-Christian attitudes are increasingly negative towards Islamic communities and traditions.[1] Much social science research,

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[1] As recent opinion polls demonstrated, including: http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/36346886/uk-attitudes-towards-islam-concerning-after-survey-of-2000-people; https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/feb/02/polls-widespread-backing-trump-travel-ban

including studies on Lebanon, the Levant and the wider Middle East, has been focussed on the uniquely violent inclinations of Islam, while other religions have largely been neglected in analysis (e.g. Rabil 2011). This has resulted in the illusion that there is something specifically violent about Islam, a sentiment that has found particular resonance in (populist) politics and (popular) media. Trying to move beyond this bias, the study will examine both Islamic (Shiite and Druze) and Christian (Maronite) orientated militia groups.

Noteworthy, in this regard, is the absence of Sunni dominated militia movements. Most Lebanese militia movements that gathered a predominant Sunni following were Nasserist in orientation and constituted smaller players in the civil war. I have chosen to focus on the larger players, in terms of numbers and influence, who took more nationalist stances. Although the LCP included some ideological components with regional orientations, the party's initial importance and popular membership base justify its inclusion.

As a continuation of the inclusivity argument, the third criterion that drove the selection of case studies concerned the ambition to present a varied range of belief structures more generally, reaching from the more religious to the more secular. The Kataeb party is associated with the Maronite Christian stratum of society, the Amal movement with the Shiite sect, the PSP transformed from a Socialist party into a Druze refuge, and the LCP remained committed to their Communist ideology. Religious and secular inclinations are not understood as conceptual opposites; instead they represent ends on a theoretical spectrum. All four militia movements take different places on this spectrum - with the Amal movement being more towards the religious end and the LCP being more towards the secular end of the spectrum. The Kataeb party and the PSP are located more towards the centre of the spectrum, while the former leans towards the religious end and the latter towards the secular end. Their 'exact' location fluctuated over the course of the civil war, as the balancing act of religious and secular motivations altered with the needs and anguishes of the times. With the chosen case studies I hope to neither overemphasise nor ignore the religious element, instead treating it as an integral part of the larger belief structures of militia movements.

All four militia movements will be introduced in detail in the next two chapters, only a small synopsis will be provided here:

The Kataeb party

The Kataeb party was founded in 1936 as a Maronite paramilitary youth organisation by Pierre Gemayel, modelled after the Spanish Phalange and Italian Fascist parties, of the kind then common in the Middle East (Stoakes 1975, 215). The militia movement that evolved

out of this constellation was widely regarded as one of Lebanon's largest and best organised paramilitary forces (Moumneh 2018, 11). The Kataeb headed the political bloc of the Lebanese Front and the armed coalition of the Lebanese Forces (LF), both were umbrella organisations for Right-wing movements. Note that throughout this thesis the focus will alter between the Kataeb and the umbrella of the LF, in which the Kataeb is regarded as the steering wheel of the larger LF.

The Amal Movement

In 1974 the Movement of the Deprived was formed in an attempt to reform the Lebanese political and social system (Ajami 1987, 136). The movement argued to represent a social class, but from the start it had a majority of Shiite followers. In 1975 an explosion occurred at a secret training ground, unveiling the existence of the Amal movement, the Deprived's clandestine militia wing (Siklawi 2012, 7). Amal (spelling 'hope') is the acronym for *Afwaj al-Muqawama al-Lubnaniya* (Lebanese Resistance Detachments). The militia movement, which eventually swallowed the Movement of the Deprived, became increasingly dominated and associated with the Shiite stratum of community.

The Progressive Socialist Party (PSP)

The PSP was created in 1949 by, amongst others, Kamal Jumblatt. The movement was founded as an ideologically secular and non-sectarian platform, although the majority of its members were derived from Mount Lebanon where the party found its origins. The PSP would later become the backbone of the LNM, the alliance of Leftist militias during the war, in which Kamal Jumblatt emerged as the symbol of progressive opposition (Richani 1998, 57). After the assassination of Kamal Jumblatt in 1977, the PSP's membership and command structure became predominantly Druze (Rowayheb 2011, 47).

The Lebanese Communist Party (LCP)

The LCP was founded in 1924 by a number of intellectuals, transcending sectarian differences in a communist framework (Ismael and Ismael 1998, 8). In the 1970s the LCP established a well-trained militia, the Popular Guard, which participated actively in the LNM coalition. The LCP had as its objective to erase sectarian lines and create economic equality; nevertheless, during the war sectarian identifications hardened and the economy fell into a deep crisis. In 1987, the Left-wing party started to cease activities, demobilising most of its militants (Yacoub 2014, 88).

3.2. Orientation towards Militia Leaders

The four selected militia movements have known different leaders over the course of the war; some militia leaders transferred out of power, others were assassinated or disappeared. The Kataeb party was created and led by Pierre Gemayel, while the military power of the party was with his youngest son Bashir and later his oldest son Amine. The Amal movement was founded by Imam Musa al-Sadr, upon his disappearance power shortly shifted to Hussein al-Husseini and then to Nabih Berri. The PSP was established upon the leftist ideologies of Kamal Jumblatt, but his son Walid Jumblatt was forced to take over following his father's assassination. Lastly, upon the outbreak of the civil war, the LCP was led by Fuad Shemali, a change of guards took place in 1979, when George Hawi was elected for the leadership position.

For the purpose of focus and depth, it was decided to concentrate on one militia leader for each militia movement. The choice of leaders was guided by the length and legacy of leadership, resulting in a focus on Bashir Gemayel, Imam Musa al-Sadr, Walid Jumblatt and George Hawi. Bashir Gemayel is still regarded as the spearhead of the Christian militia forces, Imam Musa al-Sadr's name became synonymous with the politicisation and sectarianization of Shiite identity in Lebanon, Walid Jumblatt played a vital role in the transformation of the PSP from a Socialist party to a movement of Druze representation and George Hawi headed the LCP though both its rise and decline. The selection of leaders, whose impact and lives are introduced below, form the basis for chapters 6 and 7:

Bashir Gemayel

Bashir Gemayel was the youngest son of Pierre Gemayel. He started in the Kataeb's youth section when he was 12 years of age. During the war Bashir quickly gained the reputation of a fierce military leader. In 1976 he became Commander in Chief of the Kataeb Security Council, taking over from William Hawi, who had died in battle. A year later he would become President of the LF, of which the Kataeb was and remained the driving force. In August 1982, Bashir was elected President of the Lebanese Republic. Before taking office, on 14 September 1982, he was assassinated.

Imam Musa al-Sadr

Imam Musa al-Sadr is remembered as the charismatic Shiite Imam that gave the Shiite population in Lebanon a sense of community. Born in Iran, the Imam was invited to Lebanon to become a leading Shiite figure in the south, where he revived and founded

several social institutions. His Movement of the Deprived was aimed at alleviating the burdens of the disposed, while the later founded Amal movement fought for the rights of the Shiite sect. On 31 August 1978, the Imam disappeared during a fund-raising mission in Libya.

Walid Jumblatt

In 1977, Walid Jumblatt, son of Kamal Jumblatt, succeeded his assassinated father as leader of the Druze sect, frontrunner of the PSP and head of the LNM. Whereas his father is remembered for his leftist ideology, Walid Jumblatt's leadership became synonymous with Druze representation. Faced with increasing pressure in Mount Lebanon, the stronghold of the Druze sect, the militia leader headed a strong offensive in defence of the Druze safe haven.

George Hawi

George Hawi was born into a Greek Orthodox family, though he was a professed atheist. Hawi joined the LCP in 1955, when the party was still illegal in Lebanon. He was imprisoned several times for his Communist membership and protest activities. In 1979 Hawi was elected General Secretary of the LCP, succeeding Fuad Shemali. Hawi played a deciding role in the direction of the party during the warring years. In 2005, he was assassinated in the heart of Beirut.

3.3. Orientation towards Militants

In 2016 and 2017 I travelled to Lebanon, where I resided for 10 months with the aim of collecting primary data, both archival and interview. Conducting research in a post-conflict setting is challenging. In this section I will focus on the challenges related to interviewing former militants in Lebanon. Some of the main difficulties in recruiting interviewees included lack of contact information, linguistic differences, accessibility, and, most importantly, a general atmosphere of distrust. It took time to make the first contacts, to gain access and to build trust. Usually, universities require their researchers to obtain signed consent from research subjects. In this case, taking into consideration the sensitivity of the subject and the vulnerability of the target group, the university allowed me to obtain verbal consent instead. Where requested, subjects reviewed the transcripts of interviews and in some cases the chapters in which they were mentioned. Those who insisted on anonymity were granted it, their names were changed and identity clues were omitted. I only audio recorded with the interviewees' approval and explained that consent could be

withdrawn at any moment during the interview or thereafter. Without trust interviewees are unlikely to reveal anything beyond clichés, nor will they engage in critical discussion, let alone disclose pieces of their most painful (and maybe shameful) experiences.

Once first contacts were made and relationships established, I adopted a *stratified snowball sampling technique*. The snowball sampling method is regarded as a 'second-best' strategy in the sciences, but also as a 'most effective' and 'valuable' one in (post-)conflict settings with hard-to-reach populations (Cohen and Arieli 2011, 426-27). Over time, I was able to build a sizeable network of contacts. Many former militants were eager to share their stories and help me in developing my network. I felt well able to connect with research subjects on a personal level. Several interviewees became invested in my project and helped in facilitating new interviews. These 'gatekeepers', central figures within the snowball sampling technique, vouched for me to others or travelled with me as accompaniers. Typically, gatekeepers would introduce me to like-minded friends, ex-comrades or family members, resulting in possible social network limitations (Cohen and Arieli 2011, 428). At times, however, for reasons less transparent, gatekeepers would introduce me to militants or militia leaders of other groups. To allow for both the expansion of social networks as well as their diversification, I recruited at least two gatekeepers within each militia movement. Through the involvement of gatekeepers, I was able to meet a former President, religious leaders, militia leaders, plane hijackers, legendary fighters as well as the rank and file of militia movements. I am thankful for the trust and engagement I received.

Nevertheless, obtaining a 'random' sample of a group of former militants in a post-conflict setting is impossible. In an effort to push for further diversification and a stratified sample in which each militia was approximately equally represented, I set out to include the voices of the leaders and the led, the religiously motivated and the political calculated, the mythical heroes and the unknown warriors, the militants that remained committed to their cause and those that since defected. The first pair is included to compare and contrast how rank might affect affections, including fear of death. The second pair is included to investigate the (uniqueness of the) role of religion in violent mobilisation as compared to secular motivations, without pitting them as polar opposites but by allowing visions of partial overlap. The third pair is included to develop an understanding of the underlying motivations of some of the most well-known events in Lebanon without neglecting the everyday experiences of militants. In this way, following the suggestion of Jonathan Z. Smith, the thesis aims to balance the stories that "excite horror and make men stare" without neglecting the "common stories" (J. Z. Smith 1982, xii). The last pair is included to correct for attitudes that might have changed over time, as the interviewees that defected from their

respective militias might remember their past differently compared to those who still believe in the stances of their militia movement.

The last element of memory requires more consideration. Over time, the colours of one's past are doomed to fade. The past is smudged by the bi-directional relationship that exists between identity and memory (Wilson and Ross 2003, 137). New experiences, perceptions and life-phases alter the manner in which history is remembered (Ray 2006, 138). For example, as people move on from the position and experience of the past (e.g. by disengaging from a movement, by becoming its leader, by another episode of violent confrontation, or prolonged peace) memories are rearticulated in the light of the present situation. Additionally, personal memories become entwined with collective memories, which are often riddled with rumours of the 'other' and with the celebration or victimisation of the 'us'. In other words, "people's current views are influenced by *what* they remember about their personal pasts, as well as *how* they recall earlier selves and episodes" (Wilson and Ross 2003, 137). Some aspects of personal history are naturally forgotten (*nassa*), while others are wilfully forgotten (*tnassa*) (Hermez 2017, 172). It is especially this "choosing to forget", Hermez argues, which has come to symbolise the Lebanese collective memory. Recollections are constantly evolving (Meskell 2006, 157), distorting visions on reality. Although the research is concerned with subjective perceptions rather than objective reality, a certain degree of personal and historical accuracy is imperative.

The overall accuracy of research increases as sample sizes grow. In this case, a total of 61 different people were interviewed (16 LF militants, 13 Amal militants, 14 PSP militants, 13 LCP militants, and 5 expert interviews). The relatively large pool of interviews makes the data thick in description and rich in meaning. It enables the search for group patterns and the correction of personal controversies. Some interviewees were interviewed multiple times, amounting to 69 interviews, of which 63 were recorded. The average interview lasted between 1 and 2 hours. Overall, I conducted more than 100 hours of formal interviews, of which 87 hours were recorded, all of which data I transcribed. Most of the interviews took place in Beirut (n=42), but a portion was also conducted outside Beirut (n=17). In some of these latter cases, gatekeepers would accompany me on my travels. Two interviews were conducted online through a Whatsapp call. Approximately half of the interviews were conducted in English (n=29), the other half was conducted in Arabic (n=32) – when a translator would be present.

Due to the sometimes impromptu planning of interviews, I was in contact with a pool of three female translators; one early-career professional working in the NGO sector, the other two university students. The presence of translators undeniably results in a number of biases, including that interviewees may feel less in control of their narrative, while on-the-spot translations can

include small inaccuracies or semantic loss (Temple and Young 2004, 164, 166). In mediating these weaknesses, I encouraged my translators to work within a setting of trust and calmness while stressing the importance of direct and precise translation. Typically, I would start interviews by introducing my research and myself in Arabic, demonstrating my involvement and intermediate language skills. This often resulted in surprise and expressed appreciation by interviewee recruits.

4. Sources and Interpretation

The three differentiated analytical levels – the militias, militia leaders and militants – will be studied through the examination of different data sources. In order to develop richness in data, different sources were researched and archived for analysis. Most of these sources will be drawn upon in all empirical chapters; however, some chapters rely more prominently on one type of source compared to others. The *militia* section will primarily draw on the sources derived from the militias' respective media outlets, enabling an interpretative and insider perspective on POS. Interpretation will be triangulated with evidence from national newspapers and international monitoring reports. In an effort to establish the role and meaning of *militia leaders*, the like-named section will draw from a collection of historical documents as well as from speeches delivered by the four militia leaders in focus. Primary and secondary literature will complement analysis. Lastly, in order to chart the emerging powers and agentic forces of *militants*, the last section will be built upon interviews conducted for this research. The selection and collection of sources will be discussed below.

4.1. National and International Sources

Although there are multiple historical accounts and narratives available (e.g. Hanf 2015; Traboulsi 2012; Fisk 2001; Salibi 1976), in order to grasp the specifics of core events and social structures it is necessary to gain in-depth knowledge on how these events and structures were reported at the time of the civil war. This necessitates archival work. To achieve a comprehensive outlook, a selection of both international and national resources was explored.

Since 1939 the BBC has monitored radio broadcasts in foreign countries, transcribing news reports and translating them into English. The resultant archive is referred to as the *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* (*BBC SWB*). A sister resource is found in the *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (*FBIS*), founded by the United States government in 1941. The original publications collected in both archives can take the format of factual reports; speeches of national leaders; analysis on military, political, and economic developments; news reports from frontlines and on resistance activities; assessments on domestic and international relations; and evaluations on propaganda

trends. During the Lebanese civil war, both the *BBC SWB*[2] and the *FBIS*[3] reported on the Lebanese crisis on a near-daily basis. The former was studied in full, exploring all reports from 1974 to 1990, while the latter functioned as the occasional supplement for watershed events or specific topics of interest.

Also national newspaper articles and editorials were studied. At the time of the Lebanese civil war, Lebanon circulated over ten different newspapers, catering different political orientations and religious tendencies (Hanf 2015, 505). I chose to concentrate on the two most popular newspapers distributed at the time, *An-Nahar* and *As-Safir*. *An-Nahar* was generally regarded as the "leading and most reputable newspaper in the country" (Hanf 2015, 506). Its disposition has been typified as modestly liberal, maintaining a reputation for comprehensive and reliable reportages and measured editorial comments. *An-Nahar* was read by a higher than average proportion of upper-income and well-educated respondents. Beginning in 1933, the newspaper started to build an archive collecting 'the memory of Lebanon' – which has conveniently been translated into English.[4] *As-Safir*[5] is generally regarded as left-wing, although it is not explicitly linked to any party or organisation. Like *An-Nahar* it also has a reputation for reliable, comprehensive coverage, but the difference lies in that *As-Safir's* editorial commentaries take greater account of the Muslim population (Hanf 2015, 506). During the warring years, *As-Safir* was read by members of the upper-income strata, even though by education the readership was more average. Just like the *FBIS*, the *An-Nahar* and *As-Safir* newspapers were explored in connection to important moments and events.

Lastly, the Lebanese, English-language weekly magazine *Monday Morning*[6] was studied for the years 1974-1990. The content of the magazine is mixed in political and popular orientation. For the aim of this research only the weekly domestic sections of the magazine were explored. They, amongst others, featured extensive and fully-transcribed interviews with key war personalities and reported on social and cultural issues. The exploration of these various international and national collections was aimed at creating a better contextualisation on action-events. All extracts and articles of interest were chronologically catalogued in Excel sheets.

4.2. Official Militia Sources

In order to develop an inside view on movement mobilisation, the militia movements' respective media outlets were searched for relevant information. Firstly, posters and leaflets were examined.

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[2] Available in print at Durham University library.
[3] Available online.
[4] http://archives.annahar.com.lb
[5] Available in microfilm at the American University of Beirut (AUB) library.
[6] Available in print at the AUB archives.

Many of these functioned as communication links between militia movements and their adherents, informing the latter about fallen martyrs, reminding them of commemorations, fostering admiration for the leadership and urging them to keep courage. Posters and leaflets constituted a significant popular aspect of the civil war, as they filled the streets with politically charged messages. Walls decorated with posters became symbolic sites of appropriation (Maasri 2008, 3). A number of posters have been archived and published by the Lebanese academic Zeina Maasri (2008) and the Lebanese private collector Wassim Jabre (2012) – a remarkable achievement for a perishable source. Additionally, some posters and leaflets have been archived at the AUB and at the Umam Research and Documentation (UMAM) Centre. Where available and relevant, I draw upon these sources.

More important for the purpose of this dissertation, the militia movements' partisan daily/weekly newspapers were examined for relevant information. *Al-'Amal* is the official newspaper of the Kataeb party. The newspaper was only distributed in east Beirut and its hinterland, the stronghold of Maronite Christians and the Greek Orthodox community, who together constituted the main readership (Hanf 2015, 506). *Al-Amal* (meaning 'hope') is the title of the newspaper of the Amal movement, and should not be confused with the Kateab's *Al-'Amal* (meaning 'labour'). The *Al-Amal* newspaper was primarily read in the southern suburbs of Beirut and the southern and eastern regions of Lebanon, were Shiite populations constituted a majority (Hanf 2015, 507). *An-Nida* is the official media organ of the LCP. Especially the well-educated population was highly represented in the newspaper's readership, selling most of its copies in the more urbanised areas of Lebanon (Hanf 2015, 507). By denomination, most of *An-Nida's* readers were Druze, Shiite and Greek Orthodox. Lastly, there is the *Al-Anbaa* newspaper, the PSP's official mouthpiece. Arguably (though there are no sources to confirm this) Mount Lebanon constituted the most popular area for distribution, while a mixed readership of Christians and Druze became gradually dominated by a Druze readership as the war progressed.

All four newspapers are archived in the AUB (in the format of microfilm) and UMAM (in the format of preserved printed copies). None of these collections are complete. All the existing pieces were explored together with a research assistant (a political science student at the AUB), aiming to find those articles that discussed the diagnosis, prognosis or motivational perspectives on the conflict or that deliberated the role of religion in conflict. Similar to the national and international sources, all relevant information was chronologically catalogued in Excel.

4.3. Recorded Speeches and Interviews
In order to capture the ideas of militia leaders, a range of primary sources was explored in search

for speeches and interviews with the leaders of the civil war, paying particular attention to Bashir Gemayel, Imam Musa al-Sadr, Walid Jumblatt and George Hawi. Sources included: *Words from Bashir,* which contains a collection of Bashir's most important speeches from 1979 to 1982, that is from the time he started presenting himself as more than a military leader, to the day he was assassinated; *The Journey of Imam Sayed Musa Sadr*, a twelve-part book series comprising all of Musa al-Sadr's speeches, interviews and communiqués from 1974 to 1978, from the start of the Movement of the Deprived until the vanishing of the Imam; *The War of the Mountain,* a collection of memories from the Mountain War narrated from the perspective of the PSP, which includes speeches delivered by Walid Jumblatt; *The War of National Destiny*, the memoirs of George Hawi in which he records his war experiences and archives his most noteworthy speeches; the *FBIS,* which contained a number of translated leadership speeches and interviews; and the weekly-magazine *Monday Morning,* which included a wide-range of fully-transcribed interviews with relevant leaders.

Speeches and interviews were summarised and catalogued for the purpose of historical (cross-)reference. For the purposes of chapter 7, a further selection process was followed to enable a comparative analysis on the structure of ideas, as detailed in section 3 of that chapter.

4.4. Research Interviews

Doing research on social movements requires more than solely relying on written monitoring reports, newspaper articles and movement-issued documents. Social interaction and personal engagement (even if historically reconstructed) are critical in researching the dynamics of a social movement. Nevertheless, it is these latter on-the-ground, inter-personal experiences that to date have gone "relatively […] unnoticed" (Esposito 1999, 263). Meaning flows from the interaction between symbolic language and the self-understanding and self-realisation of an individual. The 'oblique reference' back to the activities of individuals ought to break down social structural accounts resulting from sole textual analysis (Ricoeur 1973, 198). For these reasons, I spent considerable time and effort in finding militants, militia leaders and religious leaders who were willing to talk about their experiences of war.

The interviews themselves were guided by the ideas and logic of the interviewee – answering Said's (1978, 325–28) concluding plea for critical reflectiveness and open-mindedness in his now classic *Orientalism*. Said thereby criticised Marx's famous comment: "They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented". To minimise the trap of representing the interviewees rather than interviewees representing themselves, interviewees were given room to tell their story, their perspective on events and their contemplations on themselves. Generally, interviewees were given the opportunity to talk uninterruptedly, controlling their own narrative on topics provided

at the start of each interview. If controversial statements or inconsistent accounts were whitewashed, I did inform the interviewees of possible criticism, offering them the opportunity to elaborate or possibly 'defend' their narrative (Ricoeur 1990, 125). In writing, the Orientalist trap was minimised by including significant verbatim quotes from interviewees. Although critical in observation, each interviewee was treated with respect and sensitivity. On the one hand, the agentic forces of militants were taken seriously; on the other hand, it was acknowledged that many of the experiences discussed could be rooted in trauma. Face to face, I was provided with the opportunity to "obtain a measure of the character of the interviewee" (Gunning 2000, 100), enabling me to better judge whether a topic was too psychologically disturbing to be discussed or whether a statement or alleged previous behaviour was in character. Though the qualitative method of interviewing includes a significant amount of inconclusiveness, it also provides an opportunity for methodological triangulation and ontological personalisation.

Interviews were semi-structured, with questions revolving around seven sets of issues. All questions were aimed at exploring processes of violent mobilisation and social identification. As the research objectives were elaborately introduced at the start of an interview, most of these topics came up naturally. Where necessary, subjects were reminded of the relevant topics. The seven sets of issues look as follows:

(a) Background: When and where was the interviewee born? What school did the interviewee attend? What neighbourhood did she/he grow up in? How did the interviewee perceive of the socio-economic circumstances in the wake of the civil war? Were there particular grievances felt by her/him and her/his community? Can the interviewee recount the first time she/he consciously witnessed tensions within Lebanese society?

(b) Engagement: How did she/he get involved in a political/militant movement? How did the interviewee first hear about this group? What did military/ideological training consist of? How was a sense of group fostered during training? What role would the interviewee fulfil within the militia movement?

(c) Beliefs: What role did religion/ideology play in the shaping of opinions and behaviours? How did it affect political involvement and direction? How was belief learned and practised? And how was it transmitted within the group? Was there an authority – in scripture or persona? Did these views help in legitimising violence?

(d) Identity: How did the interviewee perceive of her/his social identity? How were identities represented and communicated in the militia movement? Was the in-group identity contrasted to out-group identities? If yes, how? How did social identity relate to the family/clan/religion?

(e) Violence: How was violence legitimised at the time? Was it seen as a necessity? A means to a certain end? How was the need for violence articulated by the elite (intellectuals and/or clergy)? What were the interviewee's feelings at the time, concerning violence and its performance?

(f) Agency: Part of the group of interviewees would talk mainly from the perspective of the group, however, as this research is interested in the dynamics between social structure and agency, I would prompt interviewees to elaborate on their personal narratives, emotions, feelings, motivations, ideology and religiosity. What were the interviewee's feelings at the time? How did they perceive the main issues to be?

(g) Visions now: The last part of the interview would focus on the personal journeys from the end of the civil war to anno 2017. Did opinions and behaviours change? How do they currently view Lebanon and its main grievances? How do they deal with the memories of their past? This concluding question proved particularly cathartic, eliciting strong displays of steadfastness or change.

Interviewees were asked to answer the first six sets of questions from the perspective of their past selves, while acknowledging that any account of the past is necessarily mediated by the present. To conclude the interview, interviewees were given a chance to recount the journey they had made since the end of the civil war, including the continuities and changes they have experienced since. For the interviewees, this last element functioned as an opportunity to state their continued support for their actions, their ambivalence or their change of heart. Many of the interviewees found it important to elaborate on the status of their current selves and the psychological, emotional and ideological journey that led them there. For the purpose of research, the last element functioned as a frame from which to interpret the previously discussed topics.

5. Towards Empirical Analysis

Due to the theoretical richness and ontological boldness of the research, the methodological orientation is presented as cautious. Referring back to this chapter's opening quote (De Waal 2016, 157), we should doubt method before subject. This approach will help in safeguarding against sweeping generalisations and hasty conclusions. In the next three parts of the thesis – composed of six empirical chapters – these lessons, orientations and considerations will guide data analysis. In the first part, entitled *militias*, the social structures that co-determined the start and development of the Lebanese civil war will be explored from the viewpoint of the militia movement.

MILITIAS

Much has been written on the trajectory of the Lebanese civil war, with varying theoretical and thematical perspectives. Salibi (1976), Khuri (1975) and Khalaf (1987) provided insights into the societal transformations of a nation on the crossroads to civil war; Hudson (1985) analysed the delicate system of societal coexistence; Goria (1985) and Johnson (1986) analysed different sectarian communities and their social standing; Hanf (2015), Fisk (2001), Salibi (2003) and Khalidi (1983) published detailed historical and sociological accounts on the warring years; and Ollaik (2013), Shadid (2012), Andary (2012), Chaftari (2015) and Makdisi (1999) offered personal narratives, focussing on their family structures, ideological backgrounds and individual paths of mobilisation. Collected, the literature is abundant and insightful. Nevertheless, even though various authors have pointed towards the character of religion and sectarian identities as primary (or even primordial) explanatory factors of the civil war (Randal 1983, chap 1; Wright 1985, chap 2; Gilmour 1984, chap 2; Laffin 1985, chap 1; Rabil 2011, chap 4), no systematic and comparative historical analysis on religion's role has hitherto been provided – neither across the timespan of the war, in relation to non-religious movements or cross-referenced between religions.

The following two chapters will track the role of religion in the macro-structures that affected militia movements' mobilisation towards violence. In assessing religion on the road towards and through civil war, it is important to ponder the extent to which war itself influenced and shaped the appearance and understanding of religion and their organised forms (El-Solh 1994, 231). War has the ability to uncover latent sentiments, rediscover versions of the past, and magnify feelings of anxiety and belonging. War both distorts and sorts social reality, possibly creating a chain of memory in which religion is presented as a binding and stagnant force (Hervieu-Léger 2000). Historically speaking, however, the land of Lebanon has for long had a mixture of people – varied in ethnic origin, linguistically assorted, diverse in political affiliation and heterogeneous in religious identity. The constructed relations and expressions between these multiple identities shifted over time, in which sectarian affiliations have become the organising principle of politics.

The concept of sectarianization will therefore constitute the main lens of analysis, while the macro-structural theory of POS combined with framing perspectives direct examination. Together, they counter primordialist accounts that continue to feature in civil war explanations.

The first chapter of the *militia* section focuses on four different factors that interacted with the sectarianization process in the years leading up to the civil war, while the second chapter extends analysis to the warring years. The militia movements of interest to this thesis – the Kataeb party, the Amal movement, the PSP and the LCP – will be examined within this historical context. The historical overview is necessary for at least two different sets of reasons. Firstly, the systematic and comparative historical assessment of the sectarianization process leading up to and throughout the Lebanese civil war has not been charted before in relation to diversely oriented militia movements. In particular, assessing the sectarianization process from an interpretative macro-level perspective constitutes new ground. The two chapters additionally offer new insights based on primary data. Secondly, the historical overview is regarded as a necessary precondition for the chapters that follow. The introduction of the militia movements is needed to place militia leaders (chapter 6 and 7) and militants (chapter 8 and 9) into their structural-context. The historical perspective thereby centres on providing both a general overview on the sectarianization process as well as a detailed contextualisation needed for the assessment of the meso- and micro-level analyses that are to follow.

MILITIAS: **Marching to Civil War**

"There is a lot of confusion concerning what we are talking about. In fact, you should be very rigorous about the history. The war in Lebanon did not begin in 1975. Let's start there"

- (interview President Amine Gemayel)

1. The Pre-War Years

From the 1950s to the early 1970s Beirut had gradually become a vibrant hub for Arab culture, witnessing what some called a second *Nahda* or cultural awakening. Artists, writers, publishers and journalists gathered in the city, attracted by relative political freedom and a liberal social climate. Students assembled and organised in the cafés clustered around the AUB, while a new generation of intellectuals translated and advanced Arabic literature, philosophy and culture. Meanwhile, the banking and trade sectors were booming. Lebanon's apparent prosperity and stability made it a popular tourist destination, known for its beautiful beaches attractive for swimming and its high mountains suitable for skiing. For these reasons, the Lebanese would frequently refer to their

country as "the Switzerland of the Middle East" (Hanf 2015, 160). However, underneath these appearances, Lebanon had come to face a set of grievances and fears that would eventually plunge the country into a civil war.

This chapter will trace the grievances and motivations that led part of the Lebanese community to mobilise into militia movements in the years preceding the start of the civil war. Analysis is based upon the lessons of SMT, in particular the theories of POS and framing. Previous research has provided us with several insights on the structural and cultural conditions under which militia movements are likely to mobilise towards civil war, looking at sets of socio-political, economic, transnational and security issues (see chapter 2 section 3.1). This chapter will discuss these analytical categories in connection with religious/sectarian dynamics.[1] Firstly, at the *socio-political level*, I will deliberate the effects of sectarian diversity and geographical differences, as the probability of civil war has been theorised to increase with perceived long-lasting senses of misrecognition in sect, community or region (Wilkinson 2008; Fraser and Honneth 2003). Secondly, on an *economic level*, levels of poverty, unemployment and economic stagnation will be assessed in relation to sectarian groups, as some conflict researchers have argued that the mobilisation towards violence is most expected when assets are immobile and/or unequally distributed (Boix 2008, 216). Both dimensions, in the Lebanese case, were affected by *transnational factors*, in which foreign influence put additional opportunities and strains on the country and its militia movements. Within this pre-war perspective, particularly the role of the Palestinian refugee community and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) will be discussed. Lastly, grievances are connected to *security concerns*, in which the state's already limited protecting powers were increasingly substituted by local (sectarian) alternatives of protection.

2. Sectarianization before the Civil War

2.1. Religion and the Socio-Political Context

Lebanon is a small sovereign state in the Middle East, with just 10,452 square kilometres. To the north and east it borders Syria, to the south Israel, and to the west it is engulfed by the Mediterranean. Geographical contextualisation, social movement theorist Paul Routledge (2015, 383–85) argues, is crucial to understand the emergence and forms of contentious action. Jack Goldstone (2015, 146) further adds that geographical understandings can help in enlightening demographic configurations, including religious and political representation. Schematically speaking, current-day Lebanon can be divided into three geographical regions that are home to

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[1] As a note of caution, the persistent links to religion and/or sectarianization do not mask a primordial line of argumentation; instead, connections are identified with the aim of highlighting the complexity of the topic, the changing nature of their expressions and their interconnectedness with mundane dynamics.

different communities, with different majority religious groups at their core. Clearly, the geographical divisions are not and never were total: many villages and all the cities are mixed in terms of sectarian identities, and the different religious groups find unity in the Arabic language, uphold similarities in popular culture, manners and cuisine (A. Hourani 1985, 4). Nevertheless, by investigating the historical trajectories that co-determined differences in religious geographical distribution, we can gather partial insights into Lebanon's political unity and division. Together, these factors shaped the perception of opportunities and constraints for movement mobilisation

The first of three geographical regions is the western Mediterranean coastline, a thin strip of land featuring Lebanon's ports and some of its largest cities (A. Hourani 1985, 3). The ports have been inhabited for centuries, though they have risen and fallen at different times under different rulers and empires.[2] Throughout history the different sites maintained links with the Mediterranean world, explaining much of the region's outward-looking views and inter-continental relations. Once inhabited by the Phoenicians, long and continuing historical processes made these affluent areas primarily home to Sunni Muslims, who ruled the coastline from the Umayyad period (661-750) all the way to the Ottoman epoch (1516-1917), although this trajectory was partially and temporarily broken by Crusader strongholds scattered along the same coast. Notable exceptions are the coastal cities of Jounieh and Byblos (see section on Mount Lebanon), which are overwhelmingly populated by Maronite Christians and the city of Tyre (see section on south), which is predominantly inhabited by Shiite Muslims.

Rising from the coast there is a second region, a mountain range that runs from the north to the south, facilitating only limited mixed farming, a type of farming which includes both growing crops as well as raising livestock. Long a refuge for religious minorities seeking safety from the prosecution of different dynasties and empires, 'Mount Lebanon' attained a de facto autonomy within the Ottoman Empire under the Sunni Muslim Emirs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Salibi 2003, 130–50). Particularly, the religious minorities of Maronite and Druze sects inhabited the region of Mount Lebanon. In keeping with the Ottoman *millet* system, each community governed their own personal and religious affairs in accordance with their own laws and through their own religious officials (Crow 1962, 490). The *millet* system enabled a degree of religious freedom for both the Maronite and Druze sects, but also created a two-tiered hierarchical system, separating the higher Sunni Muslims from lower 'protected' minorities. The latter groups

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[2] The land that today constitutes Lebanon has been under the governance of many; some of the longest and most defining rules include: Phoenician rule (2500-333 BC), Egyptian rule (1550-1077 BC); Assyrian rule (883-605 BC), Persian rule (538-332 BC); Roman rule (64 BC-646 AD); Umayyad Caliphate (661-750); Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258); Fatimid rule (909-1171); Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099-1291); Mamluk Sultanate (1291-1515); Ottoman rule (1516-1917); Allied administration (1917-1920); French rule (1920-1943).

were obliged to pay a protection tax, known as *jizya* (Traboulsi 2012, 4). These constraining social conditions combined with the harsher life style of the Mountain resulted in an enclosed existence, away from the outside world (A. Hourani 1985, 3). It is important to note, at this point, that the Ottoman rulers did not distinguish between Sunnis and Shiites, who enjoyed the same legal status (Hanf 2015, 67–68). This also meant that the Shiites had no separate legal court, compelling them to follow the Sunni legal system (Shanahan 2005, 30).

With the intervention of the European powers the political balance tilted. As the Ottoman state became a member of the Concert of Europe, Mount Lebanon received legal status as a *Qa'imaqamiyya* (1842-1860), which organised the region along explicitly religious contours (Salloukh 2017, 216). Local grievances became expressed along class-based (Maronite-Maronite) and sectarian lines (Maronite-Druze) and finally exploded in a bloodbath in 1860. The subsequent proclamation of the *Mutasarrifiyya* (1861-1914) incorporated Mount Lebanon into imperial politics and the world economy, novelties which were crafted upon an elitist and sectarian system (Salibi 2003, 130–50). The *Règlement Organique* forced on inhabitants a single public identity, "where one's sect defined one's involvement in the public sphere" (U. Makdisi 2000, 162). The process of political sectarianization was thus the partial result of colonial imagination, which reflected changing socio-economic relations in the emergence of a global political economy. Within this time setting, Bassel Salloukh describes how identities of rank and religion were "reimagined as primordial givens" (Salloukh 2017, 216). The emphasis here lies on "imagination", after all, the recognition of the role of colonial forces does not make the sectarian a matter of political realism (Henley 2015, 160). The sectarianization of politics was the constructed result of elite accommodation in an economic prosperous yet deeply divided society.

In 1920, France created the State of Greater Lebanon by the authority of the Mandatory Power (Hanf 2015, 97). The borders that were drawn then are the Lebanon we know today, extending beyond the Mediterranean coast and Mount Lebanon to include the Beqaa Valley, an inner plain on the other side of the Mountain, towards today's Syria. The Beqaa Valley constitutes the third geographical region in Lebanon. The annex was needed, in the minds of the French, to create an economic viable state. In the Beqaa Valley the tending of farmland is more profitable; wheat can be grown and sheep have the flora to graze. The Beqaa has for long functioned as a channel of communication, with several roads connecting larger cities and regions (A. Hourani 1985, 3). Just like the coastal area, the Beqaa (especially the eastern parts towards today's Syria) was outward looking. The Beqaa and the southern border region are primarily home to Shiite Muslims. These regions and their people were a taken-for-granted annex to the country, receiving little political representation and economic investment (Norton 1985, 110).

The creation of Greater Lebanon in 1920 and the proclamation of the Lebanese Republic in 1926 resulted in a composite of several larger and smaller religious communities (Traboulsi 2012, 90). Eighteen different sects were recognised, which included the separation of the Shiite and Sunni sect. In 1943 the Mandate period ended, signalling the beginning of Lebanon's independence (Hanf 2015, 71). Lebanon's Constitution established a compromise of power-sharing between the different religious communities (Crow 1962, 490). Sects were thereby reaffirmed as the "primary social organisation through which political security was maintained" (Hudson 1985, 72). It was considered the best (and only) way to establish a prosperous, liberal country amidst different religious denominations and interests (A. Hourani 1985, 1). The state allowed for the continuation of state-recognised sectarian courts and their legislative rights on personal status law (e.g. marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc.), which were administered by state-institutionalised religious representatives (see Article 9 in the Constitution). In turn, the state would guard over civil, commercial and criminal decrees (Traboulsi 2012, 90). Religious elites discouraged the state from constructing an optional secular personal status law, as this would undermine the hegemony of the sectarian system (Salloukh 2017, 32–51). In other words, Lebanese citizens could not escape a (nominal) sectarian identity, as their citizenship before the state would be incomplete without the inclusion of sectarian-organised personal status law (Salloukh 2017, 220).

In 1943 an unwritten 'document', known as the National Pact (*al-Mithaq al-Watani*) settled on the religious identities and political loyalties of Lebanon, in which Christians renounced the protection of Western powers, while Muslims relinquished their wish for union with Syria, then considered the bastion of Arab nationalism (al-Khazen 1991, 7). Lebanon would neither be Western nor Eastern, but an independent country in its own right (Hanf 2015, 72). Additionally, the Pact established that all sectarian communities would be included in the exercise of power, and the largest amongst them would serve as the highest dignitaries of the state. The Pact thereby specified that the President would be Maronite Christian,[3] the Prime Minister Sunni Muslim and the Speaker of the House Shiite Muslim. A constitutional amendment later that year further distributed cabinet portfolios, public offices and army positions, in order to offer representation for the six largest religious communities (Crow 1962, 496; Gilmour 1984, 28).

The power distribution was based on the only official census Lebanon ever had, carried out in 1932 (Hanf 2015, 86), which established that the number of Christians exceeded the number

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[3] The Maronite sect was given the highest post and largest number of parliamentary seats as they had been counted as the most numerous sect in 1932, but also because they feared about existing as a permanent minority in the mainly Muslim Arab world (Salloukh 2017, 219).

of Muslims by six to five (Maktabi 1999, 220).[4] The composition did, of course, not remain unchanged. Nevertheless, it proved too sensitive an issue for any government to propose a new count (McDowall 1982, 12). In 1932 the population was just below 1 million. In 1975, when the civil war started, there were an estimated 2.6 million people (McDowall 1982, 12). As the Muslim sects were characterised by a higher birth rate and the Christians were more prone to emigrate, the Christians gradually became a minority in Lebanon (Labaki 1998, 225). The political establishment, however, was reluctant to initiate a recount, as the elite feared losing power and privilege (El-Solh 1994, 231–40). It was inevitable that those who felt disadvantaged by the out-dated formula of sectarian power distribution would demand revision and a fairer slice of the cake (Faour 2007, 910).

The political establishment, which had taken shape at the end of the Mandate period (al-Khazen 1991, 26–27) was largely composed of notables, represented by landlords, feudal chiefs, businessmen, bankers, lawyers and religious leaders (McDowall 1982, 12). Every confession had developed its own political elite, and their family names became synonymous with Lebanese political life (Gilsenan 1989, 62). Amongst the sectarian Druze community there were the Arslans and Jumblatts, amongst the Shiites the Himadehs and As'ads; amongst the Sunnis the Karamis and Sulhs; and amongst the Maronites the Frangiehs and Gemayels. These notables controlled large parts of the state's resources and created elaborate clientelist networks through the provision of social welfare, education and labour (Salloukh 2017, 220). It was this group of notables who determined the political and economic direction of the country, and, no less important, harvested its fruits. In this respect, Lebanon is an example of "corporate consociationalism", in which the elite maintain vast political and economic interests in a static power arrangement that was presented as both necessary and primordial (Salloukh 2017, 218).

Aware of the growing tensions and grievances in his country, on March 25, 1959 President Fuad Chehab (1958-1964) contacted Father Lebret, director of the *Institut International de Recherche et de Formation en vue du Développement* (IRFED) and charged him with the task of uncovering the general need of Lebanon in the field of social and economic development.[5] Two years later, in May 1961, a detailed seven-volume report was presented. The need for immediate state intervention was advocated on several political and economic levels, while socially, critical reflections were made on the sectarian composition of Lebanese society:

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[4] Maktabi also demonstrates how the census was carefully constructed to inflate the number of Christians (for example, by including Lebanese emigrants in the count), thereby securing the political aspirations of Christian political leaders (Maktabi 1999, 233).
[5] The French report (1960) was translated into English and partially republished in 1975, in the popular weekly magazine *Monday Morning*, 1975-11-17/23.

The population is at the same time divided into various insular sectarian groups which thrive on friction among each other, each group made up of persons with a fierce individualistic trend. The "every sect for itself" and "every man for himself" attitude, passed along to the contemporary Lebanese by their Ottoman-ruled ancestors, has made it impossible for intercommunal organizations to be born or for an efficient State administration to be set up which can think and act in terms of Lebanon as a whole.

Although political sectarianization had aided in establishing a delicate balance of political coexistence between different religious groups and diverging geographical areas, it had prevented the development of a national identity, in which the Lebanese identified as citizens of one state. The constructivist investigation into the socio-political context (cf. Routledge 2015; Goldstone 2015) thereby explains how the emergence of a national identity or class-consciousness was constrained, while opportunities were crafted through personalised, sectarian and clientelistic structures.

2.2. Religion and the Economy

Where some focus on the socio-political context, other analysts believe that the political economy of Lebanon provides stronger indicators for the roots and dynamics of the Lebanese civil war (e.g. S. Nasr 1978; N. Hourani 2010; 2015; Traboulsi 2014; Gilmour 1984). Nevertheless, none of these writers have been able to develop reflections on economic disparity without at least referencing sectarian compositions. Within SMT, the effects of socio-economic features upon socio-political conflicts have often been addressed by looking at cleavages, viewing them as crucial conflict lines (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Della Porta and Diani 2005, 36). In this section we will consider the overlaps between social and economic cleavages in the years leading up to the civil war.

Lebanon's independence in 1943 marked the start of an economic boom, as new freedoms and opportunities were made available (Farsoun and Carroll 1976a, 9). The *nakba* of Palestine and the creation of Israel in 1948 had grave, yet contradictory, consequences for Lebanon. On the one hand, it created social strife within the Lebanese population, as the country had to cope with an estimated two hundred thousand Palestinian refugees. Certain quarters of Lebanese society received their 'brothers and sisters' with open arms, others looked upon the refugees with suspicion, seeing them as a threat to Lebanon's sectarian balance. On the other hand, Lebanon acquired Palestinian commercial and financial functions (Traboulsi 2012, 13). These financial boosts further enabled an economic and international cosmopolitanism to arise in Beirut and the nearby Mountain region. This region became the financial centre of the Arab world, possessed the

best airline in the region and hosted several service companies of international standing (Farsoun and Carroll 1976a, 9). Politically and trade-wise Lebanon was the West's gateway to the Arab world and beyond, as Beirut became the business link between the economic powers in the West and the oil areas in the East (Traboulsi 2012, 113). The bedrock of the economy was derived from its commercial services, headed by a number of Christian, Druze and newly arrived Palestinian entrepreneurs (McDowall 1982, 12).

It is commonly understood, a vision upheld by national mythology, that Lebanon's prosperity was the exceptional product of a balanced sectarian and cosmopolitan merchant elite (see N. Hourani 2015, 139 for critical assessment). Nonetheless, there were some cracks in the system. The economic advancement was heavily reliant on foreign trade, which was reflected in a chronic deficit on the trade balance (S. Nasr 1978, 4). Additionally, international capital accentuated its pressure on the Lebanese economy through the commercial and financial sectors, enabling a small group of cooperating local elites to monopolise strategic positions within the economy (S. Nasr 1978, 5–6; Safieddine 2019, 71–98). Lastly, in spite of a rapid growth of population and food needs, the two decades prior to the civil war witnessed a pronounced decline in total food production, a sector that had hitherto been important for the peripheral rural areas (Nasr 1978, 6).

All of these elements contributed to a social reality in which economic prosperity did not trickle down equally to all levels of society nor all geographical areas (Hanf 2015, 106; 'Mission IRFED' 1960, 93). The 1961 IRFED report noted, "the prosperity of Beirut hides a very real need on the part of the underprivileged class which is in the process of being formed" (quoted in *Monday Morning*, 1975-11-17/23). Increasing levels of social stratification were co-determined by the inter-related factors of region, sect and loyalty (Gilmour 1984, 29).

Geographically, there were measurable contrasts between Greater Beirut in Mount Lebanon and the "forgotten areas" that had appeared: 'Akkar in the north, Jabal 'Amil in the south and the Beqaa in the east (McDowall 1982, 13). These former agricultural hubs had been rapidly changing from semi-feudal systems to latifundia and agribusiness companies producing export (*MERIP* 1974, 28). Small and medium farmers as well as peasant workers were forced off their lands. Meanwhile, the political, administrative and economic infrastructure of the country was increasingly centralised in Beirut, making the capital a magnet for underpaid or unemployed agricultural labourers. The Shiite communities from Jabal 'Amil and the Beqaa were at the tail's end of the urbanisation process; with their limited access to education they formed the majority of the new sub-proletariat (Hanf 2015, 106). But also a portion of Sunni Muslims and Greek Orthodox Christians, mostly locals from 'Akkar, felt the necessity to move to the city for opportunity. By the 1970s over six hundred thousand newly arrived city dwellers started to form a

large suburb surrounding the southern edge of Beirut, an area also referred to as the 'belt of misery' (Gilmour 1984, 24). The swift demographic change placed considerable strain on the city, and resulted in a permanent reproduction of the country's social stratification (Traboulsi 2012, 159).

The chaotic urbanisation of the 1970s resulted in a super inflation (MERIP 1974, 27). Low-priced housing was unavailable, social welfare inadequate, and the whole socio-economic structure was tilted in favour of protecting and maintaining the established economic and political elite (Mattar 1975, 22). A large part of the inhabitants of the slums subsisted on the brink of famine, mortality rates in the marginalised residential areas were two to three times the national average, and medical care and education were for most residents virtually out of reach (al-Haytham 1976, 13). Life in the 'misery belt' stood in stark contrast to the flamboyant living situation in the coastal neighbourhoods of the city (Mattar 1975, 22), areas that were particularly inhabited by the well-educated (Maronite) Christians and Sunni merchant bourgeoisie that had profited most from economic development and relations with the West (Traboulsi 2012, 162).

Faced with visible and proximate inequalities, the less privileged areas and populations felt increasingly dissatisfied (Saad-Ghorayeb 2003, 287, 300). Students started to protest the 'merchant society' (Farsoun 1973, 3–14), while trade unions became increasingly vigorous (Traboulsi 2012, 168–69). The LCP made important strides within the labour movement, as did other Leftist organisations (Yacoub 2014, 86). Founded in 1924, and legalised in 1971, the LCP has long historical expertise and organisational know-how concerning protests and strikes (Yacoub 2014, 84; Laqueur 1961, 141), making it a familiar part of their repertoire of contention. In the 1970s, partially under their guidance, unions did not only become organised, they became mobilised (Ismael 2009, 98). Agitating for economic and social welfare demands in a changing economic climate that protected the employer rather than the employee, union organisations increasingly clashed with Lebanese security forces (Farsoun and Carroll 1976b, 24).

A case in point concerns the demonstrations in February 1975, when the fishermen of Sidon protested against Protein – a fishing firm in which former Maronite President Camille Chamoun (1952-1958) was a major shareholder – arguing the policies of the company threatened their economic existence (El-Khazen 2000, 267–82). The army interfered and fired at the protestors, leaving a number dead and wounded (*BBC SWB*, 1975-02-29). President Suleiman Frangieh (1970-1976), by default also a Maronite Christian, blocked investigations into the shooting (Traboulsi 2012, 183). This decision was followed by a number of anti- and pro-army demonstrations in Beirut, aiding the branding of the army as an instrument of Christian Lebanon, protecting its own Christian Presidents and elites (Hanf 2015, 174). Leftist parties, the Sunni

establishment and the Palestinians (who had joined their allies in the demonstrations) were rallied together for the first time in a strong fist, albeit for different reasons and agendas (Hanf 2015, 174).

On the whole, the Leftist parties strove for economic change, while the Rightist parties fought for the safeguarding of the status quo. Individuals, including the previously mentioned President Camille Chamoun and President Suleiman Frangieh, had significant stakes in the merchant society. Chamoun as major shareholder of multiple companies, and Frangieh as a founding member of the Near East Commercial Bank and as commercial agent for a number of British companies (Traboulsi 2014, 81). They sought to protect their assets as well as their venues of political power and influence. From above, relatively little effort was made to narrow the gap between high income and low income groups (S. Makdisi and Sadaka 2003, 8). From below, Rightist social movements flourished in support for their leaders, including al-Ahrar under the command of Camille Chamoun, the Marada Brigade under the leadership of Suleiman Frangieh and the Kataeb Party under the guidance of Pierre Gemayel. From an economic perspective, these Rightist movements were anti-Communist in orientation and believed in a free enterprise economic system (Farsoun and Carroll 1976b, 28; A. S. Elias 1976, 17). They thereby supported the preservation of the existing political structure that had made economic extraction possible.

Some have argued that the Left versus Right division could be equated with a Muslim versus Christian division (e.g. Farsoun and Carroll 1976b). This is too simplistic. Nevertheless, there was a degree of overlap between sectarian discrimination (and privilege) and class discrimination (and privilege) (e.g. Dubar 1974; Traboulsi 2014). A study conducted in 1973 demonstrated that 75.5 percent of commercial firms, 71 percent of the banking sector and 67.5 percent of the industrial firms were headed by Christians, in particular Maronite Christians (Boutros 1988, 166). Conversely, among the industrial working class, 75 percent were Muslims, of which a disproportionately large part was derived from the Shiite sect (Boutros 1988, 166). Christians comprised a majority of the upper and middle classes, while (Shiite) Muslims embodied a majority in both the urban and rural working classes. A year later, a study appeared by the French author Dubar (1974), who unveiled supplementary inequalities in access to education. Dubar's data demonstrated that 60 percent of Muslims in his sample group failed to complete their primary education, while this held true for only 28 percent of Christians. In fact, 34 percent of Christians completed their secondary education, while only 15 percent of Muslims was able to obtain the same level of education (Dubar 1974, 319–24).

However, Dubar argued, economic inequalities were not confined to differences between the sectarian groups, as similar differences could be measured within each group. The impact of in-group differences, Gudrun Østby maintains (2008, 149), are typically neglected in analysis on

conflict settings, even though they can provide insightful explanations on mobilisation strategies. In advancing his vision on inequality, Dubar identified two more criteria that created cleavages in society: (a) conflicting attitudes towards (pan-)Arabism (as discussed in the next section) and (b) divergent senses of self-identification with sect/class (Dubar 1974, 327–28). Dubar concluded:

> The apparent disjunction between political and economic spheres in Lebanese society is a result of an 'articulation': a connection between socio-economic circumstances and sectarian identity on the one hand, and between sectarian relationships and political institutions on the other. In this way the sectarian structure functions as an intermediary between socio-economic circumstances and political events, in which role it is as much an obstacle to translating economic demands into political action as it is an incentive […] Thus those who are most exposed to economic exploitation coupled with sectarian deprivation are best able to perceive the political roots of exploitation and deprivation and their sense of economic deprivation grows in tandem with demands for sectarian participation (Dubar, translated and quoted in Traboulsi 2014, 14)

We could argue that even though the 'misdistribution' of goods functioned in 'perspectival dualism' with the 'misrecognition' in sect (Fraser and Honneth 2003, 3), the Lebanese case demonstrates that the one cannot be reduced to the other. Neither the misdistribution of goods nor the misrecognition of sect were single-dimensional categories that overlapped unproblematically. The IRFED report, for example, suggested that there was an absence of widespread class identification and solidarity (IRFED report in *Monday Morning*, 1975-11-17/23). Even in the literature of the Lebanese Left, Traboulsi argues, the "blurred" lines between class and sect were heavily featured (Traboulsi 2014, 7–8). In the absence of strong class identifications and with the persistence of sectarianization, the economic conditions that contributed to social mobilisation cannot be understood outside the frame of sectarian compositions.

2.3. Religion and Foreign Influence

Another perspective on the roots of the Lebanese conflict can be found in those voices that described Lebanon as the playground of foreign powers (e.g. Khalaf 2004; 2012). For example, former Christian Maronite President Amine Gemayel (interview, 2017-08-14, Bikfaya), who was in office from 1982-1988, went so far as to argue that even the word 'civil war' was a misapprehension:

The word 'civil war',[6] it is part of the intervening propaganda. At that time, really, we were the victims of a campaign. A very bad campaign. We became the rich fighting the poor. The Christians fighting the Muslims. The Maronite elite fighting the masses. Why all of a sudden? We lived in harmony before. Firstly, the Palestinians wanted to transform Lebanon into a displacement country for their own people. And secondly, the Arab world was happy to have the Palestinians in Lebanon instead of having them in their countries. The Gulf countries, Syria and Egypt for example. And also some foreign countries, mainly the British and also the Americans, weren't very upset, weren't afraid, weren't against what was going on in Lebanon. Because they thought it was a way to solve the Palestinian problem. Therefore, the Lebanese conflict was a 'war' in the classical sense of the term, it was not a 'civil war'

Although President Gemayel's reflections neglect to take seriously the internal complexities of the country he headed, he was not the only one to externalise the roots of the Lebanese crisis. Also Lokman Slim, a former militant and co-founder of the UMAM archives in Beirut,[7] reiterated the much-repeated phrase that the Lebanese conflict was mostly "a war of others" (interview, 2017-06-22, Beirut). Nevertheless, he maintained, that appraisal did not absolve the Lebanese from responsibility. In this section, foreign influence will be examined in the years leading up to the civil war, relating it to alignments with sectarian communities and political movements. Although foreign influences grew considerably more complex throughout the civil war, the focus of this chapter is limited to pre-war Lebanon.

