

LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Scrutinizing Perpetual Insecurities:  
A Dilemma Facing Lebanese-Syrian Relations  
By

FARAH M. HAGE ALI

A thesis

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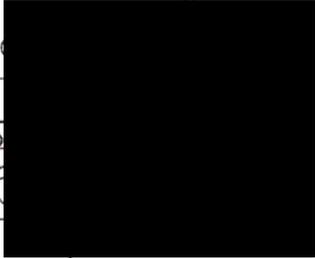
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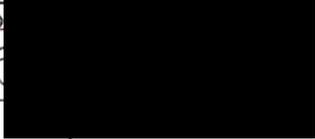
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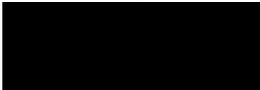
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## Dedication Page

To my loving parents

I would like to thank my parents Mustapha and Batoul as well as my brother Ahmed, and my two sisters Nadine and Maia for their constant support and endorsement.

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## AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Farah M. Hage Ali for Master in International Affairs  
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### Scrutinizing Perpetual Insecurities: A Dilemma Facing Lebanese-Syrian Relations

Third World states face a host of overlapping external and domestic threats. This thesis examines the causes and consequences of Lebanon's insecurity dilemma, and looks at Lebanon's relationship with Syria from a security complex perspective. Using an eclectic theoretical approach, the thesis investigates the structural, institutional, psychological and social causes of Lebanon's insecurity dilemma, and the latter's impact on state institutions, state-society relations, and Lebanon's relations with Syria. This thesis demonstrates how Lebanon's insecurity dilemma creates a self-perpetuating confessional system that exposes the country to external interventions. Accordingly, this thesis also considers whether it is possible to escape the trap of the insecurity dilemma in the future.

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# **Chapter One**

## **An Eclectic Study of Insecurities**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This thesis highlights the insecurity dilemma phenomena through an extensive study of the Lebanese-Syrian case. Analyzing inter-state and intra-state relationships is a priority in order to elaborate the situation from an analytical and methodical perspective. Insecurities are broad issues with a multitude of facets and levels ranging from the political, economic, social, demographic, military, ecological, and environmental. Therefore, understanding the major sources of insecurities is vital for defining and setting up the basic dynamics of the relationship between Lebanon and Syria, as well as for regulating internal relationships within Lebanon.

Strong bonds have dominated the Lebanese-Syrian relationship since mandate rule in the region. Unfortunately, however, the brotherly relationships between the two countries broke down after the Syrian withdrawal in 2005. The dramatic events of 2005 were the main factors behind the reanimation of the hidden conflict between the two states and within Lebanon as well. Accordingly, understanding the rapid turn of events followed by an extensive analysis of the current situations may expose the real sources of the conflict.

The internal divisions as well as external ones are major focal points for analyzing and understanding the situation. Studying political parties, the juridical sector, police divisions, and civil society, or what can be identified as the vertical axis

(depending on the hierarchy principle), is necessary for analyzing and understanding the relationship between the government and citizens. Therefore, comprehending and examining their direct and indirect influence on national security and policy formation is a priority for understanding the main causes of internal insecurities. On the other hand, highlighting and studying the horizontal axis of this division helps in defining the relationship between the different parties including institutional functions and interactive relations within the state.

Examining Lebanese politics alone is an insufficient condition for determining the nature of the relationship and the resultant insecurities with Syria, however. Rather a review of the Syrian state structure and Syrian policies is necessary for investigating the nature of the insecurities jeopardizing the relationship with Lebanon. Accordingly, emphasizing the horizontal axis (for interpreting inter-state relationships) is necessary to elaborate and highlight the basic elements responsible for shaping the authentic relationship between Lebanon and Syria. Although the insecurity dilemma method is mainly concerned with internal rather than external threats, highlighting the horizontal axis (by focusing on external relationships) is vital for locating the state in the context of regional and international powers.

The insecurity dilemma phenomenon as presented by Brian Job (2005) is a characteristic of Third World states especially weak ones with frail capabilities. This model is especially designed for studying and analyzing countries like Lebanon. The negative impact of insecurities on our societies hinders the progress and prosperity of the state and increases the division between the main constituents of the society. Once the society is deeply divided and fractured, it is hard to find a common ground for a stable community, a prerequisite for development and progress. Lebanon and

Syria are outstanding examples with a multitude range of insecurities generated by daily interactions. Many intertwining forces represented by sectarian, ethnic, and political divisions affect the structural composition of the Lebanese society and exert an impact on its domestic and foreign policies. Such divisions' affect interests and turns unity into an impossible mission. Consequently, this affects relationships with neighboring states. Thus, the main and basic features of the insecurity dilemma dominate and turn into a major source of tension, and are presented by the excess in using illegitimate coercive force against citizens, lack of proper infrastructural and institutional forces, and lack of legitimacy derived from citizens. Brian Job (2005), Barry Buzan (1991), Georg Sørensen (2007), and John Glenn (1997), and other prominent scholars have examined most of the insecurity dilemma attributes and enriched the concept with valuable interpretations.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Questioning and investigating the nature of insecurities in Lebanon is vital for clarifying the misperceptions concerning recurring upheavals. Thus, what is Lebanon's insecurity dilemma, and is it possible for Lebanon to escape this enforced phenomenon? How can Lebanon achieve this?

Defining the real situation through intra-state and inter-state relations can reveal the prospects for inter- and intra- insecurities in Lebanon, and defines how the insecurity dilemma affects state-society relations. These research questions help apprehend the dangers of the enforced and generated circumstances and their impact on daily life.

### **1.3 Case Selection and Methodology**

Lebanon and Syria have always enjoyed close but problematic relations. Syria has always looked upon Lebanon as its security backyard. This, in turn, has invited Syrian intervention in Lebanon, creating mutual insecurity dilemmas between the two states. This thesis investigates the causes of these dilemmas, mainly by comparing the difference in the state structure between the two countries, their policies, and social and behavioral reactions.

This situation has reflected negative effects on Lebanese politics, economics, societal, and military conditions, and threatened stability and security factors. Bloody confrontations have resulted in casualties and major destruction, which have affected the lives of ordinary citizens and caused demographic changes. The possible break down of the state demanded urgent actions to limit the proliferation of endless insecurities including research and academic studies, which possess potentials for finding possible solutions through rational and sensible analysis faraway from political interferences.

The insecurity dilemma is a major theory in international relations, discussing problems facing Third World countries extensively. It also presents important explanations for the possible sources of insecurity in Third World states. Despite various limitations, the insecurity dilemma tries to bring forward the real causes and effects of instabilities, vulnerabilities, and insecurities in states like Lebanon and Syria by combining behavioral, domestic, social, and structural realism approaches in order to reveal the nature of insecurities.

Theoretical interpretations are the appropriate solution for clarifying the conflict inside Lebanon as well as between Lebanon and Syria. Thus, focusing on international relation theories sustained with empirical studies facilitates the process of explicating ambiguities through identifying state structures and relationships, and the consequent insecurity dilemma. Both analytical and rational approaches are basics for investigating the dilemma from a rational stance with an emphasis on important key-points. Weak states like Lebanon are subject to manipulations from external powers. The chaotic situation leaves the space open for unfavorable interferences in domestic affairs. However, when a state is sufficiently strong to defend its domestic arena; it leaves no opportunity for external and foreign interventions. The strong state reinforces its situation and obliges other powers to respect its sovereignty and independence. Geographic location and historical connections made Lebanon and Syria security zones with interdependent security interests. Accordingly, studying the long-term as well as the short-term, direct and indirect forces is recommended for reducing uncertainties and misperceptions between the two peoples and states.

A variety of secondary sources are used in this research. The sources mainly depend on specialized books related to the topic explaining and discussing pertinent theories as well as history and foreign policies of Lebanon and Syria. The scholarly articles complete the discussion and enhance the analysis with precise and explicit reviews concerning insecurities affecting the state and society structures and relations. Certified web pages and accredited reports in addition to televised interviews and news enrich the research with updated and ongoing incidents in order to contemplate their impact on the general situation.

## **1.4 Map of the Thesis**

This thesis is divided into five chapters responsible for elucidating and examining the nature of the relationship between Lebanon and Syria from the insecurity dilemma perspective. The next chapter undertakes a comprehensive study of the insecurity dilemma and its impact on weak states, especially Third World ones. By studying this concept theoretically we may determine the state-society relations and institutional and infrastructural capacities that result in insecurities. Chapter three highlights and dissects the case study into its major components in order to correlate with and prove actual evidences by theoretical approaches. Thus, configuring the historical background sheds light on the contemporary relationship through the intervening and interacting forces, which condition the insecurity and vulnerability levels and affect the stability factor. Chapter four discusses the impact of direct and indirect human forces on studying the nature of actions and reactions towards policies from the normative and existentialist perspectives. Such an attempt reveals the contradiction between the importance of regulations and the struggle for existence and survival. The psycho-social analysis explains the outcome resulting from intentional and unintentional insecurities generated by the existence of dominating interests and power gaining. The final chapter summarizes the main concepts and derives the appropriate answer to the research question after analyzing the insecurity dilemma phenomenon comprehensively and thoroughly.

## **Chapter 2**

### **The Insecurity Dilemma: A Theoretical Context**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the theoretical context and highlights different interpretations of the insecurity dilemma. The deteriorating situation in almost all Third World countries, and especially weak ones, created opportunities for the spread of the insecurity dilemma. Therefore, focusing on the analysis of the state structure, state-society relations, the impact of political parties, and state capabilities and authorities, can enrich the research, because these form the conditions for either generating or dispersing insecurities and instabilities.

This chapter discusses the insecurity dilemma emphasizing the definitions provided by Brian Job and Barry Buzan. The next step highlights the importance of the state structure in defining the insecurity levels, including the impact and effects of the dominant political parties. Measuring the institutional capabilities of the state can also help in identifying the strength, sovereignty, authority, and identity factors, as well as enriching the analysis of state-society relations. Subsequently, the prevalence of the security, infrastructural, and capacity gaps reveals the importance of discussing the legitimate and illegitimate use of force as a means to protect group interests, or as a tool to protect the state from possible threats. Inefficiency and helplessness provoke gaps and reinforce threats, but dependency creates frail societies and weak states. Therefore, all these factors are integral parts of the insecurity dilemma, which ought

to be elaborated and discussed thoroughly. State institutions are exposed to different factors and forces due to their dynamic and motivating functioning, and in turn, they can affect state stability and security.

## **2.2 The Insecurity Dilemma**

Guaranteeing the security of the state and society is a priority. Theorists began studying the insecurity dilemma extensively due to the increase in threats and vulnerabilities to states and societies. Researchers have tried to explain the main factors behind insecurities, since they generate chaos and a state of anarchy that is inescapable. Therefore, state structure and the behavior of the society are keys for understanding the concept and identifying its causes. Insecurities are not just a cause for chaos; they are also an effect. They cause vulnerabilities and threats, and they are caused by disorder and confusion. In this thesis, the study of the insecurity dilemma is strictly related to state structure and actors with regional and international alliances that have an influence on domestic policy-making. According to Job (2005), “the state is at issue in most conflicts” (p. 18). Intra-state factors concern Job more than inter-state ones. He highlights the main causes and consequences generated from the (action-reaction) relationship between the different and diversified participants. The components of society vie to preserve and protect their own well-being (Job, 2005). When weak states cannot provide security for their own citizens, as Buzan emphasized, chaos and foreign interventions dominate, creating an unstable situation (1991). Their instability causes threats and vulnerabilities to neighboring states.

Therefore, the insecurity dilemma is associated with the general condition of Third World countries and especially weak ones.

### **2.2.1 Descriptions and Definitions**

After discussing the background of the insecurity dilemma briefly, it is important to define the term thoroughly due to the wide range of interpretations and the multiple opinions concerning insecurities, which lead to a variety of definitions. For Job, “Third World states must cope and function within a unique and particularly troublesome security environment... a condition that we shall characterize as an insecurity dilemma” (2005, 14). He identifies four variables for detecting the insecurity dilemma:

1. Within the borders of the state, there is often no single nation... Instead, there are usually a variety of communal groups contending for their own securities and for supremacy over their competitors.
2. The regime in power, therefore, usually lacks the support of some significant component of population, because the regime represents the interests either of a particular ethnic or social sector, or an economic or military elite that has control...
3. The state lacks effective institutional capacities to provide peace and order, as well as the conditions for satisfactory physical existence, for the population.
4. ...Internal threats to and from the regime in power, rather than externally motivated threats... (Job, 2005, 17-18).

By focusing on internal threats rather than external ones, then, Job missed an important direct and/or indirect generator of these threats. External powers are one of multi-activators that can influence state elites and social players, especially in weak states. Consequently, external powers have the capacity to affect policy-making and have the power to increase conflict within societies. They empower one communal

group or political party over opposing groups, therefore creating tension and increasing disputes. By attempting these unfavorable acts, they are creating a sense of insecurity for some sectors that may lead to chaos within the state.

Similarly, Barry Buzan argues that “only when one has a reasonable idea of both the nature of threats, and the vulnerabilities of objects towards which they are directed, can one begin to make sense of national security as a policy problem” (Buzan, 1991, 112). In fact, and unlike Job, Buzan considers external threats as a factor of insecurities and not only a consequence. He claims that “national security policy can either focus inward seeking to reduce the vulnerabilities of the state itself, or outward, seeking to reduce external threats by addressing its sources” (Buzan, 1991, 112). Consequently, weak states become subject to manipulation and exploitation, a situation that most Third World countries face. But, the main issue remains focused on the idea of how weak states can minimize the prospects of deterioration and slipping into a failed state status. It is a hard and rough course, especially for states with little or no capabilities. On that account, states should seek to reduce their insecurities either by reducing their vulnerability, or by preventing or decreasing levels of threat imposed by other states (Buzan, 1991). Despite the differences in interpreting state insecurities, both Job (2005) and Buzan (1991) agree that weak states are overwhelmed with discord and dissension. This results in an increase of threats and instabilities.

The security complex is another concept introduced by Buzan (1991) for complementing the idea of national insecurity to examine security studies. He defines the concept as, “A group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered

apart from one another” (Buzan, 1991, 190). Thus, Buzan (1991) distinguishes between three major factors that result in the formation of this complex. He emphasizes the levels of threats, security interdependence, and outside pressures as the main features of the complex. “Since threats operate over short distances,” Buzan argues, “security interactions with neighbors will tend to have first priority” (1991, 191).

Lebanon and Syria are two countries intertwined by a set of interdependent relations. Their relations are tremendously affected by the sensitivity of their geography and historical background, which adds more burdens on the intensity of the security requirements. The mutual respect and recognition of the independency and sovereignty of both states can enhance relationships and minimize disputes, but this is not the only solution and path to escape different interferences. Open dialogue for delineating misconceptions and misinterpretations, can help both states overcome their disagreements. Inevitably, amity (based on friendship relations that provide support and protection) can eliminate any possible dispute, since relationships are built and based on mutual respect. On the contrary, relations built on enmity (based on suspicious and fearful interactions) increase the prospects of insecurity and conflict. States have to strengthen their internal powers and capacities in order to abate dependency levels on external ones. Thus, preserving harmony secures the state and maintains the status quo in the face of the occurring and recurring hostilities and transformations.

### **2.2.2 Insecurity Signals**

But why is security so necessary and who needs it? Is it possible to escape

insecurities and minimize security gaps? If so, then how can be achieved?

By referring to the definition of the insecurity dilemma, we notice the impact of state performance on society's behavior and the reflection of interaction with our surrounding. Unfortunately, the concept of weak states reinforces the idea of insecurity, but survival remains the ultimate target. Survival strategies are designed to satisfy needs and secure individuals as well as states, and "the choice of components for one's strategy of survival is severely constrained by available resources, ideas, and organizational means" (Migdal, 1988, 27). The four variables of the insecurity dilemma explain the presence of gaps that results in the weakness of the state. Although not all four features of the insecurity phenomenon can be found at the same time in the same country, states still face major threats that endanger their stability and security. The sovereignty factor helps in creating states and maintaining their integrity as a requirement for gaining supreme authority and ultimate source of law, which enhances the constitutional independence of the state (Holsti, 2004). Sovereignty allows states to guarantee their existence and activate their membership in the international arena. They are basic requirements for benefitting from the World Bank, joining international organizations, exchanging diplomats, and acquiring the necessary authority to negotiate and ratify treaties (Holsti, 2004).

