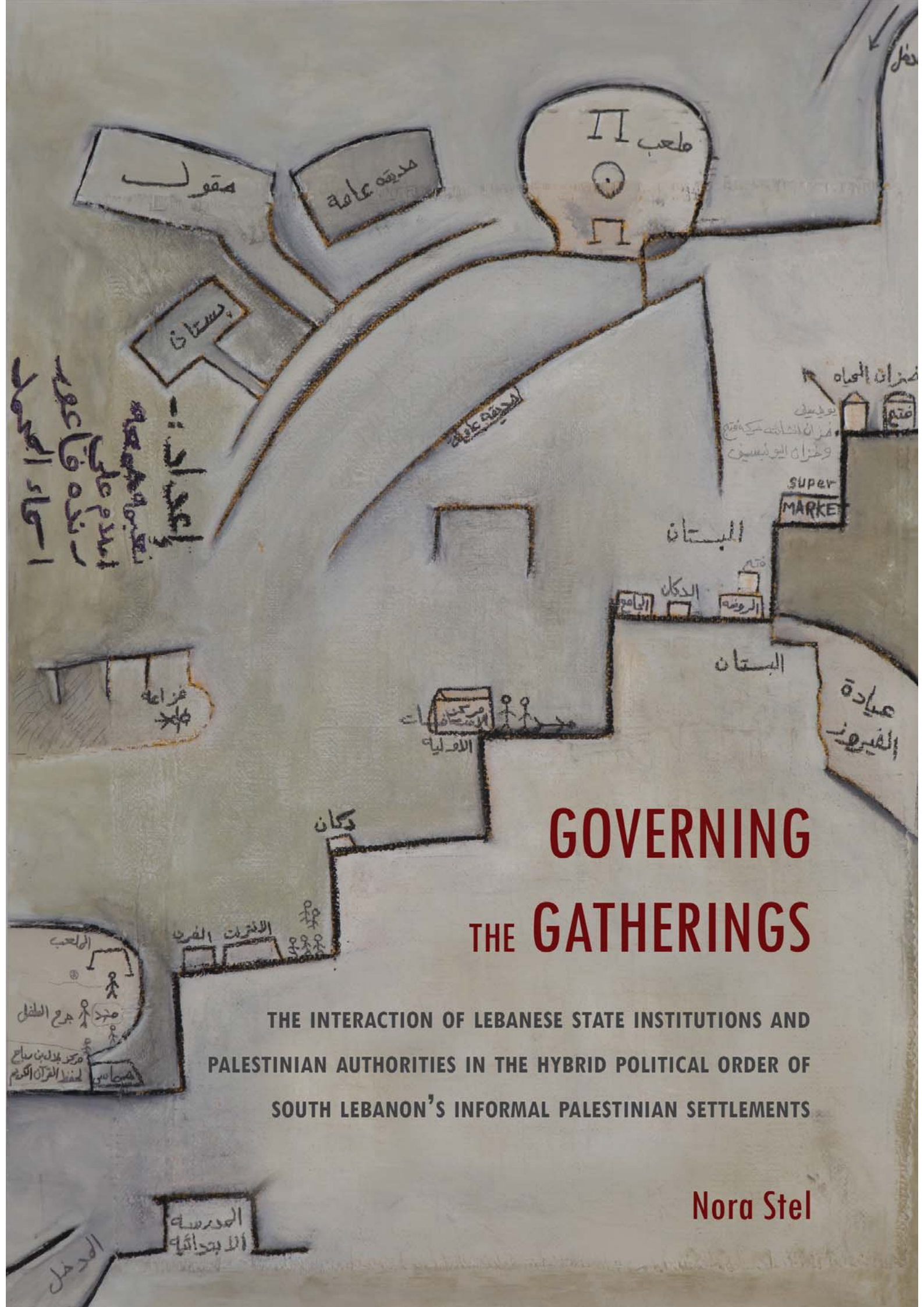

GOVERNING THE GATHERINGS

THE INTERACTION OF LEBANESE STATE INSTITUTIONS AND PALESTINIAN AUTHORITIES IN THE HYBRID POLITICAL ORDER OF SOUTH LEBANON'S INFORMAL PALESTINIAN SETTLEMENTS

Nora Stel

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Governing the Gatherings

The interaction of Lebanese state institutions and Palestinian authorities in the hybrid political order of South Lebanon's informal Palestinian settlements

Bestuur in een hybride politieke orde. De interactie tussen Libanese overheidsinstanties en Palestijnse autoriteiten in informele Palestijnse nederzettingen in Zuid Libanon

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Utrecht op gezag van de rector magnificus, prof.dr. G.J. van der Zwaan, ingevolge het besluit van het college voor promoties in het openbaar te verdedigen op vrijdag 17 februari 2017 des middags te 4.15 uur

door

Nora Marie Stel

geboren op 6 augustus 1986 te Boxmeer

Promotoren: Prof.dr. G.E. Frerks

Prof.dr. W.A. Naudé

Copromotor: Dr. P. van der Molen

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Acknowledgements

While it can be terrifying to expose one's thoughts – half- baked as they may be – to others, not least one's informants, the dividends are high. Others' experience and their various ways of making associations usually provide new perspectives and insights about one's work and the existing truths worth taking up arms against. The most striking thoughts sometimes come from places one would least expect. (Lund, 2014:231)

I have long aspired to 'do my PhD;' to have the luxury to fundamentally and elaborately explore the story of Palestinians and Lebanese, refugees and states, hegemony and hybridity that I hope to have captured in this dissertation. That the resultant intellectual journey has surpassed my expectations, which were far from modest to begin with, is due to the many people that guided me on my way.

Most important by far here are Asma and Nadia and their families, without whom I would simply have been lost in every imaginable way during my time Shabriha and Qasmiye. Your friendship, patience, knowledge, humour and intelligence were indispensable for making sense of 'governance in the gatherings.' My hosting families, Imm Ismail specifically, have made my time in Shabriha and Qasmiye one of the most personally enriching experiences in my life. Every single person that has been willing to share her or his time and thoughts with me in the course of my stay in the gatherings deserves my thanks. But Fakhri and Yaser were exceptionally helpful in their endless networking and arranging on my behalf. Had it not been for you two, I would not have lasted a week beyond Beirut.[1] Your energy and defiance in the face of so much frustration and apathy will never cease to amaze me.

[1] In this respect, I am tremendously grateful to Popular Aid for Relief and Development (PARD) and Naba'a for taking so much time and effort to introduce me to the gatherings. Know that your support for 'yet another researcher' was never taken

That I managed to go to Lebanon in the first place is thanks to my supervisory team.[2] Irna, whose support, loyalty and moral compass have carried me ever since she was my MA thesis supervisor. Georg, who was there with his commitment, experience and much-needed relativism from the very moment I dared to voice the idea of a PhD project. Wim, without whose faith in me my proposals would still be buried in a drawer and whose encouragement of my weblog and my opinion pieces has opened up new horizons for me.

My intellectual home away from home, the Issam Fares Institute at the American University of Beirut, especially in the persons of Nasser Yassin and Rima Rassi, has been indispensable in developing my thinking about 'refugeeness' and 'informality' in Lebanon. Indeed, the number of inspiring and amazing Lebanese and Palestinian scholars and thinkers that I have had the honour to discuss my research with exceeds the scope of this acknowledgements section. Jaber Suleiman, Suhail Natour, Mahmoud el Ali, Ibrahim Abou Khalil, Soha Frem, Rashid el Mansi, Ahmad Faour and Samir Sharari are among the very least I should mention here. Of all the other great minds that helped me on my way, Reinoud Leenders, Sari Hanafi and Diana Allan stood at particularly important junctions.

When, at times, I needed a place in Lebanon to get away from it all, Reem and Erik were always there for me. I don't know if you know how much your jokes, trips and food have meant to me. Ammeke and Nicolien will for me forever be connected with Beirut and all the beautiful memories it gave me. The joy of sharing 'my' Palestinian Lebanon with my friends from home has been immense. Thank you for coming to visit me Karlijn, Bouke, Bart and, most of all, Sanne – who has joined me in my adventures wherever they took me.

My research certainly did not stop with 'the field.' The Centre for Conflict Studies has never disappointed me as a place of critical analysis and

for granted.

[2] And the organizations that so generously funded my fieldwork, of course: the Hendrik Muller Fonds; the Lutfia Rabbani Foundation, whose genuine interest in my work has been heartwarming; and the Governance and Local Development Program at Yale University, where Ellen Lust was so amazing as to invite me to an inspiring conference on top of financially supporting my fieldwork.

intellectual solidarity thanks to Luuk, Lauren, Chris, Jolle, Mario and, most of all, my recent partners in crime in hybrid order and rebel rule who serve as my paranymphs, Niels and Toon.[3] I am so thankful that you, and Alies and Sanne as well, read my endless, and certainly not succinct, proposals, abstracts, drafts, revisions and (re)submissions.

And then when I thought I was done, an arduous process of editing and lay-out awaited me. I am thrilled that Marwan Rechmaoui let me use his uniquely captivating maps of Shabriha (based on sketches of Shabriha's residents) for the cover of my thesis. Without Erik and his impressive lay-out skills and obstinate design vision, moreover, this dissertation would not look half as professional as it does now.

Ultimately, however, it is the people that were there long before any research project and will be there long after, that constitute the most crucial foundations of the process that culminated in this dissertation. My mother, Ine, for never worrying and always so utterly self-evidently having faith in me. And for taking the bus through Turkey and Syria to celebrate my birthday with me in Tyre. My father, Peer, for making me care – about politics, about justice, about Palestinians and Lebanese – and for showing me the combined strength of authenticity, headstrongness and intuition. There are few things in this world that made me more proud than your pride in me. My sister, Marie, and brother, Bart, who, wherever they are in this world, make sure that I am never really alone. My daughter, Felix, whose sunlight smile has put the entire world in a new perspective. And, most of all, my love, Erik, who never tries to stop me, but is always ready to challenge me; without whom I could never be the person I want to be or live the life I want to live. For all those years of support, for the frustrating Skype sessions and wonderful letters, for the always, always being there, I dedicate this dissertation to you.

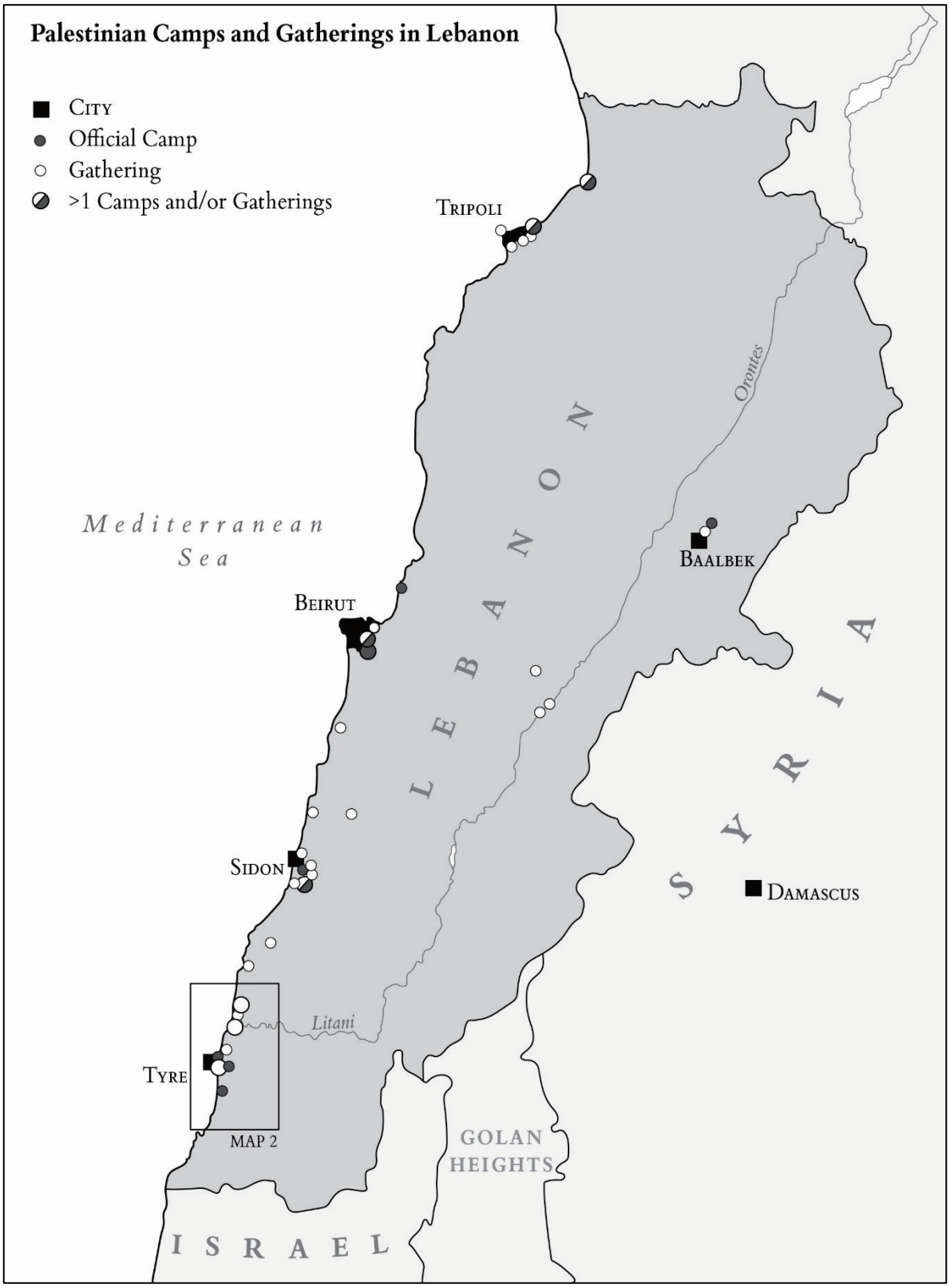
[3] And José van Aelst, who is always there when you need her.

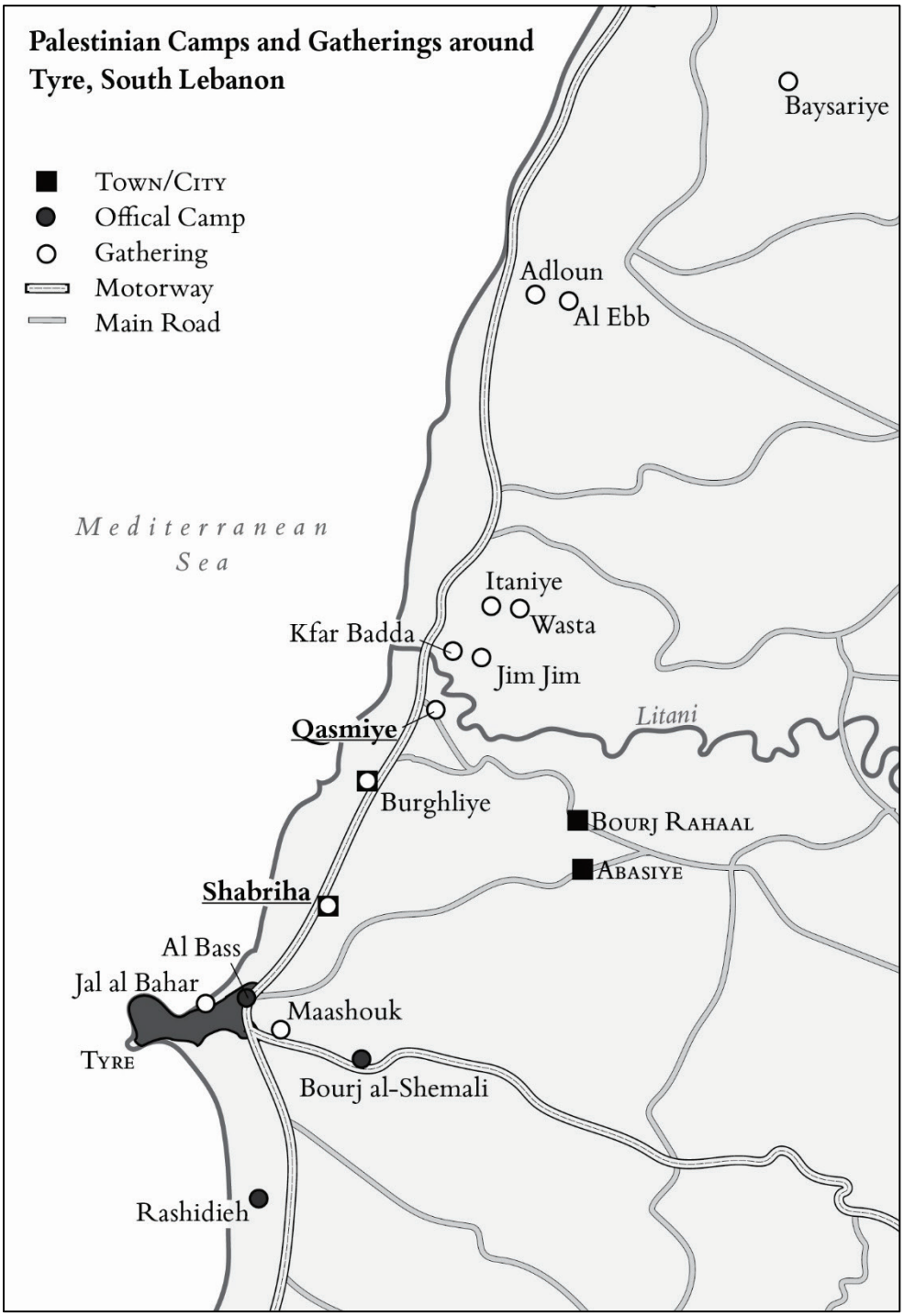
List of Abbreviations

CERES	Research School for Resource Studies for Development
CSI	Common Space Initiative
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EDL	*Électricité du Liban*
GUPW	General Union of Palestinian Women
ICG	International Crisis Group
LPDC	Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PARD	Popular Aid for Relief and Development
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PU	*Première Urgence*
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

List of Arabic Terms

'awda	'return' – refers to the right of Palestinian refugees to return to Palestine
faliyaat	'active people' – refers to local societal leaders
mukhtar	Lebanese state representative that performs social and administrative services on the neighbourhood or village level
Nakba	'disaster' – refers to the forced expulsion of Palestinians from Mandatory Palestine in the process of the creation of the state of Israel
Tahaluf	'alliance' – refers to the political alliance against the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Oslo Accords that is led by Hamas
tajamu'a	'gathering' – refers to informal Palestinian settlements in Lebanon
tawteen	'implantation' – refers to the settlement of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon
wasta	'clout,' 'influence' or 'connections' – refers to the social capital or political network needed to 'get things done'


Palestinian Camps and Gatherings in Lebanon
City
Official Camp
Gathering
>1 Camps and/or Gatherings
Tripoli
Orontes
Mediterranean Sea
Baalbek
Beirut
LEBANON
SYRIA
Sidon
Damascus
Litani
Tyre
MAP 2
GOLAN HEIGHTS
ISRAEL


Palestinian Camps and Gatherings around Tyre, South Lebanon
Town/City
Offical Camp
Gathering
Motorway
Main Road
Baysariye
Adloun
Al Ebb
Mediterranean Sea
Itaniye
Wasta
Kfar Badda
Jim Jim
Litani
Qasmiye
Burghliye
Bourj Rahaal
Abasiye
Shabriha
Al Bass
Jal al Bahar
Maashouk
Tyre
Bourj al-Shemali
Rashidieh

Preface

I knew everything about the Palestinian cause, as I have always been a supporter of Palestine, but I knew very little about Palestinian-Lebanese relations on the ground.[4]

Governance is important […]. It is the linchpin of everything, the start of any positive change.[5]

These two quotations capture the paradox that empirically kicked off my research: notwithstanding decades of studying Lebanon's Palestinians and despite a growing consensus about the centrality of local governance to political life, even the director of the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC) admits that his knowledge on the on-the-ground interactions between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities in Lebanon was practically non-existent. At the same time, the above quotes bring to the fore a conceptual blind spot that holds significance beyond the case of Lebanon's Palestinians.

Despite the interest in 'local governance' that has surged since the 1990s, the actual relations, interactions and engagements between various governance authorities – especially on a local level and even more so when of an informal nature – are still under-researched in comparison with more overt, formal and national forms of political rule. This is particularly the case where such interactions concern official state institutions on the one hand and non-state governance authorities on the other. Theories of power, governance and authority tended to see relations between state and non-state public authorities as predominantly zero-sum, which is partly a

[4] President of the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC) – Beirut, 22 July 2013.

[5] Programme manager of a Palestinian non-governmental organization (NGO) – Beirut, 13 September 2012.

result of this hiatus in empirical understanding (and partly of the long dominant failed state policy paradigm). Conceptualizations of interactions between state and non-state governance actors that focus on the possible overlaps and constructive aspects of amalgamated forms of state and non-state governance have been far less influential and are in many cases relatively under-developed.

I have thus always thought of my research as the convergence of these two major debates, the one theoretical and the other empirical and political. Both debates crucially revolve around the issue of interaction. On the one hand, my research follows from my fascination with the fact that, even after they have lived together for generations, so very little is known about how Palestinian and Lebanese governance institutions engage with each other. On the other hand, my study was spurred on by an emerging shift in the conceptualization of public authority that steered the notion of governance away from zero-sum state/non-state understandings to more mediated and multifaceted concepts.

In my arguments, these empirical and theoretical debates mutually constitute and reinforce each other. Empirical understanding has never been simply the end for which theoretical contribution offered the means. Nor has theoretical critique or innovation been the ultimate goal to which my empirical case was purely subservient. That this synthesis starts off with empirical puzzles and the related theoretical debates are only brought into the story in full later, is merely because I have to enter the dialogue between evidence and ideas somewhere.

This doctoral dissertation consists of two components: a synthesis and five published articles. The aim of the synthesis is twofold. First, to elaborate. Due to the rigid word count regulations of many journals, there is often little room for providing empirical context, theoretical background and, especially and ironically, methodological accountability.[6] These will, therefore, be presented in the synthesis in order to introduce, anchor and substantiate the claims made and findings presented in the articles. Second,

[6] In this synthesis, I will make (perhaps abundant) use of footnotes, because I want to, on the one hand, provide a compelling, streamlined and readable synthesis of my articles, but, on the other hand, offer the nuance, detail and definitional discussion that my articles could not always accommodate.

in the synthesis I intend to knit together the articles that form the body of my dissertation. While, as further explained below, the articles all stem from the same overarching question and body of data they address different debates and audiences. The synthesis will demonstrate how they relate to and build on each other and what, taken together, they ultimately argue and imply.

Before I turn to such elaboration and reflection, a few notes on the format of this dissertation are in order. In consultation with my employer and my supervisory team,[7] I opted to write a dissertation consisting of five peer-reviewed journal articles that are complemented by a synthesis, instead of a traditional monograph. This attempt to produce 'five hit singles instead of one classic album,' as a colleague characterized it, merits some expectation management.[8] Most important in this regard is that the five journal articles should not be considered 'chapters.'[9] Each journal article targets different audiences, engages with different debates and draws on different literatures and this leaves gaps for those looking for a linear narrative. At the same time, as each readership demands at least a basic discussion of my methodological approach and case-study context, there are overlaps between the articles as well.

In many instances, however, such discrepancies in the five different articles are not inconsistencies, but rather manifestations of a learning curve – which makes this synthesis not merely an elaboration on my articles, but a reflection on my epistemological journey as well. While replication and differences in analytic sophistication among the publications may be vexing (to the author no less than the audience), the production of outputs

[7] Throughout my doctoral research, which officially commenced in September 2012, I have been a full-time employee of Maastricht School of Management – first as a Research Fellow, later as Assistant Professor. My contract generously allowed me to spend sixty percent of my working time on my doctoral research, which was supervised by Utrecht University's Centre for Conflict Studies and the University of Twente.

[8] Considering that there were no stipulations available for an article-based dissertation on university or faculty level, at the outset of my research my supervisory team formulated a set of minimum criteria that the dissertation should fulfil. These are outlined in Annex 1.

[9] To reinstate this, the articles have explicitly not been rewritten or re-edited but have been included in their original form and lay-out.

relatively early in the research process also enabled structural testing and accumulation of knowledge and analysis. It allowed me to incorporate unexpected results, explore innovative insights and avoid teleological reasoning. It is ultimately the *articles* that present the most sophisticated, peer-reviewed version of my findings and claims. But the synthesis provides the methodological, theoretical and political reflections that make the articles more than the sum of their parts.

For the sake of sketching the broader picture of my dissertation, my account so far has been (deliberately) lacking in details, nuances, references and definitions. From here onwards, however, I will turn to full academic mode and systematically and precisely present the constituent elements of this broader picture. I set off by empirically situating my research puzzle. I then introduce the theoretical debates with which this empirical puzzle resonates. This is followed by a discussion of my methodological approach. Subsequently, the five selected articles are presented, followed by a discussion of the overarching findings and contributions of my research and an explication of the dialectic between these findings and contributions and the individual articles.[10]

[10] This synthesis draws on an elaborate working paper I published with the American University of Beirut in the early stages of my doctoral trajectory which discussed my empirical problematization, conceptual framework and methodological choices in greater detail than any journal article would allow (Stel, 2014).

The Empirical Puzzle

The gatherings are under the Lebanese authorities, not under the Palestinian authorities; this is the difference with camps.[11]

Since their expulsion from Mandatory Palestine in the 1948 *Nakba*,[12] Lebanon has hosted a substantial number of Palestinian refugees. Before the recent influx of Syrian refugees, approximately ten percent of the Lebanese population, some 40,000 people, was Palestinian (Atzili, 2010:768; Khalidi and Riskedahl, 2010:1).[13] Lebanon's Palestinian refugees have been withheld civil rights and face severe restrictions on the labour and property markets (Knudsen, 2007:12; Saghieh and Saghieh, 2008).[14] Four generations after their initial arrival in Lebanon, moreover, 53 percent of Lebanon's Palestinians still lives in refugee camps (Suleiman, 2006:7; see also Chabaan, 2014; Danish Refugee Council (DRC), 2005; Hanafi, 2010c; Ugland, 2003).

Through the Cairo Agreement, the Lebanese state has ceded much of its authority in these camps. The Cairo Agreement, signed in 1969 by the then leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Yasser Arafat and the

[11] Communal leader – Shabriha, 21 May 2013.

[12] *Nakba* means 'catastrophe' in Arabic and refers to the forced expulsion of Palestinians from their lands by Israeli militias in the process of the creation of the state of Israel.

[13] In 1948, approximately 100,000 of the roughly 700,000 people fleeing Palestine went to Lebanon (Suleiman, 2006:4). Numbers, however, are highly contested as downplaying or exacerbating of the number of Palestinians living in Lebanon has acute political implications (Suleiman, 2006). There is, consequently, a discrepancy between the number of Palestinians registered with the United Nations in Lebanon and those actually residing in Lebanon. For further discussion please refer to Chabaan et al. (2010).

[14] A 1964 law excludes Palestinians from joining syndicates, which is a prerequisite for professional work, relegating them to do menial labor or work on the black market. A 2001 amendment to the 1969 decree on property excludes Palestinians from owning, bequeathing, or registering property. For more details please refer to Akram (2002), El Natour (2012), Suleiman (2006) and Ugland (2003).

commander in chief of the Lebanese army, sanctioned the formation of local committees in the camps 'to attend to the interests of the refugees in cooperation with local Lebanese authorities' and permitted the Palestinian resistance to carry weapons inside the camps (Czajka, 2012:240; El Ali, 2005:82; Hilal, 2010:35). While the agreement was officially abrogated in 1987, in practice the camps are still off limits for the Lebanese police and army. They are administered by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and essentially ruled by (armed) Palestinian parties and their civilian counterparts, the Popular Committees.

Popular Committees were installed through the Cairo Agreement as the PLO's instrument to organize governance in the camps. They have lost much of their authority and legitimacy since (Pursue, 2012; Sayigh, 2011:60).[15] Nevertheless, Popular Committees can still be found in every Palestinian camp, 'where they operate as the equivalent of municipal administrations' and function as the main counterpart of Lebanese local authorities (Kortam, 2011:203; see also DRC, 2005:15; El Ali, 2011:28; Popular Aid for Relief and Development (PARD), 2011:9; Yassin, 2013:23-24).[16] Services in the camps are provided by these Popular

[15] The 23 Palestinian factions that are active in Lebanon can be grouped into three broad categories: the PLO; *Tahaluf* (the alliance that is led by Hamas and opposes the PLO and the Oslo Accords); and jihad-leaning Islamic groups (Hilal, 2010:35; International Crisis Group (ICG), 2009; Long and Hanafi, 2010:675-676). The PLO is effectively dominated by Fatah and also includes the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) (Erni, 2012:82). The PLO presence in Lebanon is multifaceted. There is the 'civil' governance structure of the Popular Committees and there is the national Armed Struggle Committee, which is the security arm of the PLO (Hanafi and Long, 2010:139). While it operated an effective 'state-within-the-state' in Lebanon during the first half of the Lebanese Civil War, the PLO has known some difficult years since its expulsion from Lebanon by Israel in 1982 (I discuss this in more detail in a seminar presentation titled 'From State-Within-the-State to Mediated Stateness: PLO Governance in Lebanon' – see Annex 4). Yet it has regained prominence since the ousting of the Syrian regime from Lebanon in 2005 which allowed it to reopen the PLO representative office in Beirut in 2006. The PLO is regarded extremely cynically by Palestinians in Lebanon, according to Hilal (1993:48).

[16] Jacobsen and Khalidi (2003:185) note that in seventy percent of the camps and gatherings, Popular Committees are the 'major co-ordinating bodies within the communities.' Hanafi (2010a:8) also stresses that the Popular Committee 'stands out as the most important local governing body [for Palestinians] in Lebanon.'

Committees as well as by UNRWA, various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – in 2011, Chabaan et al. (2010:4) documented 46 Arab and twenty foreign NGOs assisting the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon – and Palestinian religious institutions and political parties.[17]

The analytical blind spots generated by a discourse of segregation and isolation

The position of Palestinians in Lebanon is broadly perceived in a politicized way that, on the one hand, puts a premium on the right of return (*'awda*) of Palestinians to historical Palestine (Aruri, 2001; Bianchi, 2008; Czajka, 2012:244; Erni, 2012:78; Hanafi, 2010a:3; Klaus, 2000:12-13).[18] On the other hand, emphasis is placed on the potential threat that the Palestinian community poses to Lebanon's precarious sectarian balance and the concurrent danger of their permanent settlement (*tawteen*) (Czajka, 2012:243; El Ali, 2005:85; El-Khazen, 1999; Haddad, 2002; Hanafi et al., 2012:42; Khalidi and Riskedahl, 2010:2; Meier, 2010a; Weighill, 1997:308).[19]

Lebanese society is organized along the lines of eighteen recognized religious communities that each have their regional strongholds; political parties; social institutions like schools, clinics and charities; and armed militias (Barak, 2000; Faour, 2007; Harik, 1994; Jabbra and Jabbra, 2011).

[17] Palestinian political parties, predominantly Fatah (the leading part in the PLO) and Hamas (dominant in the *Tahaluf* alliance that opposes the PLO), have their own representatives and institutional structures in the camps (which are coordinated by regional branches) that are officially separate from the Popular Committee and the Family Committees (that are Hamas' equivalent of the Popular Committees). However, practically, these structures overlap to the extent that, at times, it is impossible (for both researchers and inhabitants) to say if an activity is organized by *Tahaluf*/Hamas or by the Family Comittee or by the PLO/Fatah or the Popular Committee; when a representative is speaking with his committee hat on and when with his party hat; or whether funds or facilitative services came from the parties or from the committees. Popular Committee members tend to report to the hierarchy of their party or the PLO leadership rather than to the Popular Committee structure (Pursue, 2012), generating a de facto overlap between the two institutional structures.
[18] As stipulated by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194, passed in 1948.
[19] In the words of a PLO leader: 'I always tell the youth in the camps that all our trouble is created by two words: *tawteen* which ensures that the Lebanese won't give us anything and *'awda* which ensures that we won't create anything' (Beirut, 8 July 2012).

Political organization in Lebanon has institutionalized this 'fetishised sectarian balance' (Perdigon, 2015). The Lebanese state is organized through a consociational political system that is centred on an inter-sectarian power-sharing formula that stipulates that the President should be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim and the Speaker of Parliament a Shia Muslim (Maila, 1992; Mallat, 1990). The system includes corresponding sectarian quota that guide the allocation of all public positions.

As a result of its sectarian nature, the Lebanese state structure is controlled by a quest for inter-communitarian balance that results in endemic patronage and clientelism (Cammett and Issar, 2010; Gebara, 2007; Hamzeh, 2001; Klaus, 2000:143; Leenders, 2012; Salti and Chabaan, 2010). Despite the evident distinction between social and political rights, in this context any initiative that lessens the harsh socio-economic situation of Lebanon's Palestinians is considered a prelude to citizenship. Considering that the Palestinians in Lebanon are overwhelmingly of Sunni denomination, this, it is feared, would then skew the sectarian equilibrium of the country (Hanafi, 2010b:53; Hanafi, 2014:591).

These Lebanese suspicions towards the Palestinian refugee community in their country are aggravated by the legacy of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990). The dilemma of whether the PLO should be allowed to launch its resistance against Israel from Lebanese soil (with all the ensuing retaliations that would entail) was an important instigator of the war and many Lebanese hold the PLO's 'state-within-the-state' and increasingly oppressive 'revolutionaries' responsible for the breakdown of the Lebanese state throughout the war (Meier, 2010a; Beydoun, 1992).[20] Many Lebanese accordingly still regard the Palestinian refugees as a 'fifth column' (Knudsen, 2010:102).

Weighill (1997:304) pins down the consequences of Lebanon's post-war sectarianism for Palestinians quite accurately:

[20] A detailed discussion of the causes, dynamics and consequences of the Civil War is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Please refer to Barak (2002), Fisk (1990), Hanf and Salam (2003), Hirst (2010) and Traboulsi (2007).

> Benefits that accrue to one community will be seen as being enjoyed at the expense of other communities. Thus water piped to refugee camps is water that could and perhaps should have been kept for use by Lebanese farmers. Government education spending on Palestinian secondary schools is money that should be reserved for the use of Lebanese citizens.

The dichotomous focus on 'return' versus 'settlement,' then, has resulted in an emphasis on antagonistic relations between Palestinian authorities and the state. The position of Lebanese officials thereby mirrors the dominant popular discourse that decries a Palestinian 'state-within-the-state' and Palestinian 'security islands' or 'zones of outlaw' and depicts the Palestinians as a sovereignty threat (Atzili, 2010:768; Brynen, 1990; Chabaan et al., 2010:ix; Czajka, 2012; Doraï and Puig, 2008; El Ali, 2005, 2011; Haddad, 2004:474; Hanafi, 2008:6; Hanafi, 2010b:51; Hilal, 1993:52; Hilal, 2010:37; Khalidi, 2010; Knudsen, 2010:102; Peteet, 2005; Sfeir, 2010:26; Teitelbaum, 1988; Weighill, 1997:298).[21] As Klaus (2002:92) shows, the dominant view in Lebanon portrays the camps as 'a source of instability, criminal hide-aways, militia resorts and weapon depots' at best or a 'threat to the Lebanese state' at worst.

Certainly, Lebanese state institutions have structurally combined 'prophylactic containment with malign neglect' and Palestinian authorities have often jealously guarded the de facto sovereignty that they gained through the Cairo Agreement (Allan, 2014:104). Nevertheless, the focus on institutional segregation between Palestinian and Lebanese communities does not do justice to the complex governance situation in Lebanon. Several unpublished studies by the Common Space Initiative (CSI) that precede my own work show that Lebanese-Palestinian governance interaction does take place and that, on a local level particularly, Popular Committees do (in different ways and to different degrees) collaborate and coordinate with representatives of the Lebanese state (CSI, 2011, 2012; El Ali, 2011).

Renowned research has been done on the Palestinian side of the governance spectrum. Scholars have studied the engagement between Palestinian organisations and civilians (Hanafi and Long, 2010; Klaus,

[21] And, of course, public discourse is subsequently influenced by these policy paradigms.

2000; Latif, 2008; Long and Hanafi, 2010; Richter-Devroe, 2013; Zahar, 2001); the interface between different Palestinian factions (Hanafi 2008, 2010a, 2010c, 2011; International Crisis Group (ICG), 2009; Rougier, 2007); and organisational dynamics within Palestinian organisations (Kortam, 2011; Hilal, 1993; ICG, 2009). Lebanese local governance has also been the subject of intense academic scrutiny (Antoun, 1995; Arnaout, 1998; Atallah, 2002; Beydoun et al., 2009; Dagher, 2002; El Ghaziri, 2007; Favier, 2001; Harb and Atallah, 2015; Harb and Deeb, 2013; Kisirwani, 1997; El-Mikawi and Melim-McLeod, 2010; Obeid, 2010).

The socio-cultural relations and economic interdependencies between Palestinian and Lebanese communities, moreover, have increasingly received academic attention (Doraï, 2010; Doraï and Puig, 2008; Khalidi and Riskedahl, 2010; Khalidi and Tabbarah, 2009; Khalili, 2007; Knudsen, 2011:98; Meier, 2010b; Perdigon, 2010:98; Ramadan, 2008; Schenker, 2012:73; Weighill, 1997:308). There are also reports that touch upon the ties between Lebanese and Palestinian political parties (Brynen, 1989; Ramadan, 2008:673; Sfeir, 2010:23; Shiblak, 1997; Sleiman, 1999; Teitelbaum, 1988). National policy initiatives to enhance Lebanese-Palestinian diplomatic relations (such as the LPDC) have also recently been investigated (CSI, 2011, 2012; Hanafi, 2010a, 2011; Knudsen, 2011).[22]

Yet what has not been explored structurally is local institutional interaction between Lebanese state representatives and Palestinian authorities in Lebanon.[23] Academic scholarship on Lebanon's Palestinians has broadly adopted the notion of a 'state of exception' to agendize and criticize the systematic socio-economic and politico-legal discrimination of the

[22] The LPDC was created in October 2005 as an inter-ministerial committee to address the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (Hilal, 2010:35). According to its website, it seeks to 'strengthen the interaction between the Lebanese government and the various Palestinian community representatives […] promoting channels of communication, enhancing relations and connecting Palestinian camps and communities with their neighboring municipalities.' Notwithstanding its status as the first ever officially institutionalized dialogue structure between Lebanese and Palestinian leaders, however, the LPDC has been met with widespread criticism and is by now largely inactive (Knudsen, 2011:102; Pursue, 2012:15).

[23] Apart from the previously mentioned unpublished orientation study by the Common Space Initiative (CSI) for the Nahr al-Bared, Beddawi and Ain al-Hilweh camps and several lateral discussions by Hanafi.

Palestinians in Lebanon (Agamben, 2005; Hanafi, 2010c, 2011; Hanafi and Long, 2010; Knudsen and Hanafi, 2011; Knudsen, 2007; Martin, 2015; Ramadan, 2009; Sanyal, 2011). The idea of the state of exception refers to an evident material reality and has been instrumental in broaching and problematizing this reality. Nevertheless, and despite some notable exceptions (Klaus, 2000; Doraï, 2010; Doraï and Puig, 2008), it might have generated an analytical blind spot regarding the overlap between Lebanese and Palestinian governance systems.

As I will elaborate on in the section that discusses my findings and contributions, this representation of the governance of Palestinian communities in Lebanon as separated and segregated is politically convenient for many stakeholders. It fits the post-Civil War obsession of Lebanese politicians and officials with sovereignty and state-building that fuels their anti-*tawteen* rhetoric (Czajka, 2012; Haddad, 2004; Hanafi and Long, 2010; Long and Hanafi, 2010). It also coincides with the interests of many of Lebanon's Palestinian authorities who prioritize the preservation of their unpopular rule over pragmatic improvement of the living standards of their constituencies and who seek to maintain their relevance as 'the sole legitimate representative' of Palestinian communities (Allan, 2014:203; Hanafi and Long, 2010; Khalil, 2013; Latif, 2008:16; Richter-Devroe, 2013).

The current paradigm does not, however, offer an expedient vantage point from which to improve the security, welfare and representation of Lebanon's Palestinian refugees. The likelihood of a return to Palestine grows more improbable every year (Ghandour, 2014; Richter-Devroe, 2013). UNRWA's budget continues to shrink (Bocco, 2010). And the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) (and even the PLO) increasingly disregard the Palestinians in the diaspora, prioritizing those in the nascent Palestinian state (Allan, 2014; Khalil, 2013; Sayigh, 1995, 2001; Sayigh, 1997a/b).

Thus, for better or worse, the fate of Lebanon's Palestinians is significantly and increasingly determined by the state that hosts them. The resistance of this state and its political leaders against any form of normalization of its institutional relations with the Palestinian refugees might most effectively be opposed by revealing and exploring those instances of governance

interaction that already take place. Ignoring the interaction between Lebanese state institutions and the Palestinians bypasses the opportunity to improve existing governance arrangements to the benefit of the people that governance actors claim to represent. Although, as elaborated on in the section on findings and contributions, I have my reservations about proposing clear-cut policy recommendations, the insights that my dissertation offers on the de facto relations between Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors could offer a starting point to remedy the de jure socio-political and institutional exclusion of Palestinians in Lebanon.

The above is especially pertinent because the institutional environment for Lebanese-Palestinian governance interaction has decisively changed since the Nahr al-Bared crisis, 'one of the most critical events to have taken place in post–civil war Lebanon' (Knudsen, 2010:104). Knudsen and Hanafi (2011:7) describe this calamity as a starting point for redefining the 'political relations between refugees, their political representatives and the state.' In 2007, the Lebanese army destroyed large parts of the Nahr al-Bared camp in North Lebanon to eliminate militants hiding the camp. The camp's reconstruction process subsequently encompassed a controversial new model for camp governance that was implicitly launched as a blueprint for other camps as well (CSI, n.d.:8; Hanafi, 2010c:27; Knudsen, 2010:104-105; Long and Hanafi, 2010). The Nahr al-Bared crisis, moreover, boosted the LPDC's relevance and mandate and provided the impetus for the installation of a Palestinian embassy in Lebanon in 2011. In short, it generated an unprecedented awareness of the need for Lebanese-Palestinian coordination on governance in Palestinian camps (CSI, 2011:5; Hilal, 2010:35; Knudsen, 2011).

In this sense, the post-2007 period might be a new stage in the history of Palestinian organization in Lebanon (El Ali, 2005; Czajka, 2012:252; Hanafi and Long, 2010:137; Hilal, 2010:32; Suleiman, 2006). In a similar vein, the PLO has been strengthening the Popular Committee structure and donors have invested in capacity building of municipalities (CSI, 2011). In light of this, a Palestinian scholar urged me to put my political-institutional focus in a historical perspective:

> We always saw the camps as isolated and just a few years ago we started to talk about this political-institutional interaction topic. This is very closely related

> to the NBC [Nahr al-Bared Camp] precedent and the failure of the interaction model implemented there.[24]

Nevertheless, there is no in-depth information on the current, already existing, relations between Palestinian and Lebanese governance actors (Yassin, 2013:5). This raises questions such as: When, where, in what way and on what issues do Lebanese state institutions and Palestinian authorities deal with each other? How and why do they interact? How do the relations between these different governance amalgamations work? What events, concerns, perceptions and experiences shape decision-making in this realm?

Turning towards the gatherings to explore interaction

Part of the persistent emphasis on isolation that still characterizes accounts of the governance of Palestinian communities in Lebanon stems from the fact that these accounts are almost exclusively concerned with the official refugee camps. Lebanon's twelve official camps are located on land rented by UNRWA from the Lebanese state. They are administered by UNRWA and the Popular Committees and are formally recognized by the Lebanese state. These camps, depicted as emblems of deprivation but also as vestiges of Palestinian steadfastness (Klaus, 2000:97; Sayigh, 1977), have received a more than generous share of researchers' dedication (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2013).

Yet, the official camps house only slightly over half of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.[25] The rest of the Palestinians residing in Lebanon live outside the camps, either as individual households among Lebanese communities or in Palestinian communities outside the camps. Lebanon hosts an estimated 39 of such unofficial camps or gatherings (*tajamu'aat*) (Chabaan, 2014; Hilal, 2010). DRC (2005:4-5) defines a gathering as a camp that:

> 1. Has a population of Palestinian refugees […]. 2. Has no official UNRWA camp status or any other legal authority identified with responsibility for camp management. 3. Is expected to have clearly defined humanitarian and

[24] Sidon, 13 July 2012.

[25] UNRWA estimates that 62 percent of the Palestinians live in camps, but this probably includes many of the larger gatherings as well (Yassin, 2013:7).

> protection needs, or have a minimum of 25 households. 4. Has a population with a sense of being a distinct group living in a geographically identifiable area.[26]

Gatherings can thus be conceived of as informal settlements: they are illegally located on private or public land and are not recognized by Lebanese authorities (Beer, 2011; Perdigon, 2015; Williams, 2011). They thereby differ from official camps in at least three important ways: with regard to regulatory authority, with regard to services and with regard to space (Martin, 2011).

The situation of Lebanon's Palestinians in general is characterized by a lack of any comprehensive policy or strategy (Klaus, 2000:104; Martin, 2015:14; Weighill, 1997:294). But this 'no-policy-policy' (Nassar, 2014) or 'legal limbo' (Knudsen, 2007) that leads to a maleficent institutional vacuum is even more distinct in the gatherings (Yassin, 2013:5).[27] Administratively, the gatherings fall outside both the Lebanese state's political mandate (since Palestinians are not citizens) and UNRWA's territorial mandate (which is limited to the camps). This also means, with regard to services, that while residents of the gatherings make use of UNRWA schools and clinics, UNRWA does not provide utility services such as electricity, waste management and infrastructure maintenance to them. Spatially, the distinction between camps and gatherings is strikingly apparent in the absence of the checkpoints and import restrictions that characterize life in many camps (Doraï, 2006, 2011; Haddad, 2004:480; Hanafi, 2008:2).[28] Indeed, it is in light of the far-reaching spatial segregation of the Palestinian *camps* in Lebanon that the Palestinian *gatherings*, as demarcated but not closed-off settlements, acquire their relevance for my research project.

[26] I do not include so-called 'adjacent areas' in my discussion on gatherings as these informal extensions of existing official camps often tap into the neighboring camp's services and political infrastructure and are hence less distinct than the spatially segregated gatherings on which I focus (Hilal, 2010).

[27] This is the subject of my fifth article and more will be said on this in my section on findings and contributions.

[28] The camps in South Lebanon specifically are still quite rigidly segregated from their surroundings (El Ali, 2011).

While Lebanon's twelve UNRWA-administered Palestinian refugee camps have received ample attention by academics as 'states-within-the-state' that are cut off from Lebanese polity and policy, the gatherings have been all but ignored by scholars. They are now well-known among practitioners working in Palestinian communities in Lebanon, especially since they are hosting significant numbers of Palestinian and Syrian refugees from Syria (Chabaan, 2014), and several reports have investigated needs in the gatherings (Beer, 2011; DRC, 2005; PARD, 2011; Première Urgence (PU) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), 2009; Rasul, 2013; Terre des Hommes, 2009; Ugland, 2003). There are also various media reports on life in the gatherings (see for example Integrated Regional Information Networks, 2009; Kayed, 2010; Nasr ed-Din et al., 1990). However, no academic research on the Palestinian gatherings in Lebanon as a distinct institutional environment has been done – which perhaps illustrates the implicit academic complacency with the dominant 'image of Palestinian national unity' and the 'taboo […] issue of integration into Lebanese society' (Klaus, 2000:101-102).[29]

Considering the significant number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon that live in gatherings, this situation constitutes a knowledge gap in its own right (Chabaan et al., 2010:x; Weighill, 1997:297).[30] It is even more

[29] Doraï (2006, 2010, 2011) has published elaborately on life in the gatherings, but the specific (socio-economic or politico-institutional) setting of gatherings has never been the focus of his work. The same goes for Perdigon (2010, 2015).

[30] As there are no official (UNRWA or state) statistics available regarding the Palestinian refugee populations living outside of the official camps numbers are contested (PU and NRC, 2009:4). In 2005, DRC (2005) estimated the total number of people living in gatherings at 63,055 based on key informant interviews with Popular Committees. Four years later, PU and NRC (2009:5) set the total number significantly lower at 40,000 based on a door-to-door survey. Writing in 2011, Beer (2011:11) also mentions 40,000 residents (which would constitute ten percent of all Lebanon's Palestinians), while PARD (2011:7), in the same year, claims that 38 percent of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon live in gatherings. Two years after that, Rasul (2013:4) mentions the figure of 103,000 (25 percent of all Palestinians living in Lebanon). Differences in these numbers can be attributed to the in/exclusion of 'adjacent areas' (illegal extensions of the official camps; see Hilal (2010)) and of Palestinian refugees from Syria. In the most recent study on the matter, Chabaan (2014:13) stipulates that the gatherings together host 140,000 refugees (35 percent of all Palestinians registered in Lebanon) including 30,000 refugees from Syria (the majority of which is Palestinian as well).

unfortunate with regard to governance interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities, since there are at least two reasons to assume that such interaction might be more substantial in gatherings than in camps. First, UNRWA does not provide utility services in the gatherings. This potentially increases the need for Palestinian authorities to engage with Lebanese state institutions to ensure such services (CSI, 2011, 2012; Jacobsen and Khalidi, 2003:194). Chabaan et al. (2010:ix) even claim that, in the gatherings, such public goods are 'officially the responsibility of the Lebanese Government.' In my own research, as evidenced by the quotation opening this section, both Lebanese and Palestinian people stressed that the gatherings are 'under the Lebanese authorities' or 'under the Lebanese state' which they saw as the gatherings' main difference from the official camps.[31]

Second, the gatherings do not fall under the infamous Cairo Declaration. This means that the Lebanese army and police can and do enter the gatherings in a routine and non-confrontational fashion.[32] Also, Palestinian groups within the gatherings are not sanctioned to carry weapons there. This might diminish the security limitations that are often offered as an explanation for the reluctance of Lebanese state institutions to deal with Palestinian organizations in the camps (Chabaan et al., 2010:3; Czajka, 2012; El-Ali, 2011; Hilal, 2010; Knudsen, 2011; Long and Hanafi, 2010c; Suleiman, 2006). A Lebanese political representative from South Lebanon put it like this: 'The difference between the camps and the gatherings is that the camps are under siege and they can't communicate with their surroundings. The gatherings are more free, so there is more communication, knowledge exchange and mutual relations.'[33]

The gatherings thus offer a unique opportunity to identify and explore existing interactions between Lebanese and Palestinian governance authorities. Indeed, it is in the gatherings that what Doraï and Puig (2008) call '*pratiques des interstices*' prosper.[34] My doctoral dissertation, therefore, is

[31] Communal leader – Shabriha, 21 May 2013; Fatah leader – Shabriha, 16 May 2013.
[32] Whereas the entering of security forces into the official camps is exceptional and, when it happens, often violent, as was testified by the Nahr al-Bared crisis in 2007.
[33] Hezbollah liaison Tyre area – Deir Qanun, 17 July 2013.
[34] As such, the gatherings are explicitly not representative for all Palestinian communities in Lebanon: I especially sought them out because they might display more interaction with Lebanese authorities than camps do. I return to this in my

dedicated to exploring the interactions between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities in two Palestinian gatherings. This gives long due academic attention to Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings and remedies a scholarly discourse that is overly concerned with the segregation and autonomy of Lebanon's Palestinians. It also identifies existing forms and patterns of institutional interaction.[35] Studying governance interaction in Palestinian gatherings in Lebanon, however, also has a broader conceptual significance as it tells us something about the relations between state and non-state public authorities and the ways in which ostensibly non-state forms of governance are linked to state institutions and vice versa. It is this significance that is the focus of the subsequent section, which is devoted to presenting the main theoretical debates and conceptual discussions to which my dissertation speaks.

discussion on methodology.

[35] I will say more about my definition of 'interaction' in my methodological section. Here it suffices to say that interaction need not be positive (or negative, for that matter), it is merely 'a mutually influencing relation between two or more entities' (Kooiman, 2003:231).

The Theoretical Debate

Instead of describing governance exclusively in terms of resistance and opposition, there is in fact a great deal of complicity and overlap between state and non-state forms of political power (Raeymakers et al., 2008:16).

Following Ragin (1994), I see research as a dialogue between evidence (or empirical data) on the one hand and ideas (or theoretical concepts) on the other. The above introduced empirical puzzle stipulates what kind of evidence I have been interested in. The theoretical debate presented in this section determines how I made sense of the evidence collected and how this evidence can in turn enrich existing concepts (Migdal, 1988:xvi; Ritchie, 2003:22; Silverman, 2000:86). Positioning my empirical puzzle in this theoretical debate signals what the Palestinian-Lebanese governance interaction that I am interested in is, in my view, 'a case of;' to what broader phenomena my findings and claims might be conceptually generalized (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003; Lund, 2014). That evidence and theory indeed intensively converse became clear to me in light of the differences between my pre- and post-fieldwork ideas (Lund, 2014:229). This section on theoretical debates therefore combines the conceptual ideas I set out with, with those I developed along the way and upon reflection. My theoretical innovation should be found in the articles constituting the body of this dissertation: below I introduce the relevant theoretical debates and concepts in a way that facilitates a comprehensive reading of these articles.

The empirical phenomenon under scrutiny in this dissertation is the interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors. One of the things that makes this phenomenon theoretically salient is that, in Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings, most of the Lebanese governance actors of interest are either part of the Lebanese state or closely associated with it, whereas the Palestinian governance actors in question do not have this

stately status (as they are neither part of the Lebanese state system nor of the Palestinian one).[36] When approached in this way, the main conceptual debate that this phenomenon feeds into regards governance.[37] Governance refers to the interactions through which security, welfare and representation are organized. With regard to my case, such governance is set in a multilateral, fluid and contested institutional context. Three 'schools of thought,' that I have here named after their most influential concepts, can broadly be identified in debates about governance in such settings: the failed state paradigm, the rebel rule perspective; and the idea of hybrid political order.

Failed states, rebel rule and hybrid political order[38]

The idea of state failure or fragility held a lot of political salience during the period in which I was introduced to academia and started to develop my intellectual, political and scholarly perspectives as well as what was to become my doctoral project. If I start out my discussion on governance in

[36] As I outline in my fourth article, the Popular Committees governing Palestinian gatherings in Lebanon are integrated in the institutional framework of the PLO, but they do not feature in the organizational structure of the PNA, the Palestinian state that governs (part of) the Palestinian Territory in the West Bank and Gaza.

[37] I consider theories as ways of looking at a phenomenon and recognize that the phenomenon of Palestinian-Lebanese relations introduced above can be explored from an endless variety of angles with equally diverse insights. My dissertation focuses on the institutional and governance dimensions of Lebanese-Palestinian interaction because, as argued in the preceding section, it is one of the most under-addressed aspects of their relations.

Theories offer an accumulation of knowledge on a particular phenomenon gathered within a similar analytical perspective (Wacker, 1998). As such, theories help to explain phenomena by directing the researcher towards particular issues or processes and suggesting ways in which these have manifested themselves in other instances. Theories are, then, by definition multilateral, as they are always in the process of being questioned, sophisticated and adapted (Seidman, 2013). To bring out this dynamic and contentious property of theories, I prefer to speak about 'theoretical debates.' Rather than introducing a straightforward explanatory theory, this section aims to outline the academic conversations I draw on and hope to contribute to.

[38] This section was part of a paper presented at the 'Non-state armed actors and their role in the redefinition of security provision, welfare and political representation during violent conflict' seminar (Centre for Conflict Studies, Utrecht University, 8 September 2016) and benefitted greatly from the comments received by Christopher Day, Toon Dirkx, Georg Frerks, Nelson Kasfir, Romain Malejacq and Niels Terpstra.

hybrid settings with what I will here call the failed state paradigm, then, this is not because this is the most important or even the first school to engage with the issues that I am interested in. Rather, I take this line of thinking as a vantage point for my discussion because it was the point of departure of my own thinking on these matters. Instead of neatly distinguishable bodies of literature, the failed state paradigm, the hybrid political order school that sought to counter it and the thinking on rebel rule that underlies both are categorizations that follow from my own development as well as my specific research puzzle. For me, their unit of analysis – the state in the case of the failed state, the non-state in the case of the rebel rule and the interaction between them in the case of the hybrid political order – is their main distinguishing factor.

The question to what extent the failed state paradigm constitutes an academic 'school of thought' is contested (Hameiri, 2007). Many scholars see it as a policy agenda that was hardly taken seriously as an analytical framework in academia. Yet, in its connection with both neoliberal and neo-Weberian institutionalist views on governance and stateness, as Hameiri (2007) points out, the notion of state failure has had a large impact on significant parts of academia – the 'spectre' of the failed state has touched scholarship as well as policy (Hagmann and Hoehne, 2007:20).[39] Casting the failed state paradigm as at least partly an academic school of thought is thus relevant in order to recognize the function it has played to spur on new and alternative lines of thinking in the form of the hybrid political order school as well as a rediscovery and further development of previous work on rebel rule.