The SMT literature has noted how foreign influence can contribute to radicalisation and mobilisation (Della Porta et al. 2017, 15). The nature and history of Lebanese society, some have argued, has made it especially susceptible to external influence and diverging senses of identity (McDowall 1982, 13). The Lebanese already tried to solve this vulnerability in the National Pact of 1943, in which they not only sought a compromise formulation for the power-sharing between the religious communities, but also for the identity of the nation while providing guidelines for foreign policy (Hanf 2015, 72). Theodor Hanf describes these as "vague enough for broad consensus, and interpretable enough for partiality" (Hanf 2015, 110). Nonetheless, controversies continued to impact the political arena.

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[6] Although Amine Gemayel and others rejected the usage of the 'civil war' label, this thesis will continue with the common description of the Lebanese conflict. Nevertheless, the objections to the term's utilisation are valuable to keep in mind.

[7] The UMAM Documentation and Research archives store a wide range of primary resources on the civil war, trying to raise awareness on civil violence.

The controversy in the first decade of independence centred on the question of economic union with Syria, a legacy of the Mandate period (Hanf 2015, 110). Similarly, relations with the Arab League, founded in 1944, were disputed. Whereas a majority of Muslim leaders welcomed economic and political associations with the Arab world, most Christian politicians were more reluctant as they feared it would impinge on Lebanese sovereignty (Hanf 2015, 111). Relations with the West were just as controversial. For example, when the Christian Maronite President Camille Chamoun (1952-1958) formally linked Lebanon to the Eisenhower Doctrine, various Muslim leaders feared a hidden Western agenda (Traboulsi 2012, 132). According to Kamal Salibi, the diverging loyalties reached a climax in the 1958 civil war, "whereby Christians identified themselves in terms of Lebanese particularism and the Muslims with Abdel Nasser's pan-Arabism" (Salibi 2003, 2).[8] There were no victors in this battle, instead a solution was found in the return to the National Pact and an attitude of restraint in foreign policy (Hanf 2015, 111). Lebanon would neither be Western nor Eastern.

The Arab-Israeli war in 1967 again tested the Lebanese consensus of identity. Although Lebanon tried to evade involvement, it was eventually plunged into the reality of conflict when large numbers of Palestinian refugees entered their country for a second time (following the 1948 *nakba*) (Traboulsi 2012, 152). Gradually, Palestinians in Lebanon and elsewhere started to form militia movements, of which the PLO was the principal force (Shiblak 1997, 266–67). The Lebanese policy dispute, in this instance, revolved around the permissibility of foreign fighters on Lebanese soil (Hanf 2015, 112). Discussions coincided with the budding of domestic economic unrest. As such, the Palestinian presence in Lebanon became a catalyst that accelerated existing social and economic tensions (Farsoun and Carroll 1976b, 28).

The Lebanese government, concerned by the encroachments on their land, made efforts to control foreign militias. In 1969, they became the first Arab regime to directly attack the Palestinian militias (Farsoun 1973, 11). The Palestinian question was not an abstract issue, as it concerned the immediate way in which the Lebanese understood themselves as a people. One half of the population did not distinguish between the Palestinian and their Arab identity, while the other half was willing to fight for a Lebanese Lebanon (Hanf 2015, 112).

Following a confrontational stalemate that same year, the two opposing sides settled through the Cairo Accord, which allowed the PLO to manage their seventeen refugee camps, gave them restricted freedom of movement and the right to bear arms and attack Israel, effectively granting them a state within a state (Shiblak 1997, 267). The PLO, under the leadership of Yasser Arafat, gained the popular support of large parts of the Lebanese Muslim masses, the intellectuals

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[8] 1958 also saw the intervention of US troops.

and the students (McDowall 1982, 14). Within the Arab world, they became the embodiment of a more general Arab resistance (Farsoun 1973, 11). However, some Arab regimes as well as some minority communities in Lebanon felt threatened by the Palestinians' militancy.

In Jordan this led to the events of 'Black September', a series of bloody confrontations between the Jordanian army and the PLO (Mattar 1975, 21). The PLO's defeat in 1970 resulted in the transfer of the militia's headquarters to Lebanon (Shiblak 1997, 264), which country's weak political structure provided opportunities for wider mobilisation (Mattar 1975, 21). The PLO leadership that came from Jordan to Lebanon had learned a valuable lesson, which was to never isolate themselves from their 'host' community and their political elites. As the PLO arrived in their new stronghold, they quickly started to foster alliances with the progressive and Leftist forces in Lebanon, which had united under the leadership of Kamal Jumblatt, a Druze feudal leader and the head of the PSP (McDowall 1982, 14). The PLO, in turn, assisted in the development of Lebanon, by providing much needed services in deprived and sympathetic communities (Shiblak 1997, 268). Especially the Shiite communities in the south (strategically also the border region with Israel) profited from these initiatives (Saad-Ghorayeb 2003, 294). At the same time, they helped revolutionise and ignite existing frustrations by enhancing political consciousness, providing military training, and armament for supportive militias (El-Khazen 2000, 185–203). This alliance tilted the Lebanese social balance, causing anxiety in opposing quarters of society. These developments contributed to the rising hostilities between the Lebanese Right, the Christian Maronite dominated Kataeb in particular, and the Left, headed by the PSP and aided by the LCP and the PLO (Farsoun and Carroll 1976b, 28).

On the eve of the civil war, the sheer number of Palestinians in Lebanon, estimated to be between ten and twelve percent of the population, of which the majority was Sunni Muslim and Leftist in orientation, put pressure on the delicate power balance in Lebanon's confessional formula (Mattar 1975, 21). While the Left felt strengthened by these statistics (with the notable exception of the Amal movement), the Right perceived the Palestinian presence, and particularly the activities of the PLO, as a violation of Lebanese sovereignty and a threat to its social and economic security. In the latter perspective, the Palestinian militias were blamed for many of the ills of Lebanese society. Moreover, the Christian elites feared for their privileged economic stakes and political positions as their numbers were declining in relative terms (Salibi 2003, 198). To sum up, as the Lebanese historian Traboulsi noted, the Palestinians "provided one with hope for change, the other with the needed scapegoats" (Traboulsi 2012, 162). The perception and actualisation of the opportunities and constraints for mobilisation provided by foreign actors thereby resulted in

diverging strategies. On both sides, however, the Lebanese started to prepare for the anticipated transformation of a dialogue of words into one with arms.

2.4. Religion and Security

A last cause that was frequently mentioned, by academics and militia movements/leaders alike, is the impact of perceived threats on the need for violent mobilisation (Hanf 2015, 161–62; cf. chapter 9 for a micro-perspective on the same topic). Social movement theorists Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans (1995, 96–99), for example, argue that heightened perceptions of insecurity can negatively affect people's participation in the political process, while a positive relation can be detected with social movement engagement. Many of the sectarian communities in Lebanon did not feel they were sufficiently protected by the state, when it came to social, economic, or foreign dangers. In order to change and protect their fortunes, different quarters of society started to develop the needed skills to defend themselves. In the wake of the civil war, this resulted in a chaotic armed mobilisation on both national and communal levels. This section will trace how the state competed over coercive means with militia movements and how security concerns partially overlapped with sectarian identifications.

On 9 January 1974, the *Iraqi News Agency* reported that the Lebanese Government had signed a deal with a West German company for the purchase of arms as part of a bigger armament plan by the Ministry of Defence (*BBC SWB*, 1974-01-11). The arms deal signalled a change from Lebanon's more pacifist oriented security policy. The professional army had been wilfully kept small - with a mere 15,000 soldiers, few financial investments, and no conscription code. There were two reasons for this minimal bearing. Firstly, there was the conviction that military weakness was Lebanon's best security policy (Hanf 2015, 161). No one would see Lebanon as a (regional) threat. Secondly, there was the desire but challenge to balance religious communities within the army. Soldiering had not been a valued profession before the war. The majority of soldiers came from the economic deprived and peripheral areas, including Sunni Muslims and Maronite Christians from 'Akkar and Shiite Muslims from the south and the Beqaa, the latter of which dominated the lower military ranks (Hanf 2015, 161). Sixty to sixty-five percent of the officers, conversely, were Christians with the highest positions of Army Commander and General Director of Public Security reserved for Maronite Christians (Gilmour 1984, 28). These sectarian compositions resulted in a feeling that the army did not represent all communities and ideologies equally (Gilmour 1984, 94; S. Makdisi and Sadaka 2003, footnote 11).

The same day that the Lebanese Government had concluded an arms deal with West Germany, *The Voice of Palestine* in Baghdad reported that new quantities of arms and ammunition

had arrived in the port of Beirut, which were distributed among various militia forces (*BBC SWB*, 1974-01-11). The Lebanese army found itself in an arms race with mobilising militia movements, Lebanese and Palestinian (Gilmour 1984, 110). Concerned about the changing tides, the government concluded an additional ten million US dollar loan agreement for weapons with the United States (*BBC SWB*, 1974-04-18) and a forty-three million US dollar[9] arms deal with Libya (*BBC SWB*, 1974-09-09). But with the increasing number of violent incidents on Lebanese soil, it became clear that the state struggled to maintain control over the situation (Endres 2000, 221).

The Kataeb party, and several allies, were the first to start resisting the presence of armed Palestinians in Lebanon under the slogan of re-establishing Lebanese sovereignty (Farsoun 1976, 15). They felt they needed to defend their fragile but institutionalised place as Christians in a multi-denominational country, a unique arrangement in the region.[10] They feared the Palestinians could harm the Lebanese consociational structure. However, the communities in the south, bordering Israel, suffered most immediately from the Palestinian presence and its consequences. In the pre-war period, particularly the Shiite communities in the southern region had expressed increasing frustration with Palestinian resistance efforts (grievances the newly established social services were not able to smooth over), but the sect was even more disappointed with the Lebanese state, which was neither able nor willing to protect them from Palestinian-Israeli confrontations (Hanf 2015, 243–44). Trust in the sovereignty and impartiality of the state declined even further. On 16 April 1974, the Shiite Imam Musa al-Sadr, as head of the Movement of the Deprived,[11] proclaimed: "We will establish an army within this country in order to defend the Lebanese, protect Lebanon's borders, protect the shores of Lebanon … If you [the state] do not defend Lebanon, we will defend it" (quoted in Daher 2014, 244).

In May 1974 the government introduced compulsory military service for all Lebanese citizens aged eighteen or older for a minimum period of eighteen months (*BBC SWB*, 1974-05-07). In September later that year the *Beirut Home Service* announced that the cabinet approved a law making it illegal to carry or use firearms, which ruling would apply to all residents without exception (*BBC SWB*, 1974-09-18). Through these measures the government hoped to strengthen its own power, gain control over the Palestinian resistance movement and curb Lebanese militias. But

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[9] Amount calculated from Lebanese pounds. For conversion and inflation levels see: http://www.bdl.gov.lb/statistics/table.php?name=t5282usd

[10] Gemayel, Pierre (1969). "The Kataeb and the Current Events". 24-Page manifesto published by the Kataeb, available in AUB archives.

[11] The Movement of the Deprived was established in 1974 by Imam Musa al-Sadr. The founding document was co-signed by a number of prominent Lebanese figures, who were mixed in sectarian background. The socially mixed movement sought social justice for all the deprived Lebanese, offering social welfare and education in deprived areas (Rabil 2011, 27). However, as sectarian militancy intensified, the Movement of the Deprived developed into a Shiite movement that was eventually called Amal (see chapter 5).

measures came too late. By the end of 1974 Israel launched air raids into southern Lebanon on an almost daily basis (*BBC SWB*, 1974-10/12). Occasionally, also Beirut's suburbs were targeted. Widespread suffering and fear followed, creating heated discussions between the Lebanese regarding the cause of these upheavals. Although for different reasons, almost all agreed that the state was failing to protect. The Lebanese mobilised by arms, some in favour of Palestinian resistance, others in direct opposition, again others argued they took up arms to protect their neighbourhood or village (Endres 2000, 223–24).

The lack of trust in the state and the search for alternative forms of protection is well captured in an editorial in the Lebanese weekly magazine *Monday Morning,* which starts off by posing a number of hypothetical scenarios:

> Your home is invaded by a number of armed men seeking money or blood. You yourself are either unarmed or own a pistol which may be as effective as your son's watergun.
>
> A member of your family is stopped on his way to work and kidnapped. You are stranded in your apartment, the clashes are raging around you, you fear for your and your family's safety and you have no way of getting out of your death trap.
>
> You come home to find that someone has broken into your house and looted it. You go out in the morning and find no trace of your car.
>
> These are situations which you may find yourself in with increasing frequency in Lebanon today. A few months ago, you would have known what to do. You would have called the closest police station, and you would have had help within a few minutes. Today the disintegration of normal life in Lebanon has overloaded the security forces, who are now outnumbered by the 'armed elements' that infest the insane streets of the country. A call to the police may work, and it may not. So what do you do in Lebanon today when your life, the lives of the members of your family, your property are threatened?
>
> You call for help. You try not only the security forces but also a number of other organisations which have established special sections for the protection of the residents of Lebanon and their property (*Monday Morning*, 1976-01-05/11)

The article subsequently presents a list of armed organisations and the 'services' they provide, including aid in the case of kidnapping or looting. It further specifies in which areas the different organisations and militias provide these services. Only a superficial reading will illuminate that each militia only caters to its respective stronghold: the Kataeb only offers "help in our little area (Ashrafieh)", a largely Christian neighbourhood, while Fatah (the Palestinian National Liberation

Movement, the leading organisation within the PLO) stated to operate in their "own areas […] which cannot be specified for security reasons". Presumably, these were the Palestinian refugee camps and the sympathetic neighbourhoods they needed for their continued existence in Lebanon. Similarly, other militia movements stated they were willing to provide help in their own sectarian quarters or political strongholds. Gradually, the security options of a Lebanese citizen became increasingly dependent upon her/his sectarian or political belonging.

Within the SMT literature, the breakdown of the state is typically described as an opportunity for movement mobilisation (McAdam 1996, 26–31). Similar theoretical echoes can be found in the sectarianization literature (Hashemi and Postel 2017, 9). The overarching argument is that the hiatus left by a failing state is filled by alternative, possibly sectarian, structures (Kingston and Spears 2004, 1). The above-quoted portrayals and advertisement demonstrate similar features. However, it is important to note that the Lebanese army was never omnipresent, while feudal and sectarian structures were already strong and foreign influences notable. The social, economic and geopolitical pressures that characterised pre-war Lebanon merely augmented the weak state dynamics. Paradoxically, the fear of violence, largely perpetrated by militias, was alleviated by the promised protection of these same militia movements. The restructuring of the responsibility of protection resulted in a larger restructuring of society, pushing the process of sectarianization. To obtain protection you needed to belong. Henceforth, citizens were faced with the question: In which group do you find protection and belonging?

3. Conclusion

In this chapter we trailed four different emerging factors that contributed to the gradual mobilisation of part of the Lebanese population, simultaneously tracing how these motivational factors connected with sectarian/religious dynamics. Firstly, it was demonstrated how Lebanon has undergone a long, dynamic and intermitted process of socio-political sectarianization, starting from the *millet* system and transforming to the *Qa'imaqamiyya* and *Mutasarrifiyya*, to eventually reach the status of a Republic. Sectarian arrangements were introduced and developed, in the belief that they would help in the establishment and maintenance of economic prosperity and social stability amidst religious and geographical diversity (Hourani 1985, 1). Secondly, identity formation was coupled with economic structures, highlighting the role and interests of sectarian and feudal merchant elites. They were amongst those who turned the wheel of sectarian reproduction, as they played important roles in providing a sense of safety and belonging. The patronage system enabled the controlling of identity-based political affiliations. Sectarian identities were hardened at the expense of alternative identities (e.g. nation or class).

Thirdly, the hardening of identity and the inequality of economic gain were further defined by foreign influence (e.g. Palestine, Syria and Israel). Especially the presence of Palestinian refugees and militants divided Lebanese society. Half of the population supported their 'brothers and sisters' in their right to return to their homeland, the other half saw the largely Sunni refugee community as a threat to Lebanese co-existence and sovereignty. Part of Lebanese society received military and social aid from the affluent PLO, while other communities and regions did not receive similar opportunities for social and militia mobilisation. Lastly, all of these dynamics were brought together under the heading of 'security'. Perceptions on existential threat, economic grievance and foreign influence all contributed to a feeling of social and physical insecurity. The developing militia movements provided alternative avenues of safety and belonging, a role the state struggled to fulfil. As a consequence, the Lebanese felt urged to choose side in an increasingly divided society.

The sketched picture does not provide an all-compassing account on the crossroads to war (for more general overviews see Salibi 1976; Hanf 2015; Traboulsi 2012; Khalaf 2012; S. Makdisi and Sadaka 2003). Instead, this chapter focussed on the sectarian/religious elements that were integral parts of the more mundane challenges that Lebanon was facing. The complex interplay between emerging, diverging and layered factors eventually resulted in the watershed events of 13 April 1975, initiating the official start of a fifteen-year long civil war. In the next chapter, the different phases of the civil war will be considered, developing the four points of contestation – socio-political context, economic interests, international influence and security issues - in an evolving time setting. The focuses of these reflections remain on their connection to the sectarianization process.

5.

MILITIAS: **The Phases of Civil War**

"The hatred which is erupting day after day clearly indicated that the sickness which is taking hold of us must be remedied at the root. We can do this by going back to our heritage and our true beliefs, by going back to Almighty God"

- (PM Karami, 1975)

1. The Warring Years

Under a complex set of stressing conditions, social, political and religious opinions polarised and eventually militarised. When the civil war formally started on April 13, 1975, the Kataeb, the PSP and the LCP were on the forefront of the struggle. The Amal movement would enter the conflict a few months later. None of these militia movements constitute monolithic examples of religious or secular movements, as their motivations, support bases, main leaders, allies and infrastructures will attest to. Together they represent a hybrid spectrum, reflecting the messy dynamics of social reality. To grasp the nuances in composition and change, this chapter will adopt the same theoretical grounding as presented in the previous chapter, in which the structural and cultural approaches of SMT are analysed together with the process of sectarianization.

The writings below will thereby incorporate the formerly introduced four angles that contributed to the social mobilisation towards violent engagement: (a) religion and the socio-economic context, (b) religion and the economy, (c) religion and foreign influence, and (d) religion and security. In this chapter, however, they will not be assessed as categories on their own right but within the historical setting of a civil war. Although all four POS persisted throughout the war, due to stressing circumstances, including the strains of sectarianization, their manifestation changed through the different phases of the war, in which also their framed significance altered. In this way, the constructivist, emergent and relational nature of religion is highlighted, demonstrating its interdependent qualities, changing expressions and interpretative meaning.

The historical overview of the warring years is divided into three analytical phases (cf. S. Makdisi and Sadaka 2003; Traboulsi 2012). In the first phase (1975-1976) the civil war was characterised by diverging demands for reform, requests that were partially formed and informed by sectarian compositions. While the LNM, that is the Leftist militia coalition that included the PSP, the LCP and, for a few months, the Amal movement, pushed for *socio-political* and *economic* reforms, the Kataeb party and their associates warned how changing realities had already put strain on the *security* situation of the state. The second phase (1976-1982) was defined by an increased *influence of foreign* countries, which pushed sectarianization in yet a different direction. The sectarianization process, partially under pressure of foreign players, was first reflected in the rhetoric of militia movements, then in the social un-mixing of geographical areas, and lastly in the homogenisation of the militias' constituencies and identity presentations. In the third phase (1982-1990) a 'war order' developed, in which economic gain and social influence seemed ever more appealing and profitable to (sectarian) militia leaders. Initial wishes for *socio-political reform* were put on hold, as the *insecurity* of war allowed for *economic* extraction. Through these steps of analysis, the thesis interacts with the recurring argument of Monica Duffy Toft (2006; 2007; 2015), who maintains that civil wars become more religious with the protraction of conflict.

Militia movements will be introduced within this macro-historical context, sketching their respective viewpoints on the civil war and religion's role through the frames provided in speeches and communiqués. As the historical focus on the social mobilisation towards violence with an emphasis on religion's involvement has not been pursued before, the presentation below is heavily dependent upon archival data and original interview abstracts. In the concluding section, the structural and cultural changes will be discussed and compared across the introduced militia movements.

2. Sectarianization throughout the Civil War

2.1. Demands for Reform (1975-1976)

The incident that sparked the fifteen-year long struggle took place in Beirut on 13 April 1975 in the mainly Christian populated district of Ayn al-Rumaneh (McDowall 1982, 14). Pierre Gemayel, leader of the Kataeb, was attending a consecration service at the Church of St. Maron, when a group of Palestinian militias clashed with his Kataeb militiamen who were safeguarding the sacred site (O'Ballance 1998, 1; Traboulsi 2012, 183). Among those killed was Gemayel's bodyguard. A few hours later, a bus passed through the same suburb, packed with Palestinian people and decked with Palestinian flags. Kataeb militias opened fire and killed 26 Palestinians, including children, injuring many more (*BBC SWB*, 1975-04-13). These two incidents instigated further street clashes between the Kataeb and Palestinian militants (S. Makdisi and Sadaka 2003, 18). A tug of war between two populist forces, each supported by a coalition of different militias, had sprung from a country in crisis in which the state struggled to maintain order. Both militia camps attempted to impose themselves and their ideals on the country, in which *socio-political reforms* were pitted against *security concerns*. These opposing priorities were the largest (though not exclusive or isolated) propellers of the first phase of the civil war. This section will detail the diverging demands for reform in relation to the sectarianization process.

Following the April 13 incidents, the newly appointed Sunni Prime Minister Rashid el-Solh (1974-1975) demanded that Pierre Gemayel would hand over the men responsible for the massacre. Pierre Gemayel refused, while he publicly questioned the capability of the state. Security, according to Gemayel, was under threat. On *Radio Lebanon* he commented: "There is not one government, but many in Lebanon. The authority of the state does not cover the whole state" (*BBC SWB*, 1975-04-16). Effectively, he signalled that he no longer counted on the state for protection nor adhered to its rules and regulations. He issued an appeal to his supporters to rally to the defence of 'Christian' areas (O'Ballance 1998, 48). By referring to the 'Christians', Gemayel tried to construct unity in the imagined Christian communal space, tying them together under a single politico-military umbrella (Hage 1992, 28). He created an opportunity for mobilisation in a condition he described as dangerously constraining. A feeling of panic spread across the Christian community, resulting in a high number of volunteering recruits but also in an exodus of Christians fleeing the country.

The Kataeb party had been founded in 1936 by Pierre Gemayel as a Maronite paramilitary youth organisation, modelled after Spanish Phalange and Italian Fascist parties (Stoakes 1975, 215). Although the party criticised the government, in many ways the Kataeb supported the status quo. They wanted to maintain the Lebanese socio-political confessional system and backed the

cosmopolitan merchant system. In 1952 the party had adopted the character of a constitutional party, partaking in elections and thereby gaining political avenues of influence. Political engagement simultaneously facilitated for greater population networks and organisational resources – political opportunities that would later be used for militia mobilisation (cf. Meyer and Minkoff 2004, 126). The Kataeb's constituency was predominantly Christian (85 percent), mainly derived from the Maronite Church, though some Muslims and Druze were represented in the early years of war (Stoakes 1975, 216). Most Kataeb adherents were from the eastern quarters of Beirut and the western face of Mount Lebanon (Stoakes 1975, 216).

It was in the atmosphere of fear and under the guidance of the powerful Kataeb party that the political coalition of the Lebanese Front was established and a few months later the LF, which functioned as a specialised military command (Rowayheb 2006, 311–13). Alongside the Kataeb Party, three other parties dominated the alliance: al-Ahrar headed by Camille Chamoun, the Marada Brigade under the command of Suleiman Frangieh and the Monastic Order under the leadership of Father Sharbil Qassis.[1] The joint militia became Lebanon's largest paramilitary force. Although the coalition always maintained to uphold cross-confessional alignment, membership and leadership were overwhelmingly Maronite (Snider 1984, 1; Hage 1992, 27).[2] More specifically, the ranks of the LF included no Sunni members and only incidental Shiite militants (*Monday Morning*, 1975-06-2/8); additionally, more than 80 percent of their leadership was Maronite (Rowayheb 2006, 310). As such, Rowayheb argues, the LF display "a clear example" of sectarian mobilisation "taking place according to undeclared cultural markers" (Rowayheb 2006, 311). These trends coincide with the SMT literature on identity politics (e.g. J. Gamson 2009; Robnett 2002).

The sectarian framing of security concerns by the Kataeb and the LF did not go unnoticed by their opponents. In *Al-Anbaa*, the PSP's newspaper, the condemnation of the Kataeb's role in the conflict was frequently repeated, blaming the movement for social strife and rift. In April 1975, for example, *Al-Anbaa* accused the Kataeb for inciting hatred against "all things Arab" and Pierre Gemayel for rousing hatred against Palestinians. But the PSP too, occasionally yet increasingly, used the term 'Christian', rather than Kataeb or LF, in their diagnostic narratives – pushing religious markers on the conflict. In *Al-Anbaa's* January 2-9, 1976 issue, the newspaper published an interview with a diasporic millionaire from Zgharta, who called upon "Christians" to take up arms,

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[1] See Snider (1984, 9) for more details on the development and composition of the LF.
[2] It is difficult to obtain precise numbers on party membership. We know that most high-ranking positions were filled by Maronites (with some notable exceptions). However, it was claimed that the lower ranks were composed of an additional unspecified number of Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Armenian Catholics and other Christians. The Party's List of Martyrs confirms such claims (Rowayheb 2006). The LF additionally claimed to have five to seven percent of Muslims in their personnel (Snider 1984). This latter indication is arguably inflated; nevertheless, it is true that they had some Muslims in their ranks, though these numbers decreased over the course of the war.

pledging to "kill every last Muslim in Lebanon". The LCP, meanwhile, in their newspaper *Al-Nidaa,* continued to remind their readers that the Kataeb's militancy was not univocally supported by all Christians. The LCP, which was itself supported by a large part of the Christian Orthodox population in Lebanon, tried to convince their readers that Christians are neither an empirical nor homogenous collective, but instead called for the isolation of extremist Christian elements, such as Pierre Gemayel (*Al-Nidaa,* 1975-04-19).

It was an open secret that Pierre Gemayel, spearhead of the Lebanese Front coalition, had been planning an all-out offensive against Palestinians, the PLO in particular, whose presence in Lebanon, he felt, breached Lebanese sovereignty and stained Lebanese pride. The nationalist orientation of the Lebanese Front, which exhibited "religiosity quite strongly", imagined the Lebanese nation as having an "immemorial past" (Hage 1992, 29). Lebanon, in this view, constituted an eternal entity, rooted in Phoenician and biblical history (Ayoub 1994, 241–42). The phrase *Lubnan al-azali* (eternal Lebanon) became a popularised slogan in folkloric songs and battle cries (Hage 1992, 29). Alongside its nationalist orientation, the Lebanese Front was Right-of-center and defensive of the confessional-based political structure (Farsoun and Carroll 1976b, 27–28).

The Lebanese Front supported the established 'law and order', because they maintained that the Constitution and the unwritten National Pact were "best for the country" (*Monday Morning,* 1975-06-02/08), as they protected all sects and ensured their political inclusion. The Lebanese Front feared that the influx of Palestinian refugees, most of them Muslims, would tilt Lebanese sectarian quota (even though they were not granted citizenship). For much of Lebanese history, it was proclaimed, the Christians had lived as second-tier citizens. The community refused to return to a *dhimmi*[3] status, never again would they step *nishmil*.[4] Humiliations of the past were brought into the present, creating an atmosphere of fear. Moreover, it was widely repeated that the Christians of Lebanon enjoyed more power and freedom than Christians in other Arab countries. The Lebanese formula was needed for their secure positioning. Pierre Gemayel therefore plainly stated that he would not support any reform – socio-political or economic – until the security concerns of his Christian constituency would be eliminated (*Monday Morning,* 1975-06-2/8).

On the anti-status quo side we find the LNM, a coalition of several Leftist and Arab-nationalist movements, who advocated for *socio-political* and *economic reforms* and had allied

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[3] A *dhimmi* is a historical term that refers to non-Muslim subjects in a state governed by Islamic Sharia law. The word *dhimmi* literally means 'protected person'. Although *dhimmis* had their right as a community protected by the state, as citizens they lived under certain restrictions. For example, they were obliged to pay protection tax, known as *jizya*, and only enjoyed restricted freedom of religion and worship. In modern times, the term is particularly used to denote second-class citizens (R. Geha 2009, 310).

[4] *Nishmil* comes from the verb *ishmil,* which means 'move to the left'. In some times and areas of the Ottoman Empire, Christians were required to walk on the left as a sign of humiliation (R. Geha 2009, 434).

themselves with the PLO[5] (Baylouny 2014, 333). The LNM was headed by the Druze feudal chief Kamal Jumblatt and his PSP. Kamal Jumblatt was the ideological centre and the undisputed leader of the party. The PSP, founded in 1949, started off as a loose coalition of deputies from the Chouf Mountain and mostly included friends and supporters of the Jumblatt clan (al-Khazen 1988, 180). As the Chouf constituted the party's stronghold, most of its members were derived from the Druze and Christian sects (Richani 1998, 76, 94). As the PSP was identified with the Arab Left[6] it also had substantial numbers of underprivileged Shiites in its ranks. Kamal Jumblatt's considerable control over the pan-Arab street, led him to become an influential force within Lebanon, undermining the power bases of the traditional *zu'amaa'* or leading families (al-Khazen 1988, 181). In 1970, as minister of Interior, Kamal Jumblatt had legalised the LCP, which would later become a major player in the LNM.

The LCP, active since 1924, was the oldest of all Lebanese parties (Yacoub 2014, 84; Laqueur 1961, 141). The party called for socio-political and economic reform, seeking to transform the "sectarian feudalistic system into a secular, democratic, liberal system" (*Monday Morning*, 1976-01-05/11). Unlike the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, room for private expressions of faith were preserved (interview Karim Mroue, 2017-06-03, Beirut). At its foundation, the LCP drew much of its support from the Armenian population in Lebanon (Hanf 2015, 76). Another large portion of its constituency was composed of Greek Orthodox Lebanese, of which sect many Communist leaders were derived. In the decade preceding the civil war, the LCP had considerable success amongst Shiite Muslims. Lists of fallen members during the civil war indicate that all sects were represented within the party (Rowayheb 2006, 307). Though initially not prepared for military engagement, under the leadership of George Hawi, his right hand Karim Mroue, and with the help of the LNM, a large force of fighters was erected (Rowayheb 2006, 307; Richani 1998, 111).

In August 1975 the LNM issued a comprehensive reformatory programme (full translation published in *Third World Magazine* 1976, 38–44). Highlights included the abolition of institutionalised sectarian quotas for the political and administrative system, a new electoral law based on proportional representation in a single electoral district, a reorganisation of the army, and a voluntary civil code for personal status law.[7] The demands were socio-political in nature, while a

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[5] Although the PLO was a significant player within the Lebanese civil war, they fall outside the focus area of this PhD and therefore will only be discussed in passing.

[6] Kamal Jumblatt was close to Abdel al-Nasser on a personal level. Al-Nasser even took the effort to go to al-Azhar University in Egypt, asking religious scholars for a *fatwa* to acknowledge the Druze community as a Muslim community. The *fatwa* that followed contributed to the Druze community's increased social standing in the region.

[7] In the Lebanese Republic, civil, commercial and criminal law are the same for all sects, being administered by state courts. However, personal status law (e.g. matters dealing with marriage, divorce and inheritance) is left to the religious courts of the diverging sectarian communities (Salibi 2003, 194–95). As such, to be a

condemning finger was pointed at the sectarian system. The system of political sectarianism, they argued, had "turned the struggle […] into odious communal strife; because the system of political sectarianism preserves the outmoded and backward things in this country; and because the political sectarianism suppresses the will for the majority of the Lebanese" (*BBC SWB*, 1975-09–27).

A few days following the announcement of the LNM's reformatory programme, the Lebanese Front called for the secularization of the state, which Pierre Gemayel defined as the reform towards a unified personal status law and the distribution of administrative posts based on merit, which would constitute precursors for the secularization in parliamentary representation (*BBC SWB*, 1975-08-22). It was a calculated bluff, as the Lebanese Front knowingly provoked a reaction from Muslim factions in the LNM, whose religious authorities would never agree to the imposition of civil personal status as the only option available (Traboulsi 2012, 190–91). The latter wanted to rid Lebanon of the quota attached to sectarianism, which was to their disadvantage, not of religious sentiments attached to sectarianism, which would touch the core of their identity. Imam Musa al-Sadr, leader of the Movement of the Deprived and ally of the LNM, called upon all parties to "stop exploiting religion" and to come together to find a mutually beneficial solution (*Monday Morning*, 1975-06-09/15). Arguments over reform demonstrate how religious/sectarian markers were used, accused and abused to communicate the mundane grievances people in Lebanon were facing. The multiple and muddy purposes of religion as a mobilising force have also been underlined by social movement theorists, including Johnny Williams (2002, 204) and Nany Whittier (2002, 304).

The government struggled to control the situation that witnessed ever-increasing cycles of violent clashes between the two opposing fronts. In a desperate attempt, President Suleiman Frangieh appointed a military cabinet on 23 May 1975. A number of Lebanese politicians described the formation as a "blow against democracy and freedom" (*BBC SWB*, 1975-05-27). Three days later, under the pressure of a general strike organised by the LNM and backed by a number of prominent Muslim and Christian figures, the cabinet fell (Traboulsi 2012, 188). On July 6, Rashid Karami established a new formation, this time in the format of a six-men cabinet that excluded both Kamal Jumblatt and Pierre Gemayel. Hereafter Karami (1975-1976) took office, fulfilling the role of Prime Minister.

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full citizen before the law, the Lebanese are obliged to be listed as members of any one sect that is recognised by the state. Although there is flexibility to change affiliation, one cannot exist, as a full legal citizen, outside any of the recognised sects. On paper, therefore, one cannot be non-religious. The LNM proposed to include the option of a civil code alongside the already existing religious codes of law, which would enable the Lebanese to arrange personal status through the state rather than a religious institution.

On that same day, Lebanon was introduced to the Amal movement when an explosion hit one of its training camps near Baalbeck (Siklawi 2012, 7). The Shiite cleric Imam Musa al-Sadr maintained that Amal (an acronym spelling 'hope') was formed to protect the Shiite community from government neglect, economic deprivation and Israeli aggression against the south. From the beginning, Imam Musa al-Sadr mobilised a broad diagnostic frame, including socio-political, economic, foreign and security concerns. The Movement of the Deprived - the non-militarised and multi-sectarian movement led by the Imam - gradually integrated into the more blatant sectarian movement Amal.[8] As the movement was allied with the LNM, Palestinian guerrillas trained Amal militants. However, Amal soon started to critique Palestinian resistance on Lebanese soil (Norton 1987, 115). By the end of 1975 Amal parted company with Kamal Jumblatt's LNM and allied itself with Syria, a regime that had become an important meddler in the Lebanese turmoil (El-Khazen 2000, 356). The Imam accused the LNM of "wanting to exploit the Shiite masses and use them as cannon fodder in its struggle against the Christians" (quoted in Ajami 1987, 178). Similarly, Imam Musa al-Sadr was critical towards the Lebanese Front. As a consequence, Amal found itself in an isolated position (Ajami 1987, 178).

Meanwhile, tensions were rising. On December 6, the bodies of four young Kataeb militants were discovered in the Metn region (*BBC SWB*, 1975-12-08). In an act of vengeance, Kataeb militiamen murdered two hundred Muslims in Beirut, mostly port workers (Hanf 2015, 210). The massacre became known as 'Black Saturday'. President Frangieh condemned the "horrors" and called to unite "ranks and efforts and to stand up against this catastrophic ordeal" (*BBC SWB*, 1975-12-10). Instead, the reactionary 'Battle of Hotels' erupted, in which the opposing coalitions of the LNM and the LF fought over the heart of Beirut. When the Kataeb's strategic position at the Holiday Inn was overrun on 22 March, the division of an east and west Beirut was completed. A 'green line'[9] - which ran from Ayn al-Rumaneh (were the bus massacre took place on April 13) along Damascus Street through Martyr Square (the main public meetings place in the capital) to the west gate of the harbour – marked the separation (Hanf 2015, 215). The east-west division, dividing the majority Christian quarters from the majority Muslim quarters, would endure until the end of the war.

On both sides of the divided capital the number of 'identity-card victims' mounted, citizens abducted or murdered for their religious affiliation (Hanf 2015, 210). Several churches, within and

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[8] The news outlet associated with the Movement of the Deprived was called *Risala*. With the announcement of Amal the name changed into *Risala wa Amal*. Finally, in 1978, the newspaper was called *Amal*. These name changes are firm indicators of the movements' relation and final integration.

[9] The thin strip of land dividing east and west Beirut became a no man's land, coloured 'green' by camouflaged barracks and wild growing vegetation.

outside Beirut, were desecrated. In turn, Christian dominated militias were accused of vandalising and defiling mosques (Horner 1977, 11). Sectarian attacks and demolitions further homogenised the quarters of the city and the cantons in the country, advancing the physical distance between Lebanese citizens of different religious backgrounds (Harik 1994b, 50). Prime Minister Rashid Karami framed the situation as follows:

> The hatred which is erupting day after day clearly indicated that the sickness which is taking hold of us must be remedied at the root. We can do this by going back to our heritage and our true beliefs, by going back to Almighty God […] If each one of us really believes in the message of his faith, Christianity, Islam or Judaism too. All religions enjoin love, good and righteousness among all people […] Lebanese, I appeal to you in the name of God, the homeland and mankind to stop this odious fighting and to work for [word indistinct] and the one family. Long live Lebanon (*BBC SWB*, 1975-12-10)

In addition to hatred on the streets, the government was further challenged by the gradual disintegration of the Lebanese Army. Exactly a month later the Prime Minister had to admit that the state had "lost control of the situation" and the management of the "different sides" (*BBC SWB*, 1976-01-10). Interestingly enough, Karami commented "the state was not responsible for the" sectarian brand of the state (*BBC SWB*, 1976-01-10). Constitutional jurist Edmond Rabbath attempted to clarify the matter by defining the on-going civil war as "sectarian in form and social in content and demands" (quoted in Traboulsi 2012, 191).[10] In sum, the civil war was caused by opposing socio-political, economic and security grievances. Nevertheless, the articulation of these grievances was regularly clothed in religious form, which had far-reaching consequences for the war's dynamics.

2.2. The Slippery Slope of Sectarianization (1976-1982)

The second phase of war started when 30,000 Syrian troops entered Lebanon at the request of President Frangieh and with the consent of the Lebanese Front at the start of 1976. A few months later, upon request of the newly elected President Elias Sarkis (1976-1982), the Arab Deterrent Forces (ADF) arrived in Lebanon, also in support of the government and its political allies. The ADF was composed of members of the Arab League, compromising troops from Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Syria. The deployment of the ADF formally ended the first, two-year phase of

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[10] See also: Rabbath, E. (1971). *La formation historique du Liban politique et constitutionnel: Essai de synthèse.* Beirut: Publications de l'Université Libanaise.

the civil war. In a statement, the Syrian government, which provided the overwhelming majority of ADF troops, diagnosed the prime reason for intervention to be:

> The Syrian Arab Republic rejects sectarian fighting. It rejects the killing of any citizen because of his religious identity, since this is not an Arab characteristic, value or principle. In addition, this contradicts all religions, ideals and the spirit of love and tolerance which Islam and Christianity teach. For this reason, the Syrian Arab Republic can in no way be party to any sectarian fighting. Syria will stand against this and condemns the sides taking part in it […] The aim of safeguarding national unity and the unity of the country must be far above sectarian strife (*BBC SWB*, 1976-04-02)

Both the Lebanese Prime Minister Karami and the Syrian government explained the conflict referring to generalised religious identity markers, thereby neglecting the previously expressed complexities and specific realities of class dynamics, economic decline, geopolitical pressures, militia rivalries and demands for reform. This simplification - characteristic for the second phase - marked the acceleration of the slippery slope towards a sectarianization of the conflict, in which religious labels and symbols became increasingly noticeable in the militia movements' diagnostic and prognostic frames. These debates will be guided by the SMT insights of macro-dynamical identity politics (e.g. Muro 2015; Robnett 2002). Additionally, the different manners in which *foreign countries* affected the sectarianization process will be discussed, linking the political opportunities and constraints for mobilisation to fluctuating elite alliances (cf. Della Porta and Diani 2005, 210; Tarrow 2011, 169). More specifically, this section will demonstrate how the process of sectarianization, co-influenced by foreign powers, was reflected in the rhetoric of militia movements, the partial social un-mixing of geographical areas, and as the successive homogenisation of the militia's constituencies and identity presentations.

Regardless of the official statement of the Syrian government, and regardless of its past support for the Palestinian resistance, the intervention was largely aimed at curbing the power of the PLO and the LNM, who Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad now described as "criminals" and "oppressors" (Traboulsi 2012, 197). In effect, Syria intervened on the side of the Christian President, supporting the status quo (Ajami 1987, 174). The smearing was not a one-sided endeavour, nor was it void of increasingly religious undertones. *Al-Anbaa*, the PSP's newspaper, published a caricature of Hafiz al-Asad breastfeeding a baby priest, who represented the Christian bourgeoisie (*An-Anbaa*, 1976-07-19/25) (see Appendix, Visual 1). The text that accompanied the caricature critiqued the unprecedented close relation between the two unlikely allies. The turbulent

nature of militia alliances highlight the constructed nature of identity and belonging, which emerged as much with opportunistic political opportunity as it did with interpretative frames of historical and religious affinity (cf. Muro 2015; J. Gamson 2009).

Playing into the ever more present narratives of religious and sectarian prominence, Pierre Gemayel organised a meeting with some of Lebanon's most important religious leaders, who also expressed themselves critically towards the Palestinian presence and PLO activities. Gemayel saw the opportunities religious leadership and dialogue could provide in building community commitment while re-imagining sources of legitimacy (cf. Morris and Staggenborg 2004, 180; Tarrow 2011, 29). The assembly included notables like the Shiite Imam Musa al-Sadr, the Maronite Patriarch Antonius Butrus Khoreish, and the Lebanese Mufti Shaykh Hassan Khalid. The Kataeb Political Bureau concluded: "The party looks with satisfaction and confidence to the appeals made by the religious leaders and considers them to be the true interpretation of the will of the Lebanese for life and their desire for peace, security and stability" (*BBC SWB*, 1976-04-02). The outcome of the summit of religious notables was a unified call for a ceasefire, which encompassed an acceptance of Syrian interference. Implicitly, the meeting had moved (some) religious leaders to the forefront of the conflict, as they were presented as the true voice of the Lebanese, a portrayal that further pushed divisions along sectarian lines.

The polarising social landscape was ever more sharply portrayed as well as critiqued by the diverging news outlets in Lebanon. Sharif al-Akhawi, the Ministry of Information's liaison officer with the Security Forces, framed his concern about the challenging situation:

> Our mission is not only to enlighten people about the security situation and about unsafe roads, but also to warn people of false rumours […] For instance, a foreign news agency, in its attempt to sow discord among the Lebanese, has disseminated throughout the world a report saying that the Moslems in Lebanon have declared a Holy War on Christians. Let us speak very frankly. This report is a lie (*BBC SWB*, 1976-01-21)

In a similar vein, Pierre Gemayel warned his "Muslim brothers" that "differences have been provoked between us [Christians and Muslims]. We have been driven to violence, and violence is alien to our traditions and nature. Violence is not a way to salvation" (*BBC SWB*, 1976-03-30). Gemayel thus distanced himself from the party's responsibility in the sectarian nature of the fighting, blaming outside forces for the manipulation of Lebanese identities. At the same time, he stated that the responsibility of his "Muslim brothers" was "greater" than the Christians, "because you [the Muslims] allowed evil to seek protection behind you" (*BBC SWB*, 1976-03-30).

President Sarkis (1976-1982), worried by the increasing sectarian expressions and the sectarianizing diagnostic frames, urged for the "unification" of official information, expressing his hope that the media would submit to "self-censorship" to safeguard national interest (*BBC SWB*, 1976-11-20). But the new course seemed difficult to diverge from. By introducing a state-imposed press censorship, on 1 January 1977, the Lebanese government tried to contain developments differently. Legislative Decree No. 1 stated the first two criteria to be defined as a "(a) commitment not to publish material advocating the segregation of citizens and spreading confusion and fear in their ranks; (b) not to publish material stirring up sectarian strife and weakening people's morale" (*BBC SWB*, 1977-01-05). The Decree took effect on the 3rd, was extended to foreign correspondents on the 5th and modified on the 25th. Several newspapers and periodical were suspended as restrictions were defied (O'Ballance 1998, 61).

The external intervention of Syria and the internal legislation of the government were controversial topics within Lebanon. Various key personalities condemned the situation. The most vocal of whom was Kamal Jumblatt, leader of the PSP and spearhead of the LNM. He requested the resignation of the Lebanese President (*BBC SWB*, 1976-08-13); described the Syrian army as an invading power (*BBC SWB*, 1976-04-07), and accused them of robbing the Lebanese banks (*BBC SWB*, 1976-07-19). His critical notes put him on dangerous grounds. On 16 March 1977, Kamal Jumblatt was assassinated near his home in Mount Lebanon (*BBC SWB*, 1977-03-16). The leader's death resulted in much confusion and bewilderment. The Druze elements within the PSP sought vengeance (O'Ballance 1998, 62).

Rajed Harb (interview, 2017-09-11, Beirut), a close companion of the Jumblatt family, recalled how he accompanied Walid Jumblatt, Kamal Jumblatt's 28-year old son, to the family's home in Moukhtara after they heard the news about the assassination. After a humiliating experience at a Syrian roadblock, they finally arrived in the heart of the Mountain. In the background they heard gunshots. They were "astonished" to learn that "the Druze" were seeking retaliation against "the Christians", their traditional enemy, who they presumed to be behind the death of their leader.[11] Rajed Harb was sent out to stop the fighting in the Mountain villages, while Walid Jumblatt, strengthened by the Druze religious leader the Shaykh al-'Aql (see page 150 for more on the Shaykh), tried to stop clashes elsewhere. For example, Jihad Zouhairy (interview, 2017-07-19, Beirut) recollected how he and his PSP colleague militants planned an all-out offensive

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[11] The Druze and Christians have coexisted in Mount Lebanon since the tenth or eleventh century (Salibi 2003, 13). Coexistence was occasionally intermitted by violent confrontation, the most notable of which was the conflict that took place in 1860. During the 1975-1990 civil war, the 1860 events were suddenly depicted as 'fresh in the minds of the people' (*Kull il Arab*, 1982-10-27). As such, conflict was remembered rather than coexistence.

against the Christians in Ashrafieh (a majority Christian neighbourhood in Beirut), upon hearing the news of their assassinated leader. Just before they headed out they received a phone call from Walid Jumblatt to blow off the operation. Even though Rajeb Harb and Walid Jumblatt, who suspected the Syrian regime to be behind the assassination, managed to stop some of the attacks on Christians, on the night of the assassination over a hundred Christians were killed, many of whom were members of the PSP (O'Ballance 1998, 62). The events affected the demographics of intermixed villages in the Mountain, areas that until then had been largely untouched by the war (O'Ballance 1998, 62).

Walid Jumblatt succeeded his father as leader of the Druze sect, frontrunner of the PSP and head of the LNM. Members of the Druze sect as well as secular parties within the LNM supported the inexperienced feudal heir (Richani 1998, 62–63). The process of succession illustrates the importance of both sectarian politics and cultural tradition. The backing was also based on the calculation that Walid Jumblatt could continue to capitalise on the Druze support base to serve the LNM's secular project (Richani 1998, 63). Nevertheless, the inter-sectarian PSP became increasingly exclusive in orientation and membership (Shuqair and Jumblatt 1977, 18; Traboulsi 2012, 229). The killings following Kamal Jumblatt's death, amongst other events, had left deep scars. The subsequent domination of Druze features within the PSP undermined the party's standing as a leading secular force in Lebanon, which in turn weakened the coalition of the LNM. Although Walid Jumblatt suspected a Syrian complot behind his father's death, stepping over his own emotional mistrust he laid the bearings for an enduring relationship of aid and backing with the Syrian regime. It was a strategic move; he needed the alliance for opportunity creation.

Around the same time, the leaders of the Lebanese Front became disillusioned with their Syrian alliance. With great reluctance they had accepted the stationing of Syrian troops in east Beirut. The troops decorated their positions with Syrian flags, pictures of their President and slogans of the Baath Party (Hanf 2015, 231). The cooperation with Syria started to feel like an imposition, especially when the Syrian regime reconciled itself with the PLO. The Lebanese Front searched for new allies. Disappointedly, they came to the conclusion that "Christian Europe" had lost its norms and values. [12] The West, and France in particular, treated the Christians in the East "as strangers" (*Monday Morning*, 1978-11/12-27/03). The Lebanese Front found an ally in Israel (which relations, some argue, date further back (Shipler 1983)), who shared concerns for non-Muslim minorities in the Levant and who saw a common enemy in the Palestinians and the PLO.

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[12] On 23 February 1979, Bashir Gemayel gave a speech in Jall El-Bib in which he elaborated on his disappointment in the West (translated in R. Geha 2009, 15–27).

These geopolitical reconfigurations resulted in an unavoidable confrontation between the former allies. Fierce battles erupted in east Beirut between the Syrians and the LF (Hanf 2015, 231–34). The Syrians partially retreated but retaliated with massive shelling directed at Christian majority areas, resulting in thousands of casualties (Simon Haddad 2002, 231). These events in the summer of 1978 are remembered as the 100-day battle. A flyer, distributed in the Beiruti neighbourhoods of Furn al-Shubak and Ayn al-Rumaneh in July 1978, demonstrates how the Kataeb desperately tried to mobilise its constituency by providing the following motivational frames:

> Defend this nation with us. Move away from the depths of patience. We can destroy the barbaric, hysterical regime in Syria. Furn al-Shubak and Ayn al-Rumaneh represent all of Lebanon, and carry its fate. It is being skinned and crucified for the sake of others. Furn al-Shubak/Ayn al-Rumaneh is an arena where gladiators fight, and a grave where invaders [Syrians] die. Spectators must join us in chasing down the invaders before they force us to convert [to Islam] and turn our wives and daughters into sex slaves[13]

The flyer contains strong religious symbolism which connects the struggle of the Kataeb to the 'crucifixion for the sake of others', aligning the militia's situation with the suffering and ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ. At the same time, the 'other' is portrayed as an invader, whose goal is to convert the Christians to Islam and to enslave non-cooperating women. As a consequence, the affective dispositions of fear and commitment are invoked. It is a textbook example, demonstrating how identities were continuously constructed and adjusted to fit the emerging realities on the ground, enabling waves of sectarian mobilisation. The sectarian language, however, does not distract from the nationalist objective, as is well captured in *Al-'Amal* editorial a few weeks later:

> We do not want the Lebanese to suffer and die; to face all shades of fear and dread and terror, whether from Syria or elsewhere […] We fight in order to be free in a free nation. Nothing is worth our suffering and death - nothing except this nation that we are dreaming of. And in its name, all sacrifices are worthy (*Al-'Amal*, 1978-09-12)

While the Syrian army was fighting the LF in Beirut, the PLO was increasing its power in southern Lebanon. Consequently, Israeli attacks against Palestinian activities in the south were mounting. Israel's offensive escalated with Operation Litani in March 1978 (*BBC SWB*, 1978-03-16). The

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[13] Flyer obtained from the AUB archive. Although flyers were popular, effective and low-cost tools for the spread of militia-relevant information, their collection and preservation has been difficult. As such, this piece is rare (a picture of which can be found in the Appendix, Visual 2).

subsequent imposition of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in southern Lebanon could not smooth over the thorny southern question (Traboulsi 2012, 206); a question that continued to cause tension between the Lebanese, even within the coalitions. The Lebanese Front struggled to define its relation with Israel, especially when Israel created a southern buffer zone under the leadership of Major Sa'd Haddad and his Christian Army of Free Lebanon (O'Ballance 1998, 75). Amine Gemayel, the eldest son of Pierre Gemayel, openly rejected Israel's 'protection' (*Monday Morning*, 1980-01-18/25). Simultaneously, the Leftist parties struggled to position themselves and their loyalties. Whereas the PSP and the LCP supported the Palestinians in their struggle, the Amal movement had turned itself in opposition to the Palestinian military presence, which they regarded as too vast a liability for life in southern Lebanon. The former allies started to clash on a regular basis.

The Imam began to travel the Arab world in order to tap into different avenues of support for his cause and vision. He needed to create new opportunities in what he perceived to be an increasingly constrained domestic climate. Although he was generally described as a charismatic leader, he was unable to transform his religious charisma into effective political leadership. The Imam's Amal movement therefore remained a small force on the political and military plane. There were two watershed events that changed the course for Amal and brought the militia to the forefront of the Lebanese scene (Deeb 1984, 269). First, there was the 'vanishing'[14] of the Imam in Libya, in August 1978, which became a major focus around which the Shiite community rallied (Ajami 1987, 181–82). And secondly, there was the establishment of the Islamic Republic in Iran under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini in February 1979 (Deeb 1984, 269). The Iranian Revolution shaped not only the Lebanese Amal but also gave rise to a more generalised form of sectarian sentiment in the region, giving many Shiites a sense of identity that transcended national borders (Hashemi and Postel 2017, 10).[15]

The loss of the vibrant leader, however, left Amal at risk of fragmentation. At the start of 1980, amidst an internal power struggle, *Al-Amal* devoted an editorial to this confusion, entitled: "What is happening to the Amal movement?". Amongst other things it framed the party's demographic roots, religious identity and social objectives:

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[14] The term 'vanishing' (rather than disappeared) carries religious meaning, as it mimics the dynamics of the Shiite doctrine in which the twelfth Imam vanished in 873/874 to return at a future date, bringing justice to earth (Ajami 1987, 21–23). Men are still awaiting the return of the Hidden Imam. Musa al-Sadr's fate merged with this millenarian expectation.

[15] The Iranian revolution not only gave the Shiite community a sense of identity, it also gave rise to an Islamic identity more generally. In this way, both the Shiite affiliated Amal as well as Sunni affiliated groups found inspiration in the Iranian Revolution.

> We are an important segment in Lebanese society, in our pure belonging to the nation and our futuristic outlook. For we are the peasants of the earth and the construction workers, we are fighters for justice, we are the foot soldiers in the defence of the nation […] We are the sons of an ancient strain of Islamic thinking, we hold onto the message of our Prophet Muhammad to the point of martyrdom, we are rooted in our Quran, while also being open to those of other Abrahamic religions (*Al-Amal,* 1980-04-11)

When the lawyer Nabih Berri took over from interim leader Hussein al-Husseini in 1980, shortly after this editorial, the movement transformed from a reformist into a revolutionary movement (Norton 1987, 117–18). Strengthened by Iran – with both an identity and armament – Amal clashed ever more regularly with the PLO, who were supported by Iraq (O'Ballance 1998, 98–99). The clashes did not just concern Lebanon, they reflected larger geopolitical currents. Iranian and Iraqi support for Amal and the PLO came to reflect the war Iran and Iraq were engaged in. During general strikes and demonstrations in Beirut, Amal protestors praised Ayatollah Khomeini, whose face had become a common visual in the streets of Lebanon. The impact of the Iranian Revolution combined with the Afghani resistance against the Soviet Union and the means made available by oil revenues in the Gulf, let some to believe that Islam was witnessing its "second coming" (*Monday Morning,* 1980-01-18/25).