Unfortunately, due to their dependence on international recognition, the sovereignty and authority of Third World states are controlled by great powers. These powers regulate and dominate their decision-making process. This ensures that Third World states will always remain weak powers with total or partial dependence on their sensibilities and capabilities. Negative sovereignty<sup>1</sup> reinforces insecurity features, and encourages weak attributes that exacerbate excess vulnerabilities and

generate more problems.

“National security is the right of states, and sovereign states claim it as a right, the right for independence and non-intervention” (Jackson, 2005, 87). States possess the legitimate right to use force against any source of threat either internally or externally. They have the right to defend their borders against threats and to preserve their sovereignties as well as their independence. Security institutions and agencies own the adequate and legitimate means to enforce sanctions and promote defense. They are responsible for ensuring stability and security for survival. But, the main concern remains restricted to the capabilities and efficiencies of these institutions, as well as the dynamic players who mobilize and rule them.

Lack of capable institutions, and especially security ones, affects the general performance of the state and reinforces disputes and invites interferences. When crime levels escalate and disorder intensifies, this leads to an increase in security, legitimacy, and capacity gaps. As a result, tension and stagnant relations dominate communities and parties and increase the divide between the state and society. In this case, the state and its institutions, but chiefly military and police divisions commanded by ruling elites, may turn into a source of threat and transform to an oppressive tool against their citizens. They become more oppressive, because they believe in obedience rather than loyalty (Buzan, 1991). Inevitably, the society as a core element of the state can jeopardize capacities and promote total weakness and fragility, whereas unified, loyal, and cohesive societies reinforce the overall capabilities of the state.

### **2.3 The Strong-Weak State Dialectic**

Discussing the insecurity dilemma requires an analysis of the concept of strong and weak states. Many states face different kinds of threats, ranging from military to environmental, economic, and social. Consequently, states are subject to vulnerabilities and insecurities without any protective measures. This is exacerbated in Third World states because of an increase in confrontation and incompatible competition between and among different communal groups, which fragments society and creates a state of anarchy. As Kenneth Waltz suggests, “States vary in more than their status as powers. They also vary in terms of their degree of sociopolitical cohesion” (as cited in Buzan, 1991, 97).

The strong-weak state concept is defined by depending on different perspectives, allowing states to be measured in accordance to external and internal factors. The external factors determine the capacity of the state to interact in the international arena, whereas the internal factors emphasize the performance of the institutions inside the state as well as state-society relations (Job, 2005). The institutional capacities and functions, for Buzan, are measuring tools of the strength or weakness of the state. Buzan thus notes that:

Weak states either do not have or failed to create, a domestic political and social consensus of sufficient strength to eliminate the large-scale use of force as a major and continuing element in the domestic political life of the nation. Weak power is one that lacks economic and military capability in relative terms vis-à-vis the other states in the system. A weak power lacks effective institutional capacities and is not able to efficiently mobilize its potential natural and human resources (as cited in Job, 2005, 21).

On the other hand, Joel Migdal defined strong states in relation to their institutional capacities. “Migdal perceives the strength of the state in the ability of

state leaders to use the agencies of the state and to get people in the state to do what they want them to do” (as cited in Job, 2005, 21). This relationship between the state and society, from Migdal’s perspective, is important to determine the power and strength of the state. He views the state as the ultimate source and the only entity that can use coercive power legitimately. Therefore, and according to Migdal, the state holds the necessary capacity to extract natural resources, and possess legitimate power to impose its authority over society (Job, 2005).

Migdal believes that the main attributes of a strong state are as follows: 1) The ability to extract resources; 2) The ability to mobilize the population; 3) Infrastructural capacity and service provision; 4) Effective usage of coercive force; 5) Military and police capabilities; and 6) Social cohesion (Job, 2005). Furthermore, divided societies make weak states and fragile communities. Their impact on the state is devastating, given that they promote disputes and invite external intervention, which creates insecurities. Consequently, when the state gradually starts to lose its capabilities, and becomes a weak and vulnerable one, it tends to seek all means of protection including the use of illegitimate coercive force in order to ensure its longevity, and to preserve the narrow interests of the state elites. This creates a sense of instability, vulnerability, and fear among the citizens, and it can turn into a real threat to society, even though the normal role of the state is to ensure protection (Buzan, 1991). Inescapably, state attributes and structures affect state-society relations.

The ability to deter external threats and secure borders depends on the availability of military capacities, and in turn, military capabilities require an adequate police sector for preventing internal disorder. The latter can undermine state cohesion

and promote fragmentation. On that account, citizens become more dependent on their government for providing them with the necessary security internally as well as externally. An effective police sector ensures efficient and equitable implementation of regulations for stable societies, and enhances the function process of state institutions, which guarantee adequate supply of public goods and services in addition to preserving the welfare of the society. Lack of a capable security sector encourages corruption and promotes system defects, and as a result some governments encourage a partnership with the private sector as a reform tool, which promotes a strict regulatory system with rapid revenue collection. This attempt minimizes the prospects of individual dependency on the public sector. “As a policy procedure,” Buzan notes, “the state sacrifices the interests of some for what is seen to be a higher collective interest” (1991, 45). This can jeopardize the relationship, and increase gaps, between citizens and the government. Furthermore, preferring the private sector to the public one promotes excess in labor strikes due to inhuman regulations that advance profits and incompatible competition to normal human relations. It results in chaos as a response to the dismissal of laborers and imbalanced relations between the employer and employee based on lack of trust and liability. In turn, labor syndicates demand security and support for their rights against any arbitrary actions accompanied with decreasing quality and quantity of services. Suspicions and inquiries overwhelm the relationship between the state and society. As a result, Migdal perceives the relation between the state and society as a competitive and contradictory one: “the state is frequently in opposition to much of society it contains” (as cited in Buzan, 1991, 45).

## 2.4 State-Society Relations

As a first step, it is important to identify types of states in order to address the nature of state-society relations. The assumption that the state is the ultimate source of authority infers that it seeks legitimacy from the consent of the citizens. This also assumes a distinction between maximal and minimal states.

“Maximal States depend on the notion that the state should constitute more than the sum of its parts and it has interests of its own that might derive from a number of sources” (Buzan, 1991, 40). The minimal state, however, depends on the concept of the social contract as developed by John Locke, and requires a mutual agreement of the citizens who make it up. Governors require the consent of the citizens who are capable of judging the state according to the impact of accomplishments and achievements on interests and needs of the society. Consequently, “states are perceived as the cumulative sum of their components” (Buzan, 1991, 39). The maximal state appears to be more aggressive and oppressive than the minimal state, and accordingly, state-society relationship depend on the general structure of the state in addition to the performance and orientation of the regime in power. But, when do regimes act differently than others, and subsequently affect the welfare and interests of their citizens? What is the distinctive feature that shapes the state actions and defines their attitudes towards the public?

State-society relations in maximal states differ from those in minimal states, mostly in defining the levels of demand and interactions. There is the necessity for survival and well-being of individuals, but the exploitative attitude of state elites prevents its accomplishment despite the fact that the state is an independent entity and a source of support and protection (Buzan, 1991). Preserving security and stability

requires maximal states to pay more attention to the needs and interests of their citizens. This attention secures the relation between the state and society, and prevents clashes that might lead to drastic civil wars and loss of international legitimacy due to inefficient mobilization of human resources (Buzan, 1991). Naturally, the state demands respect and obedience of regulations in order to guarantee the security and stability of society, but sometimes intentions depart from flawed declarations and become aggressive in nature especially when interests supersede values. Consequently, defects exacerbate and turn the relation between the state and society into a skeptical one. However, this distinction between state-centered and society-centered approaches to state-society relations, in addition to institutional factors, is significant for molding patterns of domination (Migdal, 1994).

Because regimes control the decision-making process, they can be considered a key element in mobilizing struggles and creating insecurities, which creates a “mutually transforming interaction between components of the state and social forces” (Migdal, 1994, 9). As an interactive challenge depending on actions and reactions, individuals seek support and security from their states, but the misuse of state powers turns into a source of threat to personal securities. Buzan captures this dilemma well,

The individual citizen faces many threats, which emanate either directly or indirectly from the state... Such threats can be grouped into four categories: 1) those arising from domestic law-making and enforcement; 2) those arising from direct administrative or political action by the state against individuals or groups; 3) those arising from struggles over control of the state machinery; 4) and those arising from the state’s external security policies (1991, 44).

The possibility of conflicts intensifies as a result of the intended or unintended use of state power, which creates domestic fissures. Accordingly, the subsequent disorderly

domestic state of affairs encourages external interferences in domestic affairs.

Migdal argues that, “any struggle for domination in society involves the essence of how these societies are and should be constituted, their norms and rules, regulations and laws, symbols and values” (1994, 10). In domestic conflicts, the state loses its legitimacy and authority to govern, and accordingly citizens refrain from considering state institutions as the legitimate authority responsible for implementing regulations and governing society. As a response, citizens start to mobilize their efforts to defend their rights, given that the state has become a part of the struggle. Furthermore, the possibility that “the state may reflect its human components (statesmen and rulers) to some extent, it quickly becomes more than the sum of its parts (maximal state feature), and therefore develops non-human modes of behavior (interests overcome values)” (Buzan, 1991, 62). Powerful statesmen and state elites take advantage of their positions and manipulate state institutions and decision-making processes for their own benefit. A single actor with multi-functions possess the capability to reinforce other active actors in the society, as well as regional and international ones, and this results in an insecurity dilemma with multitude security, capacity, and legitimacy gaps.

#### **2.4.1 Security Gaps: Sources and Outcomes**

Security is an essential element in determining stability and ensuring state prosperity; therefore, it is an effective tool for sustainable development and equitable progress. Unfortunately, Third World states are subject to different direct and/or indirect, internally and/or externally imposed pressures, which create major security gaps. These gaps can be powerful enough to break down weak states, thus they turn

into failed states with no capabilities or authorities. Nonetheless, it is important to take into consideration that security gaps are not static, since security levels oscillate and fluctuate according to the intensity of threats. The insecurity dilemma according to Georg Sorenson results in three kinds of gaps: the “Security Gap” is the inability to protect the population within the state; the “Capacity Gap” is the inability to provide necessary social values; and the “Legitimacy Gap” is the lack of popular support (2007). Accordingly, “the human cost of weak and failed statehood is extremely high” (Sorensen, 2007, 366).

Weaknesses and conflicts within the state intensify insecurity levels, and promote more chaos and instability. Inevitably, regional powers benefit from the domestic vulnerabilities of their neighbors. For them, it is considered a medium to benefit from, and increase their securities in order to preserve their status as powerful regional actors. As a natural response, they attempt to interfere in domestic affairs and empower allied groups to ensure their future domination and secure their position in the region. In order to benefit from the chaotic situation and cause a change in domestic affairs, foreign powers ought to be sufficiently influential. Over and above, states do not guarantee to exercise absolute influence by interfering in the domestic affairs of other states, unless they gain domestic allies. Domestically, actors also search for their own allies at the domestic, regional, or international levels to support their cases and provide them with the necessary military, economic, logistic, and financial help. Accordingly, when interests meet; goals can be easily achieved. As a result, the outcome becomes the struggle of foreign powers through the mobilization of domestic groups for their own benefits.

Sovereign and independent states try to minimize gaps and reduce insecurities by enhancing and strengthening state capabilities. Therefore, capabilities and resources are important for defining and shaping their power, because their authority and legitimacy is an indication of the loyalty of their citizens. Thus, maintaining the relationship between the state and society is significant; it aims to preserve security and reduce the insecurity dilemma features.

In principle, Robert Jackson suggests that, “every state is independent in the management of its own affairs... and foreign interference is a violation of rights” (as cited in Job, 2005, 87). National integration is necessary for ensuring the unity of the state and preserving security, thus actors tend to define interests in accordance with their needs and circumstances, whereas interests depend on identities embodying actions and reactions. Because individuals constitute societies, power and knowledge become basic determinants of both. Ernest Haas argues that, “Individuals are not the captives of system structure, but can influence the course of events. Changing knowledge can lead to redefining interests; organizations can adapt and learn” (in Viotti and Kauppi, 1989, 319). Unavoidably, since knowledge and experience can change according to circumstances and progress, competition rather than cooperation becomes more intense. It reveals the hidden skepticism between the competing groups in plural societies, which results in a state of anarchy. The anarchic system is perceived as the basis for defining competition, self-help, and the political environment that states operate under (Buzan, 1991). When security, capacity, and legitimacy gaps grow, thus hindering the development process, the relationship between the state and society deteriorates.

Accordingly, identifying the causes of these gaps can strengthen the analysis and limit unnecessary misperceptions. Depending on the categorization provided by Job, then, insecurities could be classified according to direct and indirect forces with internal and external influences on the long or short term (see Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1: Direct/indirect causes of internal/external defects and insecurities on the long/short term**

| CAUSES   | DIRECT/LONG-TERM   | INDIRECT/LONG-TERM   | DIRECT/SHORT-TERM  | INDIRECT/SHORT-TERM   |
|----------|--|--|--|---|
| INTERNAL | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Low Institutional functioning</li> <li>2) Clientelism and corruption</li> <li>3) Inequitable development, which increases deprivation</li> <li>4) Internal migration due to deprivation and under-development</li> <li>5) Misuse of state assets and natural resources</li> <li>6) Internal disputes as a result of strained state-society relations</li> <li>7) Diverting Interests result in fluctuation in the performance of political parties</li> <li>8) Profound disputes between different parties causing excess in opposition</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Plural society and confessional system</li> <li>2) Ineffectual electoral laws, which increase exclusion and alienation</li> <li>3) State structure and political parties</li> <li>4) Debilitating regulations, which increase discrimination</li> <li>5) Loyalty to ethnic, tribal, and communal groups plus religious leaders rather than the state</li> <li>6) Demographic irregularities plus increase in migration rates</li> <li>7) Presence of gaps</li> <li>8) Lack of cohesive societies</li> <li>9) Lack of infrastructural capabilities</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Illegitimate use of force against citizens</li> <li>2) Corruption and misuse of assets and resources</li> <li>3) Deterioration of infrastructural capacities</li> <li>4) Economic stagnations</li> <li>5) Oppressive political parties and statesmen</li> <li>6) Demographic irregularities</li> <li>7) Unemployment and under-employment</li> <li>8) Technological advancement affects the performance of state institutions</li> <li>9) Lack of experienced and skilled workers</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Corrupted statesmen and state elites</li> <li>2) Gap between the state and society</li> <li>3) Social discrimination</li> </ol> |

|          |  |  |  |  |
|----------|--|--|--|--|
|          |  | 10) Lack of popular legitimacy<br>11) Weak institutional performance   |  |  |
| EXTERNAL | 1) Foreign interferences reinforce the division of the society and domination of state institutions<br>2) Reinforcement of discrimination sustained by the loyalty to foreign allies depending on communal, sectarian, and religious basis | 1) Globalization and interdependence<br>2) Transnational and international corporations, which can dominate and regulate national economies<br>3) Emergence of a new kind of a protectorate system | 1) Military intervention<br>2) Enforcement of strict conditions on financial assistances and loans<br>3) Institutional reformation helps in accomplishing domestic interests | 1) Foreign interferences through international organizations, which can either be of partial presence or total replacement of the natural role of the state institutions in providing services |

## 2.5 International, Regional, and Domestic Responses to State Insecurities

The international community plays an important role in resolving disputes and promoting peace and security within and among states. The mutual recognition of sovereignties and independence of states encourages them to enhance their role as protectors and defenders of rights and laws. Undoubtedly, the international community promotes the concept of non-intervention and prevention of weapon proliferation to protect the rights of sovereign states. The main mission is to promote national as well as international peace and security.