The failed state strand takes a Western Weberian exemplar of stateness as both an analytical and a moral point of departure (Nielsen, 2007:696; Tilly, 1975). Consequently, it regards plural (mixed state and non-state) forms of

[39] This, probably, depends on one's disciplinary background as well. While political sociologists and anthropologists have mostly merely engaged with the idea of state fragility in the form of a convenient antithesis, political scientists and international relation scholars have, for a while at least, explored the analytical currency of state fragility quite sincerely. In any case, the ideas underlying the failed state paradigm, particularly its state-centrism, triggered a rediscovery (and simplistic reinterpretation) of Weber that for a long time permeated academia (to the extent that I think it can be considered a school of thought in its own right).

the provision of public goods from the perspective of state failure or weakness. What the conceptualizations that I have grouped into this school of thought have in common is an obsession with sovereignty, with the idea that 'no other actor may gainsay the will of the sovereign state' (Van Overbeek, 2014:18; see also Agnew, 2005; Biersteker and Weber, 1996). The result of this is an emphasis on the exclusiveness of the state in several roles and functions (Brinkerhoff, 2011; Fritz and Menochal, 2007; Krasner, 2004). This is represented most eminently by Weber (1956) and his 'monopoly of violence' thesis; Giddens' (1985:20) 'territorial integrity' argument; and the notions of 'exclusive jurisdiction' and taxation (Akinrinade, 2009:14) and 'international recognition' (Call and Wyeth, 2008:7).

Countries in which the state does not meet these characteristics and functions of the 'Weberian' state are subsequently defined and approached based on this apparent deficiency (Chesterman et al., 2005:2; Duffield, 2007). They are described as 'failed states' (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008; Herbst, 1997; Engberg-Pedersen et al., 2008); 'problematic states' (Hyden, 2006); 'collapsed states' (Zartman, 1995); 'weak states' (Rice and Patrick, 2008); 'fragmented states' (Nielsen, 2007); 'fragile states' (Naudé et al., 2011; Balliamoune-Lutz and McGillivray, 2008; McIouglin, 2010); 'shadow states' (Reno, 1999); or 'quasi states' (Jackson, 1990). Underlying these concepts is the supposition that anarchy ensues in the absence of a 'strong' state functioning in the Western sense and that state fragility undermines (inter)national security and development. Analyses of state fragility are often accompanied by, either explicit or implicit, ideas on 'ungoverned spaces' and 'institutional voids' (Kingston, 2004:1; Menkhaus, 2010; Nielsen, 2007:697; Podder, 2014:223; Rabasa et al., 2007) and an 'assumption that where there is no state, there is chaos and there are terrorists' (Hagmann and Hoehne, 2009:45).

The policy response to this 'modern world's love affair with the concept of the sovereign state' has been an emphasis on state-building, institutional development and the promotion of 'good governance' (Richards, 2005:17; see also Debiel and Lambach, 2009; Ghani and Lockhart, 2008; Hameiri, 2010; Paris and Sisk, 2009; Van Overbeek, 2014; Wiuff Moe, 2011). Consequently, this strand of the debate has been characterized by a high

level of entanglement between the academic-analytical and the policy-prescriptive. The analytical instruments that the failed state idea has put forward to 'measure empirical statehood' have 'travelled from the social sciences into the conceptual world of political actors and societies at large [and] acquired a normative quality' (Jung, 2008:37).

Much has already been said about the 'failures of the state failure debate' and its essentialist, a-historical and teleological tendencies (Migdal and Schlichte, 2005:12; see also Hagmann and Hoehne, 2009; Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:6). The good news is, however, that this liberal wave focusing on good governance and rule of law that was spearheaded by the idea of state failure also spurred a re-discovery of more anthropological perspectives on governance, authority and stateness (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:541). In particular, the idea of state failure revitalized the study of 'rebel rule,' initially as one of the main causes (or consequences) of state failure, but later also as a significant political phenomenon in its own right (Arjona, 2014; Arjona et al., 2015a/b; Arjona and Kalyvas, 2011; Weinstein, 2007).

This strand in the debate builds on pioneering work by Wickham-Crowley (1987) on Latin American 'guerrilla government' in the 1980s and the legacy of 'rebel theorists' (like Guevara, Mao and Gabral) (Arjona, 2008a:2). It generally adopts a more Tillyan understanding of stateness and 'rebel polities' that emphasizes the role of conflict and war in producing authority (Duffield, 2014). As such, it signifies a 'revalorization of non-state forms of order and authority' (Meagher, 2012:1073). Increasingly constituting a distinct field of scholarly inquiry (Arjona et al., 2015a:19), the rebel rule school focuses on the autonomy and interests of governance actors in opposition to the state, such as rebels and insurgents.

The main purpose of this school of thought that opposes the traditional statist perspective on governance has arguably been to conceptually 'mainstream the non-state' (Podder, 2014). As such, the second strand in the debate that is central to my dissertation is concerned primarily with 'rebel groups with an intention to govern' (Podder, 2014:214) and the resultant emergence of 'rebelocracies' (Arjona et al., 2015a/b; Mampilly, 2011; see also Giustozzi, 2012; Kasfir, 2015; Mampilly, 2007; Péclard and Mechoulan, 2015; and Terpstra and Frerks, 2015). Like the failed state,

however, the notion of rebel rule focuses on an extreme end of the state/non-state dichotomy. This makes it less suitable to facilitate a holistic understanding of existing governance assemblages.

The concept of rebel rule is rooted in ideas on 'parallel' governance and 'parcelized' sovereignty that reify rather than interrogate the empirical and conceptual boundaries between state and non-state (Wickham-Crowley, 1987:494, 475-476). Associated scholars are mostly concerned with relations between rebel rulers and the population living in the territory that these rulers control and the 'implicit social contracts' emerging between them (Arjona et al., 2015a; Duyvesteyn et al., 2015; Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:13; Wickham-Crowley, 1987:473; Zahar, 2001).

Several scholars working within the rebel rule paradigm, such as Arjona (2010), Klem (2012) Mampilly (2011) and Terpstra and Frerks (2015) point out the significance of rebels' co-optation of pre-war state institutions and devote attention to the institutional overlap that can occur between state and rebel governance modalities. Overall, however, within the rebel rule perspective there is relatively little discussion about the relations between state and non-state governance actors – and where this is discussed, the emphasis tends to be on competition and separation. The issue at stake, for those studying rebel rulers, after all, first and foremost concerns insurgent organisations engaging in anti-state governance as part of their violent conflict with the state.

This almost exclusive focus on the non-state is the main difference between the idea of 'rebel rule' and the third strand in my central debate, which I have called the hybrid political order school (Arjona et al., 2015a:4). The failed state's invasion of academia did not just invigorate studies on non-state governance and rebel rule, but also initiated a new body of scholarship on the interaction between 'state' and 'non-state.' Even more overtly than the notion of rebel rule, the concept of hybrid political order constitutes a response to the many problems of the failed state paradigm that 'defines through negation' and focuses on what is lacking, 'instead of what is actually there' (Wiuff Moe, 2011:148; Kraushaar and Lambach, 2009:5).

Scholars that I consider to be part of the hybrid political order school agitate against the assumption that areas where the state is not the dominant

governance actor are 'anarchic' (Boege et al., 2008:16; Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:542; Hagmann and Hoehne, 2007:21; Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:5) and that de facto local governance systems that are present there are therefore 'of little significance,' mere 'short-term coping mechanisms' (Menkhaus, 2007:102; see also Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:5; Mallet, 2011:74). Drawing on previous work on 'pluralism' and 'multiple sovereignty' (Wickham-Crowley, 1987:473-475), these scholars emphasize the multiplicity and interactive nature of governance in 'areas of limited statehood' and stress the 'interstices' and 'symbiosis' between the various 'power poles' represented by state and non-state authorities (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, 1997:441; Kingston, 2004:7; Raeymakers et al., 2008:8; Risse, 2013; Risse and Lehmkuhl, 2007; Scheye, 2009:11; Wiuff Moe, 2011:145).

Thus, in contrast to those studying rebel rule, analysts concerned with hybrid political order tend to focus less on the relations between governors and governed and more on the relations among governors (Bakonyi and Stuvøy, 2005; Booth, 2011; Clements et al., 2007; Leonard, 2010; Podder, 2014:219; Raeymakers et al., 2008; Seay, 2009). Where the state as a governance actor has become almost absent in accounts of rebel rule, it has regained its significance – yet again (Van Overbeek, 2014:9) – as one among many governance actors for scholars studying hybrid political order (Raeymaekers et al., 2008). This entails a shift in focus to the 're-makings of order beyond – but not necessarily in direct opposition to – the established Westphalian norm' (Wiuff Moe, 2011:169).[40]

[40] This difference in focus is also matter of context. Whereas scholars of rebel governance often study dynamics of intra-state war – Arjona et al. (2015a:2) consider civil war 'the common condition for rebel governance' – within the hybrid political order strand many cases are set in a post-conflict setting that is characterized by 'challenges raised by a new multiplicity of normative systems, claims to power and resources' (Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:20; see also Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:555-556). Governance, in such situations, is less a stake in violent conflict and more an aspect of post-conflict re-ordering, with all the contention, but also deal-making, this entails. With this distinction I do not mean to reify 'war' and 'peace' as necessarily mutually exclusive states of being (Richards, 2005) or to relegate all 'post-conflict countries' to a pathological similarity (Kosmatopoulos, 2011:125). But I do think it is helpful to differentiate between situations in which non-state governance actors are engaged in a structural violent conflict with the state and where this is not the case. When compared with the context of protracted conflict, a 'post-conflict setting' has

While recognizing that claims to rule are convoluted and often contradict or compromise each other (Klem, 2012:55), the hybrid political order also has eye for the pragmatic and contingent state/non-state governance relations that are productive rather than necessarily antagonistic. Indeed, scholars associated with the hybrid political order increasingly accept that 'the non-state cannot be clearly separated from the state' (Podder, 2014:217). As such, the approach is less dichotomous; not interested so much in either state or non-state forms of governance, but rather in the interdependencies and interfaces between the two. The idea of hybrid political order questions the very categories of 'state' and 'non-state' through a 'language of hybridization' and 'the interweaving of institutional fields' to challenge conventional Weberian dichotomies (Van Overbeek, 2014:50, 60; see also Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:10).

From my wording it will already be clear that I position my research in, and thus draw on and speak to, this third analytical strand that puts a premium on the multiple (state and non-state) political institutions that shape governance. This should come as no surprise considering that my empirical puzzle revolves around the notion of interaction and focuses on relations, transactions, overlaps, connections, convergences, deal making and interdependencies. Taking a state-centrist approach would make no sense in trying to understand governance in settlements that are not even recognized by the state. An emphasis on anti-state governance does not suit

several implications for governance, for instance regarding the motivations for non-state actors to engage in governance. Arjona (2008b) distinguishes four reasons for armed insurgence groups to establish governance structures: to control territory; muster support; generate profit; and implement ideologies. These motivations lose some of their instrumentality in a post-war setting. From a means to fight the state, and an instrument to facilitate armed struggle, non-state governance becomes more of an end in itself – to cater for a specific constituency. By extension, non-state governance actors' motivations might become less active and offensive (using governance as a means to their end of defeating the state) and more passive and defensive (using other means to stop the state from obstructing them in working towards their governance ends). Where non-state actors are no longer in the process of wresting control from the state but have established themselves as a governance actor – where they are not interested in seceding from, toppling or taking over the central state apparatus – governance ceases to be a zero-sum endeavour. Interaction between state and non-state governance actors then becomes more probable and more important to investigate.

my empirical puzzle either. Lebanon's Palestinian organisations are not in open conflict with the state. During specific episodes of their presence in Lebanon, most notably the Civil War, Palestinian parties vehemently opposed Lebanese governments and undermined state agencies. Currently, however, Lebanon's Palestinians might sometimes defy the state, but certainly do not structurally challenge its existence.

My dissertation thus means to contribute to an analytical shift away from the dichotomy between state-centric 'fragility,' 'failure' and 'governance is what government does' on the one hand and anti-state 'rebel governance' and 'states-within-the-state' on the other. With my study, I seek to facilitate a less normative understanding of the (perhaps ambiguous and certainly multiple) roles of state as well as non-state actors in generating security, welfare and representation. Rather than studying 'state failure' or 'insurgency governance,' my articles aim to make visible the relation between state and non-state modes of governance and challenge state-centric as well as anti-state fictions of sovereignty and authority.

Above, following Van Overbeek (2014:52) and indeed the Boege team (Boege et al., 2009b:88) itself, I have introduced the term hybrid political order as a denominator for a broader school of thought that foregrounds the interfaces between state and non-state actors in the debate about governance.[41] The idea of hybrid political order, namely, was one of the first attempts to not merely criticize the failed state paradigm, but to suggest a comprehensive and enabling alternative frame of reference (Boege et al., 2009b:89; see also Hagmann and Hoehne, 2009).[42] However, the hybrid political order also constitutes a more specific concept in its own right.

[41] The hybrid political order perspective of course, like all academic concepts and theories, is not entirely new. It is, as noted above, indebted to scholars studying state fragility and rebel rule, who are themselves often inspired by work on contentious politics (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007), social movement theory (Tarrow, 1998) or irregular warfare and counterinsurgency (Galula, 1964; Hameiri, 2010). The idea of hybrid political order is also rooted in ideas on network (Davies, 2012).

[42] Hoffmann and Kirk (2013:23) conclude that the hybrid political order has been the most influential lens 'to drive a counter-narrative to the fragile states discourse and the peace- and state-building policies that it has engendered' (see also: Chandler, 2006; Duffield, 2007; Hofmann, 2009).

A political order is the sum of institutionalised power and governance relations that one can empirically grasp at a given time and place (Hagmann and Hoehne, 2009:44). *Hybrid* political orders, a concept coined by Boege et al. (2008, 2009a/b) and Clements et al. (2007), are countries that do not have a sovereign authority or one single focal point of governance. The hybrid political order, then, is not a goal to be reached, but a situation that exists (Van Overbeek, 2014:51; see also Debiel and Lambach, 2009).[43]

All political orders are 'hybrid' to some extent. But while all countries indeed have civil society organisations (CSOs) and private actors active in security, service delivery or political representation, in many cases the state is still the undisputed coordinator of these governance activities. In hybrid orders, this is not the case. In these orders, of which Lebanon can be considered an example, a state apparatus represented by a government can play a significant role in socio-political life, but it is not the only or even most important actor involved in governance (Van Overbeek, 2014:51). Other organisations that are active in security, welfare and political representation (and are therefore armed, have a social service structure and a political representation) exist and the state is far from the 'prima facie superior form of governance' (Kraushaar and Lambach, 2009:14). This fosters a situation characterized by 'contradictory and dialectic co-existence' of governance actors (Boege et al., 2008:17) in which: 'diverse and competing authority structures, sets of rules, logics of order, and claims

[43] This begs the question of where such realities are likely to be prevalent. Is the concept specifically applicable to 'non-Western' countries? Is it particularly relevant to conflict-affected settings? While this is often assumed, I do not think the hybrid political order's pertinence need to be limited in this way. Its reconceptualization of governance in 'the South' is instrumental in highlighting the exceptionality, rather than the normativeness, of stateness in 'the North' (Clements et al., 2007:48) and underlines the arrogance of indicating the vast majority of countries as the 'rest' of the world (Boege et al., 2009b:2). Boege et al. (2009:88, original emphasis) go out of their way to emphasize that hybrid political orders 'are *not* simply non-state orders' and that hybrid political orders include but are not limited to 'fragile states.' Moreover, while violent conflict and war often breed hybridity (Aguirre and Van der Borgh, 2010; Wiuff Moe, 2011:145) as a result of the 'institutionalization of authority beyond the state' (Podder, 2014:218), Bergh (2009:45) shows that the hybrid political order notion needs neither a post-war nor a peace- or state-building context to be valuable. More globally relevant processes of decentralization, privatization and the proliferation of civil society also generate contexts that the hybrid political order lens might help to illuminate (Hagmann and Hoehne, 2009:49).

to power co-exist, overlap, and intertwine, combining elements of introduced Western models of governance and elements stemming from local indigenous traditions of governance.'

The idea of multiplicity in governance that is stipulated by the hybrid political order thesis thus emphasizes state-society interaction (Hameiri, 2007:140). As such, hybrid political order is more than just an academic alternative for what policy-makers call a failed or fragile state. Nor are hybrid orders *non*-state orders (as rebelocracies tend to be seen) (Boege et al., 2009b:88; Kasfir, 2015). The notion of hybridity (coupled with fluidity, dynamism, heterogeneity and non-synchronicity) is put centre stage exactly to think about governance in a 'non-dualistic way,' to embrace the 'intimate and messy' relations between different governance actors (Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:21) and to render visible a 'situation of co-existence, overlap, and blendings' (Clements et al., 2007:46; see also Fischer and Schmelzle, 2009:8). This clearly postulates the importance of governance as interaction and of seeing non-state (armed) providers of public goods not merely as 'spoilers' but as governance actors in their own right (Boege et al., 2009a:19). As Kraushaar and Lambach (2009:2) note, it is not the simultaneous existence of state and non-state governance actors, but their relation to each other that determines governance in hybrid political orders.

As noted before, I started to academically engage with issues like governance and public authority at the peak of the fragile state era and was intellectually formed by those scholars waylaying it. Boege et al.'s initial paper was heavily referenced and particularly influential in the field of conflict and peace studies in which I was being trained at that time (Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:24, 17). Consequently, the idea of hybrid political order was a natural vantage point for my own conceptualizations. I soon found out, however, that it did not provide a roadmap detailed or sophisticated enough to actually empirically study the interactions between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities. In the process of compiling such a roadmap, which I account in the remainder of this section, therefore, I went beyond the idea of hybridity. I encountered the 'anthropologists of the state' and discovered, on the one hand, the foundational work of Abrams, Mitchell, Scott and, most importantly, Migdal and, on the other,

the more concrete analytical tools developed by Menkhaus, Hagmann and Péclard and Lund. In the end, I have used 'governance,' to describe interactions and I adopted the 'mediated state,' 'negotiating statehood' and 'twilight institutions' to explain these interactions.

Governance

The concept of 'governance' has functioned as the main sensitizing frame in my research and denotes, defines and demarcates my chief phenomenon of interest. In his seminal work on Palestinian communities and spaces in Lebanon, Hanafi (2010b:4) has consistently presented the situation as a governance crisis – highlighting the bankruptcy of some modes and institutions of governance and the concomitant rise of alternative governmentalities. I agree that the concept of governance is the most suitable lens for describing the phenomenon I study for three reasons. First, governance sees social and political life as inherently interactive. Most scholars define governance, one way or the other, as the 'processes and interactions that constitute patterns of rule' (Bevir, 2011:2; see also Kahler and Lake, 2004:409; Stoker, 1998:22); Kooiman (2003:321) even equates governance with interaction. Underlying this emphasis on governance as interaction (rather than as a unilateral practice) is a strong belief in the mutual dependence of societal actors.[44] Second, governance conceives of rule and authority as necessarily pluralistic, highlighting 'phenomena that are *hybrid* and *multijurisdictional* with *plural stakeholders* who come together in *networks*' (Bevir, 2011:2, original emphasis; see also Davies, 2012; Stoker, 1998:18). Third, as a concept, governance 'argues for a shift away from formalities and a concern with what should be, to a focus on behaviour and what is,' making it a particularly suitable concept for studying interactions in an unofficial, informal institutional context such as the gatherings (Stoker, 1998:19).

I will say more about how I have utilized and operationalized governance in my methodology section. Here, a succinct discussion of my definition

[44] Where, for instance, a notion such as 'public authority' refers to the actor itself or a property of this actor, 'governance' takes the activity as a starting point (Bevir, 2011:11).

and conceptual positioning should suffice. In a very generic sense, governance pertains to 'social coordination and the nature of all patterns of rule' (Bevir, 2011:1; see also Davies, 2012:688; Stoker, 1988:18). Based on Kooiman's (2003:321) definition of governance as the 'interactions to solve societal problems or create societal opportunities, care for institutional aspects of these interactions, and setting normative principles for them,' including both intended and unintended outcomes of such interactions, my working definition of governance is: the interactions through which security, welfare and representation are organized.[45] Governance, then, is in many ways a synonym for the production of public authority because, in essence, it is 'concerned with creating the conditions for ordered rule and collective action' (Stoker, 1998:17; see also Davies, 2012:2700).

The function of the notion of governance in my analytical approach is thus to provide a framework that enables me to empirically capture interactions between public authorities. Because of this function as a descriptive, sensitizing tool, a crucial requirement of my take on governance is that it should be detailed, concrete and operationalized. Therefore, I have adopted Kooiman's meticulous approach to governance. Due to its links with public administration, seen this way 'governance' for many academics is strongly invested in a theory-policy dialectic (Bevir, 2011:1; Duit and Galaz, 2008; Stoker, 1998). Often, scholars working on governance are (at least partially) concerned with 'how to govern best' in an applied, practical and

[45] This definition is agnostic in most regards (i.e. modes, sites and levels of governance; more will be said about this shortly), but by its particular reference to the domains of security, welfare and representation, it does limit governance to socio-political governance (and thereby excludes governance of, for instance, families, firms and nature) (Lemke, 2000:2). It necessitates several follow-up definitions. I define *organizing* as arranging things into a structure or pattern, rendering things (temporarily and relatively) knowable. *Interaction* consists of meeting and communicating (Kooiman, 2003:8) – where meetings are physical (paying a visit, making a speech) and communication can also include documentation (agreements, laws, treaties, memoranda). Through this definition, I thus distinguish between interaction (defined as the active ties between people manifested in the events of meeting and communicating) and relations (which can be defined as latent ties between people manifested in their socio-economic or political status or identity). CSI's (2011:22) conclusion that, between Lebanese and Palestinians 'there are good relations, but there is not a good interaction' shows that this distinction between interactions and relations is relevant. *Actors*, finally, can be defined as individuals or organizations that act relatively cohesively within an interaction.

normative sense (Davies, 2012). My own conception of 'governance,' however, is rooted in governmentality, not governability.

My reading of Kooiman's approach to governance is fully compatible with the ontological premises of governmentality as developed by Foucault – namely that power works through knowledge and disciplinary institutions, procedures and practices that are to a significant extent internalized by subjects and sovereigns alike (Lemke, 2000; Rose et al., 2006). I use governance as a descriptive-analytical instrument rather than a normative-prescriptive assessment tool and follow governmentality scholars in their quest for an empirical mapping of governance practices and relations rather than striving for ideal-typification (Rose et al., 2006:99; see also Dean, 1999; Lemke, 2000). This take on governance is in line with the idea of hybrid political order as further outlined below, since governmentality does not see 'any single body – such as the state – as responsible for managing the conduct of citizens,' but instead 'recognizes that a whole variety of authorities govern in different sites, in relation to different objectives' (Rose et al., 2006:85). The state is convincingly done away with 'as the origin, animator, beneficiary, or terminal point of power' (Rose et al., 2006:86). Governance, then, goes far beyond government.

By connecting the activity of governing with the pervasiveness or dominance of particular modes of thought, Foucault's idea of governmentality is clearly indebted to the work of Gramsci and Althusser. It 'indicates that it is not possible to study the technologies of power without an analysis of the political rationality underpinning them' (Lemke, 2000:2; see also Hansen and Stepputat, 2001:3, 22; Sharma and Gupta, 2006). This approach thus allows me to go beyond not merely state-centrism but also the more 'neutral' administrative operationalizations of governance and include crucial notions of power (control of the access to the resources needed for governing) and identity (with reference to which systems of meaning governing actors and their constituencies present themselves) and relate governance to broader social-political questions. I thereby hope to avoid the tendency in studies concerned with governance to depoliticize and brush away matters of coercion and dominance (Kahler and Lake, 2004:411; Davies, 2012).

Mediated stateness, negotiating statehood and twilight institutions

Where governance offers the descriptive handles to explore interactions between Palestinian and Lebanese authorities, I used the 'mediated state,' the 'negotiating statehood' and the 'twilight institution' to further explain the empirical patterns of governance interaction that I found in Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings.

There is an abundance of concepts that seek to explain and theorize the emergence and shape of different forms of governance interaction (Boege et al., 2009b:87; Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:12). These are 'governance without government' (Raeymakers et al., 2008); 'real governance' (Blundo and Le Meur, 2009; Olivier de Sardan, 2008); 'actually existing governance' (Mallet, 2010:76); 'brokered autonomy' (Blundo, 2006; Tilly, 2004 in Titeca and De Herdt, 2011:217); the 'second state' (Scheye, 2009); 'institutional bricolage' (Cleaver et al., 2013); 'para-statehood' (Kraushaar and Lambach, 2009:12); 'contested state spaces' (Dunn, 2009); 'oligopolies of governance' (Fischer and Schmelzle, 2009:9); 'complexes of power' (Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers, 2004); governance 'beside the state' (Bellagamba and Klute, 2008:11) or 'beyond the state' (Von Trotha, 2009); 'arenas of figuration' (Titeca, 2009); and 'diffuse authority' (Suykens, 2010). As I explain in the respective articles, from this profusion of concepts, the 'mediated state,' the 'negotiating statehood' and the 'twilight institution' aligned best with my empirical findings.

The idea of the mediated state, coined by Menkhaus (2006), suggest that states in hybrid political orders need not necessarily compete with other loci of authority, but often opt for a more pragmatic form of engagement that allows them to govern *through*, rather than *against*, non-state actors.[46] In this process, Menkhaus stresses negotiation rather than purchase or coercion (Van Overbeek, 2014:50). Taking inspiration from the study of pre-modern and early-modern state formation in Europe and doing away with the implicit yet routine tendency towards conflictual and zero-sum readings of governance in non-Western settings, the mediated state helps

[46] Menkhaus' (2006) most sophisticated version of the concept, in which he presents a typology of state leaders' willingness and ability to govern that ranges from the absent (unwilling and unable) to the garrison (unwilling but able), mediated (willing but not able) and ideal type (willing and able) states, remains unpublished.

to explore how governance interaction is often also functional and pragmatic (Menkhaus, 2006:6). As such, the mediated state concept is the most explicit concept at hand to explore relations between governance actors not just as antagonistic, but as potentially overlapping and interdependent as well.

The negotiating statehood (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:539, 546) offers a three-tiered 'heuristic frame'[47] that can help unveil 'processes of negotiation, contestation and bricolage' and grasp how 'non-state powers and sub-national authorities engage and disengage with the existing state.' In contrast to the mediated state, the negotiating statehood conceives of interaction predominantly in terms of contestation (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:546). Its main interest is to map and explain 'competition over the institutionalization of power relations' (Van Overbeek, 2014:50). In the process, the negotiating statehood aims to shed light on the ways in which different governance actors 'forge and remake the state' (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:539).

Twilight institutions are those 'organizations and institutions that exercise legitimate public authority, but do not enjoy legal recognition as part of the state' (Lund, 2006a:675). The notion of the twilight institution seeks to 'understand public authority where it is not the exclusive realm of government institutions' (Lund, 2006:686-687). Like the mediated state and the negotiating statehood, it is interested in making sense of how public authority actually works in the face of 'the hodgepodge of twilight institutions that govern daily lives in local contexts' (Lund, 2006a:674, 678-679). However, it emphasizes not merely the interaction – constructive and/or competitive – between separate governance actors, but also the overlap and symbiosis of such actors (Klem, 2012:23). Lund thereby takes the hybrid approach to governance one step further and proposes that 'state' and 'non-state' should not be seen as opposing categories, but rather as extreme ends of a continuum of sovereignty that is set in the political order of a specific country. The distinction between state and non-state then becomes 'a moving target' (Lund, 2006b:698).

[47] Centered on (i) actors, resources and repertoires; (ii) negotiation arenas and tables; and (iii) objects of negotiation.

Within the broader notion of the hybrid political order, the mediated state, with its attention for the ways in which governance actors use each other in their interactions, the negotiating statehood, with its focus on the bargaining involved in governance interaction, and the twilight institution, that stresses the institutional amalgamation that often accompanies governance interaction, offer diverse strategies to tackle the issue of governance interaction. While these concepts are explicitly presented as sensitizing rather than explanatory frames (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:544; Lund, 2006a:674), they in fact do clearly suggest what issues will determine the extent and nature of governance interaction. What is more, the explanatory power of these three concepts is analogous as all three concepts draw on the same theoretical foundations. They are ontologically congruent in that they are 'interpretative rather than normative in scope, sociological rather than state-centric in philosophy, and dynamic rather than static' (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:544).

In essence, all three concepts turn to governance actors' discourses on the one hand and their resources on the other to explain emerging patterns of governance interaction. The mediated state talks about governance actors' capacity (noticeable mostly in material assets) and willingness (apparent in ideological concerns) to explain their mutual relations (Menkhaus, 2006). The negotiating statehood revolves around resources ('the material bases of collective action') and repertoires (ideas or ideologies used to 'legitimize their exercise of or their quest for political authority') (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:547). The twilight institution introduces authority (mostly depending on means for coercion) and legitimacy (more related to ideological compliance) and sees governance actors as consisting of an institution and an idea (Lund, 2006:686-687, 690, 693-694).

This implicit convergence among these different concepts in analyzing governance interaction results from the fact they are all rooted in the body of literature that is often described as 'the anthropology of the state' (Sharma and Gupta, 2008; see also Das and Poole, 2004; Gupta, 1995; Hansen and Steppupat, 2001; Joseph and Nugent, 1994; Klem, 2012; Olivier de Sardan, 2008; Trouillot, 2001).[48] In the introduction to their

[48] Kosmatopoulos (2011:120) gives an excellent overview of this field of study. Much of the anthropology of the state is interested in how the potency of the state is

seminal reader on the anthropology of the state, Sharma and Gupta (2008) put a dual emphasis on practices (manifestations of material resources: the 'putatively technical and unremarkable' activities and 'mundane bureaucratic procedures' of governance actors) and representations (manifestations of immaterial resources, i.e. discourses[49]) (see also Gupta, 1995:212).

Sharma and Gupta and their colleagues in turn build on the formative work of Migdal (2001). Indeed, the very idea of hybrid political order can be argued to stem from Migdal's mind. Migdal's (2001:231) influential 'state-in-society' thesis was one of the first systematic attempts to break with the 'analytic isolation' of the state. Migdal (2001:103) proposed to focus on interaction, on 'the clashes and coalitions between state organizations and other social organizations.' An important feature of these interactions between 'state' and 'society' that Migdal was one of the first to highlight is the institutional overlap that they generate. Migdal (2001:100, 251) explicitly theorizes the relations between the state and other social organizations (or non-state governance actors) as 'recursive' and 'mutually transforming' and the boundaries between them as 'blurred beyond recognition.' This insight stems from Migdal's at the time rather innovative conviction that the state should be seen as one among many social

constructed and imagined (Kosmatopoulos, 2011:120). In his aim to find an intellectual response to the failed state paradigm, however, Kosmatopoulos (2011:120) posed the reverse question of how state failure is constructed, thereby developing an 'anthropology of state failure.' In line with Woodward's (2009:48) call to 'shift the focus of the failing states debate onto those who are promoting the concept, its application and the remedial policies,' Kosmatopoulos (2011:118) explicates how and when the failed state discourse emerged on the agenda of international donor organizations (Overbeek et al., 2009:3) and asks how the concept of the 'failed state' is imagined and produced within expert practices and discourses. My dissertation implicitly deals with these questions, but its scope does not allow me to systematically explicate them.

[49] Apparent in 'banal techniques of representation such as official letterheads, seals, memos, photographs of official buildings, special uniforms, spatial arrangements of offices, monitoring and surveillance visits by senior officials, cars with government license plates and official motorcades, personnel files and procedures for promotion, and organizational charts' that are employed to produce a 'veneer of consistency, systematicity, centralized control, and wholeness' to governance actors (Sharma and Gupta, 2006:18; 19).

organizations (and thus should be stripped from its exclusive, monopolized or dominant associations) (Lambach, 2004).

As such, the idea of state-in-society lays the direct foundations for the notion of hybrid political order – to the extent one could wonder why Boege et al. do not acknowledge Migdal's legacy more substantially. Migdal presents his ideas as a research agenda that can be conceived of as a response to and departure from Weber's views on state and society.[50] Indeed, Migdal already diagnoses many of the analytical pitfalls of the failed state paradigm before it reached its full political potency. He laments that 'terms such as corruption, weakness, and relative capacity implied that the way things really worked were somehow exogenous to the normative model of what the state and its relations to society are, or should be' and that a state-centric approach to governance 'provides no way to theorize about arenas of competing sets of rules, other than to cast these in the negative, as failures or weak states or even as non-states' (Migdal, 2001:15). To avoid and overcome these shortcomings, Migdal (2001:97) calls for an 'anthropology of the state' – a call Sharma and Gupta's (2006) reader evidently responds to.[51]

[50] Not so much because Migdal's views always differ from Weber's, but because while Weber 'certainly did not mean the ideal type to be taken as the normal type, that is precisely what has happened in subsequent scholarship' which made the overly simplistic interpretation of Weber the default position in many writings on the state and thereby rendered Weber's work problematic (Migdal, 2001:14; see also Lambach, 2004:11).

[51] The constructivist approach to studying public authority that Migdal advocates already has much of the tenets of the concept of hybrid political order. It stresses dynamism (Migdal, 2001:23); the importance of boundary-making and peripheral politics (Migdal, 2001:88); the inherent politics of public authority (or, as Migdal (2011:245) calls it, 'social control'); the significance of de facto and informal practices and not merely formal legal modes (Migdal, 2011:47, 260); and the merits of an empirical and disaggregated approach to studying governance actors and of breaking down 'the undifferentiated concepts of state and society' (Migdal, 2001:98).
Testifying to the cyclical life of academic concepts and theories and the gaps between academic disciplines, Migdal's influence on the ideas I have here grouped under the hybrid political order header is even more remarkable. In a striking description of hybrid political orders *avant la lettre*, Migdal (1988:39) introduces the notion of a 'weblike' society characterized by fragmented and heterogeneous social control. Paving the way for Boege et al., he sees such societies as a 'mélange' of societal organizations, in which 'the state has been one organization among many,' that 'coexist symbiotically,' but also 'struggle for predominance' (Migdal, 1988:28-29,

In engaging with the theoretical debate on governance in hybrid political order, I have thus drawn on (and contributed to) three concepts – the mediated state, the negotiating statehood and the twilight institution – that all have their theoretical roots in the anthropology of the state and, even more fundamentally, in Migdal's 'state-in-society' thesis. While they may use different terms, in essence these concepts all conceive of governance interaction as a result of governance actors' respective quests for (coercive) authority and (normative) legitimacy. In their aspiration for authority and legitimacy, all three concepts basically suggest, governance actors are dependent on material resources on the one hand and immaterial repertoires or discourses on the other (Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:35). Such resources and repertoires, finally, can be rendered knowable by studying images (or representations) and practices.

Thus, the concepts that I use in my analysis, despite their differences in terminology and focus add up to a coherent analytical framework. This framework aims to theoretically flesh out the notion of governance interaction in hybrid political order with the purpose of bolstering the school of thought that explores governance interaction between state and non-state governance actors and thereby hopes to bridge paradigms that are more one-dimensionally interested in either the governance failures of fragile states or the governance claims of rebel rulers.

The state

In the above, I have concerned myself with the activity of governance in the setting of a hybrid political order. As such, I have so far more or less

2001:57). In a similar fashion, Migdal theorizes 'twilight institutions,' albeit without mentioning the term. His analysis of the 'strongmen' that constitute important non-state governance actors is rife with the same paradoxical logic that characterizes Lund's concept. Migdal (2001:91) describes these actors as 'wedded to state resources and personnel in order to maintain their local control' but with intentions that are often 'antithetical to those of the state.' Like Lund, Migdal (2001:91) marvels at 'the delicacy of the equilibrium strongmen seek in simultaneously embracing and foiling the state.' Migdal's impact on Menkhaus' ideas of mediated stateness are especially poignant. His notion of the 'triangle of accommodation,' itself indebted to thinking on indirect rule, demands attention for the 'critical functions' that 'local strongmen' have performed for state organizations that are willing but unable to maintain social stability (Migdal, 1988:244).

been able to avoid conceptually positioning myself vis-à-vis 'the state,' instead simply introducing it as one among several governance actors. This, however, will not suffice. Despite their asserted interest in governance beyond the state, the central concepts in my analysis make prolific reference to the state: I draw on ideas of mediated *state*ness and negotiating *state*hood that are rooted in the anthropology of the *state*.[52] Moreover, through its indebtedness to the anthropology of the state, the hybrid political order stands on the shoulders of some influential thinkers on politics and, again, stateness, most notably Mitchell (1999) and Abrams (1988), that deserve due credit here.

So while I am not interested in giving a grand overview of 'the state of state theory' (Barrow, 1993:3), I do have a few things to say about the 'poor old state' (Van Overbeek, 2014:9). The state, in my dissertation, has two manifestations. First, as said, the state features in a rather basic incarnation as a governance actor amongst other governance actors. In this sense I define the state as the collection of national and local agencies and organizations that is formally related to a country's legislative, executive and judicial branches (Stel and Ndayiragije, 2014:4). Second, stateness appears in a more encompassing fashion as a resource for governance actors. As discussed in detail in my fourth article, this approach of 'the state' draws on Abrams' (1988) vision on the state as simultaneously a system or apparatus and an idea; a material phenomenon as well as a social imaginary (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:543; Lund, 2006a:676). In a narrow sense, the state as a system consists of various state agencies that can be considered governance actors.[53] In a more comprehensive sense, the state as an idea on

[52] While at first glance appearing to focus first and foremost on the state, the 'anthropology of the state' is invaluable for the study of governance by non-state organizations as well because it in fact predominantly concerns itself with the construction, representation and enactment of stateness (the idea of the state) by a wide array of governance actors. Indeed, despite its state-centred name, the anthropology of the state is characterised by a common approach to studying governance, authority and legitimacy more than by a narrow demarcation of the (stately) governance actors under scrutiny. Ferguson and Gupta (2002:994), for instance, urge scholars to 'treat state and nonstate governmentality within a common frame, without making unwarranted assumptions about their spatial reach, vertical height, or relation to the local.'

[53] I do not think that the state can be an actor without such disaggregation into specific state agencies (Klem, 2012:30; Stel and Ndayiragije, 2014). In Gupta's (2012:46)

how to legitimately govern can be appropriated by any governance actor – whether it is part of the state system or not (Boege et al., 2009b:92; Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:540-541; Jung, 2008:37; Klem, 2012:55; Van Overbeek, 2014:31).[54]

By distinguishing between the state system (which encompasses all state agencies that can be seen as state governance actors) and the state idea (as a governance resource for governance actors from inside as well as outside the state system), the above approach to the state helps to avoid reproducing the misguided state/society or state/non-state dichotomy that may be analytically convenient but is empirically untenable. Following Mitchell (1991) and Abrams (1988) in their take on the state allows me to talk about 'interaction', 'cooperation,' or 'dialogue' between different governance actors (some inside and some outside the state system) while acknowledging that state and society, state and non-state, public and private, formal and informal overlap in their representations and enactments of the idea of the state. The matter at hand, then, is not to demystify or define the state, but rather to explore empirical manifestations of the state system's 'elusive, porous, and mobile' boundaries with society (Mitchell, 1991:77). Locating, describing and analyzing these boundaries, in fact, is what the study of hybrid political order is all about.

words: 'The state is a highly complex array of institutions with multiple functional specializations, modes of operation, levels, and agendas. Attributing organizational unity and purposiveness to such a welter of institutions might defy common sense rather than embody it.'

[54] This is in stark contrast to more traditional understandings of the state that heavily lean on the notion of the state as a system and see it as 'a network of authoritative institutions that make and enforce top-level decisions throughout a territorially defined political entity' or the 'medium through which political power is integrated into a comprehensive social order' (Chesterman et al., 2005:2). It departs from the default academic definition of the state that has long been entangled with the issue of sovereignty and which saw the state as a governance actor that provides security and order (through a monopoly of violence, administrative control and rule of law); delineates the parameters of the social contract (regarding citizenship rights and duties); protects and facilitates the economy (through regulating public finances, human capital, infrastructures and market and state assets); and conducts international relations (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008:70).

Methodology

Biases are like a hangover. It can't be avoided, but it's not as bad when you see it coming and try to mitigate it. (Klem, 2012:112)

The preceding sections in which I have presented both my empirical focus and my theoretical orientation culminate in a two-tiered research question that has guided the generation and analysis of my data:

How do Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors interact in and on South Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings and why do they interact in this way?

Having established a research question of course begs the question of how that particular question can be answered. Methodology, here understood as a design for data-gathering and analysis, is perhaps the most important aspect of a research project. It is methodology that determines the validity and reliability of one's findings, after all. It is ironic, therefore, that academic articles, especially in qualitative journals, in practice often leave very little room for discussions on methodology. In this section, I compensate for this. Considering that 'the orderliness of one's method is easier to establish in hindsight' (Lund, 2014:231; see also Klem, 2012:111), I think it important here to 'talk my walk'[55] (Gibbert and Ruigrok, 2010:25).

I tend to call my approach 'political anthropology.' While I am not officially trained as an anthropologist, my take on research heavily draws on anthropological concepts and techniques. I am concerned with topics of a principally political nature (governance, public authority, stateness, power, order, rule) and adopt a mostly anthropological approach to generating data (which is qualitative, field-work based and iterative)

[55] 'Report concrete research actions rather than abstract criteria' (Gibbert and Ruigrok, 2010:25).

(Gupta, 1995:212; Olivier de Sardan, 2008:3; Trouillot, 2011:135).[56] Calling my approach 'political anthropology' is also rooted in ontological and epistemological deliberations. In doing research, I depart from a constructivist approach grounded in the plurality, rather than the relativism, of meaning and I adopt a structurationist perspective that stresses the iterative relation between 'structure' and 'agency' (Giddens, 1984).

My research approach is qualitative and empirically grounded. It is empirical because there was little to no pre-existing data on my issues of interest whereas the concepts I use all put a premium on materiality, behavioural data and contextual evidence (Gupta, 2012). It is qualitative, because the political sensitivity of the questions I explore and the difficult access to Palestinian gatherings and the authorities operating in them demand a context-sensitive approach and an extensive investment in personal contacts. In addition, my research is explorative and critical.

Literature research has established *that* interaction between the Lebanese state and Palestinian Popular Committees takes place in some instances, but no significant research has been done on *how* this interaction looks and *why* it takes the form it does. An answer to these questions is best pursued through a qualitative approach that is specifically suited to take into account unexpected factors, actors and issues. In exploring governance interaction, moreover, my research is challenging an existing view of non-state governance actors as autonomous, independent and isolated. Such misrepresentation, too, is a theme best addressed by qualitative methods because these can accommodate critical and bottom-up counter identifications.

Engaging with 'how' and 'why' questions, moreover, requires exploring the motivations and aspirations of relevant decision-makers and stakeholders. Such personal, ambiguous and subjective notions cannot be captured in quantitative methods like surveys and statistics. They call for qualitative ways of generating data. Observation, for the understanding of actions, of 'how things take place.' Interviews and focus groups, to

[56] Because my data are distilled from interviews more than from observations (even if the latter were indispensible), I am reluctant to call my work an 'ethnography' of governance (Blundo, 2006:800).

reconstruct experiences and collect information and interpretation. And document analysis, to study policies and discourses. The combination of interviews, observation and documents makes it possible to examine 'what people *do* as well as what they *say* and enables an insightful examination of any discrepancies between thoughts and deeds' (Herbert, 2000:552).

Operationalization

As established in the previous section, my main interest is in governance. The related methodological question then becomes: how to empirically study governance; what to look for in 'the field' when you are interested in governance? This, in short, requires an operationalization of governance, a deconstruction of governance into 'observable, empirical elements signifying different aspects of the "whole"' (Lund, 2014:228). Operationalizing concepts in this way not only renders them researchable, it also establishes a solid link between theory and evidence that guarantees internal validity (Gibbert and Ruigrok, 2010:35). Based on a variety of scholars (most prominently (in order of significance): Kooiman, 2003; Rose et al., 2006; Bevir, 2011; and Hoffmann and Kirk, 2003), I operationalize governance by breaking the concept down into governance actors, governance modes, governance domains, governance sites and governance levels.

With regard to the category of 'actors,' it is important to note that my perspective is beholden to the analytical shift from government to governance (Stoker, 1998). Governance is the best concept available to underline that governance is not – and has never been – a privilege of the state, but is a set of interactions involving multiple societal actors (Rose et al., 2006:85; Rose and Miller, 1992). But, if governance is not the prerogative of states, what then constitutes a governance actor? I see governance actors as all entities involved in governance; these actors can be formal or informal, legal or illegal, modern or traditional, stately or non-stately, public or private or civil, provided they have the means and ambition to provide a constituency with security (regulating the internal use of force and offering protection from external threats) and welfare (social and utility services) and political representation (the organization of

collective decision-making and the related expression of constituencies' needs and priorities).

Thus, not all societal actors involved in security, welfare or representation are governance actors. Although, as recognized above, the state is not the only or even necessarily most potent governance actor, it remains a relevant one. There are, however, also important non-state governance actors. Governance is often associated with CSOs, traditional and religious authorities, NGOs and private companies that are responsible for considerable governance tasks in the realms of political lobbying and welfare services (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010). Private security companies, paramilitaries or gangs, alternatively, can take on governance roles in the realm of security. CSOs, NGOs, businesses and security companies, however, engage in governance with the consent of the government and tackle one domain of governance (security, welfare or representation).

Non-state governance actors, as conceptualised here, however, while interacting with the state, do not seek the state's permission to engage in governance (Menkhaus, 2006:7).[57] They are also active in all three governance domains and cater to a specific constituency. I have adopted this definition of 'governance actors' because it is precise enough to overcome the epistemological vagueness of the meta-notion of 'state-society interaction' and to do away with the easily over-romanticized and undetermined community-focus that is often inherent in ideas on hybrid political order (Clements et al., 2007:49; Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:9). My take on non-state governance actors is also agnostic enough to include 'non-civil' society, 'bad boys' and 'spoilers' (Boege et al., 2008:9; Lund, 2006a:678).

The governance actors I define here are not inherently stately or unstately; empirically, a state has as much (or as little) potential to be a governance actor as a rebel group or political party has. In Lebanon, governance actors include the Lebanese state represented by the government and, locally, municipalities; but also the PLO, represented by the PLO's representative

[57] Actors that I call non-state governance actors, are sometimes also categorized as states-within-the-state (Kingston and Spears, 2004), armed non-state actors (Ruaudel, 2013) or non-state sovereigns (Mampilly, 2011:17).

office in Lebanon and, locally, by the Popular Committees (Brynen, 1989; Hilal, 1993; Rubenberg, 1982; Shiblak, 1997; Weighill, 1997); and political parties in Lebanon that operate their own institutional structures through which they can provide security, welfare and representation to their constituencies in differentiated territories – a phenomenon of which Hezbollah is the most well-known and extreme exponent (Cammett, 2011; Cammett and Issar, 2010; Davis, 2007; Early, 2006; Harik, 1994; Khouri, 2009).[58]

Beyond defining governance actors, four aspects are helpful to operationalize governance: domains of governance, sites of governance, levels of governance and modes of governance. Governance domains denote what is being governed, rather than who governs (Rose et al., 2006:85). In principal, governance can refer to all kinds of entities, subjects and objects – spaces, resources, identities, events, knowledge. In my research, I look at socio-political governance. Three broad domains of socio-political governance are widely used in the literature: security, welfare and representation (Boege et al., 2009a:17; Hameiri, 2007:136; Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:4; Mampilly, 2011:62; Milliken and Krause, 2002). With security, I refer to the regulation of the use of force (through a police-like organization) within a specific community and the protection of this community from external violence (by means of an armed organization). Welfare here means the provision of social services (primarily health care and education) and utility services (water, electricity and infrastructures). Representation refers to the organization of collective decision-making and the related voicing of constituencies' needs and priorities.

Governance sites concern the practical setting in which governance is being practiced. This can be transnational, national, regional (in Lebanon: the

[58] If and when the denominators 'state' and 'non-state' are added to the notion of governance this refers to the actor's affiliation with the state system, not to its appreciation of it – 'non-state,' I reinstate, is not the same as 'anti-state' (Kosmatopoulos, 2011:129). I trust this sufficiently dissociates my own 'naming and framing' (Benford and Snow, 2000) from Kosmatopoulos' (2011:129) concerns that the 'distance between the two concepts "non-state armed groups" and "terrorism" is rather short' and that using 'presumably neutral and descriptive terms, such as non-state actor' conjure up 'images of "internal aliens".'

province and district) and local (in Lebanon: the municipality) (Antoun, 1995). Governance levels are threefold (Kooiman, 2003; Swyngedouw, 2005:2001). First-order governance deals with the implementation of existing protocols and precedents. Second-order governance concerns the renegotiation of the implementative guidelines of first-order governance. Meta-governance, or the 'governance of governance,' finally, pertains to the adaptation of the ideas and ideologies underlying second-order governance. It refers to the 'set of rules, guidelines, principles and norms that shapes the emergence and characteristics of otherwise independent regulatory arrangements and jurisdictions and guides the way these operate' (Hameiri, 2010:9). Meta-governance is, thereby, not a direct form of rule, but rather designates 'how particular issues are framed and governed, and by whom' and as such sheds light on how political choices are limited or opened up (Hameiri, 2010:9).

Governance modes concern characteristics of interactions, the most important of which are (in)formality, (in)directness, (ir)regularity and (a)symmetry (Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:11; see also Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:551). When I explore the (in)formality of interactions I investigate whether, to what extent and in what ways they are impersonal, conducted publicly and documented, on one end of the continuum or personal, secretive and undocumented on the other end. (In)directness refers to the extent to which governance actors meet directly or not. This concerns, first, whether they meet one-on-one or via the intervention or mediation of other actors and, second, whether they meet face-to-face or communicate via telephone, e-mail, letters or other media.

(Ir)regularity is concerned with the extent to which governance actors interact occasionally, ad hoc and spontaneously or, to give another extreme, in a structural, planned and regular fashion – something that can be gauged by looking at the frequency and regularity of meetings and communication. (A)symmetry regards the power relations underlying specific interactions, which can be explored by looking at the initiation of the interaction and the dominance throughout it. Initiation concerns which governance actors took the initiative to meet or communicate and the way in which this initiative was taken – ranging from unilateral and enforced to

consensual and voluntary – and dominance concerns perceptions on which governance actor determined the terms on which interaction took place.[59]

Design

To explore the how and why of governance interaction in Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings, I have adopted an approach that can be characterized as a multiple, embedded case-study (Baxter and Jack, 2008). I do not subscribe to the rigid and positivist approach to case-studies as advocated by for instance Yin (2003). Rather, as further described below, looking into specific cases and studying these cases through 'closely viewed crucial instances' (Migdal, 2001:99)[60] seemed to be the only feasible way to get inside the 'black box' of the gatherings, undocumented and politically sensitive as they were, when I was first confronted with these 'informal camps' during my orientation visits to Lebanon in Summer 2012 (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

My selection of cases was far from straightforward. For a long time, I considered studying three cases – a formal Palestinian camp, an adjacent area to it and a gathering in the vicinity of this camp – so as to be able to compare the differences in governance on the basis of the different status of these three localities. In the end, however, I decided to exclusively focus on the gatherings, because I became convinced that these held the most potential to contribute to both empirical and conceptual knowledge. In

[59] These 'modes' are not used in a normative sense (in that interactions should, for instance, ideally be formal, direct, regular and symmetric), nor are they 'good governance' scoring cards. They are merely used as inlays to be able to explore the characteristics of interactions. For this reason, I have used them as continuums rather than dichotomies. More importantly, they should be understood as properties of the interactions explored, not of the actors engaged in these interactions (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004:733). This also undercuts the idea that, for instance, formality equals stateness and informality is reserved for non-state governance actors (Kraushaar and Lambach, 2009:4-5; Lund, 2006b:699).

[60] Specific events that can be regarded as sub-cases or 'embedded units.'

addition, I selected two rather than three cases, for reasons related to feasibility[61] as well as strategy.[62]

I focus on South Lebanon because academic research on Palestinian communities in Lebanon[63] overwhelmingly deals with the camps in Beirut, as well as the Nahr al-Bared and Ain al-Hilweh camps, and tends to overlook the camps (and gatherings) south of Sidon ('Saida' in Arabic).[64] More pertinently, considering my interest in the gatherings as a geographical unit of analysis, more than half of Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings are located in South Lebanon. A fifth of the total gathering population lives in the gatherings between Sidon and Tyre ('Sur' in Arabic) in the 'coastline camps' along the Mediterranean Sea (Doraï, 2006:8; DRC, 2005:12; International Labour Office and Committee for Employment of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, 2010:35; Ugland, 2003:20).

Also, the Popular Committee structure is usually assumed to be strongest in South Lebanon, which suits my focus on governance interaction (Brynen, 1990; DRC, 2005:15; Hanafi, 2010a:13, 2010c:13; Klaus, 2000:16; Hilal, 2010:36; Peteet, 2005). Finally, the historically strong relations between North Palestine and South Lebanon are another reason to assume governance interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities might occur there more extensively (Khalidi and Riskedahl, 2010; Martin, 2011:116; Sfeir, 2010; Teitelbaum, 1988).

Three characteristics were relevant for sampling my cases. First, my cases are explicitly not representative for Palestinian communities in Lebanon in general. I focused on the gatherings exactly because they might encompass

[61] With my part-time research allocation (sixty percent of four years equals 2,5 years of de facto time to do my doctoral research, including fieldwork) and my dedication to an anthropological approach to fieldwork, it proved impossible to include more than two cases.

[62] There was also no pressing theoretical need to include more cases because these two cases covered the maximum variation criterion I used for sampling.

[63] Such as the 'Policy and Governance in Palestinian Refugee Camps' Programme of the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and Foreign Affairs of the American University of Beirut and the study by Hilal (2010) that was commissioned by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the United Nations Development Project (UNDP).

[64] For an overview of all camps and gatherings in Lebanon, please refer to the map on page xv.

more governance interaction than camps. By looking at the gatherings, I zoom in on 'the exceptional cases of effective collaboration and co-ordination that have to be explained' (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010:133). The functionality of the gatherings, then, is partly to 'debunk existing general understandings' of Palestinian spaces and communities as isolated (Lund, 2014:227).

Second, theoretically, my cases were sampled on the principle of 'maximum variation.' Considering that I was interested in the interaction between Palestinian authorities inside the gatherings and Lebanese authorities outside them, I considered the proximity (spatial as well as social) to Lebanese authorities a relevant aspect. Thus, I selected one gathering, Shabriha, which experts that I spoke with during my 2012 orientation visit described as 'very close' to Lebanese communities. This concerned both Shabriha's location right next to a Lebanese village and its close relations with the *mukhtar*[65] administering this Lebanese village. Qasmiye, in contrast, was portrayed to me as relatively isolated (it did not border directly on a Lebanese village or town and had no particularly extensive relations with the municipality on whose land it was located).[66] This initial information was corroborated with information on land and house ownership in DRC (2005:21) and PU and NRC (2009:75-100), considering that 'in every unofficial gathering, the land and shelter ownerships are important issues' since they affect relations with local authorities and the likelihood of getting authorizations for development projects (PU and NRC, 2009:17).

Third, in terms of pragmatism, it was important that I had established promising contacts with the Popular Committees of both Shabriha and Qasmiye during my orientation visit so that I could be reasonably sure that obtaining access for fieldwork would be feasible.[67]

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[65] *Mukhtars* are state representatives that perform social and administrative services on the neighbourhood or village level (Stel, 2015b).

[66] Of all the gatherings in the South, there were of course other gatherings either proximate or improximate to Lebanese communities, but Shabriha and Qasmiye constitute two of the largest gatherings in the region, which adds to the empirical relevance of my study.

[67] In contrast to, for instance, two other gatherings that might have been interesting: Jal al Bahar, where the Popular Committee was rather hostile and Maashouk, where

Shabriha is one of three adjoining settlements. In Ghaziye, Lebanese and Palestinians living abroad have built rather luxurious villas on privately owned land. 'Lebanese Shabriha,' or 'Salha' (after the village of descent of its inhabitants), is a Lebanese village that hosts a community of Lebanese citizens originally hailing from a village that is now part of Israel (and forms the subject of my third article). 'Salha' is administered by a particularly persuasive *mukhtar* who is well-known for his constructive relations with his Palestinian neighbours.[68] The Palestinian refugees living in the third area, Shabriha, are mostly of Bedouin descent and hail from the Akka and Safad regions of North Palestine. Due to the immense influx of Palestinian refugees from Syria, Shabriha now counts over 4,000 inhabitants (Chabaan, 2014:109).