The spill-over effects of the new regional power structures made the Lebanese Front wary of possible conflict solutions based on the National Pact. Instead, they started to openly propose "political decentralisation", which entailed the division of the country into defined Christian and Muslim cantons. Although these ideas had first been expressed in 1976, by the eminent Kataeb member Antoine Najm, the Lebanese Front coalition kept on disputing the archetype in public (O'Ballance 1998, 211–12). Regardless, Pierre Gemayel had regularly repeated the partition option:

> We could meet and decide to coexist as we did before, when there was fusion between the Christian and Moslem civilisations. If the Moslems find they can't accept this, because it does not suit their religion, because they must dominate, let's agree to live apart, without killing each other (*Monday Morning,* 1978-11/12-27/03)

The desire for partition was echoed within certain sectors of Christian society, as also some of my interviewees remembered, including Assaad Chaftari (interview, 2017-05-09, Beirut) and another anonymous source (interview, 2017-05-24, Beirut) (the topic remains controversial) (cf. Picard

1998, 208). But to make partition a viable option, the Christians had to stand united. Nevertheless, the opposite was true, the Christian community and their leaders were increasingly in disagreement.

In 1980, Bashir Gemayel, the youngest son of Pierre Gemayel, forcefully unified the disagreeing and fighting Christian militias (Randal 1983, 135). Bashir referred to the events as a necessary "reordering of the house",[16] warning: "We are no longer scattered groups and militias but rather a free army, the Free Army of Lebanon, we know what we want, we know where we're going, be ready" (*Al-Nahar*, 1980-08-02). The bloody 'unification of the gun' made Bashir Gemayel the most powerful leader of a now almost exclusive Christian militia. It turned the tables for the Christian community, who felt stronger than ever (though some fled the country or objected to Bashir's rule). The Christians were at the top of their might, and the "hawkish" Bashir enjoyed widespread support. Feeling strengthened by these developments, Kataeb strongmen Karim Pakradouni and Joseph Abou Khalil articulated concrete plans for "federation" (*BBC SWB*, 1980-12-14).

In 1982, Bashir Gemayel was elected President of Lebanon.[17] With his election, the idea of partition or federation were set aside. The Multinational Force (MNF), an international peace keeping force created following a United States brokered ceasefire between Israel and the PLO, started to oversee the peaceful withdrawal of the PLO from Lebanon (Hanf 2015, 264). However, a few days before taking seat at the highest office, on 14 September 1982, Bashir was assassinated (*BBC SWB*, 1982-09-16). The next morning Israeli troops entered Lebanon reaching all the way to Beirut, ostensibly to "prevent a bloodbath" (Traboulsi 2012, 218). In fact, what followed were the massacres in the Palestinian refugee camps Sabra and Shatilla, perpetrated by factions of the LF and supervised by Israel (Al-Hout 2004). The period that followed witnessed an escalation of fighting between the main parties in the conflict, in which the external forces of Israel and Syria functioned as instigators of factional fighting (Traboulsi 2012, 218-19). The PLO stopped further retreats and ceased economic relations.

The slippery slope of the second phase ended with the death and disappearance of three of the main protagonists of the conflict. The death of Kamal Jumblatt (allegedly by the hands of the Syrian army) coincided with the death of his Leftist project. The disappearance of Imam Musa al-Sadr (allegedly by the hands of the Libyan army) resulted in the rallying of large parts of the Shiite community as a sectarian brand, while the identity marker of a deprived class seemed to vanish even further than when the leader was still alive. Lastly, the death of Bashir (allegedly, but much less certain, by the hands of the Syrian army) was followed by a 'religious awakening' in parts of

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[16] Speech delivered on 14 August 1980 (translated in R. Geha 2009, 149–60).
[17] A role reserved for Maronite Christians.

the Christian community (as expanded upon below). The political opportunities and constraints, partially caused by shifting foreign alliances, were perceived as considerably different compared to the start of the war. Most notably, the sectarianization process had evolved in new directions. *Monday Morning* (1982-05-10/16) reported how 1982 witnessed increased destruction of religious sites and a surge in assassinations of religious figures. In the land without kings, the motto seemed to be: The leader is dead, long live his sectarian identity.

2.3. The Losses and Gains of Sectarianization (1982-1990)

At the start of the third phase of the civil war, on 21 September 1982, Amine Gemayel was elected to the presidency to succeed his assassinated brother Bashir. Amine was perceived as a moderate politician and therefore a more acceptable candidate to Muslims compared to his more outspoken and militarily active brother Bashir (O'Ballance 1998, 118). Nevertheless, many felt that the Gemayel presidency equalled the Kataeb party coming to power (Traboulsi 2012, 220). In his acceptance speech, Amine stated that Bashir's "soul will inspire […] to make further sacrifices in a historical and critical era", while he pledged to "march in the steps of Pierre Gemayel and […] his patriotic school" (*BBC SWB*, 1982-09-21). Moved by criticism, he tried to reaffirm to his citizens that "the President shall remain above struggles among parties and sects and loyal to the homeland's unity and interests" (*BBC SWB*, 1982-09-23). He added, that although he grieved the division and destruction of the country, he envisioned the Lebanon of the future to once again transform into a "meeting point of world civilisations and divine religions" (*BBC SWB*, 1982-09-23).

During his first days in office, Amine controversially deployed the LF (which he used as his army)[18] in west Beirut, opening all roads and barricades between the eastern and western sides (Traboulsi 2012, 221), which he articulated to be "a symbol of unification" (*BBC SWB*, 1982-09-30). Nevertheless, rather than finding unity, the third phase of the civil war can best be characterised as chaotic by flaw of division. Schism appeared within sectarian groups, arguments broke militia coalitions, and international alliances shifted all the while fighting intensified. Rather than seeking for socio-political and economic reform as had happened in the first phase, the sectarianization of society into sectarian cantons as shaped in the second phase had opened opportunities for *economic extraction* and *social rule*. A 'war order' (Traboulsi 2012, 226) developed amidst the seeming chaos of the civil war, in which economic gain and social influence appeared ever more appealing and profitable to militia leaders. It created opportunities for continued

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[18] Note how the lines between state and non-state violence are blurred.

mobilisation, protracting the civil war even longer. The last phase of the war thereby seemed like a zero-sum game over the extraction of that which sectarianization had made possible.

Due to increasingly diverging priorities and shifting identities, the LNM was the first major coalition to disintegrate in 1983 (Shuqair and Jumblatt 1977, 18). The collapse of the LNM, the umbrella of the Leftist alliance, weakened the standing of all secular forces, making some even rival militias (Baylouny 2014, 333). The LCP, for example, who had initially mobilised against the institutionalisation of religious identities, struggled to continue resistance in a sectarianizing social landscape (Ismael and Ismael 1998, 117), making it increasingly difficult to operate freely, mobilise people, and to communicate propaganda (O'Ballance 1998, 167). As a consequence of the heightened stakes and depleted resources, membership in the LCP declined (Abisaab and Abisaab 2017, 123–24; Yacoub 2014, 92). In 1985, the party still claimed that the religious factors that were regarded to drive the conflict were imagined rather than real (*FBIS*, 1985-11-29). Nevertheless, due to their increasingly isolated and weakened position, George Hawi decided to focus the LCP's attention on the fight against the Israeli aggressor (Ismael 2009, 38). Resistance became directed against an external enemy, rather than changing the domestic situation.

Amal, meanwhile, was particularly persistent in fighting the Palestinian presence, while the newly established Party of God, Hezbollah, made its main aim the struggle against the Israeli occupation (Deeb 1986, 4). They therein competed, rather than cooperated, with the LCP (Alkhayer forthcoming, 21, 46; Abisaab and Abisaab 2017, 103–4). Several targeted attacks followed upon Communist leaders, members and militants in the south, who were branded as 'atheists' (Haugbolle 2010, 139; *NYT* 1987-03-04). The two Shiite associated groups were each other's rivals from the start, with rivalry transforming in enmity in 1985 and bitter fighting erupting in 1988-1990 (Deeb 1986, 12). The symbolic and religious outbidding (Toft 2006, 19–20) between the two contending movements resulted in a spiral of violence, a split within the Shiite community and a further fragmentation of Lebanese society. Both Amal and Hezbollah vowed to continue the fight until "the last drop of blood" (*BBC SWB*, 1989-01-09). Ultimately, "the war of the brothers", Rami Ollaik describes in his memoirs, "had taken its toll on flesh and stone […] All in God's name" (Ollaik 2013, 115).

At the same time, tensions between the elements of the Druze population and the LF in the Mountain were rising (Salibi 2003, 130–50). The LF argued they came to the Mountain to "protect the Christians", while Walid Jumblatt maintained their "real aim" was the "expulsion of the Druze" (*BBC SWB*, 1983-09-03).[19] Druze affiliated radio stations broadcast martial songs,

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[19] The memoir *War of the Mountain: Israelis, Christians and Druze in the 1983 Mount Lebanon Conflict through the eyes of a Lebanese Forces Fighter* (Andary 2012) gives a good insight from the perspective of the LF.

proclaiming: "Our comrades along the road of the long struggle, we are the owners of this Mountain, we are the owners of this homeland, we are the makers of its glory, creators of its peace" (*BBC SWB*, 1983-09-22). On the other side of the trenches, the voice of Wadih el-Safi echoed through the LF's radios: "Our Mountain, we have mixed our blood with its soil. No matter what miseries destiny brought us, we will stay here and never leave our Mountain. The soil of the cedars[20] is more expensive than gold" *(Al-'Amal*, 1982-11-04). Through these articulations, security concerns were connected to socio-political visions of a sectarian world order.

The government, under the leadership of President Amine Gemayel, started to work on a peace deal with Israel, whose forces were also stationed in the Mountain. To exert pressure on the President and in the hopes of attracting the sympathy of the Druze, Israel retreated from 'Aley and the Chouf Mountain in early September 1983 (Rabah 2013, 130–31). The withdrawal resulted in fierce battles, in which the Druze dominated PSP finally gained the upper hand. The LF, and with them many Christian civilians, were driven into the village of Dayr al-Qamar, were they were kept under siege. On 4 December 1983, after a hundred days, Walid Jumblatt and Shaykh al-'Aql decided to lift the siege (*BBC SWB*, 1983-12-06). The December month resulted not only in the dismissal of the LF, but also in the displacement of thousands of Christians who had lived in the Mountain. The original place of refuge had been destroyed, as the 'War of the Mountain' ended with religious sites desecrated, sectarian cleansing and mass emigration (Rabah 2013, 242–44).

The LF lost the Mountain war and were facing opposition on other fronts as well. In 1984, President Amine Gemayel had sent the Lebanese Army, aided by the LF, to the southern suburbs of Beirut, the majority Shiite inhabited areas of the capital, to assume an offensive against Amal. These events led Nabih Berri to persuade the Shiite members of the Lebanese Army to defect to Amal (Siklawi 2012, 15). West Beirut fell under the control of Nabih Berri and Walid Jumblatt (Traboulsi 2012, 225). In southern Lebanon, in the meantime, the government was losing control over the PLO and the LCP. These were difficult times for a government that became increasingly reliant on the LF. In an editorial penned by the Catholic Centre and published in the mainstream newspaper *Al-Nahar*, the forfeiture was transformed into strength, by "thanking the oppressors" for rooting them even further to their land and faith. The belief and community they had found in hardship, they argued, had been worth it all. They thereby diagnosed the situation in order to facilitate for meaning, purpose and belonging:

> Thanks to the Khomeiniyeen who want to push Christians into the sea; to the Druze and those who call themselves progressive socialists who are chasing Christians simply because

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[20] The cedar decorated both the Lebanese flag as well as the flag of the Kataeb party.

they draw a crucifix on their foreheads and because they are baptised; to the Communists that look for every opportunity to incite hatred for Christians; to the Palestinians who are oppressed by Jews, who take out their oppression on Christians, simply because they are Christians and call for love and forgiveness; to the fundamentalist Muslims that call for us to convert and who claim that wherever there are Muslims there should be Muslim leadership, who demolish churches wherever they are; yes, thank you to our oppressors, because they have made Christians more aware of their own Christianity and their own faith and their lands after feeling lost and uprooted […] Christians of Lebanon have never been more united in the history of this nation. Never have they been more confident in their faith, their baptism (*Al-Nahar,* 1985-05-19)

Although identities might have strengthened under hardship, realities on the ground witnessed a weakening of the Christian community - partly represented by the government and the LF as well as a militia coalition that was hounded by internal power plays and schisms (*BBC SWB*, 1985-03-15). In an attempt to save his stumbling regime, in which Gemayel mainly exercised economic power, the President decided to cede larger political participation to the traditional Muslim *za'ims* and militia leaders (Traboulsi 2012, 225). Following the Lausanne peace talks, Rashid Karami formed a government of 'national unity' in which Walid Jumblatt and Nabih Berri were represented (O'Ballance 1998, 141–42). Karami would become Prime Minister (1984-1987) once more. The new government introduced a short period of precarious coexistence between the state and militia forces (Traboulsi 2012, 225), in which militias withdrew to their respective strongholds (O'Ballance 1998, 143). The institutionalised war order created a sense of stability, in which the militia movements found opportunities in the political sphere.

Despite relative calm and a seat at the political table, Amal remained deeply concerned about the missing Imam. The "Sons of Musa Sadr", under the leadership of Akl Hamieh,[21] organised several international operations, which the Lebanese and international media branded as "terrorist attacks". This included six plane hijackings between 1979 and 1982, opportunities created in the image of perceived constraints, all directing at calling maximum attention to the case of the vanished Imam (O'Ballance 1998, 143). Also, the strategic and symbolic act of self-martyrdom became a more common feature of the last phase of the civil war, mirroring a regional trend (see chapter 9). It is important to note, however, going against common perceptions, that not only the Shiite militia movements (Amal and Hezbollah) were behind these tactics, but also the LCP. In

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[21] Nabih Berri always denied that the "Sons of Musa Sadr" had any affiliation with the Amal Movement. However, the fact that Akl Hamieh would become Amal's highest military chief right after his last hijacking has casted reasonable doubt on these claims.

fact, it was the LCP that was the largest force behind suicide operations in Lebanon (Pape 2006, 205).

Given the escalation of violence and the weakening of the regime, it is not surprising that the third phase witnessed deteriorating social and economic conditions (S. Makdisi and Sadaka 2003, 22). Socially, the fighting had resulted in the ethnic cleansing and displacement of people, further homogenising areas and cities into single-dominated sectarian strongholds (Traboulsi 2012, 229). Lebanon was divided into cantons and ports (which were important for mobility and economic extraction), controlled by dozens of armed militias. As Traboulsi notes: "The war, partially the result of sectarian conflict, was to become the crucible in which those sects were reproduced" (Traboulsi 2012, 229).

In terms of economics, at this point, the country was on the verge of a financial breakdown (see Saidi 1986). There were several factors that contributed to this change, including the government's increasing budgetary deficits, the devaluation of the Lebanese lira, mounting inflation, the dollarization and speculation on the economy, the PLO's deposit withdrawals from Lebanese banks, the termination of the PLO's spending in Lebanon, and the massive destruction of the country (Traboulsi 2012, 227; S. Makdisi and Sadaka 2003, 22–23). Public debt surged from 7 billion in 1981 to 35 billion Lebanese lira in 1985, partly owing to the government's increased spending on military provisions and its decreasing revenues due to militia exploitation (Traboulsi 2012, 228). As a consequence, also private living costs were soaring. The political, economic and social opportunities for continued and widespread mobilisation were thereby decreasing.

At the end of 1985 most hostilities became intra-sectarian: Christians against Christians, Shiites against Druze[22] and Shiites against Shiites (Hanf 2015, 560). "In the relative absence of 'external' enemies to frighten their subjects with", Traboulsi argued, "militia violence was 'internalised' in order to control its 'subjects' inside the communitarian ghettos carved out and cloistered by violence" (Traboulsi 2012, 231). From this time until the end of the war, the Lebanese lived under the domination of different militia movements that abstained from fighting each other in their respective cantons, in order to allow for better economic extraction (Baylouny 2014, 330). Within their own territory, militias confiscated private property; collected tolls and taxes; cultivated, refined and exported drugs; stored toxic waste in exchange for high fees; and appropriated arms from the Lebanese Army (Corm 1994, 216–18). Through the extracting mechanism of tribute-collecting, the militia warlords achieved the "supreme capitalist phantasm" (Traboulsi 2012, 232). In this perspective, it is true that wars have no sense but function. The civil war created its own

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[22] The Druze sect is derived from a major branch of Shiism, the Isma'ili branch, and additionally incorporates Greek philosophy (Obeid 2006, 43).

order of living, bringing forth militias that had inherent interest in the continuation of war (Hanf 2015, 335). More and more, the conflict became the economic and political power struggle of the leaders (Picard 2000, 299–300).

Within these militia controlled territories, which were sectarian as well as economic spaces (Picard 2000, 300), individuals were pressured to adopt the historical, cultural and sectarian identities provided (Beyoghlow 1989, 39; Traboulsi 2012, 223). Control was exerted through the development of militia-run press organs that voiced approved political lines, the prohibition of newspapers that expressed opposing views, and finally the brutal attacks on dissidents that did not align themselves with the hegemonic narrative (Corm 1994, 220–21). The power of militias extended beyond territorial and social control, but also pushed for what Juan Goytisolo termed 'memoricide' (cf. Traboulsi 2012, 223), the eradication of all histories of coexistence and the common interests between Lebanese (cf. Salibi 2003, 200–215; Baylouny 2014, 341–43). The militias convinced their constituencies, which had been cleansed of the other, that those outside the familiar canton were of grave danger, while those inside the canton would provide protection and ensure belonging. It was this process that arguably had most effect on the sectarianization of the Lebanese mind-set.[23]

The third and final phase of the war concluded in October 1990, when the fighting ended a year after the acceptance of the Tai'f Accord. Officially, there was "no victor, no vanquished". Nevertheless, there was extensive social defeat and material ruination. Estimates put the loss of human lives at over 144,000 people, which cumulates to 5 percent of the resident population in Lebanon (S. Makdisi and Sadaka 2003, 23; *Al-Nahar*, 1992-03-05). Over 800,000 people were internally displaced, pushed away to cleanse territories of 'strangers', while a similar number migrated abroad (Traboulsi 2012, 238). The vast destruction of war and the loss of human life had enormous consequences on a social, economic and sectarian level (O'Ballance 1998, 216; Traboulsi 2012, 238). The war created a new order in Lebanon, in which warlords were institutionalised in exchange for the termination of violence, within this system sectarian identifications and political categorisations were reaffirmed. The consequences of this compromise are noticeable until today.

3. Conclusion

This chapter showed how social and class-based affiliations, that dominated the first phase of the civil war, were gradually superseded by sectarian identities. There were a number of opportunities and constraints – including socio-political organisation, economic grievances, foreign influence and

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[23] In chapters 8 and 9 a micro-analysis of militants' emotional engagement will be contrasted with this more classical and structural narrative of war's evolvement

security concerns – that contributed to the sectarianization of the conflict, though their manifestation as well as their framing changed over time and across militia movements. In this concluding section, the main features of the emergent and relational interactions between non-religious and religious factors will first be summarised for each individual militia movement before making further cross-comparisons across the groups.

The assassination of Kamal Jumblatt and Walid Jumblatt's decision to dissolve the LNM contributed to intra-sectarian fighting within the Leftist groups. Within the ranks of the PSP this resulted in a steady but radical revision of Kamal Jumblatt's democratic and secular project. The PSP was gradually homogenised into a Druze dominated sectarian militia, a militia that argued to defend its minority existence and social interest in the Mount Lebanon region. Secondly, the beginning of the Iranian Revolution, the vanishing of Imam Musa al-Sadr, the dismantling of the Palestinian state and the effects of the Israeli occupation transformed political Shiites in Lebanon from a politically underdeveloped and economic underprivileged group to a community capable of rapid social mobilisation and economic mobility. As they gained in strength, parts of the Shiite community felt that their religious identity was reinforced and their social and geographical borders established. The consolidation of Shiite identity, however, was not carried monolithically, as groups competed over the meaning and place of religion in conflict.

Thirdly, the assassination of Bashir Gemayel and the dramatic loss of the Mountain War signalled an increase in sectarian rhetoric and framing, where loss and sacrifice were coated in religious symbolism and meaning. Amidst these already straining conditions, the umbrella of the LF started to splinter, as warlords saw opportunities for the capitalisation of the conflict. Whereas the Kataeb and the LF initially advocated for a Rightist and nationalist agenda, aided by their Syrian allies, talk of partition and a Christian homeland surfaced, a dialogue inspired and supported by their new Israeli ally. Although the sectarian group as a whole did not carry such sentiments, it put the Christians in a stigmatised and isolationist position. Lastly, the multi-sectarian LCP was founded on the idea of reforming the socio-political and economic situation of Lebanon, ridding the country of its sectarian roots. Under the leadership of George Hawi, the LCP became one of the largest Leftist militia forces, pushing the agenda of the LNM coalition. However, the party increasingly struggled to exist in the sectarianizing environment of Lebanon and the gradual decline of geopolitical Communism, both of which negatively affected resources and membership. At the end of the war, the LCP had shrunk into near oblivion.

Over the course of the war, the Kataeb, the PSP and Amal became largely supported by a single sectarian group (the Christian Maronites, the Druze and the Shiite sect respectively), while the LCP was and remained mixed in constituency. Additionally, the militias increasingly adopted a

sectarianized language in which the terms Christian/Shiite/Druze were meant to designate all the 'defining' features of any one community. As a general trend, it was thus demonstrated how militia movements increasingly framed the identity of militias' original motivations on other, independent collective identities (cf. Polletta and Jasper 2001, 291). In this way, militias sought to convince militants that the mobilisation around socio-political and economic grievances were an expression of sectarian identity. Religious symbols became progressively popular and visible, adaptations that reaffirmed social identifications and differentiations. In this manner, Toft (2006, 28) is right in her argument that the protraction of war tends to result in religion moving from a peripheral to a central issue in conflicts characterised by cleavages. Nevertheless, the sectarianizing frames also exposed internal power struggles, in which militias aimed to obtain the hegemonic representation of particular groups of people. An ordering of space and people would allow for greater political power and economic exploitation for the sectarian elite, who had gained significant stakes in the new war order. The utilisation of sectarian language, therefore, should not distract from the socio-political, economic and security objectives that had largely initiated the war and were carried and suffered throughout. In other words, although Toft is right to point out that the frames incorporating religious rhetoric took a more central role, the continuing role of non-religious factors in driving conflict should not be underestimated.

In sum, this chapter sketched the POS that affected the course of the civil war, as perceived through the frames put forward by the main militia movements. The main motivations and demographics behind the chief coalitions and militias were outlined, highlighting the changing nature with which they interacted with sectarian understandings and attributions. The next chapter will elaborate on the militia leaders that headed these militia movements, looking into the ways in which militia leaders used religious infrastructures (chapter 6) and speech (chapter 7) to mobilise their constituencies. After these largely macro- and meso-level perspectives in which the militia and its leader stand central, the experiences of the militants that fought the war will be elaborated (chapters 8 and 9). Combined, a multi-levelled perspective, which connects social structure with agency, will gradually emerge.

MILITIA LEADERS

Religion is often portrayed as a tool – both used and abused by militia leaders – to mobilise constituencies in times of crisis. From a secular perspective, the mobilising power presented through religious resources and discourses arouse a sense of suspicion, viewing them as more prone to inspire violence compared to non-religious counterparts (Barbato, Franco, and Normand 2012, 54). The following two chapters take seriously the claim that religion can be instrumentalised for mobilisation purposes. However, the study differentiates itself from previous research by stepping beyond mere instrumentalist perspectives, simultaneously assessing the proposed uniqueness of religion. The study will focus on the leaders of the four militia movements introduced in the preceding chapters: the Kataeb affiliated Bashir Gemayel who led the LF, Walid Jumblatt of the PSP, Imam Musa al-Sadr who headed the Amal movement, and George Hawi as the leader of the LCP. Analysis will take a comparative and constructivist approach to the militia leaders' adaptation of religious and non-religious resources and discourses in an effort to mobilise towards violence.

Building upon the insights of the SMT of RM, chapter 6 reflects upon the manner in which militia leaders mobilised religious resources; including material, moral, cultural and social-organisational resources (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). In particular, focus is directed at the instrumentalisation of the human resource of religious leadership. The chapter will demonstrate that religious resource instrumentalisation was common. However, it was neither a straightforward adaptation of existing structures nor was it independent of the political realm. The leadership of George Hawi will function as a comparative control mechanism, as the impact of equivalent non-religious resources will be considered in relation to mobilisation processes.

In chapter 7, focus will shift from militia leaders' usage of resources to their usage of speech, as social movements that mobilise over religious discourses are regularly approached with concern (Barbato, Franco, and Normand 2012, 53). Leaders like Imam Musa al-Sadr and, to a lesser extent, Bashir Gemayel, made use of religious narratives (e.g. religious symbolism, scriptural references,

etc.) in their addresses to the people. They used religious frames to mobilise their constituencies and to legitimise the use of violence. One of the questions addressed is whether these narratives were more socially divisive and less complex in argumentative structure compared to the non-religious orientated narratives, as captured in the mobilising speeches of Walid Jumblatt and George Hawi. By using the psychometric of IC, a set of leadership speeches will be analysed for complexity of information processing. This implies shifting focus from content to structure. The quantitative analysis demonstrates that no differences could be observed between religious and non-religious discourses in regard to complexity of argumentation and levels of social division. The study of IC, common within social psychology and the psychology of religion, constitutes a new venture for the study of ideas in social movement mobilisation.

The *Militia Leaders* section represents a crucial relational link between the structural reflections of the previous two chapters and the affective analyses of militants' emotional world in the subsequent section.

MILITIA LEADERS: **Reach and Restraint in Instrumentalising Religious Resources**

"Leadership is crucial - not only to how a movement develops but to how the revolutionary

dimension develops"

- (Gentry 2004, 278)

1. Re-imagining the Instrumentalisation of Religious Authorities and Resources

The heads of religious communities, the Lebanese Constitution reads, have important rights, including the safeguarding of the administration of personal status law, religious education, religious practise and confessional prerogatives (see Article 19). The leading religious figures in Lebanon are salaried functionaries of the state, standing under the direct authority of the Prime Minister, giving them access to financial and political resources (Halabi 2015). As such, the Maronite Patriarch in Bkirki, the Shaykh al-'Aql (shaykh of the wisemen) of the Druze denomination, and the head of the Supreme Islamic Shiite Council occupy important positions within the Lebanese political and social system. It is therefore not surprising that during the Lebanese civil war, militia leaders competed for the support of these religious authorities. The legitimacy they could bestow upon militia rule, the infrastructures at their disposal, and their access

to sectarian groups were seen as invaluable (see Hassner 2016, 87–109 for the role of religious leaders).

There is an assumption, mostly upheld by those voices in academia that see causal relations between religion and violence, that the tangible and intangible resources made available through religious leadership/alignments and their associated infrastructures enable militia movements to mobilise more efficiently and grow into more destructive forces compared to non-religious counterparts (Selengut 2008, 22–23; Kimball 2008, 26; Toft 2007, 97; Hassner 2009, 2). Accordingly, much has been inferred about the role of religious leadership and the religious/sectarian components of RM during the Lebanese civil war (Szekely 2017, 11–15; Baylouny 2014; Beyoghlow 1989; Richani 1998; Rowayheb 2006). However, not all RM opportunities and constraints have been researched equally. The Maronite hierarchy and the role of Imam Musa al-Sadr in regard to RM have been assessed more thoroughly (e.g. Ajami 1987; Henley 2008), while the role of the Shaykh al-'Aql remains under researched. Moreover, few students of social movements have systematically and comparatively analysed these topics in relation to non-religious leaders like George Hawi, whose resource networks are similarly ill researched. All in all, there remain noteworthy gaps in academic knowledge.

This chapter places its focus on RM as assessed through the perspectives of four militia leaders – Bashir Gemayel from the Kataeb party, Walid Jumblatt from the PSP, Imam Musa al-Sadr from the Amal movement and George Hawi from the LCP. In particular, it will pay attention to the diverging connections between militia and religious leaders, and the manner in which these relations affected access to other resources needed for the mobilisation towards violence. The fivefold typology I detailed in chapter 2 section 3.2, will serve as the main guide in analysis (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). By focussing on the *human resource* of leadership, the study will help in analysing how militia leaders cooperated with, merged or re-imagined religious leadership. Through the resulting and diverging power relations, militia leaders were able to acquire or develop religious or non-religious *moral resources* (e.g. the legitimisation of militia rule and violence) and encourage the activation of *cultural resources* (e.g. repertoires of contention), drawing on *social-organisational resources* (e.g. newspapers and flyers) and *material resources* (e.g. money, infrastructures). The theory of RM provides a systematic way to evaluate the primary resources needed for mobilisation, while the constructivist nature of this thesis will balance structural analysis with dynamic and interpretive perspectives.

The chapter is divided into four main parts, in which the perspectives of the militia leaders Bashir Gemayel, Walid Jumblatt, Imam Musa al-Sadr and George Hawi will be analysed in subsequent order, relating their rule to RM. In the fifth and final section, the four case studies will

be compared and contrasted, one resource at a time, drawing analytical conclusions and making recommendations for future research on the topic.

1.1. Bashir Gemayel and the Maronite Patriarch

In January 1975, a few months before the official beginning of the civil war, the head of the Maronite Church passed away. Maronite bishops met to begin a ten-day conference for the election of a new Patriarch. *Monday Morning* reported:

> An estimated two million Maronites are waiting anxiously to see who their new Patriarch will be. Their anticipation is shared by the entire Lebanese population, for the Maronite Patriarchate's control goes beyond matters religious into social and political affairs (*Monday Morning*, 1975-01-20/26)

The importance of the Patriarchate cannot only be accredited to the sectarian structure of Lebanese politics, but is also tied to the dynamic historical trajectory of the religious sect. Founded on the ascetic teachings of the fifth-century Saint Maron, the Maronite Church grew on the banks of the Orontes (Henley 2008, 355). When Arab invaders attacked the seat of the Church in Antioch in the early seventh century, the followers of St. Maron are said to have fled and taken refuge in the Lebanese Mountains (Henley 2015, 159). As the seat in Antioch was left vacant, the Maronites decided to appoint their own Patriarch. In the Mountain of Refuge they lived a relatively secluded existence, until Pope Innocent III recognised the sect as part of the Holy See in 1215. Under various Arab rulers the Patriarch was granted temporal rights, which were maintained by the Crusaders, Mameluks and Ottomans. The Patriarchate emerged as a principal social and political power. During World War I, the Patriarch headed a delegation to Versailles, demanding the independence of Lebanon as a separate country. In 1920 a version of this vision was actualised with the creation of Greater Lebanon (Haddad 2002, 319).[1] The succeeding Lebanese Constitution enshrined the Patriarch's representative and commissioned position in the political system (Article 19). Through his religiously endowed appointment and politically institutionalised position, the office of the Patriarchate became key to a wide range of different resources. The historical fluctuations of the Patriarch's seat and influence demonstrate the constructed nature of the office.

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[1] The fact that the Maronite religious authorities were involved in the creation of modern-day Lebanon, has led certain elements within the community to accredit themselves as patrons of the country. I have heard both high-levelled politicians as well as local taxi drivers mention that without the Maronite community there would not have been a Lebanon. This romanticisation of the past is often accompanied with a sense of pride and belonging.

On 3 February 1975, the Patriarch Antoine Peter Khoreish (1975-1986) was elected as the head of the Maronite Church. Khoreish was described as a humble personality who, unlike his predecessors, preferred to focus on religion (Rabinovich 1985, 68). His limited political activity, also during the civil war, disclose a line of social moderation (Picard 1998, 212), a line that was supported by the Papal power in Rome. In accordance with the view of the Church, Patriarch Khoreish denounced violence unconditionally and refused to aid or promote militancy (Henley 2008, 358), restricting any form of moral or material resource distribution from his office to the militia movements. Many Maronites remember the Patriarch with disappointment, having favoured a stronger and more militant religious leadership (Henley 2008, 357).

More outspoken political stances were found in the orders of Maronite monks, who refused to take distance from the civil war. Although the monks owe obedience to the Patriarch, their proximity to the laity allowed direct involvement in the social and political affairs on the ground. Various pictures in the archives of the AUB demonstrate how monks took on Kalashnikov rifles and marched to the front line (cf. Moosa 1986, 298; *Monday Morning*, 1978-07-24/30). They blessed troops, absolved militants' sins (moral resources detailed in chapter 9) and provided material resources to the Maronite militias, including financial and infrastructural aid (Salibi 2003, 105; see also Hassner 2016, 91–93). While the Patriarch advocated for moderation and negotiation, following the lines of the National Pact, the monks pushed for a stronger Maronite presence. For example, Father Sharbil Qassis, head of the Order of Maronite monks, advocated for a "pure Lebanon", rejecting the country's "Arab face" as preserved in the 1943 gentlemen's agreement (Rabinovich 1985, 68; Henley 2008, 360). Father Qassis also unambiguously positioned himself against the Palestinian presence in Lebanon, while the Patriarch sought to accommodate the Palestinian Christians (Salibi 2003, 105; Harik 1994b, 40). As a consequence, many Maronite militia leaders favoured the line taken by Father Qassis and likeminded monks.

Competing visions within the religious hierarchy resulted in power plays that divided material resources (e.g. access to monasteries, redistribution of finances), while diversifying moral resources (e.g. different visions on the legitimacy of violence were offered). On the one hand, these schisms weakened the cohesiveness of the Maronite sect. On the other hand, it provided militia leaders with opportunities to seek those strategic alignments that suited their war objectives. In other words, the religious leaders represented human resources that could be instrumentalised (to certain extents) by the militia leader. Bashir Gemayel, for example, partnered with the lower-ranking Maronite Order of Monks, rather than the traditional Patriarch, as the Order was more sympathetic towards the cause of his Kataeb and the umbrella of the LF. The weight and

importance of particular religious authorities and hierarchies was reconstructed to fit the mobilisation purposes of the militia movement.

In 1976, Father Qassis was controversially chosen to represent the Church in the Lebanese Front[2] (Rabinovich 1985, 68). In 1982, the Lebanese Front promoted Bashir Gemayel for the presidency. The war thereby created a new generation of religious and militia Maronite leaders (Salamé 1986, 15). In an interview, Father Mouwaness, who was present with Father Qassis and others in the decisive meeting that promoted Bashir Gemayel as the presidential candidate, recalls the event as follows:

> Bashir was really a marvellous boy. Marvellous boy. We love him. We [the Maronite clerics] pushed him to be President. It was our choice. And now I am writing my memories, in a street here, in a house here. One day we came together here, we called for Bashir, because we had chosen him to be President. In this street […] Bashir was for us a dream. A kind of dream. He was young. Marvelous. Warm. Warm. Dignity. Intelligent. He was not a political man. He did not have corruption on his mind or in his heart. He was a pure angel. Believe me. I knew him very well. He was a pure angel. Really. Pure angel. Pure angel. Pure (interview with Father Mouwaness, 2017-07-10, Beirut)

The interview took place in the same location where Bashir was nominated for the seat of President. Father Mouwaness pointed out the spots where snipers were located to guard the site, in and around the monastery. Providing a network of strategic locations, the Maronite monks had opened religious sites for secret meetings, training grounds, the harbouring of fighters, and the storing of weapons and ammunitions (Cobban 1983, 38). Clerics thus not only played a vital role in deciding the political course of the militias (Rowayheb 2006, 312), by opening the infrastructure of the Church for the militias, they also enabled their development. Opponents, from within and outside the sect, warned that these practises harmed the sanctity of religion and holy sites (Rabinovich 1985, 69). The material resources of the Maronite sect, according to these voices, should be preserved for religious purposes; while the Patriarch, the official head of the Maronite sect, was considered to be the only authority able to bestow moral resources. It was particularly the moral resource of legitimising violence and militia rule that was hotly debated.

When I asked Maronite politicians, militants and monks who had been involved in the civil war about the permissibility of violence within the Christian tradition, they referred to the religious

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[2] The Lebanese Front was the political formation of the militant LF coalition (see Appendix, Warring Coalitions).

authority of a scriptural document that, according to them, surpassed the Patriarch's patronage. Almost all Christian interviewees would thereby discuss the importance of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which captured some of the core moral resources of the Catholic and thus Maronite tradition (including Jocelyne Khoueiry, 2017-06-28, Keserwan; Assaad Chaftari, 2017-05/09, Beirut). Some said they kept the book on their nightstand, highlighting the importance of these writings for their personal lives (e.g. Paul Andary, 2017-05-15, Adma). Specifically, they would refer to the fifth commandment (see paragraphs 2307-2317 of the *Catechism*), which lists four strict conditions for "legitimate defence by military force": (1) the damage inflicted, unless violence is used, must be lasting and grave, (2) violence must be a last resort, (3) there must be serious prospects of success, and (4) the use of arms must not produce graver evils. The document goes on to state that "the evaluation of these conditions for moral legitimacy belongs to the prudential judgment of those who have responsibility for the common good". These religiously approved human resources include "public authorities", "servants of security", and, unsurprisingly, Church authorities.

The legitimisation of violence was openly discussed within the militia movement, referencing the *Catechism* and the Bible and by repeating the words of monks, who were Church authorities after all. The social-organisational recourses of the LF were used to communicate these moral resources. For example, in an *Al-'Amal* editorial, penned by the LF President of Recruitment Michele Bassil, the sacredness of violent combat was emphasised: "I bow to you, freedom fighters of Lebanon, for you were truly the students of Christ on Earth, he sent you from the sky to show that fighting and freedom are twins" (*Al-'Amal*, 1982-03-09). Also Father Mouwaness stated to be "proud" that his students fought, and if need be killed, in defence of "Christian values [and] Christian existence" protecting "against Islamic fundamentalism" (quoted in Martin 1984, 8–9). Due to the pressing circumstances of the civil war, Father Bulus Naaman, who succeeded Father Qassis as the Church representative in the Lebanese Front, described political and military involvement as the "moral obligation" of every Christian (Henley 2008, 356).

Bashir Gemayel worked closely with religious figures like Father Qassis, Father Mouwaness and Father Naaman, who symbolically and strategically strengthened his position as militia leader. However, in June 1978, frictions within the Maronite front were rising, as rivalling militias tried to gain hegemony over the LF. Frictions were primarily political, concerning power and influence. As tensions grew into conflict, a meeting was organised at the Patriarchate in Bkirki under the chairmanship of the Patriarch Khoreish, aimed at reconciling the inter-communitarian dispute (*BBC SWB*, 1978-06-07). The Patriarch employed his cultural resource as mediator of a sectarian community to find common ground. However, later that month, the brutal murder of the Maronite

militia leader Tony Frangieh and his immediate family by other Christian/Maronite militants shocked the community. Bkirki again summoned key Maronite personalities, including Bashir who was rumoured to have ordered the attack, in an effort of smooth over differences (*BBC SWB*, 1978-06-15).

Various corners of the Maronite community expressed reservations about the mediation efforts by the Council of Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops and their ability to calm the situation (*BBC SWB*, 1978-06-24). To the dismay of Rome, the traditional power located in the seat of the Patriarchate weakened even further relative to that of both the militia leaderships and the monkhood[3] (Cobban 1983, 39). Although Rome and the Patriarch tried to mediate between the different Christian militias, urging for a path of reconciliation, they failed to lead the herd. It was Bashir Gemayel, on 7 July 1980, who eventually unified the rivalling militia forces in a brutal operation also referred to as the 'unification of the Christian gun' (R. Geha 2009, 149). He thereby coerced loyalty to a Christian unity, a unity that he (not the Patriarch) had created and vowed to safeguard (R. Geha 2009, 149–60).

On August 23, 1982, Bashir Gemayel was elected President of Lebanon. In Bashir's last public appearance on 14 September 1982, made just two hours before his assassination and just a few days before his ascension to the office of President, he delivered his most religiously inspired speech, in the Monastery of the Cross (*Deir el-Salib*) (for complete speech see R. Geha 2009). He stood under a Crucifix, while he was surrounded by religious figures in robes. He spoke about Christian pride, defending one's civilisation and nobody being better or smarter than the Maronites. Building on this sense of grandeur, he formulated a vision for the future of Christians in the East, in which they would be free to live their faith. Bashir melted religion and politics in Political Maronism, giving concrete reason and legitimisation for mobilisation. Through these statements he appropriated part of the moral resources that are customarily embodied by religious figures.

With Bashir's assassination, the LF were left in a state of loss. The forces splintered, with various branches witnessing the emergence of stronger religious dynamics. Bashir's image was

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[3] At this time, the Vatican struggled to resolve the conflict over religious authority, merely expressing dismay with the situation. The Vatican would later adopt a firmer stance on the Lebanese issue, making the disobedience to religious authorities a central issue. In 1983, Father Naaman met with a Papal diplomatic commission, who ordered him to stop attending meetings of the Lebanese Front and to adhere to the Patriarch, the sole representative of the Maronite Christians in Lebanon. Father Naaman ignored the order. In 1984, the Vatican gave Father Naaman a "formal canonical invitation to abstain from all activity not conforming with his mission as religious and even less with his responsibility as superior general" (quoted in Henley 2008, 361–62). The Lebanese Maronite Order gradually receded from political and military engagement (Hanf 2015, 191, footnote 25). In 1986, the Papal intervened in the election process of the Order, ensuring Father Naaman's replacement by someone more sympathetic to the sanctity of pastoral activity. Through these activities the Vatican reclaimed its monopoly on moral resources.

celebrated, portraying him as a holy martyr. Meanwhile, the Lebanese Resistance Cross[4] was introduced as well as other religious imageries. Fadi Frem, who was elected leader of the LF one day before Bashir's assassination, wrote in *Al-'Amal*:

> The Lebanese Forces today are more like a monastic order. Just as the priest gets closer to God, as times goes by, and becomes more knowledgeable of the sanctity of his mission, we too are getting closer to our cause and our nation. The Lebanese Forces have been transformed with the martyrdom of the Commander [Bashir] from a political nationalist school to a monastic order committed to survival, faith and the will to a decent, sovereign and free life (*Al-'Amal*, 1983-04-13)

At the start of the civil war the LF searched for the support and legitimacy of the Maronite Patriarch. However, the Patriarch was unwilling to extent his moral and material resources to militia rule. Instead, the religious leader remained committed to what he perceived to be his religious role, trying to steer away from political involvement. Disappointed and disapproving, the militia movement decided to surpass their traditional patron and to re-imagine the importance of the Order of Monks. The amelioration of the monks signified a break with religious hierarchies and historical trajectories. Religion as a social practice, in this case, thus interacted with the opportunities and constraints posed by diverging religious leaders. The re-imagination of religious traditional hierarchies facilitated for RM, whereby the monks legitimised the militias, sanctioned violence, opened their monasteries, and provided financial aid. This is a noteworthy development, as there is a presumption that militia movements with religiously homogenous constituencies are prone to appropriate existing religious structures, seeking for the approval of traditional patronage to access resources for mobilisation (cf. Edwards and McCarthy 2004, 134–35). The opposite happened in the case of the LF and the Lebanese Front, which surpassed their religious leader to find an alliance in the re-constructed Order of Monks. Eventually, in the opinion of Fadi Frem, the militia itself started to behave like a monkhood – finding meaning and legitimisation in itself and in its deceased leader, Bashir Gemayel.

1.2. Walid Jumblatt and the Shaykh al-'Aql
In March 1977, Kamal Jumblatt's life and political career were dramatically put to an end. The spearhead of the LNM and leader of the PSP was assassinated just a couple of miles from his home

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[4] The Resistance Cross, with its evident religious references, was launched by the chaplaincy of the LF. The Resistance Cross remains a common sign of affiliation. See Appendix, Visual 7 for the flyer in which the Cross was introduced and the symbolic value described by its creators.

village, al-Moukhtara (*BBC SWB*, 1977-03-18). As described in the previous chapter, when Walid Jumblatt, Kamal Jumblatt's 28-year old son, heard about an attack on his father's life he travelled from Beirut to his family's home in the Mountain. Upon his arrival, he learned that members of the Druze sect had started with reprisal attacks against Christians across the Mountain region. Walid Jumblatt, strengthened by the religious Druze leader Shaykh al-'Aql Mohammad Abu Shaqra, left his father's body in an effort to stop revenge attacks in the area.

The next day, during the funeral ceremony, Walid Jumblatt was adorned with the traditional mantle of leadership by the same Shaykh al-'Aql, in accordance with old feudal traditions (*BBC SWB*, 1977-03-19). The cleric declared: "Walid, a worthy successor to a great predecessor" (quoted in Rabah 2016, 133).[5] However, the "worthiness" of Walid Jumblatt's leadership was not necessarily without controversy. Walid Jumblatt, with his young age and lack of political experience, was not the most competent choice, was it not for his name and the significance his name carried. It had been in particular Druze followers of the Jumblatt clan that had pushed for his election (Richani 1998, 62). The process of succession illustrates how feudal politics imposed itself on a presumably socialist institution.

The centrality of the feudal family is particularly important for the Druze community, as this sect does not have an independent clerical hierarchy (Richani 1998, 63). Historically, the two most influential Druze families – the Jumblatt and Arslan clans – appointed their own Shaykh al-'Aql (Halabi 2015, chapter 3). The respective clerics were expected to conform to the parameters set by the feudal families that appointed them, making the station of Skaykh al-'Aql an essentially political position (Rabah 2016, 114). In other words, the resources attached to the religious offices of the Skaykh al-'Aql were tied to the political mobilisation needs of competing feudal families. From 1943 until 1970, the Lebanese state officially recognised both Shaykh al-'Aqls, whom were both salaried employees of the state. In 1970, the Jumblatt and Arslan families agreed to unite the post under the incumbent Jumblatt Shaykh, Shaykh al-'Aql Muhammad Abu Shaqra (Rabah 2016, 114). Shaykh al-'Aql Muhammad Abu Shaqra became the first Shaykh al-'Aql to be the only Shaykh al-'Aql. With this appointment, the resources of the Druze religious hierarchy were united in a single person.

In 1978, the Shaykh al-'Aql received considerable material resources, in the format of financial funds, from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Together with a number of Druze personalities, the Shaykh initiated the building of the Druze Community Home in Beirut, as well as a health institution in the Mountain, which combined a hospital, an elderly home, a nursing

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[5] Makram Rabah, who obtained his PhD from Georgetown University, had previously been a student under the distinguished Lebanese academic Kamal Salibi. Rabah and I met twice in Beirut for discussions. He is one of few academics to have researched the role of the Shaykh al-'Aql.

institute and a medical college affiliated with the Lebanese University (Halabi 2015). The Shaykh's contributions were vital to the members of the Druze community, especially during the devastating years of war (Harik 1994a, 474). The fact that the Mountain had few public facilities, made these Druze initiatives only more important (Harik 1994b, 13). The allocation of material resources and the establishment of social-organisational resources resulted in additional esteem for the religious office. The newly appointed Walid Jumblatt backed the Shaykh, by investing money for the development of these institutions. The religious and militia leader thereby shared in the esteem of their resource distribution, enabling mobilisation and motivation within the a wide quarter of the Druze community (Harik 1994a, 475).

In 1982, the Israeli army and LF invaded Mount Lebanon, the traditional stronghold of the Druze community. Upon the instructions of the Shaykh al-'Aql and Walid Jumblatt, people were requested to refrain from hoisting white flags (Rabah 2016, 163). Instead violent clashes erupted between the militants of the LF and the PSP, aided by elements of the Druze sect (*BBC SWB*, 1982-10-15). As a minority that knows a long history of persecution, many of the Druze believe that armed struggle is a natural extension of their existence. The attachment to firearms, for example, is reflected in some everyday expressions. In an interview, Badri Abou Diab described how violence "is part of our collective memory, it is vested in our sub-consciousness. It is an idea we always carry with us" (interview Abou Diab, 2017-06-05). Repertoires of violence were portrayed and understood as cultural resources. New born baby boys are referred to as 'rifles', as they will one day be expected to defend the Druze community (Rabah 2016, 163). A popular poster at the time signified this sentiment, celebrating the image of a child combatant. Big letters underneath the photo read "the Mountain's upbringing" (see Appendix, Visual 3). Various interviewees referred with pride to the fighting capabilities of their Druze community. Violence was not only expected, it was seen as a necessary tool for a minority facing threats.

Consequently, the community did not hesitate to defend their land and their people. The whole population was mobilised. One interviewee got emotional when he remembered how even his older mother took up a gun in order to protect herself admits the war (interview with Fadi Graizi, 2017-08-29, Beirut). Also the Druze clerics participated in combat, forming a military order known as *Quwwaat Abou Ibrahim* or the "Forces of Abu Ibrahim" (Rabah 2016, 116). In the AUB archives one can find several photos that depict men of religion, wearing traditional dress, standing in the trenches with Kalashnikovs in their hands. Simultaneously, the clerics provided Druze fighters with the needed moral and cultural resources, legitimising violence and motivating continued battle (Rabah 2016, 116).

In these trying times - Judge Abbas Halabi[6] explained in an interview (digital phone interview, 2019-01-30) - both Walid Jumblatt and the Shaykh al-'Aql wished to protect the community. However, their means started to diverge. Walid Jumblatt pushed for a military confrontation, as he wanted to establish his name as defender of the Druze community. Conversely, the Shaykh al-'Aql, who arguably felt more secure in his position, advocated the route of diplomacy. In the wake of the Mountain War, a direct phone line was installed between him and the President of the Republic, Amine Gemayel, who had taken up the presidency after his brother's assassination (Rabah 2016, 203). Additionally, the Shaykh regularly hosted diplomatic missions in his house in the Mountain, hoping that dialogue could reach reconciliation. Walid Jumblatt, Judge Halabi argues, saw these initiatives as a threat to his position, as he preferred to act as the sole representative of the Druze people. He wanted to be in ultimate control over the resources available to the Druze community, which meant he wanted to be able to control the Shaykh, like the feudal families had done in the past. In August 1983, when the Shaykh hosted three Lebanese ministers in his home, PSP militiamen harshly disrupted the meeting and kidnapped the politicians (*FBIC*, 1983-08-20). The kidnapping of the ministers was widely discussed in the Lebanese media, even though it was not an isolated incident. More people had been taken from the Shaykh al-'Aql's home. Judge Halabi, who had been a close aid to the Shaykh al-'Aql, recalls the religious leader saying: "Why is Walid turning my home into a trap?"

Judge Halabi comprehended that Walid Jumblatt wanted the Shaykh to understand that if there was to be any contact with outside officials those should be arranged through al-Moukhtara, not through the office of the Shaykh al-'Aql. At the same time, Walid Jumblatt knew that the Shaykh al-'Aql enjoyed widespread popularity within the community, while controlling a significant amount of tangible and intangible resources. He needed him for the access that his human resource station made possible. At the very least, he needed the Shaykh al-'Aql not to become an enemy. Walid Jumblatt, therefore, never expressed himself critically towards the religious leader in public. In fact, he denied having anything to do with the kidnappings (*FBIC*, 1983-08-20). As such, Walid Jumblatt pressured the Shaykh mostly behind closed doors:

> At that time, the Shaykh and Walid were not on good terms. But, Walid did not hurt the Shaykh and vice versa. Not in public. But the Druze people knew about this contradiction […] Walid was not mature like today. He was a military leader, he can kill people, you know. He was a militant. He was in the war. We should accept that image for that time. He was

somehow accepting the role of the Shaykh, but he, at that time, as I think now, he did not want to share his leadership position. If I may describe it like this. [To that aim] Walid Jumblatt played upon the contradictions of power within the community. He was a very good player. He gave power to some officials and shaykhs one day, and the next day he could take it, and give it to someone else. He was a player (Judge Halabi, 2019-01-30, digital phone interview)

Meanwhile, the conflict in the Mountain was escalating. The number of deaths was mounting, while large portions of the Druze sect were subjected to random acts of violence. Fouad Abou Nader, head of the LF and grandson of Pierre Gemayel, admitted that some of his men violated orders by insulting the Druze and their clerics, going as far as the humiliating acts of shaving the moustaches of the religious men and pulling down their traditional trousers (Rabah 2016, 203). The PSP's main newspaper *Al-Anbaa* reported on a daily basis about the tragedies of the Mountain. Such hardship and transgressions made it impossible for the Shaykh al-'Aql to continue with his reconciliation efforts with the LF and his lukewarm support for the PSP. Judge Halabi explains the coming together of militia and religious ranks as follows:

When there was the war of the Mountain, the Shaykh was behind the people, backing the community. He supported the [militia] leadership in defending the Mountain […] He left it to Walid to lead. He did not try to take the place of Walid in managing the situation against the LF in the war. At that time, or any other, he did not try to take his throne. He was the religious leader. But as a religious leader, he tried to preserve the interest of the community (Judge Halabi, 2019-01-30, digital phone interview)

This sentiment is well echoed in a speech the Shaykh al-'Aql Muhammad Abu Shaqra delivered in February 1984, in which he extended some of the moral resources attached to his station:

In the Name of God, in whom we seek refugee against the enemies of God. Young men of [… Druze tribes], defenders of the oppressed, oh heroes: You are now waging a sacred battle of honour. It is the battle to regain the sanctities, which the treacherous tyrants have desecrated. They have come from far away […] They have refused the rights of a guest and have sought the might of the sword to violate right and justice, practice evil, attack and kill. Return their evil […] Cast them from your homes, docile and defeated. Rise like hurricanes to storm them. Disgrace and an evil fate upon them. Oh war heroes: We have no option

left. It is either humiliation and disgrace, which we reject, or courage and the elimination of oppression and tyranny. […] God is great and He will help you against those who stand against the faith (*BBC SWB*, 1984-02-16)

This call for mobilisation and the legitimisation of violence signal a significant change from the Shaykh's earlier, more moderate stances. The Shaykh al-'Aql used the full extent of his cultural and moral resources in an effort to mobilise as much as he could from the Druze constituency. The name of God was invoked to cast judgment on the sanctity of the situation and the necessity of mobilisation. The speech additionally marked the re-found alignment of religious and militia forces. The Shaykh al-'Aql and Walid Jumblatt had found common ground in the perception of existential threat. Together, combining their resources, they headed the remaining Druze community through a devastating, one-year struggle. They concluded the fiercest phase of fighting in the Mountain, when they negotiated the end of a Druze imposed hundred-day siege in the village of Dayr al-Qamar, where 20,000 Christians had taken refuge (*BBC SWB*, 1983-12-06).