“For four-plus decades the international system operated under the influence of the superpowers, creating a security environment of pervasive penetration” (Job, 2005, 13). Superpowers ensured that Third World states developed within a global context dominated by them. A set of conditions and regulations governed the development process of Third World states, enabling the international system to interfere either directly or indirectly in the domestic affairs of almost all developing

states. In turn, such interferences affect state regulations and decision-making processes, ergo influencing local actors by the performance and function of a specifically designed set of regulations, which govern and control state institutions. Furthermore, state-society relations are left under the indirect control of foreign powers. In many instances, this situation exceeds the capacity of the state to absorb consequences, and results in a decline in the performance of state institutions. Therefore, states and state elites become agents of superpowers. As Buzan (1991) notes:

The local states do have considerable influence over how external powers impinge on their affairs. But, they have little ability to control external penetration unless they are able to resolve the local rivalries, which generate the demand for external support (1991, 222).

Domestic cohesion requires cooperation between different social actors and state elites, otherwise the level of external interferences in domestic affairs increases. External actors seek to weaken the government in order to control it. Both domestic and external allies reinforce each other and help in vexing their rivalries through empowerment and extra funding based on interests and benefits (Buzan, 1991). Consequently, resources play an important role in foreign interferences by providing political parties and state elites the necessary material as well as non-material support in order to ensure the loyalty of their followers. Foreign parties manipulate domestic political games, since they constitute a vital source of financial funds as well as military supplies. Such actions raise the anger of other opposing parties, which might drive them to respond in an aggressive manner depending on the intensity of their reaction.

Regional states interfere in the affairs of neighboring countries to protect their own security. However, unlike the behavior of international actors, regional states

need to limit the spread of conflicts, which might affect their internal politics as well as their regional status and interests. The international response is much more general in nature than the regional one; it is derived from the sense of obligation to international peace and security, or to geopolitical rivalry. Nonetheless, interests and the general welfare of states have shaped the response of international actors. International intervention in regional and internal disputes alarms some groups, and urges them to react to such interferences either by balancing or bandwagoning in order to protect their interests and their regional position.<sup>2</sup> As a result, clash of interests may emerge and bring about turbulence and stagnation.

International and regional responses demand preservation, and accordingly they seek trustworthy and reliable domestic allies. That is to say, some domestic allies empower the international and regional forces and grant them the required legitimacy and authority to act freely. This cooperative relationship between and among them authorizes the implementation of international resolutions by exerting pressures and enforcing laws, and in turn, they aim to force disputants to abide by the rules in order to safeguard states and secure societies.

### **2.5.1 The Overlap Between Domestic and External Actors**

Domestic governments seek resources to fund development projects required to guarantee their legitimacy. They seek international recognition as a condition for legalizing their authority permitting them to issue and pursue regulations necessary for their integration in the international arena as independent and sovereign states. The ultimate mission of the government is to protect the society through legal enforcement of rules and regulations, thus providing equitable distribution of

resources to prevent discrimination and communal and ethnic conflicts. Statesmen and state elites may face fierce opposition during the implementation of certain decisions, which contradict with the interests of some minorities or other communal and ethnic groups. Accordingly, they constitute a major threat to the government by promoting confrontation and reinforcing fragmentation resulting in the generation of opposing parties. Each party seeks international, regional, and domestic allies for gaining the necessary and intended support. This action and reaction creates tension in the domestic affairs and intensifies the confrontation between and among government actors. According to Buzan, then:

Domestic political violence frequently opens the door to the further threat of external intervention, either as participant on one side or the other (the Syrians and the Israelis in Lebanon...), or as invaders taking advantage of a state weakened by internal disputes (1991, 46).

Unquestionably, domestic conflicts have international and regional dimensions as a result of direct and indirect interferences in the decision-making process. Foreign interference in domestic affairs increases the levels of exploitation and corruption, because international approval on domestic decisions can be demanded as a condition for the continuity of their support and assistance. An obvious overlap of foreign interests and domestic needs govern the decision-making process and instead of enhancing the situation, they result in insecurities and instabilities.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter examined state-society relations in Third World states from the insecurity dilemma perspective. The state structure shapes institutional capabilities and state-society relations. Internal cohesion and harmony between and among different communities within society defines state survival. Cooperative relations minimize the possibilities of fragmenting society, which invites external intervention in domestic affairs. As a result, dependency on external powers increases and development decreases due to the possibility of using illegitimate force by state elites against citizens to preserve their longevity and survival. Thus, different alliances emerge between different groups, whether domestic or foreign, in order to preserve their interests. The next chapter discusses how Lebanon's insecurity dilemma allows Syria to intervene in Lebanon's domestic politics, and highlights the nature of the historical as well as the new, post-2005, relations between the two states.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Plural Societies and Insecurities: A Dilemma Facing Lebanese-Syrian Relationship**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

“Throughout history, Syria and Lebanon have been one country and one people” (Dawisha, 1980, 37). This assertion by President Hafez Asad emphasizes the importance of the relationship between Syria and Lebanon for the Syrian leadership. The emphasis on the “one people” expression reflects the combined interests, shared history, and common background of both states. This chapter compares and contrasts the differences and similarities governing the relationship between both countries. It also distinguishes between the different state structures and plural societies in Lebanon and Syria, which affect the overall performance of the state. Despite the fact that they are one people in two countries, threats and vulnerabilities governed Lebanon and Syria’s relations reaching a critical stage, which led to the dramatic events of 2005.

The chapter opens with a brief analysis of the historical background in both countries. This helps establish the sources of the insecurity dilemma in Lebanon and its intermittency in Syria. The resilient attitude of political parties influences foreign policy towards each state, and affects the overall performance of the state as well, without missing to differentiate between the structures and orientations of the political parties themselves. This plays a decisive role in determining the features of the insecurity dilemma in Lebanon and Syria.

### **3.2 Analytical Assessment of the Position of Lebanon**

The existence of sectarian groups in Lebanon influences the socio-political system and affects the level of social cohesion. Lebanon's plurality, in addition to the existence of a confessional system, aids in fragmenting political decisions. Despite the frequent attempts to normalize and stabilize the society, sectarian antagonism precedes all other calculations. Since the declaration of Greater Lebanon in 1920, the formation of the modern state has faced several insecurities. Each sectarian group grapples and struggles for domination in order to enhance its political position. As Kamal Salibi has noted: "As Arab Nationalists, Sunnites and Shiites saw that their incorporation in a Lebanese state under Christian domination meant their permanent separation from the Arab Moslem World" (Salibi, 1977, 169). In *A House of Many Mansions*, Salibi (1988) highlights the direct influence of the French mandate on the state structure and constitutional order. In *The Break-Down of The State in Lebanon*, Farid El Khazen (2000) examines the influential role played by different sectarian groups in shaping the political confessional system. He notes that, "Lebanon opted for a unitary state with centralized administration, but preserved the communal political structure embodied in the confessional system" (Khazen, 2000, 95). This is a major defect in Lebanon's state structure, which promotes cyclical crises and insecurities.<sup>3</sup>

Both Christian and Muslim political elites and social groups have chosen to ignore the real causes of Lebanon's problems and search for others to blame. In order to achieve the intended results in analyzing the situation in Lebanon, defining the identity of the state and examining state-society relations are vital. Consequently, assembling essential facts and incidents can enhance the discussion and enrich the

research with valuable outcomes. No doubt, foreign influences have contributed immensely to the deterioration of the situation by favoring one sectarian group over others.

### **3.2.1 Status and Identity Formation**

Lebanon gathers a number of unique identities, contributing to external interferences in domestic politics and the decision-making process. Because different interactive forces can influence identities, developing a strong identity is a means for achieving the security of citizens and stability of societies. According to Peter Berger:

Identities are inherently relational: Identity, with its appropriate attachments of psychological reality, is always identity within a specific, socially constructed world... Each person has many identities linked to institutional roles, such as brother, son... Similarly the state may have multiple identities as sovereign, leaders of the world... (as cited in Wendt, 1992, 397-398).

Enhancing the sense of pride in a nation requires developing capable states with strong identities.

Lebanon is marked by a diverse society combining different social groups governed by a confessional system. Thus, differences in orientations and ideologies have contributed to the formation of Lebanon's plural society, whereas direct and indirect foreign influences helped in generating sectarian, communal, and confessional disputes intensified by vulnerabilities and insecurities. Different parties in the plural society desired strengthen their position within the state for maximizing their benefits and expanding their presence through identity formation (identifying them as strong and powerful rather than weak and vulnerable). Because of the subsequent inadequate competitive situation, the legitimacy and authority of the state

declined due to empowerment of some groups at the expense of others.<sup>4</sup> For Michael Handel, “The cycles of security and insecurity and of influence and impotence in weak states like Lebanon are largely determined by the structure of the international system and the position of the state in that system” (as cited in Mubarak, 2003, 2).

Lebanon has several powerful sectarian and communal groups supported by foreign powers, all competing to preserve their position and ensure security for their communities. The excess in dependency on foreign powers for securing interests increased the diversity of society and created major security, capacity, and legitimacy gaps inside the state. By weakening state capabilities, chaos and insecurities exacerbated and generated bloody civil wars in 1958 and 1975. The Lebanese state lacked the necessary capabilities to prevent conflicts, a result of the excess in loyalty to traditional families, mostly sectarian political parties, and sectarian institutions. Eventually, this state of affairs undermined state institutional performances and effectiveness owing to the advantage of sectarian loyalties over national ones. As a result, deteriorating infrastructural powers and capabilities opened the space wide for external interferences and disputes, which ended up in a protracted civil war.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, the insecurity dilemma as presented by Job best captures the actual situation of Lebanon.

### **3.2.2 Behaviors and Actions**

Seeing that Lebanon became a victim of powerful forces, the outcome of the events led to different types of conflicts between state and society. The state needed to regain its normal role as a governing entity, whereas communal groups benefitted from the weakness and vulnerability of the regime and strengthened their position

through developing their own security zones. The conflict between the state and society generated an unusual state of affairs and fostered the weakness of state institutions. Therefore, the legitimate use of coercive force against possible reprisals was not possible, as society is growing stronger than the state. The absence of a ripe moment made the achievement of goals impossible. Despite the fact that the Syrians were against any military interventions in solving the Lebanese disputes, the deteriorating situation had left them with no other choice<sup>6</sup> except to use force. “The final motivation impulse for the Syrian involvement in Lebanon during the crisis was the growing concern of Syrian decision-makers with the persisting confessional character of Lebanon’s civil war” (Dawisha, 1980, 105). Consequently, Lebanon’s position in accordance to regional and international powers was and is still subject to different inquiries. The weakness of the state and lack of sufficient capabilities turned Lebanon into a dependent entity on foreign powers and endowments. The occurring and recurring dramatic incidents left the state with immense burdens resulted in insecurities. The dependence on regional and international powers for securing interests increased the prospects of internal disputes and decreased the authority and legitimacy of the Lebanese state.

The situation in Lebanon has not changed much, and remains the subject of much research. There have been extensive studies questioning the status and nature of the identity of Lebanon and its position as an influential and decisive entity in accordance to regional and international powers. In spite of all the difficulties and continuous dependency on external forces for security and stability, Lebanon has tried to emerge as a sovereign state. Unfortunately, the impact of the political parties and

the presence of a confessional system increased the deteriorating situation instead of enhancing security and stability factors.

### 3.2.3 Political Parties and their Effects

Kamal Salibi notes that:

If the various factions are to lay down their arms and live in peace and full co-operation as citizens of one country, the Lebanese will first have to reach a consensus on what makes them a nation or political community, and this can only be achieved if they manage to agree on a common vision of their past (1988, 17-18).

Two major political parties were present at the formation of the modern state in Lebanon: the Constitutional Bloc headed by Bishara El Khoury and other

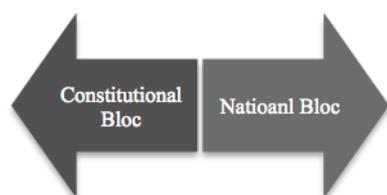


Figure 3.1: Illustrates the divergence in interests.

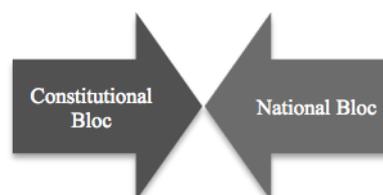


Figure 3.2: Illustrates confrontation due to divergence in interests.

prominent Muslim Leaders who favored Pan Arabism, and the National Bloc headed by Emile Edde (who spearheaded Lebanese Nationalism) and was supported by the French. A major dilemma dominated the political scene and aided in fragmenting the social structure by increasing insecurities among vulnerable groups. It created a sense of unrest and chaos combined with massive vulnerabilities and threats, which led to a hesitant and unstable national security. Consequently, “the role and capacities of the state become dependent on factors that falls beyond the state’s domestic control” (Khazen, 2000, 91).

Hence, potent elites supported by foreign powers controlled the decision-making processes, increased the levels of dependency on external actors, and opened

the domestic space widely for other communities and groups to organize and establish a variety of political parties. The first non-Maronite group attempted to establish an active political party, the Progressive Socialist Party or (PSP), was a Druze party led by Kamal Jumblatt. The PSP forced itself on Lebanese political society and played a prominent role in shaping the new political structure and engaged in bloody clashes with other parties in some instances, and formed alliances based on common interests with others. The Phalange Party is a family-based party established and led by the Gemayel family. It later played a significant role in shaping and directing the Lebanese political scene. It was one of the major actors in mobilizing a large section of the Maronite community during the civil war, and it stood against the alliance between the PSP and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).

The emergence of these political parties manifested the ethnic and sectarian nature of the confessional political system, and substantiated the loyalty to traditional families, sectarian communities, and ethnic political parties. According to Dawisha (1980), since the seventies, the nature of the domestic dispute transformed into a conflict between the left wing, where the Muslims joined forces with the Palestinians, against the right wing incorporating different Christian political parties. The communal disputes developed into ideological and political ones, or what is perceived as the left wing versus the right wing; on top of that the sectarian communities impeded national identity formation and generated different gaps (security, legitimacy, and capacity) instead. Progressively, the situation revealed the weakness of the state in favor of the absence of social cohesiveness and deteriorating institutional capacities. This weakness invited foreign interferences as a security strategy on one hand and preservation of material and non-material interests in the

region on the other hand. Obviously, the French mandate in Lebanon and Syria is evidence of direct intervention and political interference, which after independence had transformed into indirect interference under the veil of friendship relationship. “In 1920, the French annexed different parts of the former Vilayets (or Ottoman provinces) of Beirut and Damascus to the territory of the old Lebanese Mutesarrifate, and so created the State of Greater Lebanon within the present frontiers” (Salibi, 1988, 17).

Another category of political parties was influenced and dominated by regional powers and placed their loyalties at the service of the regional interests. They were categorized as small political parties due to their minimal role in the Lebanese political arena. Youssef Ibrahim Yazbek and Fouad Al Shameli founded the Lebanese Communist Party in 1924, and Antun Saadeh founded the Syrian Social Nationalist Party in 1932. The Lebanese government opposed these parties because of their extraneous Lebanese ideologies and political orientations. The threat exerted by these parties, frustrated decision-makers in Lebanon, as well as some international powers. As a response to the continuous agitation by the government and the execution of its founder Antun Saadeh in July 1949, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) was accused of assassinating the late Prime Minister Riad Al Solh during his visit to Jordan in July 1951.

During the early stages of state formation, the regional powers, especially Syria was occupied with its own internal and external conflicts. At that time, French mandate policies influenced the identity of the state. Later the situation was reversed and circumstances allowed opportunities for more regional interferences and dominations. Some parties in Lebanon perceived regional interferences as

unfavorable, jeopardizing internal cohesion and stability. Accordingly, political parties alone have no great role, whereas sectarian groups are the major players and the dynamic engine in defining and setting the rules of the game. By combining the two actors together, the truth may reveal and expose the hidden forces behind domestic socio-political activities.

Once more, referring to the historical background is important for understanding contemporary developments including identity formation, state-society relations, and decision-making process, seeing that historical residues have a direct and indirect impact on current politics. Farid Al Khazen notes that:

The legitimacy of the National Pact was based on a dual assumption: Muslim opposition to Arab unity -especially with Syria- and Christian opposition to the French mandate. Instead, Lebanon was to have an ‘Arab face’ and to adopt a neutral position in inter-Arab politics. It was now the task of the Muslims to ‘Arabise’ Lebanon’s Christians, while the Latter would seek to ‘Lebanise’ their Muslim compatriots (2000, 39).