Shabriha gathering is located predominantly on public land owned by the municipality of Abasiye. As with most other gatherings in South Lebanon, the settlement was created in the early 1950s by Bedouin tribes that saw the official UNRWA camps as unsuitable places to accommodate their cattle and preferred to settle near the orchards where they had found work (DRC, 2005:154-156; PARD, 2011:14). People in Shabriha earn their income through agricultural work (DRC, 2005:47), but the gathering is well-off compared to other gatherings in the South, which generally host the poorest Palestinian communities (Chabaan et al., 2010:x). This is attributed to the relatively large share of remittances it receives (DRC, 2005:155).

Shabriha has an UNRWA health clinic that is open a few days a week as well as a first aid service run by the NGO PARD. It also has an UNRWA primary school and a kindergarten run by the PLO's General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW). Electricity to the gathering is provided by national electricity provider *Électricité du Liban* (EDL). Water is obtained through a well dug by the PLO and operated by the Popular Committee.

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the Popular Committee was hard to reach – although in the end I did manage to publish about governance in Maashouk in Yassin et al. (2016). An overview of all gatherings in South Lebanon can be found on the map on page xvi.

[68] Ahmad Hariri, 'Lebanese-Palestinian Communication Association thanks the *mukhtar* of Shabriha, Rida Aoun,' YaSur website, 28 June 2012 [translated from Arabic].

The gathering is connected to the municipal sewage network, but faces recurrent malfunctioning in this regard. Solid waste is collected by PARD.

Qasmiye is located next to the strategic Litani river crossing and is known as the 'capital' of the gatherings. It hosts approximately 5,000 people, making it Lebanon's largest gathering (Rasul, 2013:12). Qasmiye consists of two areas, Upper and Lower Qasmiye, which are separated by a major road and a walled orchard in the middle. However, residents speak of three 'neighbourhoods' that house communities from different tribal backgrounds. Apart from the Bedouin Palestinian refugees, a community of Dom ('gypsies') resides in Upper Qasmiye and a group of naturalized, 'Lebanese' Palestinians live in Lower Qasmiye. All of Qasmiye falls within the cadastral boundaries of Bourj Rahaal municipality, but much of the land on which the gathering's houses are located is owned by different Lebanese landholders. Qasmiye is one of the poorest gatherings (PARD, 2011:8). 83 percent of those who have (occasional) work, work in elementary occupations (Chabaan et al., 2010:10).

Like Shabriha, Qasmiye has an UNWRA clinic that is operative several days a week. Its Red Crescent Society clinic was closed several years ago. Qasmiye has an UNRWA school and a kindergarten run by the GUPW. In addition, there are two youth centres and a soccer field. Electricity to the gathering is provided by EDL and water is obtained through a well dug by the PLO and operated by the Popular Committee. The gathering is in the process of being connected to the municipal sewage network (through a project by UNDP and UN-Habitat). Garbage is managed by PARD.

My two cases, Shabriha and Qasmiye, demarcated *where* I would study governance interaction. They did not designate, however, *what* to study in order to understand governance interaction. This is where my embedded units, or sub-cases, came in. 'Governance,' I realized after discarding one of my initial interview guides as hopelessly intangible and general, is far too abstract to witness happening 'on the ground.' To be able to empirically 'capture' governance interaction, therefore, I identified several recent events that were characterized by interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities. This approach is in line with the focus on 'everyday practices' advocated by the hybrid political order school (Van Overbeek, 2014:31; see also Mitchell, 1991:81; Sharma and Gupta, 2006).

Interactions, in the end, always have spatial, social and temporal dimensions that can 'be traced empirically on a case by case basis' (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:550). Similarly, 'ostensibly non-political situations may reveal themselves to be active sites of political negotiation and mediation' (Lund, 2006b:686).

I selected my 'vignettes' during the first month of fieldwork in each location – sometimes by explicitly asking people to think of instances of interaction with Lebanese authorities and sometimes deducing them from conversations about past and current goings-on in the gatherings. I specifically sought to study events (rather than developments or topics) because these are both dynamic and demarcated, referring to a 'relatively discrete' and intuitively differentiated set of actions and practices.[69] The sampling of five sub-cases[70] for each case from the pool of potentially relevant events I collected in this way was eventually based on three criteria. I wanted cases to be relatively recent (so I would be able to draw on people's memory). I also needed cases to be feasible to study, in the sense that they had to be accessible.[71] Finally, I wanted the different sub-cases to span a variety of domains. Initially, I hoped to select a security-related sub-case, a welfare related vignette and a micro-case related to representation. Soon, however, it became clear to me that such delineations were untenable. Most relevant events pertained to multiple domains. In the end, I selected the cases I found most interesting in terms of interaction, striving for as much variety as possible, but dropping the notion of governance domains as formal selection criteria.

For Shabriha, I selected the following five sub-cases, which were described in detail in the working paper I wrote for the Issam Fares Institute (Stel, 2014).[72] During the period participants called the 'waste crisis,' which

[69] Lund (2014:224) mentions 'a land conflict, a local election, a cockfight, or even an opening of a bridge' as examples of such 'micro-cases.'

[70] A number limited enough to allow depth and large enough to welcome diversity.

[71] The vignette regarding Lebanese-Palestinian interactions in the aftermath of the Israeli bombing of the Qasmiye bridge in the 2006 'Summer War' between Israel and Hezbollah, which killed several inhabitants of the gathering, including the son of the head of the Popular Committee, for instance, proved impossible to study as people refused to address the issue.

[72] While I want to use this synthesis to give a little bit more empirical 'feel' for my study than was possible to convey in my articles, it is still beyond the scope of this text

started in February 2012, Tyre's regional waste dump was closed and the factory that replaced it could not process all delivered waste. It was therefore reluctant to accept waste from Palestinian communities (who do not pay taxes and do not fall under the service mandate of the municipalities). For Shabriha, this meant that for approximately six months waste was hardly collected because it could not be dumped. In the process of arranging a 'deal' with the factory that is owned by the Union of Municipalities of Tyre, the *mukhtar* from Lebanese Shabriha, the Union of Municipalities and Shabriha's Popular Committee coordinated intensely.[73]

The second vignette I used to study Lebanese-Palestinian governance interaction in Shabriha concerns what participants referred to as the 'electricity triumph.' EDL provides electricity to Palestinian communities in a relatively regular fashion. In Shabriha, however, the gathering's single electricity transformer failed to provide sufficient electricity to the gathering. The Popular Committee had been requesting a second transformer from EDL for years but to no avail. In 2012, however, a resident of Shabriha who was working for a Lebanese company facilitated a meeting between Shabriha's Popular Committee and his boss, who happened to be the 'right hand' of one of Sidon's most influential politicians. After a series of meetings between the Member of Parliament in question, the Popular Committee and the EDL, the transformer was installed in the gathering.[74]

The third sub-case used for Shabriha was the 'highway eviction threat' central to my fifth article.[75] In 2005, the residents of approximately thirty houses in Shabriha received a message that 'their' land would be expropriated in the process of constructing the Zahrani-Qana highway. The ensuing expropriation process (that appears to still be ongoing) brought together an array of Lebanese governance actors – most notably the Council for Development and Reconstruction, Abasiye municipality

to describe each vignette 'thickly' and 'richly.'

[73] A process I described in detail in an article for *Conflict, Security and Development* (Stel and Van der Molen, 2015; see Annex 4).

[74] This vignette is further worked out in the weblog entry titled 'Electricity: Political Fireworks' (see Annex 2).

[75] And described on my weblog under the entry 'Life and Law in Limbo' (see Annex 2) as well as in a piece I wrote for the *Jadaliyya* website (Stel, 2013; see Annex 4).

and Shabriha's *mukhtar* – and a committee of affected residents that closely coordinated with some members of the Popular Committee.

The fourth event that residents of Shabriha saw as a good example of Lebanese-Palestinian governance interaction concerned what they dubbed the 'building revolution.' Building and renovation in the gatherings is usually subject to permissions that are hardly ever granted and the police normally cut short any illegal building activity. However, in 2011 the large majority of households in Shabriha added rooms, or even entire floors, to their house in a period that was characterized by a governmental vacuum and a de facto national non-implementation of building regulations. The blockade enforced on the gathering to prevent construction materials from entering and the smuggling and negotiating that developed as a result generated close interactions between the mayor of Abasiye, the *mukhtar* of Shabriha and the municipal police (and even the army) on the one hand and (some members of) the Popular Committee on the other.[76]

My fifth sub-case for Shabriha concerned an event that participants called the 'Ramadan conflict.' In August 2012, during the month of Ramadan, a row between Lebanese and Palestinian youth from Shabriha over the alleged hassling of a Palestinian girl escalated into a violent confrontation. The conflict caused five people to be seriously injured and had to be broken up by the police. Afterwards, the *mukhtar* on the one hand and the Popular Committee and the Family Committee on the other were engaged in a drawn-out reconciliation process facilitated by Lebanese and Palestinian political parties.

The majority of the five vignettes that I selected to empirically investigate governance interactions between Palestinian authorities inside Qasmiye and their Lebanese counterparts have not yet been described in detail in any formal publication. They did, however, feature in my weblog entries[77] and were systematically worked out in my analytical notes. My first sub-case for Qasmiye concerns the eviction case that was the empirical cornerstone of my fifth article.[78] When, after the end of the Lebanese Civil War, the de

[76] I discussed this vignette in my weblog entry 'Checkpoints: Who is Checking and Who is Checked?' (see Annex 2).
[77] I will say more about this weblog shortly.
[78] And of the working paper I wrote for Yale University's Governance and Local

facto permission of the landowners on whose property Qasmiye's residents built their houses was gradually withdrawn, many residents were threatened with eviction. In 1997, the residents of approximately fifty houses in the area in Upper Qasmiye faced such a threat that resulted in a series of on-and-off interactions between the gathering's Popular Committee, the local PLO office and the Palestinian Embassy in Lebanon on the one hand and the courts of Tyre and Sidon and the municipality of Bourj Rahaal on the other.

The second event that I studied in Qasmiye regards the realization of a playground in Upper Qasmiye in late 2013 – a contested development considering the disputed status of the land on which the soccer field was realized and the far from unanimous support for this development (many people preferred to keep the field as an open public space for weddings and other 'occasions'). While participants at first insisted that Qasmiye's Popular Committee had a part in this event, it later transpired that it was an organization closely affiliated with Hamas and Qasmiye's Family Committee that upgraded the existing playground and was part of the resultant negotiations with the municipality.[79]

The 2013 installation of speed bumps (as well as a set of traffic signs urging cars to drive responsibly) in front of the UNRWA school in Qasmiye constituted the third micro-case for my Qasmiye case. Upon request of children involved in its empowerment activities, the NGO Terre des Hommes approached the mayor of Bourj Rahaal with the idea to install speed bumps. The mayor told them that because the road was a national highway it did not fall under his mandate, but needed referral to the provincial governor. The mayor wrote a recommendation letter to the governor and Terre des Hommes, together with a delegation of children, then took this letter to the governor who subsequently also voiced his support. With this permission from the governor in hand, the Korean contingent of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was

Development working paper series (Stel, 2015a; see Annex 4).

[79] Despite this limited role of the Popular Committee, I nevertheless decided to further work out this sub-case, because its dynamics provided crucial insights in the nature of the Popular Committee (in contrast to the Family Committee) that, for instance, underpin the claims I make in article four.

approached and it agreed to install (and finance) the slowdowns. Throughout this process, Terre des Hommes worked closely with the Popular Committee, whose secretary facilitated meetings with the mayor and hosted the inauguration ceremony in which he thanked UNIFIL on behalf of the gathering.

The fourth vignette for Qasmiye also concerned a road. Several years ago, some roads in the area of Lower Qasmiye, which hosts a community of naturalized Palestinians, were asphalted by the neighbouring municipality of Burghliye. Because most of these Lebanese Palestinians were registered as voters in Burghliye, this event was widely seen in light of the local election dynamics. The new road, indeed, was opened by an influential local politician claiming the support of this community. In this vignette, the Khalsa Association that represented the community in question and the respective municipality were engaged in a long process of bargaining. While Qasmiye's Popular Committee was practically excluded from this interaction, it was constantly paid lip-service to. Moreover, the Khalsa Association's connections to the PLO proved crucial in its clout vis-à-vis Lebanese state institutions and politicians.[80]

My fifth sub-case for Qasmiye regards a project to improve the sewage infrastructure in Qasmiye that UNDP started in various gatherings in 2014. UNDP approached the national Popular Committee office that has an overview of the specific needs of each Popular Committee as communicated to them by the regional Popular Committee offices. The national Popular Committee office subsequently informed UNDP of the requirements voiced by the Popular Committee in Qasmiye and UNDP then proceeded to contact the Popular Committee in Qasmiye and started the project. Interestingly, the facilitation of relations between Popular Committees and municipalities was an implicit objective of this project. In the context of this initiative, then, diverse interactions between the Popular Committee and the municipality of Bourj Rahaal, but also public utility companies such as EDL, commenced.

[80] This vignette was the subject of my weblog entry 'Paving the Road to Electoral Gain' (see Annex 2).

Upon reflection, a perhaps disproportionate number of these vignettes appear to regard crises: situations of break-down or malfunctioning. This can be problematic because, as Kosmatopoulos (2014:483) remarks, crises are exceptional and constitute a 'blind spot for the production of knowledge.' It could thus be argued that what such events reveal about Lebanese-Palestinian interaction is exceptional rather than representative or structural. Yet, I am confident that what these events/crises say about Lebanese-Palestinian relations is pertinent often exactly *because* they regard crises. A key characteristic of the Palestinian life in Lebanon, as structurally recounted by participants and as evident in my articles, is that there are no regular processes or formal procedures and that all socio-political life is characterized by a state of exception. There are certain informal modus operandi that hold over longer periods of time, but mostly the various governance domains studied have no stable processes of interaction and rather reflect chains of ad hoc crisis management. My vignettes reflect this reality.

Generating data

My operationalization and design left me with the task to gather information about governance actors, domains, sites, levels and modes for ten different events. In essence, this information could be deduced from what the relevant governance actors did and what they said, from their practices and their representations. I generated such information on behaviour and speech by speaking to and observing the governance actors in question as well as by talking to the constituents, partners, competitors and superiors of these governance actors.

The process of generating data to answer my research question began long before I had even formulated that particular question, with the literature research that was inherent in the development of my research proposal. Primary data collection commenced during my six-week orientation visit to Lebanon in June and July 2012 that had the objective to explore the feasibility and relevance of the plans I had made so far and to empirically narrow down my project (for instance by preliminary case selection).[81]

[81] While I call it an 'orientation visit,' I had already spent three months in Lebanon in

During this period, I visited eight of Lebanon's twelve Palestinian refugee camps (as I was then still under the impression that one of my cases would be a formal camp).[82] I also met with 28 'experts' (ranging from academics to journalists, development workers and local authorities) to discuss and improve my research plans.[83] As these things go, only during my last few days did I become aware of the existence of the gatherings and the relevance they held for my research interests. Thus, in September, I went back for a second scoping study and visited five gatherings: Shabriha, Qasmiye, Jal al Bahar, Wasta and Burghliye.[84] Based on these initial studies, I finalized my proposal and tentatively selected my cases.

From March to August 2013, I was in Lebanon for my first 'real' fieldwork period, consisting of one month in Beirut to study Arabic and arrange access to and accommodation in Shabriha and four months of actually living in Shabriha. With the help of friends working for two NGOs that are active in Shabriha, Naba'a and PARD, I met several of the main authorities in Shabriha (a member of the Popular Committee, the leader of the Family Committee and the *mukhtar*) and received their fiat for staying in Shabriha and doing research. During these four months, I lived with the family of a prominent member of the Popular Committee. Via a friend that

2009 for my MA thesis research on Hezbollah and, before that, visited several times for a few days when I was living in Syria in 2008. My contextual knowledge on the country as well as my social and professional networks were thus already established when I officially started my research.

[82] These visits to Mar Elias, Bourj al-Barajneh and Shatila in Beirut, Bourj al-Shemali, Rashidieh and Al Bass in Tyre, Ain al-Hilweh in Sidon and Nahr al-Bared in Tripoli were very important for me to develop a sense of the material and lived differences between camps and gatherings.

[83] In addition, I met with twelve people that were experts on or representatives of Hezbollah as I was at that time still considering to study both Hezbollah and the Palestinians as cases of 'non-state governance' – a plan I soon abandoned because it was far too ambitious. These meetings were nevertheless relevant to establish my network and enhance my background knowledge on Lebanese politics.

[84] In all these camps and gatherings I spent several hours, walking around with the friends that introduced me there and speaking with a range of people working in and on these localities (such as members of the Popular Committees, communal leaders and NGO representatives). Most of the other gatherings in Tyre (Kfar Badda, Jim Jim, Itaniye, Al Ebb, Adloun, Maashouk and Baysariye – see Chabaan (2014) for profiles and the map on page xvi for a geographical overview) I visited in the first month of my first fieldwork period, before I made the definitive choice for Shabriha and Qasmiye.

worked for PARD and was a member of Shabriha's Popular Committee, I met Asma, a woman from Shabriha who became my research partner.

In June 2014 I went to Lebanon for another five months of fieldwork concerning my second case.[85] I followed a similar approach as in Shabriha, with the major difference that I now had a large social network in the gatherings in South Lebanon and I negotiated my access to Qasmiye with the help of friends from Shabriha rather than through NGOs. After a month in Beirut to polish up my Arabic and make some visits to Qasmiye's main authorities (mainly the members of the Popular Committee there), I relocated to Qasmiye where I stayed in the house of the head of the Popular Committee. As in Shabriha, with the help of some activist friends, I found Nadia, a woman from Qasmiye willing to assist me with my research.

Throughout these two fieldwork periods, I wrote regular weblog entries that had several purposes. First of all, they helped me reflect on my position as a researcher 'in the field' and the (lack of) progress I was making (thereby complementing the weekly supervision reports I sent to my supervisors). Second, they helped me to deal with the necessity of focusing on specific vignettes, because other interesting and important issues could be discussed on this weblog (which meant that less darlings had to be killed). Third, my weblog entries served as a platform to develop initial ideas, work out budding arguments and explore lines of thinking (functioning as an extension of my daily field notes). Fourth, in some instances, the weblog entries helped me deal with the anxiety of fieldwork (the lack of privacy, the frustration of language barriers) and the stress of research (concerns about all the last minute interview cancelations, worries about issues of translation and interpretation) as well, turning these issues into topics of academic reflection rather than matters of personal aggravation. I am

[85] The period of five months was initially established purely on the basis of feasibility: it was all the time I could arrange to be away from my job in the Netherlands. It turned out to be sufficient for collecting a rich amount of data with which I was able to answer my research question. In Shabriha, during my last month, data saturation became prominent. Moreover, several issues that were left hanging could be picked up again during my second fieldwork period (such as the story central to my third article). In Qasmiye, due to the larger familiarity that I already had with the region and the phenomenon of governance interaction at that time, saturation was even more evident throughout the last weeks of my fieldwork.

convinced that my weblog entries played an instrumental role in my analytical process. Through the avenues for feedback they offered to my supervisors and peers, moreover, they helped me to bolster the validity of my research. Therefore, while it is beyond the scope of this synthesis to include or recapitulate all weblog entries, I have provided an overview of them in Annex 2.

As is appropriate in any qualitative approach, and with a case-study design specifically, I have tried to generate data through a wide variety of data sources or categories so as to enable extensive triangulation (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Ritchie, 2003). In-depth, semi-structured interviews provided the bulk of my data (Legard et al., 2003). I conducted these interviews with the help of a topic list that centred on the vignettes that the interlocutor in question was knowledgeable about. Through what-when-where-who-why-how questions I established the meetings and communications between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities in the context of these specific vignettes. By means of strategic probing (following up on, or leading respondents towards, aspects of their account that could give further insights in the respective governance actors, domains, sites, levels and modes) interviews gained further focus. I thus sought to avoid asking direct questions regarding the governance interactions (for fear of being too 'leading'), but rather tried to approach these from inside the narratives produced by the interviewees themselves. In addition, I always sought to explore how, according to my interviewees, the vignettes in question related to other situations and occasions (to figure out how exceptional or regular they were).

The topic list I used was tailored to each specific interview. It accommodated emergent issues and insights and became more specific as I gained more previous knowledge on the vignettes and the general context of governance interaction (and, towards the end of my fieldwork, was seeking to fill specific knowledge gaps, rather than generate comprehensive impressions). The interview guide was also adapted to each participant – some people I interviewed had specific knowledge about a particular vignette, others had experiences and insights pertaining to a more generic understanding of the dynamics and contexts of governance interaction. In addition, I always tried to have people talk about what other issues they

thought were important and worth sharing in the context of my broader research interest.

I sampled interviewees through two strategies. By means of theoretical and stakeholder sampling, I identified the most relevant categories of respondents beforehand. These were, first and foremost, the governance actors themselves: on the Palestinian side, the Popular Committees (on a camp, regional and national level) and PLO representatives and, on the Lebanese side, any relevant state institution, starting with *mukhtars* and mayors and building up to district and provincial governors and national policy-makers. Another important stakeholder category were the claimed constituencies of these governance actors, for instance representatives of women and youth committees, people identified by their community as 'active people' (*faliyaat*) and residents that were particularly affected by a specific vignette. I also sought out the partners of the governance actors in question, which were mostly representatives of the political parties backing them up. The competitors of Palestinian and Lebanese governance actors, such as the Family Committees and representatives of the political parties opposing the PLO, constituted another relevant respondent category.

A final target group for my interviews consisted of a broad range of 'experts' who were particularly familiar with the situation in the gatherings either because they worked there (in the case of, for instance, the many NGO representatives I spoke with) or because they have studied them (such as academics, journalists and consultants). In addition, through the tactic of snowball sampling, I continued to identify relevant interlocutors in each of these categories as my research progressed. During my first fieldwork period, when I was mostly based in Shabriha, I conducted 140 interviews with 108 participants. In the second fieldwork period in Qasmiye, I conducted another 92 interviews with 82 people.

I did not record interviews. Among both the Palestinian and the Lebanese communities I was working in, there is a lot of anxiety and suspicion regarding the gathering of 'intelligence.'[86] In this context, recording

[86] I have, for instance, regularly been regarded an American or Israeli spy. This 'paranoia' is, in fact, less exaggerated than one may think, considering that there have indeed been cases where self-proclaimed academic researchers turned out to work for Israeli or American intelligence services (Nayel, 2013). I, too, have been approached

interviews would have been extremely uncomfortable for most of my interlocutors (who would have either refused or, I am convinced, have engaged in significant self-censorship) – an impression that was substantiated by my discussions on this matter with Lebanese and Palestinian scholars working on the same topic. Abstaining from recording thus helped to ensure confidentiality and establish a comfortable atmosphere. Instead of recording, I made notes throughout the interviews which I made sure to work out the same day. In transcribing my interview notes, discussion and reflection with Asma and Nadia was of paramount importance.

While some 'expert' interviews were conducted in English without any translation necessary, the large majority of interviews were conducted in colloquial Arabic. My Arabic is sufficient for daily life social conversations. For research interviews, however, it is lacking. I can introduce my topic and ask questions, but I have problems following respondents' accounts in detail (not least because of the variety in local – Palestinian, Lebanese, Bedouin – dialects they use). This is where my research partners came in. While not official translators, both of the women I worked with had studied English at university and were absolutely up to the task. While, of course, some details and subtleties of respondents' accounts inevitably got lost in translation, I am confident that the translations were accurate and comprehensive (I am certain about this, because my own Arabic is good enough to follow the main lines of conversation and identify irregularities, inconsistencies or untranslated matters) (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2013:9).

Apart from the technical translation process, moreover, working with research partners from the gatherings in question was indispensible for several reasons. It helped to get access to local respondents, who felt more comfortable and were more forthcoming. More importantly, it was extremely valuable in terms of contextualizing the interview data and interpreting it. As said, the discussions I had after each interview – exploring with Asma or Nadia what was said and what was not said, why certain terms were used and not others, what their impressions were of the interests or affiliations of the interviewee and discussing how to approach

by a Dutch intelligence branch with the request to share my insights (which I declined).

certain remaining knowledge gaps and get a hold of important interlocutors seemingly unwilling to talk to me or how to deal with hostile interviewees – were the most insightful exercises of my data generation process.

Interviews thus constituted my most important data source. I used them to 'deconstruct' as well as 'reconstruct' several events and determine the chronology of meetings and communications that constituted them. More importantly, through my interviews I explored the perspectives of my main respondents on these events and established their impressions of the interests, motivations and responsibilities underlying governance interactions. Documentary evidence formed my most important source of triangulation (Bowen, 2009; Mogalakwe, 2006). This did not regard the governance interactions as such (as these were overwhelmingly informal and therefore hardly ever documented). But it did concern the context of the vignettes (I obtained notes from court cases, newspaper articles, project documentation and development reports).

In addition to these external documents that other institutions produced *about* the governance actors in question, I got a hold of several files and documents produced *by* these actors that were related to the official structure of the Popular Committee's organization and hierarchy and some public relations material of the Popular Committees (discussed in detail in article four) (David and Sutton, 2004). These proved indispensible in exploring the gaps between what governance actors do, what they claim they want to or should do and the standards and stipulations put forward by the organization that they are officially part of (May, 2001). These documents were not gathered very systematically, as I mostly was not aware of their existence beforehand and as they were not neatly filed in archives or libraries. However, where people told me about the existence of potentially important documents, I have gone out of my way to obtain them – often petitioning the officials that had them in their possession for multiple times. Many of these documents were in Arabic, often in a very formalistic and bureaucratic jargon that proved challenging and time-consuming to translate for my research partners, but I have no doubt that the main tenets of the documents have been accurately conveyed in my study.

I did not conduct formal observations or systematically engage in participant observation as an explicit research strategy because almost all of the vignettes I had selected had already taken place and could thus not be 'observed.' In addition, it was impossible to actually join and observe the interactions between Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors that I was interested in both because these meetings were unpredictable and held in private and because, as a foreigner and a woman, authorities were very unlikely to welcome me to their discussions. Even in a more general sense, observation was challenging, as there were few public spaces in the gatherings (some coffee shacks, the mosques and some playgrounds) in any case and no public spaces at all where Nadia and Asma were comfortable to venture. Wondering around without a purpose, similarly, was regarded with some suspicion as well (particularly in the beginning).

My interview appointments, however, were useful occasions for taking detours and making small-talk on the street as well as for noting who else came to visit the person I wanted to interview (it happened, for instance, that Shabriha's *mukhtar* was called multiple times by the head of Shabriha's Popular Committee while I was interviewing him). More importantly, after a while I began to realize that all the social events (weddings, tea circles, dinners, shopping trips) for which I was invited were important to accommodate the serendipity that is needed for worthwhile social conversations (and for exploring, for example, to what extent the claims that local authorities make about frequenting the festivities organized by their Lebanese or Palestinian counterparts should be questioned).[87] During my last two weeks of each fieldwork period, in this spirit, I did very few official interviews and instead made a sort of 'goodbye tour,' as Nadia called it, during which many people shared very relevant 'closing remarks' or 'bottom lines' in the context of informal conversations that they had not revealed when I previously interviewed them.

While I would not claim an 'insider status' based on eight months of living in the gatherings (Martin, 2011:46), my stay in Shabriha and Qasmiye – in

[87] When, in 2014, I visited, for instance, a manifestation organized by Fatah to show solidarity with the Palestinian victims of Israeli attacks on Gaza, I noted that five out of the six speakers were Lebanese. This discovery substantiated my convinction that Lebanese-Palestinian interaction was pervasive.

the houses of Popular Committee members – was ultimately crucial for the contextualization, interpretation and triangulation of my other data. As Klem (2012:103) noted, interviews and observations especially complement each other:

> Observations alone tell us very little about what the observed means for the people at stake. Interviews alone tend to privilege discursive realities; they often propagate what people think life should be like or what they think the interviewer needs to know, and thus downplay issues that are shameful, sensitive, political, or deemed irrelevant.

Living in the gatherings helped me to build rapport and have people open up (Adler and Adler, 1994). It allowed me to experience some of the contextual and structural aspects that determined life, and thus governance, first-hand. My continual presence in Shabriha and Qasmiye, my own daily life as part of the families of the Popular Committee members I was staying with, helped me identify many issues I had not thought of addressing in interviews before and exposed me to matters that were too sensitive or implicit to discuss in formal interviews (Dewalt et al., 1998:267; Kawulich, 2005).

I had expected much from doing focus groups. I wanted to utilize them to help recollect the dynamics of each vignette and thus initially planned to do ten focus groups. In Shabriha, however, my research partner was fine with joining interviews, but very reluctant to engage in group activities, which complicated the organization of focus groups. I also seriously underestimated the logistics and planning involved in getting multiple people to be present at the same place at the same time as well as the difference in the skills required for conducting an interview and moderating a focus group and the more serious implications of language barriers in these settings (Finch and Lewis, 2003).

In the end, I conducted three focus groups in Shabriha (one with residents affected by the looming eviction, one with a group of people that had been involved in the building revolution, and one with several authorities that had been involved in realizing the electricity triumph). In Qasmiye, I did not conduct vignette-related focus groups (as these proved even more challenging to arrange there than in Shabriha), but I did organize two focus groups with the youth club in Qasmiye (one with young men and one with

young women, all aged between fifteen and twenty-five). These focus groups helped me to test the claims made by governance authorities (benefiting from the critical, even cynical, and open comments of these teenagers) as well as to explicate the social and political networks operating in the gatherings (these were visualized by means of collectively drawing Venn diagrams). In this way, the dynamic of inter-group interaction indeed generated insights that would have been hard to come by in one-on-one interviews.

Data analysis

The operationalization of the concept of governance interaction that I gave above functioned as a guide for data collection and a tool for data organization. Findings for each vignette were described along the lines of these dimensions. However, these dimensions – governance actors, domains, sites, levels and modes – are descriptive; they help demonstrate *how* governance interaction looks, but not necessarily *why* it takes this form. Analysis demanded interpretation: moving from 'commonsense' understandings of the participants themselves to more critical 'observer' understanding and eventually conceptual understanding (Scott, 1985:46).

Analysis is neither an 'esoteric process, shrouded in intellectual mystery,' nor an exercise through which 'discovery [falls] from the evidence as if somehow by chance' (Spencer et al., 2003:199). It is a systematic dialogue between evidence and ideas that facilitates 'breaking phenomena down into their constituent parts and viewing them in relation to the whole they form' (Ragin, 1994:55-56). In this spirit, my analytical process has been explicitly iterative. Such 'iteration and triangulation' was essential to reach the degree of saturation that was needed to make confident claims (Lund, 2014:226-227).

It, first of all, means that I did not wait with 'analysis' until I was back behind my desk at home (Spencer et al., 2003:199). Throughout the generation of my data, I was constantly conducting stakeholder analyses to identify relevant participants. After each interview, I did not merely translate it with the help of my research partners, but also already started to compare it with other accounts and link it to previously established

ideas. Halfway through each fieldwork period, moreover, I engaged in a preliminary analysis to tease out emerging patters and establish remaining knowledge gaps.

The more systematic analysis of the entire body of data that commenced when I finalized fieldwork and had processed all my interview transcripts, document translations, field notes, and focus group reflections into the NVivo qualitative data analysis program that I used had both an inductive and a deductive aspect. Inductively, I paid specific attention to what my interlocutors themselves had tended to prioritise and emphasize and, in many cases even more importantly, what they seemed to ignore, understate or deem unimportant (Gibbs, 2007:18; Ritchie et al., 2003:254). I looked at the exact words, phrases and examples that people used and reflected on whether these merited new conceptual aspects or understandings and hoped, thereby, to avoid 'imperialism of categories' (Gupta, 2012:78).

Constant triangulation was also an important element of my inductive analysis. I contrasted findings from different data sources, comparing, for instance, claims made in interviews with statements from documents and contrasting informal conversations that I had with narratives from interviews. I also juxtaposed data from different respondent categories, teasing out the differences between Lebanese and Palestinian perspectives and establishing the differences and similarities between accounts from residents and experts, for example. And I constantly compared insights gained from the different vignettes, asking in which aspects the various events differed or were alike.

To complement this inductive analysis, that tended to start earlier on in the process and be more intuitive, I also engaged in a more systematic deductive analysis through which I linked the emergent descriptive patterns to the various analytical tools and concepts available under the hybrid political order header. The deductive part of my analysis required me to take a step back and ask myself once more: 'of what is this a case?,' this time in a more theoretical sense (Lund, 2014:224).

The format of my dissertation played a crucial role in this as well. Due to the fact that I was to publish journal articles rather than a monograph, I needed to establish several key phenomena (inductively) that would

provide the focus for a journal article and then, for each phenomenon (and article) determine what concept would best explain it. It was never an option to stick to the vignettes as such and present these sub-cases as 'chapters' or 'building blocks' for one overarching analysis. As this would entail a repetitive analytical framework it would lack 'publishability' after one article. Thus, I took a more aggregated level of analysis and looked for phenomena that were apparent throughout the majority of my vignettes and seemed to be particularly relevant to respondents.[88] The vignettes, then, were merely the first sport of the 'abstraction ladder' (Spencer et al., 2003:212) and served as a way to establish 'disconfirming evidence,' helping me to avoid the tunnel vision generated by focusing on one specific anecdote.

In my second article,[89] taking into consideration the five vignettes studied for Shabriha, the main issue of concern was the indirect governance mode of interactions between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities. The important role of Lebanese and Palestinian political parties in facilitating the interactions between the Popular Committee and local state institutions was something that struck me. This phenomenon, then, was analyzed through the lens of the mediated state – a concept particularly geared towards explaining such dynamics. After the initial round of coding in NVivo based on my operationalization of governance and a general inductive analysis, I went through the data I coded in relation to the indictor of '(in)directness' once more in light of the literature on mediated stateness to facilitate the specific analysis for this article.

In my third article, the issue that increasingly surfaced as important for respondents was the ambiguous national status of the inhabitants of 'Lebanese' Shabriha and their extensive yet paradoxical relations with Lebanese state structures, a phenomenon that resonated with the asymmetric nature of governance interactions in Shabriha. Because the concept of the negotiating statehood was designed to explain the occurrence and nature of such negotiations and contestations, I adopted it

[88] My research partners, as well as several key expert interlocutors, were invaluable sound boards in this process.
[89] My first article is not an empirical article, but a review essay.

as a lens for this specific article and subjected the data coded under the indicator of '(a)symmetry' to another round of more specific analysis.

The legitimation and operation of the Popular Committees in both Shabriha and Qasmiye presented itself as a key query (for respondents as much as for myself) that was closely aligned with the informal mode of governance interactions that was apparent in all ten vignettes. The notion of twilight institutions proved a useful analytical instrument from the hybrid political order toolbox to explain this informality and the resultant positioning of the Popular Committees and thus provided the guidance for my second round of NVivo coding for this article.

The ambiguity and uncertainty of interactions that permeated all vignettes (and that was specifically pertinent for those events relating to eviction) was a recurrent theme in respondents' accounts (albeit often in the form of hiatuses or inconsistencies). This was connected to the irregular mode of governance interaction in the gatherings. No concept that I had encountered so far was suited to explain the simultaneous utility and marginalization of such irregular governance, which is why I turned to the notion of agnotology, the study of socially constructed and politically imposed ignorance (McGoey, 2012a/b; Proctor and Schiebinger, 2008), to further explain this phenomenon and recode those parts of my data that I had previously labelled as pertaining to '(ir)regularity.'[90]

My eventual explanations, the answers to the 'why' component of my research question that each of my articles encompassed, did thus not

[90] The turn that my research took in my fifth article, with my discovery of the notion of agnotology, had epistemological repercussions as well, raising the question of what a researcher can know, when not-knowing is a strategic and political priority. In addition to what I write about this in the article in question, I want to refer here to the work of Carpi (2015) on 'reality and falsehood in the field' that has provided me with a lot of guidance in analyzing deliberate ignorance and intentional ambiguity. Her contentions, largely based on Bourdieu (2003), that 'the attitudes and the reasons behind the falsehood or partial truth of some statements were far more important than the mere ascertainment of facts' and that even in 'lying' or 'evading' interlocutors engage in 'the creation of de facto knowledge, whatever its truth' have been analytical eye-openers to me. And her suggestion that falsehood can be part of interlocutors' internal conceptualization in 'the absence of wide-scale social credibility' has pointed me to the literature on agnotology that proved to be so crucial for my meta-level understanding of governance in the gatherings (see also Martin, 2011:56).

'emerge' from the data, but were constructed by me with the help of specific analytical concepts (Ritchie et al., 2003:252). This explanatory conceptual layer and the theoretical contributions it allows me to make are essential to the external validity of my findings (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003:264).

Reflexivity and ethics

My careful documentation of and reflection on the process of data generation, my close collaboration with local research partners and my elaborate discussions with Lebanese and Palestinian scholars should guarantee the reliability of my data (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003:271). As described above, the validity of my findings has been assured through various strategies as well – ranging from triangulation and falsification to prolonged field engagement, peer debriefing and, of course, the extensive blind peer review by the journals that published my articles (Creswell and Miller, 2000). In addition, many of my weblog entries have been significant exercises in reflexivity.[91] Some further reflection on positionality, however, is in order to further solidify this validity. Rather than an 'exercise in vanity,' such reflections are analytically relevant because they determine in large part 'what I got to see, what I got to ask, whom I got to talk to, and what answers I was given' and how I interpreted all this (Klem, 2012:99, 113).

I believe that five aspects of my identity were specifically salient in this regard. My nationality was a relevant factor in people's attitudes to me – particularly during the first phases of fieldwork. Being Dutch, or, more broadly speaking, 'Western,' had negative consequences in that people associated me with the Netherlands' historically very pro-Israeli politics, but in some instances also had positive implications, such as when people had relatives living in the Netherlands (or had lived there themselves). My

[91] In particular the following ones: 'Navigating Research and Reality in an Informal Palestinian Camp in South Lebanon;' 'The Continuous Identity Crisis that is Fieldwork;' 'There is No Escaping the System;' 'From the Categorized Coding of Deskwork to the Mandatory Mindfulness of Fieldwork;' 'The 'Why' of Doing Research and the Lures of Narcissism, Snobbism and Megalomania' (see Annex 2 and Annex 3).

gender significantly affected the process of data generation as well. As a Western woman, I was not subject to the same social and cultural norms as my 'sisters' from the families that I stayed with or my research partners and I never faced any problem interviewing my predominantly male respondents.

Yet, as discussed previously, observation was complicated as 'public' spaces were not always culturally open to women. Similarly, conducting focus groups was problematic because my female research partners[92] were reluctant to be involved in what they saw as a male group activity. My age, unexpectedly, also turned out to be an issue as the residents of Shabriha and Qasmiye structurally considered me too young to be taken seriously as a researcher – something I am convinced was only compounded by me being a woman. While this was personally exasperating at times, I think it enhanced rather than undermined data collection as this underestimation also led people to open up and perhaps let their guard down a little easier.

My professional background as an academic researcher was perhaps the most significant challenge in terms of positionality. As I will elaborate on below, doing conceptual rather than applied research often met with disappointment (if not resentment). At the same time, it did little to assuage expectations that I would change or improve the destitute situation in the gatherings. This might have affected people's accounts of their situation (for example painting a particularly bleak picture in the anticipation of 'projects' or 'aid'). In any case, it was sometimes hard for me to come to terms with such 'unwanted, undesired and sudden sense' of power and anticipation, as Martin (2011:45) describes.

Dealing with Palestinian authorities was, in this case, particularly challenging due to the curious blend of dominance and victimhood they represented. Popular Committee members and PLO representatives represent a largely victimized community and are themselves duped by the unrealistic expectations of their constituents, the lack of resources and opportunities granted by 'the system' (their own superiors, as well as the

[92] My choice for female research partners was deliberate as I am convinced that continued close cooperation with a man would have been detrimental for my reputation, and hence my findings, because it would have been considered inappropriate by many of the people I intended to speak with.

larger context provided by Israel's occupation and UNRWA's budget cuts) and the dominance of their Lebanese counterparts. At the same time, they held power over me – being able to make or break my research process – and, more importantly, the residents of the gatherings, including, crucially, Asma and Nadia.[93] The 'odd blend of humility and bravado' that characterized the position that Palestinian authorities took vis-à-vis me as a foreign researcher has certainly affected the questions I (thought I) could (not) ask and explains, for instance, why I never confronted the Popular Committee members outright with the allegations of corruption levelled at them by the gatherings' residents, who generally regarded the Popular Committees' inaptness with a mixture of contempt, fatigue and frustration.

My political convictions and support for the 'Palestinian cause,' finally, complicated my research as well. I do not necessarily believe in the concept of political neutrality for social science researchers. In situations of asymmetrical conflict, impartiality does not so much imply not taking sides, but rather means siding with the status quo. I am convinced, however, that it is crucial to be aware of the ways in which political positioning affects analysis. In my case, I believe this regards not so much my direct reading of the empirical material, but rather my meta-analysis focusing on the issues of power, dominance and hegemony that is laid down in this synthesis' section on findings and contributions. I will return to this issue when I discuss ethics.

In my engagement with participants, I have sought to avoid political discussions and did not wear my sympathies on my sleeve. However, despite this attempt to 'treat all viewpoints as equally interesting discursive

[93] I am sure that Popular Committee members 'vetted' my research partners. In Shabriha, the Popular Committee member that hosted me at one point urged my research partner to 'keep him informed' about the 'progress' of our research. While such surveillance became less of an issue after my presence in the gathering was accepted and my friendship with Asma and Nadia deepened, it illustrates the tight spot in which in my research assistants often operated – a tight spot that might have also, consciously or unconsciously, affected the advice they gave me. This became even more pertinent to me after I found out that after I had left Shabriha, the *mukhtar* there had approached my research partner and had her sign a written statement that I had not discussed any politically sensitive or security-related issues (allegedly to convince people that had complained to him that I had been inappropriately 'nosing around' of the innocence of my research).

perspectives,' as Klem (2012:117) notes: 'at some point people call your bluff and ask: where do you stand?' When this happened, as a matter of research ethics, I have always been frank about my personal convictions (even where this did not necessarily open doors or facilitate fruitful conversation).

Apart from my own identity, reflexivity should also pertain to the research context (Hilhorst and Jansen, 2005). During my fieldwork, enormous numbers of refugees from Syria arrived (so that by now over a fourth of all inhabitants in Lebanon are Syrian), which caused a lot of socio-economic rivalry between Syrian and Palestinian refugees. The situation was further aggravated by the spill-over of the Syrian war and the engagement of Lebanese forces in it. Palestinian leaders walked a very tight line to try and retain their neutrality in this regard (and this Palestinian leadership itself was divided on the matter, with Hamas supporting the Syrian opposition forces and the PLO backing the Lebanese government's non-intervention). All this made people suspicious and tense. One respondent captured this feeling by saying that 'the situation isn't comfortable; it's not like walking normally, it's like walking through a minefield. You always have to be suspicious and alert.'[94] This context made my initial plans to record interviews and even photograph the gatherings (or gather data through other visual techniques) unrealistic (see also Martin, 2011:47). During the onslaught of the Israeli army on the Gaza Strip in the summer of 2014, moreover, when I was doing fieldwork in Qasmiye, it felt increasingly inappropriate to press my own research agenda as everyone was entirely absorbed by the suffering in Gaza.

It was also in light of this extreme sensitivity of research that touches on political issues in any form that I soon consented with the idea of living with Popular Committee members. While this arguably entailed a risk of interference in my research, it also allowed the Popular Committees to fulfil their responsibility to 'be aware of everything that goes on in the gatherings' and, importantly, to defend my presence vis-à-vis outside inquisitors (be they their Palestinian superiors or their Lebanese counterparts). Truth be told, if I wanted to live in the gatherings – which I

[94] UNRWA representative Tyre area – Beirut, 24 June 2014.

did, as I was, and am, convinced that this has greatly enhanced the quality of my data and my analysis – I had little other choice that to go with these 'offers' (which were certainly first and foremost forms of genuine hospitality). 'Access' to the gatherings went through the Popular Committees and if Popular Committee members offered to host me, I would not have been offered a place to stay by anyone else had I refused this offer.

Nor was this all bad. Initially I was worried that my staying with a Popular Committee member would antagonize the Family Committees, but this turned out to be not the case as Family Committee members agreed that hosting me was the responsibility of the Popular Committee and did not regard this as a political issue (perhaps also because I made it a point to interview Family Committee members regularly as well). And while I cannot exclude the possibility that people were more reluctant to talk to me for fear I was reporting to the Popular Committee, I do not think this was pervasive – especially not as my stay in the gatherings progressed – as people were still relatively critical of the Popular Committees when they saw this fit. What is more, there were real advantages to dwelling in the 'lion's den.' It allowed me to have many informal conversations with Popular Committee members and gave me the opportunity to observe several relevant governance interactions. Living in the house of a Popular Committee member yielded important insights in the roles, responsibilities, activities and relations of the Popular Committees of Shabriha and Qasmiye.

As the above discussion already signals, reflexivity is closely related to ethics. Three issues for me stand out in this regard: informed consent, relations with research partners and expectation management (which is intertwined with matters related to impact and representation). Informed consent is an important cornerstone of ethical research. However, interviewees often started talking before I got a chance to explain who I was and what I was doing or to ask whether they were aware of the implications of participating in my research. They largely assumed that they knew what a researcher is and does. In other situations, the setting was so informal and social it was very unnatural to ask for consent in an official way (Martin, 2011:49). Regarding observations, informed consent was per

definition not an option. Increasingly, I have become convinced that informed consent is not something one can 'tick off' at the start of each interview. Instead, I found that consent is often produced throughout the interview, when I could inform participants about my research and their role in it and their options to disengage in response to the many questions they also asked me.

Informed consent was also generated perpetually in the general research context, because I made sure that I was always ready to explain myself and my research. I gradually experienced that almost everyone in the gatherings at some point knew about me and my questions. In the end, however, it is hard to determine to what extent consent is explicit and more problematic still to establish the degree to which it is informed, considering that many of my participants had few ways of overseeing the consequences of my research (Bakewell, 2008:448; Klem, 2012:114). In light of this, and being aware that people were not likely to refuse my requests, I actively looked for signs of discomfort or unease, accepted it when certain topics were marked as 'off limits' and (grudgingly) respected the exceptional occasions where people were indeed unwilling to meet with me.

Anonymity was a thorny issue as well. Anonymity has two dimensions, which I will here call 'field anonymity' and 'publication anonymity.' With regard to 'field anonymity,' considering the social control and communal cohesion in the gatherings, it was unavoidable that people knew whom I had talked to (something that my respondents were surely aware of as well considering that they are part of this community). I nevertheless committed myself to not discussing with others what my interviewees had actually said during these conversations. 'Publication anonymity' is more challenging, because while, as Hull (2012:32) notes, 'most quotations are uncontroversial opinions or open secrets, such statements might expose the speaker when they take written form.' In most cases, such exposure will not take place, because I do not name names in my publications.

However, some people can be easily traced because of the uniqueness of their function (there is, for instance, only one head of the Popular Committee in a gathering and one *mukhtar* in a specific village). The people that can be identified by their function, however, tend to be less vulnerable to the potential negative consequences of such identification. Still, I have

long doubted whether it was wise to mention the specific gatherings I focused on by name in my publications. In the end, however, I am sure that my presence in the field and the specific nature of the vignettes I used would have enabled anyone that was really interested in figuring out the exact locations to which my findings pertained anyway. In this regard, the trade-off between showing the 'nuances and contextual detail' that anthropological research demands and obscuring these 'for reasons of privacy and insecurity' that Klem (2012:115) identifies, remains unresolved. I have taken great care, however, in making sure that particularly controversial or sensitive quotations and claims have been totally anonymous.[95]

Another important dimension of ethical research concerns engagement with partners. With regard to Asma and Nadia, who have worked as my translators, fixers and research partners in Shabriha and Qasmiye, I have tried to create an atmosphere of equality and openness. While this initially proved very difficult because they insisted in seeing me as their 'boss,' as our collaboration endured our relation became more informal. While my budget for research assistance was limited and my demands on my partners were considerable,[96] I have at least paid them more than the Lebanese minimum wage (which, seeing that they were previously unemployed, was for them a considerable sum). More importantly, where the temporary employment that I offered them threatened to conflict with other paid work or social obligations, I made sure to prioritize their long-term commitments rather than my own research objectives.[97]

The third dimension of research ethics relevant here regards impact, the fundamental question of what my research actually did (or will do) for the people that have featured as the main interlocutors in it – an issue that gains further pertinence when these interlocutors are part of an extremely marginalized community (Gupta, 2012:109; Nayel, 2013). This, in my

[95] Making my references more general and speaking, for instance, about 'a Palestinian politician' rather than 'a Fatah representative from Tyre.'
[96] They were laid down in a terms of reference signed by me and my partners.
[97] Which is why, for instance, during my last month in Qasmiye I could only turn to my partner for half days, first because of a visit from relatives that she had not seen for years and after that because she was offered another (potentially permanent) part-time position.

case, first of all entailed expectation management. People often had inflated or outright misguided expectations of what my research might accomplish and refused to be convinced that my study was not part of a larger project with considerable development funds attached (Klem, 2012:117). In the face of such insistence, it is very challenging to not make false promises and stop refuting these assumptions (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2013:7). This is even more difficult when these expectations do not revolve around material aid, but concern advocacy, lobbying or giving voice: the 'speaking for' dilemma (Martin, 2011:40; see also Bakewell, 2008). As Martin (2011:52), puts it: 'the spectre of colonialism, the presumption of knowing, and the arrogance of representing are dilemmas that we, as researchers, constantly face.'

I have tried to consistently convey that my main objective has been to make a conceptual contribution; that, in my academic research, the 'balance between achieving understanding and making a difference' would per definition tilt towards the former (Bakewell, 2008:434). My research has not sought to 'give voice' to the residents of the gatherings (indeed, it was concerned with governance actors, not their constituents). Thus, what I eventually write may not correspond with the priorities of my interlocutors (Martin, 2011:63). Yet, as I substantiate in my section on findings and contributions, my academic accounts, while I cannot attest to their readership or distribution, do have the potential to contribute to shaping the image of Lebanon's Palestinians. My analyses, with their explicitly political focus (Bully, 2014:66; Perdigon, 2015; Sukarieh and Tannock, 2013:9), portray Palestinians as 'active actors, and view them as a social force,' a perspective that, according to Suleiman (2006:3) is still rare. Such attention for Palestinians as governance actors, can be an alternative to the often reductionist refugee frame (Bakewell, 2008; Erni, 2012:8) – I return to this issue later.

My articles do not straightforwardly 'tell the predicament of those [Palestinians] living in Lebanon in order to urge a solution for their displacement' (Martin, 2011:242), but they do, at another level, contribute to revealing and critically interrogating the structures, mechanisms and processes that produce and reproduce Palestinian marginalization (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014:6). Such testifying took a more direct and explicit

form in my weblog entries. In fact, I included one of these (titled 'The "Why" of Doing Research and the Lures of Narcissism, Snobbism and Megalomania') integrally in Annex 3, because I cannot express my position on expectations, representations and impact more accurately than I did in this piece in 2014.

In my weblog, I often discussed issues that were pertinent or acute to my respondents but did not fit the specific framework of my actual research.[98] The same goes for my op-ed pieces in *Jadaliyya*, *De Volkskrant*, *De Groene Amsterdammer, The Washington Post* and *The Broker*.[99] As I will further elaborate on in the section outlining my findings and contributions, I am critical regarding the desirability (or even possibility) for policy impact in the sense of offering 'recommendations' for 'experts' (Kosmatopoulos, 2011, 2014b; Klem, 2012:118). The political positioning displayed throughout this synthesis and in the non-academic outputs of my research mentioned just now, however, allow me to take responsibility for conveying my respondents' anticipations in other ways.[100]

[98] This 'giving voice' was most evident in the following entries: 'The Palestinians Again… The Bad PR of Protracted Victimhood,' in which I discuss the protracted corruption of continued historical victimization; 'From FIFA to GAZA: Ramadan Kareem?' that deals with the trauma of the 2014 Israeli attack on Gaza; 'The Clash Between Generations Revisited,' in which I establish my solidarity with the critical Palestinian youth movements in Lebanon; 'Please Tell Your People We're Not Terrorists' that conveys people's frustration with their negative profiling as Arabs and Muslims; and 'Life and Law in Limbo,' in which I bring to attention the consequences of looming evictions in the gatherings (see Annex 2). This last entry is also an attempt to come to terms with the frustration of not being able (or willing) to interfere on behalf of the people whose stories of despair feature so prominently in my academic research at a time when they faced existential threats.

[99] See Annex 4.

[100] The issue of giving voice to respondents also raises the question to what extent it is ethical to be critical of a structurally victimized community, no matter the corruption and authoritarianism of their leaders and their complicity in the community's marginalization. As Sukarieh and Tannock (2013:12) illustrate, the uncovering of any disagreeable tenet in governance by Palestinians in the diaspora is often seized upon to discredit the viability of a Palestinian state (see also Landau, 2014:147). My opinion pieces gave me the opportunity to preclude such disingenuous applications of my findings.

Limitations

I think it is good practice to report not only findings and contributions, but failings and problems as well (Martin, 2011:41). There are several blind spots and shortcomings of my research as presented in this dissertation that need to be acknowledged. Many of these offer important clues for future research as well. For one, I hardly discussed the security domain of governance, which has become a veritable 'elephant in the room' throughout my dissertation (Traboulsi, 2015). Already early on in the research, I decided to exclude the security dimension from my research. I did so not because it was empirically or theoretically irrelevant. In fact, the security interactions between Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors might be the most significant type of interaction there is (Sayigh, 2011:56) – even though this is less evident in the gatherings where Palestinian actors are unarmed.

It soon became clear, however, that discussing matters related to the Lebanese police or army or the armed wings of Palestinian parties (let alone approach their representatives for interviews) would endanger respondents and compromise my research.[101] While a committed researcher should not give up when the going gets tough, I decided that, considering the seemingly endless amount of relevant and interesting non-security related vignettes, feasibility should trump principle in this regard. A positive side-effect, moreover, is that this decision has prevented my research from contributing to the problematic 'securitization' of the refugee 'file' in Lebanon (Raffonelli, 2004).

Another issue that many observers would find problematic is my lack of attention for 'the people,' the residents of the gatherings. This was a matter of theoretical demarcation. From the start, my research has focused on the interactions among governance actors, not between governance actors and their constituents. This choice stemmed from my conviction that this was more pertinent in a conceptual sense (as explained in the section on theoretical debates) as well as in an empirical way (considering that the

[101] Exploring the material resources – money, weapons, real estate – of governance actors was similarly beyond the scope of this research, partly because these were also too sensitive for me to explore.

'community focus' is dominant in studies on Lebanon's Palestinians).[102] Moreover, I do touch on the implications of governance interaction for the residents of the gatherings in my articles and in this synthesis.

Indeed, the current indirect, informal, irregular and asymmetrical governance interaction in the gatherings has governance actors preoccupied with each other rather than with constituencies. Bottom-up pressure does seem to be a core incentive for Palestinian actors to engage with Lebanese to get things done. Yet, the way in which they go about it is often dictated by top-down party orders or horizontal power struggles with competitors. Lebanese governance actors are eager to gain (electoral) support from the few Palestinian communities that have gained Lebanese nationality, as well as from their Lebanese constituencies that value commitment of 'the Palestinian cause' through supporting the Palestinian people (but always under the assurance that it will not constitute *tawteen*, 'integration'). Nevertheless, their governance modus operandi is decisively influenced by their prioritization of getting the support of the Palestinian (armed) groups (Khalili, 2007; Knudsen, 2011).

A third major limitation of my dissertation is that it overwhelmingly focuses on the Palestinian side of the governance spectrum even though my main aim is to capture governance *interaction*. While I have extensively interviewed a wide array of Lebanese governance actors, I lived in a Palestinian community and have explored the characteristics and conduct of Palestinian governance actors in far more detail than that of their Lebanese counterparts.[103] This is partly the result of practical considerations: my limited amount of fieldwork time did not allow for the dual time investment needed to build rapport with Palestinian and Lebanese social communities.

[102] On the other hand, Sayigh (2011:57) notes that 'the people of the camps have been viewed by scholars primarily through the frame of dominant institutions,' such as UNRWA, the government and the PLO (see also Bakewell, 2008:435). However, with a focus on organizations and institutions and authorities, I do not seek to downgrade the self-organizing capacity or agency of camp (or gathering) communities, but rather to provide a better context to analyze them in.

[103] Although I recently did write a piece for *Jadaliyya* about the institution of the *mukhtar* (Stel, 2015b; see Annex 4).