After the victory of the PSP in the Mountain, Walid Jumblatt established a local administration run by PSP party officials (Harik 1995, 54). Part of this administration included social and educational programmes. Although Kamal Jumblatt, in cooperation with a number of Druze clerics, had already started such services in 1971, through newly established infrastructures Walid Jumblatt was able to extend reach and dissemination (Rabah 2016, 115). These altered arrangements formalised socialisation programmes for Druze pupils in the Mountain (Harik 1995, 55). Virtues like loyalty, self-sacrifice, defence and discipline were stressed in school books (Harik 1995, 55). During the warring years, youngsters were encouraged to join the party's affiliated Scouts, while all high-school students were expected to study the PSP's constitution, to take part in paramilitary training and, when needed, protect the Mountain against invaders (Harik 1995, 55). In his position as salaried government functionary and religious representative, the Shaykh al-'Aql was also able to strengthen these channels of socialisation and mobilisation (Harik 1994a, 474). The socialisation process drove the PSP to become increasingly associated with the Druze stratum of society (Richani 1998, 92–93). Badri Abou Diab recalls, "Walid Jumblatt recruited everyone [of the Druze population]. If you are Druze, you had to join. The PSP became Druze, and Druze became PSP" (interview, 2017-06-05, Beirut).

Even though the sectarianization of Walid Jumblatt's rule is frequently pointed out in academic writing (Richani 1998, 95–97; Salibi 2003, 200–201; Traboulsi 2012, 231; Rowayheb 2011, 47–48), little reflection has been paid to the meaning and consequences of this process. It is noteworthy, for example, that Walid Jumblatt never adopted religious rhetoric (as also elaborated

upon in chapter 7). Moreover, even though Walid Jumblatt desired absolute control over his militia, he felt compelled to co-opt the traditionally highest-ranking religious authority, the Shaykh al-'Aql, for RM purposes. His human resource was needed for the bestowment of moral, material, cultural and social-organisational resources. Although Walid Jumblatt had significant resources of his own, he could not do without the support and access of the Shaykh, who enjoyed good relations with the people. Walid Jumblatt thereby viewed the Shaykh's position as an extension and strengthening of his political rule.

In many ways, this practise resonated with the historical role of Druze feudal leaders, in which the feudal leader controlled the religious leader. In fact, it was demonstrated how in times of disagreement, this highest of Druze religious officials would be bullied, if not forced, into alignment. These are important reflections, as those that see a causal connection between religion and violence regularly state that religious leaders have significant influence on the direction and intensity of conflict (Selengut 2008, 22–23; Kimball 2008, 26; Toft 2007, 97). The case study of the PSP demonstrates a different dynamic, in which the militia leader struggled to instrumentalise the religious leader for his own political agenda. The support of the religious leader was considered as valuable, as he controlled many of the moral and material resources needed for (continued) mobilisation.

1.3. Imam Musa al-Sadr and 'Social Islam'

Although the main function of a Shiite cleric relates to his scholarly knowledge on jurisprudence, being an interpreter of the *Shari'a*, the central position he holds within the community also provides potential for political leadership (Shanahan 2005, 133). [7] From the outset, Imam Musa al-Sadr presented himself as more than a cleric who leads services of worship:

> The rulers say that religious figures should only conduct prayers; that they shouldn't interfere with other matters. They advise us to pray and fast, so that their rule is not threatened, while they are moving away from [the teachings of] religion and only use it to keep their positions. I refuse that my prayers turn me into a silent devil. I am a fighter with you and for you (Imam Musa al-Sadr, 1974-02-17)

Alongside his studies in Islamic jurisprudence, theology and philosophy, Imam Musa al-Sadr also underwent years of training in political science. Acting upon his well-rounded education, he related

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[7] At the time of the Imam, Iran and Iraq functioned as sources of inspiration for active religious-political leadership (Ajami 1987, 29–51), while the leaders associated with majority Shiite countries Bahrain and Azerbaijan followed politically quietest paths.

his leadership role to the responsibilities of an Imam of the Community (*Imam al Jama'a*), an image that reached beyond religious prerogatives and included worldly affairs (Ajami 1987, 123).[8] This section is focussed on analysing Imam Musa al-Sadr's reinterpretation of the human resource of leadership. Additionally, the Imam's relation, creation and re-imagination of religious moral, cultural, material and social-organisational resources will be considered.

In the years preceding the arrival of the Iranian born Imam Musa al-Sadr, the Lebanese Shiite cleric community had been "politically quiescent", whilst traditional Shiite families or *zu'ama* (landowners with political influence) effectively administered the south and the Beqaa, which were inhabited by a majority of Shiite inhabitants (Ajami 1987, 73). The *zu'ama* had been co-opted during the Ottoman rule and French Mandate, gaining material and social-organisational resources (Saad-Ghorayeb 2003, 280). Few of these resources were redistributed, leaving large parts of the populations in these areas economically deprived and without access to social services and education. Especially the prominent *za'im* Kamil al-As'ad was notorious for his corruption and arrogance (AbuKhalil 1985, 46). When Imam Musa al-Sadr arrived in Lebanon, in 1959, he made it clear that he was on a political quest, that he wanted to alleviate economic deprivation and social misrecognition (Ajami 1987, 82; Saad-Ghorayeb 2003, 296). In order to achieve these ambitions, the Imam started to establish infrastructures for a greater and more lasting reach, aiming to create and connect resources for communitarian and class-based mobilisation. In the southern region, for example, he established various charitable organisations through which he provided social services to the deprived (largely Shiite) population (Cammett 2014, 46–49).

The Imam's articulation of his leadership role was unambiguous, he saw his position in Lebanon as both a religious and socio-political responsibility. It was particularly this socio-political positioning that was perceived by the *zu'ama* as a threat to their traditional role (V. Nasr 2007, 86). The subsequent pushback from several prominent *zu'ama*, including Kamil al-As'ad, did not stop the Imam from proceeding with his socio-political and religious project (Ajami 1987, 110). Mohammad Nasrallah (also known as Abou Jafar) (interview, 2017-08-18, Beirut), who was a close companion of the Imam and who now occupies the single-highest seat in the Amal Movement, explained the multi-faceted layers of the human resources of the Imam as follows:

> Before Imam Musa al-Sadr, Muslim religious figures and Shiite religious leaders, to be more
> precise, only addressed the religious questions. They did not really address the social pains

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[8] This description on the role of Imam goes against (Western) assumptions that religious figures should not concern themselves with worldly affairs. Nevertheless, as this section highlights, the role of the Shiite clergy has gone through different phases, including those in which Shiite clerics were expected to look after the community, distributing moral as well as material resources.

and struggles the people were facing and the lack of schools, hospitals and infrastructure. For the first time, Imam Musa al-Sadr's speech touched on the wounds of the people. He started dealing with the daily problems that the people really faced […] In the north and in the south he launched projects and organisations that dealt with certain social problems [...] If you read the speeches of Imam Musa al-Sadr, you will see that each one discusses the worries of the people. So he had this power. It was something new for the people. It was different from the speeches of the thousands of religious leaders. I never recall, for example, him having a speech about how to pray. Because all the Shaykhs only talked about this. But what Imam Musa al-Sadr said in relation to these social, political and economic issues, no one dared to say it. I believe these people were dealing with the less important elements of Islam; whereas, Musa al-Sadr dealt with the complete Islam. He started from the point that the human being is the final goal [word indistinct]. That the human being has to live with dignity. In order to have a dignified life, one must have access to a house, hospital, school, job, etc. This is why, when Imam Musa al-Sadr started such a dialogue, he attracted these people [the deprived] because they felt that the parties they were in did not really offer anything more than what Imam Musa al-Sadr was calling for. They started to feel that 'Social Islam', as Imam Musa al-Sadr presented, offered much more than Marxist Islam or Islamic capitalism […] Everything Imam Musa al-Sadr called for was part of religion, because Islam is a religion that calls for a just and well-being society. A society were everybody is equal in right and obligation. Islam is a religion of coexistence. Islam calls for the banishing of any oppressed situation. One of the *hadiths* about the Prophet – peace be upon him – tells about how Mohammad criticised going to sleep while your neighbour is hungry. So how can Imam Musa al-Sadr rest when the people in Lebanon cannot find the means to eat and live? Imam Musa al-Sadr represents in a certain way this complete Islamic behaviour […] While other religious figures dealt only with this religious aspect of Islam, Imam Musa al-Sadr dealt with the social, political and also the religious

Mohammad Nasrallah explains the Imam's human resources to be grounded in both his commitment to mundane and local grievances as well as religious credentials and practise. It set the Imam apart from many other religious leaders, making him better able to connect with his constituency. Apart from the social-economic initiatives that were actualised in the early years of the Imam's presence in Lebanon, his biggest structural achievement came in 1967, when he founded the Supreme Islamic Shiite Council, a corporate body representing the Shiite community before the state. The Council was the first formal political platform for the Shiite sect, resulting in

a leap of communitarian organisation and authority (Ajami 1987, 98, 113–14).[9] The election of the Imam as the first chairman signalled his claim to the political and religious representation of that community (Shanahan 2005, 162, 164). The Council provided the platform from which he could play a leading institutionalised role in the political life of the Shiite sect, providing him with structural moral and material resources.

To wield these resources, the Imam regularly gave speeches at public forums. Thousands of deprived would come to listen to his addresses. As the Lebanese crisis developed, the content of the Imam's speeches became increasingly socio-political in orientation. As a case in point, the Imam regularly provided his diagnoses on Lebanon's problems, as also the following speech abstract highlights:

> The problem that threatens to tear Lebanon is a problem of the daily bread, the insecurity and the on-going excessive raise in price. The problem is not about sects, Muslims and Christians are brothers […] There is one sect and that is the group of monopolists, whose members are from all Lebanese sects, they are the Lebanese sect that stands against all the [other] people (Imam Musa al-Sadr, 1974-09-26)

The socialist rather than sectarian framing of the origins of the Lebanese problem was typical for the Imam in the years preceding the war. Meanwhile, he saw his role and impact as a leader growing. Following the bus massacre that sparked the civil war he maintained that "everyone – whether they be religious or not – is responsible for the upkeeping of their country […] And since the religious figures have this social impact they have huge responsibilities in these times" (Imam Musa al-Sadr, 1975-04-18). Two months later he added: "I consider myself an Imam for all the deprived, whether they are Shiite, Sunni, Druze or Maronite" (Imam Musa al-Sadr, 1975-06-14). This portrayal of the Imam as the 'leader' of the marginalised and poor was regularly repeated in the interviews I conducted with (former) Amal militants and politicians.[10] It could be argued, however, following a more calculated line of reasoning, that Imam Musa al-Sadr understood the prevailing reality of the Lebanese situation, in which the accommodation of other religious communities was an essential precondition for the advancement and mobilisation of the Shiite community (Shanahan 2005, 154–55).

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[9] Before the establishment of the Supreme Islamic Shia Council, the Shiite community was under the authority of the Dar al Fatwa, the official body of Lebanon's Sunni Muslims.
[10] Including Mohammad Nasrallah (interview, 2017-08-18, Beirut), Hussein al Husseini (interview, 2017-06-02, Beirut) and Moufid el-Khalil (interview, 2017-07-04, Beirut). But also the Maronite politician Henri Helou (interview, 2017-07-29, Baabda), whose father Pierre Helou co-signed the founding of the Movement of the Deprived, attested to this portrayal.

Although the Imam Musa al-Sadr presented himself as a leader for *all* deprived, limiting the alienation of similar-minded movements, his leadership marked the beginning of the emergence of the Shiite branch as a political entity and social identity (Norton 1987, 109–11; Siklawi 2012, 6; Saad-Ghorayeb 2003, 296). Whereas the Movement of the Deprived had maintained some levels of inter-sectarian composition,[11] the announcement of Amal, just few months into the civil war, brought the demands of the Shiite sect (or at least a vision of that) to the forefront (Picard 1993, 19–20). In his announcement speech, the Imam called upon the Lebanese youth to pledge alliance to Amal and prepare for military mobilisation. Following the Imam's speech, tens of thousands of Shiite men took an oath to fight for the rights of the community (Picard 1993, 20). When the Imam was asked about the prominence of his sect within his movement's ranks, he would reply: "Because the majority of the Shiite are deprived" (Imam Musa al-Sadr, 1974-02-15 repeated on 1975-01-03).

Although factually correct (Picard 1993, 10-14; Norton 1987, 110), there were arguably other factors that contributed to the sectarianization of Amal's mobilised constituency. For example, the Imam used a number of mobilising resources that particularly connected with the Shiite stratum of society. References to Karbala, Imam Hussein and martyrdom (*shahada*) - all vibrant markers of the religious creed of Shiism - became ever more central in the Imam's prayers and speeches (Picard 1993, 35–42). The militia's newspaper *Al-Amal* frequently featured similarly themed Quranic verses in decorative fonts on the front page. Despite the fact that these religious references originally conferred a "culture of mourning", the politically quietist interpretation was abandoned in the 1960s and early 1970s by Shiite clerical leaders, including the Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini and the Iraqi Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr (Saad-Ghorayeb 2003, 277; Norton 1987, 41). Sentiments of passivism were gradually reinterpreted as sentiments of activism. These empowering cultural and moral resources, as employed by the Imam Musa al-Sadr and as distributed through the social-organisational resource of the militia newspaper, contributed to the homogenisation of the militia as well as their preparation for violent engagement.

Apart from an increasingly religious discourse, also the utilisation of material resources, for example religious institutions, contributed to the sectarianization of the Amal movement. From 1974 to 1978, the Imam would deliver lectures on a weekly basis, during which time he would take the opportunity to talk about social and political issues. These meetings would be visited by a select

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[11] Although the Charter of the Movement of the Deprived was signed by a number of different political and religious figures (including the Maronite politician Pierre Helou); the Imam's principle constituency were the Shiites of the south, who were caught in a crossfire between Palestinian guerrillas that used the south as a sanctuary and Israeli reprisals against this group and those who hosted them (Ajami 1987, 123–24). The Imam also invested considerable efforts into fostering a social identity amongst the Shiites of the Beqaa, who he needed to channel frustration into political and social endeavours (Ajami 1987, 128).

group of friends and followers. Mohamamad Nasrallah, also quoted above, was part of this inner circle, describing the organisational set-up for mobilisation as follows:

> Each person in this group, listening to Imam Musa al-Sadr, had the duty to deliver what he heard to his [respective] cells that had been starting to form at the time of the Deprived Movement […] We would write our notes and go to the cells. I had to teach about 17 cells in a week. Each week. There were thousands of such cells. I would deliver the messages of Imam Musa al-Sadr, his teachings, and we would discuss it together. The Imam would be very interested afterwards: What did the people think of the message? Sometimes he would listen in detail to the remarks. This was one of the methods that was used to transmit his message (interview with Mohammad Nasrallah, Beirut, 2017-08-18)

One of the most common avenues for these propagation meetings, according to Mohammad Nasrallah, was the mosque,[12] while popular occasions for public speeches frequently revolved around specific Shiite commemorations, including the ritual of Ashura or the seventh day of a person's death (Picard 1993, 37). Through these avenues and occasions, a version of Shiite identity was accentuated, while motivations for social mobilisation were crystallised. The alignment with religious moral and cultural resources and the creation and utilisation of religious social-organisational and material resources (e.g. the Supreme Islamic Shiite Council or study groups in the setting of the mosques) thereby contributed to the sectarianization of the Amal movement. 'Social Islam' became the corner stone for overcoming deprivation and finding strength in a neglected sect.

The instrumentalisation and/or re-imagination of existing religious resources as well as the construction of new ones contributed significantly to the mobilising opportunities for violent engagement; however, they were not sufficient in themselves (Saad-Ghorayeb 2003, 278). Would the socio-economic situation not have been the same, which had caused longstanding grievances with the *zu'ama* and the state, the Shiite historical underdog status and quietist politics might have persisted. Without marginalisation, deprivation and alienation, the merger of political and religious activist leadership might not have emerged, while the resources available to the Imam might not have materialised in the specific forms as they did nor would they have resonated as much with the population. The emergent properties of sectarianization in Amal are specific to their macro-context and meso-leadership.

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[12] See Hassner (2006) for the role of mosques as tactical bases for mobilisation in Iraq.

Following the RM perspective, the Imam's success can partially be attributed to the creation of a religious material and social-organisational framework of resources that gave him (and those clerics that succeeded him) formal influence in the Lebanese political and communitarian system. Rather than walking through established paths, the Imam built his own structures. As head of the Supreme Islamic Shiite Council, the Imam had created a considerable amount of political access; while the charity networks gave him support among the lower classes. The cleric's broad secular and religious education further enabled him to become politically engaged and socially respected, breaking tradition with his predecessors (Shanahan 2005, 159). As such, the human resources vested in the Imam can be depicted as "a sea change in clerical activity" (Shanahan 2005, 159).

The establishment of his own militia helped the Imam in achieving the goals he had failed to achieve through peaceful means, in particular by aiming to provide physical safety to his community (Shanahan 2005, 162). Through the formation of the militia's own media outlets, *Al-Rissala* and later *Al-Amal*, the Imam gained wider access. Additionally, he was frequently featured in mainstream newspapers like *al-Hayat* and *an-Nahar*, whose coverage enhanced his public credentials (Shanahan 2005, 161). His media presence was ground-breaking for a man of his rank and status. Through the mobilisation of moral, cultural, material and social-organisational resources the Imam (being a reinvented human resource himself) overruled the traditional *zu'ama* in political power and communitarian representation. Additionally, he overruled the state in their provision of care and safety. As such, it is not an overstatement to remark that the Imam re-imagined the meaning and place of political and clerical leadership in the Shiite sect in Lebanon. Nevertheless, this is not tantamount to claiming that Imam Musa al-Sadr's militia movement was an Islamic/Shiite one. Despite the merger of religious-political leadership and the creation and utilisation of religious resources, Amal was essentially a national reform movement (Saad-Ghorayeb 2003, 296–97). Religious structures helped in sectarian mobilisation and social identification processes, but they never defined the goals of the movement.

In 1978 the Imam disappeared. Scholars describe the disappearance of the Imam as a watershed that "completely changed" the Shiite community's political standing and expectations (Shanahan 2005, 159; Ajami 1987). Ironically, As'ad AbuKhalil (1985, 45) argues, Imam "Musa al-Sadr was never as strong and influential among the Shiites as he became after his disappearance". The leadership of Imam Musa al-Sadr functioned as an example to Shiite clerics, who abandoned their distance from the political realm, taking up a place at the forefront of the community's political development.[13] According to Mohammad Nasrallah, this was the "roadmap" that the Imam had left for his followers, a path that continues to be trailed today.

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[13] This also set the stage for the development of Hezbollah, which movement emerged a few years later.

1.4. George Hawi and the Sectarian Devil

Unlike the three militias described above, the LCP did not have a religious authority to relate to or a sectarian constituency to cooperate with. Instead, the LCP aimed to bind together the working classes of Lebanon, wishing to establish a more equalitarian social and economic system, an aspiration with a global reach. In this section, the evolution of the LCP will be traced in a civil war environment that was increasingly characterised by sectarianized markers. It demonstrates how this affected the mobilising resources needed and available to the Communist leader George Hawi.

Founded in 1924, the LCP has long historical and organisational links in the region (Yacoub 2014, 84; Laqueur 1961, 141). It was not until 1971, however, that the Druze feudal leader Kamal Jumblatt, in the role of minister of interior, legalised the LCP. When the civil war started four years later, the LCP enjoyed extensive socio-organisational networks and a large following (Hanf 2015, 75–77). On a national level, it had associated itself with other Leftist parties, including Kamal Jumblatt's PSP and Imam Musa al-Sadr's Amal movement. When the civil war intensified, these parties united under the umbrella of the LNM (Baylouny 2014, 333). The Communists participated in the joint command of the coalition and contributed with a significant fighting force (K. Hamdan 1997).

The LCP was organised around a Leninist organisational structure (AbuKhalil 1991, 393–95), based on a doctrine of 'democratic centralism', in which the masses were led by the 'vanguard of the proletariat' (AbuKhalil 1991, 394). This vanguard consisted of the most experienced members of the party, who were elected to the most responsible positions, and were called leaders. This stands in contrast to the leaders of the LF, the PSP and the Amal movement, whose leadership positions were either derived from family/tribal relations or whose credentials were based on religious prerogatives. However, under the stressor of civil war, Tanios Deaibas argues (interview, 2017-07-04, Beirut) – a former member of the Communist Politburo who wrote journalistic pieces for the party's media outlets including the mostly widely read Communist newspaper *An-Nida* – the Leninist organisational structure became less open and democratic. The established leadership started to suggest a list of names that would form the basis of new elections, effectively controlling the human resources of leadership. According to Ziad Saab (interview, 2017-04-26, Beirut), this pre-filtering resulted in a fake competition and a corrupted sense of democratic choice. Ziad himself was elected as a member of the Politburo in 1984, at the age of 25, becoming its youngest member. Critically reflecting upon his own election, Ziad believes that his quick advancement spoke more to his social controllability than his personal achievement. The established elite knew he would follow party lines.

The human resources of the 'elected' leaders were ought to bring the moral resources of class-consciousness to the masses, who were seen as incapable of developing this sentiment on their own. In turn, these motivational frames had to develop cultural resources, replicating models of revolutionary repertoires of contention, mimicking the example of Socialist and Communist struggles. Ziad described how once part of the party, members were socialised with this ideology, regardless of their initial recruitment motivation. Militants were expected to follow the example of the leader. After all, he added: "What the leader said, that was right" (interview, 2017-04-26, Beirut) (cf. AbuKhalil 1991, 397). He continued:

> And usually, in all the wars, the poor people are carrying guns, defending their leaders. And their leaders are in a different place, either a different class or a different way of thinking. There are so many different issues. But they believe, *yani*, they are defending on them as a religion sometimes, as a class sometimes, as a, I don't know, Arabs maybe, or German, or uh. They use these titles to let them believe and make them fight for them. So, yes, I was believing that this was the way to change our life. To change the system. To make a better country

Ziad's testimony demonstrates how Communist labels and ideals aided the formation of a community of perceived like-minded people. The LCP entered the Lebanese civil war with these big ideals and identifications, ideals and identifications that were inspired by the ascendency of Communism and Leftist thought across the globe (Saad-Ghorayeb 2003, 288). A network of Communist and Socialist countries aided in the military preparation and development of the LCP, offering significant material and social-organisational resources (Yacoub 2014, 85). In an interview (2017-06-30, Beirut), the Communist leader Karim Mroue, the right-hand of George Hawi, explained how the organisational resources made available through Leftist relations aided in their initial and speedy mobilisation:

> When the war began [in April 1975], we immediately started to find arms here and there. We asked the Soviet Union to send us arms, we took arms from the Palestinians and so on. We immediately were a big and armed party. One of the most important ones, with thousands of people. We received a lot of arms from everywhere. Qadaffi sold us, Sadam Hussein sold us, the Syrians, the Palestinians, the Yemenites. Comrades from here and there came to join us. We sent people to the Soviet Union, all sorts of countries, even to Vietnam and Cuba

Also George Hawi remembered these early days of RM with optimism:

> I am not exaggerating when I say the Lebanese Communist Party is the most widespread in Lebanon. We are present everywhere in Lebanon, including the areas that are not under Lebanese control – like the southern border strip, Ashrafiyeh, Keserwan, and northern Metn. We are in every neighbourhood, in every city, in every village. We have deep roots in every part of Lebanon. We have worked hard to sink them deep, and *there is no way we can be uprooted* (Hawi, 1981-06-8/14; emphasis added)

The party additionally had extensive material and social-organisational resources that pre-dated the civil war, similar to the infrastructures of other militia movements and sectarian groups (although, unlike the other militias and sects, the LCP did not run its own schools). Tanios Deaibes (email correspondence, 2019-06-24) described how some of these social structures included the organisational sections dedicated to relations with secondary students, university students and trade workers. The LCP also had their own Democratic Youth Unions and Women Right Organisations. Through these social-organisational networks, which extended throughout the marginalised and deprived regions, people were recruited, socialised and trained. As such, the LCP started off as a well networked and resourced militia movement.

However, by 1979 the situation looked very different. Against the background of prolonged struggle, heavy losses and schisms within the Leftist 'front', optimism had made room for critical reflection. In order to find solutions to the existing predicaments, the LCP organised a conference in which they formulated three political pointers for the survival of the party (Ismael and Ismael 1998, 104). The party had to be *re-rooted* after all. First and foremost, they advocated for the development of relations with the Soviet Union and other Socialist satellite countries (Ismael and Ismael 1998, 110). These alignments were seen as part of an ideological internationalism but were also interpreted as a political necessity to ensure the needed material and social-organisational resources on which the LCP had come to rely. Secondly, as many of the Communists perceived of the Lebanese crisis as a foreign instigated confrontation, domestic conflicts were seen as of secondary importance (Ismael and Ismael 1998, 111). The LCP therefore pushed an international platform against imperialism, rather than a locally focussed resistance. Lastly, the party wanted to strengthen itself by becoming a "mass fighting party" (Ismael and Ismael 1998, 111), while continuing to stress that local struggles should be assessed dialectically with global and regional dynamics (Ismael and Ismael 1998, 112). The moral and cultural resources, which were so

important for successful mobilisation in the LF, the PSP and the Amal movement, were in the case of the LCP connected to global dynamics, overlooking the particularities of domestic struggles.

Three years later, speaking with the French daily *Le Monde* (1982-08-14), George Hawi had to recognise that the LCP had made mistakes that had weakened their social standing even further. His main self-criticism was directed at the party's failure "to highlight the Lebanese aspect of our struggle". They had focussed too much on regional and international currents, while they had "neglected to establish closer contacts with the [Lebanese] masses". This had resulted in a deficiency of moral resources, demonstrated in low morale and widespread disenchantment amongst militants. Hawi further added that they increasingly struggled to obtain material and social-organisational resources and that he regretted their deteriorating relations with other Lebanese militias. The party now wanted to focus on the "Lebanese problem". A month later, in September 1982, Beirut fell to Israeli occupational forces. George Hawi called upon all Lebanese parties to unite, regardless of differences. Nevertheless, in 1985, Hawi had to admit that attaining gains, internally and externally, had proven difficult. The LCP was at an impasse.

One reason that hindered the activities of the LCP was the "swelling religious and communal trends", which at the start of the civil war had functioned as an "important element in the patriotic upsurge", but which trend had now acquired a different political meaning (Ismael and Ismael 1998, 117). Whereas the LCP had earlier warned against the reification power of sectarian labels, deconstructing their meaning, George Hawi now started to adopt these semantic signifiers. In *L'Humanite* George Hawi explained how ""Jewish" aggression aided by "Christian" collaboration" had led "to a resurgence of the most fanatical elements in the Islamic forces" (*FBIS*, 1985-11-29). He continued to blame the Israelis for trying to establish "mini-confessional states" which could both justify the "Jewish state" and guarantee it a "secure border"" with Lebanon. This, he argued, had stirred up:

> clashes between Druzes and Shiites in the mountains and between Shiites and Maronites in the south. Imperialist circles further accentuated this aspect of things by portraying the resistance in the south as exclusively Shiite or Islamic, where it was the LCP which was behind resistance.[14] The role of religious factions was much less important than Western propaganda claims (*FBIS*, 1985-11-29)

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[14] This sentiment was also echoed by several of my Communist interviewees, some of whom would list specific missions executed by the Communists while media outlets would claim Amal or Hezbollah would be behind them. E.g. "I was leading this army movement. At this time, BBC London, CNN, all these networks, were saying it was Amal. But it wasn't Amal, it was us" (interview, Haydar Ammacha, 2017-05-22, Beirut).

Apart from the usage of sectarian labels, Hawi continued to blame outside powers, in particular Jewish and Imperialist forces, for the development of the Lebanese conflict. He interpreted the sectarianization of Lebanese militias as externally imposed. The sectarian perspective, he maintained, additionally undermined the efforts and sacrifices of the Communist resistance as well as their moral and cultural resources. At the same time, Hawi was critical towards the sectarianization of his own allies, disclosing the actualities of a concept he argued to be socially constructed rather than empirically real:

> We have told Amal and the PSP that we cannot continue to cooperate if they restrict themselves to representing the Shiite and Druze communities and that their relations would necessarily become antagonistic. This is unfortunately what is happening with this fierce fighting among our allies (*FBIS*, 1985-11-29)

When the PSP and the Amal movement started to clash in November 1985 the LCP knew they had lost their domestic allies. This loss coincided with a loss of resources, including access to territories and training grounds, where money could be earned and militants trained. While already being pushed into an increasingly isolated position, the LCP became a target on both ideological and territorial grounds. The Amal movement and Hezbollah started to target Communists, who they now branded as 'atheists' (see page 240 for more on the application and impact of this term), while competing over the Shiite stratum of society, who formed a significant part of the Communists ranks (Alkhayer forthcoming, 21, 46; Abisaab and Abisaab 2017, 103–4). The Communist daily *An-Nida* (1987-04-day not visible) reported that Shiite clerics in the south had issued a *fatwa*, urging the killing of all Communists. A field correspondent for the *New York Times* reported that: "dozens of Communists, many of whom are Moslem Shiites, have fled their homes in the south or gone into hiding" (Hijazi 1987). Interviewees also recalled how the sectarianization of the conflict endangered Communist resistance. The middle-ranking Communist fighter Haydar Ammacha (interview, 2017-05-22, Beirut) recollected:

> The conflict took the name of a religious conflict, instead of an ideological or land conflict. It was so obvious. We started to feel like a minority. Our power was minimised. The Leftists were losing power to the Shiite movements. Especially in the south. Every day they would tell us that they would kill us. "Be aware" […] A lot of Communists left and transformed into leaders in the Shiite movement. And the others refused, like me. That is why Amal

tried to kill me. They tried to kill my brothers. And they hit my dad and my mom [when they broke into their house to find me]. Members from Amal. They wanted to kill me, at that time. Two of my brothers were taken

Haydar describes the consequences of the sectarianization of the conflict on a militant level, in which members of the LCP were threatened and attacked for their affiliation, especially by the Shiite dominated movements (Amal and Hezbollah) in the south, who competed with the Communists over moral, cultural and human resources. From 1985 onwards, the losses of the LCP were increasing by the year, while the fighting spirit was decreasing. Militants defected or fled, depleting human resources. Moral resources, in the format of motivation and meaning, were gradually lost, as also described in the interviews with Haydar and Ziad. The cultural resources that took the image of a global Communist struggle no longer resonated with a population that suffered from local grievances. The consequences were undeniable. "Finally, we decided to stop our resistance", the Communist leader Mroue disappointedly recalled in an interview (interview, 2017-06-30, Beirut).

In 1986, Karim Mroue published a series of essays in the Lebanese newspaper *al-Safir*. In these he suggested that an incorrect understanding of religion, attributable to an erroneous reading of Marxism, had negatively affected the relationship between Communists on the one hand and the vast majority of the faithful masses on the other (Ismael and Ismael 1998, 137). He identified this misunderstanding as a root cause of the uneasy relationship between secular and religious currents in Lebanon. He echoed these ideas, referencing his own work, in an interview I conducted in 2017. During these conversations he expressed his own positive experience with religion, while he maintained that religious movements were political by nature. Seeking common ground, Mroue recollects how he "was calling the religious people to come together with the Communists" (interview, 2017-06-30, Beirut). Regardless of this outreach, 1987 saw a further escalation of aggression towards the LCP. By the time of Taif, the reconciliation accord that officially ended the civil war, the LCP had shrunk to a marginal political and fighting force - not even considered for peace talks.

In sum, the LCP suffered from the hardening of confessional identities in the Lebanese socio-political landscape, which hindered RM (Ismael 2009, 38). As more and more attacks were heading their direction, an increasing number of Communist militants quit the party, stating fear and disillusionment. Some of the interviewees would echo this sentiment, including Haydar Ammacha (interview, 2017-05-22, Beirut), Gaby Jammal (interview, 2017-05-17, Saida), and Fouad Dirani (interview, 2017-06-01, Beirut). Whereas both Hawi and Mroue recalled the grand

aspirations and abundance of resources with which the LCP started in 1975, towards the end of the civil war they were no more than a marginal player, depleted of most resources, both tangible as well as intangible. The intellectual elites, with their grand visions of utopian internationalism, had failed to get their own people on board. For more than half of the civil war, the LCP regarded the conflict of Lebanon as secondary to a global class struggle. Their international focus had initially given them recompense for the lack of religious structures and resources within Lebanon, gaining resources from friendly regimes abroad. But eventually this was not enough for local mobilisation. In fact, the obtainment of external resources blocked the connection with the local. In addition, the overt sectarianization of the conflict meant that the alternative resources were not as effective as they had been before. By the time revisions were made, it was too late to change the course of a party in decline (Yacoub 2014, 85). George Hawi had lost control of the resources needed for continued mobilisation.

2. Conclusion

This chapter provided new insights into militia leaders' diversified strategies to RM, assessing links and relations with religious RM dynamics. The different sections demonstrated how militia leaders frequently used resources associated with religion, including religious human resources, moral resources, material resources, cultural resources, and social-organisational resources. At the same time, the re-constructions and re-imaginations of these instrumentalisation processes were highlighted, congruently linking them to political and social motivations. Lastly, these paths were compared and contrasted with the Communist militia movement of George Hawi, who did not have the possibility of drawing from religious resources. In the subsequent discussion the different resources will be considered one-by-one, making a comparative analysis between the militia movements:

Human Resources

The fear of sectarian marginalisation, Harik argues, has made the Lebanese "especially suspectable to the symbolic meanings attributed to locales by leaders" (Harik 1994b, 51; cf. Simon Haddad 2002, 317). In taking this remark seriously, considerable attention was paid to the importance of human resources, as found within militia leaders as well as in their possible relations to religious authorities. The analysis on Bashir Gemayel, Walid Jumblatt and Imam Musa al-Sadr detailed how their symbolic power partially connected to their re-imagined or realigned relations with religious leaders – in these cases the Maronite Order of Monks, the Druze Shaykh al-'Aql and the role of a Shiite Imam – who administered religious laws, upheld moral traditions, arbitrated internal disputes

and lend legitimacy to militia rule. In those cases that respected religious leaders did not fully support militia rule, such as the Maronite Patriarch and the Shaykh al-'Aql, they were bound to receive significant pressure (Corm 1994, 222).

The traditional religious leader of the Maronite sect in Lebanon, the Maronite Patriarch, was ignored by the LF, as he refused to support the use of violence. Instead, the LF started to align themselves with the positions of lower-ranking Maronite monks. The Maronite Patriarch was publicly pushed to the side. In the case of the PSP, the leaders did seek to cooperate with the Druze traditional religious leader. Walid Jumblatt saw the bestowment of legitimisation by the Shaykh al-'Aql as a necessity to safeguard the unity of the Druze minority, enabling comprehensive mobilisation. When the Shaykh promoted dialogue as opposed to fighting, significant pressure was exercised on his office, albeit behind closed doors. Due to a number of co-founding factors, the Shaykh al-'Aql finally re-aligned with the PSP's policy of violent mobilisation. Imam Musa al-Sadr realised the largest re-imagination of religious and non-religious human resources. The Imam founded the Supreme Islamic Shiite Council in 1967, the Movement of the Deprived in 1974, and the Amal movement in 1975. Through these structures, all of which he headed, the Imam merged political representation with religious prominence. This conjunction was new for the Shiite community in Lebanon, whereby the Imam gained a prominent position on a sectarian level as well as within political Lebanon.

Although religious legitimisation was important for all three militia leaders, the comparison with the LCP leadership demonstrated that it was not a necessity for violent mobilisation (though the militia did struggle to mobilise resources for continued mobilisation). George Hawi did not have a religious authority to cooperate with or a religious community on whose infrastructure he could build his party. Instead, Hawi re-imagined the existing structures of Communist social services in order to spread awareness and cater for the mobilisation needs of his militia movement. In other words, although religious human resources were engaged for the purpose of militia mobilisation, these instrumentalisations were neither indispensable nor did they entail a straightforward continuation of existing structures. Instead, the possible instrumentalisation and creation of religious human resources entailed a (re-)imagination that befitted the political needs of militia leaders.

Moral Resources

The changes that the war brought forth in power constellations gave militia movements a pretext for articulating (religiously inspired) moral definitions that addressed socio-political grievances and actions (Beyoghlow 1989, 28). All militia movements manoeuvred their way through Lebanon's

fragmented political landscape, formulating legitimisations for their use of force. For the LF, the PSP and the Amal movement religious moral resources played important roles in legitimising violence and enabling mobilisation. Maronite monks legitimised the use of violence and blessed militants before and after fighting. Similarly, Druze Shaykhs provided justifications for violence, even participating in battles. The Shaykh al-'Aql eventually also legitimised and aided militia rule. The Imam Musa al-Sadr, through his religious and military organisations, had bestowed himself with the prerogatives of religious representation as well as with the reputes to legitimise and direct violence. All of these moral resources, endowed by co-opted religious leaders or obtained through the creation of religious positions, proved important for the continuation of violent mobilisation. These mechanisms simultaneously contributed to the sectarianization of the Lebanese conflict (cf. Toft 2007). George Hawi tried to obtain moral resources through the ideological framework of Communism, by embedding his militia's goals into a global frame of class struggle. Within the sectarianizing landscape, this latter global perspective was increasingly unsuccessful in convincing people to join the Communist fight and their mission. Religious moral resources, which were connected more closely to local grievances, resonated more strongly with the Lebanese population.

Material Resources

Material resources, including financial and physical capital, are also important for mobilisation purposes. After all, militants need shelter, food and arms, to name but a few necessities. All militia leaders entered into alliances to gain further access to material resource, in which the alignment with religious institutions played an important role (Baylouny 2014, 330). The Shaykh al-'Aql and the Shiite Imam, being official representatives of their sects, had access to financial means through their institutionalised positions before the state. Simultaneously, they as well as the Maronite monks opened their sacred sanctuaries for the accommodation and training of militants, thereby transforming the meaning and function of sacred spaces. George Hawi was unable to draw material resources from religious leaders, but was able to attain large financial contributions through networks of so-called comrade regimes, including the Soviet Union, Yemen, Syria and Palestine. Moreover, the Communist leader re-imagined the Communists social service system founded before the war to ensure a mobilisation structure for his militia movement.

Cultural Resources

The cultural resources employed by militia movements were related to existing repertoires of contention, including the historical and mythical experiences of previous struggles. For many of the Maronite members in the LF, the image of civil war was related to their historical understanding

of being treated as a persecuted sect, who needed political representation in order to safeguard existence. For the Druze elements in the PSP, the Mountain Conflict was comprehended in relation to the 1860 revolt, in which the sect had fought for political power. Shiite members of Amal re-imagined the myth of Karbala, seeing a revolutionary force in their destined anguish. Lastly, the LCP related their struggle to the global class conflict. These cultural experiences provided both motivation and familiar models for mimic behaviour, even though many of the dynamics were re-interpreted by militia leaders to fit the particularities of Lebanon. Cultural frames, clothed in the fear of past suffering, facilitated the recruitment, socialisation and mobilisation of militants and helped militia movements maintain their readiness for collective action. Both religious and non-religious frames were used to articulate cultural resources. Nevertheless, it is important to note that even the religiously anchored resources were inherently political in orientation, making the dividing lines smudged at best.

Social-Organisational Resources

Lastly, militia movements made use of social-organisational resources to communicate their ideas, stimulating (continued) mobilisation. All four militia movements had their own media outlets, including their main means of communication, the newspaper. The LF communicated through *Al-'Amal*, the PSP spread their ideas with *Al-Anbaa*, the Amal movement started using the outlet of *Al-Amal*, and finally the LCP articulated their ideas through *An-Nida*. All newspapers were initiated with the foundation of their associated militia movements. None of them were connected or controlled by religious authorities, although *Al-Amal* frequently featured religious pieces. In other words, for all four militia movements the main social-organisational resource for mobilisation, daily/weekly newspapers, did not have religious underpinnings or connections.

This chapter reflected on the manners in which militia leaders utilised resources for mobilisation, focussing on their rational choices and calculations. It was demonstrated how militia leaders employed, re-interpreted or constructed religious human, moral, material, cultural and social-organisational resources. The different sections analysed aspects of militia organisation that reproduced the religious authorities, structures and sentiments of society (cf. Crow 1962, 489). Nevertheless, the core argument was that these instrumentalisation processes entailed a profound level of re-imagination, finding ways to fit the political needs and wishes of militia leaders and their associated movements. Moreover, it was demonstrated that religious resources were not a necessity for mobilisation, as also the LCP managed to advance violent mobilisation, building upon non-religious mobilising resources (although, due a mixture of factors, mobilisation eventually halted).

It is important to stress the re-imagination elements of religious resources and their connection to political dynamics, as observers otherwise risk to essentialise and primordialise the existence, meaning and structure of religion's importance. Moreover, they risk to exclude the inherent political sides to these power transformations, as exhibited in the political agendas of militia leaders (Asad 1983: 237; cf. Asad 2001: 220-222). This chapter thereby stepped beyond primordial and instrumental perspectives on religion's role in RM, highlighting the importance of resources' relational emergence and their constructed and variant nature. All in all, these reflections should prompt writers on religious violence to reconsider some of their core assumptions regarding the presumed static power of religious authorities and religious resources.

<div style="text-align: right; font-size: 3em;">**7.**</div>

MILITIA LEADERS: **The Instrumentalisation of Religious Speech**

> "Language disguises the thought; so that from the external form of the clothes one cannot infer the form of the thought they clothe, because the external form of the clothes is constructed with quite another object than to let the form of the body be recognized"
>
> - (Wittgenstein 2013)

1. Re-imagining the Instrumentalisation of Religious Speech

In the previous chapter it was demonstrated that the instrumentalisation of religious authorities by militia leaders involved a significant re-construction and re-imagination of existing hierarchies and organisational structures, which was partially echoed in the manner in which militia leaders addressed their constituencies. The Shiite Imam Musa al-Sadr, political and spiritual leader of Amal, expressed himself in overtly religious terminology. The LF leader Bashir Gemayel, supported by

the order of Maronite monks, also used religious symbolism, yet to a lesser extent and less consistently. The Socialist leader Walid Jumblatt, strengthened by the approval of the Shaykh al-'Aql, called upon the Druze community without referencing the Druze faith. Lastly, the Communist leader George Hawi refrained from religious symbolism nor referred to sectarian compositions, though he did draw on class-based identities invoking the name of Communism.

This section aims to explore the cognitive and social processes that operate upon and through the religious and non-religious discourses utilised in the mobilisation towards violence, by analysing speeches delivered by Bashir Gemayel, Imam Musa al-Sadr, Walid Jumblatt and George Hawi across a range of different circumstances. What makes this study different to others is that IC allows a focus on the argumentative *structures* that underlie the *content* of articulations. A systematic examination is achieved through the appliance of the cognitive psychometric of IC, which quantitative measure was introduced in Chapter 2. The psychometric will be summarised below and linked to the study of belief/religion.

By incorporating the measure of IC into the larger framework of SMT, new ground is explored in analysing the role of religion in the mobilisation towards violence. The novel and niche approach necessitates a further detailing of IC methodology (building upon the framework sketched out in chapter 3) – providing rationales for the material under investigation, scoring considerations and scoring practises. The SPSS generated scores will be shared in the result section, while their interpretation is reserved for the discussion, in which section statistics are contextualised and exemplified. The conclusion will reflect upon the gained insights and will look ahead towards future research goals. The aim of this chapter is to systemically engage with the question of whether militia leaders who utilise religious speech as an instrument for mobilisation are more irrational and more socially divisive compared to those leaders who refrain from adopting religious narratives.

2. Integrative Complexity in Short[1]

IC is a measure of the cognitive structure that underlies information processing. IC is principally defined by two cognitive variables – differentiation and integration. Differentiation refers to the perception of multiple perspectives or dimensions when interpreting or evaluating the social world (Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Streufert 1992, 393). It is a necessary but not sufficient prerequisite for integration, which entails the development of conceptual connections and dynamic tensions among differentiated perspectives or dimensions (Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Streufert 1992, 393). Such connections are embodied in references to synthesis between different viewpoints, negotiation across perspectives, the search for hierarchical integration or the assessment of trade-offs between

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[1] Refer back to Chapter 2 section 3.2.2 for a more comprehensive overview.

alternatives.

IC is scored on a 1-7 scale (see coding manual: Baker-Brown et al. 1992). A score of 1 signifies the absence of both differentiation and integration. The author/speaker articulates her/his thoughts in narrow, rigid, binary categories, avoiding cognitive structures of ambiguity, discretion or doubt. Social groups are pitted against each other, in which the in-group represents the good and the out-group the bad. Scores of 2-3 indicate degrees of differentiation, in which an author perceives at least two different dimensions/perspectives to an issue. Maybe there are some decent people amongst the 'other'? Scores of 4 and higher indicate an author's ability of high-level differentiation and additional degrees of integration. Higher scores are characterised by broad, multi-dimensional thinking in which an author/speaker recognises multiple dynamic relations. IC thus measures the structure of thought, not its content (Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Streufert 1992, 393), allowing for a balanced and comparative perspective across differently orientated narratives.

IC coding techniques have been used to examine social, political and religious cognitive reasoning in archival, verbal, written and interview material. Studies have systematically shown that fluctuations in IC baseline levels can have consequences on social and political interactions (e.g. Suedfeld and Tetlock 1977; Satterfield 1998; Suedfeld, Leighton, and Conway 2005). Particularly potent is the predicting power of IC in regard to the upsurge of violent conflict (Suedfeld 2010, 1689). Typically, researchers measure a substantial decrease in the cognitive complexity of political leaders three to six months prior to the start of violent conflict (e.g. Suedfeld, Guttieri, and Tetlock 2003; Suedfeld and Tetlock 1977). Even when the content of a leader's address professes a commitment to peace, IC analysis reveals significant decreases in cognitive complexity weeks prior to surprise attacks (Suedfeld and Bluck 1988, 626). Decreases in IC can reflect increases in stress levels, for example, through a perceived threat to important values, lifestyle or social identity (Tetlock 1986; Savage and Liht 2009; Holsti 1972; Suedfeld 2010). These could be considered cognitive coping mechanisms, as on an emotional level it is easier to fight the all-bad rather than the partially-bad.

In sum, the frames that are uttered by militia leaders to mobilise their constituency towards violent engagement should not only be analysed in content, as we have done so far, but also in their structural presentation. Whereas, the content of ideas might shed light on the direction of behaviour, structure will enlighten the likelihood of the activation of behaviour. Together they answer when and why social mobilisation takes place, and how religious and non-religious beliefs influence processes of action orientation and action activation. Analysing the rationality and complexity levels of the idea structures of diverging militia movements can provide valuable insight to discriminate the risks of religious and non-religious speech. Given that all human beings at times

display low IC in response to certain stimuli, we need to contextualise the instances in which these decreases occur. Some contexts can be particularly receptive, instances that SMT can help us identify, as will be discussed below.

2.1. Integrative Complexity and Belief

The study of IC has been sporadically applied to case studies dedicated to belief more generally and religion more specifically. There have been several studies, for instance, focussing on whether religious individuals tend to think differently about life and the world around them compared to less religious or non-religious people. Although not all findings are in accordance with each other, research has generally shown weak but significant relationships between religiousness and measures of IC thinking on religious issues (e.g. the existence of God), but there is little evidence to suggest that such a relationship exists for non-religious topics (e.g. free trade) (José Liht et al. 2011, 316; Pancer et al. 1995, 228; Savage 2008b). In particular, Hunsberger et al (1994, 342) showed how religiousness is predictive of complexity of thought regarding existential content (e.g. life after death). People are not low or high on IC as a stable personality trait, instead IC fluctuates according to specific topics and situational variables (Hunsberger, Pratt, and Pancer 1994, 335; Houck et al. 2018, 1). IC research should therefore provide transparency on the domains and contexts under investigation.

Moving explicitly beyond the label of religion, Savage (2013, 158) argues that 'extremist' ideologies *of any kind* tend to avoid cognitive complexity. When cultural values are in tension, due to for example the proximity of diverging beliefs or lifestyles, extremist discourses tend to focus upon a single value. The arguments of extremist discourses may be elaboratively complex (e.g. marshalling a wide set of facts, historical narratives and logical arguments to buttress one viewpoint or ideology), but they are low in terms of dialectical complexity (e.g. dismissing validity in opposing viewpoints, avoiding ambiguous (some good/some bad) evaluations of own or opposing groups) (Conway et al. 2011, 156–57). The chosen association becomes a 'self-relevant value', around which all other issues and values revolve (Hogg, Meehan, and Farquharson 2010, 1062). Other values are either sub-prioritised or suppressed altogether, while a simplified picture of the world evolves (Savage 2013, 158–59). An all-good in-group is pitted against an all-bad out-group (Savage 2008a, 82). Within an extremist movement, a shared worldview and behavioural agenda is promoted that provides members with clear rules and expectations, while they are equipped with a defence against social and existential anxieties (Hogg, Meehan, and Farquharson 2010, 1062).

Fears are often unconscious, but can become salient under changing conditions (Savage 2008a, 84). Civil wars, for example, can bring the fear of death to the forefront of society and

societal relations. Terror management theorists argue that a strictly ordered worldview can minimise anxiety of death by providing an understanding of the universe that has order, meaning and standards of acceptable behaviour (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015). [2] In the case of war, the importance of one's identity is intensified, as identity has the power to provide meaning and defend against existential (death-related) anxieties. This often comes in the format of prescriptive generalisations and behavioural attitudes (traits of low IC reasoning), which can be most powerfully 'activated' under totalist group conditions (Savage 2013, 174; Savage and Liht 2009, 507). Religion has the potential to deliver such prescriptive generalisations, yet should not be mistakenly taken as a unique force in this regard. Moreover, most people will not categorise themselves into a group, adopting the group's prescribed virtuous behaviour, unless there is a motive to alleviate uncertainty in the first place. As previously mentioned, people that mobilise most intensively are not necessarily those with the strongest set of beliefs, but those whose understanding of the situation stipulates a clear rationale for action (Swidler 1986, 273).

The uncertainties attached to social tension and civil war can provide strong motivations for the perceived need for social and behavioural adaptation. After all, such identifications and socialisations can provide sources of self-esteem and social certainty in uncertain situations (Hogg, Adelman, and Blagg 2010, 73–74). This holds true for all sorts of groups and people that find themselves in high-tension and high-risk situations (Savage 2013, 158). Reductions in IC (e.g. through more dogmatic interpretations of beliefs and rigid understandings of the demarcation lines in the social world) can be seen as coping mechanisms that alleviate anxiety and uncertainty. Social psychologists have referred to this cooping strategy as 'the solace of extremism' (Hogg, Meehan, and Farquharson 2010).

The lessons and considerations of IC on religion are important to take on board, as they deepen and guide understanding on the possibilities, constraints and implications of research opportunities. Based on these insights, it is hypothesised that during the Lebanese civil war, and particularly its mobilising and violent episodes, low IC messages - providing clear-cut depictions of the social world and black-and-white rationales for action - became increasingly prevalent. IC further allows for a comparative assessment of religious rhetoric and non-religious rhetoric in terms of cognitive complexity, which measures of language *structure* can in turn be related to (ir)rationality and social divisiveness. This quantitative opportunity can measure whether sectarian composed movements that express themselves in religious terminology are more socially divisive, express themselves less complexly in argumentation, and are more prone to mobilise violently compared

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[2] This perspective is emphasised in TMT, which has been theoretically explained in chapter 2 section 3.3 and will be empirically fleshed out in chapter 9.

to non-religiously oriented movements.

3. Material and Method

3.1. Material

Drawing from a wide range of sources (as specified in chapter 3, section 3.2), speeches/interviews from Bashir Gemayel, Imam Musa al-Sadr, Walid Jumblatt and George Hawi were collected with a domain-specific focus on calls for mobilisation. Those speeches/interviewees in which leaders' primary focus addressed the economic system, debating international relations, lecturing on theological thought, etc. fell outside the scope of relevance. The collected data was filtered and organised based on four distinct time *settings* (see table below). The word setting, here, refers to a set of particular circumstances (e.g. relative peace or violent conflict), *not* to a particular time period. The first time setting includes speeches/interviews delivered during relative peacetime; either just before the war, during an extended ceasefire, or in a period when the war was thought to be over. Although the speeches/interviews in time setting 1 were recorded in the proximity of war, there was no actual fighting. The first selected interview with Walid Jumblatt, for example, was conducted in 1977 after the 'two-year war', when people assumed the civil war had ended. Walid Jumblatt's father had been assassinated and he was articulating his ideas as the newly chosen leaders of his party and his people. The second set of interviews/speeches was selected on the basis of them being delivered shortly before major acts of violence, moments in which leaders called upon their troops to mobilise and stand united. Bashir Gemayel's second speech is directed at the enemy within, delivered a few weeks prior to his notorious crackdown on Christian militias, referred to as 'the unification of the gun' (Randal 1983, 135) (also see page 129 and 148).

The third set of speeches/interviews was delivered during the height of violent conflict, in which an explicit call for continued steadfastness was voiced. Imam Musa al-Sadr, for instance, delivered a speech outlining the difficulties of the south and the need for continued resistance. The fourth set of speeches/interviews concerned calls for the unification of the splintered Lebanese socio-political landscape – in an attempt to unite the Lebanese to join forces against a common external enemy/threat. In time setting four, perceived dangers are thus externalised to non-Lebanese elements, though this does not need to exclude further struggle and possibly violence. In 1982, when Israel invaded Lebanon in a large-scale operation, George Hawi called for national unity in an effort to face an occupying enemy. All in all, sixteen speeches/interviews have been carefully selected, four speeches/interviews for four leaders, based on the aforementioned criteria. The selected speeches/interviews and their specific time settings are summarised below:

Table 1

	Bashir Gemayel	Imam Musa al-Sadr	Walid Jumblatt	George Hawi
1: Recorded just before or in a relatively peaceful period of the war	Speech: "The Beauty of our Cause" Date: 1979-04-12* Occasion: 4th anniversary of the civil war, during period of relative peace	Speech: "The Faithful Cannot Remain Quiet" Date: 1974-09-25** Occasion: Call for unity as nation is on the brink of destruction	Interview: "What does Peace Mean?" Date: 1977-10# Occasion: Walid Jumblatt ascends to the PSP leadership after his father's assassination, period of reconstruction	Interview: "A National Accord" Date: 1978-02-06** Occasion: Delivered in a relatively peaceful period, regarded at the time as the end of the war
2: Delivered just before a major act/event of violence	Speech: "The Enemy Within" Date: 1980* Occasion: Prior to the 'unification of the gun'	Speech: "Announcement of Amal" Date: 1975-07-06** Occasion: Musa al-Sadr announces the existence of his militia forces	Speech: "The Final Hour is Approaching" Date: 1983-08-25** Occasion: Call for action against the LF in the mountain. It is 'to be or not to be'	Interview: "An Offer and a Warning to Bashir Gemayel" Date 1981-08-08# Occasion: Announcement of official large-scale mobilisation
3: Articulated in the midst of violent confrontation	Speech: "We All are Zahle" Date: 1980-12-28* Occasion: In midst of Syrian attacks on majority Christian town Zahle	Speech: "The south is Suffering" Date: 1978-06-30** Occasion: In reference to the continued hardship of the south and the need for continued resistance	Interview: "The Battle is Not over Yet" Date: 1983-09-10++ Occasion: Interview during tour through the Chouf Mountain admits 'Mountain War'	Speech: "We Choose to Fight" Date: 1978-04-15** Occasion: Speech given at festival to commemorate martyrs while urging for continuation of fighting
4: Delivered with the aim of calling for unity in the face of bigger dangers	Speech: "Muslims, Last Change to Join Us" Date: 1982-03-21* Occasion: Appeal to Muslims to Join Ranks and stand united against Syria	Speech: "We want one Lebanon" Date: 1976-04-17** Occasion: Musa al-Sadr calls for unity to not become another Israel (e.g. partition)	Interview: "Weapons will be the arbitrator if Dialogue fails" Date: 28-09-1983+ Occasion: Discussion on possible ceasefire to face external threats	Interview: "A call for National Unity" Date: 1982-07-20++ Occasion: Call for unity in the face of Israeli invasion

*	Translated from Arabic by author Rani Geha
**	Translated from Arabic by RA Ihsane Malass
+	Translated from Arabic by *FBIS*
++	Translated from French by *FBIS*
#	In English (*FBIS*)

3.2. Scoring Considerations

The research material is constituted of archival material in the format of (translated) speeches/interviews. There are at least three deliberations that have surfaced in the literature

questioning the validity of IC scores derived from these forms of data sources, including concerns about possible ghostwriters, impression management and translation. Their weight will be discussed in subsequent order.