Because exclusion and discrimination diminishes the importance of the political game, it is considered as one of the determinant factors in measuring the strength and weakness of the relationship between institutions, parties, and communities. Restricting the political role of the Shiite community and other groups increased the gap between the state and society. Such a discriminatory act has generated a sense of

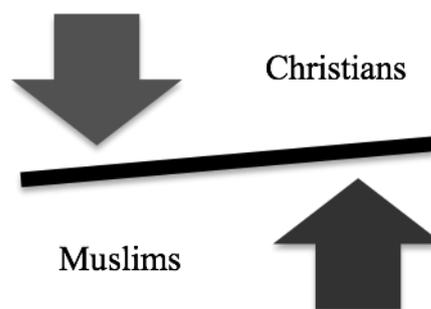


Figure 3.3: Power sharing and balance of power are significant factors for building a cohesive society and enhancing the unified living.

frustration and increased the vulnerability of a deprived community, which had no significant domestic, regional, or foreign support.

These incidents contributed to increasing insecurity levels through deepening internal divisions followed by an increase in foreign intervention in Lebanon's domestic arena. Because sectarian identities are laden with bigotry and superfluous convictions, they helped increase the weakness of the Lebanese state and prevented the establishment of a cohesive society. Despite the patriotic phrases, which call for independence and sovereignty, Lebanon was and is still considered an open society dominated by divergent sectarian forces, which serve the interests of external actors. The weakness of the state and social frustrations increased the gap between the state and society.

Discriminatory policies among and between different sectarian and political groups mobilized the oppressed communities, such as the Shiites, and encouraged them to enhance their status. During early 1970s, the Shiites managed to increase their engagement in the political arena and established the Amal Movement headed by Imam Musa al-Sader. Al-Sader tried to grant the deprived community some of its national rights and was an advocate of national coexistence based on equality. Consequently, the Shiites were involved more in shaping the political decision-making process and became good allies of the Syrian regime. "President Asad developed an interest in the Shia community, which had become the single largest confession in Lebanon. He cultivated his relationship with the powerful Shia leader Imam Musa al-Sader" (Rabil, 2003, 50). This was intensified with the rise of Hizballah as a resistance and political party in early 1980s. Hizballah tried to fill the

gap that the Lebanese army and government could not in protecting and securing the southern regions. As Jeremy Jones notes:

The presence in Lebanon of a well-organized Shia Islamist movement, engaged in the political process, contributing positively to social development among its constituents, offers hope that Hizballah could be a genuine participant in the negotiation of political change in Lebanon. In short, it has been claimed already that the so-called terrorists may turn out to be the most convincing democrats (2007, 117).

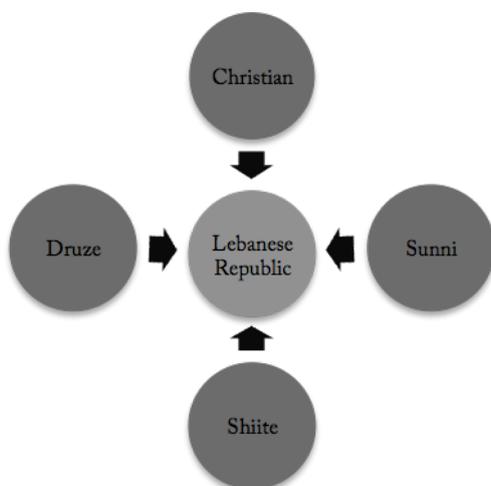


Figure 3.4: Major constituencies of the Lebanese society  
(Influential sectarian groups).

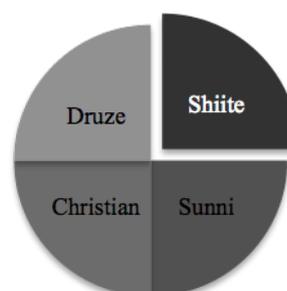


Figure 3.5: Discrimination and exclusion inside the society.

Lebanon's confessional plural society created diverse political orientations, aimed at preserving the interest of different sectarian groups and communities. Consequently, the lack of a specific war agenda blocked the establishment of a powerful military capable of protecting the society from enemy attacks (Khazen, 2000). The Lebanese government never granted the military the importance that other regional states have given it, thereby relying on regional and domestic bargaining aimed at securing and stabilizing the state. On the other hand, foreign powers impeded attempts to provision the Lebanese army with necessary weapons, mainly for regional security purposes aimed at maintaining the regional hegemony of the Israeli military forces. Unfortunately, these approaches never operate properly in a region

teeming with turmoil and hostile neighbors especially within a state combining multi-communal groups and confessional political interests. The weakness of the military establishment provided the opportunity for the political parties to proliferate in the form of armed militias.

This situation reinforced differences and generated more complexities than the state could endure, creating security gaps, which led to a protracted civil war. It aided in increasing insecurity levels accompanied by excess hatred among and between the diverse communal and confessional groups within the state. Such attitudes were the result of different agendas prioritized by private interests with arbitrary political decisions. Regrettably, political choices in Lebanon are still subject to regional and international pressures.

Do Lebanese show any readiness to overcome their disputes in order to live in harmony? Is it possible that the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon can resolve all Lebanese internal disputes? These questions have no definite answers, and are left to future circumstances.

### **3.2.4 The Withdrawal**

After the assassination of the late Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, Lebanon became an even more fragmented society than before. The withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon opened a new dialectic concerning the real identity of Lebanon. Arbitrary accusations with no clear evidence accused Syria as the main suspect behind the assassination. Recently, the accusations turned to convict Hizballah as a major suspect by referring to two main articles published by the French newspaper “*Le Figaro*” and the German newspaper “*Der Spiegel*” (Matha Ba’ad, T.V.

Interview, 31 March 2010). The arbitrary accusations aim to destabilize the internal situation in Lebanon and create a state of turmoil by reinforcing the division between and among Lebanese communities. There is no doubt that the dramatic incidents that took place were supported by super powers in order to subvert the region chiefly after the disgraceful fall and withdrawal of the Israeli army and its Lebanese allies in the spring of the year 2000.

Both Lebanon and Syria have common concerns towards the future of the region and the stability of the overall situation in view of internal and external challenges. Historical attempts to design a foreign policy based on mutual interests to overcome the fragile Lebanese socio-political and religious structure; alignments and configurations have failed (Rabil, 2003). The Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon in 2005 aimed to decrease the tension on one side and to achieve the implementation of international resolutions primarily the UNSCR (1559), which calls for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanese territories with no conditions. In addition to the UNSCR, Bassel Salloukh argues that, “US Secretary of State’s Colin Powell’s demands with regard to Lebanon included the withdrawal of all Syrian troops, and end to Syrian interference, the demobilization and disarmament of Hizbullah... and the deployment of Lebanese Army over all Lebanese territories...” (Salloukh, 2009b, 164). Syria’s withdrawal from Lebanon ultimately aimed at containing some of the international and regional pressures against Damascus in the aftermath of the Hariri assassination.

### **3.3 Syria: Historical Development and Policy Perspectives**

In 1924, the fragmented Syrian states were gathered to form the Syrian State under the supervision of the French High Commissariat. The majority of the Syrian population condemned the presence of the French mandate and demanded Syria's immediate independence. Later in 1925, a general revolution erupted demanding the creation of a provisional Syrian government. In 1936 the French proposed and signed separate treaties with both Syria and Lebanon in order to transfer authority to national powers and to grant the two states the right of membership in the League of Nations. Unfortunately, the treaties were never ratified or implemented. Thus, the deteriorating situation led to more insurgencies, which continued until 1943. Finally, real independence took place in 1946 after forcing the French troops to withdraw from the region (Hourani, 1946).

Searching for and shaping the real identity of the newly independent state was the next mission awaiting Syrian decision-makers. According to Dawisha (1980), the Baath Party emerged in 1954, and dominated the nationalist camp. The Baathists tried to convey their mission and goals by raising pan-national slogans, "One Arab nation with an eternal mission" (Dawisha, 1980, 19). After the military coup in February 1963, the Baath Party took over power in Syria. After the emergence of deep disputes and intensive struggles inside the party, General Hafiz Asad staged his 'corrective movement' in November 1970, and was subsequently elected president in February 1971. Asad adopted moderate stances in shaping domestic and foreign policies in order to normalize and stabilize the internal situation after several years filled with turmoil. Consequently, his election ended an era full of threats and

vulnerabilities promoting insecurities, and started a promising period establishing stability and progress.

The geographical location of Syria helped in shaping its vital and strategic role in the region, and “constituted a major determinant of the country’s behavior towards Lebanon” (Dawisha, 1980, 37). Syria was and is still considered an interactive hub, which connects the east with the west, and is central to the geopolitics of the region. Syria, historically labeled ‘Billad al-Sham,’ played an immense role in shaping political development in the Arab east. However, as Raymund Hinnebusch points out, “the dominance of Syria’s regional environment by threats and constraints inevitably makes security a prime preoccupation” (in Korany and Dessouki, 1991, 375). A sense of superiority accorded the Syrian leaders excess confidence under the influence of foreign threats especially that foreign policies in Third World countries designate the leader as the be-all and end-all (Korany & Dessouki, 1991).

### **3.3.1 Political Orientation**

After gaining independence in 1946, Syria started an extensive search for defining its authentic identity and configuring the overall status of the state. The egalitarian and nationalist ideologies applied by the Baath Party, which dominated the decision-making process, aimed to captivate the peasants and ordinary citizens. Dawisha argues that:

The Baath Party... was the core institutional unit in the Syrian political system, and although in theory the Baath party was supposed to share power with the other parties in the Progressive National Front, in reality the Baath remained the primary institutional actor (1980, 45).

Syria was thus ruled by a powerful regime, supported by a strong political party alongside a cohesive and stable state structure. Accordingly, the version of the

Baath Party under the command of President Asad differed from the version of the Baath Party under the command of General Amine Al-Hafiz and Salah Jadid. During the early rule of Baath Party in 1963, General Amine Al-Hafiz implemented highly oppressive policies against feudal families, industrialist, and merchants. On that account, he aimed to nationalize all the sectors by implementing leftist orientations and approaches (Dawisha, 1980). Deep disputes between the two leaders led to a bloody coup and a split inside the Baath Party. In turn, the split led to the emergence of a new leadership headed by Neo-Marxist civilians commanded by Dr. Nur Al-Din Atassi, and as a result, Michel Aflaq, the original founder of the Baath Party, accused the new leadership of attempting to deviate from the party's real orientations and basic principles.

After the humiliating defeat against the Israeli troops in 1967, a new rivalry emerged between Salah Jadid and General Hafiz Asad. General Asad favored moderate attempts to shape the domestic, regional, and international policies, on top of that condemning all extremism.<sup>7</sup> The Corrective Movement led by General Asad aimed to reform the institutional sector and implement moderate foreign and domestic policies. He saw the state as self-dependant with less dependence on foreign powers (Dawisha, 1980). "There is no doubt that under the rule of President Asad, Syria has experienced the most stable period in her post independence history" (Dawisha, 1980, 25). President Asad established the People's Council and later the National Progressive Front combining the Baathist and Non-Baathist groups as a sign of integration and acceptance of all orientations and ideologies. He needed to control the state, and accordingly was obliged to include all small political parties under his

own tutelage for supervising their actions in order to prevent any possible conspiracy against his rule.

The new regime under Asad's rule promoted a new phase in Syrian decision-making and policy orientations, especially with neighboring countries like Lebanon. However, Syrian foreign policy faced a gap between capabilities and objectives (Korany & Dessouki, 1991). Domestically, Asad tried to unify the decision-making processes by minimizing the powers and capabilities of any possible internal rivals. This was an attempt to build a cohesive society for serving the interests of the state as a whole. He built a robust state with powerful military capabilities and strong institutional infrastructure, and developed the agricultural, industrial, educational, military, health and service sectors. The reform process empowered state institutions, which in turn increased state powers.

Syria developed an influential role in Lebanon before and also after the outbreak of the latter's civil war. The relationship between Lebanon and Syria could be categorized under the security complex principle as presented by Buzan and discussed in chapter two. The main concept emphasized the importance of security concerns, especially those dominating neighboring and close states. Tension and disarray in one state can tremendously affect the national security of other states with interdependent relationships. Definitely, situations depend on the factors that regulate their actions and reactions whether governed by amity and/or enmity. Dawisha points out that, "in addition to the obvious historical roots," between both states, "the geographic factor comprised an important strategic dimension, which had considerable influence on the formulation and implementation of Syria's policies

towards Lebanon, particularly as these related to questions of defense and military activity” (1980, 38).

Asad’s speeches deliberately discussed and emphasized the importance of preserving the national securities of Lebanon and Syria and minimizing any possible unfavorable situations. The civil war in Lebanon and the common threats from Israeli attacks were the main motivators behind Syria’s policy towards Lebanon. During the early phases of the civil war, Syrian policy toward Lebanon was motivated by a number of value-based [Syrian] impulses:

Conviction of an imperialist and Zionist conspiracy, the indivisibility of Syria and Lebanon, and concern over the societal unity of Lebanon, a total rejection of military solutions inflicted by one party over the other, and attitudinal antipathy against religious and sectarian conflicts (Dawisha, 1980, 106).

This reflected the way Syrian decision-makers think about Lebanon. As Dawisha has noted, “Syria is concerned with defending Lebanon and Lebanon is concerned with defending Syria... It is difficult to draw a line between Lebanon’s security in its broadest sense and Syria’s security” (Dawisha, 1980, 72). Consequently, Syrian decision-makers created a special committee for monitoring the development of events in Lebanon. High commanders headed by the president himself supervised, and directed all the decisions issued by this special committee. Such an attempt emphasizes the importance of preserving security in Lebanon in order to reduce the prospects of spreading conflicts. Syrian decision-makers viewed and dealt with this matter as a strategic security issue, demanding constant and accurate assessment of the situation. It was not a matter of choice for the Syrians; Lebanese concerns were situated at the heart of the Syrian decision-making process and provisions. Consequently, “Syria has increasingly given way to a conventional policy of *raison*

d'état, which seeks the defense, power, and prestige of the Syrian state within the existing regional state system" (Hinnebusch in Korany and Dessouki, 1991, 378).

### **3.3.2 Policies and Decision-Making**

Decisions are not just aimless words and narrated statements; they dominate and regulate the function of the institutions and progress of the state. The arbitrary formulation of regulations without accurate and intensive study of circumstances and conditions can generate misperceptions and confusions, and promote undesired disarrays among and between states or within the state itself. Accordingly to Dawisha, decisions can be divided into three categories based on three factors: time, spectrum of initiation-reaction, and a scale of importance (1980). Thus, "they are characterized as strategic, tactical, and implementing" (Dawisha, 1980, 3). The analysis of internal as well as external factors can minimize the prospects of wrong assumptions and inaccurate choices. Syrian decision-makers attempted to design foreign policies stressing on national interests, benefits, and the safety of the state by subsuming internal as well as external forces. Thus, they integrated a clear set of definitive plans for assessing perceptions and behaviors, which affected state relationships as well as the general development process.

The geographical location of Syria designates it as a vital and active actor in the Middle East. Its unfriendly relations during the 1960s with almost all bordering countries like Turkey, Iraq, and Israel prompted Syria to sustain a friendly relationship with Lebanon, especially given that Lebanon is considered a protective shield, which borders a great portion of the southern, south western, and western Syrian territory. Nevertheless, as Dawisha contends,

Syrian decision-makers have tended to consider the mountains of southern Lebanon as natural defensive frontiers that could be utilized to stop or crucially delay attacks... It was in this context that President Asad made his often-quoted statement relating to the interdependence of Syrian and Lebanese security (1980, 38).