It is also a consequence of conceptual and methodological deliberations. My empirical vantage point for this research has been the institutional space of the gathering and my interest has been the extent to which the authorities governing this space relate to Lebanese local governance dynamics. From the beginning, I have assumed that this is where the potential innovation of my research would lie, because there was hardly any academic work on the gatherings and quite a lot on Lebanese local governance. In addition, my explanatory focus did put a premium on Lebanese governance, identifying the specific dynamics and institutional functioning of the Lebanese state as a key determinant for the governance interactions that I described.

The Articles

Palestinian refugees and refugee camps have figured prominently as objects of Lebanese state discourses (Czajka, 2012:238).

The above sections have set the stage for the five articles that constitute the body of my dissertation. The next section consists of these articles and is followed by the second part of my synthesis which explicates the overarching findings and contributions that the articles, taken together, convey.

The five articles presented here are a selection from the larger number of articles and papers I published and presented on the hybrid political order in which Lebanon's Palestinians govern and are governed (that are listed in Annex 4).[104] I included the five articles that follow, and not the others, in my dissertation because they depart from and contribute to answering the same overarching research question. They also draw on the same empirical material, although some articles focus exclusively on Shabriha and others discuss findings from Shabriha and Qasmiye both and although different articles highlight different vignettes. All articles furthermore have the same sensitizing frame, as outlined in my methodology section, underlying them. While they use different explanatory frameworks – ranging from the mediated state, to the negotiating statehood and the twilight institution – these all can be considered part of the larger hybrid political order school.

More concretely, the articles – with the exception of article one – explore a specific mode of governance, in each case by means of a different

[104] The articles published in *Conflict, Security and Development* (Stel and Van der Molen, 2015) and in the *Journal of Refugee Studies* (Yassin et al., 2016) (see Annex 4) are both quite relevant to my main question as well, but draw on analytical models that are more difficult to integrate with my larger analytical approach (in the case of the *Conflict, Security and Development* article) or empirical material beyond my own case-study (in the case of the *Journal of Refugee Studies* article). For these reasons, I have not included them in my final dissertation.

analytical tool associated with the hybrid political order school. Article two focuses on the aspect of (in)directness and seeks to analyze this indirectness through the concept of the mediated state. Article three zooms in on the dimension of (in)equality or (a)symmetry and theorizes this by way of the negotiating statehood concept. Article four addresses the issue of (in)formality through the concept of twilight institutions. Article five deals with the component of (ir)regularity through the notion of agnotology – a concept that goes beyond the hybrid political order school, but, with ambiguity, multiplicity and fluidity as central themes, is ontologically related to it.

1. Stel, N.M. and G. Frerks (2013) 'Review Essay: Lebanon – The Challenge of Moving Governance Analysis Beyond the State,' *Middle East Policy,* 20(1): 163-174.

The first of my selected articles is the only article that has no empirical core, but instead takes the format of a review essay. Its purpose, however, is to explore the utility of various conceptual approaches and agendize a specific theoretical debate rather than to merely provide a content-related discussion of the reviewed books. The essay offers a tentative engagement with my main interests and concepts and sets the parameters for my later, more in-depth, discussions on governance, state, public authority and non-state governance actors. In the broader context of my dissertation, as such, the essay has four core functions. First, it introduces post-war Lebanon as a potentially relevant case and, through the review, demonstrates that this potential has yet to be tapped into significantly. Building on this, second, the essay investigates and demonstrates the concrete limitations of a Weberian lens on governance. At the same time, third, the essay already makes clear why 'the state' matters even, or especially, if one is interested in governance beyond the state. Preliminary attempts of rendering 'the state' researchable by approaching it as both idea and institution permeate the essay and anchor, fourth, what would become my main analytical tools.

2. Stel, N.M. (2015) 'Lebanese-Palestinian Governance Interaction in the Palestinian Gathering of Shabriha, South Lebanon – A Tentative Extension of the 'Mediated State' from Africa to the Mediterranean,' *Mediterranean Politics,* 20(1): 76-96.

Together with the fourth article, my second article most straightforwardly engages with my overarching research question. The article focuses on one specific element of governance interaction in Shabriha, its indirectness, and seeks to explain this through applying the lens of the mediated state. In a very concrete manner, the article outlines how the Popular Committee in Shabriha needs the Lebanese state for matters of security and welfare because the gatherings are plagued by a relative absence (and lack of commitment) of UNRWA, NGOs and Palestinian parties. Lebanese state institutions, on the other hand, need the Popular Committee because they cannot do without an interlocutor if they are to maintain a form of (indirect) rule. The article shows, however, that such interaction cannot take a direct form because the Lebanese government does not recognize the Popular Committees as official representatives of the gatherings. From the perspective of the Popular Committees, moreover, the Lebanese state is fragmented and fails to convey a coherent counterpart. Thus, mediation is needed and Lebanese political parties have both the means and incentives to broker this mediation. In exploring the role and nature of these political parties as the channel between the Palestinians and the state, the article demonstrates how Lebanese parties, which function as amalgamated state *and* non-state actors, are central to upholding the institutional structure of the Lebanese state. This logic in turn underpins the patterns of Lebanese-Palestinian governance interaction mediated by political parties that can be observed in Shabriha.

3. Stel, N.M. (2015) '"The Children of the State?" How Palestinians from the Seven Villages Negotiate Sect, Party and State in Lebanon,' *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies,* 42(4): 538-557.

The third of my selected articles is most strikingly the odd one out as it takes an explicitly historical perspective. Yet, in essence, this article pertains to the governance dimension of (in)equality and (a)symmetry as,

through a juxtaposition of refugees and citizens, it investigates the resources of stateness that some governance actors can tap into and others cannot. By employing the negotiating statehood framework, the article explores governance actors' access to the resources related to the state system. The article documents the naturalization process of the people living in the 'Lebanese' part of Shabriha. This community hails from a village called Salha that is currently in Israel, but before that was included in Greater Lebanon. In particular, it analyzes their administrative manoeuvring and bureaucratic savvy in negotiating their simultaneous access to and independence from the Lebanese state. These explorations of how governance is shaped by attempts not merely to engage with the state, but also to create and maintain distance from it contribute to the negotiating statehood frame. The 'processes of negotiation, contestation and bricolage' that are central to Hagmann and Péclard's concept may not only be about influencing or challenging the state system, but about evading it as well.

4. Stel, N.M. (2016) 'Languages of Stateness in South Lebanon's Palestinian Gatherings: The PLO's Popular Committees as Twilight Institutions,' *Development and Change*, 47(3): 446-471.

Together with the second article, on which it builds and whose claims it sophisticates, this article most explicitly lays down my main thesis. The article starts out from the (in)formality component of governance interaction between Palestinian Popular Committees and Lebanese state institutions. It explains the mostly personal and undocumented interactions between them by conceptualizing the Popular Committees as twilight institutions. In this undertaking, the article addresses several intertwined questions. It sets out to explore how non-state public authorities such as the Popular Committees rule in light of the fact that they lack resources, capacities and popular legitimacy. Arguing that much of the answer to this query lies in the Popular Committees' engagement with 'stateness,' the article then explores how this engagement takes shape and establishes the ways in which the Popular Committees 'mirror' particular state ideas and systems. Positioning themselves in a gatekeeper position between their constituencies and the Lebanese state and other

service providers is perhaps the main governance trait that the Popular Committees have taken over from their Lebanese counterparts. This article is most explicit in showing what governance interaction actually is and does. It proposes that governance interaction consists of both interaction with a state system and emulation of state ideas and systems. This, subsequently, enables a reflection on what such coordination with and emulation of state institutions indicates about non-state as well as state authorities.

5. Stel, N.M. (2016) 'The Agnotology of Eviction in South Lebanon's Palestinian Gatherings. How Institutional Ambiguity and Deliberate Ignorance Shape Sensitive Spaces,' *Antipode*, 48(5): 1400-1419.

My fifth article does not so much diverge from my overarching research question as it goes beyond it. It engages with a different conceptual framework that revolves around the notion of agnotology. Departing from the (ir)regularity aspect of governance interaction and building on the eviction vignettes studied in both Shabriha and Qasmiye, this article takes a meta-perspective and shifts attention to the structuring logics behind interactions. The article's main thesis is that to evade forced eviction, residents of the gatherings engage in deliberate disinformation and stalling tactics and invoke both a professed and real ignorance about their situation. In contrast to dominant discourses that project Palestinian refugees as illicit and sovereignty-undermining, the article explains these tactics as a reaction to, and duplication of, a 'politics of uncertainty' that is implemented by Lebanese authorities. Reconsidering the gatherings as sensitive spaces that are subjected to aleatory governance, it is proposed that residents' responses to the looming evictions are a manifestation of the deliberate institutional ambiguity that Lebanese authorities impose on the gatherings. This institutional ambiguity, the article contents, is an intentional disciplinary technique rather than a contingency of governance deficits. It is put in place and maintained by Lebanese governments with the complicity of Palestinian political leaders and takes the form of a deliberate 'no-policy-policy' that allows the state system to control these spaces without investment and accountability.

Book Reviews

Review Essay: Lebanon — The Challenge of Moving Analysis beyond the State

Spoils of Truce: Corruption and State-Building in Postwar Lebanon, by Reinoud Leenders. Cornell University Press, 2012. 312 pages. $45.00, hardcover.

The Lebanese Connection: Corruption, Civil War and the International Drug Traffic, by Jonathan Marshall. Stanford University Press, 2012. 272 pages. $35.00, hardcover.

Lebanon: The Politics of a Penetrated Society, by Tom Najem. Routledge, 2012. 176 pages. $44.95, paperback.

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In many countries, governance — the provision of security, welfare and representation — is not a prerogative of the state alone. Besides the usual NGOs, firms and lobbies, "non-state-governance actors" have the means and ambition to provide constituencies in specific areas with security (through regulating the internal use of force and offering protection from external threats), welfare (through social and utility services) and political representation (through institutions for feedback and consultation). Such non-state actors have intricate and often ambiguous relations with state institutions, resulting in complex and contested governance dynamics.

As a response to the academically unsatisfying fragile/failed-states paradigm, the social sciences developed several concepts to address non-state governance.[1] For the purpose of this review, the most noteworthy among these are the "hybrid political order,"[2] the "twilight institution"[3] and the "mediated state."[4]

In Lebanon, with its variety of sectarian organizations providing extensive governance beyond government,[5] this enables fruitful cross-fertilization between empirical accounts and theoretical discussions of statehood and governance. However, this potential has been only marginally fulfilled in the most recent English-language monographs about the Lebanese state. Tom Najem's historical account is about Lebanese state

formation but ignores theoretical debates on statehood and governance, instead using a rich collection of undefined concepts to deal with political orders and systems.[6] Reinoud Leenders's political-science study deals with state-society relations but indirectly, via the analysis of corruption, which he sees as a proxy for such relations.[7] Jonathan Marshall's political-economy analysis of Lebanon's drug business provides food for thought on the economic aspects of non-state governance, but ultimately focuses on the bankruptcy of state governance.

We do not aim to criticize books for not being something they never intended to be, and we are aware of the fact that non-state governance is not the central concern of the reviewed works. Our observations should therefore be seen as a contribution to the academic conversation on hybrid governance rather than as a criticism of the books as such.

Najem and Leenders themselves note the remarkable lack of academic analysis on the Lebanese state in the post-civil-war period. Leenders laments the "virtual absence of the state in the study of Lebanese politics," even if there "are fierce political battles over the role of the state."[8] Aiming to address the "weaknesses and dynamics of the Lebanese state," Najem too sets out to fill a "conspicuous gap in the existing academic literature on Lebanon."[9] Even Marshall, albeit to a lesser extent, aims to "shed light on the causes of […] state failure."[10] Indeed, while many renowned works discuss the Lebanese state, most are concerned with the formation of the Lebanese state and the 1975-90 civil war and its immediate aftermath,[11] and few publications focus explicitly on the Lebanese state in the post-war period.[12] Overall, as Leenders recapitulates, the account of the Lebanese state is mostly either normative — as apparent in the discourse on Lebanon's "weak state" and its opposite, a (strong) "state of institutions"[13] — or depoliticized and technical – as in World Bank-inspired managerial, legalistic and administrative approaches to state reform.[14]

We argue that such conceptual lack of interest in the state obscures the analysis of governance beyond it. By not defining the state more deeply, one assumes it encompasses all governance, which neither does justice to Lebanese reality nor provides a solid basis for engagement with Lebanese governance actors.

The Fragile State as a Default Mode

Through a meticulous investigation of corruption in several public institutions, Leenders dissects the (dys)function of the Lebanese state. Inspired by New Institutional Economics, he shows how Lebanese politicians systematically design, divert and circumvent policies in ways that fill their own pockets, serve their own interests and undermine state capacity and legitimacy.

Leenders's main explanation for such systemic "high" corruption is these state institutions' deviations from the "essential criteria associated with bureaucratic organization derived from its Weberian ideal type."[15] This ideal-type state is governed by procedures and regulations with external checks and controls and a strict separation of public office from private interest. Through scrupulous empirical analysis, Leenders demonstrates how ambiguous mandates and ill-defined procedures, often characterized by "permanent temporariness and exceptionality," facilitate endemic corruption by paralyzing state watchdogs and interlocking the public and private sectors.

For Leenders, this failure to meet basic bureaucratic criteria is inherent in Lebanon's post-war political settlement. He identifies five aspects thereof that undermine Weberian standards: quasi-permanent deadlock stemming from high levels of inclusiveness and extreme dispersal of power; institutional elitism and a politics of apportionment; continual circumvention of the stalemates of the formal political arrangement; weak popular support for elites and concurrent further confessionalization of politics; and Syrian manipulation.[16]

Leenders studies corruption not as a practice in itself but as a "window into the nature of Lebanon's post-war state."[17] While adopting corruption as a way to explore "what constituted the Lebanese state and where its boundaries with society were to be drawn," however, Leenders seems to partly fall into the same trap as those he criticizes for ignoring the state. He does not conceptualize "the state," which remains an ever-present, yet ephemeral, notion throughout the book.[18]

In our reading of Leenders, the state seems to be a collection of public institutions, part of an overarching bureaucracy that is conceptualized in opposition to the private sector.[19] It is not clear what the theoretical relations between the "state" and the "bureaucracy" are or how the "state" and the "political system" relate to each other conceptually. The state is deployed as an aggregated actor with agency — apparent in phrases like "the state could not take responsibility"; "the deal between the state and Solidere"; and "the state was now seriously addressing importers' malpractices."[20] At the same time, the state is never actually identified as more than the sum of its parts (the state institutions Leenders is primarily interested in).

This lack of conceptual clarity is remarkable in light of Leenders's astute analysis of the importance of the "idea" of the state.[21] He argues that "the failure of bureaucratic institution-building" in Lebanon far from implies that the state is insignificant for analyses of Lebanese politico-institutional development. Paradoxically, because of the porous boundaries between public and private institutions, the state might well be "all-important" in determining access to resources and opportunities: "without the notion of bureaucratic organization, there would have been no proceeds from manipulating it."[22] Leenders persuasively shows how politicians need and use the administrative capacity and authoritative back-up of the very institutions they undermine to pursue their interests.[23]

Yet Leenders's framework also suggests an apparent exceptionalism of corruption. The overlap between public and private is not merely seen as undesirable, it is also seen as deviating from a specific standard. However, this Weberian ideal does not reflect the majority of prevailing state organizations and is hardly a historical standard in Lebanon. Leenders acknowledges this, and he is right in arguing that the ideal nature of the criteria does not prevent them from shedding light on the causes of corruption in Lebanon. But the omission of alternative views on the state, state-society relations, public authority and bureaucracy that are less traditionally Western and state-centered, is striking. Leenders sees institutional disarray as deliberately generated and pursued by politicians seeking to benefit from this.[24] As such, he is well aware of the intentional nature of the dysfunctional state apparatus. Yet his insistence on seeing corruption as the dysfunction or failure of one system (the Weberian bureaucracy) obscures how corruption is also the function or success of another system. It is that other system that needs explication. In an empirical sense, Leenders provides this, but theoretical underpinning is largely absent.

Marshall is predominantly interested in dissecting the origins, workings and consequences of Lebanon's drug economy. He is convinced that "the hidden history of Lebanon's drug trade fills an important gap in the traditional story of its recent political and socioeconomic development."[25] He offers a nuanced account of the ways in which Lebanon's drug economy affects its political economy and vice versa and how this process both lengthened and dampened the civil war.[26]

While the core topic of Marshall's book is not related to state or non-state governance, Marshall does seek to "better understand the complex impact of vast drug wealth on political realignments and civil-state relations."[27] The "state" features throughout the book and reveals itself, in the concluding chapter, tellingly titled "From Narco-state to Failed State," as one of its main explanatory notions. Whether Marshall seeks to explore how Lebanon's state institutions have facilitated its drug business, or whether he is more interested in how drugs "are critical to understanding the dynamics of the modern state," remains obscured by the truism that "the ballooning drug trade was both a cause and a consequence of state failure in Lebanon."[28]

Nevertheless, Marshall clearly sees Lebanon not merely as a state whose citizens are involved in drugs, but as a "narco-state." He quotes experts who claim that "the Lebanese government is in the narcotic business."[29] Indeed, it is the "narco" or "shadow"[30] character of the state that allowed the rise of "quasi-states"[31] and ensured Lebanon's eventual degeneration into a "failed state." Marshall even uses the term "ravaged state," stressing the importance of foreign intervention to both Lebanon's drug economy and its state failure.[32] Ultimately, however, Marshall seems unable to substantiate the exact relations between these variations on state fragility because he hardly defines them.

He paints a picture of a vicious triangle from Lebanon's political system to its corruption to its drug economy.[33] Time and again he links the marginalization,[34] fragmentation[35] and breakdown of the legitimacy and authority[36] of the state and central government[37] to the flourishing of Lebanon's drug economy. While it may ultimately be the relationship between drugs and war that proves Marshall's main interest,[38] he suggests it is the disintegration of state institutions that provides the link.[39] The drug economy, Marshall argues, "helped create temporary substitutes for the state."[40] Indeed, in his celebration of General Aoun's 1989 attack on "racketeering enterprises and illegal drug ports" as "the rehabilitation — or reinvention — of Lebanon's state," Marshall seems to causally link "state weakness" with "drug strength."[41]

Yet, despite Marshall's proclaimed interest in the nature and operation of the Lebanese state and its relations with the drug business, there is no definition, theory or analytical strategy to be found in his book to approach the state either as a concept or as an institution. This ultimately makes Marshall's conclusions on relations between the rise and fall of Lebanon's drug economy and the waning and waxing of state strength rather intuitive.

Najem's book is devoted to the study of the causes, consequences and interrelationships of three "systemic weaknesses" of Lebanon's political system: sectarian tensions, external penetration and state weakness. Through a historical analysis of Lebanese state formation, Najem delivers a solid overview of Lebanese politico-institutional development. However, he fails to conceptualize, theorize or define what it is he talks about when discussing "a" or "the" state; though it is the main topic of his book. Nowhere does he

elaborate on core concepts such as "society," "state," "government," "state institutions," "authorities," "civil service," "the political system" or "political order," terms seemingly used interchangeably.

The state is seen as structure and actor at the same time, and it remains unclear what or who constitutes the state. This confusion is palpable when Najem notes, for instance, that "the *zuama* also worked together *within the state* context to prevent *the Lebanese state itself* from becoming too strong and therefore capable of impinging on their own regional power bases."[42] Najem describes a power struggle between "the state" ruled by specific elites and the "zuama," traditional notables and political bosses, in essence constituting the same elites.[43] While the paradoxical simultaneity of these elites as both state representatives and state opponents does not do injustice to the "reality" of Lebanese politics,[44] such observations, lacking an analytical framework, confound rather than elucidate.

This also affects the comprehension of the causal relations between Najem's three systemic weaknesses. The former two (sectarian tensions and foreign penetrations) appear to describe the latter (state weakness): state weakness is sectarian tensions and foreign penetration and vice versa. Occasional reference is made to notions such as functionality, distributional capacity and legitimacy, but these too are not defined.[45] In light of the overarching emphasis on the importance of the state's capacity to resist foreign penetration and internal elite encroachment, it seems to be the traditional Weberian notion of state sovereignty that is the single most important characteristic of the ideal strong state, as opposed to the described weak Lebanese state.

At the same time, Najem takes "consociationalism" as the political system against which he evaluates the Lebanese state.[46] The proper functioning of consociational democracies is dependent on four prerequisites: clear communal boundaries, elite coordination, balance of power and a relatively low "total load on the system." In essence, Najem equates the state with the political system, resulting in a circular logic. He implies that a strong state is a sovereign state (free from sectarian-elite encroachment and foreign penetration), and that such state strength can, in Lebanon, be achieved through consociational democracy. This consociational democracy, however, will only function (that is, result in state strength) if it fulfills the four stated prerequisites, which it does not because the state is weak. Thus, the state is weak because the political system does not function, and the political system does not function because the state is weak. The consociational democracy notion here reinstates itself as a prescriptive policy proposition and reveals its limitations in serving as an explanatory framework.[47]

Najem creates welcome linkages between pre-war, war and post-war Lebanese politics, proposing an analytical continuity often absent from the bulk of literature on Lebanon that focuses on specific historical periods.[48] The lack of conceptualization of state, society and political system does not undermine the book's value in this regard. But Najem's taking for granted of the state manifests a broader phenomenon, noted in different guises by Leenders and Marshall: analyzing the Lebanese state according to Weberian benchmarks, and thereby slipping into the fragile-state paradigm. With his coining of the term "penetrated state," for instance, Najem seems to be adding yet another (dis)qualifying prefix to the word "state:" semi, quasi, failed, weak and fragile.[49] Like other manifestations of the fragile-state paradigm, Najem's approach hides specific elements of Lebanese political

life from view. Not critically engaging with the academic concept of the state precludes an engagement with any particular empirical manifestation of "statehood."

The Elusiveness of Politics and Governance beyond the State

The simultaneous centrality and indistinctness of the Lebanese state in the reviewed books partly stems from a narrow approach to the state as being concerned with overall organization and regulation. *What* is actually organized and regulated seems of only secondary interest. This obscures the role of non-state actors in such organization, regulation and provision. Approaching Lebanon as a more hybrid governance arena connects the state with other societal actors.[50] An exclusive focus on one actor — the state — without taking into account the activity — governance — with which it is concerned, limits one's view of how other actors constitute and shape the state. In the reviewed works this is predominantly a matter of conceptualization, as all authors duly recognize the empirical significance of non-state governance actors — even if they do not theorize this significance.

Leenders recognizes the fluidity of statehood, for instance, in noting that "many could speak in its [the Ministry of Transport's] name, but no one was held ultimately responsible for what happened there."[51] Yet he does not seem to follow up on the implications of such fluidity beyond what it means for bureaucratic organization. His assertion that the ideal distinction between public (office) and private (interest) is not satisfyingly implemented in Lebanon suffices for an analysis of corruption. However, regarding Leenders's self-proclaimed ambition to talk about the state, a further conceptualization of the non-state/non-public is called for. This, we suggest, requires connecting the problematic "non-state" in the corruption assessment — the politicians-cum-businessmen who undermine state bureaucratic organization by furthering private interests with public means — with the other "non-state" actors so prevalent in Lebanon: the religious authorities, sectarian leaders, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), civil-society organizations (CSOs) and lobbies.

Several components in Leenders's book would lend themselves especially well to this exercise. His pungent analysis of Solidere presents the real-estate initiative reconstructing downtown Beirut as neither a completely public nor an entirely private entity. "Only by balancing on the threshold between the public and the private sectors could Hariri and his associates apply the power of the state to enforce the scheme while simultaneously keeping a safe distance from the political settlement."[52] Thus, the notion of the state as a public institution was indispensable for Solidere to accomplish its principally private aims. These aims were pursued through an institutional design that "defied a clear distinction between the state and the private sector."[53]

Yet Leenders's Weberian reference frame ultimately dictates the overlap between state and society as a political problem, rather than a social given. As a result, there is little appreciation for the ways in which non-state institutions pick up where state institutions fail. Who, if not the state, provides health care to the Lebanese? Who takes care of the displaced? Who manages the Beirut harbor? Analyzing why the state cannot do its job would be (even) more worthwhile when coupled with an enquiry of who, then, is doing this job the state fails to do.

Marshall's detailed study of the Lebanese drug economy shows the significance of non-state governance in a different way. Marshall recognizes that "drug rents are best

extracted by either corrupt states or quasi-state organizations with de facto control over wide areas" and notes that "illicit profits enriched traditional elites and strengthened their patronage power at the expense of modern state institutions."[54] He shows how drugs provided the "country's resource-hungry militia with the means to afford huge purchases of foreign arms and fat payrolls, as well as to maintain civil order and administer basic services within their ministates,"[55] and how clans from the various Lebanese sectarian communities traditionally making up Lebanon's political class and delivering its statesmen overlapped neatly with the cartels running drug production and trade.[56] While not explicated, Marshall's elaborate discussions of the various international "connections" — mostly through the Palestinian camps and French, Syrian and Israeli occupation forces — constitute another form of non-state (transnational) governance.

Despite his lack of theorization, Marshall uses a distinct discourse in seeking to understand the governance of the drug economy. Where Leenders and Najem have a predominantly institutional approach, focusing on organizations and structures, Marshall deals with networks and persons and relationships.[57] This choice is no doubt pragmatic, but it also highlights the pertinence of the informal in (social, economic or political) governance and provides a potential link to more hybrid theories of statehood and governance. The network perspective resonates with the idea of mediated governance, as mutually shared interests of the drug trade often result in "fruitful collaboration among people of diverse, feuding religions."[58] On the other hand, the personalized nature of the drug economy raises a question: to what extent a separation can be made between individuals and organizations? Marshall recognizes this matter with regard to the PLO's role in the drug economy, wondering whether Palestinians were "operating as criminals on their own behalf or as representatives of their organization."[59] This issue, however, concerns all actors involved in the Lebanese "drug melting pot," a reality Marshall fails to satisfactorily address.[60]

Najem, too, makes ample reference to non-state actors in the form of zuama and the political parties built around them.[61] He mentions that "the sectarian zuama continued to be effectively autonomous actors and to wield most of the real power in Lebanese society," but subsequently seems content to focus on the non-power of the state rather than substantiating the power of the non-state.[62] In fact, he acknowledges that, while "the sectarian elites still exercised massive influence in Lebanese political life,…much of this was informal and difficult to explore in detail."[63] Difficult as it may be, as Leenders and Marshall show, this informal political influence seems the crux of a significant analysis of politics, the state and governance in Lebanon.

Apart from the zuama, Najem addresses another category of non-state actors, which he calls "extra-institutional elements." He rightfully states that "no account of the 1990-2005 postwar Lebanese system would be complete without considering the important role that certain elements operating outside of the formal institutional context played in the political life of the society."[64] He refers to religious and sociocultural leaders, most notably the Maronite patriarch, Shiite religious authorities and diaspora communities. In addition, there is some fleeting attention to "quasi-state organizations" such as the Council of the South.[65] His treatment of "extra-institutional elements," however, suffers from many of the same limitations discussed for the zuama.

Najem describes his third category of non-state actors as states-within-the-state (with

reference to the PLO, the Christian war-time militias and "Hezbollah-controlled parts of Lebanon") that constitute a major manifestation of and cause for "state weakness."[66] Unfortunately, he abstains from devoting attention to the development and functioning of these entities in a way that could shed light on their connections to and overlap with state governance. While Najem mentions the rise of wartime militia leaders as new elites who in some communities replaced or sidelined traditional zuama, little attention is devoted to the on-the-ground governance activities that underlie much of their influence in the post-war political system.[67]

Several concepts have been developed in the social sciences to grasp the phenomenon of non-state governance. Most notable here are the "hybrid political order" as a macro-level counter-paradigm for the fragile-state model in non-Western settings and the "twilight institution" and "mediated state" that offer a more applied perspective. Volker Boege et al. were among the first to not only criticize the failed-state paradigm but also suggest an alternative frame of reference: the hybrid political order.[68] They argue that while institutions and governance might be necessary for peace, security and development, these need not be *state* institutions and governance. The word hybrid is meant to reveal a "situation of co-existence, overlap, and blending" to counter views of clearly distinguishable state or non-state (or public versus private or civil) institutions and organizations.[69] This highlights the state as one of several reference points for governance. It is a clear opposition to the normative dominance the state is awarded in Weberian assessments. Marshall's case study of the governance of the Lebanese drug economy provides a striking but unrecognized case in point.

Kraushaar and Lambach herald the hybrid concept as adding value because of its non-state-centrism, its agnosticism about the effectiveness of governance, its rejection of essentialism and teleology, and its comprehensiveness.[70] Najem's book, with its interest in both state and society, would be served by this broader and more critical perspective of governance arenas. Leenders's account of corruption perhaps does not directly demand it, but his interest in public-private overlaps could do with more theoretical nuance.

Lund coined the term "twilight institution" to connote the exercising of public authority in the conceptual and practical space between state and non-state. He approaches the state as consisting of idea and institution. His attention to the "idea" of the state explicates a central paradox in the study of the state in many non-Western settings: the omnipotence of the idea of the state versus the weakness of its institutions. The concept of twilight institutions renders visible the fact that even the non- or anti-state presents itself with reference to the state. The idea of a powerful state with an intention and a higher rationality is a construct both the institutional state (represented by the government) and twilight institutions depend upon to legitimize their governance.[71]

Leenders breaks down the fiction of a unitary and rational state particularly well. His analysis of institutionalized corruption provides rare empirical evidence of exactly how a multifaceted and internally riven state apparatus can emerge and endure. His specific descriptions are often perfect illustrations of twilight institutions. Yet Leenders apparently lacks an interest in conceptually following up on this. Najem skillfully uncovers tensions between official and unofficial institutions in Lebanese politics and draws out the resultant problems.[72] However, he does not go beyond a normative approach to the formal-informal

dichotomy, simply suggesting that further formalization would have made the Lebanese state stronger.[73] His references to tensions between "the actual political process" and the prescribed process are manifold, but his state-centered approach does not allow him to explore the informal side of the coin beyond its contribution to state weakness.[74]

Where the twilight institution emphasizes how many institutions are neither state nor non-state, the mediated-state thesis maintains a basic state/non-state distinction but highlights mutual dependence. Menkhaus is primarily interested in the interactions between governance actors based on partnership (rather than competition or contracting), wherein state institutions enact their authority through non-state organizations, be they traditional or modern.[75] This does not assume an ideological predilection of the state, and mediation should not be equated with outsourcing in a neoliberal privatization sense. Rather, it emerges from an "if you can't beat them, join them" logic.[76] The mediated-state notion would shed light on the relations among sectarian leaders (taking center stage in Najem's analysis), state representatives (central in Leenders) and businessmen (Marshall's focus) in Lebanon. It could help analyze the concurrent cooptation and contestation among "elites" and "the state" that remains unsolved in the reviewed works.

In short, the above concepts are useful to a further analysis of Lebanese statehood and governance in three main ways. First, they help to conceptually break down the dichotomies of public and private, state and society, formal and informal and traditional and modern. Second, they move analysis away from the somewhat ahistorical and decontextualized Weberian perspective. Third, they permit scholars to systematically adopt a more comprehensive perspective by focusing on many different governance actors, rather than limiting themselves to just one (the "state").

Conclusion

Leenders provides an unprecedentedly consistent and lucid analysis, not only of the "how" of Lebanese corruption, but also of its "why." High corruption is in many ways the hub of Lebanese politico-institutional life, and Leenders is perhaps the first to actually engage with the elephant in the room of Lebanese political analysis. Najem's work, more modest in ambition, offers an accessible overview of Lebanese state formation, a welcome addition to the more specified recent works. Marshall offers a uniquely applied insight into the economic aspects of governance relations, stressing the significance of the sidelining of state institutions by informal networks.

On another level, however, these books are further additions to the already extensive literature about what is not working in Lebanon. What seems the really pertinent question is how Lebanese society is governed — by state and non-state institutions — beyond the (failing) façade of the national sovereign. A state-centered, fragility-oriented paradigm inherently cannot offer the perspective needed to address this. In light of the conceptual developments in the field of governance in hybrid political orders, the conclusion of state weakness need no longer be the end of the story. Instead, it can be the beginning of an analysis that addresses what (state and non-state) governance does take place in situations of state "weakness."

A cross-fertilization between observations and theories of state-society interaction would not only enhance our understanding of Lebanese politics; it might substantially

contribute to the development of the concepts of hybrid political order, twilight institutions and mediated statehood. Considering that these concepts currently draw heavily on African cases, comparative empirical insights from the Middle East could be particularly valuable. In fact, Christian Lund extends an open invitation "to confront our findings with empirical analyses of other contexts."[77] We would reiterate this invitation to scholars working on Lebanon.

[1] See Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta, "Introduction: Rethinking Theories of the State in an Age of Globalization," in *The Anthropology of the State. A Reader*, Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta, eds. (Blackwell Publishing, 2006); Zachariah C. Mampilly, *Rebel Rulers. Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life during War* (Cornell University Press, 2011); Timothy Raeymaekers, Ken Menkhaus and Koen Vlassenroot, "State and Non-State Regulation in African Protracted Crises: Governance without Government?," *Afrika Focus* 21 (2009): 7-21; and Anne L. Clunan and Harold A. Trinkunas, eds., *Ungoverned Spaces? Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty* (University Press, 2011).

[2] Kevin P. Clements, Volker Boege, Anne Brown, Wendy Foley and Anna Nolan, "State Building Reconsidered: The Role of Hybridity in the Formation of Political Order," *Political Science* 59 (2007): 45-56; and Volker Boege, Anne Brown and Kevin P. Clements, "Hybrid Political Orders, Not Fragile States," *Peace Review* 21 (2009): 13-21.

[3] Christian Lund, "Twilight Institutions: Public Authority and Local Politics in Africa," *Development and Change* 37 (2009): 685-705.

[4] Ken Menkhaus, "Governance without Government in Somalia. Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping," *International Security* 31 (2007): 74-106. See also Tobias Hagmann and Didier Péclard, "Negotiating Statehood: Dynamics of Power and Domination in Africa," *Development and Change* 41 (2010): 539–562.

[5] See Rami G. Khouri, "Lebanon's Parallel Governance," in *Democratic Deficits: Addressing Challenges to Sustainability and Consolidation around the World*, Gary Bland and Cynthia J. Arnson, eds. (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2009), 195-203; Anne-Marie Baylouny, "Authority Outside the State: Non-State Actors and New Institutions in the Middle East," in *Ungoverned Spaces? Alternatives to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty*, Anne L. Clunan and Harold A. Trinkunas, eds. (Stanford University Press, 2011), 101-113; Melani Cammett and Sukriti Issar, "Bricks and Mortar Clientelism: Sectarianism and the Logics of Welfare Allocation in Lebanon," *World Politics* 62 (2010): 381-421; George Corm, "Le centre ville de Beyrouth — Ou est l'état?," *Les Cahiers de l'Orient* 24 (1991): 97-110; Judith Harik, *The Public and Social Services of the Lebanese Militias* (Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1994); and Khalil Gebara and Gaelle Kibranian, "Corruption, State-Building and Communal Strife. The Role of Non-State Actors in Lebanon" (paper presented in the workshop on "Corruption and Reform Initiatives in the Security Sector in the MENA Region," Athens, November 2, 2008).

[6] Tom Najem, *Lebanon: The Politics of a Penetrated Society* (Routledge, 2012).

[7] Reinoud Leenders, *Spoils of Truce. Corruption and State-Building in Postwar Lebanon* (Cornell University Press, 2012), 1.

[8] Ibid., 8.

[9] Tom Najem, *Lebanon: the Politics of a Penetrated Society*, i.

[10] Jonathan V. Marshall, *The Lebanese Connection. Corruption, Civil War, and the International Drug Traffic* (Cornell University Press, 2012), 12.

[11] See Robert Fisk, *Pity the Nation. The Abduction of Lebanon* (Oxford University Press, 1990); Nurit Kliot, *The Territorial Disintegration of a State: The Case of Lebanon* (University of Durham, 1986); Abbas Kelidar, *Lebanon: The Collapse of a State: Regional Dimensions of the Struggle* (Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1976); Albert Hourani, *Political Society in Lebanon: A Historical Introduction* (Center for Lebanese Studies, 1986); Tabitha Petran, *The Struggle for Lebanon* (Monthly Review Press, 1987); Theodor Hanf and Nawaf Salam, eds., *Lebanon in Limbo. Postwar Society and State in an Uncertain Regional Environment* (Nomos

Verlagengesellschaft, 2003); Oren Barak, "Lebanon: Failure, Collapse, and Resuscitation," in *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, Robert I. Rotberg, ed. (Brookings Institution Press, 2003), 305-340; Boaz Atzili, "A Lasting Failure: Fixed Borders and State Weakness in Lebanon" (paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, San Francisco, March 26-29, 2008); Adham Saouli, "Stability under Late State Formation: The Case of Lebanon," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 19 (2006): 701-717; Rania Maktabi, "State Formation and Citizenship in Lebanon: The Politics of Membership and Exclusion in a Sectarian State," in *Citizenship and the State in the Middle East: Approaches and Applications*, Nils A. Butenschon, Uri Davis and Manuel Hassassian, eds. (Syracuse University Press, 2000), 147-179; and Farid El Khazen, *The Breakdown of the State in Lebanon: 1967-1976* (I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2000).

[12] With the exception perhaps of Ali Fayyad, *Fragile States: Dilemmas of Stability in Lebanon and the Arab World* (International NGO Training and Research Centre, 2008); and Theodor Hanf and Nawaf Salam, eds., *Lebanon in Limbo. Postwar Society and State in an Uncertain Regional Environment*; Michelle Obeid, "Searching for the 'Ideal Face of the State' in a Lebanese Border Town," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 16 (2010): 330-346.

[13] See Guilain Denoeux and Robert Springborg, "Hariri's Lebanon: Singapore of the Middle East or Sanaa of the Levant?," *Middle East Policy* 6 (1998): 158-173.

[14] Reinoud Leenders, *Spoils of Truce. Corruption and State-Building in Postwar Lebanon*, 235-237.

[15] Ibid., 223.

[16] Ibid., 224.

[17] Ibid., 231.

[18] Ibid., 231.

[19] Ibid., 13.

[20] Ibid., 107, 114, 184.

[21] Ibid., 116, 129, 121, 143, 207.

[22] Ibid., 231.

[23] Ibid., 220.

[24] Ibid., 179.

[25] Jonathan V. Marshall, *The Lebanese Connection. Corruption, Civil War, and the International Drug Traffic*, 164.

[26] Ibid., 166-167.

[27] Ibid., 173.

[28] Ibid., 163, 169.

[29] Ibid., 2, 78.

[30] Ibid., 12.

[31] Ibid., 12.

[32] Ibid., 173.

[33] Ibid., 164.

[34] Ibid., 164.

[35] Ibid., 103, 107.

[36] Ibid., 165, 15.

[37] Ibid., 166, 89.

[38] As suggested on page 165.

[39] Ibid., 112.

[40] Ibid., 169.

[41] Ibid., 109.

[42] Tom Najem, *Lebanon: The Politics of a Penetrated Society*, 21, authors' emphasis.

[43] Ibid., 24-25.

[44] Guilain Denoeux and Robert Springborg, "Hariri's Lebanon: Singapore of the Middle East or Sanaa of the Levant?"

[45] Ibid., 15, 26, 55.

[46] Ibid., 19.

[47] Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," *World Politics* 21 (1969): 207-225.

[48] Ibid., 34.
[49] See Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (Oxford University Press, 2008); Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick, *Index of State Weakness in the Developing World* (The Brookings Institution, 2008); Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-states: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge University Press, 1990); Mina Baliamoune-Lutz and Marc McGillivray, "State Fragility: Concept and Measurement" (UNU-WIDER Research Paper 44, 2008); and Claire McIouglin, "Topic Guide on Fragile States" (Governance and Social Development Research Center: University of Birmingham, 2010).
[50] See Jan Kooiman, *Governing as Governance* (Sage Publications, 2003); Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller, "Political Power beyond the State: Problematics of Government," *British Journal of Sociology* 43 (1992): 173-205; and Gerry Stoker, "Governance as Theory: Five Propositions," *International Social Science Journal* 50 (1998): 17-28.
[51] Reinoud Leenders, *Spoils of Truce. Corruption and State-Building in Postwar Lebanon*, 93.
[52] Ibid., 213.
[53] Ibid., 216.
[54] Jonathan V. Marshall, *The Lebanese Connection. Corruption, Civil War, and the International Drug Traffic*, 169.
[55] Ibid., 167.
[56] Ibid., 84.
[57] This is especially evident in Marshall's analysis of the involvement of the Lebanese banking sector in the drug economy (pages 51-52).
[58] Ibid., 94.
[59] Ibid., 142. He raises the same concerns with regard to Hezbollah (page 150), but not considering the zuama he also discusses.
[60] Ibid., 133, 162.
[61] Tom Najem, *Lebanon: The Politics of a Penetrated Society*, 16-17.
[62] Ibid., 102.
[63] Ibid., 109.
[64] Ibid., 63.
[65] Ibid., 90.
[66] Ibid., 27, 37, 75.
[67] Ibid., 45.
[68] Volker Boege, Anne Brown and Kevin P. Clements, "Hybrid Political Orders, Not Fragile States."
[69] Kevin P. Clements, Volker Boege, Anne Brown, Wendy Foley and Anna Nolan, "State Building Reconsidered: The Role of Hybridity in the Formation of Political Order," 46.
[70] Maren Kraushaar and Daniel Lambach, "Hybrid Political Orders: The Added Value of a New Concept" (Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies Occasional Papers Series, 2009), 4.
[71] Christian Lund, "Twilight Institutions: Public Authority and Local Politics in Africa," 689; and James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta, "Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality," *American Ethnologist* 29 (2000): 981.
[72] Tom Najem, *Lebanon: The Politics of a Penetrated Society*, 13, 60.
[73] Ibid., 32.
[74] Ibid., 14.
[75] Ken Menkhaus, "Governance without Government in Somalia. Spoilers, State Building, and the Politics of Coping."
[76] Ibid.
[77] Christian Lund, "Twilight Institutions: Public Authority and Local Politics in Africa," 682.

Lebanese–Palestinian Governance Interaction in the Palestinian Gathering of Shabriha, South Lebanon – A Tentative Extension of the 'Mediated State' from Africa to the Mediterranean

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ABSTRACT *This article offers a qualitative case study of the interaction between Lebanese state institutions and Palestinian authorities concerning the unofficial Palestinian camp of Shabriha. It particularly highlights the indirect nature of these interactions and the brokering role of Lebanese political parties. Governance in Shabriha is conceptualized as a manifestation of a 'mediated state', a notion that has been instrumental in understanding governance in sub-Saharan Africa but has not yet been applied to the Mediterranean. Based on empirical insights from Shabriha, the article offers a tentative reconsideration of the mediated state concept in order to extend it to scholarship on Mediterranean politics and governance.*

Introduction

This article offers a case study of the governance interaction between local Lebanese state institutions and Palestinian authorities in the unofficial refugee camp (or 'gathering') of Shabriha, south Lebanon. It particularly highlights the mediated nature of this governance interaction and the role of Lebanese political parties in it. Empirically, the Lebanese state and the Palestinian non-state do not interact directly, but have most of their meetings and communications arranged via the Lebanese political parties. These parties represent the local state, but also have their own (non-state) militias, welfare institutions and administrations. This simultaneous

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independence from and overlap with state institutions allows Lebanese political parties to facilitate, and shape, the interactions between the Palestinian non-state and the Lebanese state. Theoretically, this pattern of mediated interaction between Palestinian non-state governance actors and Lebanese state institutions reflects Lebanon's broader political logic of sectarian oligopoly. In Lebanon, the state provides security, welfare and representation to the population partly through the country's political parties and interaction between the Lebanese state and the Palestinian non-state reproduces this pattern (with political parties manoeuvring themselves between state and non-state governance actors).

I use the concept of the mediated state to further analyse this phenomenon of indirect governance interaction in Shabriha. The concept of the mediated state was developed by Menkhaus (2006) to theorize mediated governance arrangements in sub-Saharan Africa. In a nutshell, the mediated state suggests that to maintain control over (either spatial or political) 'hinterlands', state institutions 'partner with, co-opt, or sub-contract to whatever local nonstate authorities they can find', as shown by dynamics in, for instance, Somalia (where the state governs through 'coalitions of business groups, traditional authorities and civic groups') and Kenya (where the government forged a formal relationship with 'a collection of local nonstate actors led by a women's market group' to maintain the rule of law) (Menkhaus, 2007: 78, 74; 2008: 23). It makes a crucial contribution to understanding governance in hybrid political orders by stressing not merely the simultaneity, but also the relatedness of state and non-state governance systems. The idea of the mediated state shows that state institutions need not necessarily compete with other loci of authority, but often opt for a more pragmatic form of engagement that allows them to govern with or through, rather than against, non-state (armed) governance actors. As such, the concept may also hold relevance for the Middle East, where state sovereignty is often described as 'softening' (Ramadan, 2008), 'virtual' (Picard, 2012) or 'hybrid' (Bacik, 2008; Fregonese, 2012).

However, the concept of the mediated state is under-developed, partly because it exclusively draws on African cases. Consequently, not only might analyses of governance in the Mediterranean benefit from adopting the insights offered by the mediated state, the concept itself could in turn gain from an enrichment by case studies from regions beyond sub-Saharan Africa. While primarily offering a case study of mediated governance in Shabriha, then, by presenting an in-depth analysis of the workings of Lebanese state institutions and political parties through the lens of an originally Africanist concept, this article also seeks to further the conceptual linkages between the Mediterranean and the wider world by offering a foundation to open up an 'Africanist' concept to scholars working on the Mediterranean.

Based on the case study set in Lebanon, a country often described in terms of its 'states-within-the-state' (Atzili, 2010), I propose two reconsiderations of the mediated state that could make a start with addressing the core weaknesses that undermine its wider applicability to the Mediterranean: the absence of an actual conceptualization of mediating actors and the state/non-state dichotomy underlying the concept. First, the centrality of political parties in my case study suggests that the mediated state concept might benefit from acknowledging the (potentially) political nature of mediating

actors. Second, I propose to see these 're-politicized' brokers as twilight institutions, actors that exercise public authority on behalf of the state but also, and at the same time, independently from it (Lund, 2006: 689). Ultimately, in this article I aim to begin to outline a more comprehensive, not exclusively African, approach to mediated stateness that might benefit further studies of Mediterranean governance.

The Lebanese state and the specific case study I draw on are both unique. However, the amalgamations of the concept as suggested here (re-politicizing our understanding of governance and conceptually embracing state–society overlaps) resonate for the entire Mediterranean, where the state has been 'misunderstood' as a 'conveniently unitary actor' (Tripp, 2001: 211 in Murphy, 2001: 6). The re-conceptualization I propose goes some way in showing not merely *that* but exactly *how* the state 'contains a whole host of different institutions and practices which act, not in a single interest, but according to a variety of separate logics and dynamics, some compatible, others obviously contradictory and incoherent' (Owen, 2001: 238 in Murphy, 2001: 6–7). The article's argument speaks to two debates in particular. First, by stressing the indirect ties between the state and its constituencies, the mediated state concept can shed more light on the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion concerning the Mediterranean's marginal communities – such as refugees (Puig, 2013) and (semi-)nomads (Chatty et al., 2013: 412) – and spaces – for instance the 'heterotopias' of north and south Lebanon (Volk, 2009: 264; Salti & Chabaan, 2010) and other border areas (Meier, 2013; Obeid, 2010). Second, the debate on the mediated state ties in with discussions on neoliberal governance in the region (Guazzone & Pioppi, 2012; Murphy, 2001) – in particular the question of 'how state power is being re-articulated but also challenged at sub-national levels' in the context of neoliberal reforms and how this affects 'local patronage networks, public accountability and state–society relations' (Bergh, 2012: 303). Neoliberalism 'tends to legitimize the bypassing and disempowerment of elected local governments in favour of private sector agents or "civil society organizations", often co-opted by the ruling elites', a dynamic that is also at the heart of the mediated state thesis (Bergh, 2012: 306; see also Allès, 2012: 404).

The article consists of two parts. The first introduces my case study. In the second, I discuss the potential conceptual contribution of this case study by exploring how my findings can be understood through the lens of the mediated state and how they, subsequently, might help extend the concept's relevance to the Mediterranean. The article wraps up with a conclusion.

The Case: Lebanese–Palestinian Governance Interaction in Shabriha

Lebanon is often considered a 'weak' state and has known various examples of state collapse (Atzili, 2010; Fregonese, 2012; Menkhaus, 2009: 6; Roberson 1998: 1).

> It has long struggled with the task of asserting itself as sovereign, in the Westphalian sense, over all its territory. First as a colonial state (1918–43), then through a lengthy civil war (1975–90), Israeli occupation (1982–2000) and Syrian tutelage (1990–2005). (Long & Hanafi, 2010: 676)

A socio-economically marginalized and politically disenfranchised Palestinian refugee community constitutes roughly 10 per cent of Lebanon's population (Chabaan et al., 2010). Not only can Palestinians in Lebanon not vote or work in state agencies, they are also legally discriminated against in the labour market and, since 2001, cannot own real estate (Suleiman, 2006). In fact, the unified posture of Lebanon's judicial, legislative and executive institutions on 'the Palestinian issue' are arguably an exception to the often-cited weakness of the Lebanese state. In any case, the Palestinian presence in Lebanon is intricately linked with the country's struggle for sovereignty, a linkage that consecutive Lebanese governments have used to securitize the Palestinian refugee file (Hanafi, 2011: 35; Klaus, 2000: 69; Picard, 2012: 249; Sayigh, 1997). The Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon, suffering statelessness in anticipation of international recognition of a Palestinian state, constitutes a protracted 'non-state'. Nevertheless, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) enjoyed virtual hegemony in south Lebanon from 1969 to 1982 and the Cairo Agreement – 'one of the most contentious moments in the history of the Lebanese state' – that prohibits Lebanese security forces from entering the Palestinian camps (and sanctions Palestinian organizations to carry arms there) continues to be observed (Czajka, 2012: 240). Consequently, many Lebanese perceive the Palestinian camps as 'states-within-the state' (Atzili, 2010: 768; Meier, 2010; Ramadan, 2008: 666). Below, I discuss the interactions between Lebanese state institutions and Palestinian governance actors concerning Shabriha gathering that hosts approximately 2,000 inhabitants and is located near the city of Sur (Tyre) in south Lebanon. Shabriha is not one of Lebanon's 12 'official' refugee camps that are administered by the United Nations (UN) and recognized by the Lebanese state. Shabriha is a gathering, an 'unlawful' Palestinian settlement established outside the camp boundaries on Lebanese land. I describe the practical and theoretical implications of the camp–gathering distinction elsewhere (Stel, 2014). Here it suffices to note that because the gatherings fall outside both the Lebanese state's political mandate (as Palestinians are not Lebanese citizens) and the UN's territorial mandate (as gatherings are not camps), governance in the gatherings can be seen as taking place in an institutional vacuum.

Inside the gathering, a 'Popular Committee' (PC) installed by the PLO is responsible for governance, mostly consisting of service provision, conflict mediation and co-ordination with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Lebanese authorities. The Lebanese state in the surrounding area is represented by several institutions, most pertinently the municipality (on whose land the gathering is – illegally – built); the police and army; the national electricity company *Électricité du Liban* (EDL);[1] and in some instances national-level institutions such as the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR). Two Lebanese parties dominate south Lebanon: Hizballah and Amal.

My empirical findings are based on a qualitative analysis of 140 semi-structured, in-depth interviews with communal and political leaders, state representatives, residents, NGO staff and analysts targeted via purposive and snowball sampling. Interviews focused on five specific instances of Lebanese–Palestinian governance interaction, discussed below as 'vignettes'. I also explored respondents' more

generic understandings of governance interaction in Shabriha so as to ensure comprehensiveness. These data were collected throughout a five-month fieldwork period in 2013 during which I also conducted three focus groups and collected documents and observations (Stel, 2014).

A Description: How Does Mediated Governance Interaction in Shabriha Look?

Elsewhere (Stel, 2014), I have comprehensively described governance interaction in Shabriha across a range of indicators as predominantly informal, irregular, asymmetrical, politicized, hierarchical and contested. In this article, I focus on one specific aspect of governance interaction in Shabriha, namely its indirect, mediated nature.

In Shabriha, direct communication and meetings between Lebanese state governance actors and Palestinian non-state governance actors did occur: the PC sometimes petitioned the mayor or it would call or visit EDL. Mostly, however, co-ordination between Lebanese state and Palestinian non-state institutions was indirect; mediated by the *mukhtar*, a sub-municipal authority in charge of the Lebanese village (also called Shabriha) located next to the gathering, NGOs and, most prominently, Lebanese political parties. Respondents stressed that the direct relations that did exist were between Lebanese (Amal and Hizballah) and Palestinian (Fatah and Hamas) political parties, which would respectively connect with the municipality (or other state institutions such as the police and utility companies) and the PC. They explained that if the PC needs something, it contacts the local PLO/Fatah representative. This representative would then decide to either (horizontally) contact the relevant Lebanese political representative in Sur or (vertically) pass the request on to his superiors in Beirut who would then address their relative Lebanese counterparts. The Lebanese political representative in question would subsequently contact his 'people within the state institutions', whether ministers, mayors or employees, to get the job done.[2] The head of the national Union of PCs explained: 'We cannot talk with state employees directly. Our direct relations are with the political leaders who can affect these employees.'[3] An NGO worker confirms that 'political parties remain more important than municipalities. Palestinian bodies will lobby with political parties that will then pressure the relevant functionary in the municipality'.[4] Even the Lebanese–. Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC), the government's diplomatic body for dialogue with Palestinian leaders, follows this logic:

> We always go through the political parties. If the municipality belongs to Amal, I talk to President Berri [leader of Amal and speaker/'president' of Parliament]. […] You have to see who is supporting this municipality, Amal or Hizballah, and go to them.[5]

Indeed, the interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors in Shabriha is mediated to such an extent that, as one Lebanese analyst mused, 'Lebanese factions versus Palestinian factions might indeed be more relevant than municipality versus PC'.[6]

These general accounts were reflected in the vignettes studied. After the PC's requests to EDL for a new electricity transformer for the camp repeatedly fell on deaf ears, a Lebanese Member of Parliament (MP) eventually exerted the needed pressure on EDL and the transformer was provided. The PC even issued a written statement saying that this was the result of 'the establishment of a liaison between EDL and the Popular Committee of Shabriha' by the MP in question. When Shabriha mobilized against a highway that would cause the eviction of several households, a 'highway committee' contacted representatives of Palestinian political parties in the hope that these would subsequently address their Lebanese counterparts who might then take the matter up with their ministers. A representative of an NGO that lobbied against the highway admitted he never actually contacted the responsible state institutions:

> We didn't reach this step. Because when we met with Bahia Hariri [MP for the Mustaqbal party] and Amal and Hizballah, all said it would stop and there was no need any more to meet the CDR and the engineers. And they get their orders from the politicians anyway.[7]

During a waste management crisis, it was Lebanese political leaders, alarmed by Palestinian politicians, who eventually pressured the Union of Municipalities to continue to accept 'Palestinian' waste. In the process of resolving a conflict between Palestinian and Lebanese youth in Shabriha about the alleged harassing of a Palestinian girl, Lebanese politicians played a similar role by 'reigning in' local state authorities after they had been alarmed by Shabriha's Palestinian political leadership about possible escalation. During a spree of illegal building in Shabriha, Lebanese political figures played a more diffuse role, but respondents agreed that the very possibility for Palestinians to act against an explicit state ban on building was provided by the Lebanese parties' acquiescence:

> Under the table each party let their followers know to go ahead. And then in some instances the police would come to stop them, but someone [affiliated with the parties] would intervene to tell the police to look the other way.[8]

While such mediated interaction is likely to be specifically prevalent in Shabriha because it is an unofficial camp and therefore lacks the institutional resources associated with the UN,[9] and while characteristics of governance interaction are case-specific, the mediating role of political parties in Lebanese–Palestinian governance interaction is acknowledged in some literature (El Ali, 2011: 35; Knudsen, 2011: 98), and by my respondents, for other cases as well. When I asked a member of a PC from another camp whether his PC met with the mayor, district governor or provincial governor, he answered: 'No, only with the political leaders from Amal and Hizballah.'[10]

The centrality of mediation by Lebanese political parties in interactions between Palestinian governance actors and Lebanese state institutions, moreover, was confirmed by respondents affiliated with Hizballah and Amal. As Khalili (2007: 290)

notes, 'strengthening ties with Palestinian groups' is the key objective of Hizballah's Palestinian Affairs Committee (Czajka, 2012: 239; Knudsen, 2011: 98). A national spokesperson of Hizballah who previously served as an MP described his party as 'the channel between the Palestinians and the state'.[11] He elaborated that Hizballah 'talks with the state' on the Palestinians' behalf, 'because they will find it difficult to talk to the state'. He indicated that Hizballah has communication structures with Palestinian parties on each level of its party hierarchy to further this mediating role. Khalili (2007: 282) highlights the structural co-ordination between 'Hizbullah-controlled municipalities' and other institutions providing services to the Palestinians. To do so, respondents explained, Hizballah created liaison officers to maintain relations with the camps and inform Hizballah's leadership about the issues that are to be taken up with the relevant state institutions – ranging from the army to the provincial governor, the minister of interior and civil servants at ministerial financial departments (Norton, 2007: 477). Hizballah's liaison for south Lebanon told me, for instance, that a leader from one of the camps in the south always contacts him to arrange permission with the army intelligence for foreigners to enter the camp.[12]

Like Hizballah, Amal has 'a person responsible for the Palestinian file who meets with parties and committees'.[13] A local Amal leader mentioned that the party has specific 'committees' for most of the camps in the south.[14] An Amal MP told me he was petitioned by both Palestinian parties and Palestinian individuals, for instance with requests to intervene on their behalf with the Lebanese security services.[15] Amal's 'Palestinian liaison' for south Lebanon testified to the facilitating role his party plays for Palestinian parties, repeatedly mentioning how Amal utilizes its 'presence in the Government' to help Palestinian parties communicate with state institutions.[16] For the Palestinian governance actors in Shabriha, such dynamics are particularly relevant considering the strong presence of Amal in the neighbouring village, for instance in the person of the *mukhtar*.[17] A communal leader associated with Amal elucidated: 'I help them with the state, with anything they want from the state. You know my relation with the state in the south, with Nabih Berri, with the highest policeman.'[18]

An Analysis: Why Does Governance Interaction in Shabriha Look the Way It Does?