Firstly, when scoring archival material, the question naturally arises whether a researcher is scoring the complexity of the identified source or that of a professional writer. In a review article, Suedfeld references several studies that suggest that there is no reason for concern (Suedfeld 2010, 1677–78). Ballard, for example, found no difference in mean IC scores between spontaneous and prepared speeches delivered by Canadian Prime Ministers (Ballard 1983, 126–27).[3] The same is valid for comparisons between those artefacts that were certainly articulated by the designated leader and those artefacts that were possibly or undeniably produced by ghostwriters (Suedfeld 2010, 1678). These observations can be explained through several reasons. Leaders presumably do not accept the work of speechwriters unless the complexity of their own thinking is reflected in writing. Alternatively, leaders might make adjustments in order to establish coherence with their own thoughts (Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Streufert 1992, 339). Lastly, ghostwriters might be selected on the basis of their compatibility in complexity of thinking.

Secondly, the content of speeches can consciously be manipulated, facts can be misrepresented, and emotions can be appealed to. This has become particularly apparent in the 'post-truth' era (d'Ancona 2017). However, the phenomenon is not new, also during the Lebanese civil war parties warned against lies and conspiracy theories. For example, in 1982, following the assassination of Bashir Gemayel, the Kataeb warned against conflicting news sources (*Al-Amal,* 1982-09-19). Similarly, in 1983, the Permanent Bureau for Druze Institutions started a campaign against 'Rumours and Lies" (*Permanent Bureau for Druze Institutions*, 1983-08-06). This form of news manipulation, however, is less likely to affect the structure of speech (Suedfeld 2010, 1679). Even though the rhetoric of a message might deny any intention of war, the same statement might reveal a pattern of IC reduction, predicting the likelihood of violence to ensue (Suedfeld 2010, 1669). IC researchers have as such been able to predict surprise attacks. In other words, impression management has limited effect on complexity scores.

Thirdly, the majority of the speeches were delivered in Arabic, some in French and a few in English (see table 1). Where necessary, speeches were translated into English, so that all data could be understood and treated equally by IC-scorers. This might elicit questions of whether translation effects the scoring of material. Previous research has nevertheless shown that scores of English translations do not significantly differ from the scores assigned to the same passage in the original language (Suedfeld, Tetlock, and Streufert 1992, 393–400).

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[3] This also suggests that spontaneous interviews and prepared speeches can be treated equally.

<u>3.3. Scoring Practise</u>

The basic unit for any IC score is the paragraph, which captures an 'idea-chunk'. With the exception of quotes, satire, sarcasm, clichés, definitions and purely factual descriptions, the IC scoring system can be applied to almost any verbal (written or transcribed) material. The first step of IC research entails the identification of 'scorable units'; for each speech each identifiable 'idea-chunk' will be selected and organised for coding. For the purpose of later cross-reference, 'idea-chunks' were additionally labelled religious or non-religious depending on possible references to religious imagery (e.g. references to God, prophets, saints, religious ideas/concepts, religious community, the Bible or the Quran).

Assessing IC is difficult, as it requires the informed judgement and interpretation of trained coders. To regulate research endeavours, scorers use a detailed 18-page manual (see Baker-Brown et al. 1992). The manual includes lists of 'critical indicators', which are identifiable structures of an argument that warrant particular scores. The identification of the critical indicators can help in assigning scores. Additionally, several 'content flags' are outlined in the manual, which serve as supplementary guides for scorers. Content flags are words that are suggestive of certain scores (e.g. *always, impossible, convinced* for an IC-score of 1; *however, maybe, sometimes* for an IC-score of 2-3; or *mutual(ity), interdependence, compromise* for an IC score of 4>).

Scorer reliability was calculated between two scorers working with overlapping portions of the material. Firstly, a batch of random paragraph was selected and scored independently by both the researcher and the second-coder.[4] Scores were discussed in detail until both scorers felt enough agreement and understanding was reached. The researcher subsequently scored all 249 'idea-chunks' in the dataset. The second coder scored a portion of this set, while scores were measured against the scores of the researcher. In accordance with the manual, to achieve inter-coder reliability, kappa scores[5] should be above .50 and were calculated to be .58 with a significance level of <.00001. This meets the requirements for scores to be accepted as correct. Finally, by means of SPSS, agreed scores were analysed for differences across the speakers, time settings and domains identified earlier.

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[4] The second-coder, José Liht, has been trained by Peter Suedfeld, the founding father of IC, and has over two decades of coding-experience. Liht is part of the IC Thinking Intervention Science Research Group at the Department of Psychology at the University of Cambridge (https://icthinking.org/publications).

[5] Cohen's kappa coefficient is a statistic that measures inter-rater agreement for qualitative items. It is commonly regarded as a more robust measure than simple calculations on agreement percentages, as kappa takes the possibility of random agreement into account.

4. Results

First, the mean complexity scores of speakers were assessed and subsequently compared, showing no significant differences between militia leaders.

Figure 1
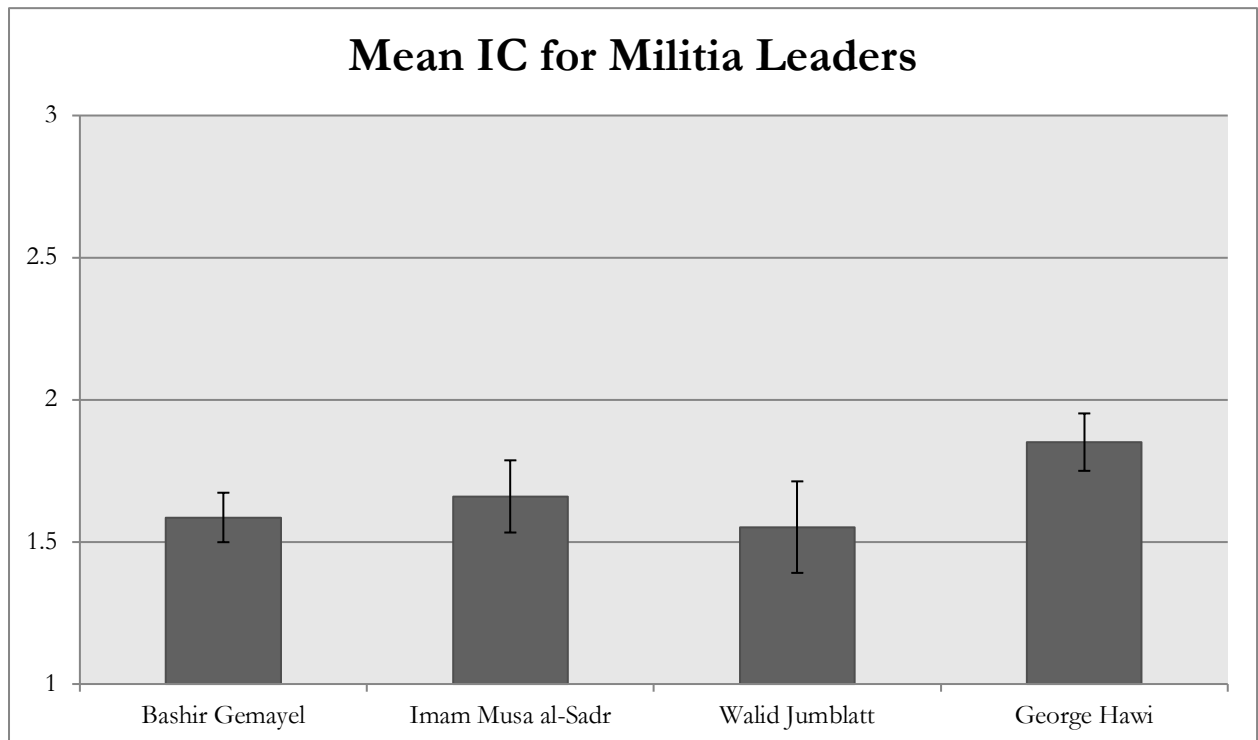
Second, IC mean scores were calculated across time settings (in which 1 represents relative peace, 2 a time setting just prior to violent confrontation, 3 a speech delivered during violent confrontation, and 4 a speech addressed with the aim of calling for internal unity in order to face external danger) (see table 1). Figure 2 shows a statistically significant reduction in mean complexity score from time setting 1 to 2 ($p < .0001$) and from time settings 1 to 3 ($p < .0001$). The figure also records a significant increase in mean complexity scores from time setting 2 to 4 ($p < .002$) and from time setting 3 to 4 ($p < .0001$). Time setting 1 is significantly higher compared to time setting 4 ($p < .001$), while time setting 2 and 3 do not differ significantly.

Figure 2

Mean IC for Time Setting
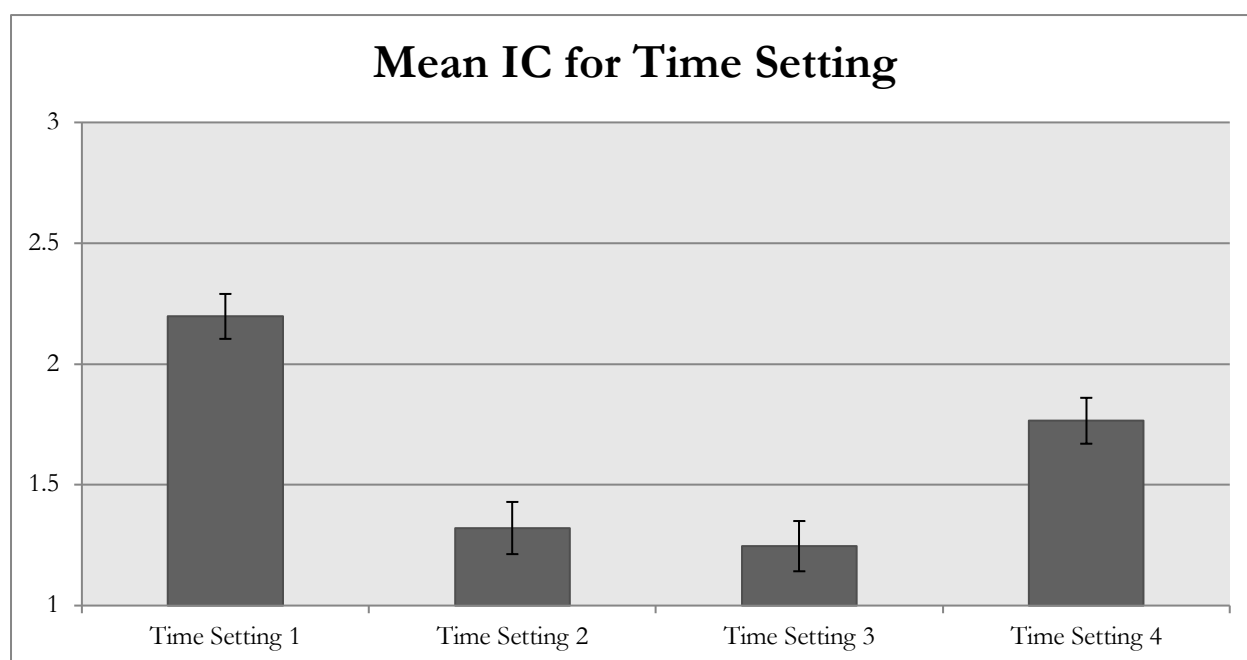
Mean levels of IC were also calculated per speaker in each of the four different time settings (see table 2).

Table 2

Speaker	Time Setting	Mean IC	Std. Err.
Bashir Gemayel	1	1.98	.12
	2	1.09	.23
	3	1.09	.16
	4	1.62	.15
Imam Musa al-Sadr	1	1.92	.22
	2	1.11	.25
	3	1.33	.25
	4	1.94	.18
Walid Jumblatt	1	2.67	.31
	2	1.00	.31
	3	1.10	.24
	4	1.71	.29
George Hawi	1	2.92	.21
	2	1.56	.15
	3	1.50	.19
	4	1.83	.18

On this individual level, the recorded drop from time setting 1 to time setting 2 was significant for Bashir Gemayel ($p < .001$), Walid Jumblatt ($p < .0001$) and George Hawi ($p < .0001$), but not for Imam Musa al-Sadr ($p < .017$). The drop from time setting 1 to time setting 3 was significant for Bashir Gemayel ($p < .0001$), Walid Jumblatt ($p < .0001$) and George Hawi ($p < .0001$), but again not for Imam Musa al-Sadr ($p < .083$). The rise from time setting 2 and 3 towards 4 was measurable but not significant, which holds for all militia leaders. Lastly, the drop in complexity from time setting 1 to time setting 4 was significant for George Hawi ($p < .0001$), but not for the other speakers. All speakers, however, showed a similar pattern of mean IC fluctuation across the different time settings, as the lines in figure 3 demonstrate.

Figure 3

Mean IC for Militia Leaders across Time Settings
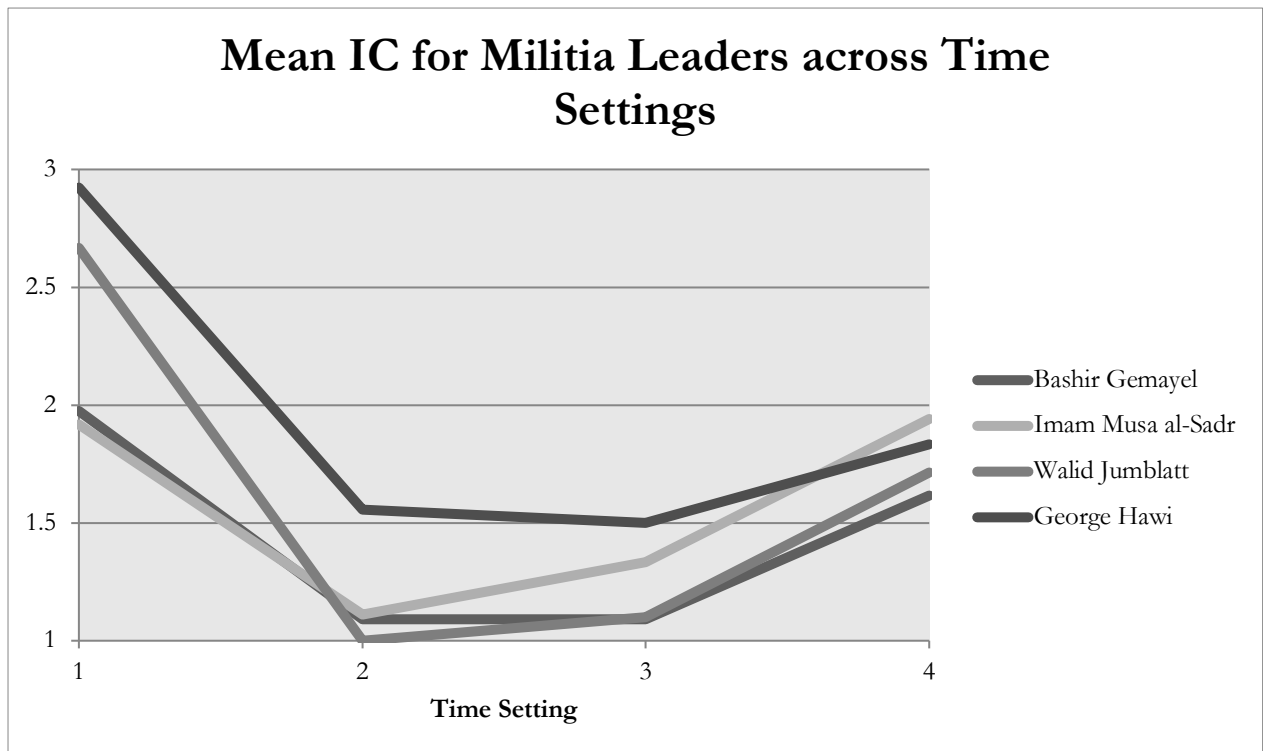
In the dataset 10.84 percent of the coded 'idea-chunks' had religious connotations. Across the speakers, those 'idea-chunks' labelled religious (n=27) are not significantly different in complexity from those 'idea-chunks' labelled non-religious (n=222). In fact, as figure 4 shows, the differences in content are near identical in structural complexity.

Figure 4

Mean IC for Religious versus Non-Religious Rhetoric
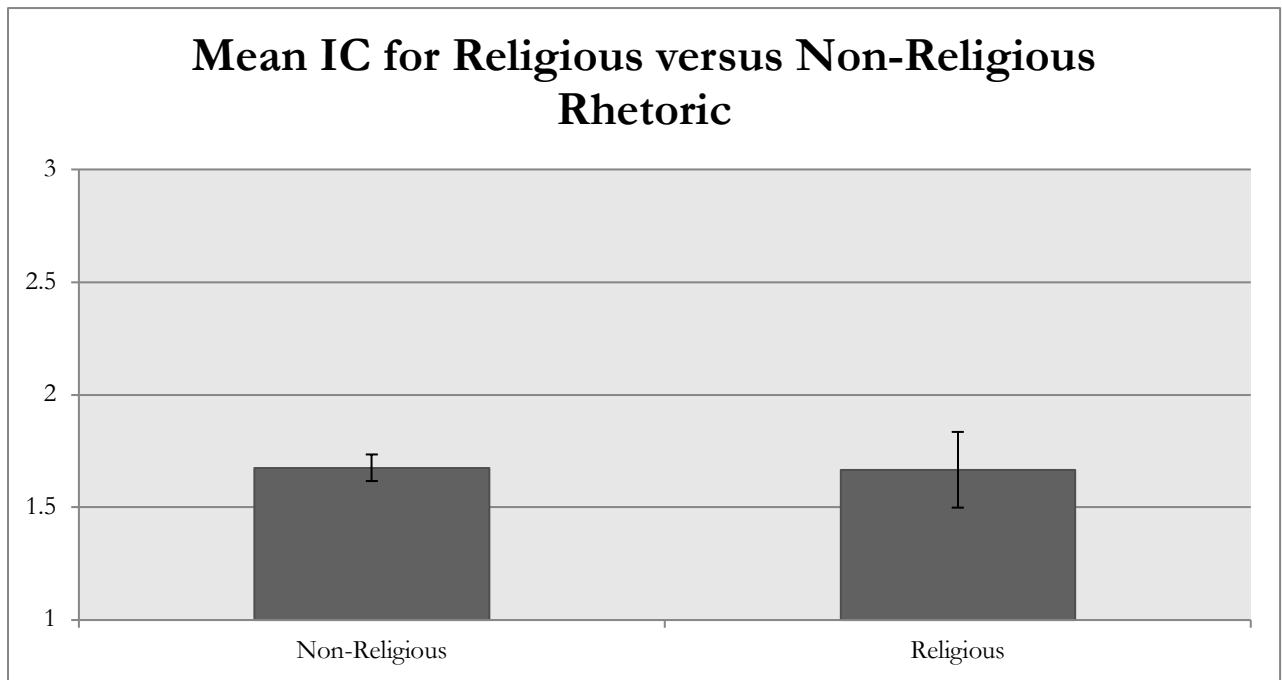
It is important to note that most religiously labelled 'idea-chunks' were clustered in the speaker Imam Musa al-Sadr. Analysis of his individual scores shows that the 'idea-chunks' labelled non-religious were not significantly different in mean IC score compared to those 'idea-chunks' labelled religious (see table 3).

Table 3

Idea-Chunks Imam Musa al-Sadr	Observations	Mean IC	Std. Err.
Non-Religious	25	1.60	.16
Religious	22	1.73	.22

Although various authors have shown that IC cannot be manipulated through impression management, as a means of caution, the mean IC score for both speeches and interviews were calculated and compared. Although differences between the means of communication could be observed, these were not significant, as figure 5 shows:

Figure 5

Mean IC for Interviews and Speeches
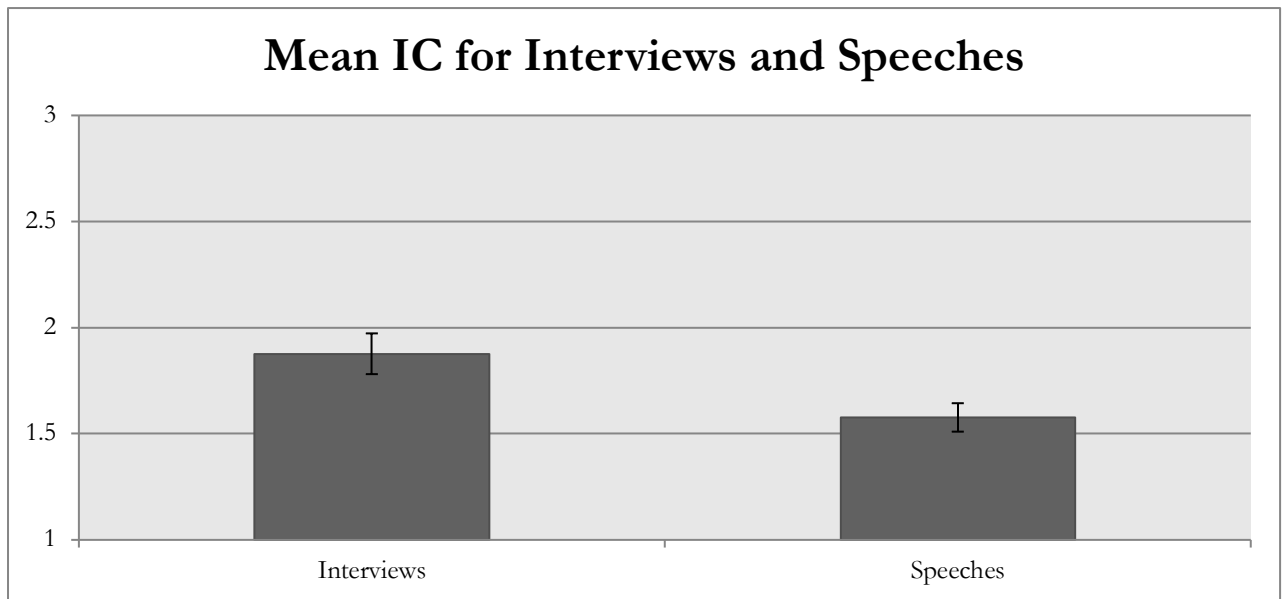
5. Discussion

The results demonstrate several aspects of relevance in which IC can shed light on the role of religion in social mobilisation, as measured against the variables of religious versus non-religious rhetoric and as compared to sectarian demographics and mixed support bases. Six of these results will be discussed below.

To begin with, in line with earlier IC studies, the communications of militia leaders provided reliable predictors of the start and intensification of violent confrontation. Whereas earlier studies typically focussed on the sole onset of conflict, this study was able to replicate findings in the setting of prolonged civil war, venturing into a new territory for IC research. The case of the Lebanese civil war thereby demonstrated that hostile confrontations were preceded by declines in the levels of complexity exhibited by militia leaders. Before and after violent incursions, all four leaders exhibited higher levels of complexity, even though the status of war had not changed. In other words, during the 15-year-long civil war, IC fluctuations can help elucidate episodes of violent mobilisation, confrontation and de-escalation. Because of the historical nature of this study, IC measures provide reflective rather than predictive observations. Results, however, strengthen confidence for future research to explore IC fluctuations in on-going conflict settings. Such insights could inform strategies for security, negotiation and settlement; offering valuable tools for security and peace studies.

Second, the four leaders assessed in this study did not show significant differences in mean IC score. The speeches of the religious leader delivered in more overtly religious rhetoric (Imam Musa al-Sadr), the interviews and speeches spoken by militia leaders with a single dominant

sectarian support base (Bashir Gemayel and Walid Jumblatt), and the communications of the Communist leader with a mixed support base (George Hawi) did not differ significantly in complexity levels (although Hawi had slightly higher mean scores). This is an interesting finding in itself, as it challenges theories and narratives that argue that religious groups (whether defined by their rhetoric or constituency) talk in manners that are more socially divisive, less complex in argument structure and/or more prone to mobilise towards violence compared to secular or non-religious counterparts (Hick 1987; Laqueur 1999; Marvin and Ingle 1999; McCutcheon 2000; Cook 2003; Juergensmeyer 2003; Stern 2004; Sageman 2004). Depictions of social divisiveness and complexity of argumentation are directly assessed through the method of IC coding, while mobilisation towards violence can be indirectly inferred, as they were double-checked against historical events (see table 1).

Thirdly, all speakers displayed similar and significant fluctuations in complexity, in which speeches/interviews delivered in the time settings characterised by relative peace (time setting 1) or time settings in which the speaker called for unity among different Lebanese groups (time setting 4) contained higher levels of complexity compared to those time settings distinguished by approaching unrest (time setting 2) or outright violence (time setting 3). These fluctuations can partly be explained as emotional adaptations. Zooming in on the lower scores, as exhibited in time setting 2 and 3, the prospect of or engagement in violence is likely to bring existential concerns to the surface, making the resort to more rigid depictions of reality, alarmist rationales for mobilisation and dehumanising images of adversaries more appealing (all indicators of low IC). Emotionally speaking, it is easier to engage in violent activity against the all-bad compared to the partially-bad.

For example, in time setting 2, Imam Musa al-Sadr announced the existence of Amal, after an explosion at one of the militia's secret training grounds, killing twenty-seven militants (Siklawi 2012, 7). He started the subsequent announcement of his militia with a Quranic verse, referencing the literal immortality of the martyred (remember that quotes cannot be coded for complexity). Paraphrasing the Quran, while taking its lessons to the case of Lebanon, the Imam continues:

> This is a red bouquet of youth and redemption roses [referring to the recent martyrs]. They are the pioneers of the Lebanese resistance groups [Amal] who answered the cries of the wounded homeland, which Israel continues to attack from every part and by all means (IC = 1)

This is a typical example of a low IC 'idea-chunk'. Firstly, the statement dichotomises the social world, in which the pioneers of Lebanese resistance are contrasted against the aggressive forces of

the Israeli army. Secondly, the description of the Israelis revolves around one dominant viewpoint, with no room for ambiguity. "They attack from *every* part and by *all* means". The content flags 'every' and 'all' are indicative of a score of 1. The Imam continues his speech with an elaboration on how martyrs will be blessed by God. How God alone controls life and death. And how the martyred militants had been following "the path of Imam Hussein". The collection of rigid social identifications and clear rationales for action throughout the speech cumulate to low complexity structures, providing listeners with a vibrant vision on the social world and a sense of control and meaning in an uncertain environment.

A similar level of low complexity is echoed in the second recorded speech by Walid Jumblatt, in which he called upon his people to defend the Mountain against Christian aggression:

> The land is yours and you are part of its history, your children are your future, your existence and your honourable residence on this land is final, you must push back enemies and protect it with sacrifice, which you have already done all year (IC = 1)

Again, the in-group – whose social identity is tracked through time – is pitted against an elusive enemy. The black-and-white diagnosis of the situation leaves little room for doubt; everyone knows what is needed and expected next. Walid Jumblatt ends his speech with an encouragement for his people: "You are strong with your unity and your strategism and your nationalism, strong in your alliances and your friendships, strong in your right to life". With these words he called upon the Druze community to come together in unity, defending their historical land. Walid thus positions himself as a secular leader, drawing upon a religiously delineated sect, while evading religious narratives.

Low IC messages can tie groups together into cohesive wholes and protect against existential anxieties (Delehanty 2018, 250). They are divisive in nature and provide strong rationales for mobilisation, whether religious or non-religious in framing. Nuances and details are left behind, as black-and-white dichotomies and prescriptive generalisations are taking the upper hand. Over 300 studies in IC research have demonstrated that sudden drops in IC can predict the upsurge of violence (Suedfeld 2010, 1669). This study indeed replicates these long-standing findings. Both the Imam's and Walid's speech were followed by violent incursions (see also table 1). Imam Musa al-Sadr's announcement of the Amal militia movement was followed by the group's violent involvement in the war, while Walid Jumblatt's speech signalled the nearing end of a failing dialogue with the LF and the start of the Mountain War (for more on these historical events see chapter 5). A similar pattern was observed for the other two speakers. Bashir Gemayel's second speech was

followed by the violent crackdown within his own party, the so-called 'unification of the gun'; while Hawi' second speech was followed by a large-scale confrontation with the LF. Speeches delivered in time setting 3 were recorded during violent confrontation and displayed similar low IC structures.

Conversely, the complexity of argumentation structures was higher when social and existential tensions were less pressing (time setting 1) and when leaders consciously tried to build bridges across the Lebanese factions (time setting 4). It is interesting to note, however, that time setting 4 produced relatively high IC scores, even though calls for mobilisation did not cease. What sets time setting 4 apart is that militia leaders called for unity and compromise across Lebanese elements to face external threats (e.g. Syria or Israel). To achieve alliances between the Lebanese militias, the different militia leaders resorted to higher complexity argumentation, seeking for compromises and common ground. When faced with the Israeli invasion, for example, George Hawi called for unity among the Lebanese, even expressing a willingness to negotiate with their former prime opponent:

> It seems possible to reach a national accord on the basis of negotiations between the [Lebanese] Nationalist Movement and the Phalangist Party [Kataeb], which would pave the way for broader negotiations involving all the country's religious factions (IC = 2)

The word 'possible' signifies a way out of black-and-white thinking, while 'pave the way' indicates an emerging perspective of an alternative future. Similarly, Bashir Gemayel called upon Lebanese Muslims to join ranks with the LF in an effort to face the Syrian invader:

> To our Muslim partner in the Lebanese life. In clarity, we reiterate our invitation to him, and we renew our call to him, to be on our side. And if he cannot do so openly, and if he cannot do so clearly, and if he cannot do so because the occupations over his head in his own home, we understand this reality. And he has to know and he has to trust that any decision we are taking, we are taking it in our name and in his name. We are ready to tell him about it. And we are ready to reach an understanding with him about it. So we can finally get rid of these occupations which are suffocating any possibility of an honest voice (IC = 2)

In this excerpt Bashir Gemayel differentiates between some of the layers of social reality. He acknowledges that even if his former opponent, the Lebanese Muslims, would want to change

alliance, this might be difficult for them to express in the open. Although Gemayel expresses to seek common ground between the Lebanese factions, this ambition seems to be driven by his own ideals. Together, this warrants an IC score of 2, as differentiation is emerging rather than fully developed.

The 'idea-chunks' expressed in time setting 4 resulted in higher scores compared to time setting 2 and 3, in which calls for mobilisation and violent confrontation were much more rigid and univocal. However, time setting 4 is still significantly lower compared to time setting 1, in which no calls for mobilisation were voiced. Moreover, although time setting 1 was not followed by violent episodes, time setting 4 was followed by violence though not necessarily in the format as discussed in the speeches (e.g. in the case of Bashir Gemayel's fourth speech, parts of his Christian community did mobilise, however, Muslims did not join the ranks of the LF nor did they enter in an official alliance with them).

Fourthly, it is compelling that all speakers showed this pattern of IC fluctuations across time settings at a similar level of mean complexity. None of the speakers displayed the pattern at a significantly higher or lower level compared to other speakers. This indicates that time setting is a stronger predictor of violent mobilisation, engagement and disengagement compared to possible identity markers (e.g. religious or non-religious) or constituency compositions (e.g. is the support base made up out of a single or multiple sectarian base). This quantitative pattern confirms the qualitative claim, put forward by Barbato, De Franco and Le Normand (2012, 54), that religious and secular discourses alike have the potential to formulate messages for violent mobilisation in certain contexts.

Even more noteworthy, on an individual level, the pattern across time settings is measurable but not significant for Imam Musa al-Sadr (for the other three speakers it is measurable and significant). In other words, the leader who uses most explicit forms of religious language and has one of the most monolithic constituencies shows the least fluctuation in complexity scores across time settings. This not only challenges the idea that religion (here narrowly measured through language usage or support base) is more divisive, less complex and a stronger mobiliser compared to its non-religious counterparts, it demonstrates an opposing trend. The speaker that employs most explicit religious narratives demonstrates the most stable IC levels across time settings. In other words, in this particular instance, religion could be regarded as a less plastic/impressionable/manipulatable trait than the non-religious discourses.

Nevertheless, as this was only measured for the speaker Imam Musa al-Sadr, generalisations cannot be assumed. Instead, I encourage researchers to expand upon this observation. For example, could the relatively stable levels of complexity scores be due to the Imam's long years of

secular and religious education?[6] Are the relatively stable levels unique to Imam Musa al-Sadr, or can we detect similar patterns across other Shiite Imams with similar levels of education? And how do such observations measure against other speakers and ideologies?

Fifthly, the reflection that religious rhetoric is near identical to non-religious rhetoric in terms of argumentation complexity – whether in times of relative rest or full-blown unrest - is insightful. Although 'god-terms' or 'transcendent signifiers' (Allen and Allen 2016, 559) are invoked as cognitive mobilisers (e.g. by making reference to Karbala[7] or by invoking the image of the road to Golgotha[8]), these motivating images of mobilisation do not differ in complexity compared to non-religious cognitive mobilisers (e.g. by invoking the image of an approaching all-destructive defeat by external forces[9] or by raising the existential philosophical state of 'to be or not to be'[10]). Consequently, we can dismiss the idea that religious imageries are less complex and therefore more mobilising compared to non-religious imageries. Across the militias, the presentation of ideas by their leaders is similar in terms of complexity, while we can historically point out that all four groups mobilised and engaged in violent confrontation.

Moreover, a comparative analysis within the speaker Imam Musa al-Sadr revealed that those 'idea-chunks' characterised by religious rhetoric and symbolism did not differ in mean complexity compared to those 'idea-chunks' labelled non-religious. Although the number of observations (religious versus non-religious) was relatively equally distributed, complexity did not fluctuate across the contents. This again suggests that the inclusion or exclusion of religious speech does not affect the complexity in which ideas are presented.

To further expand upon these observations, one more speech, delivered by Bashir Gemayel, was later included for IC analysis. The initial four selected speeches of Bashir Gemayel, containing some but few religious 'idea-chunks', were typical for the leader's style of expression. However, on 24 September 1982, just two hours before his assassination, the newly elected President delivered the most Christian speech of his life at the Monastery of the Cross (*Deir El*

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[6] Shiite Imams typically undergo years of education (far more compared to Sunni clerics) before assuming a role in the public realm. Imam Musa al-Sadr, for example, completed a full secular education alongside seminary studies. He completed a degree in Islamic Jurisprudence and Political Science at Teheran University, studied Theology and Islamic Philosophy at Qom and completed another 4 years worth of religious education at Najaf.

[7] As Imam Musa al-Sadr did when he announced the birth of Amal (recorded in his speech in time setting 2).

[8] As Bashir Gemayel did when he described the cause of his militia (recorded in his speech in time setting 1).

[9] As George Hawi did when he described the dangers of the Israeli invasion (recorded in his speech in time setting 3).

[10] As Walid Jumblatt did when he outlined the threat of the Christian forces marching into the mountain (recorded in his speech in time setting 2).

Salib). In this extraordinary speech Bashir Gemayel spoke about bearing witness to Christianity, Christian pride, Political Maronism, refusing to step *ishmil*, and rejecting a *dhimmi* status in Lebanon (for complete speech see R. Geha 2009). According to Bashir, he and his militia movement had been struggling to maintain a free and empowered status as Christians in Lebanon, a community he regarded to be better than others:

> Nobody is smarter than us [the Christians]. Nobody is better than us. Nobody defended his country more than we defended ours. No civilization is stronger than our civilization, for it to come and try to impose it on us and to say that it knows better than us, and to say that he is civilizing the culture of camels and Bedouins, and we have no camels. We have 6000 years of civilization, and we are proud of these 6000 years of civilization, and we know what to do to preserve it (IC = 1)

It would be a mistake to think, however, that all of the idea-chunks that contained religious references were necessarily low in IC. Bashir, who had recently retired from the LF in preparation to become President of Lebanon, differentiated between the Christians of Lebanon and other communities, while seeking overarching goals and objectives:

> It is up to the state today to defend security, and defend the freedom of every Lebanese citizen. And we [the Christians] are Lebanese citizens, and we are a principle part of the Lebanese citizens. We have our security and our freedoms as a people, but we also have our security and our freedom as a community. It is the duty of the Lebanese state and the President of the Republic of Lebanon to protect this security and this freedom, be it for the citizens [of the Lebanese state] or for the [sectarian] communities that are in this country (IC = 3)

The mean IC score of those idea-chunks that were clothed in religious terminology (1,44) were statistically not different to the mean IC score of idea-chunks that did not contain references to religious symbolism, community or scripture (1,59). In other words, just like the Imam Musa al-Sadr's scores, the religious speech of Bashir Gemayel did not differ in complexity from his non-religious speeches and ideas.

Table 4

Idea-Chunks Bashir Gemayel	Observations	Mean IC	Std. Err.
Non-Religious	95	1.59	.07
Religious	25	1.44	.14

6. Conclusion

This chapter provided a new and cutting-edge entrance to the study of religious versus non-religious speech in social mobilisation processes. The psychometric of IC deconstructed language by looking at the latent power that lies underneath speech constructs. Rather than assessing the specifics of the *contents* employed in speeches of militia leaders, it steered attention to the *structural* representation of religious and non-religious rhetoric. Whereas, the content of ideas might shed light on the *direction* of behaviour, structure will enlighten the likelihood of the *activation* of behaviour. The spoken words of leaders can thereby be appreciated in connection to the mobilising performance of the led. The led were additionally assessed in their demographic composition. As a consequence, the study of IC allows for a deepening of knowledge, adding to the SMT-oriented analyses of the rest of this thesis.

The results reaffirm that IC is domain-specific rather than content-specific. The content of an idea does not determine complexity (as any idea can be expressed at any level of complexity), but the domain or setting in which an idea is expressed does have an effect on complexity (e.g. peace versus war). This study has quantitatively shown that neither religious narratives nor certain sectarian groups can inherently be condemned as more divisive, less rational, or as stronger mobilisers for violence compared to non-religious narratives or militias consisting of mixed support bases. In fact, both religious and non-religious ideas were used for violent as well as non-violent mobilisation purposes, making a certain 'ambivalence' (Appleby 1999) not specific to religion, but inherent to both religious and non-religious groups and narratives (see also Barbato, Franco, and Normand 2012, 58).

Consequently, this study suggests that a detailed contextualisation of the setting in which ideas are expressed is more valuable in explaining violent mobilisation. Heightened social tensions, existential anxieties, perceived threats to values, identities or life styles all affect the complexity in which the world is viewed, described and communicated. It is here that SMT has a role to play. Sudden drops in IC can *predict* the upsurge of violence, while contextualisation with the help of SMT can *explain* the upsurge of violence. All in all, the proposed approach offers novel insight into

the role of religion in social mobilisation, as perceived from the perspective of the militia leader.

As this is a small n-study, external validity could be increased by including more cases (e.g. more speakers and speeches) and more diverse environments (e.g. expanding beyond the Lebanese case study). However, such endeavour would require significant funds, as the study of IC is time and labour intensive. Still another aspect that could benefit from further exploration is the comparison between religious and non-religious 'idea-chunks'. The outlined dataset contained 10 percent of religious 'idea-chunks' (excluding the added Bashir Gemayel speech), while most of them were clustered in the speaker Imam Musa al-Sadr. To improve reliability and generalizability an expansion of the dataset would be welcomed.

In the next two chapters, the role of religion in the mobilisation towards violence will be assessed from the perspective of militants, who fought for the militias and militia leaders described in the previous chapters. Although individual behaviours and emotions emerge under conditions already existing – transmitted from the past, imposed by political structures and framed by leaders – social agents also have powers to make their own history (cf. Marx 1852, 15). While remaining attentive to the relational dynamics of the macro- and meso-levels, the agentic forces of militants will stand central in the next two chapters.

MILITANTS

So far, we have looked at the structures in which militia movements evolved and at the manners in which militia leaders instrumentalised and re-imagined religion for social mobilisation purposes. It is important to note, however, that militants do not follow militia movements and their leaders "blindly and stupidly" (Goodwin and Jasper 2009, 5). Neither society nor organisation exist independent from human activity. Although social practise, knowledge and affection are partially imposed, they are also consciously learned and wilfully exercised, as social agents are endowed with the cognitive ability to monitor themselves in relation to their (social) environment (Archer 2003, 104–5). This deliberative capacity to act independently includes the power to make rational choices, but is also demonstrated in emotional and personal involvement. Militants' decisions, deviations and defections are part of militia movements' social reality.

It is exactly the notion of agency that is frequently understated in SMT, reproducing a structural bias in the field (Goodwin and Jasper 1999, 28). When studying 'religious violence' in specific, the lack of systematic engagement with the militants that make up the militia movement risks the additional oversight of seeing religion only as a mobilising tool, forfeiting analysis on affective attachments. This chapter will focus on the militants' perception of the role of religion in their (continued) mobilisation. Public memories of Lebanese militiamen reviving the strives of the civil war are rare (Haugbolle 2010, 134). Their testimonies, however, are crucial for understanding the development of the mobilisation towards violence, because they expose how difficult it was to exist and subsist in wartime Lebanon. Personal narratives disclose part of the militant's emotional world that lay underneath the rationale of militias and the objectives of its leaders. Rather than assuming that these individual narratives match abstract histories of group consciousness, they inevitably confront us with the fact that people are always both subjects and objects of social processes (cf. Berger and Luckmann 1966, 194–200), being both the cause and result of protracted war.

In the following two chapters the voices of militiamen and women will stand central. The first chapter, engaging with the testimonies of militants affiliated with the PSP and the Amal movement, is focussed on the role of religion in identity formation processes, crafting possible socially divisive visions of the 'us' and the 'them'. The second chapter, delving deeper into the emotional and intimate worlds of militants, will engage with the testimonies of militants affiliated with the Kataeb party (who mostly fought under the umbrella of the LF) and the LCP, talking about the existential anxieties that resulted from the proximity of death. This is an important enquiry, as religion is frequently mentioned as a mechanism that can help overcome the fear of death, thereby making perpetrators of 'religious violence' more unconstrained and indiscriminate in their use of violence compared to secular militants (Ranstorp 1996, 54)

Social identity and existential anxiety are key elements of subjective reality and will be evaluated in dialectical relation with each other and society (Berger and Luckmann 1966, 194). The choice to spread the four militia movements over two chapters was guided by the desire to provide in-depth accounts of militant's life stories. However, both chapters contain considerable overlap in theme and focus. The first section of each chapter contains reflections on the religious symbols, myths and practises employed by militants, while the second section of both chapters zooms in on the crossroad towards sacrifice and self-sacrifice. This mirror set-up enables a general conclusion at the end of the second chapter, bringing the four militia movements back into conversation.

The testimonies presented in the next two chapters compose but a small part of the conducted interviews. I believe, nevertheless, that the chosen selection represents both important moments in time as well as overall patterns that were echoed within and across the militias (answering to J. Z. Smith 1982, xxi). Within this perspective, both lower- as well as middle- and higher-ranking militants (and occasionally leaders) will be presented. To demonstrate the interconnectedness of testimonies, other interviews will be referenced for contextualisation. Together they lay bare the different fragments in which religion played a role in social identification and emotional cooping in a society at war.

8.

MILITANTS: **Social Identity formation in Wartime Lebanon**

"We all became extremists in the perception of our identity"

- (interview Amira Radwan)

1. Finding Belonging in a World at War

The irony of social movements is that to achieve their aims of social change, movements often produce rhetorical packages and identification mechanisms that explain their claims and grounding within existing, shared and culturally recognisable boundaries (R. H. Williams 2002, 247–48; Gongaware 2011, 39). This ironic fact might help explain why so many militia movements in Lebanon have been based in religious communities or have used religious symbols and myths to cement in-group identifications. In this chapter, I will focus on religion as a cultural resource for militia movement identification as experienced by fighters in the PSP and the Amal movement. These two movements provide examples of how religious narratives can be adopted to strengthen in-group cohesion and social identity admits the violence of civil war. Simultaneously, this section will demonstrate how these religious identity markers continued to be mixed with non-religious considerations and ambitions.

The chapter finds its theoretical base in the SMT literature on social identity (e.g. Polletta

and Jasper 2001; Robnett 2002; Steward, Shriver, and Chasteen 2002; Stryker, Owens, and White 2000), strengthened by the lessons of social psychology (e.g. Tajfel 1974; Turner 1981; Ashmore, Jussim, and Wilder 2001) and the psychology of religion (e.g. Hogg, Adelman, and Blagg 2010; Herriot 2007; Loewenthal 2000), pushing forward a multi-levelled analysis and integration of micro-, meso- and macro-dynamics. Through social identity, social actors recognise themselves – and are recognised by others – as part of larger groups, while developing emotional attachments to in- and inter-group identifications (Melucci 1989; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001). Social identities are important for this research, in so far as their fluctuating constructions direct affection and guide action (Herriot 2007, 27). As religion can be a sharpener of social identity, this section will study the militant's perspectives on the relation between identity formation and emotional and behavioural dynamics.

The first half of the chapter will explore the merger of political, sectarian and religious markers into the formation of social identification in the PSP militia. The section will show how identity constructions were partially formulated by lower-ranking militants, who made creed part of their lived experiences – a direction not necessarily supported by all of the religious elites. The testimonies of various militants will demonstrate these observations, while they will be evaluated against the backdrop of elite perspectives. In the second half of the chapter, the case of the Amal movement will be discussed, which militia has most frequently been connected to religious narratives that celebrate extreme forms of violent combat, portraying them as central fragments of Shiite identity. This section will critically assess this observation, dissecting both the religious as well as non-religious markers of these narratives. To showcase these reflections, the testimonies of the brothers Akl and Mohammed Hamieh will be explored. Both brothers fought as militants in Amal, witnessing some of the key events that shaped the militia movement in its apparent sectarianization process. In the concluding remarks, the two militia movements will be assessed in relation to their similarities and differences.

2. The Progressive Socialist Party: The Circle of Life

Rabih al-Ali (interview, 2017-06-20, Brih) grew up in Brih, a small village in Mount Lebanon. For generations, Brih as well as other villages in the Chouf region, had been populated by Druze and Christians alike. "Our life was perfect [before the war]. We didn't know about Christian and Druze",[1] said Walid Saab (interview, 2017-06-20, Brih), who hosted us in his home in the center

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[1] Although this sentiment was much repeated in my interviews, it will be critically assessed in this section (see also Hanf 1994).

of Brih. The two Druze-born childhood friends were around eleven years old when the war started. But Rabih says he remembers it like yesterday. The day after the bus massacre, he recalls:

> The teacher was drawing [the Kataeb cedar and] a cross on the blackboard. We [some of the Druze children] used to wear these Palestinian *kaffiyeh*.[2] She asked all the [Christian and Druze] students to come forward to the board and kiss the cross […] I went to the blackboard and I wanted to kiss it. But then instead I ran away […] I didn't go to school the next day

Although they were barely teenagers at the time, the now middle-aged men are still troubled by the experience. Following the incident, Rabih's brother, who was a member of the PSP, talked with the headmaster of the Christian school. The partisan expressions did not cease, Rabih tells me, but they did become less direct. For instance, he felt that his teacher would punish the Druze children disproportionality compared to the Christian students. "I hate this Christian teacher too much", he adds. "She still lives here. I am waiting for her funeral, so I can tell how stupid she is, how mean, how enchanted. They were using their sectarianism and their extremism in the classroom".[3]

The story of these two childhood friends – who would later become brothers in arms in the military branch of the PSP – sets the stage for the unravelling of a region that for decades had lived in relative peace and co-existence (cf. Hanf 2015, 275). It started with small acts in the classroom, explicitly reminding young students that there were differences between the people of the Mountain. Small gestures gradually unfolded unto big pressures. This section seeks to study the changes in social identification in the Mountain, analysed through the experiences of PSP militants. First, I will outline how educational institutions played a role in priming identification questions. Secondly, I will examine how these factors contributed to the dichotomisation of communitarian perspectives and social causes. The discussion will subsequently turn to the delicate balance between religious identifications and political objectives. Lastly, the religious creeds of reincarnation and *maktoub* will be considered in relation to social identification and mobilisation.

In a country with so much youth, it is not surprising that educational institutions were frequently used as avenues for social identification, polarisation and mobilisation. Several interviewees, across the militia movements, mentioned the setting of schools as key sites where

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[2] The *kaffiyeh* is a traditional Middle Eastern headdress. In Lebanon it was seen as a sign of Arabism, but it was also a symbol of Palestinian solidarity. The *kaffiyeh* was in particular worn by fighters of the Leftist forces, including those who fought under the banner of the PSP and the LCP.
[3] The other way around, the wearing of a *kaffiyeh* can be seen as an expression of political orientation, and maybe as an indirect expression of sectarianism.

social categorisations were crafted and membership into parties originated. Ziad Saab (interview, 2017-04-26, 2017-09-14, Beirut), for example, was recruited to the LCP by a teacher at school (his story will be narrated in the next chapter). Similarly, Salwa Saad (interview, 2017-05-29, Shoukh al Gharb), Salam Abou Mjahed (interview, 2017-07-12, Beirut) and Fadi Nasserdinne (interview, 2017-08-01, Beirut) found their path to Communism through educational establishments. The LF leader Assaad Chaftari (interview, 2017-05-06, Beirut) (whose story will also be touched upon in the next chapter) grew up in the centre of Beirut, receiving education in Christian affiliated schools, like the Collège Sacré Coeur and the Jessuit Université Saint Joseph. These educational institutions, attended by an almost exclusive congregation of Christian youth, fed into his ideas about the place, proficiency and prominence of Christians in Lebanon. Other Christian fighters, including Jocelyne Khoueiry (interview, 2017-06-28, Keserwan) and Chahine Fayad (interview, 2017-05-16, Beirut), shared similar school experiences. Within my sample, militants affiliated with the Amal movement were less likely to mention the school as an avenue of identification, recruitment or mobilisation. Arguably this difference can be attributed to the fact that the Amal militia movement was not as well-established in educational infrastructures compared to the PSP, the LF and the LCP (Harik 1994b, 51; Abouchedid, Nasser, and Van Blommestein 2002, 63).

Rabih negatively reflects on his Christian teacher's abuse of sectarianism in the classroom, but Druze affiliated educational institutions were not void of partisan sentiments. Due to a lack of written sources, a remnant survival strategy of a persecuted minority (Harik 1995, 53), the Druze had for long relied on oral traditions, traditions that were preserved and shared by initiated Shaykhs. In 1971, with the support of Kamal Jumblatt, a number of Druze clerics launched a fundraising campaign aimed at establishing, improving and systematising educational services in the Chouf (Rabah 2016, 115). In a detailed study on the Mountain's educational history, Makram Rabah (2016, 115) argues that the institutions and programmes arising from this initiative, reaching an estimated six thousand students, did not include religious instructions, as none of the students had reached the age of adulthood, a prerequisite for religious initiation. Nevertheless, educational content was aimed at forming a sense of Druze collectiveness, for example, through teaching Lebanese history from a Druze perspective (Rabah 2016, 115).

Badri Abou Diab (interview, 2017-06-05, Beirut), who is approximately the same age as Walid and Rabih, grew up in a village just a few miles away from Brih, in Jahiliyat. He recalls how Druze pupils experienced partisanship in the classroom:

Before the war, my village consisted of only Druze. We never saw others. Only the schools were mixed, we had some Christian students […] Before the war, we never heard about

our Druze history. We never heard about what the Christians did. When the war started, we started to look into the history. Being part of my community gave me pride and a sense of security. We don't have to go anywhere else. This was my security zone. We never learned about religion, not in school and not at home. You only learn about these things if you want to be Shaykh. We didn't have this religious element. But when the war started, the big Shaykh started telling stories about the land. We need to keep it. Protect it. We should die for it. Death is cheap for our land […] If you love me, you will die for me [… We wanted to protect] the sectarian community, not the religious one[4]

The distinction between communitarian and religious teachings is important, as reflected in Rabah's study as well as the Badri's testimony. Pupils were taught about Druze history, their attachment to the land of the Chouf, and their communal bonds of solidarity. This process of affective conditioning made certain ideas and practises to become embedded in the psyches of the Druze, or to use Bourdieu's words, they became "internalised as a second nature and so forgotten as history" (Bourdieu 1990: 56). Affective conditioning enables the creation of positive social capital, basic trust, the provision of safety, the reduction of anxiety and uncertainty, and the organisation of social and personal life (cf. Gamson 1991; Benford 2002).[5] The schools thereby became sites in which group solidarity or *'asabiyyah* was crafted (Rabah 2016, 107). Forgotten histories and social identities became valued goods, valued to the extent that they were worth dying for. Or, as the local Shaykh taught Badri: "Death is cheap for our land".

Conversely, these sources reveal how religious teachings were not shared in schools. They were reserved, as tradition dictated, for adults who sought to be initiated into the Druze secretive theology. The social identity that was shaped in educational institutes and with the help of local Sheiks was thus not characterised by religious creed or practise, but by communitarian identifications that found their markers in sectarianism.

In comparing Rabah's study to the testimonies of Badri, Rabih and Walid we can also discover a noteworthy discrepancy. All three interviewees suggest that changes in social identification were primed by the start of the civil war in 1975, while Rabah shows how educational curriculums incorporated sectarian components as early as 1971. The sentiment that 'we did not know of sectarian differences before the war' was much repeated by my interviewees within the PSP as well as across the different militia movements. However, this seems a somewhat

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[4] An almost identical testimony was shared by Amira Salwan, whose story is discussed below.
[5] Sociological studies on religion have had some particularly interesting insights on this topic (e.g. Augoustinos and Walker 1998; Herriot 2007; Savage 2008; Hogg, Adelman, and Blagg 2010; Savage 2011; Davie 2013).

romanticised picture of pre-war Lebanon. Rami Rayes, the current spokesperson of the PSP (interview, 2017-07-21, Beirut), seriously questions the feasibility that people did not know of religious/sectarian differences before the war:

> Because religious communities are strong in Lebanon. They have their institutions, their regulations, even personal status law is confessional. So even if a citizen wants to get out of a sect, he cannot. Legally speaking. He can of course psychologically. But on paper he cannot. If you are a Druze, you are born as a Druze, you go to Druze schools, you marry a Druze girl in a Druze court, you go to a Druze hospital, and then when you die, you are buried in the Druze way[6]

Sectarian differences, as we also saw in chapter 4, are institutionalised and socially real. They dictate both opportunities and constraints for the citizens of the Lebanese state. For example, although inter-sectarian marriages were rising in the 1970s, they were still relatively rare (Salibi 2003, 196; Hanf 2015, 486). In other words, also prior to the war, the Lebanese were likely to marry within their sectarian group. Additionally, a large portion of the Lebanese youth attended schools affiliated with their sectarian group (Abouchedid, Nasser, and Van Blommestein 2002, 61–64). These customs presume knowledge on sectarian belonging. That being said, the stressors of civil war might have made social identification and comparison more explicit and pertinent.