Syrian decision-makers constantly promoted the importance of the Lebanese case for them by focusing on the common interests represented by defeating a common foe Israel. Thus, focusing on the proposition of brotherly relations and depending on the principle of the older and mature actor has to take care of the smaller and fragile one. For that reason, Lebanon is perceived as a pivotal factor in Syrian foreign policy, which requires extensive attention and great care. They stress on enhancing coordination and cooperation for supporting Arab issues and deterring external threats. Their deep conviction in unifying security goals benefits and sustains the Arab position in general, and the Syrian one in particular. For the Syrian regime, stabilizing and normalizing relations with Lebanon advances the position of Syria in the regional and international arena, and on the other hand aims to preserve the security and stability of both Lebanon and Syria, seeing that, "the structures of the Baath state are a formidable machine for harnessing society to the regime's foreign policy goals" (Hinnebusch in Korany and Dessouki, 1991, 390). The Syrian regime needed to create harmony and congruity among and between neighboring countries, especially with the emergence of rival states threatening the Syrian regime and causing internal harm and dissonance at a time Syria was dependent on Arab aid and facing economic instabilities, which prevented proper achievement of its foreign policy objectives (Hinnebusch in Korany and Dessouki, 1991).

Alternately, the Syrian regime designed a defensive foreign policy depending on the integration and incorporation of all vital sectors to safeguard the Syrian

territories as a first step and as a second to preserve stability, progress, and development of the state. The dramatic sequence of incidents in 2005 altered the position of the Syrian regime and forced them to revise all policies, ideologies, and orientations designed towards Lebanon. The once brotherly relations based on values and interests turned into defensive policies and formal diplomatic relationships.

### **3.3.3 State Capabilities and State Policies**

Migdal argues that, “Understanding the differing abilities of states to achieve social control, and in particular the difficulties many Third World states have had in their own societies, demands an appreciation of the nature of the resistance states have encountered” (Migdal, 1988, 40). Syria’s process of state formation allowed for the institutionalization of a powerful regime, enjoying substantial autonomy from society.

Syria is a one party regime, whereas Lebanon is multi-party one in a confessional context. Consequently, the diversity in political orientations in Lebanon has led to an array of perceptions and inclinations unlike the situation in Syria. Syrian citizens are loyal to the Syrian state alone, and because of that “the political apparatus – the single party and its ‘mass organization’ – which incorporates a large segment of the population, has mobilized indispensable support for the regime” (Hinnebusch in Korany and Dessouki, 1991, 390). For some Lebanese parties, Syria is an essential actor to preserve security in Lebanon and the region, while others view the presence of Syria as a major threat. However, the Syrians consider Lebanon a major security concern, and their attempts to solve Lebanese internal disputes are perceived by some Lebanese parties as direct interferences in Lebanese domestic affairs. Historical

factors and skewed personal convictions have designated Syria as a major threat to internal solidarity. Unfortunately, this reality cannot be dismissed by the Syrian decision-makers, seeing that Lebanese opponents are also partners in the Lebanese regime and can be engaged in oppressive actions with the Syrian opposition to devastate the current Syrian regime.

The lack of balanced relationships demanded extra alertness from all groups. As a result, friendly relations have no place in such tense conditions; on the contrary, interests and security preferences are the dominant values. The weakness and diversity of the political scene in Lebanon led to an increase in Syrian interferences in internal and domestic affairs driven by deep concerns and intense intimidations from the deteriorating situation in the neighboring state. Obviously, the Syrian reaction is derived from an imminent threat, which might negatively influence Syrian national security and threaten internal stability and cohesion.

During the Lebanese civil war, Syrians weighed Lebanese internal disputes and affairs as a priority to be taken into consideration. Strategies were designed by Syria to secure its borders and minimize the prospects of threats to their national

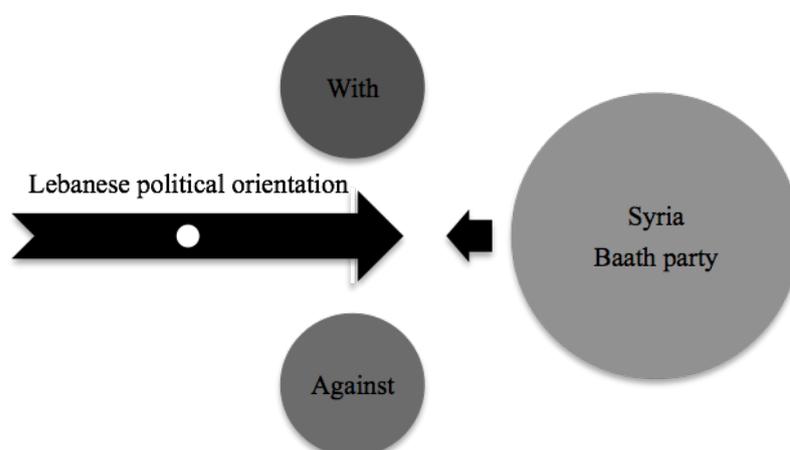


Figure 3.6: Illustrates differences in orientation toward the Syrian state.

security ensuing from excess numbers of displaced individuals, rivalry groups, and enemy attacks. The Syrians aimed to increase social stability, economic progress, and military capabilities to enhance domestic cohesion.

In turn, Syrian attempts and plans intimidated some groups and relieved others inside Lebanon, as well as regional and international political powers. It affected both the government and the non-official sectors represented by the public. Such coalitions resulted in an increase in tension and excess in security gaps. Inevitably, the Syrians were alerted and divided the situation in Lebanon into three major phases in order to assess incidents and evaluate circumstances as a preparatory stage for their intervention. During Phase One (18 January till 15 March 1976), Syrian decision-makers supported their leftist allies represented by an alliance between Muslims and Palestinians. They ordered the Saiqa and the PLO to stop the advancement of the leftist Arab Army from heading towards the Palace of President Suleiman Franjieh. During Phase Two (15 March till 31 May 1976), their orientation shifted towards helping the rightist Christian groups. As a result, they decided to stop the negotiation phase and use force (military intervention) against their previous leftist allies. During Phase Three (31 September 1976), the Syrians managed to defeat the leftist parties and end the conflict with them (Dawisha, 1980). Despite the deep convictions and commitment to protect the Palestinian causes, the Syrians selected the Christians as their new allies basing their choice on common intimidation from the increase in the powers and military capabilities of the Palestinians from one side (Dawisha, 1980) and a threat from Israeli counterattacks against the persistent powerful presence of the Palestinians on the other side (Rabil, 2003). Clearly, politics has no friends, and thus political decision-makers and parties are constantly searching for alliances, which

provide them with security and preserve their geopolitical interests as well as their status.

In 2005 international pressures accompanied by domestic reprisal led to the quick withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon, and promoted the end of the presence of Syrian powers on Lebanese soil. Bassel Salloukh argues that, “Washington was bent on using Lebanon to isolate the Syrian Regime, Damascus was determined to use Lebanon to abort the new regional order” (Salloukh 2009b, 170). Foreign pressures empowered some domestic groups against others, and mobilized the international community against the Syrian presence and its constant support for Hizballah. This “signaled to Damascus the beginning of a concerted international effort to evict Syria from Lebanon, thereby threatening its regional position and consequently the survival of the regime” (Salloukh, 2009b, 167). As a result, foreign powers and their domestic allies created political tensions to exhaust Hizballah. The weakness of the fragmented society debilitated the decision-making process. Syria managed to turn defeat in Lebanon into victory by relying on loyal Lebanese allies. Syria then started to correct the basis of its relationship with other neighboring countries, including Lebanon, in order to enhance its regional and international political power and diplomatic relations. Accordingly, Syria proved to Lebanon as well as regional and international actors its capacity as a powerful actor, which cannot be easily defeated. Even though international powers like France, Germany, Spain, and other forces were good allies to 14<sup>th</sup> of March group in Lebanon, they constantly sought to normalize their relations with Syria. As Salloukh notes, “the image of a confident President Bashar al-Asad attending the Union for the Mediterranean summit in Paris on 13 July 2008, hosting French President Nicolas Sarkozy on 3 August 2008

and then gathering in Damascus the leader of France, Qatar and Turkey on 4 September 2008 underscored the dramatic close to Syria's regional and international isolation" (Salloukh, 2009b, 172). In this respect, "Syria's Lebanon policy played a central role in this rehabilitation and perhaps Damascus learned belatedly that its Lebanese proxies can be far better than the heavy-handed tactics deployed by its own army and intelligent services" (Salloukh, 2009b, 172).

This position clearly derived from the conviction that Syria plays an instrumental role in mobilizing and regulating regional politics in the Middle East. Syrian state elites favored a foreign policy that responds to geopolitical shifts. For them, positioning the state in accordance to the global structure and regional challenges is a priority for determining their security concerns and designing defensive policies (Korany & Dessouki, 1991). Enforcing sanctions on Syria could limit the progress of normal relations with other countries, and undermine Syrian participation in the regional decision-making process. After all, Syria possesses multiple regional assents.

### **3.4 Influences and Outcomes**

Political parties are important institutions in regulating behaviors and shaping relationships on one hand and helping in deteriorating the situation on the other. The entire situation is under their command, because they regulate the decision-making process by defining the rules of the game. However, situations can change by changing orientations, beliefs, and alliances between different and previously opposing parties and hence direct and indirect influences can reveal the defects in the state structure and stress on the fragile social cohesiveness.

The multi-party confessional system in Lebanon increases the diversity of society and intensifies the competition and confrontation between and among rival groups. Undoubtedly, diversity promotes divisions, but when combined with general awareness and national consciousness, it enriches society. At this stage, differences are not always a sign of conflict. Unfortunately, differences in Lebanon are a major source of political dissention and social fragmentation. Nonetheless, the lack of national consensus and the presence of a confessional system, complicate the situation and increase tension.

The Syrian case is the opposite of the Lebanese situation. A one party regime in Syria dominates and regulates political decisions, and unifies the decision-making process. Although, freedom of expression is restricted, the regime argues that exceptional and uncommon circumstances demand such moves in order to preserve stability and security in turbulent conditions.<sup>8</sup> The one party regime benefits Syria internally and serves the interests of the regime, allowing Syria to develop a proactive and defensive foreign policy at the same time.

In Lebanon, the plural and confessional political system institutionalized differences and created gaps between the state and society. Nonetheless, the unmanageable interferences of political parties in state institutions and decision-making jeopardized the development process and undermined the welfare of the state by generating infrastructural, security, and legitimacy gaps. The nature of the structure of the state helped in the proliferation of security zones generated by these groups who encouraged the empowerment of some parties over others. Political parties benefitted from the weakness of the state and dominated state institutions along sectarian lines. By operating the institutional sector for their own benefit, they

have deprived Lebanese citizens from benefitting from what is considered as a natural right for them. The plural and confessional system invited foreign interferences as powerful allies necessary for preserving their longevity and status. By promoting discrimination and inequality, they have managed to create a sense of insecurity among citizens and undermined the legitimacy of the state.

Despite the presence of small political parties, the Baath party dominates the decision-making process in Syria. Their role is insignificant in comparison with those in Lebanon. As noted before, the Baath party needed to dominate the decision-making process and state institutions in order to limit conspiracies from inside and from outside the state. Therefore, the hegemonic approach was necessary for preserving and securing the state and society from foreign interferences and internal discords. Past political instability convinced the regime of the necessity to secure the state by limiting political plurality and controlling participation. Although the Syrian regime is accused of being undemocratic, it has nevertheless managed to insulate the state and society from external and domestic threats. Accordingly, it has enhanced the development process for the general welfare of the state, empowered the military and intelligence sector to secure the state from external and internal threats, and maintained a prosperous and productive economy.

### **3.4.1 Socio-Political Forces**

Private interests of sectarian groups regulate the political situation in Lebanon, and sectarian diversity accompanied by deep disputes, increases social divisions and political stagnation. However, the dramatic events that took place in 2005 are a clear example of the weakness of the Lebanese political system and the strength of the

confessional one. Undoubtedly, the overall situation opened the space for political and sectarian discords accompanied by an increase in public strife, which divided the society into two extreme opposite camps each believing in different ideologies and convictions. Thus, civilians faced the possibility of becoming subject to manipulation by sectarian elites who aimed to achieve their interests.

As mentioned earlier, alliances between political parties shift according to their interests. This, in turn, threatens to change the balance of the political game and affect public interests.<sup>9</sup> The outcome of this change could result in dissensions and disarrays. The sense of threat from the Syrians is still a dominant factor in defining the relationship between the two states. Unfortunately, this situation has hurt Lebanon on all sectors and levels. Needless to say the passive reaction of the government, aided in increasing chaos and economic stagnation, whereas social divisions promoted the failure of the state in Lebanon. The entire set of factors created conflicts, ergo accusing Syria of interfering in Lebanese domestic affairs and condemning its role in administering the extension of the presidential duration of President Emile Lahoud. The indirect impact of the Syrian policy in Lebanon is channeled through its allies. “The politics of Syria and Lebanon are not only intertwined, but they also offer two related, but perhaps polar examples of the functioning of political parties in the region” (Jones, 2007, 85).

The Syrian role in 2005 promoted awareness of the seriousness of the situation. Accordingly, the response and unpredicted behavior of the Lebanese parties antagonized Syria, and unleashed dramatic changes in regional politics. The assassination of the late Prime Minister Rafic Hariri was only a pretext in a bigger contest aimed out changing the regional political map and alliances. Clearly, the

change in political alliances in Lebanon aided at forming new political gatherings across sectarian groups.<sup>10</sup> It is a sign of a new stage in regional politics in general and the Lebanese one specifically. “Nonetheless, Syria has continued to play a leading role in Lebanon’s domestic politics, and its army and security forces effectively held at least parts of the country as a result of its intervention in the civil war from 1975” (Jones, 2007, 89).

The chaotic situation was well planned and derived from a deep conviction of the importance of leaving the situation in Lebanon as unstable as possible. The international community represented by UNSCR (1559),<sup>11</sup> the foreign embassies and delegations in addition to some domestic Lebanese political parties supported by powerful foreign forces exerted pressures on local officials. They aimed at implementing UNSCR (1559), which called for disarming Hizballah, and for enforcing sanctions on Syria in order to stop supporting and providing the resistance with the necessary equipments and funds. By disarming Hizballah and isolating Syria, they sought to usher forth the “New Middle East”.

In order to minimize casualties and undesirable effects, the Syrians chose to withdraw from Lebanon in a peaceful way and consolidate the domestic arena. Nonetheless, they aimed at safeguarding Syrian influence in the region and minimize possible confrontations with neighboring countries. Confrontations incubate menacing forces capable of jeopardizing their relationships with other Arab states in general and between Lebanon and Syria in particular.

It is therefore understandable that Syria has established a more stable state than Lebanon, despite their claimed interdependence based on mutual relations. Although state structure, as mentioned earlier, is a pivotal component, which

distinguishes Lebanon from Syria, it is not the only one. National consciousness and consensus, the existence of a cohesive nation, and loyalty to the state are the only protection from state collapse and external interventions.

A plural society in Lebanon cannot be blamed for creating conflicts. Many states worldwide are as diverse as Lebanon and even more, and they manage to live in harmony and peace. Therefore, diversity is not the problem in itself, but the main obstacle is situated at the core of the irreconcilable interests combined with the lack of national consciousness and a sense of loyalty plus the domination of a confessional system. National coexistence represented by an agreement between Christian communities and Muslim communities as stated by the Taif accord of 1989, can reduce the prospects of insecurities and vulnerabilities to a certain extent. Thus, building trust between communities and enhancing nationhood can be achieved, but are the concerned actors willing to forget and forgive? Lebanese communities are the only authorized entities who decide which kind of Lebanon they want. Despite their diversity, national unity and the survival of the state are priorities, because without a strong and capable state, identities and authorities are subject to extinction.

### **3.5 A Legacy of External Interventions**

Lebanon has a long legacy with external interventions by regional as well as international powers. The geographical location and the nature of the population distinguish Lebanon and make it a strategic destination and a focal point in the region.

As Migdal notes,

“The territory of one of the states with the least social control of all, Lebanon, served as a playground for three non-Lebanese armies in the

1970 and 1980s in addition to a gaggle of non-state militias, gangs, and international and multinational forces...” (Migdal, 1988, 24).

The lack of capabilities and the weakness of the state expose Lebanon to various pressures. For that reason, regional and international pressures endanger the stability of state-society relations and generate different gaps. Distinguishing between the intensity and type of these forces is essential for better comprehension and awareness.