Above, I described how Lebanese political parties function as a mediating entity in the governance interactions between Palestinian authorities and Lebanese state institutions. In analysing why this interaction is mediated in the first place and why, subsequently, it is mediated by political parties, two further, and inter-related, questions present themselves. First, why would Palestinian actors turn to these parties rather than directly to state institutions? Second, why would Lebanese political parties play the role of gatekeeper to the state for the actors representing Shabriha's Palestinians, who have no voting rights and are thus not part of their electoral constituency?

Why Do Palestinian Non-state Governance Actors Turn to Lebanese Political Parties? As my vignettes showed, Palestinian governance actors need interaction

with Lebanese state institutions in order to realize services (such as electricity, waste collection and housing), justice (like compensation for evicted households) and security (through conflict mediation). Respondents, however, stressed that the state bureaucracy works in a hierarchical and formal way that, for various reasons,[19] excludes the Palestinians as a people, because they are not granted Lebanese citizenship, and as a governance actor, because their main local governance entity, the PC, is not officially recognized. The fact that the Lebanese state does not formally recognize PCs means that state institutions cannot officially deal with them, reflecting what a Lebanese analyst dubbed the 'no-policy-policy' of the Lebanese state vis-à-vis the Palestinians.[20] Direct state/non-state interaction, according to Klaus (2000: 42), is thus 'prevented by a complete absence of any clearly defined programmatic state guidelines for dealing with the refugees'. A representative of a Palestinian NGO explained: 'The municipality is the representative of the Ministry of Interior here. They have to implement state policy and this prevents them from really helping us.'[21]

Political parties have no such qualms. Indeed, Knudsen (2011: 98) argues that the (informal) relations Palestinians have with Lebanese parties, ranging from 'consultative to clientelistic', are a direct result of their lack of civil rights that deprives Palestinians of official representation in the state system. Shabriha's PC turned to Lebanese parties explicitly as gatekeepers to the state. It did not expect political parties to pay for the electricity divider, it wanted them to 'pressure' EDL; it did not ask the parties to arrange compensation for evicted families, it only requested them to take the case up with the ministers; it did not imagine the parties would solve Shabriha's waste management problem, but hoped they would 'encourage' the Union of Municipalities to address it.

Lebanese parties recognize the tension between Palestinian actors caught in illegality and a state at least nominally bound by the law and have carved out their niche within it. In fact, considering that it is ultimately political parties that make government policy, it is fair to assume that political parties – Amal and Hizballah included – actively maintain the government's non-recognition of the PCs so as to maintain this niche (Sheikh Hassan & Hanafi, 2010: 27, 42–43). Moreover, echoing the literature that reminds us that the state is far from a coherent entity (Hoffmann & Kirk, 2013: 13; Titeca & De Herdt, 2011: 231), interviewees found the state diffuse, represented by a wide variety of institutions – from the Union of Municipalities in Sour in one vignette to EDL in another, from CDR to the municipality and the army and police. The absence of a stable counterpart for the PC on the side of the Lebanese state is striking (Common Space Initiative (CSI), 2011: 33; El Ali, 2011: 46). Lebanese political parties, in contrast, present a stable, approachable and to some extent reliable counterpart for Palestinian actors, presenting much of the intention, rationality and purpose that states preach but can inherently not practise (Sharma & Gupta, 2006: 8).

While Lebanese parties are not tied down by formal regulations as state institutions are, they nevertheless to some extent embody the state vis-à-vis both non-state governance actors and the population. On the one hand, when Palestinian authorities are dealing with Hizballah or Amal-affiliated ministers, mayors,

managers and *mukhtars*, Hizballah and Amal represent the state vis-à-vis Palestinian representatives. On the other hand, in many interactions with the Palestinians, Amal and Hizballah, political movements with their own institutional structure, act, if not in opposition to the Lebanese state, then at least seeking to protect their independence towards it (Picard, 2012: 264–265).

It is this simultaneous independence from and overlap with state institutions that gives Lebanese political parties the possibility and incentive to facilitate interactions between the Palestinian non-state and the Lebanese state. A Hizballah leader told me that people go to parties because this feels more direct to them: 'people consider that the mayor or anyone takes his decisions from his political leaders anyway, so they prefer to talk to these political leaders directly'.[22] Nabih Berri, for instance, is not merely the leader of Amal, he is also the speaker of Parliament, one of the most powerful positions in the state. One Lebanese man from Shabriha commented that: 'Berri is the head of the Parliament, he can suggest a law and he can convince the MPs to agree and vote for it; he is the state and he is the ruler of the south.'[23]

Why Do Lebanese Political Parties Care to Function as Mediating Entities?. Interaction between the PC and Lebanese political parties is far from equal; the process was often described as the PC 'petitioning' for favours with the parties.[24] Nevertheless, Hizballah and Amal have several motivations to be a broker between the Palestinians and the Lebanese state beyond mere philanthropy. These motivations are sometimes ideological; evoking a shared resistance against Israel and a pan-Arab or pan-Islamic solidarity with the plight of the Palestinians (Høigilt, 2007). At other times, they are instrumental, whether electoral (gaining votes from a small minority of naturalized Palestinians), political (acquiring legitimacy in 'the Arab street' and showcasing control over 'their' region of south Lebanon) or military (securing the support of Palestinian armed groups in anticipated war) (Khalili, 2007; Knudsen, 2011). Klaus (2000: 88) documents that Palestinians indeed 'actively supported those political parties or personalities who were willing to voice their needs in Lebanese public and Parliament'. In the words of a Palestinian from Shabriha, interactions were initiated 'to solve problems and build relations that benefit them in the future if there is war'.[25]

Shabriha's Governance Interaction as the Manifestation of a Mediated State

Menkhaus (2007: 78) defines a mediated state as a political order 'in which the government relies on partnership (or at least coexistence) with a diverse range of local intermediaries and rival sources of authority to provide core functions of public security, justice, and conflict management in much of the country'. Following this, the described instances of interaction in Shabriha could be seen as a manifestation of a mediated state on two levels. First, as evidenced above, empirically, interaction between state and non-state governance actors is indirect, mediated. In Menkhaus' jargon, the Lebanese state has negotiated a particular form of extension of its governance via the bridging institution of the political parties. State and non-state governance actors do not contest each other, or operate in isolation, but constitute

each other; through the mediating parties, Palestinian governance is 'connected to the state through complex means' (Mallet, 2010: 74).

Second, the dynamics described also reflect a mediated state in a theoretical sense. Governance interactions between the Palestinian non-state and the Lebanese state replicate the political logic of this state, rather than present a parallel or different system of governance. Being systematically included in punitive law-making while simultaneously being excluded from legal rights, Lebanon's Palestinians are caught in a 'state of exception' vis-á-vis Lebanese citizens (Hanafi, 2011: 36; Ramadan, 2008: 666). To a large extent, however, the above-described Palestinian–Lebanese governance interaction mirrors intra-Lebanese governance constellations. This suggests that regarding the specific issue of governance mediation by Lebanese political parties, the Palestinian state of exception is a matter of degree rather than quality. A Palestinian leader stressed that 'in Lebanese areas as well, if the electricity doesn't work, they go to the parties who then pressure the municipality'.[26] A Lebanese analyst noted that

> the Palestinians don't have a relation with the Lebanese state, because the Lebanese don't have a relation with the Lebanese state. All have relations with Lebanese parties, which are more efficient, because here in Lebanon we belong to communities and political leaders, not to the state.[27]

This argument that Lebanese state structures dictate Palestinian-Lebanese governance interaction in Shabriha does not mean to reify a state 'logic' or argue that this 'system' is static (Hagmann & Péclard, 2010: 553; Hoffmann & Kirk, 2013: 35–36). Nor does it seek to revive a state-centric perspective posing that it is only state 'structures and activities [that] condition and configure what may appear to be socio-economic phenomena' (Evans et al., 1985 in Lund, 2006: 674). What I aim to highlight is that the central characteristic of the Lebanese state – its oligarchic, sectarian delegation of power to political parties that are simultaneously state and non-state – is also the single most important characteristic of governance interactions between Lebanese state institutions and Palestinian non-state governance authorities.

The mediating position of political parties that incorporate and represent the state as well as the non-state is a direct result of Lebanon's sectarian political system. Lebanese society is organized along the lines of 18 recognized religious communities that each have their regional strongholds, political parties, welfare institutions and armed militias (Cammett & Issar, 2010; Harik, 1994; Picard, 2012). Political organization in Lebanon institutionalized such sectarianism. The Lebanese state is organized through a consociational political system that centres on an inter-sectarian power-sharing formula. The system includes corresponding sectarian quotas guiding the allocation of all public positions: in Lebanon, socio-economic redistribution is inherently sectarian (Klaus, 2000: 29). Consequently, the Lebanese state structure is informed by a quest for inter-communitarian balance that has resulted in endemic clientelism (Atzili, 2010: 761; Cammett & Issar, 2010), not least because the sectarian political system resulting from 'series of compromises between the French mandatory power and the indigenous elites' was designed to

accommodate much of the patriarchal and feudal patronage networks that predated it (Joseph, 1997: 89; Makdisi 1996: 23).

Political parties, in this structure, are the main vehicle of sectarian and clan-based patronage networks; they are 'the citizen's main administrative representative within the Lebanese state' (Vloeberghs, 2012: 246). This function has only been furthered by the 'cantonization' and 'militia politics' of the Civil War (El-Khazen, 2003; Harik, 1994; Makdisi 1996: 28). As such, parties in Lebanon differ markedly from the civil representational organizations defined primarily by broad popular membership and parliamentary activity that political parties are considered in most of western Europe (El-Khazen, 2003). As Catusse and Karam (2010: 15) note, in the Middle East, the word party is much more associated, or even interchangeable, with notions of 'clubs', 'clans', 'militias' and 'confessions'. And while parties may have 'little real power over the political destiny of their societies', their existence 'as structures within clientelist organizations, as tributaries to communitarian or tribal considerations', makes them elementary in connecting citizen and state nonetheless (Catusse & Karam, 2010: 11).

Scholars on the Lebanese state seem to agree with this linchpin role of (sectarian) political parties. Ramadan (2008: 666) states that 'sovereignty in Lebanon is highly conditional, distributed among different groups and actors along religious lines'. Fregonese (2012: 659, 670) perceives Lebanon as 'a constellation of hybrid sovereignties', in which governance is shaped by the 'hybridizations between state and nonstate actors'. She particularly highlights that 'the blurring of practices of state and nonstate actors [take place within] the administration' and singles out Lebanon's political parties as the vehicles for the 'tight circular connections between state and nonstate actors' (Fregonese, 2012: 656, 657). With regard to Hizballah, for instance, Fregonese (2012: 668–669, italics original) stresses that it 'became a hegemonic actor … not simply in *opposition* to the state, but in close coordination with it'; that it is 'simultaneously a political party … , an armed resistance movement, a provider of social services, and a provider of infrastructure: it is simultaneously part of the state, nonstate, and state-like'.

In effect, and as I elaborate in the next section, Ramadan and Fregonese describe Lebanese political parties as 'twilight institutions' that are at one and the same time governing in the name of the state and autonomously from it (Lund, 2006: 689). Their conceptualization of Lebanese parties as amalgamated state *and* non-state actors that are central to upholding the institutional structure of the Lebanese state underwrites the patterns of Lebanese–Palestinian governance interaction mediated by political parties observed in my case study. Political parties, at once parasitic on the state and constitutive of it, are the political oil in the institutional machinery of the state; they are an essential ingredient to maintain the 'purposeful fiction' of the 'public/private divide constitutive to the will to statehood' (Joseph, 1997: 73).

The mediated interactions between Palestinian governance actors and Lebanese state institutions presented, then, are a result of the particular sectarian and oligopolistic structuring of Lebanon's state system. Klaus (2000: 50) demonstrates that, from the beginning, 'the refugees received aid in the first place not from the state but from communal institutions'. She also shows that during the one centralist period

of Lebanon's history as an independent state – the years from 1958 to 1964 under President Chehab that were characterized by an attempt to strengthen the Lebanese bureaucracy and limit the extra-parliamentary power of political leaders – there was direct and formal interaction with the Palestinian representatives in Lebanon (ratified in the Cairo Agreement) (Klaus, 2000: 58).[28] This was, however, the exception to the rule that the 'ineffectiveness of the administrational governmental apparatus … was also reflected in the absence of any further plan of how to deal with the Palestinian refugees' (Klaus 2000: 141). Instead, as was the case for Lebanese citizens, Palestinians' 'integration within the state system had happened qua loyalty towards a local [political] leader' and Palestinian 'leaders continued to keep relations with Lebanese parties and politicians' (Klaus, 2000: 25, 92). Ultimately, 'the conditions of Palestinian presence in Lebanon would be a mirror of Lebanese society itself' (Klaus, 2000: 146).

The Conceptual Contribution: Bringing the Mediated State to the Mediterranean

Both the tangible mediating role of the political parties described above and the way in which these local governance dynamics replicate broader patterns of a state mediating its power through political parties testify to the relevance of the mediated state as an instrument to understand governance – in Lebanon and, as I argued in the introduction, in the Mediterranean at large.

The Added Value of the Mediated State

The concept of the mediated state was introduced by Menkhaus (2006: 1) in order to better characterize 'the relationship between weak central governments and the non-state polities which can arise in their hinterlands'. Such a mediated state, Menkhaus (2006: 3) argues, is most likely to emerge in situations where state institutions have an interest in providing governance in a specific area, but are not able to. Menkhaus (2006: 5) writes: 'It is at this point that state authorities are most likely to reach out to negotiate with non-state authorities they would otherwise have viewed as rivals to be marginalized or tools to be co-opted.'

The dynamics captured by the mediated state are also recognized by other scholars. Scheye (2009: 5), for instance, suggests that

> the post-colonial state is characterized by the 'rule of the intermediaries', a series of networks and polities that substitute and compensate for the lack of authority of the central, legally constituted state and its inability to deliver essential public goods and services.

Migdal's (1988: 144) seminal thesis on the dialectic between 'weak states' and 'strong societies', where 'strongmen' deliver the social stability and mobilization that 'statesmen' need concerns the same practices of mediation. Indeed, the idea of the mediated state is closely related to a wide range of other concepts dealing with the

interdependencies between various governance actors in non-Western political orders. These are, to name only the most cited: the above-mentioned 'twilight institution'; the 'hybrid political order' (Boege et al., 2008); the 'negotiated statehood' (Hagmann & Péclard, 2010); 'governance without government' (Raeymaekers et al., 2008); 'real governance' (Olivier de Sardan, 2008); 'actually existing governance' (Mallet, 2010: 76); 'brokered autonomy' (Tilly, 2004 in Titeca & De Herdt, 2011: 217); the 'second state' (Scheye, 2009); 'institutional bricolage' (Cleaver et al., 2013); 'para-statehood' (Kraushaar & Lambach, 2009: 12); and 'diffuse authority' (Suykens, 2010).

These concepts were developed in response to the many problems of the 'fragile' or 'failed' state paradigm, most notably its teleological state-centrism and its ideal-typification (Boege et al., 2008; Hagmann & Péclard, 2010: 541). In the wake of this academically unsatisfying but politically powerful discourse, Meagher (2012: 1073) identified a 'revalorization of non-state forms of order and authority'. These perspectives on governance in non-Western countries agitated against the idea that areas where the state is not the dominant governance actor are 'ungoverned' or 'anarchic', and that de facto local governance systems present there are therefore 'of little significance', mere 'short-term coping mechanisms' (Menkhaus, 2007: 102; see also Hoffmann & Kirk, 2013: 5; Mallet, 2010: 74). Reviving Migdal's (2001) 'state-in-society' approach and the work of 'anthropologists of the state' (Sharma & Gupta, 2006), scholars emphasize the pluralistic and interactive nature of governance in 'areas of limited statehood' (Risse & Lehmkuhl, 2006) and stress the 'negotiations', 'relations', 'dependencies' and even 'symbiosis' between state and non-state authorities (Raeymaekers et al., 2008: 8; Scheye, 2009: 11).

The mediated state focuses on the pragmatic relations and interdependencies between state and non-state governance systems and goes beyond merely stating their coexistence. Among the plethora of concepts mentioned above, the mediated state concept is the most explicit in, 'instead of describing governance exclusively in terms of resistance and opposition', focusing on the 'complicity and overlap between state and non-state forms of political power' (Raeymaekers et al., 2008: 16). This does not mean that the mediated state advocates a return to state-centrism. While the mediated state is often seen as over-valuing state agency, it does not narrowly champion the agency of the state as an actor, but rather demands attention for the influence of the state as a structure. The mediated state suggests that the relevance of the state in hybrid governance lies not in strength in terms of sovereignty, exclusiveness or dominance, but in offering a political logic, or implicit outline, for interactions between state and non-state governance actors. This approach accommodates now broadly shared conclusions that the role of the state, not least in the Mediterranean (Guazzone and Pioppi 2012), has been 'redefined rather than evaporated' (Titeca & De Herdt, 2011: 213).

Potential Amalgamations of the Mediated State

Among the proliferation of concepts concerned with hybrid governance, the mediated state thus has a unique potential to conceptualize such dynamics beyond zero-sum state/non-state competition and give due credit to the role of the state without relapsing into state-centrism. Nevertheless, the concept is under-developed.

In his empirical articles on Kenya (2008) and Somalia (2007), Menkhaus himself did not structurally work out the typology of the mediated state that he put forward in a conference paper in 2006. Moreover, the mediated state is built exclusively on African cases, a trait it shares with almost all of the above-mentioned concepts. That the response towards the state failure paradigm came most strongly from Africanists is unsurprising as the fragile state discourse itself was driven by a focus on Africa (Hoffmann & Kirk, 2013: 4; Menkhaus, 2009: 5). However, there are neither convincing ontological nor compelling empirical grounds for such African exceptionalism (Stel & Frerks, 2013: 171). Indeed, despite the exclusive focus on African cases there is no inherent claim apparent in the concept that the mediated state would be a typically African phenomenon. In arguing the exceptionality rather than normativeness of stateness in 'the North' (Clements et al., 2007: 48; Risse & Lehmkuhl, 2006: 4), it would be a mistake to limit 'the South' to Africa – especially considering the still pressing deficiency of empirical data on hybrid governance (Hoffmann & Kirk, 2013: 41) and the hybrid and contested nature of the state in the Mediterranean.

Before attempting to identify how the mediated state concept might best be adapted from the African context to the Mediterranean, two fundamental issues first need to be addressed: what is, in fact, a state and are there insurmountable differences between an 'African' and a 'Mediterranean' state? Both issues are tremendously complex and largely beyond the scope of this article. Here, I limit myself to noting that I follow Owen (2006: 1) in understanding the state as the 'set of institutions and practices which combines administrative, judicial, rule-making and coercive powers'. What is more relevant for the sake of my current argument, however, is the political system through which the operation of the state is organized. In this regard, it can be argued that African and Arab states display a broad similarity in terms of their neopatrimonialism (Bank & Richter, 2010; Olivier de Sardan, 2008) – a concept which by definition puts a premium on the relations, connections, networks that are at the heart of the idea of the mediated state. While the notion of (neo)patrimonialism is much disputed and often used in 'too sweeping, too general and too partial a manner', and a thorough analysis of specific historical trajectories of the formation of political institutions is indispensable, in this article the reference merely serves to establish that the use of Africanist concepts is not anachronistic to the Middle East (Olivier de Sardan, 2008: 6). I agree with Owen (2006: 230, 1) that the Middle Eastern state 'has been subject to most of the same universal historical processes' as many African countries, 'including colonialism, the two world wars, the general emphasis on state-building and development, and then the trend towards more liberal economic policies' and that, as such, it is useful to see it as part of a broader 'non-European world' as this opens up the Middle East to 'a much larger body of works of comparative political and socio-economic analysis'.

Bringing the Politics Back in: Everyday Mediation. A first limitation that prevents the mediated state's utility to the Mediterranean is that a clear definition or categorization of the mediating actors so central to the concept has so far been lacking. My case study of Shabriha could provide some clues on how to start

addressing this hiatus. In Shabriha, as well as in Lebanon at large, political parties function as gatekeepers to the state. A former LPDC official mused that municipal employees mostly 'redirect to the relevant Hizballah or Amal functionary' and quickly reach 'ceilings of decision-making to which they cannot go without consultation [of the parties]'.[29] This merits adding a political layer to the mediated state to acknowledge the potentially crucial role of political actors in 'mediating' a state. Rather than a direct state–non-state–population interaction chain, the relation between state and non-state might go via political parties constituting a 'fluid frontier' between state and non-state actors (Hagmann & Péclard, 2010: 549).

A meaningful starting point to include the role of local politicians in mediated governance into our thinking on the mediated state is provided by Berenschot's (2010) notion of 'everyday mediation'. Approaching mediation as 'facilitation of the communication between citizens and state officials', he shows that, for citizens in his Indian case study, 'the elements that constitute a state – its employees, its numerous laws and rules – are only experienced through the intervention of political intermediaries, and are thoroughly shaped by the operations of these intermediaries' (Berenschot, 2010: 890–892). Berenschot shows how politicians and their parties are simultaneously part of the local state bureaucracy and constitute an independent gatekeeper to these state institutions. He sees the mediation of political parties as entrenched at the heart of the state in India:

> the mediating activities of politicians … cannot be seen as an aberration or intrusion into the 'normal' operations of the state. On the contrary, I argue that political intermediaries – mediating between bureaucrats, citizens and service providers – are a constitutive part of the state in Gujarat. Political mediation is so deeply entrenched in the procedures, policies and habits that guide the daily functioning of state institutions that we can speak of a 'mediated state': the state is embedded in society in such a way that its interaction with citizens is, to a large extent, monopolized by networks whose political (and often also financial) success depends on their capacity to manipulate the implementation of the state's policies and legislation. (Berenschot, 2010: 884–885)

Berenschot's account closely resembles Shabriha's and illustrates that the significance of 'political' mediation is not limited to my Lebanese case study. It also suggests that 'bringing the politics back in' to the mediated state is pertinent – not least because it helps to remedy implicit connotations of 'mediation' with 'equality' or 'symmetry' (Cleaver et al., 2013: 13; Risse & Lehmkuhl, 2006: 8).

Accounting for State/Non-state Overlaps: The Twilight Institution. A second hurdle to extending the utility of the mediated state to Mediterranean governance is that the concept is often disqualified as state-centric. This is, however, a misrepresentation: the mediated state is demanding attention for, rather than claiming the exclusive relevance of, the explanatory value of state structures for hybrid governance. Yet the mediated state concept lacks a definition or problematization of what 'the state' actually is, disregarding a seminal body of literature (Abrams, 1988; Mitchell, 1999;

Scott, 1998). The lingering assumption that state and non-state can be separated either analytically or functionally is problematic as it denies the connectedness between polities and societies. Interaction assumes separate institutions to be connected. Such separations, however, are highly arbitrary and often non-existent. Can we still talk about 'interaction' or 'mediation' when the conferring entities overlap to the extent that they might be indistinguishable? In the words of a local Amal representative: 'When we say the state, we mean our people in the organizations of the state. Through our people in the state we can take decisions. In the end, we're all intersected together.'[30]

Based on my case study and following Fregonese's (2012: 661, italics original) de facto identification of Lebanese political parties as twilight institutions – she sees them as 'hybrid political actors [that] constitute new entities that are *both* state *and* nonstate' – I propose not merely to re-politicize the mediated state as suggested above, but to conceive of the political parties acting as mediating entities as 'twilight institutions'. Lund's (2006: 689) description of such institutions as being engaged in 'an ambiguous process of being and opposing the state' closely corresponds with the role political parties played in Shabriha. It is exactly because they function as twilight institutions that bridge the state and the non-state that political parties could play the mediating role they did; it is their 'twilight' nature that enabled them to constitute the buffers and proxies the state needs in its dealings with armed non-state governance actors.

Conceptualizing political parties as twilight intermediaries does away with the all-too-neat demarcation of state and non-state, formal and informal, as separate entities (Clements et al., 2007: 46; Meagher, 2012: 1073). As Shabriha's Amal leader summarized: 'We're not only a military party against our enemy, we are an organization that works inside the state for the state.'[31] Indeed, the very fact that the formal state needs twilight institutions to engage with (informal) non-state governance actors in the 'decentered reworking of state power' (Fregonese, 2012: 666) reinstates Renders' and Terlinden's (2010: 726) observation that the 'setting and shifting of boundaries between formal and informal spheres have been key instruments in the struggle for power and control'. The 'Janus face' of politicians as at once state and non-state (Mallet, 2010: 81) enables them, in the words of Hagmann and Péclard (2010: 551), to operate at both the governance table headed by the state and the governance arena populated by non-state governance actors, granting them their assets as a governance intermediary.

Conclusion

This article introduced a case study of governance interaction between local Lebanese state institutions and Palestinian authorities in Shabriha. It was argued that this case constituted a manifestation of a mediated state both empirically – as interaction between the Lebanese state and the Palestinian non-state was mostly indirect, brokered by Lebanese political parties – and analytically – as this pattern of mediated interaction with the state reflects Lebanon's broader political logic of sectarian oligopolies.

Subsequently, insights from the case study were taken as a starting point for tentatively extending the acumen of the mediated state to Lebanon and the Mediterranean. By stressing the political identity of the actors mediating between state and non-state governance authorities and embracing the inter-related rather than dichotomous manifestations of the state and non-state 'faces' of these political mediators, the article has sought to offer a vantage point for scholars of governance and politics in the Mediterranean to incorporate insights offered by the mediated state into their analyses.

Such insights are expected to be twofold. First, devoting attention to how the structure (of the state system) rather than the power of the state (as an actor) shapes governance interaction, re-emphasizes the 'idea' of the state (Lund, 2006: 675) that, despite the relative weakness of state institutions operating as governance actors, continues to provide a crucial context and resource distribution mechanism, also in the Mediterranean (Boege et al., 2009: 92; Cleaver et al., 2013: 13; Lund, 2006; Migdal, 1988, 2001; Sharma & Gupta, 2006). Second, as Bergh (2012: 305) has argued, a '"re-politicization" of the debate' on governance in the Mediterranean is crucial if we are to explore how political and policy dynamics affect 'the "rules of the game", i.e. the formal and informal institutions that shape the power bases and patronage networks of local elites and, in particular, what these mean in terms of clientelism and public accountability'.

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Notes

1. Other services are not accessed through the Lebanese state. Shabriha has its own water well; waste is collected by an NGO and education and health care are offered by the (UN).
2. Interview, Former Hizballah MP, Beirut, 26 June 2013.
3. Interview, Bourj el-Shemali camp, Sour, 25 July 2013.
4. Interview, Beirut, 13 September 2012.
5. Interview, Ex-President LPDC, Beirut, 22 July 2013.
6. Interview, Beirut, 23 July 2012.
7. Interview, Beirut, 21 June 2013
8. Interview, Palestinian NGO, Sour, 22 March 2013.
9. In official, UN-administered camps, moreover, there is likely to be more direct interaction between the PCs and the army and police manning the checkpoints that regulate access to the camps.
10. Interview, Jal al Bahar, 13 June 2013.

11. Interview, Beirut, 26 June 2013.
12. Interview, Deir Qanun, 17 July 2013.
13. Interview, Palestinian liaison officer Amal Sour, Wadi Jilo, 29 June 2013.
14. Interview, Shabriha, 27 July 2013.
15. Interview, Sour, 27 July 2013.
16. Interview, Wadi Jilo, 29 June 2013.
17. Interview, Amal leader, Shabriha, 27 July 2013.
18. Interview, Shabriha, 26 July 2013.
19. Such as the fear ofencouraging the Palestinians' 'permanent settlement' in Lebanon that is broadly perceived as a threat to Lebanon's sectarian balance and, hence, peace and stability (Meier, 2010) and the absence of a united Palestinian counterpart (Knudsen, 2011).
20. Interview, Beirut, 28 May 2013.
21. Interview, Al Bas camp, Sour, 18 June 2013.
22. Interview, Beirut, 26 June 2013.
23. Interview, Lebanese journalist, Shabriha, 27 June 2013.
24. Interview, Communal leader, Shabriha, 8 June 2013.The political parties constituting the PLO have historically been closely intertwined with south Lebanon's main political parties and their alternating competition and alliances in controlling the region (Norton, 2007: 477). In the initial absence of their own political parties, Shi'ite Lebanese from south Lebanon constituted a large part of the political membership and armed militias of Palestinian parties operating in Lebanon during the Palestinian Revolution (Shanahan, 2011: 96). Indeed, it was Fatah that trained and armed the nascent Amal Movement in the 1980s (Shanahan, 2011: 107). After the PLO's expulsion from Lebanon by Israel in 1982, however, particularly Amal (in the 1985–87 Camp Wars) has ensured that the state-like service structures and the concomitant patronage networks that the PLO had constructed were destroyed (Sayigh, 1997: 24). As a result, and also following from the marginalizing legislature adopted, the dependence has reversed and the Palestinian political actors are now decisively the junior partners of their Lebanese counterparts.
25. Interview, Shabriha, 11 June 2013.
26. Interview, Bourj el-Shemali camp, Sour, 20 September 2012.
27. Interview, Beirut, 4 June 2013.
28. Jordan and Syria, that were 'centralized and authoritarian', did not see politically mediated governance interaction with Palestinian institutions as they were 'politically better equipped' to directly engage with them (Klaus, 2000: 52).
29. Interview, Beirut, 23 July 2013.
30. Interview, Lebanese Shabriha, 27 July 2013.
31. Interview, Shabriha, 27 July 2013.

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‘The Children of the State’? How Palestinians from the Seven Villages Negotiate Sect, Party and State in Lebanon

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ABSTRACT *In Lebanon, the fear of tawṭīn makes nationalization of Palestinian refugees an anathema. Yet several groups of Palestinians have received Lebanese citizenship since 1948, most (in)famously those from the ‘seven villages’, a chain of Shi‘i villages on Lebanon’s southern border that was incorporated into Palestine in 1923. The trajectory of their nationalization is usually presented as a straightforward consequence of top-down Lebanese electoral politics. This article augments this dominant perspective through a case study of the community from the village of Salha, now in Israel, that currently lives in Shabriha, a small town near the city of Tyre in South Lebanon. Adopting the ‘negotiated statehood’ framework, the article offers an agency-oriented, bottom-up perspective on the community’s gaining of citizenship and shows how the people from Salha have acquired citizenship not merely to gain access to, but also to ensure a degree of independence from, the Lebanese state and political parties.*

Introduction

> They are the children of the state (*āwlād al-dawla*); they have very good connections with people in the government. And this is what makes them strong; it is prohibited to hit them.[1]

In Lebanon, the fear of ‘naturalization’ (*tawṭīn*) makes nationalization of Palestinian refugees an anathema.[2] Knudsen notes that ‘the question of naturalizing refugees is one of the most contentious political issues in Lebanon today’.[3] Yet several groups of Palestinian refugees have received Lebanese citizenship since 1948, most (in)famously those from the ‘seven villages’, a chain of villages on Lebanon’s southern border that was incorporated into Palestine in

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1. Hizbullah representative, Palestinian Shabriha, 4 May 2013.
2. Daniel Meier, ‘“Al-Tawteen”: The Implantation Problem as an Idiom of the Palestinian Presence in Post-civil War Lebanon (1989–2005)’, *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 32(3) (2010), pp. 145–162.
3. Are Knudsen, ‘Widening the Protection Gap: the “Politics of Citizenship” for Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, 1948–2008’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 22(1) (2009), p. 51.

the 1923 Paulet-Newcombe Agreement.[4] The trajectory of their nationalization is largely unaddressed by academics, or where it is discussed it is presented as a straightforward consequence of top-down Lebanese electoral politics.[5]

This article does not dispute the importance of strategic electoral concerns in the nationalization process. Rather, the article augments this dominant reading by offering an in-depth analysis of the case of the community originating from the village of Salha, now in Israel, that currently lives in Shabriha, a small town near the city of Tyre in South Lebanon. The article's approach is inspired by the 'negotiated statehood' framework, which stipulates that access to, and forms of, statehood are the result of negotiated exchanges between various authorities and constituencies that each have their own resources, repertoires and objects of negotiation to advance their position.[6] Based on this framework, the article offers a bottom-up perspective on the community's gaining of citizenship and argues that rather than merely following from the electoral interests of Lebanon's political leaders, nationalization also resulted from the community's purposeful instrumentalization of existing resources (the financial and social capital of the community's clan leader) and active reinterpretation of available repertoires (alternating political, nationalist and sectarian identities). The article further contends that the object of negotiation central to the nationalization was not only votes in exchange for state resources, but also, and apparently contradictory, party loyalty in exchange for a degree of local self-governance.

Analysing the story of a community that was once stateless but is now referred to by their Palestinian fellows as 'the children of the state' makes a two-fold academic contribution. Empirically, it offers a detailed historical analysis of a structurally under-analysed case.[7] Analytically, it conceptualizes the nature and consequences of nationalization in a way that goes beyond a default instrumentalist electoral approach and presents a more nuanced account of the process as a negotiated exchange about not just access to, but also independence from, the state. This insight helps to address the hiatus noted by el-Khoury and Jaulin when they observed that 'very little academic research focuses on the naturalizations' political and electoral impact (e.g. political clientele); the processes (administrative, judiciary, etc.) through which citizenship is granted (or denied); and the background of those who have been naturalized (religious, geographic, social, etc.)'.[8]

Contrasting the experiences of nationalized and non-nationalized Palestinians, moreover, serves as a reminder that 'in conscripting Palestinians to the realm of refugees and refugee studies', we ignore experiences of Palestinians who obtain

4. Asher Kaufman, 'Between Palestine and Lebanon: Seven Shi'i Villages as a Case Study of Boundaries, Identities and Conflict', *Middle East Journal*, 60(4) (2006), pp. 685–706.

5. Hind Ghandour, 'Citizenship Space: The Case of Naturalized Palestinians in Lebanon' (paper presented at the Middle East Studies Association annual conference, Washington, DC, 22–25 November 2014); and Guita Hourani and Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, 'Naturalized Citizens: Political Participation, Voting Behavior, and Impact on Elections in Lebanon', *International Migration and Integration*, 13 (2012), pp. 187–202.

6. Tobias Hagmann and Didier Péclard, 'Negotiating statehood: Dynamics of Power and Domination in Africa', *Development and Change*, 41(4) (2010), pp. 539–562.

7. Khalid Sindawi, 'Are There Any Shi'ite Muslims in Israel?', *Holy Land Studies*, 7(2) (2008), p. 189.

8. Melkar el-Khoury and Thibaut Jaulin, *Country Report Lebanon* (Beirut: EUDO Citizenship Observatory, 2012), pp. 8–9. See also Are Knudsen, 'The Law, the Loss and the Lives of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon' (Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway, 2007), p. 2. Knudsen stresses the 'need to explore the "politics of citizenship" in post-war Lebanon' that refugees face.

Lebanese citizenship.[9] By focusing on the interplay between the geographical border between Lebanon and then Palestine now Israel and the formation of political identities and electoral dynamics within the community from Salha, my case study furthermore contributes to the exercise of linking 'the physical aspect of the border and borderland of South Lebanon with the more symbolic dimension of boundaries' that was recently reinvigorated by Meier.[10] Building on this interaction between spatial and institutional boundaries, the article suggests seeing Salha's simultaneous explicit allegiance to and implicit distancing from the Lebanese state as a manifestation of what Scott calls 'the art of not being governed'.[11]

Seeking to shed light on how Palestinian refugees can, in some instances, regain their socio-political agency, the article's main concern is to adopt a bottom-up and empirical perspective to explore how the community from Salha has been able to use its nationalization to ensure a degree of independence toward the state and to strengthen its position toward local patrons. The article is structured to accommodate the investigation of this key question. The next section offers a historical overview of the nationalization of Palestinians in Lebanon and introduces the 'seven villages' as a special case of 're-nationalization'. This section outlines the dominant top-down perspective on nationalization processes. It highlights the importance of electoral concerns to explain why the nationalization of certain communities was condoned and even supported by particular elites. In the subsequent section, the case study of Salha is brought in. The context-specific nationalization trajectory described here sets the scene for the subsequent section that proceeds with an in-depth analysis of the Salha case. Using the negotiated statehood concept, this section brings in the bottom-up perspective required to substantiate the argument that Salha's nationalization was shaped by more than mere electoral engineering. The final section concludes and places the preceding analysis in broader debates on citizenship in the Arab world and governance autonomy.

The Nationalization of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon[12]

Lebanon hosts some 400,000 Palestinians, constituting roughly 10 per cent of Lebanon's population before the influx of refugees from Syria.[13] The Palestinians constitute Lebanon's most disenfranchised community.[14] Not only can

9. Ghandour, 'Citizen Space', p. 2.

10. Daniel Meier, 'The Palestinian Fidâ'i as an Icon of Transnational Struggle: The South Lebanese Experience', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 41(3) (2014), pp. 323–324.

11. James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland South Asia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2009).

12. Aiko Nishikida, 'Palestinians From the "Seven Villages": Their Legal Status and Social Condition', *Kyoto Bulletin of Islamic Area Studies*, 3(1) (2009), pp. 229–230. Nishikida captures the intricate differences between nationalization (*tajannīs*), which means 'getting nationality as a Lebanese citizen and does not mean to quit being a Palestinian', and naturalization (*tawṭīn*), which carries the zero-sum connotation of 'quit being a Palestinian'. In light of these sensitivities, I will here use the term nationalization to indicate the process of obtaining Lebanese citizenship.

13. Muhammad Ali Khalidi and Diane Riskedahl, 'The Lived Reality of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon', in M.A. Khalidi (ed.), *Manifestations of Identity. The Lived Reality of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon* (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies and Institut franais du Proche-Orient, 2010), p. 1.

14. Jad Chabaan, Hala Ghattas, Rima Habib, Sari Hanafi, Nadine Sahyoun, Nisreen Salti, Karin Seyfert and Nadia Naamani, *Socio-economic Survey of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon* (Beirut: American University of Beirut and UNRWA, 2010).

Palestinians in Lebanon not vote or work for state agencies, they are also legally discriminated against in the labour market and, since 2001, cannot own real estate.[15] The Palestinians' marginalization is closely connected with the policy to withhold citizenship from them because, as Knudsen notes, in Lebanon, citizenship rather than residence 'is the key to obtain civic rights'.[16]

Despite the policy of opposing Palestinian nationalization, however, some Palestinians did obtain Lebanese citizenship. First, in the 1950s and 1960s some 30,000 Palestinians were nationalized through various lawsuits.[17] Second, in 1994 another approximately 27,000 Palestinians were granted Lebanese citizenship by means of Presidential Decree number 5427.[18] This was followed by an additional 23,000 Palestinians that obtained Lebanese citizenship in 1995.[19]

The 'seven villages'

The 1994 decree nationalized 154,931 foreign residents; Syrians, Bedouins, Kurds and Armenians as well as Palestinians.[20] For the Palestinians, the 1994 nationalization included a particularly intriguing case not of 'nationalization' but of 're-nationalization' or 're-Lebanonization' that is generally known as the story of the 'seven villages'.[21] This case concerns a chain of villages located around Lebanon's southern border that is known for the historically inter-twined socio-economic relations between what are now Lebanese and Palestinian communities.[22] Of these 24 villages and farms, 12 were populated by Sunnis, two by Maronite, one by Greek Catholics and two by Jews; six of the villages were predominantly Shi'i and one was divided between Shi'i and Greek Catholics. The latter seven villages—Terbikha, Salha, Malkiya, Nabi Yusha, Qadas, Hunin and Ibl al-Qamh—have gained currency as *the* seven villages and have, in Lebanon, become widely known for their ambiguous national status.[23]

In a process of colonial contestation, they were first included into the French Greater Lebanon in 1920 and then attached to British Mandate Palestine in 1923, according to the Paulet–Newcombe Agreement.[24] During the 1948 *Nakba* (catastrophe), the majority of the residents from the seven villages was expulsed from Palestine and became Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, where they mostly settled in the South.[25] While some individual court cases in the 1960s were successful, Palestinians from the seven villages were only nationalized as a

15. Suheil Al-Natour, 'The Legal Status of Palestinians in Lebanon', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 10(3) (1997), pp. 360–377; and Jaber Suleiman, 'Marginalized Community: The Case of the Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon' (Brighton, Research Report Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, 2006).
16. Knudsen, 'The Law', p. 4.
17. Simon Haddad, *The Palestinian Impasse in Lebanon. The Politics of Refugee Integration* (Eastbourne, Sussex: Sussex Academic Press, 2003), p. 4.
18. Hourani and Sensenig-Dabbous, 'Naturalized Citizens', p. 188.
19. Simon Haddad, 'The Origins of Popular Opposition to Palestinian Resettlement in Lebanon', *International Migration Review*, 38(2) (2004), pp. 470–492.
20. Hourani and Sensenig-Dabbous, 'Naturalized Citizens', pp. 187–188.
21. Ghandour, 'Citizenship Space', p. 7; and Dorothee Klaus, 'Palestinians in Lebanon between Integration and Segregation. Contextualisation of a Conflict' (PhD Dissertation Ruhr-Universitaet Bochum, 2000), p. 46.
22. Ahmad Beydoun, 'The South Lebanon Border Zone: A Local Perspective', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 21(3) (1992), p. 35; and Meier, 'Palestinian Fidâ'i', p. 323.
23. Nicholas Blanford, 'The Seven Villages, Another Lebanese–Israeli Complication', *Daily Star*, 25 August 2009; and Sindawi, 'Are There Any Shi'ite Muslims in Israel?', p. 186.
24. Kaufman, 'Between Palestine and Lebanon'; and Rania Maktabi, 'The Lebanese Census of 1932 Revisited. Who are the Lebanese?', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 26(2) (1999), p. 227.
25. Blanford, 'Seven Villages'; and Knudsen, 'The Law', p. 7.

community by the 1994 decree.[26] A decree, Hourani and Sensenig-Dabbous found, that 'changed the face of the Lebanese political system and has thus impacted the political scene ever since'.[27]

Electoral engineering and Shi'i emancipation

Scholars explain the 1994 nationalization of the seven villages, which constitutes a clear exception of the generally moribund anti-nationalization policy of the Lebanese state *vis-à-vis* the Palestinians, with reference to two inter-related issues, which I here discuss as electoral engineering and Shi'i emancipation respectively.

Electoral engineering is the dominant explanation for Lebanese political leaders' violation of their general rule of not granting Palestinians citizenship. The reason why Palestinian nationalization is extremely contentious in Lebanon is two-fold. First, Lebanese officials fear that Palestinian 'naturalization' (*tawṭīn*) in Lebanon would decrease the pressure on Israel to comply with UN Resolution 194 that stipulates the Palestinian refugees' right to return (*ḥaq al-'awda*).[28] Second, Lebanon's political system is utterly sectarian. The Lebanese state is organized through a consociational political system that centres on an inter-sectarian power-sharing formula. The system includes corresponding sectarian quota guiding the allocation of all public positions and resources. The fact that the Lebanese state structure is informed by a precarious quest for inter-communitarian balance means that granting the largely Sunni Palestinians Lebanese citizenship would have significant implications for the balance of power governing Lebanon's post-war political dynamics.[29] Kaufman summarizes: 'As a state founded on the basis of a delicate balance between its sects, the Palestinian refugees were perceived as a threat to Lebanon's political order'.[30]

The aversion to grant Palestinians citizenship is thus often presented as 'probably the only issue on which the views of the Lebanese—across ideological and confessional lines—agree'.[31] This, however, tells only part of the story. While Lebanese political leaders indeed recoil from nationalizing Palestinians *en masse*, they have fewer scruples to nationalize those segments of the Palestinian refugees that might benefit their own electoral position. El-Khoury and Jaulin find that 'within the confessional regime, granting Lebanese citizenship, or denying naturalisation rights, have represented key features of [...] legal and administrative misuses aiming to modify the demographic balance between sects and, accordingly, obtaining a larger share of power'.[32] Significantly, the people nationalized in 1994 were directly eligible to vote in parliamentary and municipal elections 'without a waiting period or duration of stay' as is usual.[33]

26. el-Khoury and Jaulin, *Country Report Lebanon*, p. 9; and Maktabi, 'Lebanese Census', p. 227.
27. Hourani and Sensenig-Dabbous, 'Naturalized Citizens', p. 188.
28. Nishikida, 'Palestinians From the "Seven Villages"', p. 222; and Knudsen, 'Widening the Protection Gap', p. 68.
29. Melanie Cammett and Sukriti Issar, 'Bricks and Mortar Clientelism: Sectarianism and the Logics of Welfare Allocation in Lebanon', *World Politics*, 62(3) (2010), pp. 381–421. This is intricately related to the broadly shared feeling among Lebanese that the Palestinian presence in Lebanon caused and prolonged the Civil War. Beydoun, 'South Lebanon Border', p. 42; and Meier, 'Al-Tawteen', p. 119.
30. Kaufman, 'Between Palestine and Lebanon', p./ 695.
31. Haddad, 'Origins', p. 473.
32. el-Khoury and Jaulin, *Country Report Lebanon*, p. 6.
33. Hourani and Sensenig-Dabbous, 'Naturalized Citizens', p. 190.

This electoral logic is clearly demonstrated by the fact that 'politicians continue to mobilize and rally the naturalized to vote'.[34] Hourani and Sensenig-Dabbous show that nationalized citizens demonstrated a higher rate of voter participation than native-born Lebanese, which they attribute to effective mobilization by 'machine politics'.[35] Indeed, blocs of nationalized voters have 'tipped the demographic balance in some districts'.[36] Discussing the case of nationalized Bedouin tribes in the Bekaa valley, Chatty et al. conclude that 'Bedouin women and men were seen as blocks of votes "purchased" by the powerful elite to shift the balance in their favour'.[37] There is no reason to assume that such dynamics should be different for Palestinians that were nationalized. In fact, the 1994 nationalization 'turned into a political firestorm from groups fearing that selective naturalisation was politically motivated and being used for personal gain'.[38]

This logic of 'electoral engineering,' which both stems from and perpetuates Lebanon's political system driven by sectarian quotas, is closely related to the second dynamic scholars refer to in explaining the 1994 nationalization of Palestinians: the 'emancipation' of Shi'i political parties in Lebanon.[39] Whereas the practice of electoral engineering explains the interests underlying the 1994 decree, the increase of Shi'i political power in Lebanon explains its timing. Prior to the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990), Christian Palestinians much more easily gained citizenship than Muslim Palestinians because, during this period, Lebanon's Christians still firmly dominated Lebanese state institutions.[40] Concurrently, 'the incorporation of Shiite villages into a country with no Shiite population [initially] raised few feathers'.[41] Yet, throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, the Shi'i parties of Amal and Hizbullah remedied the historical Shi'i political marginalization in Lebanon.[42] It was these parties that 'drew the public's attention to the deviations from the armistice lines of 1920 that led to current boundaries' and claimed that 'seven predominantly Shi'i villages were unjustly robbed from a south Lebanon peopled by their co-religionists'.[43] That in 1994 Lebanon *de facto* claimed the seven villages 'was seen as a testament to the rising power of the Shi'i parties, especially since the remaining non-Shi'i 16 villages left behind by the 1923 deviations were excluded from the territorial claim'.[44]

The 'Re-nationalization' of the Refugees from Salha

Having established the general context of Palestinian nationalization in Lebanon and the exceptional history of the seven villages, I will now zoom in on one of

34. Ibid.
35. Ibid., p. 187.
36. Ibid., p. 193.
37. Dawn Chatty, Nisrine Mansour and Nasser Yassin, 'Statelessness and Tribal Identity on Lebanon's Eastern Borders'. *Mediterranean Politics*, 18(3) (2013), p. 422.
38. Knudsen, 'The Law', p. 7.
39. Nishikida, 'Palestinians From the "Seven Villages"', p. 224.
40. Kaufman, 'Between Palestine and Lebanon', p. 695; and Klaus, *Palestinians in Lebanon*, pp. 111–112.
41. Warren Singh-Bartlett, 'Seven Villages Await Their Independence', *Daily Star*, 20 November 2000.
42. Both Amal and Hizbullah have a complex relationship with Lebanon's Palestinian community. For an overview, see Jacob Høigilt, 'Islamism, Pluralism and the Palestine Question: The Case of Hizbullah', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 34(2) (2007), pp. 123–136; and Harel Chorev, 'Power, Tradition and Challenge: The Resilience of the Elite Shi'ite Families of Lebanon', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 40 (3) (2013), pp. 305–323.
43. Knoozroom, http://knoozroom.com/tale-of-a-lost-village-ch2.php (accessed June 2014).
44. Blanford, 'The Seven Villages: Origins and Implications' (unpublished).

these seven villages: Salha. The analysis presented in the remainder of this article is based on qualitative data derived from interviews, focus groups, documentary evidence and observations conducted and obtained during five months of fieldwork in Shabriha in 2013 and an additional round of more targeted interviews in the summer of 2014.[45]

Salha has gained some notoriety as a result of the 'Salha massacre' in 1948 'when 105 residents were machine-gunned behind the village mosque' by the Israeli Hagannah militia.[46] Salha's residents fled to Lebanon afterwards, where they were eventually registered with United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) as Palestinian refugees. After an initial stay in the environments of the town of Bint Jbil, the refugees from Salha relocated to an area called Shabriha in 1956, where they initially lived in and around the orchards they worked in. The refugees from Salha consisted of three main families that were taken under the auspices of the leading Shi'i clans in South Lebanon. The members of the extended 'Aun family, constituting a considerable part of Salha's original population, were placed under the patronage of the Lebanese Al-Khalil family.[47] According to a community elder from Salha, the Al-Khalil family forced the people from Salha to work on its lands in dire circumstances. When the people rose up against this exploitation in the late 1960s, they were supported by Shi'i cleric Musa Sadr. He bought a plot of land in Shabriha and donated it to the community so they could create their own village and would be safeguarded from eviction or exploitation.[48]

Some families from Salha received Lebanese citizenship almost directly after their flight to Lebanon in 1948, most probably due to their socio-economic status or political connections.[49] Others successfully raised individual cases in the 1950s and 1960s. Most of the people from Salha, however, collectively received Lebanese citizenship through the 1994 decree. Throughout the nationalization trajectory of the people of Salha, the issue of registration has been ambiguous. Initially, in the 1960s, people from Salha who received citizenship were registered in different places as registration had to happen in an already existing neighbourhood or village, which Shabriha was not at that time. Some people were allegedly registered in the Beirut neighbourhood of Burj al-Barajna.[50] Yet most people from Salha that got Lebanese citizenship before the 1994 decree—even though they lived in Shabriha, on the territory of 'Abasiya municipality—were registered in Basatin, a neighbourhood of Tyre (apparently to avoid tensions in the smaller 'Abasiya).[51] In 1994, the people from Salha who got Lebanese citizenship also registered in Basatin. However, the number of registered people in Basatin

45. Nora Stel, 'Governance between Isolation and Integration. A Study on the Interaction between Lebanese State Institutions and Palestinian Authorities in Shabriha Gathering, South Lebanon' (Working Paper No. 22, Beirut, Lebanon, Issam Fares Institute, AUB, June 2014); and Stel, 'Lebanese–Palestinian Governance Interaction in the Palestinian Gathering of Shabriha, South Lebanon—A Tentative Extension of the "Mediated State" from Africa to the Mediterranean', *Mediterranean Politics* (Published online on 20 March 2015), DOI: 10.1080/13629395.2014.984830. (http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13629395.2014.984830#preview).

46. Singh-Bartlett, 'Seven Villages'.

47. Rodger Shanahan, *The Shi'a of Lebanon. Clans, Parties and Clerics* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), p. 47; Chorev, 'Power, Tradition and Challenge', p. 312; and Meier, 'Palestinian Fidâ'i', p. 325.

48. Communal leader, Lebanese Shabriha, 26 July 2013; and Amal representative, Lebanese Shabriha, 17 July 2014.

49. 'UN Representative De Mistura', *Daily Star*, December 2001.

50. Amal representative, Shabriha, 17 July 2014; and *mukhtār* Basatin, Masaken, 23 July 2014. A *mukhtār* is a sub-municipal state authority responsible for administrative issues in a certain neighbourhood or village.

51. *Mukhtār*, Lebanese Shabriha, 9 July 2014.

then reached the population threshold that allocated it another *mukhtār*.[52] This new *mukhtār* was elected by, and thus represented, the community of Salha living in Shabriha and registered in Basatin. The newly elected *mukhtār*, subsequently, used his capacity to 'collect' (*jama'*) the registration files of the residents of his community and gather these all in Shabriha, an area geographically distinct from Basatin. He thereby separated Shabriha from Basatin as an administrative unit. Several *mukhtārs* explained to me that a *mukhtār* has the authority to request a relocation of registration files if he can prove that the citizens in question have been living for three years in the new place of registration.[53] This clarifies how, in 1997, the registration of the nationalized people of Salha (both those that received citizenship before and those that had been nationalized through the 1994 decree) was transferred from Basatin (and Burj al-Barajna and possible other locations) to Shabriha, which was thereby recognized as a neighbourhood on its own.[54] In the words of the *mukhtār*:

> At the time when we got Lebanese nationality [in the beginning of the 1960s], there was no registration file for Shabriha; there was nothing called Shabriha. That is why we lived officially in Basatin. But everyone was living in another place [i.e. Shabriha]. In 1995 there was a decision to call this area Shabriha. At that time, we started to make a registration file. And we worked to transfer this file until 1997. We transferred the appropriate names from Basatin to our own file called Shabriha.[55]

This move was partly made to avoid competition in *mukhtār* elections with the original inhabitants of Basatin.[56] More importantly, however, and as I will elaborate on below, it allowed Shabriha to manage its own affairs relatively independently. It was not until 2004, however, that the registration file of Shabriha was included in the voter registration system of Tyre municipality.[57]

Before turning to a more thorough analysis of the above-described nationalization and registration process, it needs to be stressed that there is a gap between official citizenship, experienced national identity and the material consequences of both in the case of the people from Salha.[58] It is ultimately impossible, and undesirable, to determine whether the people from Salha are 'Lebanese Palestinians', 'Palestinian Lebanese' or neither.[59] These issues of identity and belonging are even more pronounced as the village of Shabriha emerged in tandem with a settlement started by Palestinian Bedouin tribes that had also fled Palestine during the *Nakba* and, after a short stay in Qlayla, chose Shabriha to 'set up camp' as well. While both Palestinian, these two groups (the people from Salha and their Palestinian neighbours) differed significantly in terms of sect (Shi'i versus Sunni), place of origin (border area versus Safad) and vocation (Bedouin versus farmers [*felāḥīn*]). To this day, while they share the same kindergarten and primary (UNRWA) school, both communities live spatially segregated. While outsiders would refer to both settlements as 'Shabriha', the people from Salha living in Lebanese Shabriha tend to refer to the inhabitants of Palestinian Shabriha as 'the

52. A neighbourhood is allowed one *mukhtār* per 500 residents.
53. *Mukhtār* Basatin, Tyre, 25 July 2014; and Palestinian–Lebanese municipal council member, Burj al-Shemali camp, Tyre, 24 July 2014.
54. *Mukhtār* Basatin, Masaken, 23 July 2014.
55. *Mukhtār*, Lebanese Shabriha, 23 July 2013.
56. Mayor, Tyre, 25 June 2013; and *mukhtār*, Lebanese Shabriha, 23 July 2013.
57. *Mukhtār*, Lebanese Shabriha, 6 May 2013.
58. Singh-Bartlett, 'Seven Villages'.
59. Nishikida, 'Palestinians From the "Seven Villages"', p. 220.

tribes' (*al-'Arab*) or 'the camp' (*al-mukhayim*) and the Palestinians living in Palestinian Shabriha would consistently call Lebanese Shabriha 'Salha'.