For example, in *I Speak for Lebanon*, Kamal Jumblatt's memoirs that were published posthumously, the feudal leader describes the war as a "historic opportunity" to finally transform "confessional and outdated institutions into truly secular and democratic ones" (Jumblatt 1978, 15). At the same time, he plainly delineates his sectarian identity, cultural heritage and political alliance:

> I am Druze. Our roots in Lebanon lie in Moukhtara, a little village in the Chouf where my family's palace is situated. Here, I am often called 'the lord of Moukhtara', sometimes a little ironically, as if there were some contradiction with my position as a progressive leader (Jumblatt 1978, 26)

The Druze historical and cultural heritage is discussed at great length, while resulting identifications are compared and contrasted to the Maronite identity in the Mountain (Jumblatt 1978, 33–39).

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[6] There are possibilities of changing one's sect to that of another sect, but one cannot be registered outside the framework of sectarian belonging (see page 95).

Jumblatt's descriptions of the 'other' are wrapped in primordial condescension (Jumblatt 1978, 40–63). Readers of *I Speak for Lebanon* are reminded that the Druze and Maronites, the founding communities of Mount Lebanon, have clashed on more than one occasion over the past two centuries. In this perspective, they were indeed depicted as primordial enemies.

Amira Radwan (interview, 2017-09-11, Beirut), a PSP militant from the Aley area, the gateway between Beirut and the Chouf, stresses how important these identities became: "For me Druze identity is my life, my community, my family". Amira joined the PSP as a Scout[7] while she was still in school. After completing her education, in 1980, she became an active member in the militia movement. Together with the other Druze men, she was trained to use weapons. She joined the PSP because she felt she needed to protect her community and herself against the Christian invader who was stealing the land, raping its women and murdering the men. "We went back many years in time, to 1860,[8] because we were thinking about how to protect ourselves and our identity". The historical roots of the civil war of 1860 were thereby re-constructed to fit the perceptions of the present. After Amira's brother and fiancé died in battle, her "normal life ended". "This was it for me. *Ghalas*", she fiercely states while tears fill her eyes.

After a few minutes Amira continues with her account, explaining that the reconstruction of Druze identity underwent two phases. Firstly, there was a top-down education about Druze history that informed about communitarian bonds and geographical attachments. Once this social identification was cemented, a bottom-up push followed:

> We would all start reading. Before there were certain things I could not ask the Shaykh, because I am not a Skeikha.[9] But now, everyone was discussing. We were reading books that before we weren't allowed to read. It was no longer restricted to this group. The whole society became more religious. If you just go for coffee, you will now also discuss religion

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[7] The Scouts are an important element of Lebanese society and many children's childhoods. All of the militia movements discussed in this thesis had their own Scouts. During the civil war, Scouts from all associations played an important role in mobilising children for aid projects, but the Scouts also functioned as a ground for militia recruitment. Salaam Abou Mjahed (interview, 2017-07-12, Beirut), for example, was a member of a Communist affiliated Scout group. In an interview Salaam described how he and his group were sent out to help war victims. He was just 12 years old. The bloody memories stirred an internal desire to be able to provide in his own protection, causing him to join the LCP. Fadi Graizi (interview, 2017-08-29, Beirut), who was part of a PSP affiliated Scout group, remembered his recruitment as follows: "In the summer of 1976 I joined the Scouts camp. In the Scouts there were recruiters, who saw me and saw my passion, and they asked me to join an officer college, a higher ranked training. These recruiters in the Scouts were looking for people like me, people with potential. But specifically, they were looking for someone from my family, from my village".

[8] In 1860 a bitter conflict between Druze overlords and Maronite peasants in the Mountain resulted in a civil war, causing tens of thousands of deaths.

[9] Shaykha is the female form of Shaykh.

As a portion of the Druze community awakened to their sectarian identity - a process facilitated by official authorities and institutions - they became interested in the religious markers that underpinned these social bonds. The initiation into Druze religion is traditionally preserved for Shayks and Shaykhas, maintaining a division between the *'uqqāl* (wise or initiated) and the *juhhāl*[10] (uninitiated or ignorant) members of society (Firro 2011, 77). Whereas the former obtained full access to the Druze Canon, the latter would only be orally instructed. Amira describes how the people, who searched for insight into Druze religion, broke with century-old traditions. She explains how she came to love this newfound identity, while Badri recalls how it gave him a sense of pride and security in an uncertain setting.

Others, especially higher-ranking religious officials, expressed concern about the rapid popularisation of the religious dimensions of the community's identity. The spread of ideas – ideas that were traditionally studied and understood by few – led to a danger of misconceptualisation and misinterpretation. The Druze Shaykh Ghassan al Halabi (interview, 2017-07-20, Beirut), for example, pointed my attention to a book that was secretly distributed after the assassination of Kamal Jumblatt, in the wake of the Mountain War. The Arabic book *Between Mind and Prophecy*[11] is written in a casual style that addresses the reader directly and emotively. There are long sections in the book that elaborate on Druze creed. The Shaykh, whose office is located in the 'House of Druze' in Rue Verdun, the highest seat in the Druze hierarchy, stipulates the repercussions of such writings with unknown origin, yet widespread distribution, amongst a population that knew little about Druze religion:

> It is very important, because it had a very deepening effect on the Druze. Very dangerous […] Oehhhh, very dangerous. And many Druze don't know about his religion, it is very dangerous. It had an effect on many levels of Druze life. It became… Everyone knows about religion and knows nothing, so he wants to speak about religion. It is complicated. We try. The people know. [They made Druze religion] an instrument of war

The Shaykh thereby expresses himself critically towards the popularisation of Druze creed, in which the *juhhāl* initiate themselves without the guidance of the *'uqqāl*. Whereas Amira and Badri

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[10] This transliteration corresponds with Druze pronunciation, which is quite particular to the sect and distinct from other sects in Lebanon.
[11] Available upon request in the archives of the AUB.

saw the religious teachings as energisers for their mobilisation, the Shaykh describes it as the instrumentalisation of a faith ill-understood, thereby diluting the deeper meaning of Druze identity.

The book *Between Mind and Prophecy* not only elaborates on creed, it also sets out the ideal conditions for community. The book expresses the desire for the foundation of a Druze state; including a detailed plan of how to achieve statehood, how such a state should be organised, and what status other 'minorities' would receive. The relation of the Druze to other religious communities is further elaborated, elevating the confidence of 'us' on the back of the 'other'. For instance, the writings argue against the codification of the Holy Word, question the purity of certain prophets, and maintain that religious sites, like the *Kaaba*, should be destroyed. In its concluding remarks, the book confidently states: "God is lucky to have found the Druze". It thereby pits the Druze community (as a perceived collective and homogenised whole) against other religious communities in Lebanon.

These books and testimonies offer interesting examples of how the militia movement's goals became intertwined with a sectarian identity and finally with religious dynamics. From a communitarian perspective, the Arab-nationalist and revolutionary line pursued by the PSP resonated with the Druze historical banner of protectors of the Mountain, fighting off Lebanese enemies and imperialist collaborators (Rabah 2016, 122). From a PSP perspective, the prominence of Jumblatti leadership enabled the party to draw on "the same perimeters that others power centers within the community used to define what it is to be a Druze" (Rabah 2016, 122). Eventually, when the terror of war drew near, the Druze elements fighting within the PSP started to engage with religious creeds to further ground their social identity and safeguard against existential anxiety.

Although the PSP had been involved in the civil war since the beginning, the Mountain had long been spared from bloodshed. But in 1982, fierce battles erupted in the heart of the Chouf (see page 131). In this perceived battle for existence, many Druze felt strengthened by the idea that death would lead to life, as the concept of reincarnation had been reawakened. Reincarnation entails the belief in the perpetual nature of the soul and its phased movement from one vessel to another, transitioning from one life to the next (Obeid 2006, 87). It is a major part of the Druze sect's socio-religious creed. Beyond the spiritual interpretation, reincarnation aided in creating a strong imagined pedigree that is kept alive through intermarriages (Rabah 2016, 108–9). Druze can only reincarnate as Druze and Druze should only marry Druze. These social regulations create a strong sense of *'asabiyyah* (Khaldûn 2015). From this Khaldunian perspective, the community is interconnected, not only through time and space, but also through blood. This enclosed circle of family and life is well exemplified in the Druze battle cry: "Who wants to drink his mother's milk"

(Martin 1984, 8). The fears associated with the prospect of a nearing violent death are suited by the idea that the dead will live again, drinking milk in the arms of their new mothers.

Almost all the Druze militants I spoke to evaluated the creed of reincarnation as a key part of their social identity. Additionally, they reiterated that the belief in reincarnation eased the fear of death and aided in mobilisation. In particular, Samir Alwan (interview, 2017-08-17, Beirut), Farid Mahmoud (interview, 2017-08-28, Beirut) and Badri Abou Diab elaborated on the concept and meaning of reincarnation. Amira depicted her belief as follows:

> I wasn't afraid at all. I would reincarnate for sure. And I would reincarnate to carry arms once again […] Some girls stayed in their houses. But I didn't. I descended to my late fiancé and brother, and believed that God is one and death is one. So I wasn't afraid. Either you die with pride, or you live like a coward

The concept of reincarnation, connected with the steadfast belief in the enclosed circle of Druze relations, suppressed militant's fear of mobilisation to wondrous extents. According to Riyad Taqi al-Din, who was a military trainer in the PSP's militia, the Druze as a people "were difficult to train and discipline, because they had an intrinsic belief that they were natural born fighters and thus training was unnecessary, a misconception which took a long time to alter" (Taqi al-Din 1987 quoted in Rabah 2016). Also Badri reiterated this belief:

> We can fight and die, and we will be reborn again. Every Druze man thinks that in his previous life he was a fighter, so they can fight. They don't have to go to the training

The internalisation of Druze social identity and religious creed, mixed with the objectives of the PSP, thus resulted in an extraordinary commitment by part of a community that already felt attached to their warrior past. Most men and a considerable amount of women (for reflection on female militants, see Eggert 2018) eventually did partake in training (Rabah 2016, 150).

Both Badri and Amira indicated that the ordinary fighter drove the popularisation of religious creed, attaching belief to the wider social construction of PSP identity. How did the middle- and higher-ranking officers reflect upon these changes? To find an answer to this question I made an appointment with Walid Safi (interview, 2017-07-31, 2017-08-02, 2017-08-22, 2017-08-28, Beirut), one of the founders of the People's Liberation Army (*Jeish al-Tahrier al-Shabe*), the military wing of the PSP. Being an intellectual in his own right, the former military leader expressed deep interest in the research topic, providing guidance on an academic level and support for

network development. He became a valuable asset in the field and a sparring partner in the evolution of my thoughts. Over a course of two months we met several times, discussing the topic of religion in the mobilisation of Lebanese militia movements. Religion, for him, had nothing to do with the Druze community. But when I asked about Druze creed, the issue of reincarnation surfaced, revealing the delicacy of definition and interpretation.

> Absolutely, the Druze believe. I will give you an example of that, the Druze believe in reincarnation. You know that reincarnation has its role in the war. We would go to war, but we did not fear of death. Because death doesn't exist. It doesn't exist for the Druze fighter. There is another life waiting. We die and we are born. This issue facilitated mobilisation and it facilitated for parents to accept the martyr[dom] of their kids [… Life] is a cycle: death, birth, death, birth (interview, 2017-08-02, Beirut)

Fascinated by the engaging and emotive way in which he explains the concept of reincarnation, I ask him how he felt about it on a personal level, if it helped him in reducing fear in times of violent confrontation. He looks at me and laughs: "Haha. Me? I don't believe. Haha. I am secular. I don't believe. But other people believe and they are so proud of this issue and this belief".[12]

Jihad Zouhairy, another high-ranking militia leader in the PSP, who remains close to the Jumblatt family, pointed out another element in which Druze religious creed strengthened the community's sense of identity, meaning and coping.

> Imagine if you are a mom and you have a kid and then your kid is a soldier and he dies. It is very important to find someone to tell the mother that her son died. And this is what they don't know in the West. What they do in the West, they use to receive a telegram from Western Union. And the moment they see this guy coming [they already know]. And they sometimes break down and…. No, no, for us it is a story, a story that will make the mom feel proud. Today [we would tell her], your son liberated the whole village. [This was] probably untrue, but she will tell [these] stories to her neighbours and to her kids and they will all feel proud of their son, their brother... He stopped a tank with his bare hands and... He made the plane go down. He can be Hercules. And then we come down and we would kiss her [the mother's] hands, for the belly that carried such a hero. And then she is proud

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[12] This brings us back to the discussion of elite versus militant perspectives as deliberated in chapter 3.

The death of militants is not only recalled with tints of heroism and supernaturalism, their faith is also perceived as *maktoub* or predestined. Whereas the sharing of epic stories does not necessarily incorporate religious meaning, their image as 'meant to be' does. The life of Druze is considered to be written by God, and therefore life starts and ends when "He wills it". Family and friends were discouraged from mourning the dead. Even the tears of mothers were disheartened. After all, how could one be upset with God's will. The belief in *maktoub* assisted the community in dealing with loss, while strengthening the image of a fearless community of fighters. Jihad recalls how these ideas even affected inter-personal relations on the battlefield: "If anyone is shot, you leave him. Don't help him. Don't carry him. Because if God decided he will live, he will live". When Jihad found his own brother wounded during battle, he left him. He had a war to fight.

To conclude, the Druze members within the PSP witnessed an increasing nostalgia for the past that effected interpretations of the present. Social relations were re-interpreted and re-imagined. Sectarian demarcation lines that were previously perceived as latent, were made ever more visible through educational teachings. Through the articulation of an assertive and historically rooted 'we', collective traits of loyalty and solidarity were crafted (cf. Gamson 1991, 28, 42). Equally indispensable was the identification of the 'other', the Maronite Christians, who were held responsible for the tense conditions in the Mountain and against whom social mobilisation was called.

To consolidate identity structures further, religious ideas were awakened by religiously uninitiated militants, making creed part of their lived experiences. Religious creed and practise contributed to the cementation of group identification and the conviction of the need of social mobilisation (cf. Smelser 1997, 52, 84). Reincarnation took centre stage, giving fighters a sense of confidence on the battlefield. Fighters did not fear death, as death was but part of the circle of life. *Maktoub* similarly lightened the pain associated with the loss of loved ones. This was what God had wanted. On a community level these ideas were recovered and shared, while the elite level happily engaged with these affections. God was embraced. And God was one with death. The social identity of the Druze came to life with the cycle of death, connecting the Druze of the now with the Druze of the past as well as the future (cf. Hervieu-Léger 2000). Feelings of identification made it easier to face the risks and uncertainties related to collective action (cf. Della Porta and Diani 2005, 94).

What is interesting about these observations is that the political, sectarian and religious markers of identification became merged. By effectively marshalling these different social identifications, many of the Druze felt able to turn their small numbers into an assertive militia

movement. Interviewees were more likely to describe their identity as Druze than PSP, but when they elaborated on the meaning of this identity label, militants delivered complex and multi-levelled deliberations. The Druze identity emerged out of a political, sectarian and often religious commitment. This intersection of social identities often go unrecognised by students of social movements (cf. Della Porta and Diani 2005, 98), yet constitutes a vital part to Druze identity structure.

3. Amal: Strength and Sacrifice

> Think not of those who are killed in the way of Allah as dead. But they are alive with their Lord, they are well-provided (3-169). They are pleased for what Allah has bestowed upon them out of His Bounty, rejoice for those who have not yet joined them but are left behind [not yet martyred] so that no fear shall come on them and they shall not grieve (3-170).
> *Surat Al-Imran - Holy Quran*

These were the opening words of Imam Musa al-Sadr's speech[13] on 6 July 1975. Through this public address, the world was introduced to the Amal militia, or more precisely, the movement inadvertently revealed itself, when an explosion occurred in one of its secret training camps near Baalbeck, killing twenty-seven militants and wounding another fifty (Siklawi 2012, 7). The Imam referred to the young martyrs as a "red bouquet of redemption roses". In line with the above quoted Quranic verse, Imam Musa al-Sadr called for the celebration of the martyred and the steadfastness of those left behind. There was no need for doubt or fear, he maintained, as the blood of the martyred had spelled "be believers on the path of Imam Hussein". The speech signalled a notable turn for a religious leader that had previously expressed ambivalence towards the practice of violence (Ajami 1987, 166). Nevertheless, his constituency appeared prepared. Following the sermon, tens of thousands of men took an oath to "fight until the last drop of blood for the rights of the community" (Picard 1993, 20).

Through his speech, Imam Musa al-Sadr had reinterpreted the traditional Shiite themes of persecution, martyrdom and sacrifice, which were rooted in the events of 680 AD, when the Prophet's grandson Hussein was martyred in the streets of Karbala (Ajami 1987, 138). Whereas the Shiite community was previously portrayed as a community that suffered unjustly from perpetual victimhood, they were now presented as being part of a heroic struggle for reform and liberation (Ajami 1987, 137–41; Szekely 2017, 116–17; Hazran 2010, 528). Gradually, Amal came

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[13] A full script of the speech can be found in *FBIS* online archive.

to represent "a self-consciously Shi'i [Shiite] movement for which the reinvigoration of Shi'i orthopraxy is a stated goal. However, it does not seek to establish an Islamic or Shi'i state in Lebanon, and it has consistently extolled the virtues of Lebanon as a state in which religious toleration has been a historical landmark" (Norton 1987, 72–73). What does this observation mean for the role of religion in the identification and mobilisation towards violence?

This section will focus on two aspects that were incorporated into Shiite social practise and identity, namely the pursuit and celebration of sacrifice and self-sacrifice. These two elements are regularly presented as typically religious[14] and particularly destructive,[15] as well as core dynamics of Shiite identity (Hazran 2010, 527–28), echoing notes of the 'religious violence' debate. Although religious justifications and myths surrounding martyrdom and self-martyrdom have been explored at length in other writings (e.g. Rapoport 1984, 665; Hoffman 2006, 132; Selengut 2008, 183), this section seeks to explore these labels in relation to their thesis as well as anti-thesis (following in the footsteps of e.g. Asad 2007; Araj 2008; Brym and Araj 2006). In particular it will focus on how religious as well as non-religious identity and organisational markers explain acts of sacrificial violence. Comparisons to identity formation processes within the PSP will be reserved for the conclusion.

To achieve this aim, while paying tribute to those voices that felt the fight, writings will concentrate on the narrated life stories of two brothers from the Hamieh clan. Akl and Mohammed Hamieh's testimonies have been selected as the two provide a multi-levelled perspective on the changes in the Amal movement. Throughout their time in Amal they moved up in the ranks, participated in some key events, while presenting difference in opinion and reflection. The brothers, in particular Akl Hamieh, are prominent in Lebanon – celebrated by some and despised by others. Now living secluded lives in their hometown Tariya in the Beqaa, I was granted a rare opportunity to interview the brothers about their war experiences.[16] Their testimonies will be supplemented by the reflections of other militants as well as some notable political and religious leaders.

One of the survivors of the historically explosive moment in which Amal was exposed to

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[14] E.g. "The physical body, like everything else in creation, is ultimately a religious matter and is to be used and even abused in the interest of the religious community. All religions insist on what can be called the "corporeality of faith," on the right and duty of religion to call upon the faithful to show religious obedience by enacting their faith in physical acts of commitment, self-sacrifice, and violence" (Selengut 2008, 183).

[15] E.g. "Suicide tactics are devastatingly effective, lethally efficient, have a greater likelihood of success, and are relatively inexpensive and generally easier to execute than other attack modes. […] For radical Islamic terrorist groups in particular, religious and theological justification plays an additionally critical role: it ensures a flow of recruits to these organizations that is needed to sustain suicide operations" (Hoffman 2006, 132)

[16] One notable exception is the journalist Robin Wright.

the world was Mohammed Hamieh (interview, 2017-08-05, Tariya). The Hamieh clan, who trace their origins in the Beqaa Valley, have been amongst Lebanon's fiercest fighters. Throughout history the Beqaa had been neglected and exploited, leaving it to be one of the poorest regions in the country. The Hamieh clan had consecutively fought the Ottomans, the French and the Israeli armies. They stood for social justice, Mohammed told me, it was the core of their social identity. In the early 1970s, several members of the Hamieh family joined the Movement of the Deprived, headed by Imam Musa al-Sadr, in their fight against injustice. A few years later, an affiliated militia wing started military training in the Beqaa Valley. For Mohammed, however, joining this secretive group called Amal was not an ideological choice: "If you want to know the reasons of why I joined Amal, you should ask Akl [Hamieh]. I just followed my big brother".[17]

Akl Hamieh (interview, 2017-08-05, Tariya) was born in 1954. He was a few years older than Mohammed. Although the family's roots are in the Beqaa Valley, the family moved to Beirut in the 1960s in the hopes of finding a better life. They thereby followed over six hundred thousand other city dwellers that mostly settled in the southern suburbs of Beirut, the city's 'Misery Belt' (Gilmour 1984, 24; Hanf 2015, 106; Traboulsi 2012, 159).[18] Akl recalls how at a young age he was able to see the "classifications of the people living there". When Imam Musa al-Sadr entered the Lebanese scene, Akl was one of the first of the Hamieh clan to join his cause. The injustice frames that the Imam used within the context of the Movement of the Deprived resonated with his personal experiences as well as with the core identity of the Hamieh clan. The struggle for justice brought Akl to the fight in Afghanistan against the Soviet forces, he fought in the Iran-Iraq war and worked as a bodyguard for the Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini. He became close with Imam Musa al-Sadr, who he regarded as his spiritual leader. Like many other Amal interviewees, there was a level of absolute admiration for the religious leader.

The strength of Amal was in its identity, according to Akl, the representation of a neglected sect fighting for a just cause. Its strength was not exalted through its military force. In fact, in the early years of the militia movement, the din of battle smothered identity and ideal, halting mobilisation and questioning identification. By 1978 Imam Musa al-Sadr's "populist campaign to mobilise Shiites was fading into near obscurity" (Norton 1985, 114). As Amal had also lost most of its allies in Lebanon, the Imam started to travel through the Middle East trying to raise funds

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[17] Several of my interviewees across the parties were first mobilised through family relations, including Kataeb militant Jocelyne Khoueiry (whose story will be told in the next chapter), but also the Amal affiliated Ayoub Hmayeh (interview, 2017-08-24, Beirut), the PSP militant Fadi Nassredinne (interview, 2017-06-01, Beirut) and Kataeb militant Chahine Fayad (interview, 2017-05-16, Beirut) spoke of the importance of family relations in their mobilisation.

[18] The impact of the childhood experiences in the Misery Belt is repeated by Ziad Saab, whose story will be shared in the next chapter.

for the militia's development. On August 31, upon a visit to Libya, the Imam vanished. Ironically, the disappearance of the Imam became one of the most important factors in reviving the Amal movement (Norton 1985, 115).

When Akl was informed about the missing Imam he tried everything politically possible to return his religious leader. He helped initiate an investigation, arranged political summits, talked with the United Nations, organised mass protests and called for national strikes. But the Imam was not found. The dubious disappearance did not only motivate Akl to raise his engagement, it galvanised large parts of the Shiite community in Lebanon (Szekely 2017, 140). The sectarian community came together, transcending the bickering and competition of the Lebanese political scene (Norton 1985, 115). The vanishing of the Imam had hit a sensitive chord that was soon transformed into symbolic narrations (Siklawi 2012, 10). The faith of the Imam was linked to the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, who suffered at the hand of the Ummayyad Caliph Yazid I. Ora Szekely also explains how "Sadr's disappearance, and the mystery surrounding his fate, closely echoes the story of the Mahdi, or the 12th Imam, who vanished into occultation as a child in the ninth century" (Szekely 2017, 140). Both references fit in many ways with Imam Musa al-Sadr's own mixing of religious and political narratives.

It is exactly the melding of narratives that is often overlooked. On the one hand, the religious symbolism surrounding the vanishing of the Imam helped Shiite members of Amal to put their pains into a historical perspective. Reminders of the martyred Imam Hussein or the occulted Imam Mahdi provided interpretative frames that spanned from the past to the present (cf. Hervieu-Léger 2000), connecting the members of the sectarian community through the religious experience of bereavement and endurance. Loss in the fight for justice was portrayed as a central fragment of Shiite identity. The Amal affiliated foot soldier Sleiman Souasaydan (interview, 2017-08-27, Deir al-Ahmar), who fought under the command of Akl Hamieh, formulated this part of Shiite identity as follows:

> I fought because I needed to stand in the face of justice,[19] it does not always mean it has to be done by military action. It can be done by the word as well. But it is a religious obligation to stand up for justice […] It is a bigger project than defending my family or my land. I have this bigger picture, up until now, that we have to fight for justice. This is the lesson we teach to our children and grandchildren. The teachings of Imam Hussein. Imam

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[19] The justice frame was repeated by all Amal interviewees, including militants like Mohammad and Akl Hamieh and Rashed al-Amine (interview, 2017-06-08, Beirut); the political leader Hussein al Husseini (interview, 2017-06-02, Beirut) and Mohammad Nasrallah (interview, 2017-08-02/18, Beirut); and the religious leaders Shaykh Ali Mohammad Haj (interview, 2017-07-26, Beirut).

> Hussein was martyred together with his family and his kids, just to stand for justice. He had nothing to gain[20]

Just like Imam Hussein, Sleiman had nothing to gain from his militia involvement, which cost him his childhood and his education. Due to his early mobilisation into the Amal militia he never learned how to read or write. But that was a sacrifice he felt he needed to make to fight for the justice that his religion prescribed. This religiously prescribed justice included societal safety, economic equality and political opportunity – ideals that are neither exclusively nor distinctively religious.

On the other hand, the mundaneness of the political crisis was not left unspoken, as many saw political schemes and conspiracies behind the vanishing of the Imam. Could the Imam have been kidnapped? By whom and why? The official militia movement's newspaper *Al-Amal* only spoke of these political and practical sides (*Al-Amal*, 1978-10-13; 1978-10-20; 1978-12-01). It did not invoke the religious symbolism that I frequently heard repeated in my interviews. Instead, the newspaper informed about the evidence the movement had gathered about the missing Imam. Simultaneously, the opportunity was used, Amal strongman Mohammed Nasrallah (interview, 2017-08-02/2017-08-17, Beirut) contends, "to once again educate the people about Imam Musa al-Sadr and what he stood for. More strongly even than before". Speeches of the Imam were reprinted in the newspaper, while every week a part of the Amal Charter was discussed at length. No one was to forget the social message of the Imam and the place of the Shiite sect in Lebanon.

Although the vanishing of the Imam was widely regarded as an attack on the coming together of Shiite identity, the opposite happened. The loss of the leader was transformed into a catalyst for sectarian mobilisation and social identification (Szekely 2017, 140–41). Meanwhile, the Lebanese state and foreign powers lost interest in the case of the missing Imam. Frustrated with the discrepancy of the situation, and knowing that Amal needed external support to find the Imam, Akl decided to "step up" his game. With the help of his brother Mohammed, he started to organise plane hijackings in order to call attention to the vanishing of "their" Imam. One of the hijackings, in 1981, remains the longest in aviation history. Akl seized control of a Libyan plane mid-air between Zurich and Tripoli and commandeered a ten-thousand-kilometres transcontinental pilgrimage to Beirut, then Athens, Rome, back to Beirut, Tehran, before making its final stop in Beirut. Akl walked away free from the hijacking, as well as the five other hijackings he masterminded.

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[20] In the next chapter, a similar sentiment will be echoed by Salwa Saad, who believed she was fighting because she was "obliged to do so" due to her Communist ideas.

In a Beiruti magazine published at the time,[21] one of the passengers in one of the hijackings recalls how half an hour into the flight the hijackers took over. According to his testimony, the chief hijacker, Akl Hamieh, grabbed the loudspeaker and proclaimed: "We are members of the *Sadreyoun* [followers of al-Sadr], a group devoted to the return of Imam Musa al-Sadr". The hijackers subsequently turned the plane into a classroom, teaching the passengers about the Imam, his cause and the Shiite sect in Lebanon. Akl aimed to get his community's social identity recognised (cf. Honneth 1996), by bringing his cause not only to the passenger but also to the international community that was following the developments of the hijackings with close eye. The passengers on the plane, remarkably enough, reported they came to "understand" the Shiite sect's struggle, even "applauding" the cause (Wright 1985, 50–51).[22] But the international community was unable to see beyond a sectarian group that was radicalising (Wright 1985, 13–14, 21). Akl and his crew were labelled as terrorists (in accordance with the hegemonic perspective that Shiite 'terrorism' that was 'raging the region').

Arguably in an effort to steer away from terrorism charges, the Amal leadership denied complicity, even though they never condemned the actions (*FBIS*, 1979-01-17). After the sixth and final hijacking, when Akl was still in his twenties, he became the highest military commander in Amal, which was Lebanon's largest Shiite militia at the time (Wright 2017). It was the high tide of the movement. The security situation in Lebanon, however, had been deteriorating. Operation Litani in 1978 marked the upsurge of Israeli incursions in the south of Lebanon, while relations between Amal and the PLO gradually turned hostile. In 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon reaching the capital Beirut. The absence of the Imam combined with the fragile situation on the ground resulted in power plays within the Amal leadership. As a consequence, the political substrata started to shift as well. As Norton argues, "despair and frustration took their toll and substantial numbers of Shiites turned away from the centrist leaders and lent their support to more radical organisations (Norton 1985, 118). The most important splinter groups that parted from Amal included Islamic Amal, Amal of the Believers, and finally Hezbollah (AbuKhalil 1985, 49–50).

In order to understand the underlying reasons for these schisms, and how these related to social identification, I sat down with Shaykh Abid Haidar (interview, 2017-08-27, Beqaa). Shaykh Abid Haidar had been a leading figure in Amal but eventually left the party to co-found Amal of the Believers. The Shaykh explains the reasoning behind the split to be due to differences of opinion regarding political alignments: "To be completely honest with you, the main difference

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[21] *Monday Morning*, 1979, Jan 22-28.
[22] This passenger was travelling on another flight, flight KU561, from Kuwait to Beirut to Libya on 25 February 1982.

between the split was that Amal was under the Syrian influence, while we wanted better relations with Iran".[23] "Why did these alliances matter so much", I asked the Shaykh.

> For us, we wanted to know under whose orders we were fighting. As a religious people. If I might become a martyr, I want to be guided or directed by someone I can trust. Someone I am willing to fight for […] We just wanted to know for who we fought. We wanted someone whose morals and religion we could trust. For us this was Khomeini. If the enemy is going to attack us, we don't need a *fatwa* from anyone. But if we are going to attack someone, are we allowed to fight? We need to do this under religious rules. For us, it was not about politics, but rather religious guidance […] We could draw a similarity between the Pope of Rome and the Ayatollah. The difference is that the Pope of Rome only gives guidance in religiously related matters. But for the Ayatollah, he gives guidance in both religious and political affairs. For us, the prophet, Imam Ali, Imam Hussein, the descendants, they were not just religious figures, who fought for social justice, they had guidelines they needed to follow. There are different sets of moral values, based on whether this war is justified or not. For example, when one person invades another person's house or property, based on these rules, we can establish whether it is just or not. Because the soldier cannot really decide a war – what to attack and what not – he needs a supreme leader, who is both wise and has moral standards. Based on this he can decide what is justified and what is not. These are humanitarian and moral standards

The manner in which militia movements functioned was tied to the political and religious guidance of a religious leader, whose authority in turn was coupled with foreign political powers. These complex interactions were regularly mentioned by interviewees, including Akl and Mohammed Hamieh, Mohammed Nasrallah, Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli (interviews, 2017-08-27, Beqaa), and Mahmoud Abou Hamdan (interview, 2017-08-05, Beqaa). [24] Reiterating the above quoted testimony, all described the importance of religious guidance and meaning in the ways of political war (cf. 'just war' tradition Achtar 2010; Batley 2003; Donner 1991; Johnson 1981; Kelsay 2007, 2010). Simultaneously, they explained how Shiite militias, just like other militia movements in

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[23] The 1979 Iranian Revolution functioned as an inspiration for the Shiite community in Lebanon; however, not all Shiites expressed aspiration to emulate the political structures that the revolution had created (Norton 1987, 56–58). Amal, most notably, sought for cordial relations with Iran but never committed to a dependency relation (Szekely 2017, 141).

[24] Mahmoud Abou Hamdan held various high-ranking positions in Amal and in parliament as an Amal representative. He was excommunicated in 2003. It was rumoured Nabih Berri saw his popularity in the Beqaa too much as a threat.

Lebanon, started to be dependent on foreign government interests (Sambanis 2004, 271).

The diverging foreign and domestic alliances within the Shiite community eventually led to fierce intra-sectarian fighting (Hanf 2015, 317). Shiites were ordered to fight Shiites (see chapter 4.2.). None of the interviewees I talked to condoned this break in community cohesion,[25] nor was anyone able to point towards a religious justification. In fact, much of the violence that followed was part of a competition over Shiite identity, all of which was part of a larger political power play between regional domination and political leadership (cf. Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001, 105). The competition between militia movements resulted in a radicalisation of action forms (cf. Della Porta et al. 2017, 24). Violence was used to outbid the competitor.

One of the highest-ranking defectors from Amal was Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli (interviews, 2017-08-27, Beqaa), who left the militia movement to co-found Hezbollah, becoming its first Secretary General. Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli played a major role in the re-crafting of the Shiite community identity. A community that was increasingly willing to die for its cause. In our interview, he described how mothers visited him, begging for their sons to be send on suicide operations. I asked how people were able to transcend the fear of death, the loss of life, and even the loss of a loved-one. How come they desired death? The former Secretary General answered:

> When you have faith, it is not like believing, it is like having faith, then you should fight for the oppressed, fight for the right of the people. Your mission is not complete, it only ends when you die, because as long as you are alive, there is a chance you might let go of your cause. You could be turned and move away. But when you die, you can be finally sure that you didn't let go. When you die, your mission is complete. This is why death is in a certain way a relief and a joy for the martyred. He can finally be sure that he has passed the test. This is what differentiates a regular person from a prophet, because they were willing to face death to defend their ideas and their causes. They were not afraid of facing death to stand up for their beliefs

Also Akl Hamieh was affected by the spirit of the time. After his troops clashed with the American Marines, a rumour surfaced that a large American counter-attack was about to follow, targeting the Shiite populated southern suburbs of Beirut. In an interview with the CNN, Akl smilingly stated:

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[25] Similarly, almost all the Christians active in the Kataeb objected to the intra-Christian fighting. Nevertheless, these intra-communal battles amounted to some of the most lethal battles in the Lebanese civil war. In the interviews, few militants admitted to having participated in these fights.

> None of us are afraid. God is with us and gives us strength. We are making a race like horses to see who reaches to God first. I want to die before my friends. They want to die before me. We want to see our God. We welcome the bombs of Reagan (quoted in Wright 1985, 54)

The religious connotations of martyrdom and self-martyrdom have been well-documented in numerous letters, diaries and video recordings made by young militants killed in combat and reprinted or aired by the militia's propaganda machines (Picard 1993, 41).[26] Amal's weekly magazine *Voice of Deprived*, for example, systematically printed the pictures of martyrs, who would neither be forgotten nor forsaken.[27] In these commentaries, martyrs do not only resemble military success; instead their faith was fused with the heroes of the past (cf. Hervieu-Léger 2000). Through (self-)martyrdom a person shared in the grace of Imam Hussein (Abisaab and Abisaab 2017, 137). Death became a token of belonging and a symbol to be emulated. Ayatollah Mutaharri described how "the martyrs are the illuminators of society" (Mutaharri 1986, 126). Their death "infuses fresh blood into the veins of the society" (Mutaharri 1986, 136).

I talked over the issue of martyrdom with Mohammed Hamieh as well. How did he feel about the mobilisation towards violence and the run towards martyrdom?

> There are two points of view, my brother's and mine. I will explain my opinion. I believe that the Iranian revolution had some very bad consequences for the Shiite population in Lebanon. It reflected badly on the Shiite community. After that I believe that the Shiite became regarded as terrorists […] The Islamic current, which was created amongst the Shiite, it was actually created by Iran for this purpose. When I say that the Islamic current was created by Iran, I actually also would like to criticize the term 'Islamic current'. What does it imply? Were we atheists or non-believers before? The Movement of Deprived was founded on the ideas of Imam Musa al-Sadr, and therefore on certain ideas and ideologies. But I believe this was true Islam, not politicised Islam, used for killing and being killed

Mohammed had proudly fought under the leadership of Imam Musa al-Sadr, whose beliefs he had interpreted to represent the core of Islam. Mohammed fought for social justice, just like the people from his clan had done in the generations before him. This was his social and religious identity. He

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[26] A longer discussion on self-martyrdom is presented in the section on the LCP in the next chapter, which was the militia movement behind most suicide operations in the Lebanese civil war (Pape 2006, 205).
[27] Also the militia newspapers of the PSP, the Kataeb and the LCP printed pictures of their martyred men and women (for overviews see Maasri 2008; Jabre 2012).

perceived the political mixing of foreign patrons – Iran and Syria alike – as stains on the Shiite identity in Lebanon. The so-called 'Islamic current' had turned the Shiite community, in the eyes of the international community, into a group of terrorists. This was a miss for the community, according to Mohammed. Moreover, he questioned whether the frames put forward by the competing Shiite groups in Lebanon and their external contributors could legitimise the escalation of violence – within the Shiite sectarian group as well as against other targets. Could self-sacrifice ever be religiously justified, he wondered? He was not alone with his questions. Various militants defected from the battlefield or continued to change alliance in search for solace (Haugbolle 2010, 188–92).

In this section we traced the life stories of Akl and Mohammed Hamieh, who were militants in the Amal movement. Both were recruited within the close networks of family and community ties. These networks also supported the maintenance and development of social identity and the commitment to social justice. Group identification strengthened feelings of safety and belonging, making militia participation a source of pride (cf. Della Porta et al. 2017, 39). Both brothers mobilised under the leadership of the charismatic Shiite Imam Musa al-Sadr, fought for his return when vanished, and continued to fight in his name – though admittedly under different visions. Their struggle was aimed at the recognition of their social identity and the fair representation of the Shiite community in the Lebanese political system (cf. Taylor 1992, 26).

Although the demands made by the Amal militia movement were explicitly non-religious and non-sectarian, throughout all the phases of the Amal movement religion was frequently invoked as a tool to connect the Shiite community, empowering them with the affections of cohesion, solidarity and pride. Shiite tradition was reinterpreted to provide an ideological blueprint suited to the narrative of resistance and resilience as well as sacrifice and self-sacrifice (cf. Szekely 2017, 118). Myths and martyrs were created and reimagined, pushing forward the development of structures and norms that reproduced violence (cf. Della Porta et al. 2017, 24). Emotional narratives, in this case grounded in a particular perception of Shiite identity, tended to present violence as righteous rather than radical (cf. Viterna 2013, 54).

This section showed how although the adaptation of martyrdom and self-martyrdom might have been grounded in religious narratives, their aim was political, while their escalation can be linked to the mingling of political proxies and the competition between domestic militias. The specific forms of violence were thus influenced by the presence of communal identity, group incentives, regional concerns and militia movement competition. These are important observations, as it explains militia violence to be the emergent product of a complex interplay

between religious and non-religious factors.

4. Conclusion

This chapter looked into the role of religion in crafting and cementing social identities during war. William A. Gamson (1991, 27) noted that "any movement that hopes to sustain commitment over a period of time," especially when the stakes run high, "must make the construction of a social identity one of its most central tasks". In specific, this chapter traced identity formation processes within the PSP and the Amal movement as these militias faced the pressures of civil war. The testimonies that were shared within this perspective were aimed at shining light on the relationship between social identity and collective action on the one hand and social identity and affective attachments on the other hand (J. Gamson 2009, 356).

The section articulating the lived experiences of PSP militants focussed on the processes of in-group identity consolidation and inter-group comparison. Educational institutions were mentioned as one of the avenues in which communitarian identities were fostered and transmitted (cf. W. Gamson 1991, 27). As part of the Druze community felt to face an existential battle for survival, the coming together of the community was presented as imperative (cf. Kaufman 2001, 49–84). Social mobilisation was needed to find safety in small numbers but strong cohesion (cf. Olson Lounsbery and Pearson 2009). Building upon these institutionally initiated communitarian identifications, Druze militants retrieved religious creeds, in which reincarnation and *maktoub* facilitated the appeasement of the fears associated with violent battle. In other words, top-down constructions on sectarian identifications were accompanied by bottom-up considerations on religious myths and practices. The latter addition takes the role of religion in social mobilisation beyond instrumentalised visions, putting emphasis on the emotional benefits of religious narratives. Opening the theoretical door to militant perspectives thereby adds a vital nuance to the militia movement and militia leader perspective presented in the previous chapters.

In the second part of the chapter it was demonstrated how the Amal movement invoked religious narratives as a tool to connect the members of the Shiite community, a group of overwhelmingly deprived people that had hitherto found belonging in the more traditional and localised relations of patronage. By explicitly merging religious and political narratives, drawing on both traditional themes of dispossession, martyrdom and social justice and newer themes such as empowerment, the militia movement facilitated for a broader level of social identification which in turn enabled larger scale mobilisation (Szekely 2017, 142). The testimonies of Amal militants, including those of Akl and Mohammed Hamieh, revealed how this revised identity contributed to personal paths of sacrifice and self-sacrifice. These repertoires of contention were aimed at

attaining recognition, in the format of social status and visibility within Lebanese society (cf. Honneth 1996, iix). Social identity thus affected the specific forms of collective action, while collective action was aimed at reinforcing social identity.

At least two common patterns can be deduced across the two militia movements. Firstly, both militia movements produced rhetorical packages and identification mechanisms that explained their origins within existing, shared and culturally recognisable boundaries (cf. Williams 2002, 247–48; Gongaware 2011, 39). Many of these cognitive processes constructed identities through religious perceptions, religious tales, and religious symbols, preparing militants to face the dangers of battle while inciting specific forms of violence. The adaptation of religious identity markers, which fostered deep bonds of in-group loyalty (cf. Weber 1930, 99), mediated the fears associated with violence. Nevertheless, that does not exclude the role of political objectives, social anxieties, and the outbidding between competing militia movements in directing violence. In the case of the Lebanese militia movements, violence can only be explained by assessing the transcendent aspects of religious markers in relation with their mundane contextualisation and organisation.

Secondly, the testimonies of militants in both groups transferred sentiments of intergroup comparison, in which enmity was felt towards the 'other', while harmony and fraternity was reported towards the 'us'. Binary worldviews helped militants navigate in a world at war, protecting against cognitive overload while emotionally assigning a sense of belonging (Savage and Liht 2009, 493). The most categorical distinctions people made, involved the good versus the bad and the in-group versus the out-group. These social identifications and comparisons were largely based on distinctions between militia affiliations. The existential narrative that echoed in all corners of Lebanese society created a sense of compulsion. Violence was not a choice, my interviewees would tell me.[28] Violence was about killing or being killed, about becoming visible or remaining invisible. These were the social stakes of war. It is important to note that the dynamics of social comparison are typical for any form of group conflict. A large body of social psychological research has demonstrated that these dynamics are not exclusive to possible religious identifications (e.g. Ashmore, Jussim, and Wilder 2001; Turner 1981; Tajfel 1974).

Another important theme for both PSP and Amal militants constituted the search for social recognition, although this struggle manifested itself in distinct manners. The recognition of social identities cannot be overstated enough; "it is a vital human need" (C. Taylor 1992, 26; cf. Honneth

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[28] Of course, this assessment, given by most interviewees, is not entirely fair. Only a small percentage of Lebanese society mobilised towards violence. Many Lebanese left the country, while others objected to the violence from within their country. Violence, it seems, was a choice. After all, a significant portion of society was engaged in nonviolent activities.

1996; Hegel 1977; Fanon 1963). When denied of this human need, neglect can transform into revolt. Militants affiliated with the PSP expressed to seek the continued recognition of their historical claims, fighting to *maintain* their existing and rightful place in the social order (similar to the objectives of the LF). Militants of the Amal movement spoke of seeking recognition for a group that felt invisible to outsiders, they were trying to *establish* a place in the social order (similar to the objectives of the LCP).

These differences might be related to differences in contention tactics. The struggle for recognition can make militants 'fearless', Frantz Fanon famously argued over six decades ago (Fanon 1963, 49). Violence can become a cleansing force through which those denied recognition are freed from their inferiority complex (Fanon 1963, 49). Blood was considered cheap for the protection of the land, Badri believed. No one was to bow to the Christians, who were trying to take their place. Akl pursued plane hijackings, calling attention to his community and their cause. Through shock, he hoped to captivate the attention of the international community, while restoring a sense of self-respect and control (cf. Honneth 1996, 127). The perceived lack of power resulted in the pursuit of violence.

Several of the featured testimonies in this chapter contained references to militants' contemplations concerning the proximity of death, an undeniable reality of a life on the front lines. The next chapter will further expound on the issue of existential fear, looking at the experiences of the militants fighting for the Kataeb party and the LCP. In the conclusion of the next chapter, all four militia movements will be compared and contrasted with relation to militants' affective testimonies.

9.

MILITANTS: **Death in Wartime Lebanon**

"To kill is to exist. Imagine"

- (interview Gaby Jammal)

1. The Intractability of Death

In the previous chapter we tracked the stories of militants active in the PSP and the Amal movement, paying particular attention to identity formations and alterations in wartime Lebanon. In both cases, we saw that militias increasingly incorporated religious identity markers in search for meaning, security and authenticity in a society at war. More than anything else, the incorporation of religious dynamics sought to remedy anxieties that had emerged with the reminders of social and personal mortality. This chapter seeks to further explore the emotions elicited through the proximity of death, asking about how the fears associated with war were managed and mediated by militants in the Kataeb party and the LCP.

Death is of course inevitable. The end of life is part of the human condition. That does not mean, however, that humankind has found this irrevocable part of life a light destiny to accept. In fact, Ernest Becker argues that the idea of death 'haunts' the people, who fervently try to postpone or even escape it (Becker 1973, ix). But death cannot easily be escaped in war. War brings death to

the forefront of life. These are important topics for students interested in violent social movements, as qualitative enquiries can shed light on the hindrances and opportunities for the mobilisation towards violence and its continuation. But these are also important questions for those interested in the 'religious violence' debate, as religion's ability to mediate militant's most fundamental fear of corporal death has frequently been propositioned as making perpetrators of 'religious violence' to be more unconstrained and indiscriminate in their use of violence compared to secular counter-parts (Ranstorp 1996, 54; Kitts 2015, 351).

This chapter will build upon the insights of TMT as well as SMT's recent work on agency and emotions. In the first half of the chapter, the emotional dynamics connected to the proximity of death will be explored for militants fighting for the Kataeb or the umbrella of the LF. In particular, the story of Jocelyne Khoueiry will be outlined, as her perception of meeting God on the battlefield trickled down to co-instigate a wave of different forms of religious frames, symbols and rituals within the militia movement. The section will track how the Kataeb party adopted her stories as well as how different militants interacted with her image as a hero. In the second half of the chapter, the case of the LCP will be discussed, who increasingly adopted simplified and seemingly 'religified' narratives to cope and subsist in a sectarianizing social landscape that isolated and targeted Communists. The testimony of Ziad Saab, who fought from the first to the last day of the war, will be presented as an exemplification of the struggle of Communist fighters, who desperately searched for meaning after the death of their ideal.

2. The Lebanese Forces: Meeting God on the Killing Fields

When I lived in Beirut, I spoke to two Lebanese photojournalists who had reported on the civil war. In a public gathering they shared the difficulties of their profession, its absurdity and its necessity. Photographs "allow the viewer to empathise with those who bore the brunt of violence, and to interact with those images based on the emotional, political, cultural and religious perspectives that the viewer brings to the material" (McMaster 2014, 190). Interestingly enough, both journalists commented that the international media apparatus often invites for visual tropes that take 'episodic' rather than 'thematic' approaches to war, visualising the more dramatic and narratively charged stories, including images of child soldiers and female fighters (cf. Zarzycka and Kleppe 2013).[1]

One of the most iconic photographs of the Lebanese civil war, an image that travelled the world, was a close-up of a young woman, around twenty years old, wearing sturdy jeans and a

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[1] This can be compared to the media hype around the Kurdish female fighter Asia Ramazan Antar, who combatted ISIS, and was described as the 'Angelina Jolie of the Kurds' (for a critique see: Gol 2016; Coghlan 2016; McKernan 2016).

casual tank top, her finger pressed on the trigger of her rifle (see Appendix, Visual 4). She looks fierce. She looks mighty. The triparted cedar tree[2] necklace reveals her political affiliation. She fights for the Kataeb. The street sign on the wall behind her tells us she is in a shipping area. Some of the toughest battles took place in and around the ports. She must be fierce indeed. Who is this woman?

Her name is Jocelyne Khoueiry. She was the commander of *al-Nizamiyat* (the Female Regulars), a female unit within the Kataeb party (Haugbolle 2010, 33). Jocelyne was the only female commando to be included in the highest of elite levels. She was close to Bashir Gemayel, who had personally recruited her to the leadership position. Until today, she remains a fabled individual in Lebanon. Her famous status made it easy to track her down. I contacted her through one of my interlocutors and she agreed to meet. We met in the Keserwan district in Mount Lebanon, where she owns a restaurant (interview, 2017-06-28, Keserwan). It is but a stone's throw away from the Harissa hilltop, where a large statue of the Holy Mary overlooks Beirut, her bronze arms spread like a mother that welcomes her child. The Holy Mary is believed to project protective power.

Jocelyne welcomes me as I enter her establishment. More than 40 years have passed since that renowned photo was taken. Some of the ladies working in the restaurant, she explains as we walk in, are her former comrades. She takes care of "her girls". We sit down for a talk and she starts our conversation with an elaboration on her background:

> I was born in Beirut. And my home was facing the central headquarters of the Kataeb party.[3] It was here that I grew up. We were living with the guys of the party […] We woke up in the morning with the guys raising the flag and [went to sleep] in the evening [with them taking it down]. [We saw all of] the military apparatus around it. We got sentimental and attached to Lebanon and therefore at the start of the 70s we felt that there were signs that things were not alright. At this time, military training started. And when I say 'we' I mean me and my [six] brothers

The first time Jocelyne held a gun was in 1973, when she began training.[4] At that time there was a lot of discussion about the Palestinian presence in Lebanon and the PLO in particular. Among

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[2] The three levels of the cedar tree symbolise God, Family and Fatherland (A. S. Elias 1976).

[3] The Kataeb headquarter is located in the centre of 'downtown' Beirut. The bunker-shaped building is situated near the famous Martyr Square, which was one of the landmarks that shaped the demarcation line dividing the city in half, separating the 'Christian' East from the 'Muslim' West.

[4] The fact that Jocelyne, as well as so many others, mobilised before the official start of the war is telling. Firstly, it undercuts romanticised scenarios that state that before the war people did not have any grievances. Secondly, it speaks to the fact that there was an elaborate build-up towards the civil war, in which

certain Christian, particularly Christian Maronite, communities this presence was perceived as a danger for Lebanese sovereignty (A. S. Elias 1976, 14–17). When the war started Jocelyne was barely twenty years old. She regarded her involvement as both 'natural' and 'necessary', natural because most of her friends and family enlisted and necessary because enemies were pointing their guns at the Christian community. She looks at me with determination when she says: "We had to do anything possible to defend our life here, because Lebanon without Christians would have lost the message and the commitment". The sentiment that some form of Christian Lebanon had to be protected was repeated throughout several of my interviews, including the interviewees Joseph Abou Khalil (interview, 2017-07-19, Beirut), Fouad Abou Nader (interview, 2017-06-28, Dora), Assaad Chaftari (interview, 2017-05/09, Beirut), anonymous (interview, 2017-05-28), and Mounir Eddik (online interview, 2017-10-20).

I ask Jocelyne if she was religious before the war. She looks at me confused: "Religious before the war? Not too much. Normal. Like any Christian. Our parents used to force us to go to Church. But something happened during the war". In the Aljazeera documentary *Lebanon's Female Warriors*, she summarised that 'something' as follows:

> On the night of May 6th 1976, in Martyr Square, in the city centre, there was a battle. And I mean battle in all senses of the word. The area was empty. I moved forward slowly, with the other female fighters. We were requested to be relocated to one of the front lines, to where the enemy was present. I mean the Palestinians and their allies. The opposition forces occupied a building in Martyr Square each night. So we sought permission from our leaders to seize this building, but they refused as they feared for our lives. But one day, without orders, we proceeded to secure the building, and made the building our position. I was in charge of this site and I decided to change the position of our defence. That night, the night of May 6th, they launched a very strong attack on our location. Even though there was a ceasefire agreement. They attacked us in the hundreds [...] There was a great feeling of fear and tension. There was no time to think, because bullets were coming closer to us. We had to react quickly. After 5 hours they came very close and surrounded us. But we managed to stop the attack and push them back. They almost reached, but thank God. I consider this our baptism[5]

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populations were already in a state of mobilisation. 13 April 1975 was not necessarily the date that people 'started' to get mobilised.

[5] Aljazeera, *Lebanon's Female Warriors*. 18.15-24.03. (NB: I chose to include the Aljazeera testimony rather than the verbatim of our interview, as her story was concisely presented in the former compared to our more narrated, detailed and elaborated interview).

The reason why Jocelyne thanks God reaches deep, as she explains in our interview:

> Three hours before [the attack] I felt that something was going to happen and I prayed for
> the first time from my heart. I was on the roof of the building, which we were protecting.
> This is where I felt that God is present within me. Not only present [*mojud*], but here [*hadir*]

She continued her story, explaining that hours later, when she and her five female comrades were surrounded by the large opposition force, while having run out of ammunition, she returned to the rooftop where she had felt the presence of God. She remembered how she made the sign of the cross, fear and tension transformed into strength and conviction. From the centre of the roof she started running. At the edge she jumped towards the next building. In the midst of her leap she threw a grenade into the mass of fighters beneath her. It was a lucky throw, or maybe it was divinely orchestrated, but the explosion that followed killed the troop's commander. Startled, the assault force retreated. Jocelyne and her girls won the battle.

"There is a difference between studying God and experiencing Him personally", she continues in the documentary. "We discovered Him in many dangerous places. The killing fields. In places we didn't think He would be present. But it was in just those places that He came to us".[6] Intrigued by those recorded remarks, I ask in our meeting why she thinks God presented himself in those extraordinary and violent circumstances. A small silence rests, before she comments: "The Holy Mary helped us because we were protecting the Christian area, or because we were weak as young ladies, or maybe the Holy Mary loves Lebanon and wanted to protect it, because our area was the entrance to the whole Christian side of Beirut […] I cannot answer these questions, I leave this to God".

Although Jocelyne struggles to explain the moment of divine intervention, the experience marked the start of a profound transformation: "I started thinking again, rethinking, not the second day, it took time. An evolution happened". During the truce of 1977-1979, Jocelyne considered laying down her arms and taking the veil. She frequently visited the nuns in search of her path. But Bashir Gemayel caught up with her in 1980 and asked her to train five hundred women in arms. Initially she wanted to refuse, but then Bashir rephrased the request, as Jocelyne recalls: "He told me that our girls had lost their values and their ethics". Jocelyne understood that she could not only provide military training, but also give militants a taste of God and thus contribute to the creation of the resistance of her dreams. Jocelyne accepted the offer. In 1983, her troops had grown

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[6] Aljazeera, *Lebanon's Female Warriors*. 18.15-24.03.

from five hundred to fifteen hundred female militants (Scarlett Haddad 2015). She describes her contribution with pride:

> I saw myself in my military dress, saluting Bibles, you know. And this is what I did. During the training there was a course of about two hours in the Christian religion and I would teach them in the morning on purpose, because people would be awake and more receptive. And many good things happened. The training period became longer and some Muslims wanted to become Christians, but I said no. There were many conversions, meaning that Christians became real Christians. They were crying when they heard the gospel and my explanations. It was very beautiful. My golden era was between '80 and '85 when I was doing this. I felt that God and the Holy Mary were walking with me […] Every evening we used to pray together, even if we were fighting or when we were in our barracks, we prayed together

In reference to these particular experiences and to the changes in training structures, Jocelyne recalls how her personal and later her troop's identity transformed. Initially she described herself as 'Lebanese Kataeb'. She wanted to defend Lebanese sovereignty, Christian lifestyle and the multi-denominational Lebanon. Quoting Pierre Gemayel, she repeats the rhythmic Kataeb motto: "No to the West, neither to the East, but we should live together as Lebanese". But the war 'baptised' her to become 'Christian Lebanese'.[7] She started to live her faith in a new way and encouraged her followers to do the same. She wanted to "serve Lebanon through […] Christian beliefs". In part due to Jocelyne and her fighters, a spiritual awakening developed in the Kataeb and the umbrella of the LF (Scarlett Haddad 2015).