### **3.5.1 Regional and International Forces**

The interactive relation with the surrounding institutes the state as both a recipient and a benefactor of direct and/or indirect, regional and/or international forces. As a result, statesmen benefit most due to their high status and ultimate power. And in turn, their close loyal allies benefit as well. Such international and regional forces make the most of the situation and try to expand their powers inside the state, so they turned into true mobilizers of the domestic decision-making process due to partial or total dependence on their assistance and expertise. As Kalevi Holsti notes,

Governors and claimants to authority use the state for their own private purposes, sell offices, and purchase loyalty through patrimonial offerings. Bureaucrats use their positions to enhance their wealth, to provide jobs for their families and friends, and to impose various forms of illegal taxation (Holsti, 2004, 57).

Those political parties own capabilities and potentials made available by different regional and international forces to secure their interests and expand their ambitions. Thus, corruption prevails as an effective means for deepening disputes and widening gaps between the state and society, and especially the corruption of statesmen in Lebanon and the ineffectiveness of the institutions. International and regional forces

benefit more from this situation and help in increasing the weakness of the state by promoting and reinforcing the opportunity for excess in interference and dependency factors. Khazen emphasizes this point by arguing that:

In terms of state-society relations, the outcome of this contradictory mechanism translated into a low degree of stateness in Lebanon and a permanent dependence of state on the multi-communal structure of power within society... In Lebanon's regional order with various types of intervention by external powers have taken place (Khazen, 2000, 92-94).

The dysfunctional situation in Lebanon demands serious actions in order to prevent both regional and international forces from further interfering in domestic affairs. Syria's intervention in Lebanon in 1976 aimed to secure its geopolitical interests and maintain friendly relations, whereas Israel's first invasion in 1978 and the second one in 1982 sought to expand its own geopolitical interests, which allowed it to gain a foothold in Lebanon. The deployment of UNIFIL troops in 1978 worked toward fulfilling claimed values such as securing the borders and participating in peace keeping and peace building missions.

During 2005, Lebanon was transformed into a playground for international powers aspiring to mobilize both sectarian political parties and civil society. This resulted in an increase in tension inside the country. Internal turbulence led to an escalation of insecurity levels and a drop in legitimacy rates. All parties searched for chances to increase their gains and benefits. On this account, international forces increased sanctions on Syria. They centralized their efforts to subjugate the regime and enforce the Syrian leadership to cooperate with them against some undesired Lebanese parties and political groups.

By isolating Syria and unleashing a propaganda campaign against Iran, international and regional actors intend to diminish the credibility of major regional

players and enhance the situation of others. Nevertheless, the main goal behind these strategies is to undermine the state and create communal disputes. Without delineating defects and reinforcing open and transparent dialogues between the disputant parties, trust can never find a place, and instead insecurities continue to overrule proper relations, decisions, and actions.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the nature of the relationship between Lebanon and Syria, starting from a historical analysis of the current situation. The conflict in 2005 between Lebanon and Syria jeopardized their so-called brotherly relations and affected the daily lives of ordinary citizens from both sides, and resulted in a stagnant political, economic, and social state of affairs. Foreign interference was a major actor in mobilizing and provoking political parties, confessional groups, and social communities, thus performing the role of a two-sided agent with multiple faces, combining the virtuous who is ready to help and the odious with malevolent intentions. Therefore, besides the stimulation of internal rivalries between contending parties, they endanger and threaten the normal historical relationship between the two states. The next chapter discusses the ranges of insecurities in Lebanon and Syria from the existentialist and normative perspectives. It also highlights the importance of the psycho-social analysis in interpreting institutional, political, and social relationships.

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Consequences of the Insecurity Dilemma in Lebanon and Syria**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Because insecurities have effects across borders, the maintenance of the relationship between Lebanon and Syria demands extensive collaboration from both sides. For that reason, the decision-making process and the structure of the political system alone do not constitute effective tools for preserving the security of the state. Attitudes and behaviors of the executive bodies, as well as society, are essential complementary factors for generating cohesive societies and secure states. This interactive relationship between different agents and the availability of the required resources influence the performance and function of state institutions. Therefore, insecurities can be affected by behavioral attitudes performed by individuals, especially statesmen and state elites who possess the ability to motivate and mobilize society and enforce regulations.

Unlike the normative, the existentialist approach interprets and perceives insecurities from a different perspective. Human existence, freedom, and survival supersede regulations and norms. Despite the importance of norms in regulating societies, human progress remains the ultimate goal. On top of that, human consciousness, harmony, and mutual respect turn to essential requirements for regulating societies and diminishing insecurities. The insecurity dilemma, as discussed in chapter two, includes though in an indirect manner, both the existentialist

as well as the normative approaches. Thereby, it explains when and how insecurities emerge from explicit and implicit levels in order to distinguish between the nature of actions and reactions of state and society. Additionally, it discloses the features of the state-society relationship, as well as the causes of security gaps. Nevertheless, such a critical approach requires the appropriate and ripe moment to close the gap between the state and society. The importance of ripeness is reflected in minimizing insecurities and resolving conflicts between the disputing parties. Thus, the proper function and progress of state institutions depend on coordination and cooperation between and among all parties from different backgrounds.

This chapter discusses and assesses the impact and influence of insecurities on the general situation of the state. As a first step, studying insecurities from the existentialist and normative approaches is necessary to understand the important role humans and norms play in defining situations and creating tensions. The next step emphasizes the importance of the implicit and explicit distinction, which focuses on the importance of intentions, goals, and gains between the interacting agents. It highlights the main purpose behind their attempted actions and reactions. The third step discusses the importance of the ripe moment in resolving disputes and regulating relationships as necessary conditions for building cohesive and democratic societies. The fourth step highlights the role of political parties in mobilizing society, and consequently affecting the progress and function of state institutions. Therefore, circumstances and decisions determine what source and type of power could be utilized, and whether soft power or hard power is more effective in curtailing insecurities and rebuilding societies. Finally, the fifth step in this chapter emphasizes the significance of the psycho-social effect on the state in general and society in

particular. However, the social and psychological impact on individuals and their interactive relationship determines the levels and intensity of disputes, which in the first place results in insecurities.

## **4.2 The Range of Insecurities in Lebanon and Syria**

Realists argue that:

Statesmen are granted too little autonomy and too little room to maneuver, and the decision-making process is seemingly devoid of human volition. Human agents are pawns of a bloodless system that looms over them, a structure whose functioning they do not understand and the mechanics of which they only dimly perceive. Statesmen are faced with an endless array of constraints and few opportunities. It is as if they are engaged in a global game, a game called power politics, and they are unable to change the rules even if they so desire (Viotti & Kauppi, 1999, 83-84).

Consequently, the impact of decisions and policies, regardless of time, place, or space, affects the range of insecurities.<sup>12</sup> The change in the essence of the relationship between Lebanon and Syria resulted in severe tensions. Interests alone have replaced what was assumed to be a brotherly relationship, based on mutual values and interests.

Such an ideological and perceptual transformation led to destabilizing relationships followed by an increase in security gaps between the two states. A possible third party seeking benefits reinforces the change in order to preserve its dominant existence and interests in the region as well. Their role is vital in defining intentions and interests due to their ability to generate instabilities and insecurities. Both states faced obscure destinies, but the intensity and impact of change affected Lebanon more than Syria. Several factors aided in obtaining such results including:

- 1) the difference in the nature of the regime in power, defines change according to the levels of legitimacy gained from citizens, which in turn affects the intensity of the

authority required for outlining the relations with foreign powers and implementing regulations; 2) state structure, institutional, and infrastructural capacities, 3) the strength and weakness of the relationship between the state and society. Despite all obstacles and disputes, historical coherence and cultural bonds remain powerful tools for regaining normal relations. Reinforcing relationships decrease the prospects of insecurities generated by dominant political, confessional, and sectarian parties, which resist all attempts for improving the relationship between the two countries. However, despite the fact that a diverse society indicates different orientations and values, the sense of societal concern and not personal interests ought to finally prevail. As Ernest Hass has noted a long time ago,

The politics of human choice-the importance of interests tied to ideas and carried by politically connected elites and other players... Individuals and groups of individuals, their interests, and their ideas mattered. In his view, change in the human aspirations and human institutions over long periods is caused mostly by the way knowledge about nature and about society is married to political interests and objectives (in Viotti and Kauppi, 2001, 224).

Unlike Syria, Lebanon has always been a vulnerable state with weak capabilities.<sup>13</sup> Although Syria is a Third World country with limited capabilities, it possesses some features of a strong state represented by a level of social cohesion, institutional capacities, effective military powers, industrial, and productive capabilities. Nonetheless, not all Third World states can be considered weak states, although they subsume some defective sectors, but classification should depend on the state's institutional and infrastructural capabilities, state resources, military powers, and its social cohesiveness. "In empirical terms, the Third World is composed of an array of states, exhibiting enormous variation in their economic, social, and political conditions. In theoretical terms, there is no single understanding

of the weak state concept” (Job, 2005, 19).

The institutional capabilities of Syria are more developed than those of Lebanon. However Lebanon’s geographic and strategic location, and its social pluralism, has allowed it to retain a level of regional and international attention. Misperceptions affected the relationship between Lebanon and Syria tremendously and led to dramatic changes on several levels. In turn, these changes played a major role in defining the new political orientations and relations, which mainly took place after 2005. As a result, wrong convictions generated different conflicts, and for Mubarak, “motives and strategies in Lebanon have also been shaped by its leadership’s historic fears. Syria’s anxieties stem from the nature of its political system and its geographical location” (Moubarak, 2003, 11).

Accordingly, the internal situation was fueled by tension and threats derived from misperceptions and wrong assumptions, which benefited definite interests and satisfied personal goals.<sup>14</sup> The internally generated insecurities in Lebanon created a divided society, and increased security, legitimacy, and capacity gaps. Consequently, some political parties chose to bandwagon by allying with external actors, which constituted a major source of threat for some domestic groups, while others chose to balance by creating alliances in opposition to the source of that threat (Viotti & Kauppi, 1999). For Stephen Walt, bandwagoning minimizes the prospects of security, because it encourages aggressive actions; whereas, balancing promotes more secure environments (Viotti & Kauppi, 1999). “The flip side of this relation is also a constant in Lebanese politics: local actors deploy transnational ideologies or bandwagon with external actors to strengthen their positions in domestic political struggles” (Salloukh, 2009a, 1).

The bandwagoning and balancing approaches define almost all political and confessional alliances in Lebanon and form a response to defensive approaches against threats and vulnerabilities encountering their safety. Thus, different alliances formed two major blocs confronting and competing to safeguard their interests and preserve their status. Some groups have chosen to bandwagon by allying with powerful Western entities like the European Union and the United States of America against Iran and Syria. The opposite parties have chosen to balance by allying with Iran and Syria in order to secure their presence and preserve their interests internally and regionally. The differences in ideas and orientations create political, economic, and social stagnation, and lead to an increase in the levels of friction with Syria. “The quest for security may drive states to interfere preemptively in the domestic politics of others in order to provide an ideological buffer zone” (Jervis, 1978, 168). Syria needed such justifications to defend its approach and policies towards Lebanon. Therefore, preserving their national security and social stability was and is still a priority, which requires focused strategies and preemptive plans.

Syria’s need to stabilize its geopolitical environment means that it has to normalize relationships with all parties, despite their differences, in order to minimize vulnerabilities and insecurities and creates a cooperative and collaborative situation. The historical and geographical existence of both states in unstable region demands that each state has to respect the others’ independence, sovereignty, and laws. An existentialist and normative distinction is essential for understanding the impact of the dominant forces in this relationship.

### **4.3 Existentialist vs. Normative Explanations**

Existentialists encourage the search for an authentic political identity. They value the use of interacting relationships remote from restrictive norms and rules, which curb efforts and bound attitudes.<sup>15</sup> A possible clash can emerge between the state and inhabitants who demand survival as a security opportunity faraway from the impact of the overwhelming regulations.

#### **4.3.1 The Existentialists**

For William McBride, “consciousness is placed in the world, but placed in the center if that world is to be intelligible and human” (1997, 466). Nonetheless, MacBride emphasizes the importance of human existence and the realization of his/her surroundings. In an indirect manner, MacBride presents the relation between the state and society through collective existence and the impact on social harmony and stability. Human relations are thus essential for building a secure and stable state, on that account mutual interactions become a strategy to manage and operate the system, as they define the cohesiveness of the society. Human realities, existence and survival are rudiments for existentialist thinkers. When man becomes aware of his own existence as well as the existence of others (Sartre, 1985), existentialist thought emerges as a key element in international relations. The existence of human beings as active members in society, requires shaping identities as a necessity to control responsive relations, and thus integrates the existentialist concept as an indirect method of application. The lack of self-confidence encourages disputes and increases vulnerabilities and threats, unlike confident and powerful forces that believe in their own capabilities for dominating and controlling passive attitudes with weak

potentials. The existentialist becomes an exception in itself the same as the state, and turns into a primary value represented by self-preservation and social protection. Self-preservation develops into an end, thus seeking available sources in order to guarantee and achieve goals. Carl Schmitt observes that:

Its superiority derives from its sheer existence: The existence of the state is undoubted proof of its superiority over the valid legal norm. The decision frees itself from all normative ties and becomes in the true sense absolute... The norm is destroyed in the exception (as cited in Wolin, 1990, 398).

The sense of responsibility towards all men enhances social, political, and economic relationships, and strengthens the sense of belonging and dependability towards the community as a whole, which promotes common concerns. Such an attitude aims to build a cohesive society with cooperative and collaborative intentions and inclinations. Accordingly, “the individual becomes an active member since the existentialist declares that every truth and every action implies a human setting and a human subjectivity” (Sartre, 1985, 10). Challenging circumstances reveal realities and expose hidden intentions, ipso facto norms are perceived as an obstruction for survival and progress, especially that “we always choose the good, and nothing can be good for us without being good for all” (Sartre, 1985, 17). Collective relations define the survival of individuals, forging a cohesive community with shared interests as the basis for a welfare state. The general sense of responsibility assists in enhancing cooperation through an extensive comprehension of realities as well as surroundings necessary to improve relationships and minimize insecurities. Thus, consciousness and awareness turns into an attribute of the existentialists for guaranteeing security and self-preservation, in view of the fact that wars leave affected individuals deprived of their humanity, dignity, and shelters. Robert Gilpin emphasized the consequences

of war throughout history,

Changes in power lead to changes in relations among states... Disequilibrium replaces equilibrium, and the world moves toward a new round of hegemonic conflict. It has always been thus and always will be, until men either destroy themselves or learn to develop an effective mechanism of peaceful change (as cited in Viotti and Kauppi, 1999, 166).

Accordingly, all sources that generate vulnerabilities and insecurities become real enemies with existential anxiety, and “to end war, improve men; or: To end war improve states” (Waltz in Viotti and Kauppi, 1999, 141). For Schmitt, “War, the readiness for death of fighting men, the physical annihilation of other men who stand on the side of the enemy, all that has no normative, only an existential meaning” (as cited in Wolin, 1990, 406). War cannot be defined by rules and norms, the superior and powerful wins, whereas the weak and vulnerable loses. Humans realize their existence and the existence of their surrounding whenever they face real threats and insecurities. They define their identities and try to define themselves in accordance to the actual capacities of their enemies in order to build proper strategies that can safeguard them from inescapable harm.

The insecurity dilemma lies at the core of the existentialist approach, and accordingly, in addition to state structure and defective behaviors, war turns into a primary source of threat. Irresponsible actions derived from selfishness and unjustifiable use of coercive force against citizens, add to and increase the prospects of insecurities.