The Palestinians in Palestinian Shabriha see the people from Salha as first and foremost Lebanese and most people in Lebanese Shabriha seem to agree, often employing a deliberately primordial Lebanese identity. One communal leader from Lebanese Shabriha, for instance, remembered: 'My grandfather told me that at the southern end of the village of Salha there was a big stone on which it was written "here end the Lebanese lands"'.[60] Singh-Bartlett documents similar sentiments. One of his respondents reminisces:

> 'Our family was Lebanese before the Ottomans, before the French, and before there was even a Lebanon,' says Hajj Abou Fawwaz Hassan Khodroj, who was just 13 when he left his home for the last time. 'I'm Lebanese, and our land is Lebanese, there is no doubt about it.'[61]

Yet at the same time there is a distinct refugee identity discernible in my respondents' accounts. They yearn for return to Salha, which is now in Israel. And they benefit from their refugee identity, because it is their Palestinian ID card that entitles them to enrol in (free) UNRWA schools and clinics.[62] Indeed, despite internal Palestinian 'othering',[63] many respondents stressed their Palestinian origin. A Palestinian scholar mentioned that nationalized Palestinians from the seven villages established a non-governmental organization that is fighting for their right to return 'and thus confirms their Palestinianness'.[64] As further discussed below, these identifications are crucially linked to the trajectory of nationalization followed by the people from Salha.

Making Sense of Salha: Electoral Engineering and Societal Savvy

In line with the broader literature about the seven villages, the nationalization of the people from Salha seems predominantly inspired by electoral scheming. However, it is not the 1994 nationalization as such that had any direct electoral results. It was the 2004 registration within a specific—and from a residential perspective not the most obvious—municipality that evidences the dominance of electoral logic in this story. As el-Khoury and Jaulin note for other instances of nationalization in Lebanon: 'In several constituencies, groups of newly naturalised persons were registered on electoral lists, although they were not residing there. The aim of such irregularities, so-called parachuting, was to influence the election's outcome'.[65] Similar dynamics seem to have been at play with regard to 'Salha's' 2004 registration in Tyre. The eventual inclusion of Shabriha's (nationalized) voters in Tyre's electoral file. and not in that of 'Abasiya, was laid down in Decision No. 120 (19 February 2004) and allegedly resulted from interventions from Speaker of Parliament and Amal leader Nabih Berri.[66]

60. Communal leader, Lebanese Shabriha, 26 July 2013.
61. Singh-Bartlett, 'Seven Villages'.
62. Nishikida, 'Palestinians From the "Seven Villages"', p. 225.
63. Kathleen Fincham, 'Learning Palestine: The Construction of Palestinian Identities in South Lebanon' (PhD thesis, University of Sussex, 2010). Fincham describes how in 'Palestinian society, boundaries are constructed between "authentic" Palestinian Sunnis and Palestinian Shi'ite "Others"'.
64. Mar Elias camp, Beirut, 21 March 2013.
65. el-Khoury and Jaulin, *Country Report Lebanon*, p. 12.
66. Mayor, 'Abasiya, 11 April 2013; and *mukhtār*, Lebanese Shabriha, 3 April 2013.

While electoral outcomes were relatively stable in ‘Abasiya, they were hotly contested in Tyre, the capital of South Lebanon. Apparently Amal, to which the Lebanese in Shabriha adhered ever since Musa Sadr guaranteed their loyalty by freeing them from the yoke of the Al-Khalil family, could use their votes better in Tyre than in ‘Abasiya and intervened to include Shabriha in Tyre’s electoral zone.[67] In the words of the former district governor (*qāimaqām*) of Tyre:

> This is a nice piece of Lebanese political work. [. . .] The minister of interior did this by administrative act; he made a liaison between Tyre and Shabriha. [. . .] This is political. Shabriha is part of the same political movement as Tyre. Shabriha and Tyre are both with President Berri. So this gave Tyre some additional members; enhanced their chance there to succeed.[68]

While separating cadastral and electoral territories is not unheard of in Lebanon, a local observer was quite upset by the entrance of this ‘bloc’ (of over 700 Amal votes) of Shabriha into the electoral dynamics of Tyre as it had a significant impact on the balance between the competing alliances for the municipal elections: one supported by Amal and the other by Hizbullah.[69] Another commentator concurred, stating that Shabriha constitutes a ‘homogenous electoral block’ that is ‘a reliable contingency’ for any election.[70] Thus, ‘citizenship is only relevant to the extent it challenges the balance’.[71]

This might also explain why Amal only utilized the latent voting bloc of Shabriha in the 2004 municipal elections and did not immediately exploit this benefit in the 1998 elections. It seems that Amal had not expected the fierce competition posed by Hizbullah in its traditional stronghold in South Lebanon in 1998 and only just maintained a ‘slight advantage’ at that time.[72] This experience, however, may have prompted Amal to better prepare for the competition with Hizbullah that *i*Montly called one of the most important dynamics of the 2004 elections.[73] In fact, in 2004 Amal’s electoral position in South Lebanon deteriorated even further: in the South, Hezbollah was ‘victorious in over 60 percent of the municipalities (compared with 55 percent in 1998), while Amal captured only 30 percent of municipalities (down from 45 percent in 1998)’.[74] Amal did, however, manage to maintain its dominance in Tyre, the regional capital that is of great political significance to it.[75]

Thus, for many analysts, it is clear why Lebanese political leaders bothered to nationalize the people from Salha: strategically administrable votes. But what was in it for the people? The material benefits of citizenship are usually put forward as

67. Former *qāimaqām*, Tyre, 22 June 2013; and Mayor, ‘Abasiya, 11 April 2013.
68. Tyre, 22 June 2013.
69. Ameir Kanso, ‘Intervention in the Electoral Process in Tyre’, Al ‘Ahed, www.alahednews.com (accessed June 2014).
70. *Al-Mustaqbal* newspaper, 26 February 2004, Bint Jbil, www.bintjbeil.com (accessed June 2014).
71. Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee representative, Beirut, 26 March 2013.
72. Carole Dagher, ‘Lebanon Holds First Municipal Elections in 35 Years’, *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, July/August (1998), pp. 55–56.
73. *i*Montly, ‘Changing of the Guard? Wrapping up Lebanon’s Municipal Elections, All Eyes are Now on 2005’, *Public Sector*, 24 (2004), p. 4.
74. Rodger Shanahan, ‘Hizballah Rising: The Political Battle for the Loyalty of the Shi’a of Lebanon’, *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 9(1) (2005), p. 2.
75. *i*Montly, ‘Changing of the Guard?’, p. 4; and Shanahan, ‘Hizballah Rising’, p. 4. The mayor of Tyre (15 July 2014) insisted, however, that ‘in the end, we [Amal] got 72 percent of the votes and they [Hizbullah] got 28 percent. So the 700 voters from Shabriha—which is like 8 percent as the total number of voters is around 11.000—wasn’t decisive’.

the main motivation for people to seek nationalization.[76] Indeed, in the case of the people of Salha, the consequences of their right to own property, work in government agencies and benefit from municipal services stands in stark contrast with the situation of their non-nationalized Palestinian neighbours. This 'pragmatic citizenship' conception was prevalent in almost all accounts and highlights the refugees' understanding of citizenship as (primarily) a set of rights rather than as (only) a national identity.[77] Clearly, for refugees, those 'without the right to have rights', it is in 'the inextricable binding of rights to citizenship', particularly in the exceptionally marginalizing context of Lebanon, that citizenship gains its ultimate relevance.[78] A nationalized Palestinian elaborated: 'My two girls have finished university. If you're Lebanese you pay only $500,- per year, Palestinians pay $2000,-; which is more than I would have been able to afford. And many people have joined the Lebanese army'.[79] On top of these formal state services, moreover, are parallel sectarian services, such as education, health care and alimonies, provided by Lebanon's Shi'i political parties. This informal sectarian patronage, however, cannot be separated from formal citizenship, as such clientelism is only beneficial for parties if it can be exchanged for votes. Thus, Lebanese citizens mostly access the state and its resources as a voter for a political party (rather than based on the civil rights they hold as a citizen). Nahas describes that it is through party structures that state redistribution is executed.[80]

This, then, is the dominant perspective on the nationalization of people from the seven villages: Lebanese political leaders need their votes and the people need these leaders' mediation to access both state and partisan services and resources. It is not this article's intention to contest the importance of strategic electoral concerns in the nationalization process concerning the people from the seven villages. In fact, the account from Salha underwrites the importance of these dynamics. I do intend to show, however, that this top-down lens does not tell the whole story. I seek to complement it with a more agency-oriented perspective that highlights the role of the community and its leaders in the emergence, timing and manifestation of the nationalization. I thereby build on Kaufman's conclusion that accounts of the seven villages are characterized by an absence of the perspective of the villagers themselves.[81] Nationalization was not all about 'political machines [taking] advantage of their political demoralization and comparative social weakness'.[82] Instead, nationalization has, in the case of Salha, to some extent 'encouraged the naturalized to develop a feeling of group identity and electoral clout'.[83] This emancipation did not, as Hourani and Sensenig-Dabbous assume, 'lead to a willingness to challenge the control of their benefactors', but it did enable them to use their citizenship in ways that went, if not against, certainly

76. Kaufman, 'Between Palestine and Lebanon', p. 703; and Klaus, *Palestinians in Lebanon*, p. 39.
77. Ghandour, 'Citizen Space,' p. 19.
78. Ibid., p. 2; see also Sari Hanafi, *Governing Palestinian Refugee Camps in the Arab East: Governmentalities in Search of Legitimacy* (Beirut: Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, AUB, 2010), pp. 53–54.
79. Communal leader, Burj al-Shemali camp, Tyre, 26 July 2012.
80. Charbel Nahas, 'The Lebanese Socio-economic System, 1985–2005', in L. Guazzone and D. Pioppi (eds.), *The Arab State and Neo-Liberal Globalization. The Restructuring of State Power in the Middle East*. (Reading: Ithaca Press, 2012), p. 135.
81. Kaufman, 'Between Palestine and Lebanon', p. 703.
82. Hourani and Sensenig-Dabbous, 'Naturalized Citizens', p. 192.
83. Ibid., p. 193.

beyond the interests and motivations of the 'godfathers' who facilitated their nationalization.[84]

I use Hagmann and Péclard's negotiated statehood concept to show these divergent motivations and the active role of the community of Salha that are mostly overlooked in analyses of nationalization in Lebanon.[85] While the negotiated statehood idea is predominantly concerned with the study of political authority in settings of 'state fragility' and is overwhelmingly based on African case studies, its underlying logic offers a useful perspective on the dynamics of citizenship as dealt with in this article. It focuses on the 'processes of negotiation, contestation and bricolage' that make states and shed light on how citizenship, a key institution constituting the state, is acquired and shaped.[86] The concept offers a heuristic framework that approaches negotiation processes as consisting of resources (social and material capital) and repertoires (or frames), on the one hand, and objects of negotiation on the other. Resources and repertoires refer to the instruments by means of which access to the state is negotiated. Objects of negotiation pertain to the motivations for negotiating this access.

A divergent motivation: objects of negotiation

For Hagmann and Péclard, 'objects' of negotiation signal which interest is at the heart of a negotiation. Hagmann and Péclard consider the 'institutional structure of the state, and especially the balance of power between the "centre" of the state and its "peripheries"', a crucial object of negotiation.[87] While the nationalization of the people from Salha is always portrayed as being about electoral politics, it is also about the carving out of local autonomy for the Salha polity. Both electoral engineering and local autonomy relate to the institutional structure of the state as an object of negotiation, but they put a premium on different components of this institutional structure. The electoral frame stresses the importance of getting access to state structures, whereas the autonomy frame emphasizes the relevance of independence from state structures.

As established above, a main reason for the people from Salha to be enthusiastic about Lebanese citizenship is the access to state services and resources it generates as well as the parallel benefits associated with party patronage. Interestingly, however, respondents indicated that apart from access to the state, the nationalization was in part also inspired by a desire for independence from the state's imposing hierarchies and surveillance regime. The bid for their 'own' *mukhtār*, for instance, was a deliberate move:

> This was our idea, we wanted to be independent. If we wouldn't have our own registration, we'd need to go to Tyre, to 'Abasiya, to other villages to ask for services. We prefer to have our own *mukhtār* so we can manage our internal affairs alone. And now we're independent and we can do everything alone.[88]

Such independence could not have been achieved under the category of Palestinian refugeeness, something respondents from Salha had experienced prior

84. Ibid.
85. Hagmann and Péclard, 'Negotiating Statehood'.
86. Ibid., p. 539.
87. Ibid., p. 553.
88. *Mukhtār*, Lebanese Shabriha, 23 July 2013.

to their nationalization. It was only as Lebanese that the people in Salha sought and realized a rather unprecedented degree of local self-governance and autonomy. In practice, now, the *mukhtār* can operate as if he runs his own municipality because Tyre is not very interested in what it does as long as Shabriha votes for the dominant party and 'Abasiya does not have much leeway to impose anything on Shabriha because Shabriha enjoys the political backing of the much bigger Tyre municipality. The vice mayor of Tyre explained: 'In Shabriha, yes, the *mukhtār* is his own municipality. My friend says it's like Monaco or the Vatican in Europe: a small state on its own'.[89] The former *qāimaqām* agreed that 'in Shabriha they're like a small state by themselves'.[90] A representative of the Korean contingent of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, which provides development aid to several municipalities in the region, mentioned Shabriha on a par with 'Abasiya, Burkhliya and Burj Rahal; that is, as being a municipality.[91] Shabriha's *mukhtār* summed up the situation of his community as follows: 'Geographically we're under 'Abasiya. Politically, we're with Tyre. Practically, we're independent'.[92]

Leaders from Lebanese Shabriha, moreover, assured me that they are working to transfer this *de facto* independence into *de jure* independence as well:

> Soon, I think in the coming years, we will become our own municipality in Shabriha. [. . .] Now if we want a project, we need the acceptance of Tyre, because they'll pay from their budget and we have to wait until they finished all the previous budgets and you have to remind them every week. But when we have our own municipality, we have our own budget and we can implement our projects quickly and we don't need permission from Tyre. [. . .] And we don't have to be with one against the other. If, in elections, they want to make common lists they cannot force us to be with one [political party/block] against the other.[93]

This aspiration to become a municipality of their own is remarkable as many commentators insisted that, because Shabriha currently has the status of a neighbourhood (*ḥayy*), and not a village (*quriyya*), it cannot legally be awarded its own municipality, a privilege limited to villages. A *mukhtār* from Basatin, however, suggested that Shabriha might not settle for this: 'Shabriha has many people abroad and their economic situation is good and this makes them ambitious, wanting to be independent. They might think they'll get their own village and become independent.'[94] After all, laws have been changed on Shabriha's behalf before. What is more, some intentional administrative loopholes to promote Shabriha to the status of municipality might have been installed already. Advising me not to 'dig too deep', a representative of Tyre municipality hinted that Shabriha's current status is more than that of a 'neighbourhood', even if not officially that of a 'village'. He told me: 'Shabriha was added to the voting list of Tyre in 2004. Officially, now we're the municipality of Tyre-Shabriha, like a joint venture. But we'll never entirely understand this situation'.[95] An authority figure from Shabriha also told me that Shabriha would soon 'gain the decision to be our own village [and have] two members in the Tyre municipal council from

89. Tyre, 3 April 2013.
90. Tyre, 22 June 2013.
91. Burj Rahal, 16 October 2014.
92. Lebanese Shabriha, 3 April 2013.
93. Amal leader, Lebanese Shabriha, 25 July 2013.
94. *Mukhtār* Basatin, Tyre, 25 July 2014.
95. Tyre, 15 July 2014.

the ministry of interior' as a step towards an independent municipality.[96] Another respondent seemed to corroborate this, saying: 'Shabriha is like a municipality already even while there is no real municipality there'.[97]

An active role: resources and repertoires

The previous section argued that the people from Salha had their own distinct motivations for seeking nationalization and pursued different goals than the Lebanese politicians that granted them their citizenship; the objects of negotiation were different for both. The community's passiveness as assumed by the exclusively electoral paradigm is further nuanced by the active role the people from Salha and their representatives played in the actual nationalization process. First, by lobbying for their nationalization. Leaders from several of the seven villages emphasized that citizenship was not bestowed on them out of the blue. A *mukhtār* originally from Terbikha remembered: 'We asked for this! We asked so hard for this!'[98] Representatives from the seven villages united in an informal committee that petitioned Lebanese Shi'i leaders. A local community leader explained that 'the seven villages are very close to Nabih Berri and to Amal and to the Shi'i council in Lebanon; they talked to all of them'.[99] The *mukhtār* originally from Terbikha stressed that, in initiating the call for citizenship, Berri merely supported requests that spokespersons of the seven villages had already been voicing for a long time.

When they had attained citizenship, community leaders from Salha secondly took an active stance in the process of registration. The *mukhtār* of Lebanese Shabriha said that he, rather than his Lebanese patrons on his behalf, 'made an agreement with Tyre municipality'.[100] The *mukhtār*'s strategic registration of his people in one and the same place was, he told me, informed by his own aspirations to serve the community rather than by requests of political parties. It was this immediate administrative unification that later made electoral inclusion under Tyre a politically interesting option. Many local leaders I spoke with were convinced that the eventual electoral clout 'Salha' attained had been envisioned by its representatives from early on. In response to my question of why the people form Shabriha would want to be registered as a collective, for instance, a municipal council member from Burj al-Shemali stated:

> Because then they can have authority. When they vote, they calculate the number. Authority moves from the bottom to the top … And 'Aun is a big family, so they want all people to stand together so they can say "Bayt 'Aun votes like this". This would put them in a good position in the upper echelons.[101]

Resources: unity and representation

A look at the resources available to the community from Salha helps to explain how such an active role was possible despite the hierarchical structure of Lebanese

96. Shabriha, 17 July 2014.
97. Communal leader, Qasmiya, 26 September 2014.
98. Masaken, 23 July 2014.
99. Burj al-Shemali camp, Tyre, 24 July 2014.
100. Lebanese Shabriha, 3 April 2013.
101. Nationalized municipal council member, Burj al-Shemali camp, Tyre, 24 July 2014.

politics. Hagmann and Péclard define resources as 'the material basis of collective action; they include tangible and intangible assets such as bureaucratic capacities, organizational skills, finance and ability to mobilize funding, knowledge and technical expertise, control over physical violence, international networks, political alliances'.[102] In the case of Salha, it was particularly the socio-political capital of the *mukhtār* and the community's cohesiveness that indicate nationalization was not merely a matter of waiting until a Lebanese patron deemed it beneficial to grant them citizenship.

The unity of the community is often regarded as a consequence of the fact that the part of Salha which relocated to Shabriha consisted of one extended family. These close ties explain why the community can act as a collective *vis-à-vis* Lebanese patrons and is less susceptible to divide-and-rule politics than other villages. According to Klaus, 'often whole families were associated with a particular political leader whom they would support and vote for. In return, they could expect to be granted privileges from his side'.[103] This was certainly the case in Lebanese Shabriha. The vice-mayor of 'Abasiya explained:

> Most of the villages when they were displaced from the south were spread over many villages [. . .]. Only Salha came together and stayed together. This is what facilitates them to ask for a *mukhtār* and have the ministry agree to this.[104]

Considering the strength of the leader heading this unified village, the role of the *mukhtār* as described in the previous section was crucial, not least because he has the authority to demand unified voting as described above. A Palestinian admiringly said:

> Look to the second [Lebanese] Shabriha: what the *mukhtār* tells them is done, they obey him in everything. He is the only responsible. They are united; they are improving their village and now they are a force in Tyre city. They are a small village, but they have an effect in the elections. *Mukhtār* 'Aun has good relations with [the head of the union of municipalities in Tyre area] because the *mukhtār* is smart and he is building good relations from all sides.[105]

While, as mentioned above, the *mukhtār* gained particular clout only when he became an actual *mukhtār*, he and his forefathers had played the role of community leaders before and their authority can thus be considered a crucial resource even before it was institutionalized as a state function.

Repertoires: nation, sect and politics

Hagmann and Péclard see repertoires as the symbolic counterparts of material resources; the frames that are used to 'mobilize popular support and to give meaning to their actions'.[106] Repertoires come close to ideologies, but also touch upon national, religious and cultural identities.[107] In the case of Salha, the community has been able to shape the process and interpretation of nationalization by strategically alternating the emphasis on the nationalist, political and sectarian

102. Hagmann and Péclard, 'Negotiating Statehood', p. 547.
103. Klaus, *Palestinians in Lebanon*, p. 37.
104. 'Abasiya, 1 July 2013.
105. Rashidiya camp, Tyre, 6 July 2013.
106. Hagmann and Péclard, 'Negotiating Statehood', p. 547.
107. Ibid.

aspects of their socio-political identity. Inherently, the issue of citizenship is about a national identity and hence a nationalist repertoire—it is all about whether or not these people are 'really' Lebanese or 'actually' Palestinian. Yet the particular set-up of the Lebanese state also brings in a sectarian repertoire that activates Shi'i versus Sunni identities to appeal to sectarian parties. For quite some time, however, there was a political identity the people from the seven villages played upon that bridged both nationalist and sectarian repertoires. The strategic highlighting or downplaying of any of these repertoires available to the people from Salha has helped them in realizing their object of negotiation—access to state resources and services and simultaneous independence from state dominance. Indeed, as Peteet describes, the self-identification of Palestinians in Lebanon, as either refugees, citizens or nationals, most pertinently depends 'on the current nature of their relations with their Lebanese hosts'.[108]

Initially, in the pre-Civil War phase, people from the seven villages were active in the Palestinian National Movement that had a pan-Arab outlook. During this time the communities from the seven villages purposefully ventilated their dual Lebanese and Palestinian identity, identifying themselves as the embodiment of pan-Arabism. Meier demonstrates how, at least until the mid-1970s and especially in South Lebanon, the Palestinian struggle was 'effectively transnational', cast as it was as 'the ferment of "an Arab revolution" that should lead to liberation and development' for society as a whole.[109] While the people from the seven villages were supported in this struggle by the Shi'i clergy in Lebanon, which longed to claim a contribution to the fight for the liberation of Palestine in the pre-Hizbullah era, this Shi'i identity was of minor importance. Their programme was dominated by resistance against occupation and implementation of the international revolution. According to an Amal representative from Shabriha, Musa Sadr initially encouraged the men from Salha to join the Palestinian Revolution under the flag of Fatah as there was close coordination between Sadr and Yaser 'Arafat. The mayor of Tyre noted: 'the first fighters of Amal were trained by Fatah and were fighting inside Fatah. [. . .] Their relation is historically intertwined'.[110] Only with the demise of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in Lebanon in the late 1970s did the seven villages start to organize themselves with the intent to seek Lebanese citizenship.[111] A Palestinian legal scholar noted: 'They were the real pan-Arabists, Lebanese and Palestinian at the same time. And yet this brought them nothing. So the thought was "now our guys [the Shi'i in Lebanon] are on the ascendancy, why shouldn't we benefit?"'[112] A nationalized Palestinian scholar corroborated that 'after the withdrawal of the PLO [from Lebanon in 1982] and the diminishing of importance of the right of return in the negotiations [between Israel and the Arab countries], the feeling became "let's live"'; that is, get Lebanese citizenship.[113]

This entailed an increasing identification as (also) Lebanese. A Palestinian from Palestinian Shabriha noted:

108. Julie Peteet, 'Problematizing a Palestinian Diaspora', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 39(4) (2007), p. 640.
109. Meier, 'Palestinian Fidâ'i', pp. 334, 327.
110. Tyre, 15 July 2014.
111. Meier, 'Palestinian Fidâ'i', p. 331.
112. Mar Elias camp, Beirut, 28 June 2014.
113. Saida, 7 July 2014.

> Before 1948, Palestinians saw them as Palestinians. There was no discrimination between Muslims, Christians and even Jews and they would live in the same village and even intermarry. And the villages in Palestine and Lebanon had a good and close relationship. But now, we surely see them as Lebanese, because this is what they want; they see themselves as Lebanese.[114]

Ironically, and despite the shared refugee identity mentioned above, to avoid accusations of *tawṭīn*, people from the seven villages often felt the need to 'be more Lebanese than the Lebanese'. Aversion of Palestinians seems a rather national Lebanese trait.[115] Someone from Palestinian Shabriha summarized the general sentiment there that 'they [the people from Salha] don't like the Palestinians; they're really Lebanese, accent and all'.[116] A Palestinian analyst told me of a joke that circulated just after the 1994 decree was announced:

> One boy is in love with his niece, his uncle's daughter, and they're supposed to get engaged. His nephew, his uncle's son and niece's brother, is his best friend. Then the nephew gets citizenship and the boy does not and the nephew tells him: 'no way you're marrying my sister, we don't want our girls to marry Palestinian refugees!'[117]

As a result of Lebanon's sectarian system, the path to national citizenship went through sectarian mobilization: it was the ascendancy of Shi'i political parties that provided the people from the seven villages with the opportunity of citizenship, not their apparent hailing from Lebanese soil. From the latter perspective they had been Lebanese all along, yet it was only when they were recognized as *Shi'i* Lebanese that nationalization occurred. Thus, identifying as Lebanese was a necessary but insufficient condition for nationalization into the Lebanese sectarian state. The most basic way, in a confessional political culture, was to follow the sectarian logic that since there are no Shi'i Palestinians, the Shi'i of the seven villages were 'intrinsically Lebanese'.[118] One of Singh-Bartlett's respondents whose ancestors are from Hunin, for instance, reasoned that: 'We're Shiites and we're Lebanese. Why put our villages in Palestine? There are no Shiites in Palestine'.[119] The attempt to 'out-Lebanonise the Lebanese', to be more Shi'i than the Shi'i, should be seen in this light.[120] For the people from Salha, the opportunity to prove their Shi'iness, and through that their Lebaneseness, came during the War of the Camps (1985–1987) that pitted the Lebanese Amal militias against Palestinian PLO militias.[121] In Palestinian Shabriha there were many accounts about the way the people of Salha had turned against them—even if the people from Salha maintained they had actually sided with the Palestinians from Shabriha against the Shi'i from 'Abasiya and had protected them from worse.[122] An UNRWA employee told me: 'The people of Salha fought with Amal against the Palestinians. Not out of hate, but to prove themselves to the head of the Shi'i, Nabih Berri—to show they were more Lebanese than the Lebanese.'[123] Some

114. Hamas leader, Palestinian Shabriha, 5 April 2013.
115. Haddad, *Palestinian Impasse*; and Peteet, 'Problematizing', p. 632.
116. Resident, Palestinian Shabriha, 1 April 2013.
117. Mar Elias camp, Beirut, 21 March 2013.
118. Maktabi, 'Lebanese Census', p. 227.
119. Singh-Bartlett, 'Seven Villages'.
120. Kaufman, 'Between Palestine and Lebanon', p. 703.
121. Fincham, *Learning Palestine*, p. 31; and Jihane Sfeir, 'Palestinians in Lebanon: The Birth of the "Enemy Within"', inKhalidi (ed.), *Manifestations of Identity*, pp. 13–35.
122. Resident, Palestinian Shabriha, 9 April 2013; and PLO representative, Palestinian Shabriha, 9 April 2013.
123. UNRWA representative, Tyre, 9 April 2013.

respondents were even convinced that it was their particular fervour in the War of the Camps that gained the people from the seven villages their nationalization:

> In the Civil War, these Shi'i stood more or less with the Shi'i in Lebanon and some of them became prominent in Amal. One became a member in their political bureau; another one was martyred. And this is why Amal raised their nationalization.[124]

Conclusion: The Children of the State?

As also illustrated by the quotation with which I opened this article, the non-nationalized, Sunni Palestinians living in 'Palestinian' Shabriha have repeatedly referred to the nationalized, Shi'i 'Palestinians' living in 'Lebanese' Shabriha as 'belonging to the Lebanese state' or even as 'children of the state', indicating both a loyalty to and a privileged status within the Lebanese political system.[125] I have argued that this perspective is indeed insightful since people from Salha generally identify as predominantly Lebanese and, due to their local electoral significance, have a special relation with Shi'i political leaders representing the Lebanese state in South Lebanon. The main purpose of this article, however, has been to show that painting the Palestinian–Lebanese from Salha who live in Shabriha as 'children of the state' tells only part of their story.

Through the 'negotiated statehood' framework that allows for a more agency-oriented and bottom-up perspective on the community's gaining of citizenship, it becomes clear that the people from Salha have acquired citizenship not merely to gain access to, but also to ensure a degree of independence from, the Lebanese state and political parties. This attempt, moreover, was driven by bottom-up interests and initiatives as well, not only by top-down ones. Tellingly, it was not the nationalization *per se* that rendered the new citizens of Shabriha electorally relevant, but rather the strategic administrative manoeuvring that followed. Had Shabriha's *mukhtār* not taken it upon himself to register all of Salha at one place as soon as 1997, his community would not have been as electorally convenient for the Amal leadership in 2004 and hence would not have had the political leverage to engineer their *de facto* autonomy the way it did. As such, the story of Salha questions the passive posture of nationalized constituencies and nuances Hourani and Sensenig-Dabbous' conclusion that 'these naturalized groups were continuously at the mercy of their patrons'.[126]

This conclusion speaks to debates about citizenship in the Arab world. Salha's negotiated access to the Lebanese state confirms Ghandour's claims that, with regards to the Palestinian community in Lebanon, citizenship should more straightforwardly be conceptualized as a set of rights rather than as a national identity (only).[127] In the case study central to this article, rather than a 'nationalized form of membership that imposed top-down notions', acquiring citizenship was about a bottom-up negotiation to obtain the socio-political rights that brought with it the liberty to distance oneself from exactly such imposed national projects. The dynamics analysed in this article, however, are relevant beyond definitions of citizenship as well. I have shown that the inclusion in the

124. Nationalized Palestinian, Mar Elias camp, Beirut, 19 June 2013.
125. Journalist, Lebanese Shabriha, 27 June 2013.
126. Hourani and Sensenig-Dabbous, 'Naturalized Citizens', p. 198.
127. Ghandour, 'Citizen Space'.

state that comes with nationalization is neither uncomplicated nor unproblematic.[128] As also recognized by Nishikida, despite the increased services and other material benefits, inclusion in the state might also lead to being caught up in political vendettas and dependencies.[129] Consequently, the people from Salha and their representatives have used their inclusion in the state to negotiate a remarkable degree of independence from this same state.

In this regard, Salha's residents bring to mind Scott's 'art of not being governed'.[130] Stateless communities, refugees among them, are often particularly apt at mobilizing different identifications in order to 'adjust their distance from the state'.[131] This distance here, clearly, is symbolic and political more than spatial. In Scott's words: 'It is perhaps one of the features of shatter zones located at the interstices of unstable state systems that there is a premium on the adaptability of identities'.[132] Connecting these observations with Meier's borderland/boundaries nexus, it becomes apparent how the people from Salha utilized the spatial ambiguity of the South Lebanon borderland to negotiate other, institutional and socio-political, boundaries.[133]

In the context of a long-contested borderland characterized by significant periods of state absence, they have carved out their specific form of administrative independence. While geographically and institutionally inside the Lebanese state, then, the community of Salha can be thought of as having acquired what Scott would call a tributary status *vis-à-vis* that state, where 'the periodic renewal of oaths' guarantees remaining 'outside the direct political control of court officials'.[134] Reliable block votes, in such an argument, are the currency for relative autonomy. While this dynamic is clearly viable only on a small scale that does not encroach on larger fictions of state sovereignty, in this way Salha's 'Palestinian Lebanese' might be emblematic for Lebanon at large where, in some cases, 'despairing of having a "better" state, citizens ask for "less" state'.[135]

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128. Haddad, *Palestinian Impasse*, pp. 68–69.
129. Nishikida, 'Palestinians From the "Seven Villages"', pp. 227–228. Here between Hizbullah and Amal and between 'Abasiya and Tyre. Many respondents felt 'Abasiya municipality acted in a vengeful way towards the people from Salha. Communal leader, Lebanese Shabriha, 8 May 2013; and focus group, Palestinian Shabriha, 28 July 2013.
130. Scott, *Art of Not Being Governed.*
131. Ibid., p. 325.
132. Ibid., p. 329.
133. Meier, 'Palestinian Fidâ'i'.
134. Scott, *Art of Not Being Governed*, p. 54.
135. Nahas, 'Lebanese Socio-economic System', p. 147.

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Languages of Stateness in South Lebanon's Palestinian Gatherings: The PLO's Popular Committees as Twilight Institutions

Nora Stel

ABSTRACT

Public authority beyond the state has often been seen as isolated from the state and/or constituting a threat to the state. Recent scholarship, however, has started to conceptualize 'state' and 'non-state' forms of public authority as closely connected and interdependent. This article contributes to this theoretical shift by means of a qualitative case study of public authority in Palestinian refugee camps in South Lebanon. Lebanon's Palestinian camps are routinely characterized as 'states-within-the-state', undermining the sovereignty of the Lebanese state. Yet, as this article demonstrates, both a generic state idea and the specific Lebanese state system constitute crucial benchmarks for the Popular Committees that govern informal Palestinian settlements. The article therefore conceptualizes the Popular Committees as 'twilight institutions' and explores the 'languages of stateness' that they adopt both communicatively, *vis-à-vis* Palestinian competitors, and coordinatively, *vis-à-vis* Lebanese counterparts. This reveals that the Popular Committees emulate the Lebanese state institutions they come into contact with, to bolster their own authority. They do this partly to be viable interlocutors for Lebanese state institutions; this suggests that the Popular Committees' non-state authority might validate rather than challenge state authority in Lebanon, and that state and non-state authority can be mutually constitutive.

INTRODUCTION

The question of public authorities that are not formally part of the state has long been cast in pathological terms (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:

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540). Under the paradigm of the failed state, with its support of 'good governance' and its struggle against 'neo-patrimonialism' (Khan, 2004a, 2004b), non-state public authorities were widely perceived as 'spoilers' — potential threats to 'state-building' at worst and temporary compromises at best (Meagher, 2012: 1073). Some recent scholarship, however, has started to conceptualize 'state' and 'non-state' forms of public authority as overlapping and interdependent (Boege et al., 2008, 2009; Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013). Following Meagher's (2012: 1083) conclusion that this 'shift in theory' needs to be inflected with 'a consideration of the processes at play in specific cases', this article contributes to this emerging body of knowledge by means of a qualitative case-study of public authority in Palestinian camps in South Lebanon — an endeavour that should help move the discussion beyond its Africa-centrism (Khan, 2004b: 23; Lund, 2006a: 682; Meagher, 2012: 1074).

Lebanon hosts some 400,000 Palestinians, constituting roughly 10 per cent of the country's population. They are the remnants and descendants of the people who sought refuge in Lebanon when they were forcefully expelled from historical Palestine during the 1948 *Nakba* that led to the creation of the state of Israel. After an initial welcome, the refugees were increasingly seen as a threat to Lebanon's precarious sectarian system — even more so after the Palestinians' liberation struggle became entangled with Lebanese internal conflicts during the infamous Lebanese civil war (1975–90) (Czajka, 2012; Haddad, 2004; Sayigh, 1997a, 1997b).[1] In post-war Lebanon, Palestinian refugees have been systematically marginalized: citizenship is withheld, they are legally discriminated against in the labour market, and cannot own real estate (Allan, 2014; Sayigh, 1995).

The majority of Lebanon's Palestinian refugees live in refugee camps where the Lebanese state has ceded much of its sovereignty through the Cairo Agreement.[2] The camps are governed by Popular Committees (PCs), civil bodies installed in the 1960s by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the transnational political representative of the Palestinian people, to provide services, security and political representation (Knudsen and Hanafi, 2011). These PCs, however, face a severe lack of resources. They also have serious legitimacy deficits because members are not elected or selected based on competency, but rather appointed by the PLO's member parties (Allan, 2014; Khalil, 2013; Kortam, 2011). The nature of public authority among Lebanon's Palestinian refugees thus raises the question of how non-state public authorities such as the PCs can maintain their rule, especially in light

1. Unless indicated otherwise, all references to 'war' in this article refer to the Lebanese Civil War.
2. The Cairo Agreement was signed between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Lebanese army in 1968. It sanctioned the PLO's armed presence inside the camps and forbade Lebanese state institutions to enter them (Czajka, 2012: 240; Sayigh, 1997b: 192). The Agreement was abrogated in 1987 but continues to be observed in practice.

of their limited resources, capacities and popular legitimacy. This article shows that part of the answer lies in the PCs' enactment of a generic state idea and their emulation of specific elements of the Lebanese state system.

The alleged weakness of the Lebanese state is notorious (Fregonese, 2012; Migdal, 2001: 136). The country is scarred by a colonial legacy, the brutal civil war and Israeli and Syrian occupation, and its policy making is almost perpetually gridlocked by its consociational political system. Lebanon's Palestinians have often been associated with these predicaments. Palestinian camps are broadly perceived as 'states-within-the-state' (Martin, 2011). Indeed, in post-war Lebanon, the Palestinians are regularly conceived of as the 'anti-state' responsible for the breakdown of the Lebanese state throughout the war (Czajka, 2012). Yet, Palestinian refugees also constituted an important benchmark in Lebanese nation building, providing a convenient 'other' against which the heterogeneous Lebanese could identify (Haddad, 2004; Sfeir, 2010). Similarly, as the camps are controlled through extensive networks of informants and external army check-points, the Palestinian 'issue' featured as a yardstick for state building too, offering an expedient rationale for strengthening surveillance and policing institutions (Czajka, 2012). Manifestations of stateness inside Lebanon's Palestinian camps thus not only offer insights into public authority among Palestinian refugees: they also shed light on the nature of the Lebanese state and its relations with non-state public authorities. Indeed, as outlined below, state institutions can sometimes even be sustained by the authority of non-state governance actors. This article shows that Lebanon's main non-state public authorities emulate the Lebanese state. They do so, in part, to be viable interlocutors for the Lebanese state institutions they have to deal with. As such, they might not undermine or challenge the state as much as validate and corroborate it.

This is particularly true for Lebanon's 39 Palestinian 'gatherings'. Gatherings are informal Palestinian camps. In contrast to the country's 12 formal refugee camps, gatherings are not administered by the United Nations (UN) nor recognized by the Lebanese state (Stel, 2014, 2015; Ugland, 2003).[3] They do not fall under the Cairo Agreement and are built illicitly on Lebanese public and private lands (Martin, 2011: 241). Gatherings, moreover, are relatively dependent on Lebanese actors due to their limited UN entitlements (even if they do fall under the Palestinian PC structure). In short, the gatherings are exposed to the Lebanese state on a regular basis, but, with their residents lacking citizenship, still largely fall outside Lebanese state structures. They thereby offer a unique interface to study how Lebanese and Palestinian, state and non-state, authorities interact and mutually influence each other (Stel, 2014).

The article is based on a qualitative case study that investigates the interactions between Palestinian authorities and local Lebanese state institutions

3. I see gatherings as a particular category of camps. In this article, unless further specified, 'camps' thus encompass both official camps and gatherings.

(such as *mukhtars*,[4] municipalities and utility companies) in the gatherings. As such, its main focus is on the relations between different (Lebanese and Palestinian) authorities rather than on those between these authorities and their purported constituencies. Specifically, the article documents how Palestinian authorities shape their rule through a dual enactment of stateness. The PCs utilize generic ideas of stateness, particularly when they address Palestinian competitors or constituents — for instance by structurally referring to themselves as 'municipality-like' and casting themselves as public and national representatives. When engaging with Lebanese counterparts, the PCs also explicitly mirror elements of the Lebanese state system. This is, for example, evident in their duplication of the administrative layers of the Lebanese state.

To explain these dynamics, I draw on the concept of 'twilight institutions' which posits that public authority is generated in the amalgamation of state and non-state institutions. The article thus casts public authority in the gatherings as ontologically beholden to stateness despite the physical absence of a state. It also furthers an understanding of the Lebanese state as an entity that is hybrid and crucially intertwined with non-state providers of public goods rather than simply 'weak'. As Sayigh (1997b: 674) describes, the 'statist approach' of the PLO and the PCs has been historically dominant, but not inevitable.[5] Yet, it is not simply the fact that PCs mimic the state that is of interest, but also the consequences of this mimicry. These are not necessarily detrimental to the 'real' state, but, as I discuss in the article's final sections, can be considered constitutive of it.

The article thus addresses several intertwined research questions. It sets out (first) to explore how non-state public authorities such as the PCs rule. Arguing that much of the answer to this initial query lies in the PCs' engagement with 'stateness', it then (second) explores how this engagement takes shape and how the PCs 'mirror' particular state ideas and systems. This leads (third) to a reflection on what such state emulation indicates about non-state as well as state authorities. The article's outline follows these lines of enquiry. First, I introduce my conceptual and methodological approach; I then discuss how public authority is constituted in the Palestinian gatherings and demonstrate that PCs often imitate state institutions. The subsequent section explores why this is the case by analysing the Palestinian and Lebanese polities in which the PCs operate. This is followed by a more elaborate theoretical discussion that links back to the conceptual framework introduced previously. Final reflections are offered in the conclusion.

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4. State representatives that perform social and administrative services at the neighbourhood or village level.
5. The PCs could have followed other organizational blueprints, inspired by, for instance, civil society and religious movements (as the rival Hamas Family Committees have), or by pan-Arabism and international revolution (as many 'dissident' factions in the PLO have long proposed).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: HOW TO TACKLE 'THE STATE'?

As Abrams (1988) eloquently demonstrated, the state is an elusive construct to study. His distinction between 'state-system' and 'state-idea', however, helps address the paradox, central to this article, that in many non-Western contexts 'the state does not exist and the state is everywhere' (Ismail, 2006: 165). The state system is the collection of practices and institutions produced by state agencies and can be conceived of as a material structure. The state idea is the socio-political construct that gives this amalgamation of practices its perceived coherence and intention and puts forward the state as an ontological structure and a resource for public authorities (Migdal, 2001: 123).

The juxtaposition of idea and system resonates through many of the conceptualizations of the state that succeeded Abrams, ranging from the differentiation between symbolic repertoires and material resources by Hagmann and Péclard (2010) to the distinction between representations and practices put forward by 'anthropologists of the state' (Sharma and Gupta, 2006). These conceptualizations all build on Migdal's seminal 'state-in-society' theory that sees state authority as consisting of a dialectic between the 'image' of a 'clearly bounded, unified organization that can be spoken of in singular terms' and the 'practice' of a 'heap of loosely connected parts or fragments, frequently with ill-defined boundaries between them and other groupings' (Migdal, 2001: 22–3).

This is particularly relevant in situations of 'strong societies and weak states' (Migdal, 1988). In situations where the state system is considered 'fragile' or 'failed', other public authorities might be (more) dominant in regulating security, welfare and representation (Boege et al., 2009; Meagher et al., 2014: 1). The ensuing hybridity begs the question of how to theorize the relatedness of state and non-state authorities.[6] Various scholars have sought to conceptualize interactions and overlap between state and non-state authorities (Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013), for instance through the notions of 'brokered autonomy' (Titeca and de Herdt, 2011: 217), 'negotiated statehood' (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010), 'hybrid political order' (Boege et al., 2009) and 'mediated stateness' (Menkhaus, 2006; Stel, 2015). Here, I will particularly engage with the concept of 'twilight institutions' (Lund, 2006a, 2006b).

Twilight institutions are those 'organizations and institutions that exercise legitimate public authority, but do not enjoy legal recognition as part of the state' (Lund, 2006a: 675).[7] They are outside the state system, but

6. 'State' and 'non-state' here refer to the international *de jure* status of a particular authority. Only *de jure* state authorities are part of a formal state system (as an actor), but both state and non-state authorities can draw on the state idea (as a resource).
7. Following Lund (2006a: 676; see also Lund, 2011: 75 and Sayigh, 1997b: ix), public authority is defined as the ability 'to define and enforce collectively binding decisions'

nevertheless draw on the state idea to substantiate their authority, engaging in 'state mimicry' (Scott, 2009: 37) or state 'simulation' (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001: 34). Indeed, according to Hoffmann and Kirk (2013: 34), the aim of the twilight institution is to provide an 'understanding of institutions' abilities to claim public authority through the idea of the state'. Where related concepts emphasize coordination to understand the relations between state and non-state authorities, the twilight institution foregrounds emulation. It thereby takes the political and institutional interconnection between state systems and ideas as an important analytical vantage point. This makes it particularly well suited to my empirical query as it is the PCs' mimicry of state systems and ideas, and not only their pragmatic engagement with state institutions, that stands out. Adopting the twilight institution thus helps avoid teleologically seeing the PCs as either 'wannabe states' or 'states-within-the-state'. Instead, it allows a focus on how their practices and discourses are related to the state ideationally as well as institutionally.

Lund (2006a: 677, 2006b: 688) introduces the 'language of the state', conveyed through behaviour and speech, as a crucial instrument for twilight institutions to shape their authority (see also Boege et al. 2008: 8; Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013: 17; Khan, 2004a: 1–2; Sharma and Gupta, 2006: 18), but does not systematically operationalize this language. Hansen and Stepputat (2001: 17) do. It is, therefore, to their take on 'languages of stateness' that I turn to study the construction of public authority by twilight institutions.

Hansen and Stepputat distinguish between two crucially inter-related languages of stateness. Their 'practical languages of governance' concern the roles that public authorities adopt as providers of security, welfare and representation (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001: 7). Their 'symbolic languages of authority' refer to the linguistic, spatial and material languages centred on legality, public interest and nationalism that authorities use to legitimate their rule (ibid.: 1). I adopt these languages of stateness as an analytical framework to order my findings on the ways in which PCs shape, maintain and render acceptable their authority. My data suggest that the (self-)identification of public authorities in the gatherings and the institutional structures in which they (claim to) operate also testify to the relevance of the state to the functioning of PCs. These elements furthermore help to give due consideration to the political fields, or polities, in which non-state public authorities operate. I therefore add them to Hansen and Stepputat's languages of stateness and discuss them below as 'status and structure'.

My argument is based on twelve months of fieldwork in Shabriha and Qasmiye, two of the largest gatherings in South Lebanon (Stel, 2014). To construe the PCs' languages of stateness, I studied their behaviour and speech

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and rules. Authority combines coercive elements ('power') with more voluntary aspects ('legitimacy'), understood as the 'normative belief of a community that an institution ought to be obeyed' (Papagianni, 2008 in Stel and Ndayiragije, 2014: 6; see also Sikor and Lund, 2009: 7–8).

by means of 260 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with PC members and related Palestinian politicians and officials and with constituencies (residents, community leaders and women and youth committees), competitors (such as Hamas's Family Committees) and partners (state institutions and non-governmental organizations [NGOs]) of the PCs. In addition, I gathered observational data and collected documentary sources. The most important of these have been the by-law for the PCs produced by the PLO's Department for Refugee Affairs that was signed in July 2010 in Palestine;[8] the guidelines for the PCs in Lebanon as stipulated by the Central Follow-Up Committee for the PCs in Lebanon in 2013;[9] the 2013 annual report of the regional PC in Tyre;[10] and the monthly magazine that the Central Follow-Up Committee has been issuing since April 2014.[11]

TWILIGHT INSTITUTIONS AND LANGUAGES OF STATENESS IN SHABRIHA AND QASMIYE

The Popular Committees, in a nutshell, are the PLO's instrument to organize local governance, including coordination with Lebanese authorities (Knudsen and Hanafi, 2011; Kortam, 2011; Stel, 2014). Ugland (2003: 185) notes that in 70 per cent of the camps and gatherings, PCs are the 'major coordinating bodies within the communities'. In Shabriha, the Danish Refugee Council describes the PC as 'active and in charge of . . . organisation of the gathering, solving conflicts, liaison with authorities' (DRC, 2005: 155). PC revenues come from the PLO and from service fees collected among residents. While each PC officially has around 13 members, representing all the PLO's member parties, usually only the head and the secretary are active. They maintain relationships with residents through social interaction based on their close communal proximity rather than through official channels. These relations, moreover, are politicized, because the institutional structures of the PLO, Fatah (the PLO's largest party) and the PCs, while formally separate, de facto extensively overlap (Sayigh, 1997b: 239). This is only exacerbated by the fact that PC members are not elected, but appointed by (and hence accountable to) the respective PLO factions (Sayigh, 1997b: 454).

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8. Provided to me in soft copy on 6 July 2014 by a leader of a Palestinian youth movement; translated from Arabic by my research partner.
9. Provided to me in hard copy by the president of the Central Follow-Up Committee on 29 September 2014. The document consists of various sub-documents and was translated from Arabic by my research partner.
10. Provided to me in hard copy by the former head of the regional PC office in Tyre on 15 August 2014; translated from Arabic by my research partner.
11. Titled 'The Popular Committee – A Monthly Publication'. Various issues were provided to me in hard copy by the head of the PC in Kfar Bedda in September and October 2015; translated from Arabic by my research partner.

Status and Structure

When asked who is responsible for the gatherings, respondents from all categories almost by default referred to the PCs. Two tenets explain why this is so. First, different types of respondents all emphasized the fact that the PCs are part of the institutional structure of the PLO, 'the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people' — a phrase used as 'a shield and a cudgel against internal and external foes and competitors (real and perceived)' (Khalil, 2013: 2). The PLO's consistent 'thinking and organizing in statist terms' rubs off on the PCs (Sayigh, 1997b: 668). An NGO representative explained: 'The PC is the authority. It is with the PLO; it is inside the PLO; it *is* the PLO' (Interview, Qasmiye, 24 September 2014). Second, PC members often described PCs as 'state-like', or, more specifically, 'like a municipality' (see also Kortam, 2011: 203; Martin, 2011: 157). Page 15 of the 2013 annual report of the regional PC office in Tyre states that: 'The PC should be like the municipality and have similar local authority'. When I asked the PC head in Qasmiye how the PCs had realized their position as the main authority in the gatherings, he responded: 'Who works as a municipality here? The PC!' (Interview, Qasmiye, 10 July 2014). Residents used the same municipality terminology, although mostly to point out the PCs' failure. A Palestinian NGO worker posed: 'The PC is like a municipality, right? But it doesn't even have the capacity to develop project proposals' (Interview, Tyre, 20 August 2014).

The PCs in Lebanon fall under the Lebanese office of the PLO's Department of Refugee Affairs that oversees a Central Follow-Up Committee on the national level, five regional PC offices and a PC in each camp. This institutional structure influences the languages of stateness the PCs adopt. As Hansen and Stepputat (2001: 6) indicate, 'institutional rites, schemes of classifications [and] hierarchies of competence' are key instruments to order authority. For the PCs in Lebanon, on the one hand, this concerns a general idea of stateness: the PCs cast their institutional structure in terms of professionalism and coherence. On the other hand, the mimicking of stateness apparent in the institutional structure of the PCs is specifically influenced by the institutional set-up of the Lebanese state.

In line with the PLO's regard for 'bureaucratization' (Sayigh, 1997b: 459), the Central Follow-Up Committee's guidelines and its monthly magazine convey the image of a structured organization that meets on a regular basis and whose output is formally documented.The magazine emphasizes that 'in order to serve the public benefit, the communication of the PCs must follow the hierarchy of the PC system and cannot bypass any step in the hierarchy'.[12] Even critics acknowledge the centrality of the PCs' structure in the PCs' quest for legitimacy. A youth leader said:

12. PC magazine no. 5, August 2014, p. 1.

> As a Palestinian, I can't ignore them, because I'm interested in strengthening the structure and in having a powerful PC. So each time we do a project, we want them to be included. Because we don't want to reinvent the wheel: there is a structure that is good, it's just the people that aren't good. You can't destroy the structure because of the people. (Interview, Tyre, 6 July 2014)

Besides mimicking a state structure in a generic sense, the PC structure parallels the Lebanese state system. This is a consequence of both institutional precedents set during the PLO's 1973–82 heyday in Lebanon — during which it established 'parastatal institutions and a bureaucratic elite, the nucleus of government' — and pragmatic contemporary considerations (Sayigh, 1997b: vii). The PCs' regional tier closely follows the Lebanese provinces. While the PLO's by-law on the PCs claims to provide the exclusive blueprint for the organization of PCs in all countries that host Palestinian refugees, the PC structure in Lebanon has, in the form of the Central Follow-Up Committee's guidelines, set up its own structure rather than followed Ramallah's. This signals the importance of the Lebanese state for the operation of the PCs. When I asked a former analyst of the Lebanese–Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC) why the PCs often present themselves as a municipality, he explained that this was partially to make themselves more appealing as partners for the Lebanese state: 'They say they're like a municipality, because they see the municipality as their Lebanese counterpart. They want to show they have a similar structure . . . ; that they also have an organogram and a structure, that they're not random. This might get them more acceptance even if the model doesn't mirror reality' (Interview, Beirut, 9 June 2014).

Languages of Governance

The rule of the PCs is not characterized solely by associations with the 'commanding heights' of the PLO and its stateness, or the organizational mimicking of Lebanese state structures, but also by their more concrete local governance 'in the trenches' (Migdal, 2001: 121). Hansen and Stepputat's languages of governance cover three domains: security, welfare and representation. These domains are overlapping, but the role of PCs is most pronounced with regard to representation. Although PCs have a role in local conflict mediation, security provision is mostly considered a task for the Lebanese police because PCs in the gatherings are not armed and are not assisted by security committees (as in the official camps). Service delivery is considered the responsibility of PCs; however, despite the PLO's history of full-fledged welfare provision in Lebanon (Sayigh, 1997b: 460), the PCs currently do not have the necessary resources and competences for such service provision. In Shabriha and Qasmiye, only water provision is directly managed by the PCs. Thus, PCs in the gatherings have neither real sanctioning power, which compromises their contribution to security, nor resources,

limiting their welfare role. This only serves to put more emphasis on the third language of governance: representation.

Representation here refers to a form of 'brokering': communicating or interacting with an external actor on behalf of a certain constituency. Part IXX of the PLO by-law reiterates that the PC is the 'official representative of the camps *vis-à-vis* foreign, national and all other organizations'. Representation manifests itself primarily in controlling and welcoming. PCs are described as having to 'watch and daily check implementation' of any project.[13] Residents of the gatherings indeed seem to expect PCs to take on this controlling role, sometimes blaming the bad performance of NGOs on lack of oversight from PCs. Representation, in the case of the PCs, also often takes the form of welcoming people or organizations to the gatherings or thanking them on behalf of the gatherings' inhabitants. When a Lebanese politician donated an electricity transformer to Shabriha, for instance, the PC wrote her a public letter in the name of 'the people of Shabriha'. The PC magazine is primarily an overview of occasions on which PCs thank donors, NGOs, municipalities and political parties 'in the name of the PC and the people of the camp'.[14]

PCs represent the gatherings towards three categories of actors: NGOs, the UN's Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the Lebanese state. Corroborating Lund's point that 'development projects constitute *par excellence* arenas' for the establishment of public authority (Lund, 2006b: 692), the head of Qasmiye's PC stressed that 'all organizations deal with the PCs', because it is PCs that 'know the needs here' (Interview, Shabriha, 9 April 2013). Hamas's Family Committees indeed complained that most NGOs only coordinated with the PCs and not with them. The PCs also represent the inhabitants of the gatherings towards UNRWA. They send letters to the head of UNRWA's educational committee to request belated exam results, lead protests against failing projects of UNRWA's engineering office and pressure UNRWA to step up its health care services.[15] PCs also strive to represent the Palestinians towards the Lebanese state. Despite a lack of formal recognition, Lebanese municipalities and utility providers routinely address the PCs as representatives of the Palestinian refugees. I will return to this later.

Representing a group of people does not necessarily convey stateness. In this case, however, there are three main reasons why I see the PCs' representative role as an emulation of stateness. First, PCs do not merely try to be *a* representative of the gatherings' inhabitants; they want to be *the* representative and (successfully) claim a degree of exclusiveness that mimics the prerogatives of a state. While there are several other organizations in

13. PC magazine no. 6, September 2014, p. 4.
14. PC magazine no. 5, August 2014, p. 3.
15. PC magazine no. 4, July 2014, p. 4; PC magazine no. 3, June 2014, p. 4; and PC magazine no. 2, May 2014, p. 4.