What is interesting about Jocelyne's story is that it directly opposes the main assumption on the 'religious violence' debate, namely that religion causes violence. In Jocelyne's perception of events, she found God on the battlefield. The fear of violent death instigated the sensation of a religious awakening. It makes her testimony an important counter-perspective to the typically one-sided standpoints that depict religion to cause violence. Sometimes, Scott Thomas (2015, 62)

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[7] Amongst others, also Paul Andary (interview, 2017-05-15, Adma), Assaad Chaftari (interview, 2017-05/09, Beirut), and Father Mouwaness (interview, 2017-07-10, Beirut) described themselves as Christian Lebanese, while Massoud Ashkar (Pussy) (interview, 2017-07-06, Beirut) and Tony Fayad (interview, 2017-05-24, Beirut) described themselves as Lebanese Christian. In other words, all merged religious with national identities – albeit in different hierarchies. This merger was quite particular for militants affiliated with the LF. Militants affiliated with other militia movements mostly described their primary identity to align with social movement membership (e.g. most LCP fighters described themselves as Communist) or solely with their religious affiliation (e.g. in the time of the Mountain War it became more usual for PSP militants to describe themselves as Druze).

argues, "violence is at the very heart of the sacred". Ziya Meral stresses a similar observation in his book *How Violence Shapes Religion* (2018), in which he demonstrates the many ways in which religion and violence are bi-directionally connected.

Jocelyne's militant career came to an end in 1985, when an internal power struggle shook the LF. She was quick to identify these events as the start of a cycle of intra-Christian violence. Condemning the actions, she withdrew from her post. She could not see herself defending the Christian community as long as she was surrounded by 'hypocritical' Christians. With her, others left as well. Another portion of militants was ousted from the party's ranks.[8] The turn of events signalled the political undercurrents and mundane power plays of a movement that was increasingly eager to present itself as religiously inspired.

Just like the photograph, the story of 6 May 1976 is arguably romanticised. The image of six female fighters against hundreds of Palestinian troops spoke to the imagination. The story of divine intervention functioned as a source of inspiration. Several interviewees – from different sides – would reference the notorious night of May 6th. The narrative feels cinematic. Grand. And most readers will wonder about fictitious exaggerations. It is difficult to verify the specifics. In *War and Memory in Lebanon* Haugbolle moves away from literal interpretations, describing how "heroic memories allow for a narrative" (Haugbolle 2010, 74). The spirited battle story of Jocelyne, cloaked in religious symbolism, provided a sense of meaning and pride, a much-needed relief for the people who were faced with the 'terror of death' (Jonas and Fischer 2006, 553). The perceived support of God justified violence, while it glorified the associated suffering. The manner in which Jocelyne's story was presented, shared and remembered resulted in the management of behaviour and emotions, offering "a set of standards of valued behaviour that, if satisfied, provided" affirmative emotions that enabled perseverance in violent mobilisation (cf. Greenberg et al. 1992, 212).

Conversely, Haugbolle argues, the unheroic memories of loss and hardship have to be reframed in order to find meaning and purpose (Haugbolle 2010, 74), avoiding a growing sense of 'fear and trembling' (Kierkegaard 1983) within the militia movement. An example of this reframing can be found following the assassination of the newly elected President, and protector of Jocelyne,

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[8] Assaad Chaftari (interview, 2017-05/09, Beirut), Chahine Fayad (interview, 2017-05-16, Beirut), and Tarik Khalaf (interview, 2017-06-12, Beirut) all suffered under the consequences of the internal power struggle. After an assassination attempt, Chaftari went into exile, first in France and then in the Lebanese city of Zahle, afraid for his former party members. Chahine, Assaad's cousin, was also forced to go underground. Tarik, who was a Sunni Muslim fighting in Chahine's small battalion that defended the Ashrafieh neighbourhood in which they both lived, was imprisoned and tortured for several months. Fouad Abou Nader (interview, 2017-06-28, Dora), who was the grandchild of Pierre Gemayel and cousin of Bashir and Amin Gemayel, had become one of the leading military figures at the time. Nevertheless, his refusal to partake in the inter-Christian fighting led him to be in an increasing position of isolation. "I never took part in this [Christian-Christian fighting] myself. And I paid for that at a political level, I lost my political power because of this". All four stories pay testimony to the political power within the militia movement.

Bashir Gemayel. His life and death were compared to the life and death of Jesus. The President-elect had been thirty-four years of age, identical to that of Christ on the day of his crucifixion. Just like Jesus, Bashir had known his fate,[9] but faced it 'without qualm' (cf, Becker 1973, 258). The frame alignments between the death of Bashir and the crucifixion of Christ resonated with the Christian community.

The LF accentuated the comparison by adapting religious rhetoric and religious imageries. The party newspaper reported that "the carrier of hope" had been assassinated (*Al-'Amal*, 1982-09-15, page 3). Political cartoonist Pierre Sadek followed with a series of posters, also featured in the party's *al-'Amal* newspaper, in which he linked the path and suffering of the fallen leader to the image of Jesus Christ. In one of these famous posters Bashir is depicted wearing a Crown of Thorns (see Appendix, Visual 5). In another, the word Bashir is spelled with a white cloth that is draped on a cross, red blood drops mark the vowels of his name (see Appendix, Visual 6). At the illocutionary level, these imaginaries resonated with the social conventions of the community. At the perlocutionary level, all the sufferance experienced by the group was transformed into a narrative of religious calling, duty and pride. Meaning was found in loss and hardship. Just like Christianity was built on the body of Christ, Lebanon could be rebuild on the sacrificed body of the 'hero' Bashir. He became the "martyr of 10,452 square kilometres" (*Al-'Amal*, 1982-09-15, page 3), the latter a reference to the total surface of Lebanon.

Several interviewees referred to the loss of Bashir with great sadness, yet simultaneously transferred a sense of commitment to the course he had set out. Joseph Abou Khlalil (interview, 2017-07-19, Beirut), Bashir's spiritual father and Kataeb strongman, remembers the death of Bashir with sorrow and grief. A picture of the martyred leader still stands on his desk in the Kataeb headquarter, the frame accompanied with a statue of the Holy Mary. "But", he maintains, "all the problems made the party stronger and clearer about its objectives". Amin Gemayel (interview, 2017-08-14, Bikfaya), Bashir's older brother and political successor, expressed himself a bit more reserved. For him the strength of his brother's leadership had left a gap that was difficult to fill:

It was easier to manipulate the LF after the death of Bashir. Because Bashir was a strong leader and aware of the Lebanese interests. Willing to serve the Lebanese interest. After the death of Bashir, unfortunately, it was easier to manipulate and to infiltrate the LF

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[9] Bashir survived several assassination attempts, one of which had killed his eighteen-month-old daughter Maya (Randal 2012, 141–88). Four years before his assassination a *Le Monde* journalist asked the leader: "You know Bashir, you are promised a violent death.... How does it affect you to live constantly skirting this idea?" Bashir answered: "I have a role. I will fulfil it. People go, nations stay" (quoted in Hage 1992, 36)

Even before his death, Bashir was praised for his leadership skills within the Kataeb party and the LF. He was referred to as a 'hero', a denotation that does not necessarily carry religious meaning. In the perspectives of these movements and its supporters, Bashir was the hero of manifold battles (R. Geha 2009, 10). Bashir was described as a leader that had maintained a fanatic faith in the destiny of group, he was fearless on the battlefield, ruled the militia with iron nerve, all of which images were strengthened by his narrow escapes from death. After he did not escape death, on September 14, 1982, religiously related terms became more common, including 'saviour' or the comparison to Jesus. Reflecting upon these terms Hage mentions: "it would be more exact to see [Bashir's] death as a perfection of the religious image of the hero" (Hage 1992, 37). It was death that awakened the 'religious aura' surrounding the heroic life of the leader (Hage 1992, 37). These empirical observations find theoretical echoes in the work of the existentialist philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (Kierkegaard 1983), whose writings have been adopted by terror management theorists. Especially Kierkegaard's conception of the 'knight of faith' connects with the re-imagination of Bashir's image. In *The Denial of Death,* Ernest Becker elaborates on this notion:

> [The knight of faith] accepts whatever happens in this visible dimension without complaint, lives his life as a duty, faces his death without a qualm. No pettiness is so petty that it threatens his meanings; no task is too frightening to be beyond his courage. He is fully in the world on its terms and wholly beyond the world in his trust in the invisible dimension (Becker 1973, 257–58)

Through death, the management of mourning and the creation of meaning, the knight of the worldly realm finds his faith in the otherworldly dimension. Without the steadfast faith in the invisible, the knight would be but a defeated man in an iron suit. But faith can transform his image to an ideal. "Like all ideals", Becker maintains, "it is a creative illusion, meant to lead men on, and leading men on is not the easiest thing" (Becker 1973, 258). Regardless of Bashir's physical death, his ideal found immortality – inspiring the constituency of the LF to persevere despite loss.

However, the loss and suffering did not stop here. After the death of Bashir, the LF stationed troops in Mount Lebanon, causing significant social strain in the region. A few months later a full-blown war took hold of the Mountain, setting the PSP in direct opposition to the LF (Andary 2012). On April 19, 1984, following the defeat of the LF in the Mountain War, the convent of Saint Charbel introduced the Cross of the Lebanese Resistance (see Appendix, Visual 7). It symbolised the Cross of Jesus Christ, coloured red with the blood of the Lebanese martyrs. Its pointed base resembles the steadfastness of Christians, who would remain on the land no matter

the sacrifices (Jabre 2012, 20). In the years of Christian defeats, the use of Christian symbols became a "last refuge" (Jabre 2012, 20). In the archives, I came across a large number of photos in which tanks were decorated with white-painted crosses and images of Christ, military processions were preceded by priests in black dress, rifles were embellished with the Virgin Mary's image and soldiers wore crosses around their necks. Increasingly, protection against death was sought in the image of religion.

One of the people who articulated these group adaptations was Massoud Ashkar (interview, 2017-07-06, Beirut). I met Massoud Ashkar, who went by the *nom de guerre* Pussy,[10] in his office in Ashrafieh, a Beiruti Christian neighbourhood where he had been born and raised. His office, from which he was running a political campaign, looks like a shrine dedicated to the civil war. In the middle of our interview he walks me through the many relics: a picture of a burning Ashrafieh, photo frames of him shaking hands with Bashir Gemayel and other high-ranking leaders, a large statue of the Virgin Mary and group pictures of his troops. We halt at one of these pictures, where he takes me through the names of the men that lost their lives during fighting. The list is long. I am amazed he remembers all their names. Pussy tells me about how he broke the news to the mothers of the martyrs. His voice breaks a little.

We sit down again and I ask him about the symbolism of the Holy Mary, who is watching over us from her pedestal.

> A lot of our men used to put the picture of Virgin Mary on their rifle. On our tanks we used to put the photo of the Christ. We were Christians. And we were motivated to defend ourselves. And when you go say that the Virgin Mary will support you, will take care of you. When you talk to your mother that you are going to the front, what do you say to your mother at that time? What does she tell you? "The Virgin Mary will take care of you". All the people. I am not talking about parties. Because at that time, all the Christian people were with you. All the people were with you. Parties, not parties. All the people used to be on the same. The feeling that you are in danger, and your parents are in dangers, and they are shelling your parents, they are trying to kill you, you will do everything to defend yourself. You are priest, you are not priest, you are Christian, you are not Christian, you do everything to defend yourself[11]

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[10] A nickname given by Massoud's mother, as he was the Benjamin of the family.
[11] A similar sentiment, but then from the perspective of a PSP militia leader, was shared in the testimony of Jihad Zouhairy in the previous chapter.

Pussy describes how the images of Christianity became tokens of protection, cherished by his troops. It provided a sense of safekeeping, which metaphysical powers were sustained by the group. The protraction of war called for symbolic remedies (Jabre 2012, 20) and so the wooden crosses around the militant's necks became "bigger and the chains longer" (Haugbolle 2010, 139). These adaptations of rituals and symbols helped manage existential terror by fostering the illusion that militants had a sense of control in the chaos of war (cf. Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015).

It must be noted, however, that not all militants would adopt these tokens, behaviours and beliefs. For example, Chahine Fayad (interview, 2017-05-16, Beirut), who ran a small battalion in the same Ashrafieh area, did not allow his troops to display religious affiliations. He reasoned religion did not have a place on the battlefield. Moreover, his group included a few Muslim fighters, who he did not want to feel excluded. This battalion was defending a physical space, he argued, not a metaphysical community.

Although many within the Kataeb would not adopt the religious ideals and imageries as advocated by Jocelyne and as treasured by Pussy, the religious trends within the militia movement was undoubtedly supported and condoned by the religious Maronite elites, who, from the start, had taken a prominent role in the direction of the Christian militias (see chapter 6). The clerics also helped to alleviate the emotional pains, anxiety and guilt that follow warfare. For this purpose, they relied on the Catholic practise of confession.

One of my main informants in Lebanon was Assaad Chaftari. We would meet several times over the course of many months (interviews, Beirut 2017-05/09). We conducted formal interviews but also chatted informally about his past engagement in the LF, his exile from those same forces, the guilt he started to feel after the war, and the path of redemption he was currently walking. Assaad had been second in command of the Security Forces of the Kataeb. The intelligence bureau was one of the most feared institutions in wartime Lebanon, an institution Assaad had helped create and develop. Assaad's commander, Elie Hobeika, is often mentioned in one breath with the massacres in the Palestinian refugee camps Sabra and Chatilla. Assaad has additionally confessed they colluded to poison the water systems in certain neighbourhoods. "How come", I asked him, "you were able to organise and engage in mass killings"?

> Violence was, as I said previously, motivated by the holiness of the cause. So you could explain some of the incidents. Of course, some of the incidents can never be explained. Like some massacres that happened. But I am speaking of the day-by-day events. I will tell you for example, being active in the security and intelligence services, I had to decide over

the faith of many who were arrested and found guilty of collaborating with the enemy or fighting against us or the cause of Lebanon. And I took these decisions [e.g. death sentence, imprisonment or release] very easily. Although being a practising Christian. I could decide for the deaths of many during the week and go on Sunday to the mass. And not feel guilty at all. At all. On a religious level

On a religious level Assaad felt strengthened by his faith, he was fighting a Holy cause. He would go as far as to describe himself as a 'modern crusader'. But on a personal level, he did at times struggle with his consciousness:

I will give an example, about a clergyman, a confessor, who came to visit us many times [...] And one time he asked me if I wanted to confess, or I asked him maybe, I don't remember. So yes, during the confession I confessed that I had to execute a number of guys, I don't remember even how many. And he told me: "What are you talking about, you are fighting for the cause, and it is the Holy Cause of Christianity". Things like that. "I will absolve you for the five hundred that died and for five hundred more, and if you finish you come back to me and I will give you another set of five hundred"

Maronite priests absolved doubt and guilt from the executioners of violence, thereby legitimising the act of killing. They functioned as sources of strength, managing the emotions that flow from 'high-risk environments' (cf. Goodwin and Pfaff 2001, 282).

This section demonstrated how the proximity of death functioned as a catalyser for religious experiences and expressions within the Kataeb and LF. Jocelyne met God in the killing fields. Of all places. She used her story to mobilise troops, recounting her encounter with God in military training camps but also in the party press. She thereby encouraged her soldiers and supporters to follow a similar path of dedication and determination. But also the death of the hero Bashir functioned as an important source of inspiration, in which the stories surrounding his death immortalised his image as a watchful saviour. Fear and loss were transformed into strength and steadfastness. Places of desperation became monuments of inspiration. All frames and re-framing efforts were aimed at enabling motivation and continued mobilisation.

Commanders like Pussy would incorporate such language and symbolism and disseminate it amongst other branches in the party. As such, stories and myth were shared and treasured by the elites as well as lower ranking militants. When death tolls rose high, there were always the clerics

to alleviate guilt and distress through the practise of confession. God was invoked as a source of support and guidance. This coming to rely on a metaphysical power could be explained as an "encouragement mechanism" in a "high-risk" environment, in which the mitigation of participants' fear in regard life and death is required (Goodwin and Pfaff 2001, 284). God became ingrained in different fabrics of the party, through social identities, rituals and imageries. Killings were justified and the fears of death alleviated. This is the 'solace' religion can provide (Hogg, Meehan, and Farquharson 2010, 1061).

However, not all fighters in the Kataeb and the LF connected with this presentation of solace. Some did not share in belief; others perceived it as a perversion of religion. Additionally, it has to be noted that not all militia movements in Lebanon had the opportunity, prospect or desire to find solace in religion. How, for example, did secular militia movements cope with the proximity of death?

3. The Lebanese Communist Party: Death and Decline

For a window into the LCP I arranged a meeting with Tanios Deaibes. During the war, Tanios had been a member of the Communist politburo and wrote journalistic pieces for the party's media outlets. During one of our multiple sit-downs (interview, Beiut, 2017-07/08), I communicated my preliminary observation that most of my interviewees did not seem to have mobilised over religious ideas, yet a significant amount of them adopted forms of religious beliefs and rituals at a later stage of the war. How did this relate to the experience of the LCP? Tanios opened his reflections with an analytical account:

> [In 1982] all the big projects had failed and they were replaced with small projects. Small projects driven by little small confessional or religious interests […] The assassination of Kamal Jumblatt led to the fall of the national project […] The assassination of Bashir Gemayel was also the assassination of an idea; the reunification of the country, under another point of view, another political project. There we may say that the external forces - Syria, the Israelis, the Americans, and all the other big forces who had a big influence in the region - they became the first players in this. Not the Lebanese. The Lebanese were weak. The war had caused a big weakness, between all the Lebanese, between all the parties. They couldn't manage to lead the country by themselves […] The identity factor was always present within the political powers. The Christians never forgot the idea that Lebanon was a Christian country. In the same way the Muslims never stopped thinking that Lebanon

was just a continuation of the whole Arab world and they were part of it and they couldn't claim for any independent country

Tanios describes how 1982 became a turning point after the accumulation of a number of latent and patent factors. The war had started over big ideas and ideals, including the place of nationalism versus pan-Arabism, the position of the Palestinian cause in Lebanese society, and the urge for maintaining the political status quo versus striving for (radical) reform. After the assassinations of Kamal Jumblatt and Bashir Gemayel, the vanishing of Imam Musa al-Sadr, and the arrival of the occupying forces of Syria and Israel, the big ideas and ideals collapsed. "When the projects fell" in conjunction with the death of their leaders, Tanios maintains, "it is normal that the alternative is the reviving of the sectarian presence and leadership". [12] The change of guards coincided with reforms of membership, which became increasingly homogeneous in sectarian composition (O'Ballance 1998, 11). It was a coping mechanism, Tanios argued, to deal with the changed structures of the conflict.

The consolidation of sectarian attitudes in Lebanese society weakened the Left (Yacoub 2014, 92). The imagined boundaries that came to divide the community made it difficult for the LCP to operate freely, mobilise people, and to communicate their main positions. The party became a target for several groups, who opposed the 'atheists'[13] in ideological orientation. Key members were captured or assassinated (O'Ballance 1998, 167), while whole areas were cleansed of "dissenting Communists" (Haugbolle 2010, 139). Former Communist leader Karim Mroue (interview, 2017-06-30, Beirut) told me how the initial "utopian ideals" of the party collapsed. "All

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[12] Tanios was not the only interviewee to relate changes in idea-structures to sudden changes in leadership positions. Almost all interviewees at least mentioned how the death of their respective leader led to ideational shifts within their party. Many interviewees were also able to identify similar trajectories in other militia movements. One of my anonymous interviewees contended: "In the Middle East, ideas and ideals often die with the death of their leader". More specifically, Tanios was not the only interviewee to describe the civil war as phased. PSP militant Farid Mahmoud (interview, 2017-08-28, Beirut) echoed a similar sentiment, arguing that the events of 1982 transformed the war from a political conflict in stalemate to a war expressed in sectarian terms. Lebanon expert and former Communist Fawwaz Traboulsi (interview, 2017-08-30, Beirut) repeated the same sentiment (cf. Traboulsi 2012, 193–253).

[13] The term 'atheist' was frequently used to describe the LCP, especially by oppositional forces (e.g. see article New York Times 1987-03-04). Also my interviewees used the term to describe the LCP. One interviewee recounted having a difficult time choosing between joining the PSP and the LCP, because the two parties had so many goals in common. He eventually joined the PSP, primarily based on the premise that this party did no "advocate atheism", an aspect he condemned of the LCP (interview, Farid Mahmoud, 2017-08-28, Beirut). Nevertheless, the LCP never officially pursued an atheist agenda (Abisaab and Abisaab 2017, 82-83). LCP leader Karim Mroue, whose father was an esteemed Shiite Shaykh, had much respect for the religions, even calling upon people of faith to join the LCP (interview, 2017-06-30, Beirut). Another interviewee, Faoud Dirani (interview, 2017-06-01, Beirut), made a sharp distinction between the CP and the LCP when it came to perceptions of the religious. Whereas the CP was "leading the atheist thing", the LCP "realised this was not a realistic solution for the world". As such Dirani reserved room for private expressions of faith within the LCP, thereby going against the blueprint of the CP.

the wisdom we had", he regrettably declared, "all the wishes we had, it all disappeared". The party had transformed into something else. As a consequence, membership in the LCP depleted (Abisaab and Abisaab 2017, 123–24; Yacoub 2014, 92). The stakes were perceived to be too high, while potential gains seemed ever more hypothetical.

Despite a general trend of death, decline and depletion, some militants continued the fight. This section aims to take perspective from within the personal experiences of these fighters. How did they cope with the mounting of death within the party, the crumbling of their leadership, the loss of allies, and the large number of defecting comrades? How were they able to persist when death seemed ever more immanent and accomplishment ever more distant? One fighter reflected on his determination as follows:

> Let me tell you something. There is no one who is ready to die for something he does not believe in. For free. He is thinking lots. He thinks what he is doing is a holy issue. Even if he is not a believer. To go and to sacrifice yourself, to put yourself in the front, to possibly die, that means you believe you are making something good

These words constitute a glimpse of the elaborate testimony provided by Ziad Saab. Ziad's testimony will feature prominently in this section. Simultaneously, his words and experiences are related to the words and experiences of other fighters in the party. Through Ziad's story of mobilisation and continued endurance, the emotional battles of Communist fighters will be exemplified. I chose to concentrate on Ziad's testimony for two reasons. Firstly, Ziad was involved in the Lebanese civil war from the very first day. He lived through the initial phase optimism, believing the party would be able to make a change. Later, he experienced the disappointment associated with the crumbling of Leftist parties and the disillusionment due to the death of his comrades. Nevertheless, he continued the fight until the very last day. By having witnessed all phases of the war, his story incorporates a large array of emotional dynamics. Secondly, Ziad took interest in my project and was committed to help its development. For him, these were important questions too. Over the course of several months, I met up with Ziad multiple times. Twice we met for a formal interview (interview, 2017-04-26/2017-09-14, Beirut), but he also took me to events in and around Beirut. I met his family and he connected me with former comrades. These experiences gave me an in-depth insight into his life, which helped me develop these reflections.

Ziad was born in 1959 to a Druze family. He grew up in the so-called Misery Belt, a cluster of poor and under-facilitated suburbs surrounding the Lebanese capital. His father was a man of the cloth, who regularly invited religious figures for theological discussions. On these occasions,

Ziad and his four siblings would be sat in one quarter of the two-room apartment. The kids were ordered to silence. And if they did not obey, they would be punished afterwards. Ziad despised these occasions and related his struggles to his father's religion. He recalcitrantly sought for alternative ways to empower himself, seeking an ideology that opposed his family's. Through a teacher in school he was introduced to Communism. The critical stance towards exploitative capitalist systems resonated with his under-privileged experience. But also the Communist idea of revolution reverberated with the young Ziad, as the image of his grandfather revolting against the French Mandate was engrained in his psyche. Ziad's disadvantaged background, combined with his juvenile desire to oppose his father and emulate his grandfather resulted in his enrolment in the LCP. He was fourteen years old. Looking back on his own motivations, Ziad comments:

> Are these reasons enough to make this choice? No. Because my other brother, he had the same situation, but he did not choose the same path. Everyone has his own reasons. Everyone takes his own way in life. But in the end, I am an individual and these are the reasons why I took that direction (also quoted on page 74)[14]

Ziad's testimony provides an articulated example of agency, highlighting that structural factors alone do not determine movement engagement. Also his personality guided him on the road towards movement participation, co-determining his trajectory in the party. With a mere fourteen years, Ziad started carrying his first gun. At school he became a driving force behind the Communist youth club, while he started to attend political gatherings. Because of his active involvement, tall posture and mature looks he was quickly promoted to the rank of commander. At the start of the war, when he was sixteen, Ziad was charged with the responsibility of holding the frontline in Bourj Hammoud in the centre of Beirut, having thirty militants under his command. Ziad did well on the battlefield and promotion upon promotion followed, adding responsibility onto his shoulders.

In 1976 Ziad was sent to Moscow for his first overseas military training. The trip triggered him to become more interested in Communist thought. Upon his return, he was immediately sent

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[14] Many of my interviews stated personal, emotional and at times random reasons that led to their militia movement engagement. Consider, for example, the story of Daoud Faraj, who joined the Communists, unaware of the meaning of the word. In an interview he explained his confusion: "Because Communist in Arabic means *shiu'ayy* and I am *shi'ayy* [Shiite]. So the first time I heard *shiu'ayy* I thought they meant *shi'ayy*" (interview, 2017-05-17, Tyre). And so Daoud enlisted for the Communist Party, thinking it was the Shiite party. Nevertheless, he eventually decided to stay. Stories like Daoud's and Ziad's (who represent all but exceptions) make generalisations about mobilising processes difficult to support.

out to the front. The battles were becoming fiercer, leading to greater human losses under his command. To make sense of his situation he searched for a firmer set of worldviews:

> As I told you, I did not join the Communist Party because of ideology. But during the war, to convince yourself and others that you were right, you start to involve much more into the ideology. I started to read about Communism and lectured the others why we were doing what we were doing: It is because of the ideology. I started to deal with [Communist] ideology as a religion. So if you are speaking with me about any subject and it is not written, in paragraph 7, page 24, in what Marx said, you are wrong of course. There is no question, you are wrong […] So to be more powerful you have to read more and that is why in '81 I made an intensive course in Moscow for seven months in Marxism

The so-called 'religification' of Communism was frequently expressed in interviews. Abou Salma, a comrade and friend of Ziad, repeated the sentiment: "Communism is not a religion. But it became one" (interview, 2017-08-22, Beirut). These ideas were also explicitly and elaborately echoed in interviews with Nassim Assaad (interview, 2017-06-01, Beirut), Gaby Jammal (interview, 2017-05-17, Tyre), and Salwa Saad (interview, 2017-05-29, Shoukh al Gharb). According to these interviewees, the 'religification' of Communism entailed the adjustment of motivational frameworks, in which ideology became absolute. The written word and the elite vanguard had ultimate authority on the questions of right and wrong. Responsibility was externalised.[15] Through these mechanisms, loose affiliations with Communism were transformed into a strict adherence of the doctrine of Communism. Identifications were solidified within the framework of black-and-white dichotomies, providing a sense of psychological security in a world at war.

The change towards a perceived 'religification' of Communist ideology can be interpreted as a TMT textbook example. Stricter cultural worldview tend to minimise anxiety of death by "providing an understanding of the universe that has order, meaning, and standards of acceptable behaviour" (Savage and Liht 2008, 84). The latter, when upheld, confers self-esteem. To maintain positive self-esteem actors will try to avoid cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1957), evading possible inconsistencies between a positive self-image and bad behaviour. First acts of violence can therefore come to function as a 'slippery slope' (Zartman, Anstey, and Meerts 2012) in which refusing to continue with violence requires recognising that there was something wrong with

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[15] These social psychological dynamics have been connected to cognitive neurological processes, in which the later stages of 'extremism' (of any kind) are related to back-front opponent brain processes that enable cognitive distancing, de-individualisation, and dehumanisation, all of which erode moral responsibility (Savage 2013, 172–77; Derks, Scheepers, and Ellemers 2013).

engaging in violence in the first place (cf. Milgram 1963). Individuals seek to confirm their behaviour with befitting patterns of social conduct and authority (Mccauley and Moskalenko 2008, 420). In other words, when death is made salient, people tend to intensify striving for self-esteem and will respond positively towards people and ideas that support their worldview and past actions, while they will respond negatively towards those people and ideas that undermine these worldview or actions (Savage and Liht 2008, 84).

The 'religification' of Communism gave militants conviction in their fight and confidence regarding their part in the war, helping them in overcoming their natural fears of mortality while pursuing violent means in high-risk settings. Or as Gabby Jammal, a fighter in the LCP, explained:

> We were mobilised through ideas. We had Kalashnikovs in our hands. And in front of our eyes, there was always that what we believed in. And we thought that we would change the world. We are correct, and they are wrong. And they are wrong to the extent that we should kill them. Imagine

In the documentary *Che Guevara died in Lebanon* (2011), Ziad and documentary-maker/wife Christina visit a statue of Lenin in East Germany. Ziad approaches the stone formation when he remarks: "This is one of the reasons why the Soviet Union broke down. Because of the ideal […] with the ideal of the saint, even though Marxism doesn't believe in saints, we dealt with the ideas as religion". Christina asks her husband whether he saw Lenin as a saint.[16] "Somehow", Ziad answers, "yes". He later adds: "When you are stuck in fundamental ideas, there is nothing in the middle. There is black and white. Right and wrong. Good and evil".

Communist ideas were seen in a favourable light, providing social prescriptions that could not be questioned. Who would not want a just and equal society? To further strengthen the goodness of their own side they started to negatively stereotype the 'other'. The mechanism of dehumanisation prepared militants to mobilise towards the frontlines, by creating an emotional and cognitive distance from the target. Through these means, the psychological barriers hindering violent engagement were eroded (Borum 2011, 29). The 'us' was exalted to the level of deification, whereas the 'other' was confounded to the abridged description of evil (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015, 128–32).

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[16] Vladimir I. Lenin was a Russian Communist revolutionary and political thinker who in 1917 served as head of the Soviet Union. After his death in 1924, Lenin's body was embalmed and placed in a mausoleum on the Red Square. Although Lenin had outlawed religion, this practise resonated with the Russian Orthodox belief – similar to that of the Egyptians and Chinese before them - that the body of a saint does not decay after death (Greenberg et al. 1992, 120). Lenin was routinely praised for his superhuman powers, while posters and busts depicting the leader were distributed around the country.

The negative stereotype of the 'other' was not difficult to maintain in a society engrossed in violent conflict. Ziad witnessed thirty-six of his comrades, his friends, being executed against the walls in Tripoli. "In the beginning we used to be sad with everyone that died," Ziad confided, but "later, after a few years, we weren't sad anymore. Every day there were more death". Ziad felt like he had nothing to lose. He became reckless. Death was always close by. Considerable elements within the party started to question the cause and the means. The party was shrinking in size and influence (Abisaab and Abisaab 2017, 123–24; Yacoub 2014, 92). Disillusioned and frightened, people deserted the party. Traitors, in Ziad's eyes.

Salwa Saad (interview, 2017-05-29, Shoukh al-Gharb) felt a similar commitment to defend her community from outside and inside threats, despite the heavy losses and in spite of her critical stance towards the 'religification' of the party. In our interview, she described how the initial open structure of the LCP had attracted her to join. In university she had participated in Communist affiliated discussion groups, book clubs, film societies and the student organisation – all of which avenues she utilised to form and voice her opinion. Feeling inspired, empowered and emancipated she followed her party to war. But as the war progressed, she describes how the party became more prescriptive in orientation and communication:

> You just accept. Just like the prayer in the mosque or in the church. You go and listen. You do not discuss. You listen to how you must behave. Your father tells you how you must behave. Always you learn about how you must […] Before we did discuss [in the party], but in the end you come to recognise that they also tell you how to behave. And if you don't, they call you a traitor. […] It was an existential crisis. It was not either me or them, as in the person, but either our project or theirs. It was existential

Despite the critical reflections, Salwa continued to believe in Communism. She continued to believe that violence was needed to face the threat of the 'other'. She believed to the extent that she was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice:

> We were fighting… I was fighting, with the belief that, we were obliged to do so […] To protect ourselves. *Yani*, we believed that, if we don't fight, they will destroy us.[17] They will destroy the Palestinians. You fight for your own good. It is for your community's good.

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[17] "If you don't fight, they will destroy us" is very similar to Walid Jumblatt's earlier construction "it is to be or not to be" - Speech "The Final Hour is Approaching", Date: 1983-08-25.

You sacrifice. They told you, you are sacrificing. I was ready to bomb myself. […] Yes. This

much I believed

By the time Salwa felt "ready to bomb herself", she discovered she was pregnant. Due to her pregnancy she retired from the party in 1983. The depth of Salwa's commitment is striking, but that did not make it unique. Other men and women in the LCP carried similar depths of commitment and carried on with suicide attacks. One of these suicide attackers was Lula Elias Abboud, a nineteen-year-old student born into a Christian Orthodox family. On April 21, 1985 Lula blew herself up near an IDF outpost in her hometown, killing four Israeli soldiers. Her poster, reading "the National Lebanese Resistance Party[18] is the only path to liberation, unification and democratic change" was widely distributed across Lebanon (see Appendix, Visual 8). Less than four months later, on August 6 1985, Jamal al-Sati executed a suicide mission in Hasbiyya, also directed at an Israeli military base. Before his mission Jamal recorded a video explaining his motivations, [19][20] the footage of which was televised on Télé Libnan the day after the attack. In the broadcast Jamal repeated the formulaic phrases of heroic resistance against the Israeli occupier. The wall in the background of the video was decorated with a LCP flag and posters of previous martyrs, including the one of Lula. Also Jamal's image was eventually transformed into a poster (see Appendix, Visual 9).[21] "A successfully constructed martyr", McCauley and Moskalenko argue, "can radicalize sympathisers for the martyr's cause" (McCauley and Moskalenko 2011, 172).

The day after the attack, *An-Nahar* newspaper featured a report on the suicide mission, penned by the LCP, which party encompassed the clandestine National Lebanese Resistance Party that carried out these clandestine attacks:

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[18] The National Lebanese Resistance Party was the underground guerrilla alliance directed by the leader of the LCP George Hawi.

[19] Available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlsynVNS1uk&t=30s&frags=pl%2Cwn

[20] Jamal al-Sati's poster and video were later 'discovered' by the Lebanese artist Rabih Mroué, who incorporated them into an art installation and performance. First performed in Beirut in 2000, the artwork was later purchased by Tate.

[21] The LCP utilised the same format for all their martyrs (for an overview see Maasri 2008) – it included their name, their political affiliation, their place of birth and finally the details of the attack they carried out. This basic format did not just characterise the LCP, also other militia movements adopted informative layouts. Take the Amal movement, for example, their first suicide operation took place on 16 June 1984, when the seventeen-year old Bilal Fahs detonated his car near an Israeli military patrol, killing himself and wounding a number of Israeli soldiers (Kramer 1991). His image was commemorated in a poster that reads: "The groom of the south. Martyr Bilal Fahs" (see Appendix, Visual 10). The visuals of the poster show a young man and an explosion causing the star of David to crack. The poster did *not* include religious references.

The National Lebanese Resistance Party has promised our people from the first day of its launching [16 September 1982, when Israel invaded Lebanon] to continue the fight until the land is completely free, without any conditions from the Israeli conquest and its traitor agents […] to achieve this liberation the hero-martyr Jamal al-Sati performed a suicidal attack against one of the enemy's strongholds, the building of the Military governor in Hasbiyya before noon on 6 August, where general Fardi, five intelligence officers, more than 15 Israeli soldier guards, 10 soldiers for communication and management, and about 40 soldiers of the agent [Antoine] Lahd [Head of the pro-Israeli south Lebanese Army] were stationed. We were unable to destroy this location using regular methods, so the hero-martyr Jamal al-Sati performed this huge operation. Based on our investigations, the location was destroyed by a TNT payload weighing 400kg loaded on a mule, near the wall of the building which was scattered in all directions and killed all who were in it (quoted in C. Elias 2015)

Elias Atallah, a leading figure in the LCP and the person responsible for overseeing al-Sati's operation, admitted that although the Politburo endorsed "the suicide-operations scheme", there was some discussion about "its deep[er] meaning" (quoted in C. Elias 2015). How did the practice of martyrdom, which they regarded as an expression of the religious ritual of sacrifice, fit into the Marxist project?

In *Dying to Win* Robert Pape surveyed all suicide attacks in Lebanon in the 1980s, concluding that the vast majority of suicide attackers maintained a Socialist/Communist ideological affiliation (Pape 2006, 205).[22] These statistics, as well as Pape's wider research on suicide terrorism, contest with conventional wisdom that suicide bombers are mostly of religious (fundamentalist) backgrounds (Hoffman 2006, 131), Islamists backgrounds in particular (Toft 2007, 128). Interestingly enough, as the testimony of Elias Atallah shows, the premise that suicide tactics were something particular to religious traditions was also held within the LCP, who struggled to reconcile suicide strategies with their non-religious alignment, causing a degree of cognitive dissonance within party ranks. Most observers fail to acknowledge, however, that Communist/Socialist groups were in fact the main perpetrators of suicide attacks in Lebanon.

Apart from this oversight, many have neglected to notice that the targets of suicide attacks

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[22] Pape's research on suicide terrorism has been ground-breaking for the field, offering new insights into the demographic profiles of suicide attackers. However, the claim that 71% of all suicide attacks in Lebanon in the 1980s was perpetrated by Communists/Socialists seems to me slightly skewed. First of all, I would disagree with Pape's categorisation of the Amal movement as 'Socialist/Communist' (especially for this time interval). Secondly, this particular statistic excludes suicide attacks perpetrated by Hezbollah, again skewing the data.

in Lebanon were inherently political, as also the case of Lula and Jamal illustrate. Pape and Feldman (2010, 207) demonstrated that of the thirty-nine suicide attacks in Lebanon, "thirty-seven attacks were directed against Israeli occupation forces' military posts or convoys and against military targets associated with Israel's ally, the South Lebanese Army". The two remaining attacks were directed at the American Embassy in Beirut. Through the observation that Socialist/Communist groups were behind the majority of suicide attacks in Lebanon combined with the reflection that these strategies were aimed at political targets, Pape is able to counter arguments of proponents of the 'religious violence' debate who perceive religion to be an explanatory factors in suicide attacks.

"This phase [of suicide attacks] between '82 and '89", Tanios mentions near the end of our second interview, "was the agony of the Lebanese brain, the Lebanese political brain. The Left did not decline, it was defeated. As simple as that. We had been defeated". We were the "collateral damage" of the sectarianization of Lebanese society. "The big ideals had collapsed," Tanios once again stresses, "we focussed on resisting Israel only, it was a complete shift from the initial picture". Ziad was part of the last remaining elements of Communist resistance. "We were very little", he recalls, "not more than 10 people, I was one of those [...] So, at that time we had a choice. Just like 99% of the population we could have stayed at home and *ghalas*". But Ziad did not stay at home; he fought until the last day of the war. Partly because he felt he needed to defend his country; arguably because being a fighter had come to constitute a primary part of his identity; but also because he believed. He continued to believe in the religion of Communism.

Although Communism is not a religion in the narrow sense of the term (as it does not believe in the existence of superhuman powers (Gifford 2019, 3)); due to the stressors of war and conflict, Communist ideology became reconstructed. Adherers described it as a 'religification'. Communist leaders were admired like saints, Communist doctrine seemed engraved like a Holy Scripture, and deviations were no longer accepted. The dogmatisation and deification of Communism resulted in easily accessible cognitive structures that created certainties in an uncertain environment (Hogg, Adelman, and Blagg 2010, 72). As the testimonies of Ziad and Salwa showed, this aided in the justification of killing and the mental preparation of dying. Fighters were ready to die for their cause, as they believed their blood sacrifice was but a small price to keep their people save(r) from external threat.

The use of the word 'religification' seems ironic for militants that call themselves Communists. However, it is important to reiterate that the LCP, unlike the CP, reserved room for private expressions of faith. Within the ranks of the LCP there was a mixture of observant and non-observant believers, and only few militants were avowed 'atheists' that insisted that religion

impeded on progress and class solidarity (Abisaab and Abisaab 2017, 55). The veiled presence of religion can therefore help explain the choice of words here.

Despite my interviewees' frequent use of the term 'religification', I have adopted this term with reluctance. What does it mean or imply? By identifying the changes of presentation in Communist ideology as a process of 'religification', my interviewees reiterated the 'religion causes violence' trope. Just like Hitchens, they blame religion for 'poisoning' their cause (Hitchens 2009). There is an element of truth that the sectarianization of the Lebanese landscape inflicted death and decline on the LCP. But these external conditions tell us nothing about the internal workings of the party. 'Religification' somehow implies that the party's cause or structure became clothed in religious narratives or objectives. But what became religious? The militia movement's objective remained political in orientation, while the object of their violent attacks were and remained directed at political targets. The LCP did not adopt religious narratives or symbols, nor did they use religious rituals to manage the negative emotional discharges caused by increased casualties.

Instead, when my interviewees invoked the term 'religification' they inferred that Communist ideology was interpreted in increasingly black-and-white terminologies, leaving less room for individual interpretation, while elevating the group's survival above that of its individual members. All of these mechanisms are mundane. TMT explains these processes to be adaptive and reactive coping strategies flowing from the psychological stressors caused by the proximity of death. As such, I think the term 'extremification' of ideology would be more appropriate than 'religification'.

4. Conclusion

Weaved into the daily life of a civil war are the emotions elicited by the proximity of death. They are intractable, causing existential anxiety in the minds of those who find themselves in the twilight of war (cf. McCauley and Moskalenko 2011, 184). The presented testimonies of militants offer a rare glimpse into personal and emotional worlds, their turbulence and their brittleness. Most of the interviewees were lower- and middle-ranking militants and thereby compose an invaluable contrast to the political elite's and militia leaders' discourses, as presented in earlier chapters. Most of these militants were less calculated in their considerations of confrontation, more fragile in the war game, and more expressive of their emotional rather than analytical take on the evolvement of the civil war.

By incorporating emotions into the study of social movements a better causal understanding of the "nuts and bolts" (Elster 1989, 3) of popular mobilisation is established (Goodwin et al. 2007, 611), fusing agency into the framework of social structure, organisation and

leadership. By focusing on existential anxieties in particular, the coping mechanisms of militants were laid bare, needed for the continuation of mobilisation in protracted conflict. Testimonies, just like photographs, allow the observer/reader to empathise with "those who bore the brunt of violence" (McMaster 2014, 190), looking into the personal coping mechanisms that enabled fighters to endure and make war despite the many losses and high risks. Although certain personal episodes stood central, the aim of analysis was to distil themes and patterns that could be detected within and across the militia movements.

The first section on Christian militants in the Kataeb and LF described one of the mechanisms that enabled continuous mobilisation. Specifically, the adaptation of religious beliefs, practices and symbols were discussed, which provided meaning and vigour in an environment dominated by fear and loss due to the proximity of death. References to the otherworldly became prominent in images, icons and popular sayings. The collection of testimonies revealed the manner in which these ideas and ideals spread, while the behaviour of different-minded Christians left room for divergence. The section also demonstrated a neglected pattern in the 'religious violence' debate, namely that violence can cause religious upsurge. Metaphorically speaking, while some feel moved by God to go to the battlefield, others find God on the battlefield.

In the second part of this chapter, the testimonies of militants affiliated with the LCP demonstrated the challenging search for meaning in an environment that increasingly articulated itself in sectarian and religious terms. Lebanon's struggle for identity was a local expression of a global movement, in which Communist ideology was losing ground to religious forces. Disillusioned with the protraction of war, a war that had somehow turned itself against the Leftist forces, many Communist fighters defected from the battleground. In response to these strains, the LCP adopted increasingly static and 'extremist' views on ideology, providing stronger rationales for engagement. The militants' testimonies bear witness to a party that struggled to survive after the death of many of its fighters, while a portion of the remaining fighters prepared for their ultimate sacrifice.

In the previous chapter, we saw how personal repertoires of contention became interactive, negotiated, and contingent with collective identities (Tilly 2002, 6). The longer militants remained in their respective militias, the harder it became to separate the self from the group (cf. McCauley and Moskalenko 2011, 31). In both the previous and current chapter, militants expressed to be willing to sacrifice themselves, if it would aid their group and its ideals. They became integral parts of a juggernaut, making its destructive way through Lebanon. But like in most high-risk movements, the militia members' fears (of death) had to be managed or mitigated in order to ensure (continuous) mobilisation (cf. Goodwin and Pfaff 2001, 301). The terror management theorists

Solomon, Greenberg and Pyszczynski refer to these coping mechanisms as quests for immortality (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015, 82–126).

With the ever-increasing proximity of death, nostalgia emerged as a central theme in wartime Lebanon. It was demonstrated how some members of the Kataeb saw themselves as the founders of the Lebanese state and as protectors of Lebanese particularism (cf. Salibi 2003, 70). The Amal movement, in turn, "awakened" to their cause and identity through the struggles of war and revolution (Abisaab and Abisaab 2017, xix–xxii). Within the PSP, which militia came to be dominated by the Druze sect, histories of prosecution were reminisced while warrior pasts were celebrated (Rabah 2016, 103). The LCP saw itself as part of a global class struggle. All militias capitalised on these larger, historic or sectarian markers. Without this context, personal pain would overshadow the collective cause.

More specifically, what all four militia movements had in common is that they fostered motivational frames by constructing public cultures of remembrance through collective narratives and symbolic markers (Haugbolle 2010, 79). For example, we saw how militants held on to rituals of redemption and tokens of safekeeping, how they created public markers of celebration and commemoration, and how they popularised metaphysical understandings of life and death. Although the balance between these different elements differed across the militias, they all contained similar ingredients. Heroes were celebrated. Martyrs were commemorated. In the most basic sense, the stories as well as images of the dead functioned as public obituaries (e.g. the posters of Lula, Jamal and Bilal). They informed people about the deceased, while they encouraged the bestowment of honour. But stories also became examples of courageous resistance and righteous paths, while the visual images on the streets and in the newspapers provided constant reminders of these ideas and ideals (Maasri 2008; Jabre 2012). The narratives and images resulting from individual experiences (e.g. Jocelyne's story of victory or the Imam Musa al-Sadr's vanishing) thereby gained emergent properties at the level of the group (e.g. they came to constitute models of inspiration and motivation, providing mimic models of contention).

In other words, beyond their informative function, martyr stories and posters served as tools of keeping the death alive. Just like the old Egyptian proverb states: "to say the names of the dead is to make them live again" (quoted in Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015, 99), the Lebanese recited the names of the fallen. The obvious example is of course the eternalisation of the names of the martyred and vanished leaders – including Imam Musa al-Sadr, Kamal Jumblatt and Bashir Gemayel. Their names and actions were and continue to be remembered by the political elites, who try to build on the legacy of their predecessors. But also the names of lower ranking militants were remembered. Primed by a question or not, many Lebanese tell about their martyred

family members. But also leaders, like Pussy and Ziad, remember and commemorate the names of the men that had fought and fallen under their command.

Similarly, the art historian Hans Belting notes how through images the dead are "kept as present and visible in the ranks of the living" (Belting 2005, 307). But images (as well as stories), Belting adds, they do not exist by themselves, they emerge. They come to life through communal perception and commemoration (Belting 2005, 302–3). Through sonic or visual presence, militants achieved 'symbolic immortality', even though their bodies perished (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015, 84). Through the community of their group, the martyrs' images and names were carried to future generations. Death was symbolically overcome (Becker 1973). Their sacrificed lives had become part of a heroic cause.

All four militias pursued 'symbolic immortality'. All militants I spoke to believed they were fighting for a larger cause, of which they were but a smaller part. It is important to note at this point that 'symbolic immortality' does not necessitate religious grounding. 'Symbolic immortality' can be clothed in religious symbolism, but it does not require it for its emergent properties. As such, the LCP was able to transmit 'symbolic immortality' as much as the LF, the PSP and the Amal movement. Through 'symbolic immortality' all militias were able to manage the terror of death to certain extents. However, only the LF, the PSP and the Amal movement were able to transmit an additional 'literal immortality', by providing their members with the narratives that ensured continued life (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015, 84; cf. Toft 2015, 339).

Many members of the PSP believed they would be born again, reincarnating to earth to continue the quest for knowledge in another Druze form (Harik 1994a, 463). In this way, the Druze fighter (or at least those that believed) was promised the eternal life of the body. The believing Shiite members of Amal trusted that those who risked, who really went out to change things, they would reap whirlwinds of reward in an otherworldly life (Ajami 1987, 150). Heaven and earth were seen as connected, giving the martyr an elevated status in both spheres of reality. Part of the Christian fighters in the Kataeb and the LF believed in the blessing of God and had faith that the soul of the deceased would live on. "With Christ they would live again" (Seely 2014, 41–54). The believe in 'literal immortality' (which was not held by all believers of these religions nor by all militants fighting for these militia movements) further diminished the terror of death (Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 2015, 102). Rituals of redemption, tokens of safekeeping, and the popularisation of metaphysical understandings of life and death all contributed to this aim (cf. Shimazono and Kitts 2015, 345–50).

These observations and testimonies were also compared and contrasted to the militants that fought for the LCP. Although several of my interviewees referred to the character of the militia

movement as being 'religified', the party never entertained 'literal immortality' tales. At most, militants believed to be eternalised in the red struggle. Their names remembered as heroes. They were promised 'symbolic immortality'. But the stereotypical Communist did not believe that her/his body or soul would live on if they were to fall in battle. The so-called 'religification' of the party had its limits. Nevertheless, the narratives revealed that the promise of 'symbolic immortality' was enough to foster a small group of militants willing to sacrifice their lives for the cause. In fact, the Leftist parties became the biggest sponsor of providing men and women willing to perpetrate suicide missions.

In this way, the micro-perspectives add strong in-depth and sensitive reflections to the debate on 'religious violence'. Religion is neither exclusive in its power to socially connect militants into cohesive wholes, nor is it exclusive in preparing adherents for overcoming the fear of death. In the following concluding chapter, we will consider these contributions in relation to the macro- and meso-perspectives provided above, looking at both the empirical particularities of Lebanon as well as the analytical lessons for the study of religion in movement mobilisation.

10.

CONCLUSION

"I think you have two problems. One is how to make sure that you discover the religious element
when it is there. And the other is more importantly, who represents the community?"

- (interview Fawwaz Traboulsi)[1]

1. 'Religious Violence' and the Lebanese Civil War

The dissertation examined what role religion played in the mobilisation towards violence and to
what extent it differed from equivalent non-religious dynamics. More precisely, it investigated
whether religious dynamics made militia movements more irrational in their motivations, more
socially divisive in their portrayal of the other, and more destructive in their violent endeavours.
The constructivist and comparative assessment of four ideologically variant militia movements
active in the Lebanese civil war showed how religion interacted with mundane factors in co-
determining the emergence of motivations and legitimisations of violence. A first pattern that can
be distilled is that religious markers do not necessarily differ in rationality, social divisiveness and
destructiveness compared to non-religious markers, but that they can and do play a role in

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[1] Fawwaz Traboulsi is a Lebanese historian at the AUB and a former Communist militant (interview, 2017-
08-30, Beirut).

mobilisation processes. This study aimed to contribute to the field of 'religious violence' in Lebanon by elaborating on these nuances, identifying when and where religious elements matter, while avoiding to treat religion as a general and inflexible category that is inherently distinct from the secular. Amongst others, the dissertation showed the specific ways in which religion played a role at the macro-, meso- and micro-levels of social mobilisation, identifying the specific moments in which militias, militia leaders and militants became most apt to include religious resources, narratives and rituals.

In the first two empirical chapters, the dissertation asked how the structural opportunities and constraints that co-influenced the start and evolvement of the Lebanese civil war intersected with religious factors and how various Lebanese militia movements assessed these and were affected by these. Attention was focussed on the LF, the PSP, the Amal movement and the LCP. In assessing this sub-research question, I focussed on religion's intersection with the socio-political context, economic configurations, foreign influence and the security situation. These structural elements are common to almost all social situations, making them generic and abstract components of a causal emergent ontology. Their specific forms of interaction, however, give the Lebanese scene its unique patterns of emergent properties. Religion's pre-war interaction with the socio-political field resulted in a political power configuration of consociationalism, based on reconciling societal differences along sectarian lines. Religion's interaction with the Lebanese economy resulted in some groups to be more privileged in comparison to other groups. Despite considerable heterogeneity, these 'groups' were often portrayed as echoes of sectarian configurations. Religion's interaction with foreign influence resulted in diverging visions on the Lebanese core identity and was reflected in different power alignments and coalitions. Lastly, religion's interaction with the security situation resulted in an atmosphere of fear, in which all communities perceived themselves to be under threat. The focus on the religious, of course, does not mean to say that religion was the main cause of social unrest or the determining factor in shaping specific structures. Instead, I focussed on religion to demonstrate its impact, while highlighting some of the inherent connections it shared with POS.

The course of the war was recounted in accordance with three different time periods. During the first phase, from 1975 to 1976, the militias expressed different wishes for reform. The Kataeb interpreted the presence of Palestinian refugees and militia movements in Lebanon as a threat to Lebanese security and particularity, while the LCP, the PSP and the Amal movement pushed for revisions in the socio-political and economic landscape. During the second phase, from 1976 to 1982, militias started to express these mundane grievances in increasingly sectarian terminologies. The change was partially explained as a strategy of militia movements to group their

constituencies and mobilise their efforts in an existential battle for communitarian survival. The complexities of grievances expressed in earlier stages of war were increasingly simplified in diagnostic and prognostic frames. Foreign influence further affected the sectarianization process by engaging with these simplified labels and identities. As a result, certain geographical areas underwent partial social un-mixing, forcefully homogenising communities and identities under militia rule. The sectarianization of society into sectarian cantons opened opportunities for economic extraction and social rule, which characterised the third phase of the war, from 1982 to 1990. This was the high tide of the (sectarian) militia leaders.