#### **4.3.2 Normative Behavior**

Norms govern our actions and regulate our daily behaviors, and are especially designed to benefit and not restrict the state and its institutions. At this point, the

exceptional precedes norms in defining the state as an identifiable and distinguishable entity. For Schmitt, “the moment of ‘concrete indifference’ represents a type of ‘vital substrate’, that element of pure life opposed to the formalism of law” (as cited in Wolin, 1990, 395). Although, they are important features of the state that demand obedience and respect for stability and security purposes, but when the existence and idea of the state is jeopardized by their presence, their role comes to an end. Thus, they create a state of dependency in some cases and interdependency in others. The generated interdependent actions and social expectations are caused by motives of either conforming with or controlling others’ expectations (Kondo, 1990). “Interdependence does not mean equality. Interdependence connotes some degree of vulnerability by one party to another” (Viotti and Kauppi, 1999, 76). Therefore, normative behavior is a stabilizer and organizer more than a creator, and rationality is the basic element for providing normative behavior with the required effectiveness. A system of expectations and plans enhances normative adjustments and minimizes undesired responses. Thus, security concerns become a priority. “Information that reduces uncertainty is therefore an important factor in world politics. But information is not a systemic constant” (Viotti and Kauppi, 1999, 177). Despite the fact that knowledge is not the only ultimate option, it is an effective one to learn from. It enables the process of designing appropriate norms and regulations for tackling unexpected incidents. Because of that, it helps in increasing preparedness, awareness, and alertness levels for facing critical situations. Waltz notes that, “variations in information may be important in influencing state behavior” (in Viotti and Kauppi, 1999, 177). Variation is a healthy feature, if it is accurate and suitable for the

specified situation. Bearing in mind, it increases the availability of options and provides a variety of possibilities with diverse solutions.

The normative behavior supported by a variety of proper information, enhances cooperative performance of rational individuals who seek reciprocity and mutual relationships for a stable and secure society. Consequently, norms and regulations in their natural realm are vital for reinforcing security levels and minimizing insecurities and instabilities.

#### **4.4 The Ripening Influence**

The ripe moment is the answer for almost every question. For Campbell, “Ripeness of time is one of the absolute essences of diplomacy... You have to do the right thing at the right time” (as cited in Zartman, 2000, 226). The core of ripening theory demands appropriate timing, place, and readiness for achieving desired outcomes. “The ripening theory is intended to explain why, and therefore when, parties to a conflict are susceptible to their own or others efforts to turn the conflict toward resolution through negotiation” (Zartman, 2000, 228). But, how is ripening theory related to the insecurity dilemma? Mary-Jane and Marius Deeb argue that:

One of the major reasons for the failure of the negotiations in the Lebanese case was the fact that the basic elements of the ripe moment were not present. Ripe moments, according to Zartman occur when three elements are present: a mutually hurting stalemate, a formula for a way out, and valid spokesmen (1991, 92).

Regrettably, Lebanon missed the opportunity to enhance the legitimacy of the state and increase levels of national consciousness. Instead, instability dominated society and opened the space widely for undesired interferences and disputes. Although the time factor might seem irrelevant, its presence ensures successful

outcomes for conveying the weakness and vulnerability of the state and motivating stability and security instead.

Eliminating insecurities is not as easy as generating them. Highly conscious attitudes supported by the time factor can ease situations and facilitate solutions. Within plural and confessional societies, the psychological and social impediments, in addition to divergent interests, reinforce political disputes with dramatic antagonisms. Grasping the right moment can minimize the levels of insecurities, but one might question how this can be accomplished and whether it is possible? Circumstances and interactive approaches provide the appropriate answer, as they require ripe moments for achieving successful outcomes. Nevertheless, compliance with rules may eliminate barriers, but when the international, regional, and domestic institutions become subject to and subjugated by different influential forces, their role is neutralized. Thus, enhancing empathy among different sectarian groups, counters political dissonance. It creates a state of satisfaction and encourages determinism as a requirement for harmony. On that account, displaying the positive forces rather than restrictive ones, augment the possibilities of proper results.

#### **4.5 Institutions: Functions and Capabilities**

What impact do institutions have on insecurity levels? How do political parties influence the role of state institutions? What results can be derived?

“The institutions of the state comprise the entire machinery of the government, including its executive, legislative, administrative and judicial bodies, and laws, procedures and norms by which they operate” (Buzan, 1991, 82-83). Norms, laws, and rules regulate state institutions, hence they tend to restrict powers and define

authorities. Nevertheless, institutions aim to organize both state and citizens' affairs and facilitate their relations. The diversity of state institutions demands strict regulations for defining and organizing their missions and specifying their duties. Their function as juncture between the government and society stipulates their integrative roles. They are of hierarchal order with terminating procedures of authorities when needed to set preferences and limit powers. The main goal of institutions is to maintain stability, effectiveness, and regularity in interactions (MacCormick, 1998). Institutions are essential for providing the society with the necessary services, security, and policies. Due to their active and dynamic orientations, they turn into a target for capture by actors aiming at weakening the state, either through corruption or by inviting external interferences. For many, a weak state means weak institutions, for that reason institutions define the nature of the relationship between the state and society.

#### **4.5.1 Institutional Function and the Impact of Political Parties**

Institutions are composed of legally binding instruments and tools with different tasks and purposes. They constitute a medium of cooperation in some instances, an arena that causes change in other cases, and a reflection of the interests of the state in almost all stages (Viotti and Kauppi, 1999). Therefore, institutions are considered the most powerful and integrative bodies with vital regulatory agents possessing an authoritative character that play the role of a catalyst for organizing the relationship between the state and society (MacCormick, 1998).

Political parties and statesmen influence the role of the institutions, and at the same time, they are bound and obligated by the rules, which regulate and govern the performance and affairs of these institutions without missing the impact of foreign interferences on their attainments. The confessional system in Lebanon, and the nature of the state structure, allows sectarian political parties to manipulate the

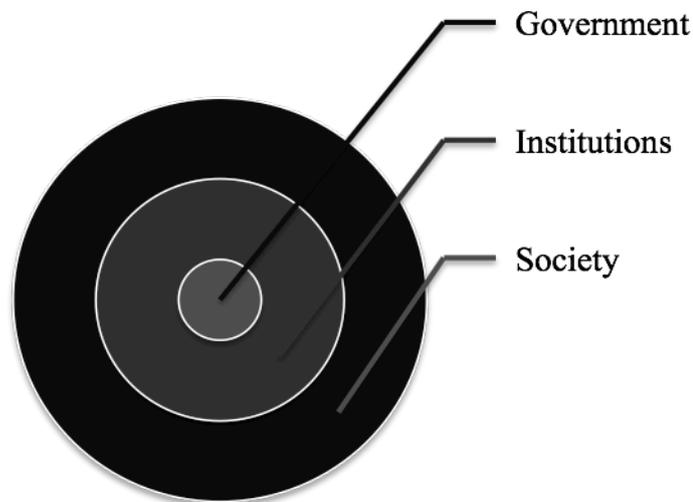


Figure 4.1: Illustrates and presents the hierarchal levels of the state interactive procedures.

political system and jeopardize social relations by influencing the role of state institutions. The negative sovereignty attributed to Lebanon drove statesmen and traditional ruling families to seek international approval from external actors. As mentioned in chapter three, President Bashar Asad supported amending the laws and permitted the extension of the presidential tenure of President Emile Lahoud for another three years in 2004. Domestic groups and international powers incited Lebanese protestors to accuse Syria of interfering in Lebanese internal affairs, and demanded the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanese territories. The tense situation created insecure feelings, striving to jeopardize the historical relations between Lebanon and Syria. This increased the gap between the state and society from one side, and resulted in a gap among the Lebanese communities themselves on

the other. As a consequence, the legitimacy and pragmatism of the state institutions was jeopardized and debilitated.

#### **4.6 The Use of Force**

Internal and external actors are either sources of insecurities or generators of stability. The internal use of force can be divided into two main parts, depending on situations and circumstances and can be classified as legitimate and illegitimate powers, whereas the external use of force seeks to secure the state from external threats and attacks.

##### **4.6.1 Internal Use of Force**

###### *a. Legitimate and Illegitimate Forces*

The legitimate use of force is used to preserve stability and security and protect the citizens from dangers. Implementing justice and enforcing regulations through special institutions, safeguards the state and society. Therefore, the Internal Security Forces (ISF) under the authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the military institutions, including the national army under the authority of the Ministry of Defense, are the sole entities authorized to use legitimate force. The main aim is to ensure security and maintain stability, and accordingly build trust in the capabilities of the state for gaining the respect and loyalty of citizens. However, the state wins when security, stability, and public safety can be achieved. The paradox emerges when the state turns into an oppressive and repressive force against the citizens. Examining cases, in which the state undertakes such oppressive actions, helps in identifying the exact sources of insecurities.

The use of illegitimate force is the second part, which highlights exceptions and irregularities in the performance of the regime. The stick and carrot approach becomes the tool for persecuting and abusing citizens under the cover of protection. Instead of enhancing state stability and security, the security forces develop into an effective instrument for subjugating the society and generating chaos resulting in excess of oppression followed by discrimination. Although, it is an unusual situation, unluckily corrupted and weak regimes tend to use this technique as an effective option for securing their longevity and preserving their interests. In 2006, the nongovernmental human rights organization “Support of Lebanese in Arbitrary Detention” (SOLIDA) issued a report documenting various types of tortures allegedly practiced at the Ministry of Defense between 1992 and 2005 (Diplomacy in Action, 2008).

However, distinguishing between the unintentional harm caused by the use of force and intentional one is important to clarify misconceptions and prevent confusion concerning this specific argument. Unfortunately, almost all dramatic incidents and clashes were and are still proclaimed and justified as unintentional flaws. No authority admits its responsibility despite the fact that the preservation of state security is a compulsory act and an attribute, which concerns both the state as well as its inhabitants. Therefore, maintaining the security factor is not an option; it is a demand, which requires minimizing misperceptions, seeing that they are major enemies for the stability of the state. “High levels of uncertainty reduce confidence with which expectations are held, and may lead governments to discount the future heavily” (Keohane in Viotti and Kauppi, 1999, 177). Consequently, citizens develop a sense of intimidation and fear, because their protector turns out to be the agitator,

and as a result, their loyalty to the state diminishes and threatens national unity and harmony.

*b. External Use of Force*

Political parties and armed militias undermine the role of the national army by searching for powerful foreign allies to empower their status and secure them from harm. The excess in dependency and reliance on foreign allies open opportunities for further interferences in domestic affairs. At the same time, they restrict the reach of necessary supplies and advanced weapons to the army for vanquishing and dominating its powers and capabilities. However, technological advancement enhances capacities and promotes competition among and between states, on the other hand it fosters internal tension derived from the constant threat from others.

The invitation of Syrian troops was an opportunity to protect the interests of its Lebanese allies via fighting separatists groups, securing shared borders, and limiting the possible danger of an Israeli counter attack. Unfortunately, for some parties, this act was perceived as Syrian interference in Lebanese affairs, which further fragmented society. The constant challenges from various armed militias increased the weakness of the state and aided in diminishing the role of the national army. The deteriorating situation affected the performance of the institutions and influenced social unity negatively.

#### **4.6.2 Use of Force and the Institutions**

“The institutions of the state are much more tangible than the idea of the state as an object of security” (Buzan, 1991, 86). As mentioned earlier, institutions are

dynamic elements and primary providers of different services, and accordingly the progress of the state is measured by the potency and effectiveness of its institutions. Besides political parties, which possess the capacity to obstruct decisions, dominate institutions and result in corruption, sectarianism and confessional systems aid in fragmenting society. Accordingly, the presence of disputed sectarian and confessional communities promote chaos and endanger the existence of legitimate national forces.

Lebanon was on the brink of total collapse during the civil war, owing to the domination by armed militias and sectarian and confessional political parties, in addition to foreign-armed guerillas (PLO), and then by the Syrian troops and the Israeli Defense Army. An unusual combination led to the rupture of state institutions. In 2005, the situation reemerged with the existence of old and new actors. Thus, military institutions failed to protect citizens from excess violence and to preserve the state from falling into chaos. The capabilities of previous and current armed militias superseded those of the state, including the ISF and the national army. The phantom of civil war was revealing itself again, fueled with high levels of tension among and between the sectarian and confessional communities despite the existence of cross-sectarian political alliances. Consequently, the democratic game in Lebanon was facing threats, which affected the performance of institutions and jeopardized the stability of society.

#### **4.6.3 The Diplomatic Path**

Negotiations and compromises are effective solutions for weak states with little or no military capabilities; it is the last haven for solving problems with minimal

casualties. National harmony demands setting aside sectarian and confessional interests, but in Lebanon blind loyalty to political leaders and sectarian rulers dominates. State elites are a major part of the problem, and in some instances, they constitute the obstacle. Their willingness to let their followers forget and forgive remains a doubtful reality. The dilemma lies in a contradictory situation, and no one is willing to sacrifice for the sake of the state. Political dynamics in spring 2008 confirmed and proved the unwillingness of statesmen to forfeit their interests in order to protect and preserve the security, stability, and harmony of the state. Despite the extensive dialogues between different political and sectarian leaders, citizens were the only victims who fell into the trap of bloody clashes. Nevertheless, state elites possessed the necessary authority to control incidents and prevent clashes, but indirectly they aided in the deterioration of the situation.

#### **4.7 Psycho-Social links**

How do psycho-social attitudes affect political relationships? Political decisions are governed by psychological and social influences based on the reality that statesmen are human beings and can make mistakes by making wrong decisions as any other human being would. Politicians are thus a major source of insecurities resulting from corruption and misuse of the state assets and resources.

Different behaviors and attitudes precipitate insecurities and vulnerabilities, and hence find in weak states a natural home for exacerbating insecurities. According to Dag Hammerskjöld, “fear motivates much of the human actions” (as cited in Yost, 1969, 25). As a result, psychological and social interpretations constitute a background for political decisions, because human attitudes and behaviors are subject

to modifications according to needs and interests (Yost, 1969). Thus, highlighting such discussions can help in understanding the crux of causes, features, and actors who bring about the insecurity dilemma, and reveal the truth behind different causes, explaining why some state elites make particular decisions and not others under specific circumstances. Definitely, in addition to interests and values, the answer lies in attitudes, mentalities, reactions, and early experiences. As Charles Yost notes:

Politics, it is said, is the art of the possible. It is the art of the indispensable, and any politician who does not have a feeling in his bones for what is necessary, not just this year but five or ten years hence is not likely to survive that long (1969, 210).

Therefore, psychological behavior and social changes shape political decisions and constitute the driving forces, which motivate individuals.

#### **4.7.1 Psychological Interpretations**

Social diversity increases variations in perceptions and interpretations depending on interests, values, and attitudes. “Things are probably not as simple as that, thanks to the discrepancies between people’s thoughts and their actions, and to the diversity of their wishful impulses” (Freud, 1961, 10). Therefore, diversity in behaviors plays a major role in exacerbating insecurities and creating a wide range of gaps between the state and society. Referring again to Sigmund Freud:

It is impossible to escape the impression that people commonly use false standards of measurement that they seek power, success and wealth for themselves and admire them in others, and that they underestimate what is of true value in life (1961, 10).

For many it is difficult to differentiate between what is real and what they wish to happen, and for every effect, there is a cause and an actor, which generates insecurities. Because of that, insecurities begin as a psychological feeling. As Yost

notes, “In each small daily act of statesmen and ordinary men and women in these critical times, the future is imperceptibly and cumulatively determined, judgment is pronounced on ourselves by ourselves” (1969, 205).

On that account, state elites from different backgrounds reflect their attitudes and perceptions on their circumstances. As a result, the individual who has no power or authority to cause a change suffers. Reinforcing discipline can limit corruption and resolve defects, whereas the absence of proper enforcement of laws and regulations together with corrupted institutions open the door for different types of interferences. By linking the behavior of statesmen and state elites to the generation of insecurities and vulnerabilities, emphasizes the nature of the relationship between the state and society from an attitudinal perspective, and as a complimentary aspect to the structural one. As mentioned earlier, humans are major actors in the state, and their attitude and behavior matters. Humans tend to use force as a tool to gain benefits and utilize all available means for their own sake in order to protect their status. Although, Humans are good in nature, but circumstances, interests, and benefits divert them from good towards evil. On that account, individual behavior is also a factor of insecurities, especially when it coincides with weak state institutions. Total dependence on the analysis of behaviors and attitudes is risky;<sup>16</sup> equally, social factors are complementary for the analysis.