Shabriha and Qasmiye that could, and sometimes do, represent residents, these are careful not to trespass into the PCs' realm of meta-representation. Qasmiye's women's committee, for example, has represented the gathering *vis-à-vis* the municipality and NGOs in multiple instances, but is keen to stress that: 'The PC is the authority. It reaches many different Lebanese authorities' (Interview, Qasmiye, 24 September 2014). In Shabriha, a youth committee that explicitly defined its mandate as 'helping the PC' was nevertheless dissolved by Shabriha's PC soon after, because 'no one could work on these issues other than the PC' (Interview, member of youth committee, Shabriha, 1 May 2013). The clearest challengers of the PCs' representative role, however, are the Hamas Family Committees. The guidelines of the Central Follow-Up Committee label the Family Committees as 'competitors'.[16] Yet, the Family Committees in Shabriha and Qasmiye predominantly present themselves as social associations *inside* the gatherings and not as state-like representatives *of* the gatherings.

The second reason is that PCs seek to achieve the position of exclusive, or at least overarching, representatives by painting their representation as national and public. The state idea assumes an 'almost transcendental association with the "nation" as the fundamental political community' (Mitchell, 1999: 81) — something that is vividly evidenced by the history of the Palestinian presence in Lebanon (Sayigh, 1977, 1995: 52). In line with this, PCs cast their representative role as inherently national: 'The PC is not only a committee concerned with services, but has been established as a national committee' that organizes 'the celebrations of national occasions as well as protests to support the people inside the occupied homeland'.[17] In line with Lund's (2006b, 2011: 74) observation that claims to legitimate authority often hinge on matters of 'autochthony', and Sayigh's (1997b: 671) conclusion that nationalism, for the PLO, is a legitimizing rather than a mobilizing instrument, designating other organizations as 'foreign' is one of the PCs' most effective strategies. The PC head in Qasmiye, for example, stressed that 'The PC and the PLO are Palestinian. [The Family Committees] take their orders from Iran and Qatar' (Interview, Qasmiye, 10 July 2014). In a similar way, critical youth movements were discarded by PC representatives as following a 'foreign agenda'.

Demarcating 'public' from 'private' is also an important part of the 'purposeful fiction constitutive of the will to statehood' (Joseph, 1997: 73). Accordingly, PCs do not merely seek to portray their representation as national, but also as public and non-partisan.[18] Part XIV of the PC by-law explicitly states that PC members 'should prioritize the public good over the private interest', and the Central Follow-Up Committee's guidelines stress that PCs should 'implement all its principles, decisions and advice free from

16. Document no. 3, pp. 3–4.
17. PC magazine no. 5, August 2014, p. 1.
18. The 'popular' part of their name stems from the Arabic word for 'the people' (*shaab*).

the interference of the parties'.[19] Qasmiye's PC head explained: 'We're not a just a party, like Hamas is. The PC is the PLO. When I talk in the name of the PC, I talk for the PLO; I talk for Fatah in other occasions. When I write, I have two notebooks to choose from: one with the PC logo, the other with the Fatah logo' (Interview, Qasmiye, 10 July 2014). Despite the politicized behaviour of PC members and the recurrent description of PCs as consisting of party appointees, the fiction of PCs as a public institution was to some extent replicated by the gatherings' residents. Most of them would consider projects implemented by the Family Committees as the work of Hamas whereas activities done by the PCs would be seen as PC (rather than Fatah) work.

The references to exclusiveness, non-partisanship and nationalism give the PCs' representative role some credence in a general sense. Yet, they also contain specifically contextual elements. The politicization of the PCs that hides behind their 'public' veneer, for instance, echoes a particular Lebanese stateness. Much as the Lebanese state is little more than an institutional façade for the 'rule of the parties' with their own militias, welfare institutions, economic enterprises and international alliances, the PC is to a large extent still the administrative fig leaf for Fatah, which uses it as a first stop shop for party members to collect their monthly allowance or sign off medical bills that can then be submitted for reimbursement higher up in the Fatah hierarchy.

The third reason for considering the PCs' representative role as a form of stateness is even more specifically related to the Lebanese state. By portraying themselves as exclusive delegates of the gatherings, PCs do not merely cast themselves as representatives, but — in the spirit of Migdal's (1988: 257) 'strongmen' that 'impose themselves between segments of the population and critical resources' — also as 'gatekeepers' (Lund, 2011: 75; see also Sikor and Lund, 2009: 1). The PCs' appropriation of the position of representative for the Palestinians *vis-à-vis* NGOs, UNRWA and the Lebanese state means that residents of the gatherings will find it hard to access these external actors (and their resources) without the PCs' mediation. Despite the fact that they hardly offer any services themselves and are not particularly liked, PCs have created a modus operandi in which no Palestinian can afford to ignore them.

This gatekeeper position of PCs was illustrated poignantly in a diagram representing the gathering's governance networks drawn during a focus group discussion in Qasmiye. While participants insisted that the PC is 'just talk', it nevertheless formed the hub in the chart they drew. A member of Qasmiye's women's committee was clear that, in the gathering, 'you can't do anything without their [the PC's] permission' (Interview, Qasmiye, 12 September 2014). A representative from an international aid organization

19. Document no. 3, p. 5.

seconded this, noting that 'We never enter without passing through them, even though not a lot of people believe in them these days. But they still have the capacity to block things, so we surely must see them' (Interview, Beirut, 27 August 2014).

This gatekeeper position of PCs between residents on the one hand and NGOs, UNRWA and the Lebanese state on the other is, I argue, a duplication of the role the Lebanese state plays *vis-à-vis* PCs. The municipalities with which PCs deal function primarily as gatekeepers to the PCs. PCs have to petition municipalities for permission to build or repair houses, they need municipal agreement before any NGO project can commence, and they require stamps and signatures from municipalities before they can deal with other state institutions such as provincial and district governors. In the words of one PC member: 'The municipality permits. And they're able not to permit and if they don't permit we can't do anything' (Interview, Qasmiye, 24 July 2014). Thus, for the PCs, to be like a municipality is to be a gatekeeper. A senior PLO leader confirmed this link between identifying as a municipality-like organization and insisting on a gatekeeper role when he said: 'The PC should be like a municipality, the by-laws say so. The PCs are the main responsible. They are the entrance gate to the camp, the door that all NGOs, projects, UNRWA, anyone should pass through' (Interview, Beirut, 16 June 2014).

Languages of Authority

An evaluation of the status, structure and languages of governance of the PCs suggests that they project themselves as municipality-like, national and public gatekeepers. They bring together a form of generic stateness (hierarchical and systematic organization and national and non-partisan claims) and more specific features of the Lebanese state (the state as gatekeeper rather than provider and as a civil façade for an inherently politicized system). This impression is further substantiated by looking at Hansen and Stepputat's second set of languages of stateness, the languages of authority that manifest themselves in regalia, space and idiom, which are habitually used by PCs to underline their credibility. Languages of governance and languages of authority are thus tightly interwoven and mutually dependent (Mitchell, 1999: 83).

Administrative 'regalia' can be as diverse as uniforms, 'official documents, stationery and rubber stamps, as well as registers and court books' (Lund, 2006b: 690; see also Ismail, 2006: 133). For the PCs, the role of stately gatekeeper is evidenced by the power to grant 'permission', which they see confirmed in stamps and signatures. The head of Qasmiye's PC was adamant that: 'If they [organizations] want to work here, they'd have to get our stamp' (Interview, Qasmiye, 2 September 2014). Documentation and 'the gathering and control of knowledge of the population' are at the

core of projecting stateness (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001: 7). While mostly not getting beyond an amateur's attempt at such documentation, PCs present themselves as 'making studies, taking pictures, doing measurements and estimating costs' (Interview, PC head, Qasmiye, 13 October 2014). The former head of the regional PC office kept an expanding archive of rudimentary statistics on inhabitants of and developments in the gatherings. He proudly noted: 'for everything there's a paper' (Interview, Bourj el-Shemali camp, 15 August 2014). Considering that 'public authority connotes impersonal administrative operations' (Lund, 2006a: 678), the PCs' take on producing paperwork underlines their proclaimed public nature. This, too, has a gatekeeper dimension. As Martin (2011: 185) observes: 'the possession of this information makes the popular committee the first key interlocutor for everyone'.

The second language of authority that the PCs utilize is related to space. Public authorities 'often have territorial markers in space, ranging from national flags, through signs, fences, party banners, masks and marches, to graffiti on walls' (Lund, 2006b: 695; see also Sikor and Lund, 2009: 14). PCs stress the importance of their physical offices for the Central Follow-Up Committee, regional PCs and camp-level PCs. For Sayigh (1997a: 21), 'the rapid proliferation of the offices that [they] vied to set up in every camp, village, and city neighbourhood possible, the closest they could come to the ubiquitousness of government bureaucracy', is 'a mark that the statist model was being emulated' (see also Martin, 2011: 119–20). In Qasmiye, the PC has its own office, adorned with portraits of former president Yaser Arafat, which it shares with the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW). In fact, the venues in Qasmiye that come closest to public spaces — the youth club, clinic and café — are all administered by PLO organizations (such as the Palestinian Red Crescent Society and the GUPW) or have a key kept by a PC member.

The significance of offices ties in with the importance of 'welcoming' and 'thanking'. The PC magazine incessantly emphasizes that PCs act as hosts for anyone who enters a camp or gathering. Such 'receiving' signals the host as both the representative of the community that is visited and the gatekeeper to the territory entered (Ramadan, 2008: 665–6). The importance of meeting space for enacting a hosting role is also related to the importance of staging what residents of Shabriha and Qasmiye called 'occasions', events such as receptions, protests, national festivals and inaugurations (Sayigh, 2001: 104), where the idea of capacity and 'a higher rationality' is transmitted (Lund, 2006b: 689). Following Wedeen (2003: 697), these occasions — which are described in great detail in the PC magazine and, according to Sayigh (1977: 35), are an important source of politicization — offer a stage to 'act like a state' (see also Ismail, 2006: 50).

The third language of authority relevant to understanding how the PCs cast themselves as state-like is that of idiom. In Shabriha and Qasmiye, the theme of taxation provided a particularly useful insight into the way PCs

present themselves as national and non-partisan. For PCs, the collection of fees for water provision is a financial necessity. Perhaps more important, however, is the value of taxation as an assertion of authority (Khan, 2004b: 13; Lund, 2006b: 696). Tellingly, while the PCs do not take issue with the Family Committees providing services, it is clearly understood by the Family Committees that 'if we would want to gather money from the people to address issues, the PC wouldn't agree as they would consider this as us taking over the leadership' (Interview, Family Committee head, Qasmiye, 11 July 2014). In Shabriha, indeed, when the Family Committee started to collect money to improve service provision, the PC objected and eventually sabotaged it.

WHY DO PCS EMULATE THE STATE?

An investigation of the PCs' use of languages of stateness demonstrates *how* PCs seek to shape and legitimize their authority with reference to stateness. In this section, I explore *why* PCs do so. This throws up three interrelated questions. First, to what extent do PCs explicitly cast themselves as state-like and to what extent is this implicit? Are we talking about 'proto-states' aspiring to become 'real', internationally recognized states, as is often said of 'rebel rulers' (Mampilly, 2011)? Or do non-state public authorities more intuitively aspire to the mantle of stateness for the relatively uncontested compliance that the state idea generates (Sikor and Lund, 2009: 3)? Second, do PCs want to appear as a state in a generic sense or do they have a specific — Palestinian or Lebanese — system to mirror? Third, by whom do the PCs want to be perceived as state-like; their constituents, their competitors, their stately counterparts?

The answers to these questions are linked. In some instances, PCs adopt a generic state idea. This can be explicit, such as when they literally liken themselves to municipalities. It can also be implicit, for instance when they emphasize the significance of administrative hierarchy; assert themselves as the main authority through taxation; present themselves as national representatives through hosting occasions; or stress their public nature through the management of documentation and public space. This projection of a generic state idea is particularly directed at competing Palestinian authorities (and, to a lesser extent, constituents). In other situations, the PCs emulate a specific state system, namely that of the Lebanese state. Again, this is sometimes explicit, as when they copy the Lebanese state's administrative layers. At other times, it is implicit, for instance when the PCs duplicate the state's role as a gatekeeper by issuing stamps and guarding the keys to public spaces, or take over the Lebanese state's politicized functioning. The mimicry of this particularly Lebanese state system is a form of coordinative discourse addressed to the Lebanese state institutions on which PCs depend.

The Resounding Salience of the State Idea

Despite globalization and localization, ours is a 'world of states', where administrative and institutional power is largely concentrated in nation states (Scott, 2009: 337; see also Hansen and Stepputat, 2001: 38; Mitchell, 1999: 81). In this context, public authority by default will to some extent reflect 'stateness', because, regardless of the weakness of some state systems, the state idea has become hegemonic in the imagination of public authority (Lund, 2006a: 677). Recognizing this empirical centrality of stateness is not the same as analytical state centrism (Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013: 13). It does not mean, namely, that stateness is a normative goal or an inevitability; it merely acknowledges that it is exactly the uniqueness of the state as a 'globalized utopia' that makes stateness a resource for any public authority — whether it is part of the state system or not (Von Trotha, 2009: 38).

As Meagher et al. (2014: 6) surmise, even in 'fragile contexts', the idea of the state continues to 'shape the terms' and 'institutional toolbox' for non-state authorities. In an era governed by the state idea, 'metaphors, analogies and symbols derived from this idea have served to bolster local institutions of humbler pedigree' (Lund, 2006b: 691). This nigh-universal centrality of the illusion of unity and common interest that is intrinsic to the state idea means that any claim to domination framed in its orbit is 'so plausible that it is hardly ever challenged' (Abrams, 1988: 77). The 'veneer of consistency, systematicity, centralized control, and wholeness' that the state idea offers is unsurpassed in obfuscating the 'messiness, contradictions, and tensions' that public authority inevitably entails (Sharma and Gupta, 2006: 19). For the PLO, desperately in need of a vehicle to realize 'a reassertion of Palestinian existence and autonomous will [and] determination to pursue an independent course', this veneer is essential to substantiate its claim to power through the PCs (Sayigh, 1997a: 20).

Communication: Stateness as a Resource in Intra-Palestinian Rivalry

The PCs thus adopt a generic state idea for the almost inherent legitimacy this entails. Building on Schmidt's (2008) distinction between coordinative and communicative discourse, I understand this general language of stateness as a predominantly communicative discourse that is directed at the PCs' competitors in the struggle over power in the Palestinian polity in general and in Shabriha and Qasmiye in particular. Languages of stateness have different intentions and manifestations *vis-à-vis* different audiences. What Schmidt calls coordinative discourse are the narratives and practices directed at those actors that authorities perceive as counterparts. Communicative discourse, conversely, addresses a wider public.

For Schmidt (2008: 310) this public would primarily consist of constituents. However, as also noted by Khan (2004b: 43) for the Palestinian

Territories, in a political context in which power is not distributed democratically — Palestinians in Lebanon do not vote for their 'representatives' — competing Palestinian parties and structures seem more relevant 'publics'. Acknowledging this variety of audiences for the PCs' languages of stateness serves to contextualize the local dynamics described above in broader (trans)national 'superstructures' of stateness and governance (Khan, 2004a: 2). This, in turn, takes us beyond the protracted localness that Meagher (2012: 1082) identifies as one of the main pitfalls of conceptualizations of public authority beyond the state.

Sayigh (1977: 18) already established that 'while the major determinants of a minority's position are the policies of the dominant group' (the dominant group here being the Lebanese state), 'much of the variation in subordinate group strategies may be accounted for by internal features'. The Palestinian polity is, firstly, dominated by the struggle between Fatah (backed by the PLO) and Hamas (part of the Tahaluf alliance) (Hilal and Khan, 2004: 97), both of which have established local-level entities: PCs in the case of the PLO and Family Committees in the case of Tahaluf. In this struggle, presenting itself as a civil, neutral, public, non-partisan committee, rather than the instrument of one of two contending parties, gives the PLO an edge over Hamas, which it can discard as 'just a party'. The meta-level stateness of the PLO, for which 'the search for state' has decisively shaped 'the articulation of goals, formulation of strategies, choice of organizational structures, and conduct of internal politics', is, then, a core component of the languages of stateness of camp-level PCs (Sayigh, 1997b: x). This confirms Hansen and Stepputat's (2001: 9) argument that 'the attribution of stateness to various forms of authority also emerges from intense and often localized political struggles over resources, recognition, inclusion, and influence' (see also Lund, 2006b: 691).

Apart from the conflict between Fatah and Hamas, the Palestinian polity is also characterized by a less tangible tension between the PLO and the Palestinian Authority (PA). The PLO claims to represent all Palestinians worldwide and thereby institutionally supersedes and encompasses the PA that functions as the governing body of the Palestinian Territories only (Sayigh, 1997a). With the nascent international recognition of the PA as a state, however, the relation between the PLO and the PA has started to shift (Khalil, 2013; Sayigh, 1995). This is particularly the case in Lebanon, where the gap left by the PLO when its state-in-exile there was shattered in 1982 is gradually being filled by the PA-affiliated Palestinian embassy that absorbed the existing PLO office (Knudsen, 2011). For most PC and PLO representatives, then, the embassy represents a threat to their position as the default interlocutor to the Lebanese state.

Much to the chagrin of the local Palestinian PLO leaders in Lebanon, more and more issues are resolved between the PA headquarters in Ramallah and the Lebanese government rather than 'within Beirut' (between the government and Lebanese PLO elites) (Sayigh, 1997b: 661). This is

particularly vexing for Palestinian authorities in the South, traditionally a PLO stronghold in Lebanon (Allan, 2014: 115; Martin, 2011: 176; Sayigh, 1995: 41). In Qasmiye, many PLO leaders accumulated power 'due to their direct relations with Abu Riad who used to be the head of the PLO in Lebanon before the embassy' (Interview, former LPDC analyst, Beirut, 9 June 2014). The relations between the PLO and the PA, which are symbiotic in many situations, should not be painted as too antagonistic (Sayigh, 1997b: 662). Nevertheless, there is significant discontent amongst 'many members of the Palestinian leadership and senior officials' who 'lost their power bases in Lebanon' (Sayigh, 1997a: 29; see also Sayigh, 1995: 41). In this dynamic, casting the PCs, which are still under the sway of the PLO rather than the PA, as state-like might give credence to a message that the PLO is more than the increasingly redundant political umbrella for a Palestinian state headed by the PA (Khalil, 2013). Presenting the PCs as municipalities, in this light, might be an attempt to ensure their enduring relevance as 'the counterpart to Lebanese municipalities' (Interview, LPDC facilitator, Beirut, 26 June 2014).

Coordination: Stateness as a Resource in Palestinian–Lebanese Relations

The communicative discourse of the PCs, directed at their Hamas and PA competitors, is thus crafted around a generic state idea. In this intra-Palestinian strife, however, one of the things at stake is the position of counterpart to the Lebanese state on which the Palestinians in the gatherings to a large extent depend. For the PCs that try to govern the Palestinians in Lebanon until their envisioned return to Palestine, it is the Lebanese — rather than the Palestinian — state that functions as 'the gravitational force' (Scott, 2009: 328). It is Lebanese municipalities to which the PCs refer when they bestow upon themselves the status of a municipality; it is the behaviour of Lebanese state officials that they copy when they interpret their role of public authority as that of gatekeeper; it is the organizational levels of the Lebanese state that the PCs follow (to the extent that they sideline institutional structures imposed from Ramallah); and although the regalia, spaces and idioms that the PCs employ to establish public authority follow general languages of stateness, some of their exemplars are clearly taken from the Lebanese system. This emulation of the more specific Lebanese state system can be seen as part of the PCs' coordinative discourse directed at the Lebanese state institutions with which they are confronted. The PCs' mimicry of the Lebanese state system ultimately conveys a 'wish for state recognition of [its] position (thus indicating the state's importance which [it] tries to emulate)' (Lund, 2006b: 687; see also Sayigh, 1997b: xi). For PCs, it appears, the recognition of state authorities is prioritized over that of constituents (Lund, 2011; Sikor and Lund, 2009).

The above contextualization of the PCs in the Palestinian and Lebanese polities helps to illuminate how PCs utilize the state idea and state system to organize and legitimize their public authority, the core issue raised in the introductory sections. The case study contributes to our understanding of public authorities for whom 'slogans' and 'rhetoric' seem to outweigh capacity; they have no sanctioning power and fail to satisfy the needs of their constituencies, but nevertheless maintain their power positions (Sayigh, 1997b: 665). This seems to go against the general assumption as summarized by, among others, Hoffmann and Kirk (2013) and Sikor and Lund (2009: 10), that there can be no sustained public authority without the provision of public goods. In the cases central to this article, languages of governance, and thereby the generation of public authority, may be less about provision of security or welfare than about the representative position that facilitates control over such provision. The PCs in Shabriha and Qasmiye may not produce many public goods, but they are deployed between those institutions that do and their constituencies. This fabricates authority in its own way, as Ismail (2006: 48–9, 52) has documented for Cairo's informal quarters where, for twilight institutions, 'undoubtedly the most important element is their mediating role between local communities and state agents and agencies'.

While the question of popular legitimacy has not been the main focus of this article, my findings nevertheless confirm Meagher's (2012: 1077) concerns about the almost default equation between hybrid authority structures, localism and popular legitimacy. The languages of stateness adopted by the PCs do not render them legitimate in the eyes of the inhabitants of Shabriha and Qasmiye; nor are they necessarily geared towards obtaining such popular legitimacy, as Sayigh (1997b: 670) rightfully notes. Rather, the PCs' twilight nature serves to maintain their position *vis-à-vis* competitors and partners, in the process often 'reproducing rather than challenging predatory and unaccountable modes of governance' (Meagher, 2012: 1097). As observed by Ramadan (2008: 673), there is a broadly shared sentiment among Lebanon's Palestinians that their leaders care more about 'political relations' with Lebanese than about the 'lives of ordinary Palestinian refugees' (see also Sayigh, 2001: 96).

CONCEPTUAL IMPLICATIONS OF EMULATION AND COORDINATION

Analysing the PCs in light of the Palestinian and Lebanese polities allows for a better understanding of the nature of non-state public authority. It also provides insights into the Lebanese state. In my case study, non-state authorities do not only refer to and thereby empower a general state *idea*, they also mirror and as such give credibility to Lebanon's specific state *system*. As twilight institutions, the PCs are not formally part of the Lebanese state and often agitate against its policies (Lund, 2006b: 687–9). Yet, in their behaviour and speech the PCs address the Lebanese state institutions they

see as their counterparts and whose recognition they seek at least as much as that of their Palestinian constituencies. Shabriha's PC head summed up the function of the PCs by stating that: 'The PC is the representative of the Palestinians to the Lebanese state and the Lebanese authorities deal with the PC' (Interview, Shabriha, 9 April 2013). According to the regional PC head, the PCs were even '*created* to officially work with the government' (Interview, Bourj el-Shemali camp, 7 May 2013; emphasis added).

PCs, then, do not seek to overthrow or replace the Lebanese state, but covet its recognition. They not only mirror the Lebanese state, but also validate it by confirming the state's hegemony and shaping themselves in the state's likeness to obtain its de facto acknowledgment. As DiMaggio and Powell (1983: 154) demonstrate, the more an organization depends on another organization or perceives it to be successful, 'the more similar it will become to that organization in structure, climate and behavioural focus'. My study of public authority in Palestinian gatherings illustrates that the Lebanese state, despite its proclaimed weakness and absence, still has potency as 'the big enframer' of political life in Lebanon (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001: 37). This is true even, or perhaps especially, at the margins of its sovereignty that the gatherings are often seen to represent.

Whereas the PLO's state-in-exile was a threat to the sovereignty of the Lebanese state — a 'cuckoo' that saw Lebanon as a useful 'hostage' (Sayigh, 1997b: 551) — the current PCs are a very different matter and, if anything, at times help cement the rule of the Lebanese state. The empirical trajectory of PLO institutions from meta-level threat to local-level partner, then, appears to go hand-in-hand with the conceptual shift from a zero-sum perspective on state/non-state relations to one that acknowledges interdependence. This means that the usual narrative of sovereignty-undermining 'states-within-the-state' that Lebanese politicians and officials still use to discuss Lebanon's Palestinian camps is redundant (Czajka, 2012). In this regard, the situation of the Palestinians is significantly different from that of, for instance, Hezbollah — to take the example of Lebanon's most significant 'state-within-the-state' (ibid.). Hezbollah is more formally institutionally entrenched in the Lebanese state and more broadly seen as a competitor to it (Davis, 2007; Early, 2006: 121). While Hezbollah's path is widely understood to 'have grown beyond the ability of the Lebanese state to determine', this is far from true for the PCs (Early, 2006: 125).

The relation between PCs and the Lebanese state is clearly an asymmetrical one: Palestinians 'play little part' in post-war Lebanon (Sayigh, 1995: 42) and PCs need the Lebanese state for both practical and legitimizing purposes. However, bearing in mind the logics of indirect rule (Boege et al., 2008: 8–9) and the concept of the contained client state (Hilal and Khan, 2004), the Lebanese state also needs the PCs. If we substitute 'tribal' with 'stateless' in Scott's famous 'anarchist history of stateness', the interest of states in state-like authorities that are not rivalling state systems becomes apparent — particularly considering that 'reestablishment of state control over

the refugee community' has been a main objective of Lebanon's post-war governments (Sayigh, 1995: 42; see also Sayigh, 2001: 101):

> Rulers and state institutions require a stable, reliable, hierarchical, 'graspable' social structure through which to negotiate or rule. They need an interlocutor, a partner, with whom to parlay, whose allegiance can be solicited, through whom instructions can be conveyed, who can be held responsible for political order, and who can deliver grain and tribute. Since tribal peoples are per definition outside the direct administration of the state, they must, if they are to be governed at all, be governed through leaders who can speak for them and, if necessary, be held hostage. (Scott, 2009: 209)

The PCs, in this light, are a crucial element of the Lebanese state's attempts to control or contain 'extrastate spaces' (ibid.: 31). As such, the relation between the Lebanese state and PCs exhibits much of the trappings of what Hilal and Khan (2004) call 'fragmented clientelism': factional competition and weak central control on the Palestinian side nurtured by the Lebanese state's interest in maintaining a client authority. In such a constellation, the PCs constitute the controllable 'strongmen' that can enact some of the social stability the Lebanese state so desperately needs (Migdal, 1988: 141).

Martin (2011: 160) cites an employee of the British Embassy in Beirut who concludes that 'it was very much easier for the government to exercise control of the camps through the PLO in this way'. In her work on the everyday state in Cairo, Ismail (2006: 39) shows that the dependence of state authorities on intermediary public authorities in marginal areas has led state representatives to incorporate such authorities 'into their strategy of control'. This 'local power compact that serves as an auxiliary to formal government', then, cuts both ways (ibid.: 55). Many respondents, Lebanese as well as Palestinian, indicated that in Palestinian gatherings 'the reality on the ground, the current situation, is a consequence of mutual interests' (Interview, former LPDC analyst, Beirut, 9 June 2014). This resonates with other accounts of 'the tacit complicity between institutional stakeholders on the Palestinian political scene and the Lebanese government in maintaining the status quo' (Allan, 2014: 203). Indeed, a local PLO official went so far as to claim that 'we help the Lebanese government to control' (Interview, Rashidiye camp, 14 May 2013).

Most state institutions, too, seem to work on this premise even if it is not formally acknowledged or officially organized. Above and elsewhere (Stel, 2014), I have documented in detail how municipalities, *mukhtars* and utility companies routinely work with PCs to the extent that they would not be able to deal with the contentious presence of the Palestinians in their domain without the PCs as a representative and buffer. The regional director of Électricité du Liban, for instance, explained:

> There is a PC present in all gatherings … There is coordination between us … It's true the Lebanese state doesn't consider it as official, but if there are problems in the gathering as a whole, the PC is responsible. We cooperate with them as a reality on the ground, but not official … And for us it's better if the PC comes to apply than if twenty people all come by themselves. (Interview, Marake, 15 October 2014)

Shabriha's *mukhtar* said it was 'natural' for him to work with Shabriha's PC since, exactly because of the weakness of many state institutions, 'it's just me and the PC who do the local governance here' (Interview, Shabriha, 3 April 2013). Even the former president of the LPDC, whose policy vision does not so much as mention the PCs (see LPDC, 2013), matter-of-factly explained that on 'construction, infrastructure, electricity, water, sewage . . . we call them directly' (Interview, Beirut, 22 July 2013).

In this light, the authority of the Lebanese state and that of the PCs are intertwined rather than contending, as Lebanese nationalist narratives would have it. While the PCs mimic the Lebanese state to legitimate their authority, 'the question of who invests whom with authority' cannot be singularly answered (Lund, 2006b: 693). The state is not a given (Migdal, 1988: 180). If we see it 'not as an actual structure, but as the powerful, apparently metaphysical effect of practices that make such structures appear to exist', the PCs' emulation of the state might indeed be a relevant 'state effect'. Taken as such, the PCs' mimicry of the Lebanese state contributes to the Lebanese state's 'appearing to exist' (Mitchell, 1999: 85). Rather than forming each other's antithesis, in many ways the Lebanese state and the PCs constitute and require one another and are 'doing the state' together (Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013: 12).

CONCLUSIONS

Not everything that the PCs do or say — maybe not even most of it — evokes stateness. There are certainly crucial differences between the creation of public authority by states (Lebanese or any other) and by non-state public authorities such as PCs. Yet it is the similarities between them, the languages of stateness appropriated by twilight institutions, that prop up the public authority of PCs in many instances. Accordingly, this article has made a twofold empirical argument. On the one hand, it has demonstrated that public authority in Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings can be better understood by investigating it through the lens of stateness, regardless of the often proclaimed absence of the Lebanese state in these localities. On the other hand, the article has shown that studying the production and legitimation of public authority in localities popularly understood to be characterized predominantly by the absence of the state can, in fact, tell a lot about both state ideas and state systems. The article thereby underwrites Scott's (2009: 31) contention that state evasion and forms of authority that are 'derivative' and 'imitative' of stateness are not at all mutually exclusive.

As a policy goal, the 'fiction of statehood' has been proven misleading in many fragile settings (Von Trotha, 2009: 39). As an instrument for non-state authorities in these same settings, however, this fiction is significant indeed. Stateness, partly accrued through emulation, is an important constituent of the glue that binds together the 'great variety of interpenetrative

relationships' that make up public authority (ibid.: 42). Even if languages of stateness merely feature as 'the emperor's clothes' — to buy into Von Trotha's metaphor (ibid.: 43) — these clothes serve a purpose. Especially when non-state public authorities have few carrots (welfare and security provision) or sticks (repressive and sanctioning power) at their disposal, 'dressing as the emperor' helps them to benefit from the inherent compliance generated by the state idea and to gain relevance as interlocutors for representatives of the state system.

Exploring the languages of stateness used by the twilight institutions that govern Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings thus makes a conceptual contribution to the nascent theorization of interaction and overlap between state and non-state authorities under 'hybrid', 'mediated' or 'negotiated' arrangements. The case study presented here helps conceptualize state and non-state public authority as mutually constitutive rather than mutually exclusive — in contrast to the claims of the dominant discourses of both the failed state policy model (Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013) and state authorities themselves (Czajka, 2012). In particular, my cases have demonstrated that it is not merely an abstract state *idea* that is relevant in understanding public authority produced by actors not formally part of the state system, as originally assumed by the concept of the twilight institution. Rather, by differentiating between public authorities' coordinative and communicative discourses, I have demonstrated that the emulation of a concrete state *system* is equally significant in analysing public authority beyond the state. State and non-state forms of public authority, then, are not merely drawing on similar legitimacy sources but are also practically, institutionally, interdependent.

This explains why it is perhaps exactly in alleged 'states-within-the-state', the pockets of informality seemingly outside the reach of the state system, that the significance of stateness is apparent. The assumption that the Lebanese state does not actually exist 'imbues the daily perceptions and attitudes of Lebanese of all backgrounds in the wake of failing public services, institutional deadlock, civil strife, and political stalemate' (Mouawad and Baumann, 2014). The case of Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings, however, suggests that the Lebanese state exists rather compellingly for those who live within its shadow as non-citizens — if only as the hegemonic exemplar for the twilight institutions governing these gatherings.

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The Agnotology of Eviction in South Lebanon's Palestinian Gatherings: How Institutional Ambiguity and Deliberate Ignorance Shape Sensitive Spaces

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Abstract: A significant part of Lebanon's Palestinian refugees live in unofficial camps, so-called "gatherings", where they reside on Lebanese land. Many of these gatherings are now threatened with eviction. By means of two qualitative case studies this article explores responses to such eviction threats. Residents, it turns out, engage in deliberate disinformation and stalling tactics and invoke both a professed and real ignorance about their situation. In contrast to dominant discourses that project Palestinian refugees as illicit and sovereignty undermining, I explain these tactics as a reaction to, and duplication of, a "politics of uncertainty" implemented by Lebanese authorities. Drawing on agnotology theory, and reconsidering the gatherings as sensitive spaces subjected to aleatory governance, I propose that residents' responses to the looming evictions are a manifestation of the deliberate institutional ambiguity that Lebanese authorities impose on the gatherings. As such, the article contributes to understanding the spatial dimensions of strategically imposed ignorance.

Keywords: agnotology, institutional ambiguity, eviction, informal settlements, Palestinian refugees, Lebanon

> Like knowledge or wealth or poverty, ignorance has a face, a house, and a price: it is encouraged here and discouraged there from ten thousand accidents (and deliberations) of social fortune. (Proctor 2008:6)

> The situation here is totally clouded and unclear. And it is meant to be cloudy; we are not supposed to understand. (Leader of a Palestinian youth movement, 7 May 2013)

Agnotology, the study of socially constructed and politically imposed ignorance, is remarkably underdeveloped (Slater 2012:951). This is problematic because information is more often than not incorrect or incomplete and because the limitations that are placed on knowledge determine decision-making (Bernstein 1998:207; Croissant 2014:12). The "sociological ignorance of ignorance" is particularly profound with regard to the spatial dimensions of not-knowing (McGoey 2012b:554). As Proctor (1995:8), the trailblazer of agnotology, notes, agnotology has a "distinct and changing political geography that is often an excellent indicator of the politics of knowledge".

Exploring the spatial manifestations of ignorance, then, is a logical priority in the attempt to further agnotology. It is, after all, through material demarcations and geographical categorizations that social processes, including the making and unmaking of ignorance, happen (Gieryn 2000:465).

The intention of this article, therefore, is to make a contribution to the political geography of agnotology. It seeks to do so by studying the politics of eviction in informal Palestinian settlements in South Lebanon. A significant part of Lebanon's 400,000 Palestinian refugees live in unofficial camps, or "gatherings", where they reside on public and privately owned Lebanese land. Many of these gatherings currently face eviction threats. This article explores residents' responses to such looming eviction by means of two qualitative case studies. Inhabitants of the gatherings generate deliberate disinformation, employ stalling tactics and invoke both professed and real ignorance about their predicament. While Lebanese authorities consequently portray Palestinian refugees as disruptive and sovereignty undermining, I suggest these tactics are, rather, a reaction to, and duplication of, the institutional ambiguity that Lebanese authorities implement in the gatherings.

Drawing on agnotology theory, my argument thus entails two levels of intentional elusiveness. On the one hand, the Lebanese state imposes a regime of "institutional ambiguity" on the gatherings. On the other, inhabitants of the gatherings respond to this with what I call "deliberate ignorance". My cases, then, concern spatially determined forms of not knowing and are consequently particularly well suited to an agnotological analysis. Such an analysis suggests that the gatherings can be understood as sensitive spaces that are governed on the basis of aleatory sovereignty. Dunn and Cons (2014:102) introduce aleatory sovereignty, rule by chance, as "the constant making and remaking of shifting landscapes of unpredictable power". It is the spatial demarcations and specificities of this unpredictability of power, so evident in Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings, that can advance agnotology. The article therefore integrates the concepts of sensitive spaces and aleatory governance into the nascent theory of agnotology to enable the understanding of the spatial dimensions of strategically imposed ignorance.

My argument is developed in three sections. I begin by outlining my analytical framework. I then proceed with a discussion of the case studies in which I analyse specific instances of looming eviction and residents' responses to them in light of institutional ambiguity and deliberate ignorance. The concluding section integrates the political geography notions of (sensitive) space and (aleatory) governance into the agnotology frame and draws out implications of such a spatialized agnotology with reference to epistemology and agency.

Agnotology

"There is more information we don't know than we do know for making most critical decisions" (Rowe 1994:743). Following this truism, uncertainty, ambiguity and ignorance (or "informational boundedness") have been pivotal issues in law, psychology, economics, and organization and management (Congleton 2001:391; see also Cowan 2004). Scholars like Kutsch and Hall (2010), for instance, explore the managerial effects of withholding information from others on the one

hand and "deliberate inattention" to information inconvenient to the self on the other. Yet, overall, economists, management scholars and organizational theorists treat ignorance as a contingency to be reduced or eliminated (Einhorn and Hogarth 1986:226). Taking its cues from political sociology, agnotology, conversely, engages with the functionality of ignorance.

Building on concepts such as "structural amnesia", "non-thinking" and "states of denial", agnotology refers to a social theory of ignorance that supposes that ignorance is a "fundamental influence in human cognition, emotion, action, social relations, and culture" (Smithson 2008:209). As such, it is based on three core premises: that ignorance is pervasive; that it is socially constructed; and that it can be advantageous (Smithson 2008:209). In coining the notion of agnotology, Proctor (2008:3) distinguishes between three forms of ignorance: ignorance as "native state"; ignorance as "lost realm"; and ignorance as "a deliberately engineered and strategic ploy". It is the latter, specifically political, category that I draw on (Slater 2012:951). Agnotology is then closely related to what Jones (2014:799) calls the "politics of uncertainty": the manufacturing of doubt and ignorance to accrue profit and power.

Ignorance, from this perspective, is not "a simple omission or gap", but "something that is made, maintained, and manipulated" (Proctor 2008:9); the product of cultural and political struggles (Slater 2012:951). This means that ignorance and knowledge are "equal tools of governance and usurpation" (McGoey 2012a:10). In the form of diverting attention, exploiting doubt and ignoring (or actively marginalizing) alternative understandings, ignorance can be a productive asset to justify inaction and evade responsibility (McGoey 2012b:553; Slater 2012:961; Smithson 2008:223).

Such production of ignorance has two dimensions (Proctor 2008:14; Slater 2012:950). On the one hand, social actors—be they individuals, communities or organizations—protect or profess their own ignorance. On the other hand, they manufacture the ignorance of others. These two dimensions are closely intertwined. As I demonstrate below, the response to imposed ignorance is often further maintained or feigned ignorance; the latter a form of resistance to or coping with the dominance implicated in the former (Gupta 2012:42). Following Taussig's dictum that knowing what not to know is a crucial kind of socio-political knowledge, what this branch of agnotology is ultimately interested in is "the knowledge of what individuals aspire and struggle [and pretend] not to know" (McGoey 2012b:554, 571). This has implications for scale. Agnotology is not so much concerned with individual ignorance (clearly, not everyone can, wants to or should know everything). What is at stake for agnotologists is socially deliberate ignorance. As Croissant (2014:10) notes, ignorance is inevitably "wrapped up in economic, political, cultural, and ideological processes".

This underlines the most enigmatic aspect of ignorance: its intentionality—how to prove that knowledge that is not there, is not there on purpose? In McGoey's (2012b:559) eloquent words: "The pyrrhic challenge for scholars of ignorance is to prove the existence of something for which the very ability to evade detection is a key criterion of success" (see also Scott 1985:290, 1990:199–200). There is a crucial difference between ignorance in the active form ("ignoring") and ignorance in its passive form ("being ignorant") but this difference is innately complicated to pin down (Smithson 2008:210). Agnotology, nevertheless, aims to differentiate

between "things we don't know we don't know and things we know we don't know" (McGoey 2012b:558–559). It is the latter form—the things people know they don't know but don't want to know (deliberate ignorance) and the things they know but pretend not to know (professed ignorance)—that is of specific relevance to my argument.

While locating and explaining such conscious ignorance is per definition elusive, recognizing that "intentionally produced agnoses" have a political geography is a useful starting point (Croissant 2014:11). Following Proctor (2008:6), this prompts me to explore where there is ignorance (and why there rather than elsewhere). The distribution of ignorance is never even. For Proctor (2008:26), "the geography of ignorance has mountains and valleys", which leads to questions such as: "Ignorance for whom? And against whom?" Marxist, feminist and postcolonial theories have conclusively demonstrated that class, gender and race "produce absences of knowledge" (Croissant 2014:11; see also Slater 2012:951). This also brings to the fore "the troubling relationship between (mis)information and state power" that is central in my analysis (Slater 2012:948; see also Gupta 2012; Hull 2012:25).

Departing from these intellectual traditions, I distance myself from Orientalist or developmentalist associations of ignorance with backwardness, irrationality or inferiority (Gupta 2012:196). Ignorance, in this article, simply refers to (sometimes strategically imposed or simulated) not knowing. In the following sections I explore the spatial manifestations of such not knowing by investigating how residents of Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings employ deliberate and professed ignorance in order to deal with eviction threats and how these responses are related to the pervasive institutional ambiguity that these localities are subjected to.

Evictions in Lebanon's Palestinian Gatherings

Palestinian refugees constitute roughly 10% of Lebanon's population[1] and are Lebanon's most disenfranchised community: they are withheld citizenship, legally discriminated against in the labour market and cannot own real estate. Since their arrival in Lebanon during and after the 1948 *Nakba*,[2] consecutive Lebanese governments have feared that naturalization of the largely Sunni Muslim Palestinians would upset Lebanon's precarious sectarian balance. Lebanese political leaders have habitually cast any form of relieving the Palestinians' plight as a first step towards naturalization (and hence intra-Lebanese conflict) (Meier 2010). The ensuing marginalization has been defended with the claim that maintaining the Palestinians' destitution serves to keep pressure on Israel to fulfil the Palestinians' right to return to Palestine. As a result, governance of and within the Palestinian communities in Lebanon is dictated by a "state of exception" and remains without regularization, recognition or formalization (Hanafi and Long 2010). Lebanon's Palestinian refugees "hover in an ill-defined space, out of place and between states, as Lebanon denies their naturalization and Israel rejects their return" (Allan 2014:10).

This legal and political marginalization has clear spatial components. It is affected by the differing politico-institutional status of various categories of territories and epitomized in land and tenure issues. The majority of Lebanon's Palestinian refugees live in official refugee camps where the Lebanese state has ceded much

of its sovereignty through the Cairo Agreement.[3] Indeed, Lebanon's Palestinian camps are popularly regarded as "states-within-the-state" (Czajka 2012; Meier 2010). The camps are administered by the United Nations Works and Relief Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and governed by Popular Committees installed by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Not all Palestinians in Lebanon, however, live in these official camps. Many[4] of them reside in gatherings, informal camps that are not recognized by the Lebanese government and have been surprisingly under-researched (Martin 2011:138; Ramadan 2009b:662; Stel 2014).

There are some 42 gatherings in Lebanon, 26 of them located in the South (Chabaan 2014; Danish Refugee Council 2005). Residents of the gatherings fall largely outside UNRWA's service mandate (Hilal 2010; Williams 2011). Lebanese municipalities do not consider the gatherings their responsibility either, as residents are neither citizens nor tax payers. Responsibility for and control of the gatherings are consequently taken up by an amalgamated array of actors ranging from Popular Committees, various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UNRWA to Lebanese and Palestinian political factions and Lebanese state officials such as *mukhtars*,[5] mayors and utility companies (Stel 2016).

The institutional ambiguity inside the gatherings is closely related to, and hence most evident in, housing, land and property issues. As Sanyal (2011:882) explains, "the Lebanese authorities insisted on keeping the structures of the camps temporary" in order to maintain the temporary nature of the Palestinian presence in Lebanon. Palestinians are legally prohibited from owning land or real estate since 2001, because, according to Lebanese authorities, allowing Palestinian refugees to own a home encourages them to envision their future in Lebanon rather than a prospective Palestinian state (Martin 2011:101). Palestinians residing in Lebanon's official camps live on land rented by UNRWA from the Lebanese state and hence face a notoriously cramped and deprived but also relatively stable tenure condition.[6] The gatherings, however, are built on Lebanese land without permission, which renders the residents' tenure situation there extremely insecure (Rasul 2013; Williams 2011:31). Moreover, while restrictions on construction and maintenance are salient aspects of the gatherings' tenure insecurity it is the increasing threat of eviction of already existing houses that is the quintessential manifestation of "spacio-cide" techniques: as argued by Martin (2011:170) and Ramadan (2009a:156) the destruction of material structures to deny Palestinians' living space is part of a broader process of cultural and political annihilation (see also Beer 2011; Chabaan 2014; Rasul 2013; Williams 2011). It is instances of eviction in the gatherings, therefore, on which my study turns.

The argument made below is based on the in-depth analysis of nascent eviction in the gatherings of Shabriha and Qasmiye, two of Lebanon's largest gatherings.[7] Data were generated during 12 months of fieldwork (eight of which I lived in Qasmiye and Shabriha) by means of over 250 semi-structured, in-depth interviews, four focus groups, document analysis and field observations. Considering that I was trying to study a phenomenon, ignorance, which is by definition ephemeral, the analysis of these data was challenging. Throughout my exploration, I draw on Scott's (1990:199–200) suggestions on how to study infrapolitics, "political action [that] is studiously designed to be anonymous or to disclaim its purpose ...

[and therefore] requires more than a little interpretation". Because my interest regarded things people knew they did not know or pretended not to know, careful triangulation—juxtaposing accounts from different categories of respondents and different forms of data—and immersion—personally experiencing to which extent information was (not) available—made it possible to unravel how and why people have protected, invoked and claimed ignorance despite the fact that they might in many cases have had an interest in misrepresentation (Scott 1985:45–46).

Eviction Threats in Shabriha and Qasmiye

Shabriha gathering is located predominantly on public land owned by the municipality of Abasiye. As with most other gatherings in South Lebanon, the settlement was created in the early 1950s by Bedouin tribes that saw the official UNRWA camps as unsuitable places to accommodate their cattle and preferred to settle near the orchards where they had found work. It was only after the chaos of the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990) ended that the gathering's illegality became salient. But actual eviction seems never to have been on the agenda until 2005. Then, the residents of approximately 30 houses in the upper area of Shabriha received a message that "their" land would be expropriated in the construction process of the Zahrani–Qana highway. The project started in 1996, but it was only in 2005 that the expropriation case was taken to court by the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR). Due to the complicated situation with the non-owner residents, extensive hearings were required. However, in 2007, residents reported that engineers came to mark houses. In 2010, construction started with more houses added to the eviction list. In 2013, engineering teams arrived in the gathering and signalled that the construction of the highway in Shabriha was imminent.

Qasmiye falls within the cadastral boundaries of Bourj Rahaal municipality. Some 20% of the land on which the gathering is built is public (municipal) land; the rest is the property of a variety of Lebanese private owners (Danish Refugee Council 2005:152). In the 1950s, most of these landowners gave the Palestinians, often their field labourers, permission to live on their lands. Their heirs, facing ever-expanding construction and encouraged by rising property prices, however, no longer feel bound by the promises their (grand)fathers made (Beer 2011:36). Many of them have started law suits against the Palestinians "occupying" their land. In 1997, the residents of approximately 50 houses in the area in Upper Qasmiye were accused of illegally residing and building on private land and summoned to court. After almost a decade of recurrent court sessions, the judge in Sur ruled in favour of the landowner in 2006. In 2010, the residents' appeal was rejected by the court in Saida as well. One year later, the residents received a warrant from the police that informed them that they had five days to leave. The people I spoke with, however, lacking any alternative residence, refused to leave. Nor did the police come to physically evict them.

Residents' Responses

Thus, the eviction threats in Shabriha and Qasmiye have reached an impasse. In both cases, eviction warrants have been issued, but not implemented. In both

cases, also, residents' responses to their looming displacement are characterized by two interdependent strategies: stalling and ignoring. Residents are aware that in a legal sense they cannot claim ownership of either their land or their houses (Beer 2011:6). As the judge in charge of the Shabriha case said: "We're looking for a practical solution, not a legal one. Because legally, they don't have any rights".[8]

In light of this, residents in both cases have sought to stall and evade the evictions rather than dispute them in legal terms. Reference to political parties has been critical here (Rasul 2013:47). In Qasmiye, Palestinian political leaders discussed the matter with Nabih Berri, Speaker of Parliament and leader of the Amal party that is dominant in the region. Berri agreed that "it would not be acceptable to have people say that in the South they destroy Palestinian houses" and instructed the police charged with implementing the eviction order to refrain from doing so.[9] In Shabriha, a committee of affected residents contacted representatives of Palestinian political parties, in the hope that these would subsequently address their Lebanese counterparts who might then take the matter up with the CDR. A representative of an NGO involved in the case explained that he did not contact the CDR directly, but instead approached political parties, because the CDR engineers "get their orders from the politicians anyway ... There are no legal solutions; it's about political interference".[10]

Apart from getting politicians to "freeze" court cases, residents themselves also seek to stall or sabotage the legal processes that would enable their expulsion. It is here that their ignorance comes in. This ignorance takes various forms. In some instances, people did not have the relevant information—either because they were unaware the information existed or was worth knowing or because they were unable to get it. At other times, residents claimed not to know things they arguably knew. Also, residents refused to know things they could have known, choosing not to know. A policy analyst described this posture as cherishing "loose ends: people don't get to the bottom; they open something, have a look and put the lid back on".[11]

Residents claimed they had been ignorant of the illegality of their situation. In Qasmiye, a sheikh maintained that: "When we built here we were under the impression that the land belonged to the municipality. Only later did we find out that it belonged to the [landowner]".[12] An observer, however, assured me that: "They knew very well the land was owned".[13] Indeed, people I interviewed admitted that they were aware that they were living on privately owned land but referred to a "right of use", reasoning that their continuous presence on and cultivation of the land legitimizes their stay. In addition, residents insisted that the previous owner had given them permission. Both assertions allowed them to "claim to have been taken unawares by the impending eviction" (Ramakrishnan 2014:766).

Besides such professed ignorance, residents actually ignored the impending evictions as long as they possibly could, intentionally maintaining their not knowing. While in both cases there had been indications of eviction threats from the early 1990s onwards, it was only when they saw actual state representatives (police with warrants in Qasmiye and CDR engineers in Shabriha) that residents began to really engage with the situation. During my stay in Qasmiye and Shabriha, I was struck, at first, by how little people seemed to know about their case. Certainly, landownership is a complicated matter and "a lack of knowledge of the legal ownership and zoning of land in the gatherings is commonplace" (Beer 2011:36).

Considering the pertinence of their case, however, I was surprised that people often did not even know who owned the land they lived on. In Qasmiye, stories about the amount of houses involved in the case were widely divergent, with numbers of affected households ranging from 38 to 120.[14] In Shabriha, accounts of when the court case had started and whether the final decision was reached yet differed remarkably. People made clear that they had no understanding of the legal workings of the court cases, which made the proceedings seem entirely random to them. Residents would recount how the issue "comes up time and again"[15]; "like a volcano it is calm for a while and then it awakens".[16] This confirms Rasul's (2013:38) observation that residents of the gatherings "exhibited an overwhelming feeling of helplessness and apathy towards finding solutions for HLP [housing, land and property] issues".

Yet, much of residents' "disinterest" and "unawareness" was deliberate; a form of "strategic not-wanting-to-know", as Croissant (2014:12) calls it. In fact, ignoring in this context can be considered a form of resistance (Cowan 2004:931). A legal aid worker observed that many people are so scared they "don't even want to know the details".[17] In Qasmiye, affected residents were notified personally by the court. Even if they did not understand the legalistic jargon of the court's communication, they could have made an effort to have it explained to them. Yet, legal awareness raising sessions were, according to the NGO that organized them, not broadly frequented. In Shabriha as well, residents adhered to a strategic "what you don't know can't hurt you" motto (McGoey 2012b:554). The inclusion of part of Shabriha in the lands expropriated for the highway was nationally broadcasted in a 1996 decree. And while residents can perhaps not be expected to closely follow all such decrees, all people I interviewed were aware of its existence. Yet none of them had tried to obtain and read it. Likewise, while several maps indicating which houses would be affected circulated among residents, most of them said they had made no efforts to look into them.

There is, however, a "productive pragmatism" that often lies behind such "ritualized forms of apparent idleness" (Allan 2014:141; see also Scott 2009). Ismail (2006:161) reminds us that "inaction, passivity, evasion, and fear are all features of encounters with the everyday state". If, as Gupta (2012:268) puts it, "biopolitics depends on knowledge of the population", maintaining "institutional invisibility" would logically be a key priority for those facing eviction (Scott 1985:35). Residents' adherence to (professed or maintained) ignorance stems from their assumption that maintaining and inciting uncertainty can help them prevent eviction. And indeed, "false compliance" and "footdragging" tactics, theorized by Scott (1985, 1990) as "everyday resistance" and the "infrapolitics of the powerless",[18] have served the gatherings so far (Bayat 1997:56). By avoiding registration, for instance, Qasmiye's residents have successfully delayed the court process. The court proceedings of 14 February 2002 state that:

> The prosecutors do not show in their accusation the complete identity of some of the accused people … And the investigation by the police in Abasiye did not result in complete knowledge about the identity of all accused … The court will have to withdraw charges against those persons vis-à-vis whom the prosecutors could not fulfil the legal stipulation to provide the necessary personal information to press charges.[19]

Under Lebanese law, every individual accused in court has to be notified. If the person has no designated address—or in this case if the designated address cannot

be tied to a registered person—the court has to resort to other notification mechanisms that can severely delay the process. Qasmiye's residents aptly utilized such stalling tactics to put "sand in the gears" of the judicial process (Proctor 2008:17). The landowner admitted that the court case was effectively frustrated by the residents "absenting" themselves when "someone from the court comes knocking on their doors".[20]

Ultimately, of course, "playing dumb" will not prevent eviction. Nevertheless, the pose of "submission and stupidity" can constitute a useful tactic (Scott 1985:37). Residents maintained and feigned their own ignorance and fed that of their evictors in order to delay—confirming that "not acting has value" (Bernstein 1998:15). As a resident in Qasmiye noted: "We cannot make calls and connections until we have serious material documents that indicate the time period we have to leave, for instance".[21] This also implies that as long as the residents do *not* have this information and documentation, as long as they remain ignorant, they cannot be expected to act. What is more, as long as the authorities do not have certain information, they too cannot act (Gupta 2012; Hull 2012). If decision letters create their "own reality", ignoring these letters signals a refusal of this reality (Cowan 2004:954). Keeping matters oral, and thereby "transitory and potentially more open to corruption and contradiction" as long as possible then becomes imperative (Gupta 2012:200). Bearing in mind similar examples discussed by Hull (2012:204), it is in this light that the physical resistance of Shabriha's residents against the marking and measuring of affected buildings by CDR engineers and their apprehension of statistics should be seen. As Scott (2009:229) explains, what is threatening to people is often not so much the "officials themselves as the paper documents—land titles, tax lists, population records—through which the officials seem to rule".

Ignorance as Strategic Replication of Institutional Ambiguity

The above-described ignorance—real, deliberately upheld, and pretence—on behalf of the Palestinian residents of the gatherings is often discussed as a symptom of the threat they supposedly present to the Lebanese state and nation. It fits the dominant Lebanese discourse of the Palestinians and their camps as sovereignty undermining (Czajka 2012; Meier 2010). Lebanese authorities present residents' ignorance as "disruptive" and use it to fuel stereotypes of Palestinian refugees as "either hapless or unruly, painting them as patently unable to conform to the projects that have been formulated for [the public] good or as dangerous and criminal" (Dunn and Cons 2014:104; see also Cowan 2004:929). The space of the gatherings is thus central in proclaiming moral deviance (Gieryn 2000:479) and denigrating resistance (Scott 1985:301).

What I will demonstrate below, however, is that, rather than going against the sovereignty claimed by the Lebanese state, the strategic ignorance of the gatherings' residents in fact replicates the implicit policies of the Lebanese state. In many ways, residents are "forced to commit ... the slew of transgressions" they are accused of (Dunn and Cons 2014:101). The institutional ambiguity effused on the gatherings, characterized by uncertainty regarding rights, mandates and

responsibilities, lies at the root of the gatherings' eviction problems. Residents invoke and reinforce this ambiguity as a protection mechanism—implicitly reasoning that as long as the situation remains vague, decisive action (which will be to their detriment) might be postponed. Thus, to some extent the very uncertainty that generates the residents' "permanent state of anger and anxiety" is used by them to delay the certainty of eviction (Williams 2011:30).