The militia leadership level was further elaborated in the second part of the thesis, asking an additional two sets of sub-questions. Firstly, it examined how militia leaders interacted with possible religious authorities for the purpose of mobilisation and how non-religious and religious components influenced the mobilisation of moral, cultural, social-organisational, material and human resources. Militia leaders were demonstrated to be inventive in ensuring the endorsements from religious elites, who could legitimise calls for violent mobilisation and engagement. Bashir Gemayel of the LF and Walid Jumblatt from the PSP both re-imagined existing religious authorities and resources to fit their cause and ensure mobilisation. Imam Musa al-Sadr of the Amal movement, being both a militia leader as well as religious authority, re-imagined the role of political and clerical leadership for the Shiite sect in Lebanon. The manners in which these leaders and their religious alliances mobilised diverging resources were related to political dynamics and objectives. These mechanisms were additionally contrasted to the leadership role of George Hawi, who headed the secular LCP. The constructivist approach thereby took analysis beyond instrumentalised visions, in which leadership strategies were not solely reduced to calculated and manipulative features, but in which actions and articulations were linked to the malleable interpretations of both the leaders and the led. Additionally, the comparative approach demonstrated that religion is not a necessary component for the emergent properties of violent mobilisation. Without these nuances, I argue, observers risk to instrumentalise and essentialise the existence, meaning and structure of religion's importance on the organisational level.

Theoretically, the emergent properties of violent mobilisation are not only dependent on POS and RM opportunities, but also on the framing strategies pursued by militia leaders – who have the power to emphasise or de-emphasise the impact of religion (in turn, these frames are assessed and interpreted by militants). The second sub-question on level of the militia leader therefore engaged with how the structure of rhetorical frames and their relative complexity influenced the mobilisation towards violence. Analysis paid particular attention to whether religiously oriented idea-structures were less rational and more socially divisive compared to non-

religious idea-structures. It was particularly Imam Musa al-Sadr who adopted religious frames. Bashir Gemayel only employed religious rhetoric incidentally, while Walid Jumblatt and George Hawi consistently employed non-religious phraseology. A social psychological assessment on the cognitive complexity of speech acts, illustrated that religious frames were not more socially divisive or more irrational compared to those frames that were devoid of religious references. It was not the religious content of frames that determined the mobilisation towards violence; instead, people were moved by situational factors and the low complexity of arguments that subliminally communicated degrees of urgency. These observations connected findings in SMT (e.g. Swidler 1986) with IC research (e.g. Conway et al. 2011), thereby proposing new research directions for the role of speech in 'religious violence'.

At the level of the militants, two last sub-questions were trailed in order to answer the overarching research question. Firstly, the dissertation tracked the extent to which religious identities affected individual mobilisation processes. In specific, it asked whether religious identities resulted in more socially divisive perceptions on the social world and the conflict compared to secular identities. Secondly, it investigated whether religion played a regulating role in managing the negative emotions elicited by the proximity of death. The enquiry into the militant level was regarded as an invaluable part in the comprehensive assessment of 'religious violence'. After all, the militants that make up the militia movements have their own voices, their own paths of social mobilisation, their personal connections to the religious, and their individual views on the use of violence. By incorporating micro-perspectives into the study of 'religious violence', a better causal understanding of the "nuts and bolts" (Elster 1989, 3) of popular mobilisation can be established, fusing agency into the framework of social structure, organisation and leadership.

In this pursuit, it was demonstrated how the high-risk environment of a civil war caused national identifications to splinter and militia movements to compete over the provision of alternative social identifications. Militants sought after unity and cohesion within their militias, while emphasising the differences between militias. As an example, by joining militia movements, PSP militant Rabih al-Ali and Amal affiliated Akl Hamieh argued they were provided with an opportunity of social belonging and existential relief. The longer militants remained in their respective militias, the harder it became to dissociate themselves from the values presented by their group and to separate the self from the identity of their (sectarian) militias. The testimony Akl Hamieh, for example, showed how his involvement followed a deep identification and socialisation of group dynamics. Gradually, militants became integral parts of a juggernaut, making its destructive way through Lebanon. Associated emotional narratives presented forms of violence as righteous rather than radical (including the actions in which sectarian groups were dismissed from

their homes and the execution of plane hijackings), while cognitive processes constructed identities and justifications through sectarian tales and symbols. These reflections have also been echoed in Kaufman's *Modern Hatred* (2001) and Della Porta's edited *Social Movements and Civil War* (2017). In this way, violence had powerful effects in terms of the politicisation of the Lebanese conflict, reproducing at least one of the objects it was fighting – (sectarian) group identifications.

However, violence was not only directed at those that were perceived to be different. When inter-sectarian tensions were unappeased, blame sought a surrogate victim. This was exemplified by a slippery slope of violence in which outside enemies were increasingly replaced by inside traitors (cf. Girard 1977, 2). Ziad Saab and Salwa Saad, both fighting for the LCP, described how those who deviated from the in-group's norms and values were branded as traitors, a label that carried at minimum social repercussions. As the civil war progressed, more and more assassinations and clashes occurred within militias (Bashir's 'unification of the Christian gun') and within sectarian groups (Amal versus Hezbollah). This goes to demonstrate that sectarian belonging alone cannot explain the spiral of violence. Instead, these testimonies reflect back upon the power plays and power gains of war, as described in the militia movement chapter.

Regardless of the identity of the enemy, the research highlighted how the militia members' fear (of death) needed mitigation in order to ensure (continuous) mobilisation. Religious beliefs and rituals were habitually mentioned as sources of relief and meaning. In this way, one could say that for many, religion was found on the battlefield. The LF's fighter Jocelyne Khoueiry, for instance, outlined how the existential anxiety of battle opened up for a religious experience that gradually not only transformed her, but also part of her militia movement. Jocelyne's story demonstrates two important elements. Firstly, whereas most people believe religion causes violence, her story reveals how religion can also be the result of violence. In other words, the relationship between religion and violence is bi-directional (see also Meral 2018). Secondly, it demonstrates the agentic powers of an individual on the course of a militia movement. The impact of religion is not only top-down imposed from the level of the leadership, religion can also take shape in the minds of militants, facilitating a bottom-up change.

Through sharing the testimonies of ideologically diverse orientated militants I established that religion was neither exclusive in its power to socially connect militants into cohesive wholes, nor was it exclusive in preparing adherents in overcoming the fear of death. Also non-religious beliefs and rituals aided in social identification and the symbolic transcendence of possible and proximate demise. The testimonies of Communist fighters, for example, demonstrated how non-religious belief similarly manifested into violent mobilisations, even to the extent that militants were willing to sacrifice themselves for the greater good. These are important observations, none of

which would have been possible without the active and in-depth engagement with militants. Talking to the perpetrators of violence has demonstrated the importance of micro-perspectives, as testimonies both deepen and widen understandings on the process of the mobilisation towards violence. Accounts were neither presented with the aim of romanticising or dehumanising the people behind violence, instead the aim was to demystify that what is often shelved out of fear and anger. We tend to avoid those with whose actions we disagree. Nevertheless, the data derived from the testimonies is invaluable, as they do not necessarily align with the macro- and meso- rationales that have come to form the bases of mainstream perspectives on the topic, conforming that which we want to believe. The emotive discernments of micro-perspectives lay bare a more delicate plane of being in which religion can transform militants' sense of belonging and motivation. Especially in high-risk environments the emergent properties of social coping become prominent, in which religion can play an important (though not exclusive) role.

In sum, my analysis has shown that in the Lebanese civil war religion played a role in the mobilisation towards violence. It shapes militias' and militants' view of conflict and can move them to the barricades. As such, I maintain that religion cannot be excluded from analysis when considering the (continued) violent mobilisation of militias in Lebanon. However, secular motivations also characterised the Lebanese civil war, as outlined with respect to, amongst others, the socio-political dilemmas, economic grievances, the influence of foreign entities and the deteriorating security situation. Moreover, the war was headed by a number of militia leaders, most of whom refrained from religious rhetoric. Lastly, Lebanon had various non-religious militias fighting in its civil war, including the LCP. These patterns are paramount when considering the meaning and power of 'religious violence'.

Throughout, I have sought to underscore a second interconnected caveat in research on 'religious violence'. Often, those factors that are deemed prominent in explaining violence are those that are ill understood. Religion is no exception to that either, as the definitional quest at the start of this dissertation already alluded to. The choice of employing a substantive definition of religion, describing it as the belief in the supernatural (following the definition of Gifford 2019), helped to outline an analytical distinctions between religious and secular oriented militia movements. Empirical evidence was nevertheless quick to establish that there were no hard dividing lines between the secular and religious characteristics of militia movements and their justifications for social mobilisation and the adaptation of violence. Typically, militia movements drew on combinations of religious and secular rationalisations, in which the religious was not necessarily connected to the supernatural but more commonly to the perceived identity of a group. However, as also Traboulsi indicated in the opening quote of this chapter, that does not mean that those

militias that represented themselves with religious markers were the actual representatives of that group. In fact, militias only represented parts of the groups they claimed to embody, whether that was a religious community (e.g. part of the Shiite sect or part of the Maronite sect) or a group of secularists (e.g. part of those who identified as Communists or Socialist).

Functionalist definitional extensions to the religious were added to broaden understanding and analysis (e.g. following the example of Durkheim 1915; Weber 1930; Malinowski 1954), looking at the manners in which religion functioned within the setting of social mobilisation. Motivational frames, used to mobilise constituencies, were most regularly clothed in religious ritual and rhetoric – using religious symbols in the search of meaning, attaching guidance/remorse to religious leadership and mediating the fear of death through religious myths. It is exactly the functionalist mechanism of religion that was most typically mirrored in secular militia movements. Secular movements utilised non-religious symbols in the search of meaning in social interaction, they looked at secular leadership for guidance/remorse and employed secular myths for mediating the fear of death. As such, the functionalist definition added limited explanatory power.

Regardless of definitional challenges and garbled resolutions, as an academic wanting to engage with the 'religious violence' debate I cannot refrain from defining religion for at least two reasons. Firstly, without a form of analytical conceptualisation (even if flawed), there could be no engagement with the 'religious violence' debate nor could a comparative perspective between religious and non-religious motivations and movements been pursued. My work offers no universally satisfactory solutions to the definitional quest of religion; my work does propose a number of helpful strategies in assessing the role of religion in the mobilisation towards and through the Lebanese civil war. It offers, for example, an operational conceptualisation that is both discriminative and inclusive, permitting for a comprehensive and comparative analysis that takes religion seriously at laminated emergent levels of reality. Additionally, the format allows for a culturally sensitive and adjustable interpretation of religion that can be made to fit the specifics of any region and movement. In the case of Lebanon, this entailed an in-depth investigation into the constructed socio-political culture in which the consociational system emerged, while dynamically following the process of sectarianization over the course of the civil war.

Critically reflecting upon definitional quests and unhelpful dichotomisations constitutes more than what can be epitomised as a 'science war' (Hacking 1999, 3). How we define religion and non-religion and what power we attach to their institutions has real-life consequences, including the attribution of blame and the construction of solutions. In the case of Lebanon, this is an essential point. Because religion was understood to be a major factor in determining the violent character of the civil war, religion was also regarded as a necessary factor to be managed in

the peace process. But what if the religious factor, as this dissertation argues, never was as determining or isolated as some have believed? What does this mean for the long-term peace of Lebanon and its political arrangements? This question will be dealt with in the Afterword, taking a closer look at the 2019-2020 protests. But first, the concluding remarks will focus on the theoretical contributions this thesis offers, while future research directions will be advocated.

2. 'Religious Violence' and Social Movement Theory

As demonstrated throughout this dissertation, SMT can help by bringing the role of religion in the mobilisation towards violence into sharper focus. It offers operational tools of comparison, with which the religious and non-religious markers of militia movements can be assessed. Additionally, it offers relational tools (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 307), by adopting a multi-levelled analysis that seeks for the emergent properties of mobilisation processes at the militant, militia leader and militia movement level. To realise this promise, SMT was aided by CR. The combination of levels and theories is in itself not novel, but by offering a comprehensive justification for the claim that social structure is best understood as an emergent causal power of social entities, the specific application aims to systematically connect different perspectives in their ontological orientation. It thereby recognises that social reality is socially constructed and interpreted by the various actors that are part of the conflict. Meaning, it reflects on the ways in which conditions are activated and individual motivations transformed through the interactions of various social movement players and structures. Without an understanding of the emergent ways in which religion interacts at these different analytical levels it would be impossible to comprehensively explain how and when religion affects social mobilisation. Crucial, thereby, are the social movement theoretical foci of POS, RM and framing as well as the social psychological theory of IC, with social identity and emotions being informed by both academic fields. The explicit integration of these various theories and entry points constitute key contributions to the field.

The two chapters dedicated to militia movements built upon the SMT of POS in an effort to analyse the interactions between structure and religion, together co-forming the specific macro-characteristics of the strengths and weaknesses of Lebanon. Similar structural assessments can help elucidate the opportunities and constraints of other countries and localities, cementing understanding on particular configurations. Although these forms of analyses are not innovative in themselves, they constitute invaluable bases for in-depth and localised research.

On the level of the militia leaders, two different theoretical perspectives were pursued. In one chapter, the resources needed for mobilisation were assessed in relation to militia leadership. It demonstrated how the maximisation of resources was materialised through both religious

resource instrumentalisation as well as religious resource re-imagination. The assessment of religious resources in comparative dualism with non-religious resources enabled the re-evaluation of the weight of the religious. By investigating the cognitive complexity of the spoken word by militia leaders it was further established that in theatres of war, religious rhetoric does not significantly differ in levels of IC compared to non-religious rhetoric. Together these tools offer novel ways of assessing the role of militia leadership in relation to religious resources and rhetoric, thereby nuancing and quantifying perspectives on the uniqueness and power of the religious. Especially the latter IC theoretical approach is novel in the study of 'religious violence' and SMT more generally, adding an innovative edge.

Lastly, the section dedicated to the perspectives of militants demonstrated the importance of emotional dynamics, including social identification and fear of death. In this regard, SMT was strengthened by the triangulation of social psychological theories, including social identity theory, emotional dynamics and TMT. These perspectives proved insightful in understanding the adaptation of religious rites and rituals in coping with the social and existential stressors associated with war. It demonstrated how lower-ranking militants, in addition to leadership perspectives, comprehended, crafted and shared these rites. Explorations into social identification and affection have the potential to lay bare an intimate perspective into the emotive worlds of those who perpetrate acts of violence.

In combination, this dynamic theoretical framework enables an analytical exploration of the political and religious opportunities and constraints in which militia movements emerge and develop. With each of these steps, the adopted perspective becomes more personal and less calculated, moving from the more static structures beyond an individuals' control to the agentic forces that any individual maintains within constrained settings. Within this framework, social action is conceived as both a reflexive deliberation (cf. Archer 2003) as well as a consequence of social structures. Individuals can be the cause of action, but only partially and contingently. Likewise, social structures influence action, but only in their tendencies (Elder-Vass 2011, 105). This critical realist approach allows for individual militants as well as social structures to have causal efficacy in their own right (Elder-Vass 2011, 85). As such, the events of the civil war and the violence of the respective militia movements cannot be fully understood without the consideration of individual participation and contemplation. All analytical levels, as well as their inherent interdependence, need consideration and exploration.

The focus on framing, featured in all stages – the militia movement, the militia leader and the militant – is aimed at deepening insight into motivational and belief structures. Whereas 'religious violence' experts typically focus on belief as a static source for the justification of

mobilisation, SMT directs theoretical focus towards the (socially) interactive and constructed processes that shape ideational structures and their relations to violent mobilisation. Framing dynamically bridges structure and agency, giving statue to a stratified reality. This theoretical orientation combined with archival and interview methods allows for an inside viewpoint, in which militia movements are assessed through their own perspectives, writings and voices. This functional, fluid and familiar application is particularly well suited to the ideologically diverse landscape of the Lebanese civil war, in which diverging religious and secular ideological motivations were featured. The dynamisms that framing proposes might prove fruitful for other case studies as well, as it assists the move beyond primordialism and instrumentalism.

All of the mechanisms and processes identified above – constituting fundamentals within SMT – manifested themselves in the militia movements that mobilised in the Lebanese civil war. This begs the question: Is the theoretical alignment the result of a biased empirical search, or do the identified mechanisms play a significant role separate from the presented theoretical framework? Although the theoretical framework was largely crafted before fieldwork endeavours, being based on decades of social movement research, the actualities I encountered on the ground informed and tweaked the framework that was finally presented in this dissertation. Most significantly, the inclusion of the sub-field of emotions was only elaborated upon after a preliminary examination of collected interview data identified the emotion of fear of death as a recurrent theme. The belated integration of micro-analysis based upon empirical observations shows the importance of fieldwork in advancing theories that resonate with on-ground realities. Although the theoretical framework is both theoretically and empirically informed, the novelty and complexity of its constellation necessitates further corroboration.

The propositioned theoretical framework proved valuable in evaluating 'religious violence' in Lebanon. In order to expand the horizon of the 'religious violence' debate, the theoretical framework should be applied to other case studies, possibly tailoring theories to fit particularities. Although I believe that many of the key mechanisms and processes identified will resurface, the specific properties and patterns that emerged out of their relations are likely to be particular to each empirical case. The familiarity of theories makes this study recognisable and interpretable to any student of social mobilisation, while the flexibility of the framework allows for diverse application. A wider application might help identify what is particular to Lebanon and what is patterned across other instances of 'religious violence'.

The novel and speculative nature of some of the theoretical characteristics necessitate a need for further confirmative and constructive evidence. With an eye on the future, a few areas of developmental interest come to mind. Firstly, the dynamic of IC needs to be corroborated and

refined by widening analytical focus, including an increase in the number of speeches and speakers. IC offers promising new ground from where to quantitatively compare the ideas presented by leaders, focussing on the structures rather than the content of speech. The content of ideas (assessed through framing) sheds light on the direction of behaviour, while the structure (assessed through IC) enlightens the likelihood of the activation of behaviour. Together they answer why and when social mobilisation takes place. Analysing the rationality and social complexity levels of the idea structures of diverging social movement orientations can provide valuable and tangible discriminatory tools to assess the risks of religious and non-religious speech. IC thereby offers exciting new opportunities for the study of ideas in social mobilisation.

Secondly, strides need to be made in the SMT sub-field of emotions (see also the research calls by Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001; Aminzade et al. 2001; Calhoun 2001; Eyerman 2005; Flam 2005). This research focussed on the emotion of fear in the face of death. So far, few academics have devoted attention to this primal anxiety, even though its mediation is essential to ensure (continued) violent mobilisation (notable exceptions include Goodwin and Pfaff, 2001; Gunning and Baron 2013). More generally, the sub-field of emotions would stand to benefit from a further expansion of emotional dynamics and challenges, as micro-dynamics could add invaluable lessons to the study of 'religious violence', thickening descriptions on militants' emotional and motivational worlds. After all, Goldfarb reminds us, social and political change typically do not begin with a bang, it often starts with whispers around the kitchen table (Goldfarb 2006).

Finally, the definitional quest over the meaning and reach of the religious (versus the secular) has not ended here. Especially religion's presupposed 'unique' role in relation to violence needs further probing and (de)construction. Given the ambiguity of the concept but the political salience of the topic, a crucial question is why people continue to insist on relating the concept of religion so firmly with the practice of violence. More resources should be directed at balancing the sweeping generalisations that continue to prevail in public and academic debates. This is a challenging task in an age that is more interested in sensational arguments that are presented in crisp sound bites that confirm that what we already believe rather than complex conclusions (based on patterns of emergence and relationality) that challenge our assumptions and that take time to digest. Nevertheless, this should be our next step. For policymakers (in the West), such observations gesture for an overdue and critical self-examination, priming them to think about how they understand religion and with what purpose such conceptualisations have originated as well as the consequences these carry. For academics, this constitutes a strong reminder that academia and politics cannot be understood as detached realms, both have a role to play in the framing of the 'religious violence' debate.

This thesis began with questioning various approaches to the 'religious violence' debate. Although caveats persist, the thesis contributed to the provision of operational tools and empirical reflections that enable a contextualised, relational and emergent vision on religion's relationship to violent mobilisation, highlighting the importance of macro-, meso- and micro-forces as well as their interaction. A key contribution is the rejection of religion's isolated or unique role in mobilisation processes, instead underlining its interconnectedness with non-religious forces. Religion does not act in isolation, nor is it unique in its power to inspire mobilising movements. By adding new and systematised entrances to a heated subject, academic debates can be evolved and policy orientations can be informed. In a world were violence continues to divide people and destroy land, it is imperative to understand the origins and complexities of conflict. Only a deep and dynamic understanding can enable the realisation of appropriate and sustainable solutions for peace.

AFTERWORD

> "Don't throw teargas, we can cry by ourselves"
>
> - (chant of Lebanese protestors, 2019)[1]

As I am writing the concluding remarks for this dissertation, on 10 February 2020, it seems as if the mass protests that have been rocking Lebanon for months are losing momentum. On 20 October 2019, when the protests had just started, an estimated 1 million people (of an estimated 4,5 million population) went out onto the streets across Lebanon. The protesters – uncoordinated in organisation and leadership – protested against the government, its economic mismanagement and its sectarian constellation. Many of these grievances are consequences of the 1989 Taif accords that contributed to the conclusion of the civil war. At the time, the main obstacles towards peace were understood in two ways: (i) the *religious* character of the conflict, and (ii) the *violent* expression of the conflict. The Taif accords, fathered by the former Speaker of the House, Hussein al-Husseini (interview, 2017-06-02, Beirut), took these two problems as the basic guidelines in crafting a solution.

In an effort to solve the first problem, in which religious differences were seen to have resulted in sectarian mobilisation, the Taif accords re-emphasised the principle of mutual coexistence between the Lebanese sects, ensuring their respective representation in the post-civil war parliamentary electoral law. It thereby maintained the National Pact (see page 97) in slightly modified fashion, transferring some of the power previously reserved for the Maronite Christian sect to that of the Sunni and Shiite Muslim sects (A. Hamdan 2012, 44–46). Although the Taif accords maintained that the political sectarian system was of transitory purpose, depicting its abolition as a national priority, it provided no timeframe for revisions. More than 30 years later, no attempts have been made to reform the political system. If you create a sectarian state, Middle East

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[1] In reference to the 2019/2020 protests in Lebanon, as expanded upon in this chapter.

correspondent Robert Fisk argues, it will remain a sectarian state (Fisk 2019). In other words, through Taif, sectarian divisions were further reified in the political reality of Lebanon.

In regard to the second problem, the Taif accords aimed to reconcile the warring militia leaders in the hopes of deescalating violence. The agreement ensured the disarmament and pacification of all national and non-national militias (with the exception of Hezbollah),[2] in return for elite accommodation. A blanket amnesty was issued. No one was held accountable for the atrocities committed during the war. Additionally, various warlords were incorporated into the post-war political landscape, in which they secured their own representation based on sectarian quota. These warlords turned politicians took to the business of rebuilding Lebanon through largely neoliberal policies that made the poor poorer and the rich richer (C. Geha 2019; Salloukh et al. 2015, 52–69).

The new generation of politicians additionally lent their legitimacy to traditional religious leaders, making the latter a renewed by-product of the post-civil war political system (Henley 2016, 1). Within this framework, religious leaders were responsible for three societal roles, that of spiritual authorities on religious matters, that of administrators of personal status law, and that of public spokesperson for religious communities. Through their monopoly over religious affairs, personal status law and communitarian representation they preserve visions of homogenised religious communities and divisions of a heterogenous citizenry, confining all to communally bound lives. Although most of these religious leaders have invested in religious coexistence (which format justifies their institutionalised roles), their very positions mark sectarian differences.

To mediate the combined problem of 'religious violence', the Taif accords facilitated a peace that reaffirmed and strengthened sectarian differences by a political system of power sharing while ending violence by institutionalising the main perpetrators of the conflict into this system. Political, economic and religious powers were therein concentrated in the very elite group of people that had led the country to and through war. Through these compromises, the Taif accords were able to conclude a 15-year-long violent struggle in a war-torn country. Some commentators, however, have described these compromises as short-term solutions with negative long-term consequences, fearing the looming of another war as former militias retain mobilising infrastructures (although de-militarised) in a religiously diverse/divided society (e.g. Ghosn and Khoury 2011, 388; Fisk 2019; Hermez 2017).

The protests that developed in October 2019 reveal at least two interrelated consequences associated with the aftermath of the Taif accords. Firstly, the emphasis on sectarian compromise and violent cessation led to the marginalisation of deeper grievances, including growing inequalities,

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[2] Hezbollah was allowed to stay armed in the capacity of a resistance force against Israel in the south.

widespread corruption, lack of basic social services and weak educational institutions. Secondly, the Lebanese citizens have developed a negative perception of government competence, intention and representation. A 2019 survey by Transparency International established that 80 percent of Lebanese citizens have "little or no trust in their government" and 89 percent think government corruption is a big problem. Although the initial impetus for the protests could be described as a direct reaction to a rapid economic collapse and proposals for increased taxation, the main demand of the protestors was the downfall of the country's post-civil war sectarian politicians, who they blame for their economic hardships (Azhari 2019).

Journalists described the protests as "unprecedented" (Dabashi 2019), in that the Lebanese are not only demanding accountability from the government at large but also from their own sectarian leaders (Azhari 2019). On the streets, people are expressing solidarity with the shared grievances of other sects and regions. Martyr square, the focal point of protest, is coloured red, white and green, symbolising the unity of the Lebanese national flag. Despite that some sectarian elements could be detected from the start – including supporters of Amal and Hezbollah clashing with peaceful protestors, chanting 'Shiite, Shiite' – the protests have been relatively peaceful, drawing all sects, ages and strata of society together (Najmuddine 2019; Molana-Allen 2019). This stands in stark contrast to previous protests waves that saw streets divided by colour, representing different political movements associated with divergent sectarian groupings, which is more "typical for semi-democracies such as Lebanon" (Knudsen and Kerr 2012, 5). The protests demonstrate a wish for economic improvement, a stance for political reform and a sentiment of national unity.

On 21 January 2020, a new cabinet was presented, backed by Hezbollah, the Future Patriotic Movement and their allies, who still hold a parliamentary majority (Aljazeera 2020). None of the new cabinet members are career politicians, in fact, most of the new appointees are university professors (Battah 2020). This move was aimed at accommodating part of the protestors' demand, who called for the de-sectarianization of the political system. The electoral law and the distribution of key positions, however, are still arranged along sectarian lines. Moreover, some critics pointed out that at least half of the new ministers have served as advisors to or supporters of former politicians (Battah 2020), leaving the impression of a latent but continued sectarian rule.

Although the formation of the new government has resulted in the majority of protestors to retire from the streets (for now), structural changes and reform remain elusive – at best. Even more than the Taif accords, the current solution seems to be a superficial fix. The sectarian structures retain their dividing power, as the old elites and alignments are still influential and religious leaders continue to represent religious communities as homogenised wholes in a divided society. All the while, the merchant elites and their political allies continue to extract resources

from a country in economic downfall. It is difficult to predict how these dynamics will develop in the near future. It is clear, however, that the Lebanese are confronted with a rigid sectarian system. But who will triumph in this tug of war?

Taking a step back from the immediacy of the Lebanese crisis, I started this thesis with setting out a dichotomised view on the opinions that characterise the 'religious violence' debate, pitting those who envision a firm causation against those that see no causal relation. Binary perspectives make the world understandable. There is an 'us' and a 'them'. There is religion and there is secular. There are protestors and there are elites. Wading into the complex waters of Lebanese sectarianization, it becomes clear that there rarely are clear-cut explanations, religion's impact on society and mobilisation only emerge in relation to other structural undercurrents and agentic forces, including interpretations of political opportunities, resource access and emotional attachments. This observation requires better tools of understanding. It necessitates continued dialogue and non-binary perspectives. Similarly, the opportunities for change and reform in Lebanon, as demanded by protestors, needs further attention, in which religion is not understood as an independent variable but as a relational factor in a complex and emergent reality.

12.

APPENDICES

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1. Chronology of Wartime Events

1975

26 February	'Protein Affair' or Fishermen Dispute: The Lebanese Army clashes with labour movements in Sidon
13 April	Assassination attempt on Kataeb leader Pierre Gemayel. In retaliation, armed partisans of the Kataeb party attack a bus with Palestinians. Retrospectively, these events mark the beginning of the civil war
April	On different fronts across Lebanon fighting erupts
23 May	Franjiyeh appoints 'military cabinet'. The cabinet falls after three days
6 July	Karami forms six-man cabinet, excluding Jumblatt and Gemayel
6 July	Imam Musa al-Sadr announces the existence of the Amal militia
6 December	'Black Saturday': Muslims are attacked and killed in the port of Beirut by Kataeb militants, in retaliation for the murder of four Kataeb members
December	'Battle of Hotels': Fierce battles in the hotel district in Central Beirut

1976

January	The Palestinian refugee camps in the Christian sectors of east Beirut are besieged
	The Lebanese Army starts to disintegrate
	Several Christian villages are attacked and cleansed by the PLO and the LNM
	The Lebanese Front is established
22 March	Fall of the Holiday Inn hotel
6 May	Jocelyne Khoueiry and her 'girls' win the battle at Martyr Square
June	Syrian troops enter Lebanon on invitation of President Frangieh and with the consent of the Lebanese Front
25 July	Syrian President Hafez al-Assad criticises the LNM and the PLO in infamous speech
August	The LF are founded under the leadership of Bashir Gemayel
November	Arrival of ADF in Lebanon, who formally end the two-year civil war

1977

January	Press censorship in Lebanon
16 March	The Druze feudal chief Kamal Jumblatt, leader of the PSP and LNM, is assassinated

1978

February	Clashes between the Syrian Army and the LF
14 March	'Operation Litani': Israel invades south Lebanon
19 March	UNIFIL is deployed in south Lebanon
13 June	Tony Frangieh and his family are murdered by the Kataeb forces
July	'100 days' battle: Battle between the LF and Syrian army
31 August	Amal leader Imam Mussa al-Sadr vanishes upon a fund-raising mission in Libya

1979

Continuation of violent confrontations between LF and Syrian troops

Israel initiate air raids on south Lebanon

February　　　Iranian Revolution

1980

Israeli air raids on south Lebanon continue

July　　　'Unification of the (Christian) gun': Bashir Gemayel coordinates an internal and bloody offensive to unite the LF

1981

Israel increases air raids on south Lebanon

PLO and LNM organise cross-border operations against Israel

2 March　　　Start of the LF-Syrian battle over the city of Zahleh in the Beqaa

1982

6 June　　　Israel invades Lebanon

23 August　　　Bashir Gemayel elected President of Lebanon

14 September　　　Assassination of Bashir Gemayel

15 September　　　The Israeli invasion reaches west Beirut

15-17 Sept　　　Massacres at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps

16 September　　　LNM coordinate operations against Israeli occupation

21 September　　　Amin Gemayel elected President of Lebanon

29 September　　　Israeli army leaves Beirut

November　　　Fighting begins in the Mountain between the PSP and the LF

1983

	Israel withdraws from the Mountain
September	'Mountain War' between the PSP and the LF
31 October	Reconciliation conference at Geneva

1984

6 February	The seize of west Beirut by Amal and the PSP, aided by Syria
February	MNF withdraw from Lebanon
12 March	Second reconciliation meeting in Lausanne
April	Karami government is installed

1985

12 March	Uprising by the LF cause a split from the Kataeb
March	Violent inter-militia confrontations in west Beirut
May	'War of the camps': Amal militias attack and besiege Palestinians refugee camps in west Beirut and southern Lebanon
June	Israel retreats to the Litani river
November	Clashes between Amal and PSP in west Beirut
28 December	Tripartite agreement between the leaders of the LF, Amal and the PSP

1986

| | Continued hostilities between PSP and Amal |
| *15 January* | Second uprising in the LF, causing the annulment of the tripartite agreement |

1987

February   The government asks Syrian troops to re-enter west Beirut in order to suppress militia rule and their internal confrontations

1 June   Assassination of Prime Minister Rashid Karami. He is replaced by Salim el-Hoss.

Sep-Oct   Amal clashes with PLO, Syrian troops and PSP

1988

May   Amal and Hezbollah clash in the southern suburbs of Beirut

22 September President Amin Gemayel assigns army general Michel Aoun as head of the new military government; disapproving Muslim authorities form an opposing government under Salim el-Hoss

1989

January   Amal and Hezbollah come to an agreement

14 March   Aoun starts 'War of Liberation' against Syrian troops

September   Ceasefire arranged by the Arab League

October   In Taif, Saudi Arabia, the Lebanese parliament negotiate and accord to end the civil war

November   President René Moawad is assassinated; Elias Hrawi is elected as new President; Aoun denies legitimacy of Hrawi

1990

31 January   Clashes between the LF and the Lebanese Army

February   Aoun-Geagea pact

October   Syrian army besieges the presidential palace in Baabda; Aoun flees

November   Based on the Taif agreement, the Lebanese government declares the end of the civil war.

2. Warring Coalitions

For synopsis on the militia movements see chapter 3, section 2.1.

The Lebanese Front

The Lebanese Front was established in January 1976, joining several Right-wing Lebanese nationalist parties, including the Kataeb party led by Pierre Gemayel, al-Ahrar headed by Camille Chamoun, the Marada Brigade under the command of Suleiman Frangieh and the Monastic Order under the leadership of Father Sharbil Qassis. As such, the Front was headed by a number of notable Christian (primarily Maronite) political, religious and intellectual figures. In terms of ideology, the Lebanese Front maintained a neutral position towards the Arab-Israeli conflict, while it strongly objected to the presence of the PLO on Lebanese soil, which it regarded as a threat towards Lebanon's unity and sovereignty. The Front was critical of the Leftist and pan-Arab militia movements, who in their view, compromised a Lebanese Lebanon.

The Lebanese Forces (LF)

The LF were founded a few months after the Lebanese Front in August 1976, functioning as its official joint military command structure. Initially, Bashir Gemayel commanded the Lebanese Forces in collaboration with the other military leaders. In 1980, following a bloody battle, referred to as the unification of the (Christian) gun, Gemayel gained exclusive control. The LF, with the help of Israel, grew into a well-oiled and hierarchical military structure. In 1985, Elie Hobeika and Samir Geagea staged a coup to gain independence from the Kataeb party and President Amine Gemayel's rule. In 1986, following further internal struggles, Samir Geagea became the principle leader of the LF.

Lebanese National Movement (LNM)

The LNM, founded in 1969, grouped a heterogeneous set of Leftist and national parties under the leadership of Kamal Jumblatt. The movement strove for socio-economic reforms and challenged the confessional-based political system. The movement supported the Palestinian resistance on Lebanese soil and the two fronts enjoyed each other's support and coordination on the battlefield. Towards the end of the civil war - following the assassination of Kamal Jumblatt, the Israeli invasion and the evacuation of the PLO from Lebanon – the LNM started to dissolve.
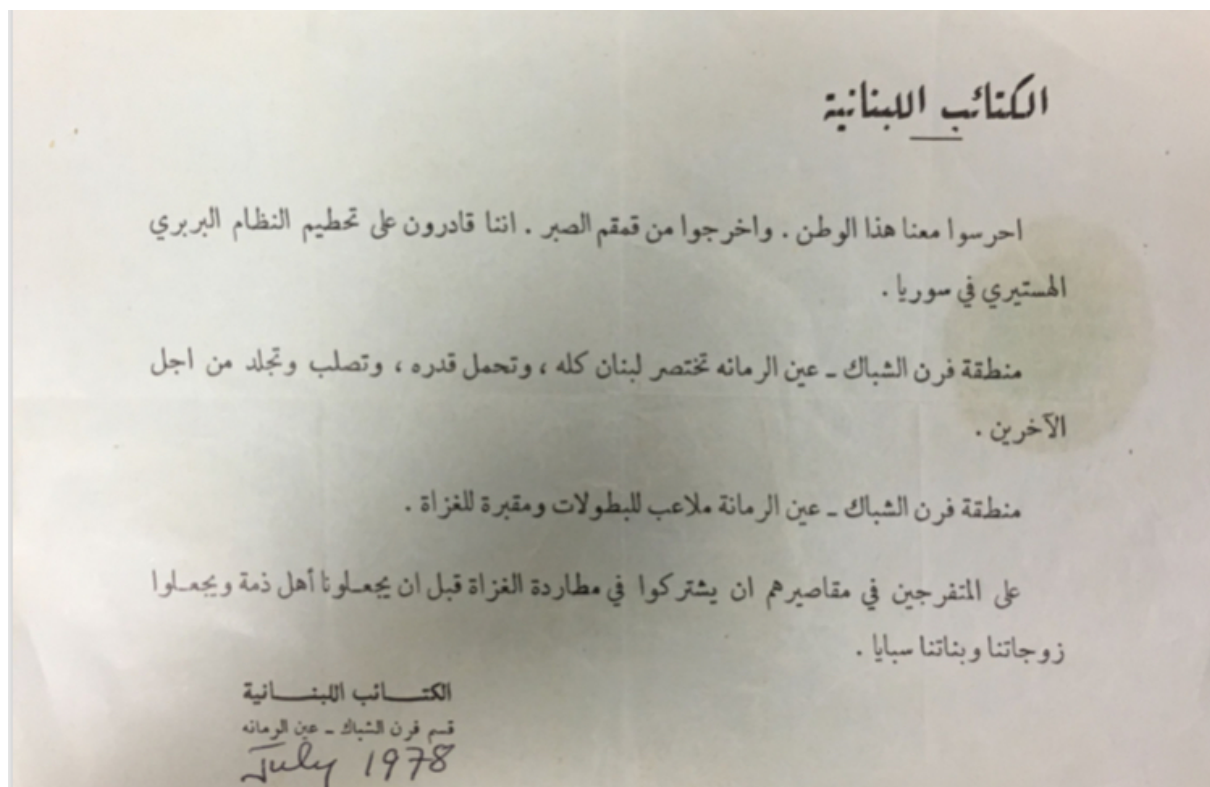
3. Visuals

<u>Visual 1</u>

Syrian President Hafez al-Assad breastfeeding Maronite baby.

Publisher: PSP newspaper *Al-Anbaa*

Source: *Al-Anbaa*, 1976-07-19/25

الكتائب اللبنانية

احرسوا معنا هنا الوطن . واخرجوا من قممم الصبر . اننا قادرون على تحطيم النظام البربري الهستيري في سوريا .

منطقة فرن الشباك ـ عين الرمانه تختصر لبنان كله ، وتحمل قدره ، وتصلب وتجلد من اجل الآخرين .

منطقة فرن الشباك ـ عين الرمانة ملاعب للبطولات ومقبرة للغزاة .

على المتفرجين في مقاصيرهم ان يشتركوا في مطاردة الغزاة قبل ان يجعلونا أهل ذمة ويجعلوا زوجاتنا وبناتنا سبايا .

الكتـــائب اللبنـــانية
قسم فرن الشباك ـ عين الرمانه
July 1978

Visual 2

"Defend this nation with us. Move away from the depths of patience. We can destroy the barbaric, hysterical regime in Syria.

Furn el Shubak and Ain el Remmaneh represent all of Lebanon, and carry its fate. It is being skinned and crucified for the sake of others.

Furn el Shubak/Ain el Remmaneh is an arena where gladiators fight, and a grave where invaders (Syrians) die.
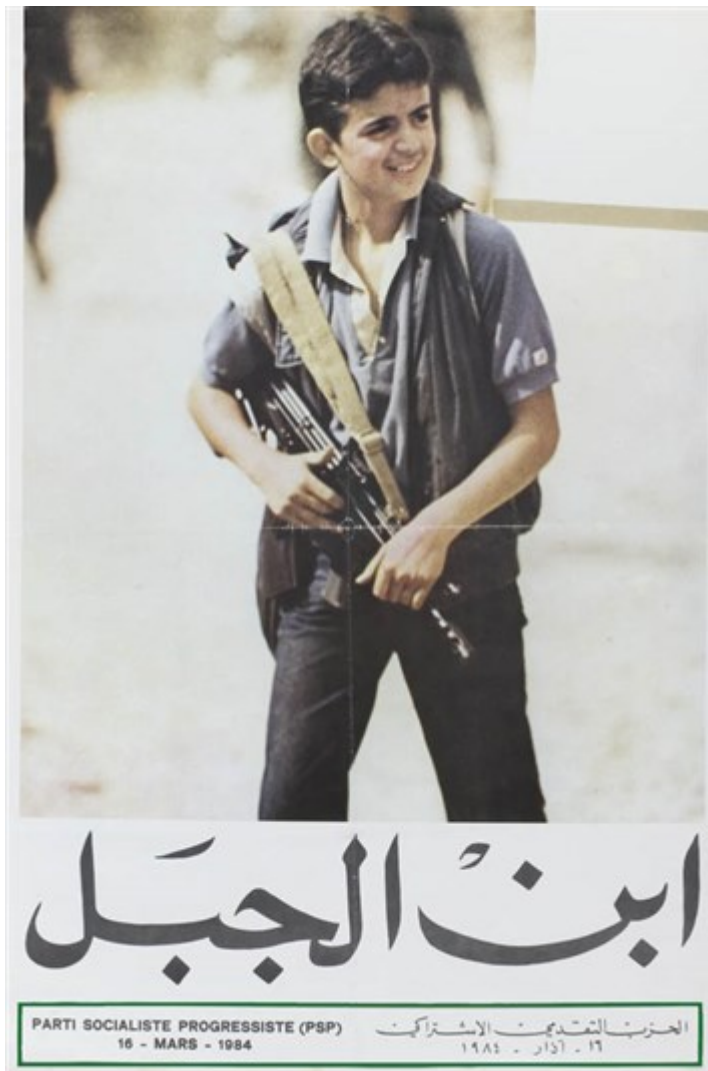
Spectators must join us in chasing down invaders before they force us to convert [to Islam] and turn our wives and daughters into sex slaves.

Lebanese Kataeb
Furn el Shubak/Ain el Remmaneh division"
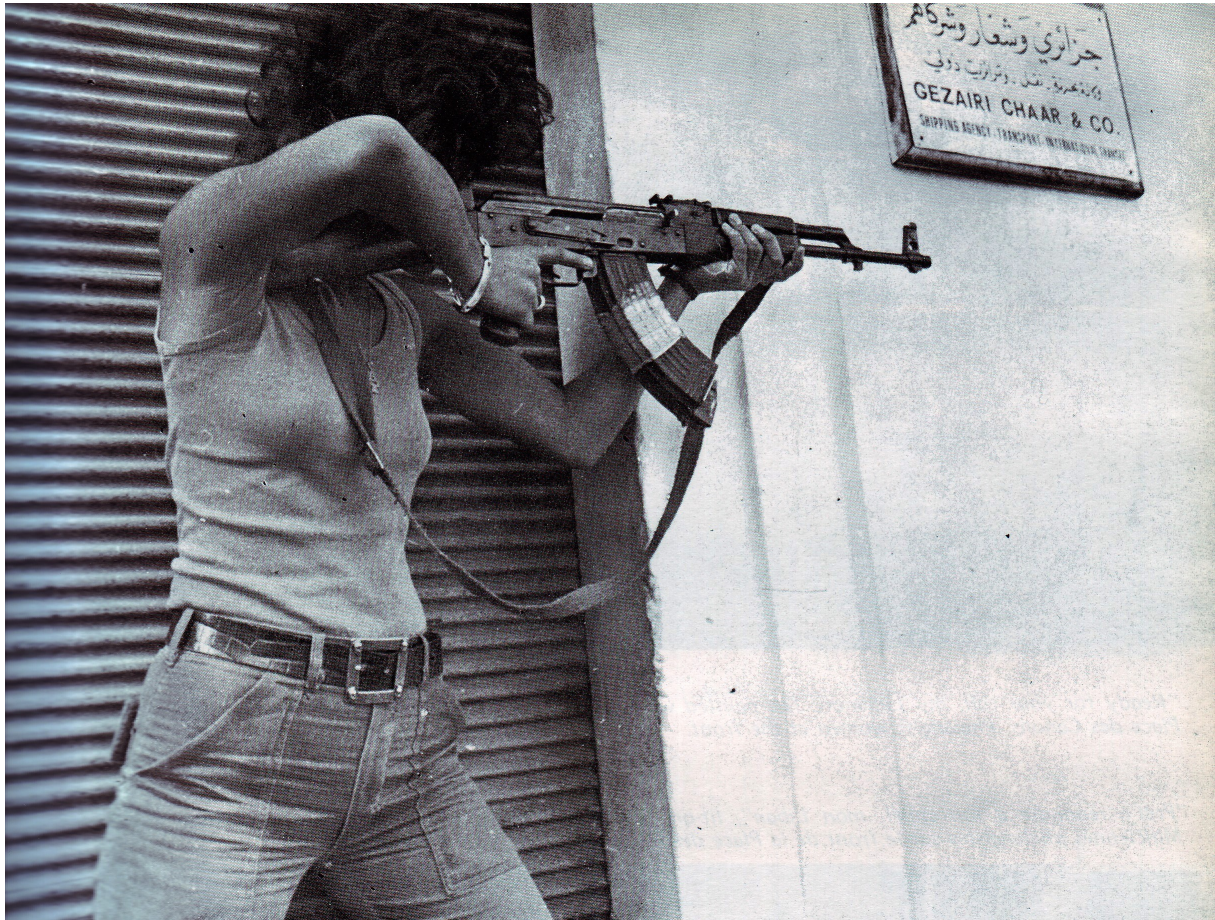
Publisher: Kataeb
Source: AUB Archives

Visual 3

Poster from 1984: "The Mountain Upbringing"

Publisher: PSP

Source: Hezbollah media office collection

Available at: http://www.signsofconflict.com/Archive/poster_details/1756

Visual 4

Kataeb militant Jocelyne Khoueiry

Source: Google image search

Visual 5
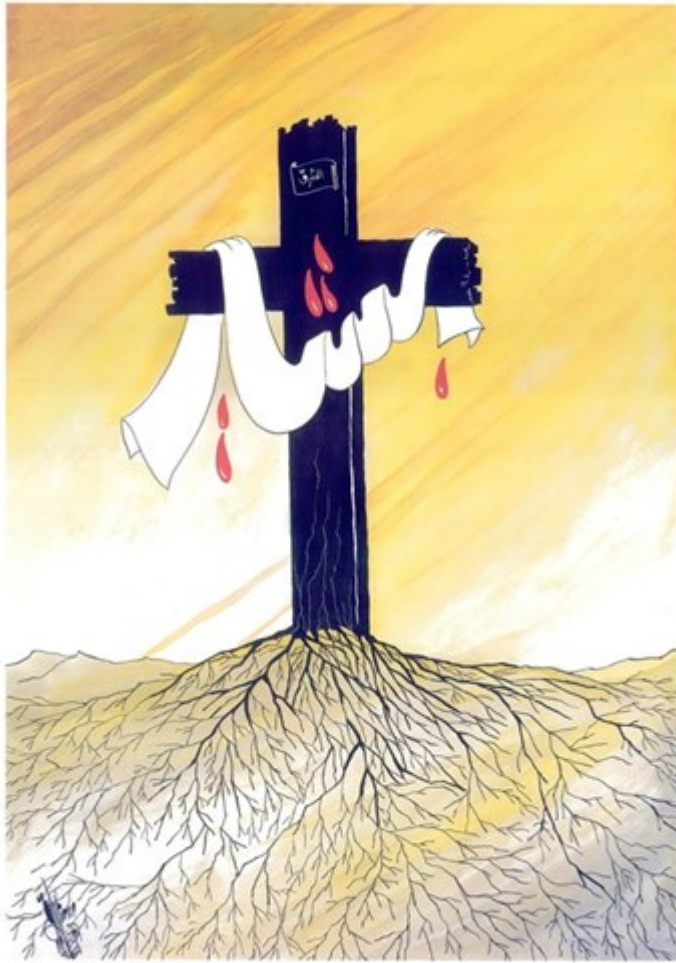
Cartoon of Bashir Gemayel with thorn crown by Pierre Sadek

Publisher: Kataeb

Source: Wassim Jabre collection

Available at: http://www.signsofconflict.com/Archive/poster_details/2192

Visual 6

Cartoon of Cross with white draped cloth spelling Bashir by Pierre Sadek

Publisher: Kataeb

Source: Wassim Jabre collection

Available at: http://www.signsofconflict.com/Archive/poster_details/2191

Visual 7

"The Lebanese Resistance Cross Inspired by oriental crosses has three meanings:

1. Our saviour Jesus Christ's cross. In red for martyrdom and glory.

2. Lebanon's Christian Cross. For their suffering throughout history.

3. "The cutting" at the base: refers to the strength of Lebanon's Christians and their determination to keep the cross planted in this part of the world.

Date of launching:

This Cross has been launched by the chaplaincy of the Lebanese Forces during "the Resistant prayer's day" at Saint Charbel monastery in Anaya on April 19, 1984.

The chaplaincy of the Lebanese Forces is the only Party who has the right to manufacture and distribute this Cross"

Publisher: Saint Charbel monastery

Source: Courtesy of Wassim Jabre

شهيدة جبهة المقاومة الوطنية اللبنانية

لؤلؤة البقاع لولا الياس عبود

«جبهة المقاومة الوطنية هي الطريق الوحيد للتحرير والتوحيد والتغيير الديمقراطي»

«من طلب انتساب الشهيدة لولا الياس عبود الى الجبهة»

استشهدت في عملية بطولية في ٨٥/٤/٢١ ضد قوات الاحتلال الاسرائيلي وعملائه.

Visual 8

"The pearl of the Bekaa Lula Elias Abboud. The (Lebanese) National Resistance Front is the only path to liberation, unification, and Democratic change. Extract from the enrollment applications submitted by the Martyr Lula Elias Aboud. She was martyred in a Heroic operation on 21/4/85 against the Israeli occupation and its agents"

Publisher: The LCP

Source: Zeina Maasri collection

Available at: http://www.signsofconflict.com/Archive/poster_details/2078

شهيد جبهة المقاومة الوطنية اللبنانية
الرفيق جمال ساطي
بطل عملية تفجير مقر الحاكم العسكري الاسرائيلي في حاصبيا

«لا يهمني متى وكيف واين سأموت، بل كل ما يهمني هو أن
تبقى الثورة مشتعلة في كل أنحاء الأرض كي لايسام العالم بكل
نتنه فوق اجساد الفقراء»

استشهد في عملية بطولية في ١٩٨٥/٨/٦ ضد قوات الاحتلال الاسرائيلي وعملائه
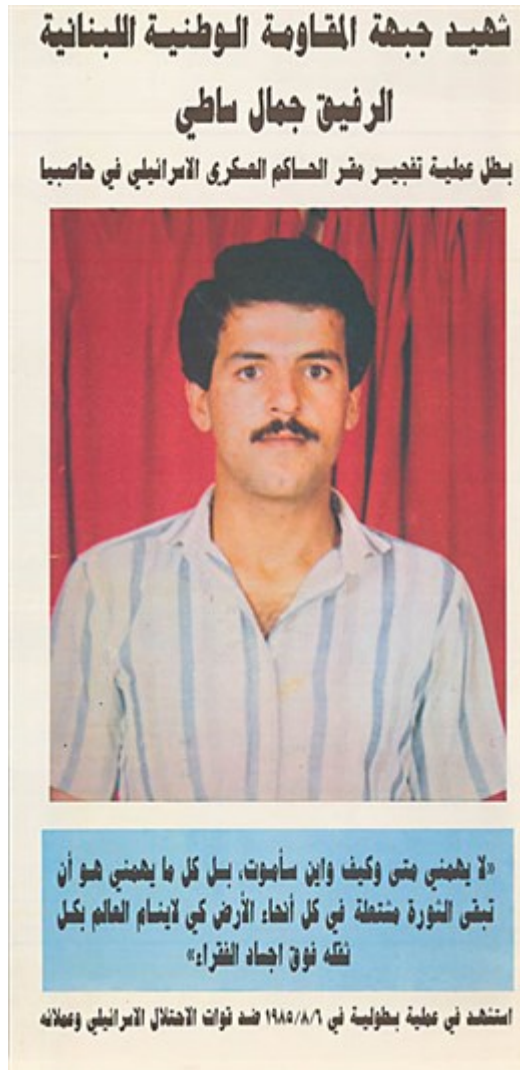
Visual 9

"The martyr of the Lebanese National Resistance Front comrade Jamal Satti. The hero of the operation of the detonation of the headquarters of the Israeli military commander in Hasbaya"

Publisher: The LCP

Source: Zeina Maasri collection

http://www.signsofconflict.com/Archive/poster_details/2083

Visual 10

"The groom of the South. The martyr Bilal Fahs"

Publisher: Amal movement

Source: Hezbollah media office collection

Available at: http://www.signsofconflict.com/Archive/poster_details/1755

13.

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Abou Khalil, Joseph, 19-07-17, Beirut

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Abou Nader, Fouad, 28-06-17, Dora

Abou Saad, Nohad, 17-08-17, Beirut

Al-Ali, Rabih, 20-06-17, Brih

Alwan, Samir, 17-08-17, Beirut

Ammacha, Haydar, 22-06-17, Beirut

Andary, Paul, 15-05-17, Adma

Anonymous, 15-05-17, Beirut

Anonymous, 24-05-17, Beirut

Anonymous, 28-05-17, Beirut

Ashkar, Massoud (Pussy), 06-07-17, Beirut

Assaad, Nassim, 01-06-17, Beirut

Chaftari, Assaad, 06-05-17, Beirut

Daeibes, Tanios, 04-07-17, 11-07-17, Beirut

Diab, Badri Abu, 05-06-17, Beirut

Dirani, Fouad, 01-06-17, Beirut

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El-Amine, Rashed, 08-06-17, Beirut

El-Khalil, Moufid, 04-07-17, 11-07-2017, Beirut

Faraj, Daoud, 17-05-17, Tyre

Father Mouwaness, 10-07-17, Beirut

Fayad, Chahine, 16-05-17, Beirut

Gemayel, Amine, 14-08-17, Bikfaya

Graizi, Fadi, 29-08-17, Beirut

Hamadieh, Rashed, 28-07-17, Beirut

Hamdan, Kamal, 22-06-17, Beirut

Hamieh, Akl, 05-08-17, Beqaa

Hamieh, Mohammed, 05-08-17, Beqaa

Hareb, Rajed, 11-09-17, Beirut

Hariz, Lama, 22-08-17, Beirut

Helou, Henri, 29-07-17, Baabda

Hmayed, Ayoub, 24-08-17, Beirut

Husseini, Hussein, 02-06-17, Beirut

Jabre, Wassim, 20-07-17, Beirut

Jammal, Gaby, 17-05-17, Saida

Judge Halibi, Abbas, 30-01-17, online interview

Khalaf, Tarik, 12-06-17, Beirut

Khoueiry, Jocelyne, 28-06-17, Chouf Mountain

Khoury, Ibrahim, 22-05-17, Beirut

Khoury, Maroun, 26-06-17, Beirut

Mahmoud, Farid, 28-08-17, Beirut

Mroue, Kariem, 30-06-17, Beirut

Nasrallah, Mohammad, 02-08-17, 18-08-17, Beirut

Nassredinne, Fadi, 01-06-17, Beirut

Radwan, Amira, 11-09-17, Beirut

Rayes, Rami, 21-07-17, Beirut

Saab, Walid, 20-06-17, Brih

Saab, Ziad, 26-04-17, 14-09-17, Beirut

Saad, Salwa, 29-05-19, Shoukh al Gharb

Safi, Walid, 31-07-17, 02-08-17, 22-08-17, 28-08-17, Beirut

Salma, Abou, 22-08-17, Beirut

Shaykh al-Halabi, Ghassan, 20-07-17, Beirut

Shaykh al-Tufayli, Subhi, 27-08-17, Beqaa

Shaykh Haidar, Abid, 27-08-17, Beqaa

Shaykh Mohammad Haj, Ali, 26-07-17, Beirut

Slim, Lokman, 22-06-17, Beirut

Souasaydan, Sleiman, 27-08-17, Beqaa

Traboulsi, Fawwaz, 30-08-17, Beirut

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