#### **4.7.2 Social Factors**

Walid Mubarak notes that, “Key factors in the development of these unfortunate conditions was not so much the intentions of specific people and groups as it was the structural weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the Lebanese political

system itself” (2003, 4). However, intentions and behaviors of specific groups intensify situations and create tensions despite structural conditions. The influence of individuals on their surroundings is immense, and in turn circumstances affect behaviors as well. Social factors, in addition to psychological ones contribute to and increase the structural weaknesses of the political system. The general development of the state and the progress of its institutions are affected by various social forces. These forces have a tendency to enhance the performance of institutions and increase state achievements. Thus, distinguishing between negative and positive forces can safeguard the state from different pitfalls and secure society from chaos. As Buzan points out:

The structure of the system and its interaction dynamics complete this dilemma by ensuring that any attempt to acquire, or even move towards, complete security by any actor will stimulate reactions which raise the level of threat in proportion to the measures taken (1991, 331).

Social forces reinforce threats and endanger social interactions, especially when interests supersede values. This creates social gaps, which endanger state security and affect institutional performance. Social behavior thus constitutes a major condition in defining the identity of the state and establishing a cohesive society.

In Lebanon, the increase in unemployment rates, lack of proper job opportunities, growing poverty, and lack of equitable development, all increase anxiety and pressure among different social groups. The sectarian parties inflame tensions by intensifying political rhetoric and mobilize their followers along sectarian lines. This leads the jobless and aimless youth to either migrate or join the militias. Unfortunately, small personal disputes amplify into bloody confrontations. Social burdens stimulate psychological feelings that steer the proliferation of security, legitimacy, and infrastructural gaps. Citizens gradually start to lose faith in the

capabilities of the state and its institutions, and they champion the parties that protect them instead. This creates a burden on the development process and results in an increase in internal and external migration rates and domestic insecurities. Migdal draws attention to,

The state's injection of new social organizations, resources, symbols, and forces into an arena enables it to appropriate existing social forces and symbols in order to establish a new pattern of domination... When the non-state social forces rise to the top... the organization and symbols of the state's components are appropriated by the local dominating social forces and the transformation of the local components of the state is so extensive as to harm significantly the state's overall chances of achieving integrated domination in society (1994, 25).

It is the state's responsibility to minimize these attitudes in order to regulate social behaviors. However, state efforts alone might not be the only effective source for controlling existing forces. Civil society plays a major role in motivating and regulating public opinion. "Civil society assumes the existence of a normative consensus or hegemony of fundamental ideas among social forces, even among contending groups; this consensus represents a prevailing moral or social order" (Migdal, 1994, 28). Accordingly, social forces are a vital feature for the stability and security of the state. "If society is the outermost limits with which people identify, then it is the state that initially determines those limits or social boundaries" (Migdal, 1994, 23). Therefore, the state has to regulate social forces, define civil society's framework, and prevent possible escalation of undesired behaviors.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

Why does the Lebanese state lack effective institutional capacity to provide peace and order? Why does the state face a crisis of popular legitimacy? Why does

the society lack unity? Blaming others for our misfortunes is misleading. Both the state and society are responsible for Lebanon's failures.

The existentialist and normative approaches explain both the direct and indirect features of the insecurity dilemma. Both approaches offer valid explanations and call attention to its degenerating consequences. Nonetheless, the study of human behavior and interactive relationships support and complement the previous arguments concerning state structure, institutions, and state-society relations. They present intentions, aims, and goals, which generate weaknesses and result in insecurities and vulnerabilities. The next chapter briefly searches for an appropriate answer to this thesis' final question: Can Lebanon ever escapes its insecurity dilemma?

**Table 4.1**

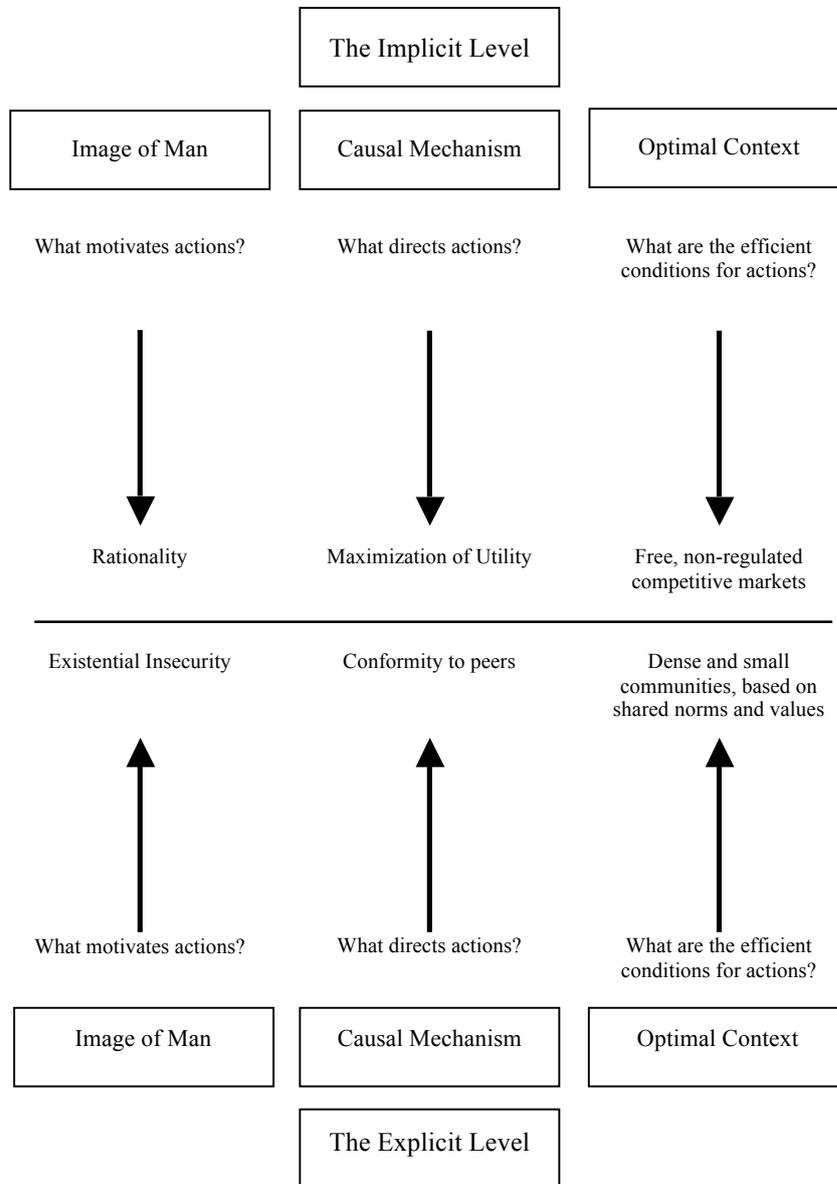


Table 4.1: Presents different levels of behavior (explicit and implicit strands in Coleman’s sociological analysis), *explicit level / optimal context, the markets can represent states and societies.*

## **Chapter Five**

### **Escaping the Insecurity Dilemma**

#### **5.1 By Way of a Conclusion**

This thesis examined the consequences of the insecurity dilemma in Lebanon based on the definition provided by Job. It also highlighted the nature of the relationship with Syria from the security complex perspective as presented by Buzan. The main argument presented in this thesis is that Lebanon's domestic socio-political structure and regional position has exacerbated its insecurity dilemma. Likewise, the insecurity dilemma has benefitted from the resulting situation. The psychological dimension cannot be totally discarded, however, seeing that it affects the decision-making process and generates gaps between the state and society. On top of that, the institutions of the state turn into a medium for precipitating insecurities due to excess in corruption and the inadequate behaviors of local actors. Adding to the previously mentioned factors, the confessional system in Lebanon thus replicates and exacerbates the country's insecurity dilemma.

The weakness of the Lebanese state has invited foreign interference, which added more burdens to the situation in Lebanon than the state can absorb. These difficulties jeopardized national security and increased insecurities and vulnerabilities, which undermined national unity and have contributed in fragmenting the society. Nonetheless, the lack of national cohesion not only affected the domestic situation, it also influenced state decisions concerning regional and international relations. The

fluctuating internal situation in Lebanon has affected relationships with neighboring countries, especially Syria, and threatened the historical relations between the two countries. Instead of enhancing the position of the state, political parties manipulated state assets and exploited policies in order to fulfill their interests and ensure their longevity. Domestic divisions increased the dependency of the state on foreign powers, owing to the decrease in institutional capabilities and resources, in addition to the constant search for powerful foreign allies that guarantee protection. In turn, the excess of foreign influence weakened internal cohesion and threatened state institutions. The negative impact of these influences on state institutions led to an almost total institutional paralysis, and a sectarian take-over instead.

The Lebanese political system principally calls for coordination and collaboration among the different sects, which should bring about social coexistence and harmony. Yet, the problem is in the implementation of constitutional clauses and the resulting corruption. Therefore, any attempt to escape the insecurity dilemma requires plenty of efforts from all domestic actors.

## **5.2 The Future of Insecurities in Lebanon**

Can Lebanon escape its insecurity dilemma? How can Lebanon achieve this objective? The previous chapters discussed the insecurity dilemma extensively, providing examples to validate the theoretical argument of this thesis. The lack of social cohesiveness, infrastructural and institutional capacities, and legitimacy increases the insecurity levels and affects behavioral attitudes in Lebanon, unlike the situation in Syria. Therefore, achieving national consensus and proper implementation of regulations enable statesmen, as well as ordinary citizens to protect

and preserve the institutions of the state by creating regular interactive relationships between the state and society. Because the insecurity dilemma is not static in nature, and oscillates depending on the intensity of the intervening and dominating actors, it consequently causes instability. In addition to its unpredictable forces, this situation reflects negative effects on the development process in Lebanon, thus making the possibility of escaping the insecurity dilemma a difficult task. By strengthening state institutions and internal unity, external influences can be decreased, and replaced by opportunities guaranteeing to create social balance. The stability of the political, social, educational, and health sectors are affected by the stability of the economic situation. Lebanon faces both political turbulence and economic stagnation, due to weak political and confessional system with a divided society, which results in instability and vulnerability. This, in turn, forms an endless circle of insecurities.

In addition to the internal and external factors, the geographic location of Lebanon attracts different powers with various ambitions and results in an unusual situation. This also affects the decision-making process and the strategies of the state in general. Lebanon became and is still an arena for foreign and domestic disputes, threatening citizens and jeopardizing the proper functioning of the state and non-state institutions.

Throughout history, Lebanese have demonstrated a stubborn persistence against failure despite threats and vulnerabilities. The present situation creates a medium for weakening and fragmenting the state because of the lack of infrastructure, institution, and human capabilities. Successive wars limited the progress of the state, and created fragmented societies. It resulted in material and non-material breakdown

of both the state and social institutions. They thus affected the overall capabilities of the state and led to national insecurities.

Persistent problems are renewed with every disagreement, hence making the possibility of maintaining the security of the state a difficult task. Appropriate timing and efficacious circumstances are partial solutions for bringing the conflicting parties together, whereas cooperative attitudes increase the prospects for resolving conflicts. The insecurity attributes are not formed from void, but are the cumulative summation of structural and psychological factors with recessive threats, which promote chaos and generate inescapable insecurities. Inevitably, the possibility of escaping the insecurity dilemma remains a slim one. Lebanese citizens and politicians alone should decide whether or not they are willing to live in harmony and escape the consequences of the country's insecurity dilemma.

## **Abbreviations**

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| ISF    | Internal Security Forces                    |
| PLO    | Palestinian Liberation Organization         |
| PSP    | Progressive Socialist Party                 |
| SOLIDA | Support of Lebanese in Arbitrary Detention  |
| SSNP   | Syrian Social Nationalist Party             |
| UNIFIL | United Nations Interim Forces In Lebanon    |
| UNSCR  | United Nations Security Council Resolutions |

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## **Notes (Chapter Two)**

<sup>1</sup> Negative sovereignties require international recognition, they are an attribute of Third World countries in general, and weak states in particular, unlike positive ones, which signifies developed and powerful countries.

<sup>2</sup> Balancing requires alliance formation with the opposition to the source of threat, and bandwagon represents the alliance with the source of threat. The realists tend to perceive the balance of power as a sort of interdependence since it constitutes and shapes the framework of relations and interactions between and among states. For Stephen Walt, "Because the system is anarchic, each state has to survive on its own. Waltz argued that this condition would lead weaker states to balance against, rather than bandwagon with, more powerful rivals." (Walt, 1998, 31).

## **Notes (Chapter Three)**

<sup>3</sup> Khazen provided an example derived from an international experience and highlighted the impact of this defect on the cohesion and proper integration of the society in the state affairs; "The state plays a similar role in other democratic plural societies such as Belgium, Switzerland, and Canada. However, in these countries the communal structure of society is institutionalized in the federal political system. In Practice, this means that the cultural, regional, and linguistic differences are unambiguously recognized by the state. In political terms, this translates into political decentralization. In Lebanon the process is reversed" (Khazen, 2000, 95).

<sup>4</sup> Sovereign states are independent entities with full control over the state institutions and decision-making process including policy implementation accompanied with legitimate use of force to maintain stability and security. Accordingly, the ideologies and orientations of the regime in power dominate. In turn, foreign interferences subjugate decision-making and intimidate the independency as well as the freedom of choice and expression. "General environment be laboring under a prolonged and intense state of turmoil, a participatory and pluralist system linked demographically or ideologically with other countries in the region will have no chance of maintaining neutrality and domestic tranquility" (Harik as cited in Mubarak, 2003, 3)

<sup>5</sup> The insecurity dilemma features as defined by Brian Job (2005) dominated the situation in Lebanon, and helped in forming a weak state with frail capabilities and resources.

<sup>6</sup> For further information concerning this issue, refer to Adeed Dawisha (1980), *Syria and the Lebanese Crisis*.

<sup>7</sup> General Jadid insisted on the application of radical domestic and foreign policies (Dawisha, 1980).

<sup>8</sup> Syria attempted to unify the political decision-making process especially after the turbulent situation before 1970 and promoted chaos and disarrays. After President Hafiz Asad took hold of the Baath Party, he started a reformation operation for lively sectors in order to normalize relations and stabilize the general situation. Thus, Syria turned into a powerful regional force that demanded international respect.

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<sup>9</sup> The agreement between Hizballah and Al Tayyar Al Watani Al Hurr (National Liberal Party) has changed the rules of the game and affected the political equation. General Aoun was a member of 14<sup>th</sup> of March alliance, but due to several interests and concerns, he shifted his orientations towards 8<sup>th</sup> of March alliance. Therefore, Lebanese politics depend on interests more than values and tight commitments.

<sup>10</sup> Political Alliances in Lebanon have changed in a dramatic way, thus changing the rules of the balance of power. As an example, the progressive socialist party was a strategic ally of the Palestinians during the civil war. In 2005, the head of the party, deputy Walid Jumbulat became a major actor and an initiator of the Lebanese Politics. Consequently, he allied with rightist groups like Lebanese Forces, and the Phalange party, who were against left parties during the Lebanese civil war.

<sup>11</sup> *Calls upon* all remaining foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon; *Calls for* the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias (UNSCR 1559).

#### **Notes (Chapter Four)**

<sup>12</sup> The influence of policies and rules is significant and can result in drastic social, political, or economic changes. Accordingly, their impact on individuals and situations evinces the demand for survival. As a result, disputes exacerbate between reformers and those affected by the resulted change.

<sup>13</sup> The strength and weakness of the state affects relationships with other states. For Jervis, States, which lack powerful military capabilities and adopt passive and flawed foreign policies have little impact and exerts little or no pressure at all on the nearby states (1978).

<sup>14</sup> Their proclaimed threat is based on illusionary fears demanding protection from foreign powers.

<sup>15</sup> The dialectic concerning the normative and existentialist approaches is a controversial one. The former venerates laws and norms, whereas the latter emphasizes the importance of the state and individuals. Accordingly, the existentialist believes in the existence, survival, capabilities and constant progress of the individual and the state. The dialectic turns into a mismatch norms and existence.

<sup>16</sup> Depending on the analysis of personalities alone can be a misleading attempt and results in wrong assumptions. Therefore, accurate definitions in addition to proper assessments can help in emphasizing the right image and highlighting true values.

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