The institutional ambiguity to which the gatherings are subjected, and which residents replicate through their "ignorance", has various manifestations. These all demonstrate how the institutional marginalization of particular spaces can spur collective action to avoid "loss of place" and how deliberate ignorance can be part of such collective action (Gieryn 2000:481–482). First, the gatherings fall outside UNRWA's territory-based mandate and the Lebanese state's citizenship-based mandate. They are also excluded from the Cairo Agreement and are illegally located on Lebanese land. As such, they are excluded from all forms of legal, formal and official governance in Lebanon. This extra-legality is part of what the gatherings' residents evoke when they play ignorant and make the Lebanese state ignorant. Indeed, Scott (1990:199) reminds us, infrapolitics is particularly "well-suited to subjects who have no political rights". Palestinians strongly feel that they have little to expect from "the law" (Rasul 2013:6). In a focus group in Shabriha, participants stated:

> We live in a situation of chaos. No one is ruling on the ground, everyone has their own laws that they apply according to their benefits. No one cares for the people; they are living; they are suffering; this is not important for them [the authorities]. You are in Lebanon and you must know this—we're in the jungle, not in a state ... We have no court, we have no law and we have no state.[22]

Being excluded from the rule of law, residents necessarily put their faith in the rule of precedents. People know that by steadfastly sticking to "quiet non-compliance" and threatening with "on-the-spot resistance" their presence on the ground is hard to reverse (Bayat 1997:54; Hull 2012:23). The informality and illegality that characterizes much of the response of the gatherings' residents to the evictions, then, "is not an essential preference", but rather an "alternative to the constraints of formal structures", or, in this case, the exclusion of the gatherings from such formal structures (Bayat 1997:60).

The lack of any indisputable authority in the gatherings, and the related "diffusion of agency", constitutes the second aspect of the gatherings' institutional ambiguity that is mirrored in residents' strategic ignorance (Hull 2012:115). In the gatherings, neither UNRWA nor the Lebanese state nor Palestinian Popular Committees feature as undisputed representatives of the residing communities. With regard to the evictions, this means that residents are not informed about their fate (and cannot hold anyone accountable for this disinformation either). In the case of Shabriha, the CDR approached the municipality, which is the official landowner, and assumed the municipality would inform the residents. The municipality, however, hardly communicated about the eviction process with the Palestinian residents, whom it regarded bothersome squatters. A range of other actors, including Shabriha's *mukhtar* and several NGOs, sought to fill this position of representative but this only generated

more confusion about who spoke for the residents. In the end, a CDR project manager said the residents:

> Didn't get any letter or anything; we see them in the field when we pass by. We asked the mayor what they were doing there and he told us that they live there illegally. There is no communication with them, not official and not unofficial. We saw them and we know there is a problem, but legally there is no relation between us and them.[23]

Indeed, residents claimed they were never actually informed that their houses were included in the highway plot. Instead, they say they heard this through other channels and then suddenly found engineers painting large red numbers on their houses. The lack of a clearly designated responsibility for the gatherings thus explains much of the ambiguity that the residents replicate: if no one represents them, namely, they cannot be addressed and their lack of registration and compliance is hard to penalize. Legal experts of an NGO following the eviction case in Qasmiye explained that they were careful not to harm these "coping mechanisms that are based on discretion and not making noise".[24] They added "we could have all the information that you're asking for, but we don't want to have it—for their sake".

Institutional ambiguity is not only related to the gatherings' informal status and concomitant lack of an undisputed representative. A third aspect is the politicization of the gatherings' tenure situation. On the one hand, Lebanese authorities cast the Palestinian presence in Lebanon in terms of the polarized debate revolving around "settlement" versus "return". The physical presence of the refugees and the particular conditions of their shelter—as concrete manifestations of either temporariness, and dedication to return, or permanence, and surrender to "settlement"—have consequently become particularly politically laden. While residents indicated they resent this politicization, they have nevertheless come to embrace it. When they address Lebanese politicians in order to freeze court cases, residents stave their requests with specifically political arguments to drive home the "political costs of expropriation policies" (Hull 2012:207). They play on the knowledge that displacing Palestinian refugees, already burdened by a history of forced expulsion, is a thorny issue for Lebanese politicians (Sanyal 2013:568; Williams 2011:34). Residents actively incited such sensitivities through the media and, according to the landowner, inhabitants of Qasmiye publicly accused her of "repeating the Palestinian *Nakba*".[25]

I argue that the above-described institutional ambiguity to which Lebanese authorities subject Palestinians in Lebanon, and specifically those in the gatherings, is deliberately constructed and maintained. Institutional ambiguity is not, I propose, an inevitable consequence of refugeeness, but rather the purposeful result of the absence of any state policy beyond repression (Klaus 2000:140; Ramakrishnan 2014:757). This replicates Ismail's (2006:168) observations for Cairo's informal settlements where many residents were equally convinced that "the state did not want them conscious and was actively undermining their ability to think critically by enmeshing them in daily struggles for survival".

For Palestinians living in the gatherings this is especially poignant. In at least half of my interviews with local Lebanese state representatives, they were ignorant—or pretended to be ignorant—about the gatherings, thereby reproducing the image of Lebanon's Palestinian spaces as "impenetrable and closed, unknowable, foreign"

(Ramadan 2009a:157). Officials who I spoke with in Sur, for instance, said they were not even aware of the fact that there was a Palestinian gathering in Shabriha. A representative of an NGO working with Palestinian refugees in Lebanon said: "Many people at the municipality don't have a clue about the gatherings; there is no representation or exchange".[26] This not knowing, however, is often intentional. A mayor from the region told me: "don't tell me how things are arranged [in Shabriha gathering]; I don't want to know!"[27] Another mayor similarly advised me to "not get into this; to only dig on the surface".[28]

The institutional ambiguity to which the Palestinians in the gatherings are subject, thus, is the result of a deliberate "no-policy-policy" on the side of the Lebanese government (Nassar 2014). Several responses are possible in the face of such imposed ambiguity. Actors can lobby for regularization, the "hardening" of institutions, which would increase predictability. Alternatively, they can employ what Cleaver (2002) calls "situational adjustment": the exploitation of the "soft" status of institutions. Where, as in the gatherings, people have no official representative, few socio-economic assets and little political clout, producing regularization is not within their ability. Thus, situational adjustment becomes the default response to threats. The Lebanese "policy vacuum" regarding the gatherings can partly be understood as a manifestation of deliberate "nonroutine and unpredictable" rule which is a form of "despotic power" (Ismail 2006:xxiv).[29] As a member of Qasmiye's Popular Committee lamented: "We don't know what might happen even tomorrow; we live on a day-by-day basis".[30] This reveals how the uncertainty produced by the residents of Shabriha and Qasmiye as a defence mechanism against eviction is generated by the uncertainty they themselves are subjected to by authorities. A Palestinian youth leader surmised: "We're normalizing the abnormal. I think this is what one calls a negative coping mechanism".[31]

Institutional Ambiguity and Strategic Ignorance: Who Benefits How?

For residents, situational adjustment has so far served as a last resort to delay eviction, underwriting that "ignorance is not simply a resource for those wielding political power" (McGoey 2012a:9). The inhabitants of Qasmiye and Shabriha have utilized ignorance as a measure of last resort to protect the only living space that has been left for them after generations of legal marginalization in Lebanon succeeded forced expulsion from Palestine. The large majority of the people now living in the gatherings have been born there. They cannot relocate to the official camps, which are infamously overcrowded and have not been allowed to geographically expand since the 1950s (Martin 2011:101). They are, since 2001, allowed to own neither land (on which they might build) nor real estate (Knudsen 2007:12). Their legal discrimination on the labour market, moreover, makes it unlikely for most of the residents of the gatherings, two thirds of which live under the poverty line (Chabaan 2014:59), to earn the money needed to pay Lebanon's high rents (Danish Refugee Council 2005:46).

Temporary gains of ignorance should thus not be overstated. As Slater (2012:951) notes, in the long run they will almost always have disturbing consequences "for those living at the bottom of the class structure" (see also Scott

1985:299).[32] The stalling generated through politicization of the eviction cases, for instance, ultimately only reinforces the instability and uncertainty of the residents' daily life. A communal leader told me: "They stopped it; it was postponed. But we didn't solve anything, it's just suspended ..."[33] Reflecting on the volatile relations between the PLO and Amal, someone from Qasmiye who preferred to stay anonymous worried: "Politics controls everything here. Now he [Berri] helps us and our relation with him is very good. But if there is a change in the situation or his opinion, this stops. Before, they were killing us!"[34]

While residents in Qasmiye have depicted private landowners as the main villains, they cannot be said to have benefited from the situation either. Landowners are left with unimplementable court orders and land they cannot use or sell but do pay taxes on. In the end, it is neither the landowners nor the residents that benefit from the status quo of institutional ambiguity. Rather, it is the Lebanese and Palestinian politicians that have claimed gatekeeper functions in the situational adjustment strategies of the residents that have profited from the situation (Stel 2016).[35]

Lebanese political parties, which in Lebanon's political structure de facto hold sway over officially "neutral" state agencies (Stel 2015b), benefit from the institutional ambiguity in the gatherings because a more formal position of the Palestinian residents and their representatives would sideline them as intermediaries to the state. Lebanese leaders are often said to covet the allegiance of Palestinian armed groups with an eye to the country's unstable political situation (Stel 2015b:85). In addition, some Palestinians have received Lebanese citizenship and their votes can be relevant to local electoral dynamics (Stel 2015c). Palestinian leaders also depend on the current institutional ambiguity to legitimize their undemocratic and widely unpopular rule over the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon (Hanafi and Long 2010; Richter-Devroe 2013; see Ramadan 2009b:673 for a poignant example). Had the affected residents had a formal status as either citizens or residents, the Palestinian parties might have lost much of their relevance for residents as gatekeepers to the state (Stel 2015b, 2016). Indeed, "the tacit complicity between institutional stakeholders on the Palestinian political scene and the Lebanese government in maintaining the status quo" (Allan 2014:203) means that insecurity and ambiguity are reinforced "by the very Palestinians who are supposed to protect their communities" (Martin 2011:238).

At least as important as the interests of Lebanese and Palestinian politicians in the current status quo of ambiguity, is the institutional entrenchment of this ambiguity by the various organizations of the Lebanese state. The contested land situation of the gatherings at first glance does not benefit the state. In Shabriha, the municipality of Abasiye has been unable to use parts of its most attractive land and the CDR faces serious obstacles in realizing important infrastructure projects. Yet, ultimately, the gatherings' current institutional ambiguity is advantageous to the Lebanese state (Nassar 2014). It enables the Lebanese government to disregard even the few obligations it has under the rare international conventions (such as the 1965 Casablanca Protocol) it acceded to (Knudsen 2007:15). The Lebanese state faces an enormous financial deficit and grapples with capacity problems. In combination with the political sensitivity of the "Palestinian issue", this is a major incentive to try and avoid rather than address the needs of Palestinian refugees in the gatherings. In short, maintaining ambiguity means not having to deal with and invest in the gatherings.

Echoing the opening quote of this article, a Palestinian analyst explained that the situation in the gatherings is vague, because "it is intended to be vague! ... The Lebanese state doesn't want any formal responsibility; this is the heart of the matter".[36] The gatherings were never part of the Cairo Agreement. There is thus no legal impediment to prevent the Lebanese authorities from incorporating them into their governance. Yet, they do not—because maintaining ambiguity about the political and juridical status of the gatherings relieves them from having to take the responsibility for these spaces (Martin 2011:181). This interpretation resonates with Wedeen's (2008:151) thesis that "spaces of disorder" can paradoxically function as "a mode of reproducing rule". It establishes ambiguity as a form of political subordination that stems from the creation of "a façade of unpredictability" (Ramakrishnan 2014:757, 759).

Towards a Political Geography of Agnotology: Aleatory Sovereignty in Sensitive Spaces

As Proctor (2008:19) marvels, some spaces "have been erased from maps or never drawn in". While featuring on geographical maps, Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings have never been drawn into the maps that delineate responsibilities and rights and this renders them ambiguous and vulnerable. Thus, from a conceptual perspective at least, the project of mapping and conceptualizing power within and across such spaces is particularly urgent (Dunn and Cons 2014:106). The above analysis of the politics of uncertainty that entrenches institutional ambiguity in Shabriha and Qasmiye—which culminated in the threats of eviction—suggests that the strategic making and unmaking of ignorance are of key importance in such mapping and conceptualization.

Spatial governmentality has been concerned with studying how government, sovereignty and discipline operate through space. In this approach, camps are often theorized with reference to Agamben's "spaces of exception", zones in which refugees are degenerated to "bare life" because the sovereign has placed them outside regular governance (Gupta 2012:6–7; Martin 2011). This reading has also been dominant with regard to (non-refugee) informal settlements (Bayat 1997; Fawaz and Peillen 2003; Ismail 2006). The Agambenian framework tells us a lot about the significance of spaces of exception for our understanding of modern sovereignty. However, it primarily engages with the existence of such spaces and has less interest in the dynamics inside them. As such, as Dunn and Cons (2014:93) reveal, it ultimately fails to explain how these places actually work (see also Sanyal 2011). This is the case precisely because "the notion of a space of exception is grounded in an absolute certainty that belies the anxiety and confusion" that characterize many "exceptional spaces"—such as camps, borderlands and informal settlements (Dunn and Cons 2014:94). The notion of the state of exception does not deny the omnipresence of ambiguity in refugee spaces, but seems primarily interested in the ostensibly unequivocal dichotomy between norm and exception that undercuts a "pluricentered, multileveled, and decentralized" conception of power (Gupta 2012:17–18). If we are to engage explicitly with the idea of ambiguity, arguably the core feature of such spaces (Dunn

and Cons 2014:95), therefore, Dunn and Cons' (2014:93) notion of "sensitive spaces" offers a more applicable analytical instrument.

The concept of "sensitive spaces" was specifically honed to understand "spaces characterized by multiple modes of power and conflicting claims to sovereign control", such as the gatherings. The pervasive uncertainty, unpredictability and ambiguity that determine sensitive spaces brings them squarely into the realm of agnotology, because, as evidenced by the cases discussed above, this ignorance is often deliberate more than inevitable, a construct rather than a given. Knowledge generation projects are not simply per definition doomed to fail in the complexity of sensitive spaces, as Dunn and Cons (2014:96) suggest. Instead, they are often actively sabotaged by both sovereigns and subjects. Hence, it is in combining the more structural analysis implicit in Dunn and Cons' notion of aleatory sovereignty with the relatively agency-oriented perspective of agnotology that the full implications of ignorance and ambiguity in the gatherings (and similar spaces) is brought to the fore.

Dunn and Cons stipulate that sensitive spaces are ambiguous because such spaces are governed by what they call "aleatory sovereignty". Aleatory sovereignty exists at the "conjuncture of multiple forms of power" and "results in outcomes that are unpredictable and appear to happen by chance" (Dunn and Cons 2014:102). In sensitive spaces, "there are so many interwoven projects, logics, goals, and anxieties of rule operating at once that it is impossible for any one person to understand and account for them at any given moment" (Dunn and Cons 2014:102). This framework assumes that, in sensitive spaces, excessive "projects of rule" implemented by the governing inexorably result in dramatic complexity and unintended results. This, in turn, necessitates the governed to act in informal and even illegal ways and, cyclically, eventually results in new and even more elaborate projects to establish control (Dunn and Cons 2014:2–3).

While my case studies corroborate much of this vicious cycle of uncertainty, one potential point of contention surfaces. Dunn and Cons (2014:2–3), in the instances of regulatory pluralism they focus on, assume that the unsanctioned actions of residents are "corrosive to carefully laid plans to establish power within or over such zones since they introduce action beyond sovereign control". For the instances of regulatory deficit that the gatherings represent, however, I suggest that uncertainty and institutional ambiguity might be an intended rather than an unintended consequence of authorities' projects of rule; that the maintenance of such unpredictability and ambiguity might be an instrument of rule itself. The incongruity between institutional ambiguity and "a clear plan to establish sovereignty" is then misleading because the ambiguity itself is part of the attempt to enact sovereignty (Dunn and Cons 2014:103; see also Nassar 2014:21). This also means that residents' replication of this ambiguity through their ignoring and stalling tactics might reinforce rather than corrode state power. In the Palestinian gatherings of Shabriha and Qasmiye, authorities and would-be sovereigns may indeed be aggravated by the "constant transgression" of the gatherings' residents, which they cast as a threat to "territorial and other forms of sovereign control" (Dunn and Cons 2014:102). Yet the transgression is, in these cases at least, a response not to these authorities' attempts to regularize or formalize but, conversely, to the absence of such attempts and the

resultant protracted irregularity and informality. As Hull (2012:166, 248) has shown, in many cases "illegibility and opacity have been produced by the very instruments of legibility" which means that "state control can be extended not only through specification, but through ambiguity".

Such rule through, rather than despite, ambiguity resonates with Martin's understanding of "potentiality". Martin explores the Lebanese state's technologies of sovereignty and control vis-à-vis the country's official refugee camps. She suggests that the very absence of the Lebanese state from Palestinian spaces can be read as "the manifestation of the sovereign's *potenza*: a potentiality to-act or not-to-act, to-control or not-to-control" (Martin 2011:195; see also Ramadan 2009a:158). It is in renouncing responsibility but embracing sanctioning that Lebanese authorities make institutional ambiguity work for them. Territoriality and land play an existential role in this. Now that "uncertainty over the status of the land has become the rule", the Lebanese government is in a situation where it could eliminate the gatherings without legal consequences (Martin 2011:149). Potentiality explicates how "not-to-be and not-to-act" can, in such contexts, be forms of control and power and abandoning direct "disciplinary techniques focusing on space and enclosure" are not always an end of engagement, but can be merely another manifestation of it (Minca 2005:409, quoted in Martin 2011:183).

If we try, as Dunn and Cons (2014:105) urge us, to move away "from the abstractions of juridical philosophy and towards the space of lived practice" we have to account for not merely the structural aspects of the ambiguity of these spaces, but also the agency underlying it. Where Dunn and Cons (2014:102) find that actors operating in sensitive spaces "*cannot* know everything about how and why the other people in sensitive space act" (emphasis added), the agnotology lens I have adopted in my analysis above suggests that actors also *will not want* to know. Rather than assuming that the "landscape" of unpredictability is an inevitable nuisance or liability "with which both the governed and the governing must contend", we need to recognize that the governing often have a stake in maintaining the status quo ruled by ambiguity which the coping mechanisms of the governed often replicate and thereby reinforce (Dunn and Cons 2014:102).

This has repercussions beyond the Palestinian gatherings. Martin (2011:148–149) and Ramadan (2009a) show that official Palestinian camps face increasingly ambiguous land situations as well. And the multitude of informal camps hosting Syrian refugees is subjected to similar logics (Nassar 2014). Beyond the Lebanese context, other protracted refugee populations and inhabitants of informal settlements can be expected to face comparable situations (Bayat 1997; Fawaz and Peillen 2003:7–8; Gupta 2012; Hull 2012; Ismail 2006:xviii; Sanyal 2011:885, 2013:569; Scott 1985, 1990).

My agnotological reflections on sensitive spaces have implications for our understanding of agency too. Over the last decade, scholars have moved from seeing refugees predominantly as victims and recipients towards considering them active political agents (Richter-Devroe 2013:995; Sanyal 2011, 2013). This has been a much needed paradigm shift but one, my findings suggest, whose repercussions are not always self-evident. As Scott (1985:29–30) himself cautions, the weapons of the weak should not be romanticized. The defiance of building regulations and appropriation of private lands practiced by residents in Shabriha and Qasmiye can be championed

as a form resistance and a claim for redistribution (Bayat 1997:56). But the gathering's recourse to informality, politicization and exceptionality simultaneously suggests that Qasmiye's residents are working around, or even with, the foundations of domination rather than shaking them (Ismail 2006:xxiii). This should remind us that "the parameters of resistance are also set, in part, by the institutions of oppression" (Scott 1985:299). Many of the residents' genuinely inventive and at first sight effective coping mechanisms ultimately buttress the exceptionalism and ambiguity that caused their predicaments in the first place (Scott 1985:29), resulting in what Ismail (2006:xxxv) calls "the mutual ensnarement of rulers and ruled".[37]

Spatializing agnotology helps to explicate this ensnarement, because it elucidates how spaces such as the gatherings both make and are made by deliberate forms of ignorance. Insecurity, uncertainty and ambiguity are produced in and on the gatherings and have come to define them. Space, in the gatherings, "is not merely a setting or backdrop", but "a force with detectable and independent effects on social life", here the production of ignorance and ambiguity (Gieryn 2000:466). My case studies have evidenced this by amplifying the structuralist political geography notions of (sensitive) space and (aleatory) governance with the more agency-oriented agnotology framework. This contributes to furthering the field of agnotology because it casts ignorance as putatively spatial and partially intentional and thereby renders it ethnographically accessible (Croissant 2014:4; Dunn and Cons 2014:97; Ramakrishnan 2014:757). It is, after all, the culmination of geographically situated microgeographies of exclusion, dispossession and uncertainty that make up the macrogeographies of ignorance that scholars, practitioners and policy-makers grapple with (Jeffrey et al. 2012:1258–1259; see also Gupta 2012:69).

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Endnotes

[1] Before the influx of Syrian refugees.

[2] *Nakba* means "catastrophe" in Arabic and refers to the forced expulsion of Palestinians from their lands by Israeli militias in the process of the creation of the state of Israel.

[3] The Cairo Agreement was signed between the PLO and the Lebanese army in 1968. It sanctioned the PLO's armed presence inside the camps and forbade Lebanese state institutions to enter them (Czajka 2012:240). The Agreement was abrogated in 1987 but continues to be observed in practice (Ramadan 2009a:158).

[4] Numbers are contested: Beer (2011:11) mentions 40,000 (10% of all Lebanon's Palestinians); Rasul (2013:4) 103,000 (25%). Differences can be attributed to the in/exclusion of "adjacent areas" (illegal extensions of the official camps; see Hilal 2010) and Palestinian refugees from Syria. Chabaan (2014:13) stipulates that the gatherings together host 140,000 refugees (35%) including 30,000 Syrian refugees.

[5] *Mukhtars* are sub-municipal government authorities tasked with administrative and social responsibilities on a neighborhood or village level.

[6] This is not to disregard the destruction and dismantling of several of the official camps (Tell al-Zaatar, Jisr al-Basha and Nabatiye) or the invasion of others (Nahr al-Bared); it is to suggest that, overall, eviction is currently less likely in the camps than in the gatherings.
[7] Shabriha has about 4155 inhabitants (Chabaan 2014:109). Qasmiye hosts approximately 5000 people, making it Lebanon's largest gathering (Rasul 2013:12). The cases on which I draw here have been described in more empirical detail in previous papers (see Stel 2013a, 2013b, 2014 for Shabriha; Stel 2015a for Qasmiye).
[8] 17 July 2013.
[9] Sheikh, 11 April 2013.
[10] Palestinian NGO, 21 June 2013.
[11] 28 May 2013.
[12] 23 October 2014.
[13] 21 October 2014.
[14] Based on my own assessment and the Danish Refugee Council (2005:iii), I estimate the affected houses at around 50.
[15] Resident, 11 July 2014.
[16] Communal leader, 16 July 2014.
[17] 10 April 2013.
[18] Contrasting infrapolitics with institutionalized politics, Scott (1985:33) sees the latter as "formal, overt, concerned with systematic, de jure change" and the former as "informal, often covert, and concerned largely with immediate de facto gains".
[19] I received the court proceedings through a legal aid worker from UNRWA. They were translated from Arabic by my research assistant.
[20] 17 October 2014.
[21] 1 May 2013.
[22] 14 June 2013.
[23] 3 July 2013.
[24] 14 August 2014.
[25] 17 October 2014.
[26] 13 September 2012.
[27] 11 April 2013.
[28] 15 July 2014.
[29] LPDC analyst, 28 May 2013.
[30] 2 September 2014.
[31] 6 July 2014.
[32] The nature of academia as a knowledge-generating business of course demands a reflection of the role of the researcher in "revealing" ignorance. Where ignorance is both a repression strategy and a coping mechanism, however, it is hard to determine whether exposing it is harmful. As I believe that the institutional ambiguity of the gatherings ultimately benefits authorities more than residents, whom I see as rightfully resisting the gatherings' institutional marginalization rather than as profiteers, I am confident that my disclosure of ignorance in the cases of Qasmiye and Shabriha is not unethical.
[33] 16 July 2014.
[34] 2 September 2014. He refers to the War of the Camps (1985–1987), a particular vicious phase in the Civil War during which Amal laid siege to several Palestinian spaces.
[35] Although my case studies have Lebanese and Palestinian actors as main protagonists, the ambiguity described in this article is not solely a Lebanese–Palestinian affair. The developments described are evidently the consequence of the *Nakba* which was implemented by the militias that would come to constitute the Israeli army and was enabled by the Sykes-Picot Agreement and Balfour Declaration.
[36] 6 June 2013.
[37] Scott (1990:xii) recognizes this ensnarement as well when he posits that "short of actual rebellion, powerless groups have ... a self-interest in conspiring to reinforce hegemonic appearances". For him, infrapolitics almost inevitably "imply, in their intention or meaning, an accommodation with the system of domination" (Scott 1985:292).

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Findings and Contributions

How much power you see in the social world and where you locate it depends on how you conceive of it, and these disagreements are in part moral and political, and inescapably so (Lukes, 2005:12).

In this section on findings and contributions I endeavour to answer my overarching research question that asks how Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors interact in and on South Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings and why they interact the way they do. The various articles that constitute my dissertation all address different audiences and issues and as such do not offer a linear answering of a singular research question. However, in a more implicit manner, my articles do provide the ingredients for answering the guiding question of my dissertation. In linking my articles to the empirical and theoretical stage setting done in the first sections of this synthesis, I aim to make the connections between my different claims and conclusions more straightforward. The arguments and reflections presented here often follow from the benefit of hindsight and are the product of an intellectual journey and learning curve that allows me to now draw connections and point out logics that were not always apparent at the time the articles were written and published.

This section commences with answering the 'how' and 'why' components of my main research question and subsequently highlights the relevance of my findings for several specific theoretical, empirical and political discussions to which I accord particular importance.

Findings

So what answers do the articles included in this dissertation provide for my question of how Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors interact in and on South Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings and why they interact the way

they do? First of all, it is important to stress that I indeed found that interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors took place. While this was assumed from the outset, and indeed offered the rationale for my project, there were very few documented instances of such interaction. As explained in my methodology section, I have deliberately sought out instances of interaction. Yet, that I subsequently actually found them, is important in its own right. It establishes that relations between Lebanese and Palestinians in Lebanon are not merely personal, socio-economic or political, but that they have institutional dimensions as well.

That governance in Shabriha and Qasmiye is a distinctly interactive affair corroborates participants' general characterizations of service provision and socio-political life in the gatherings which they see as crucially dependent on relations with Lebanese authorities. As one Popular Committee member rhetorically asked me: 'How would you solve issues if you don't sit together?'[105] Regarding the local Lebanese state, a member of a community of naturalized Palestinians in Qasmiye concluded: 'We have to walk with them or walk alone.'[106] The importance of coordination is also evident in the vision of the Central Follow-Up Committee for the Popular Committees in Lebanon (see article two) that commands its regional offices to 'work towards the activation and improvement of the relations with the neighbourhood, especially with the municipalities in the cities and the surrounding Lebanese villages.' As laid down in the section that explicates my empirical puzzle, as far as I am aware my dissertation is the first attempt to academically analyze such interaction.

How do Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors interact?

Beyond establishing *that* interaction between Lebanese state institutions and Palestinian governance authorities takes place, my articles shed light on *how* such interaction happens. Following my sensitizing framework, my articles demonstrate that with regard to governance modes, interaction is largely informal, indirect, irregular and asymmetrical. Governance regarding the gatherings is informal because, according to Law 7279 issued in 1961, 'it is forbidden to connect property owners or residents of a lot

[105] Tyre, 13 June 2013.
[106] Qasmiye, 26 September 2014.

with a phone, service, or electricity if s/he does not provide a residency permit' (Yassin et al., 2016:8). While suspended in 1967, this provision was reinstated through the 1971 building code and reconfirmed in 1983 and applies to all public agencies (Hilal, 2010:30).

In Shabriha and Qasmiye, accordingly, interactions were mostly personal (taking place at social occasions such as weddings and funerals), not conducted in a public manner and undocumented. In the words of Shabriha's *mukhtar*: 'There is a difference between the official and the real.'[107] An UNRWA employee anonymously explained that a lot of his communication with representatives of the gatherings is 'under the table; [...] some agreements aren't exactly official, but rather depend on personal relations.' Such informality is also recognized by the CSI (2011) that concludes, with regard to Nahr al-Bared camp, that 'the municipality's relation with the popular committee, the camp governance committee, remains a personal and occasional relationship lacking the institutional framework that ensures its continuity and sustainability.'

Interaction between the Popular Committees in Shabriha and Qasmiye and Lebanese municipalities, *mukhtars* and public utility companies was not only overwhelmingly informal, but also mostly indirect in the sense that these contacts were mediated by various other actors (such as NGOs and UNRWA), most important of which were Lebanese and Palestinian political parties.[108] This logic of political mediation was compellingly explained to me by the head of the Popular Committees in Tyre region:

> The Lebanese structure is different. If I talk to the district governor, he frankly says he's not the suitable person to talk to. We all know where to go. If we need an electricity transmitter and we have a problem with the manager of the company in Sidon, we search for a manager affiliated with either Bahia or

[107] Abasiye, 25 April 2013.

[108] Knudsen (2011:98) argues that the (informal) relationships that Palestinians have with Lebanese parties, ranging from 'consultative to clientelistic,' are a direct result of the lack of civil rights that deprives Palestinians of political representation and clout. In addition, the post-Oslo Process internal division within the Palestinian political arena has increased the need for such alliances with Lebanese political parties. For Lebanese politicians, Knudsen (2011:109) describes, 'the refugee file' is 'a key, divisive national issue whose stewardship gives political gains' – controlling the national dialogue on this issue is 'a political asset' (Knudsen and Hanafi, 2011:7).

> Osama [the leaders of the two major competing Lebanese parties in Sidon] who can pressure him and we go directly to this person and convince him to give the transformer. Here [in Tyre], we have to know if the manager in question is from Amal or Hezbollah and then we can go to talk to the leadership directly. If we go the long way, the official way, you don't get anything like you do when you take the shortest way. The question is: who can influence this person? Before we talk to him, we have to ask this question. This is the structure of the country.[109]

Governance interaction in my case-study is informal, indirect and also irregular. Meetings or moments of contact were not scheduled or planned, but rather occurred on an ad hoc and needs-based basis. An analyst affiliated with the LPDC explained: 'People are used to sit together if there is a problem, but otherwise they don't; there are no regular meetings.'[110] Interactions occurred frequently, but were needs- or crisis-based; there are no pre-determined, predictable, standardized meeting or communication patterns (except from the certainty that authorities will know where to find each other when there is a problem[111]).

In addition, governance interaction was mostly asymmetrical, in that interactions were almost always initiated by the Palestinian side and conducted on terms set by the Lebanese side. In practice, preserving security and arranging services was often treated as a joint responsibility, but this mutuality was not openly acknowledged. When I asked him about the many Lebanese officials that do occasionally help Palestinian authorities, the Palestinian consul in Lebanon reflected: 'This is about "I woke up in a good mood today and I'm going to help you." It happens from time to time. But we need a system; we need things done properly, not depending on moods.'[112] Palestinian authorities very clearly felt that 'the Lebanese have their homes and their land here; what will they benefit from talking with us?'[113] The mayor of Tyre put this more subtly, but

[109] Bourj al-Shemali camp (Tyre), 25 July 2013.
[110] Beirut, 23 July 2012.
[111] Which can, in some instances, even be practically institutionalized to some extent, as was apparent in the case of the resolution committee that was created by Lebanese and Palestinian leaders after the 'Ramadan conflict' (that featured as my fifth vignette for Shabriha) in order to facilitate reconciliation and prevent future conflicts.
[112] Beirut, 22 September 2014.
[113] NGO director – Bourj al-Shemali camp (Tyre), 15 June 2013.

essentially corroborated it, when he said: 'In summary: we do what we can if they ask, but they have to ask.'[114]

My articles also provide insights with regard to other governance indicators – domains, levels and sites of governance. Considering the domains of governance, most vignettes related to the domain of welfare (and regarded utility services and infrastructural projects). Nevertheless, as detailed in article four, in my cases, governance seems to be more about representing, claiming a constituency vis-à-vis other governance actors, than about actually serving this constituency (by providing security and welfare). Service delivery was seen as primarily political rather than humanitarian (Erni, 2012:80-81). Indeed, governance actors often appeared to regard concrete grassroots interactions, which are often about service delivery, as petty and, in interviews, preferred grand political discourse on politics and security over discussing pragmatic organization.[115]

Regarding governance sites, governance interactions were remarkably nationalized. Even apparently local issues gained a regional or national significance as they were 'stovepiped' by local representatives who were uncomfortable with taking responsibility for matters related to the contentious 'Palestinian file' (Hanafi, 2010c:34).[116] As discussed in article five, eviction cases were 'frozen' after the involvement of not merely local Palestinian and Lebanese politicians, but also of the Lebanese Speaker of Parliament, the Palestinian Ambassador in Lebanon and, allegedly, even the Palestinian President. When Qasmiye's youth, with the support of an NGO working in the gathering, wanted to establish speed bumps in order to reduce the many accidents on the main road that passes through Qasmiye, to give another example, they soon found out that they needed not just permission from the mayor or the district governor, but from the provincial governor.

[114] Tyre, 25 June 2013.
[115] Press secretary Palestinian Embassy – Beirut, 6 June 2013; PLO leader – Beirut, 24 April 2013.
[116] A phenomenon I discussed in the weblog entry titled: 'Is there anything local about local governance? Decision-making in an institutional vacuum' (see Annex 2).

Considering levels of governance, what becomes clear from my articles is that governance interaction was contested. Interaction in the gatherings was never self-evident and always contained elements of renegotiation. Because there are no official guidelines and policies for governance interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian actors, almost all interactions were inherently a reinterpretation or renegotiation of existing precedents rather than straightforward implementation. In many cases this touched upon reworking the very foundations that produced existing precedents in the first place. With regard to the waste crisis vignette, for example, what was at stake was not simply implementation of municipal policies, but rather a recurring contention about if, when and to what extent the management of 'Palestinian' waste was the responsibility of these actors. To turn around a metaphor used by Scott (2009:302): interactions were not about the terms of an implicit 'contract,' but about the question 'whether there should be one [a contract] in the first place.'

The above described patterns of governance can be further categorized. Governance is often envisioned as a continuum between the ideal types of isolation (where governance actors enjoy total autonomy and no relations or exchanges exist) and integration (when they merge; Migdal (2001:126, 127) calls this 'total transformation' or 'incorporation'). In between these extremes, of course, various other modes are possible. Kooiman (2003) proposes collaboration, cooperation and coordination. Collaboration is relatively informal and flexible and occurs on an ad hoc, spontaneous basis. Cooperation is slightly more formalized and institutionalized, but is still essentially non-binding. Coordination is an institutionalized and bureaucratized manifestation of interaction.

Migdal (2001:52) similarly suggests recognition (or acknowledgement), informal collaboration and formal cooperation. Boege et al. put forward several functions of interaction too: complementarity, where informal actors reinforce state agencies; substitution, where parallel non-state actors replace state institutions; and competition, where non-state actors challenge state institutions (Clements et al., 2007:51-52, Kraushaar and Lambach, 2009:12). Drawing on Helmke and Levitsky (2004:729), Kraushaar and Lambach (2009:7) add a fourth form of interaction, accommodation, where 'informal institutions create incentives to behave

in ways that alter the substantive effects of formal rules, but without directly violating them; they contradict the spirit, but not the letter, of the formal rules' (see also Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:22).

The forms of governance interaction I documented here for Shabriha and Qasmiye resonate most closely with Kooiman's and Migdal's (informal) collaboration, under which interaction is significant, but hard to pin down due to its unofficial and non-binding guise. From the perspective of Boege et al., the governance interaction in Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings seems to be in line with the modes described under complementarity and accommodation.

These categorizations contain important clues regarding the rationales underlying interaction. They stress that non-state governance actors often do not so much violate, contradict or undermine state governance, but are part of it and reflect its logics. As Lund (2006b:698-699) argues, in hybrid political orders what matters is not how many different governance actors there are, but the 'mutual congruence or rivalry' between them. My articles propose that such rivalry occurs mostly among Lebanese and Palestinian political parties. In the interaction between Palestinian Popular Committees and Lebanese state institutions, there is actually not that much incongruence at play. This is because the interactions I outlined can be understood as processes of 'situational adjustment' in which actors navigate 'the indeterminacies in the situation' or generate such indeterminacies 'by reinterpreting or redefining rules and relationships' (Lund, 2006b:698-699). Such 'manipulation of rules and manoeuvring between them' generate 'unpredictability, inconsistency, paradox and ambiguity' (Lund, 2006b:698-699).[117]

Considering, as laid down in article five, that such indeterminacies are often implemented by and working for state authorities, this testifies to the asymmetry in governance interaction that I flagged above. While governance interaction is shaped by both sides, in my cases state institutions seem more dominant in the process. Similarly, governance interaction

[117] Situational adjustment contrasts processes of regularization 'which produce rules and organizations and customs and symbols and rituals and categories and seek to make them durable' and follow from 'people's efforts to fix social reality, to harden it, to give it form and predictability' (Moore, 1978:50 in Lund, 2006b:698-699).

affects all actors involved, but, as my fourth article demonstrates, it appears that the impact of state institutions on Popular Committees is more significant than vice versa. After all, while Popular Committees strive to be (seen as) the 'municipalities of the camps,' no Lebanese municipality attempts to be the 'Popular Committee of the town.'

Why do Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors interact the way they do?

Before turning to explain the specific patterns of governance described above, it is useful to ask why Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors interact in the first place. Their motivations might help to explain the forms that governance interaction subsequently takes. The short answer to this question is that the Palestinian Popular Committees and Lebanese state institutions interact because they need each other. While this may seem self-evident, it goes against assumptions that non-state governance actors depend on state resources and therefore seek interaction whereas state governance actors would merely engage with non-state providers of public goods out of benevolence (often voiced in the Lebanese context) (Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:549; Podder, 2014:221). Contrary to this one-dimensional perspective, my articles show that the Palestinian Popular Committees and the Lebanese state interact because they need *each other* – even if their needs are not the same or of equal proportion. The Popular Committees in the gatherings need the Lebanese state in order to be able to provide security, welfare and representation to their constituencies because alternative providers such as UNRWA, NGOs and Palestinian political parties are underrepresented in the gatherings. The Lebanese state needs interaction with the Popular Committees because it requires an interlocutor for indirect rule (Blundo, 2006:814; Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:542).

The question that then follows from this is why the ensuing interaction takes the form it does. Why is it informal, indirect, irregular, asymmetrical, politicized, nationalized and contested? The answer that emerges revolves around the idea of deliberate institutional ambiguity that I developed in article five. Governance actors face a 'fundamental lack of coherence' in the 'heterogeneous organizational settings' they operate in that renders the

idea of unified action inadequate (Migdal, 2001:191; see also Suleiman, 2006:4). Building on this insight, I propose to use the term 'agnotological governance' as a shorthand for the informal, indirect, irregular, asymmetrical, politicized, nationalized and contested governance interaction described above. This testifies to the purposely capricious and arcane nature of governance interaction in Shabriha and Qasmiye and emphasizes that interaction takes the form it does because it is set in a deliberate institutional vacuum.

This 'no-policy-policy' was a recurrent theme in my interviews. Two subsequent directors of the LPDC hailed it as the central problem of Lebanese-Palestinian relations.[118] A resident of Qasmiye lamented: 'Whether laws are good or bad, at least they are there and you can know them; it's better than having no law and just having the Palestinian political parties.'[119] A regional Palestinian leader similarly felt that the institutional void that the gatherings face was deliberate, a way to 'stop people from dreaming about bigger things […]; to keep them in a circle – and in a circle, you never know where you are and whether you haven't been there before; it's all repetition.'[120]

This institutional ambiguity is produced in the conjuncture between representation and space. With regard to representation, the two most important aspects of ambiguity that shape governance interaction are the Palestinians' lack of citizenship (stemming from their protracted refugeeness) and their resultant dependency on political parties and Popular Committees to broker between them and the state system. The absence of a structural institutional framework for interaction is primarily manifested in the Popular Committees' 'no-status status.' In the described context, the lack of formal recognition of the Popular Committees as representatives of the Palestinian communities in the gatherings by the Lebanese state

[118] Beirut, 22 July 2013; Beirut, 17 September 2014.
[119] Qasmiye, 18 August 2014.
[120] Bourj al-Shemali camp (Tyre), 15 June 2013.
Allan (2014:140, 162) found this sentiment pervasive in Shatila camp as well and conceptualized it as 'indefinite existential suspension.'

relegates governance interaction almost automatically to the forms I have here characterized as agnotological.[121]

As refugees, Palestinians in Lebanon, and their representatives, have no direct (i.e. legal, formal, institutional) access to the Lebanese state.[122] This engenders the 'double' gatekeeper logic – Popular Committees function as a gatekeeper between Palestinian residents and the Lebanese state and Lebanese political parties operate as gatekeepers between the Popular Committees and the state – I have described in articles two and four. Because the gatherings do not fall under any official mandate and because the Popular Committees are not recognized by the Lebanese state, participants found it self-evident that Palestinian actors always needed to take the initiative for interaction, leading to an asymmetrical relation. Informality, too, is closely related to the lack of recognition of the Popular Committees. Formal interactions, after all, can only occur between institutions that mutually recognize each other as official counterparts. Thus, lack of citizenship results in informal representation as Palestinians and their governance actors lack electoral clout (the importance of which is discussed in article three)[123] and civil rights.

The representational aspect of the institutional ambiguity that produces agnotological governance interaction is a generic feature of all Palestinian communities in Lebanon. The spatial component of this institutional

[121] There are various reasons for the Lebanese government not to want to formally recognize the Popular Committees, many of which are discussed in my articles. The official reason is that by recognizing the Popular Committees, the Lebanese government fears it would be seen as taking sides in the internal Palestinian PLO-*Tahaluf* strife (El Ali, 2011:28; Long and Hanafi, 2010:685; Hanafi, 2008:10).

[122] Indeed, as Hilal (2010:34) highlights, Palestinians in Lebanon do not even benefit from a refugee status. They are regarded as foreigners that do not have a state and therefore should not benefit from reciprocity clauses. In a legal sense, then, 'Lebanon only hosts "stateless foreigners",' not refugees, and 'admits no responsibility for them' (Knudsen and Hanafi, 2011:2).

[123] I also wrote on the significance of electoral politics in two weblog entries: 'Paving the Road to Electoral Gain' and 'Electricity: Political Fireworks' (see Annex 2).
The importance of Lebanese citizenship was stressed by the head of Shabriha's Popular Committee when he noted that the Palestinians in Shabriha that were threatened with eviction were 'lucky' that some Lebanese residents faced the same fate because this meant that they could count on help from Lebanese parties: 'We have some *wasta* [clout] as there is a Lebanese family involved that has two martyrs – this is an asset for us.' (Shabriha, 9 April 2013)

ambiguity that further protracts agnotological governance interaction, however, is specific for the situation in the gatherings. The gatherings, as opposed to the camps, fall largely outside the mandate of UNRWA. In addition, because the gatherings are smaller than the camps, and lack the camps' emblematic lustre, they attract less attention and resources from NGOs and Palestinian parties (Sayigh, 2011:56).[124] Thus, lack of citizenship places the gatherings outside the state's responsibility and lack of 'campness' excludes them from much of UNRWA's mandate (Yassin et al., 2016). A member of Shabriha's youth committee summarized this situation as follows: 'UNRWA doesn't offer basic services here because we're *not* a camp, but the government and the municipality don't offer anything either, because they *do* consider us a camp.'[125]

Space thus matters not only with regard to struggles for territorial control (Ismail, 2006:xxiv; Lund, 2006b:695)[126] or the importance of place in the creation and sustenance of Palestinian identities (Klaus, 2000:99; Sanyal, 2011:887). It is also, to borrow Hameiri's (2010:7) jargon, about 'the contested constitution of regulatory spaces at various geographical scales within the institutional spaces of the state.' As explained in the section introducing my empirical puzzle, space becomes salient in the distinction between the camps as relatively autonomous 'islands'[127] 'fallen from the

[124] An NGO representative told me that it is hard to obtain funding for projects in the gatherings. She said: 'The needs of the camps are easier to understand for donors; these are clear spaces that they know about; they know the camps are really bad and always need help. It is a matter of reputation as well. I myself don't remember the names of the gatherings we worked in, while I do recall all the camps.' (Sidon, 25 July 2013)

[125] Shabriha, 1 May 2013.

[126] Although this plays a role in intra-Palestinian competition, as discussed in the weblog entry 'My First Steps in Qasmiye: Flags, Signs and Territories' (see Annex 2).

[127] This distinction is increasingly questioned. Knudsen and Hanafi (2011:7) have stressed the dynamic relation between camps and their urban environment and talk about the emergence of 'city-camps' or 'camp-cities' (see also Martin, 2011, 2015; Sanyal, 2011:880). Nevertheless, Doraï and Puig (2008), describe how some camps still '*échapper complètement à l'autorité de l'État*.' The CSI (n.d.:5) notes that 'in Lebanon, some Palestinian refugee camps are closed spaces, they constitute urban enclaves or satellites located at the urban periphery.' Chabaan et al. (2010:ix) call Lebanon's camps 'enclaves outside the authority of the Lebanese state.' Hilal (2010:37) also reiterates the exceptional status of the Lebanese camps as being devoid of the 'public institutions of the host authorities.'

sky, not part of the Lebanese land'[128] and the gatherings as more 'open spaces'[129] that depend on interaction with state institutions due to their exclusion from UNRWA's mandate and are more prone to interaction as a result of their exclusion from the Cairo Agreement. One participant working for EDL noted: 'The gatherings are not camps. The state treats the gatherings differently. The state can enter the gatherings any time, but not the camps, so solving problems in gatherings is easier than in camps.'[130]

Power, dominance and hegemony in Lebanese-Palestinian governance interaction

As the above discussions on representation and space suggest, ultimately, governance interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities in Shabriha and Qasmiye takes the form it does because of the parameters set by the Lebanese state system. It is Lebanese state institutions that have shaped the representational and spatial frames that determine interaction. The gatherings are not 'spaces of choice' (Carpi, 2015:9) and the self-identification and modes of representation of Palestinians in Lebanon most pertinently depend 'on the current nature of their relations with their Lebanese hosts' (Peteet, 2007:640).

The structuring logic of the Lebanese state is a recurrent theme in my articles as well. Article two demonstrates how the indirect, mediated nature of Lebanese-Palestinian governance interaction is conditioned by the Lebanese state system. Article three reveals how the logic of Lebanon's sectarian electoral engineering crucially determines the governance resources of respective Lebanese and Palestinian communities in Shabriha and produces asymmetrical interactions. Article four shows that the Palestinian Popular Committees' main governance resources and repertoires mirror the Lebanese state system in an attempt to entice (at least

[128] Hezbollah liaison Tyre area – Shabriha, 16 July 2013.
[129] NGO youth worker – Tyre, 20 August 2014.
[130] Tyre, 21 May 2013.
This difference between the spatial leeway of camps and gatherings, however, is not absolute and, participants stressed, gatherings are still less accessible to the Lebanese state than Lebanese towns are. This is the case both because state institutions do not trust the security situation in the gatherings and because governance actors in the gatherings put in place their own closure regimes.

informal) interaction with this system. Articles two and four indeed conceptualize agnotological governance interaction as a form of indirect rule by the Lebanese state (Hameiri, 2010:4; Mamdani, 1996). Article five, finally, most explicitly drives this point home by demonstrating that the institutional vacuum that has its representational and spatial culmination in the irregular governance interaction concerning the gatherings is intentionally maintained by the Lebanese state and reproduced by Palestinian governance actors – who are, in many ways, 'forced to commit […] the slew of transgressions' they are accused of (Dunn and Cons, 2014:101).

All this importantly means that informality, irregularity, indirectness, asymmetry, politicization, nationalization and contestation are deliberate, not in a direct sense, but in that they serve interests. While I am wary to draw overly grand or structuralist conclusions, I cannot avoid a reflection on power, dominance and hegemony in explaining why governance interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities takes the form it does.

The ways in which Palestinian governance actors, in their engagements with Lebanese state institutions, mirror and reproduce the very conditions that marginalize their constituents[131] can be read as a form of disciplinary power that works not (only) destructively from the outside, but also partially operates as 'an internal, productive power' (Mitchell, 1991:93; see also Lukes, 2005:89). Some of the Popular Committees' behaviour can be understood with reference to what Scott (1990:xii) calls 'infrapolitics,' the 'often fugitive political conduct of subordinate groups' that are obliged to adopt a 'strategic pose' in the presence of the powerful (Scott, 1990:xii).[132] The creative coping mechanisms that the Popular Committees espouse to

[131] My articles clearly demonstrate that there is a difference, even an incompatibility, between the interests of the gatherings' residents (better services, more security, legitimate representation) and the interests of the Palestinian political leadership (maintaining their power position). The Popular Committees, composed of residents of the gatherings but simultaneously constituting the lowest tiers of Palestinian political representation, are crushed between these interests.

[132] A manifestation of resilience that I discuss in more detail in Stel and Van der Molen (2015) – see Annex 4.

address the many crises they face indeed often make smart use of contacts with Lebanese counterparts.[133]

Yet, as also recognized by Scott (1990:205), most groups engaging in infrapolitics cannot afford to openly refuse to comply with hegemonic practices. Actively 'resisting' the hegemonic forms of agnotological governance interaction that they are complicit in may be beyond the 'power' of the Popular Committees. This suggests that the forms of governance interaction that were discussed for Shabriha and Qasmiye reflect the hegemony of the Lebanese state (Scott, 1985:315; see also Davies, 2012:2691; Lukes, 2005:8). Importantly, I understand hegemony here not so much as ideological dominance (Scott, 1985:318), but rather as institutional dominance, as providing the nigh inescapable and partly internalized logics of order and rule that are embodied in the Lebanese state system. This view allows me to bridge Scott's infrapolitics and Lukes' 'third dimension of power' as complementary answers to the question of compliance with domination. Whereas Scott highlights instances of compliance that are a strategic veil for resistance, Lukes (2005:13) draws attention to situations where compliance is 'real,' either stemming from ideological consent (so-called 'thick' hegemony) or resulting from practical resignation ('thin' hegemony).

With regard to my specific cases, I do not think that Palestinian refugees or their authorities, 'as a result of mystification, repression, or the sheer unavailability of alternative ideological frames,' as Lukes (2005:10), quoting Tilly, proposes, are 'unaware of their true interests' – whatever those may be.[134] The question for the cases at hand is not so much 'interests,' but rather strategies. Residents of Shabriha and Qasmiye are

[133] Much of this may even have escaped my notice due to the very nature of such 'resistance' where there 'are no leaders to round up, no membership lists to investigate, no manifestos to denounce, no public activities to draw attention' (Scott, 1990:200). As Scott (1990:200) notes: 'By covering its tracks it [infrapolitical resistance] not only minimizes the risks its practitioners run but it eliminates much of the documentary evidence that might convince social scientists that real politics was taking place.'

[134] This does not necessarily mean that I disagree with Lukes that such instances can occur, I just do not think this is the case for the dynamics I have studied. I do believe that 'the dominated will never fully internalize ways of interpreting the world that devalue and stereotype them,' but rather develop a 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1969[1903]:45 in Lukes, 2005:120).

aware of domination in that they recognize and resent it (and could imagine a counterfactual order), but they are unable to find strategies to resist it that do not ultimately also entrench it. Validating Scott, they resist their domination, but, confirming Lukes, they are unable to escape it.[135] Palestinian governance actors are not subjected to 'false consciousness,' but rather to a form of constrained or 'burdened' agency (Dunn and Conns, 2013).

Such hegemony of the Lebanese state might seem counterintuitive in light of that state's often proclaimed hybridity (Bacik, 2008; Fregonese, 2012), weakness (Atzili, 2010), softness (Ramadan, 2008), virtuality (Picard, 2012) and fragmentation (Migdal, 2001:136). However, dominance here does not denote the coercive strength of individual state institutions, but rather the inescapability of the organizing logic of the Lebanese state system. The sectarian, oligopolistic and clientelist nature of the Lebanese state system, described in detail in various instances in my articles, makes the governance of its respective institutions informal, indirect, irregular, asymmetrical, politicized, nationalized and contested. The Palestinian non-state governance actors interacting with this system might modestly affect it, but are, apparently, more significantly affected by it. Again, this does not make the state system 'strong' as much as it makes it pervasive in the sense of its providing a 'framework for numerous, disjointed patron-client bargains to flourish' (Migdal, 2001:1481-49; see also Kingston and Zahar, 2004:95).

Following Scott (1985:326), hegemony then denominates a system of domination that accomplishes 'to define what is realistic and what is not realistic and to drive certain goals and aspirations into the realm of the impossible, the realm of idle dreams, of wishful thinking.' Lund (2006b:698) proposes a similar reading on hegemony when he defines it as stemming from 'constellations of power' that reproduce and 'normalize' certain institutions. It is not that Palestinian governance actors – and even many Lebanese ones – cannot imagine an alternative or that they see the current situation as inevitable, it is that they do not have the resources, the

[135] This confirms Foucault's truism that 'where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power' (Lukes, 2005:95).

capacity, to produce that alternative or change the current situation (Lukes, 2005:28). This concretizes how, following the idea of 'potenza' that I explore in article five, power is first and foremost 'a capacity,' rather than always 'the exercise of that capacity' (Lukes, 2005:12). As explored in article five, ambiguity can constitute an important aspect of such hegemony, a form of 'constitutive ambivalence' (Oesch, 2015:2). Indeed, Gramsci himself understood 'laissez faire as a disciplinary strategy' (Davies, 2012:2692).

It is this characterization of hegemony that for me most candidly captures the power relations in Lebanese-Palestinian governance interaction. These are not about the coercive quality of individual Lebanese state institutions, but rather about the Palestinian governance actors' inability not so much to envision, but to enact a form of interaction with Lebanese authorities that escapes the informality, indirectness, irregularity and asymmetry dictated by the accumulated practices and images of the Lebanese state vis-à-vis the Palestinians. That 'the conditions of Palestinian presence in Lebanon would be a mirror of Lebanese society itself' (Klaus, 2000:146) is also intuitively underwritten by the observations of many of my participants, who contended that 'the Palestinian structure is different now from before as it depends on the Lebanese social structure'[136] and that 'we're part of this shitty Lebanese game; we have to play their game.'[137]

This emphasis on the structuring logic of the Lebanese state system is not meant to minimize the complicity and agency of Palestinian governance actors, as described in detail in article four.[138] It is meant to stress that the governance interaction that is central in my dissertation is not one between equal partners or contenders. Individual interaction vignettes foregrounding (Palestinian and Lebanese) local governance actors may

[136] Palestinian scholar – Mar Elias camp (Beirut), 19 June 2013.
[137] UNRWA employee – Tyre, 12 April 2013.
[138] As an LPDC analyst summed up: 'The Palestinians, the political factions, also use *tawteen*, because such agreements [that formalize and regularize governance interaction] might lessen their authority over people. Now, they govern in the absence of a formal representative. […] And the dominant [Palestinian] political parties might lose if Lebanese authorities become responsible – they would have to report to the Lebanese and be accountable to the Palestinians. […] There is a silent agreement between both sides to maintain the status quo.' (Beirut, 28 May 2013)

convey this impression (as the accommodations described in them indeed preclude dominance in the traditional sense). But the larger governance assemblages behind these individual actors are not. Hybrid political orders per definition display a form of what Migdal (2001:129) calls 'dispersed dominance' in which domination by the state or any other governance actor 'takes place within an arena or even across a limited number of arenas but does not encompass society as a whole.' The space of the gatherings, however, might be one such arena where a form of state hegemony operates (in the ambiguous and counter-intuitive ways described in this synthesis and in my articles).

Contributions

In the above I have shown how my articles add up to an answer to my research question. Below, I highlight several debates for which these answers are relevant and I emphasize specific theoretical, empirical and political implications of my findings and conclusions. The scope of this synthesis does not allow me to work out these implications in great detail and the purpose of this section, therefore, is to draw out the relevance of my work rather than to develop new analyses. My aim here is to point out the analytical space that my articles open up (Klem, 2012:135). I think this is important because explicating the linkages between a specific research project and broader discussions can help solidify the significance of academic findings. Elucidating what Lund (2014:226) calls the 'resonance' of one's research is an indispensable form of not only 'scholarly communication,' but also of validation. In the end, I hope to refute the belief of one of my most valued interlocutors when he ultimately concluded that 'it means nothing, these meetings and discussions;'[139] I think they *do* mean something and I hope to explicate what that 'something' is below.

Theoretical contributions

My theoretical contributions do not come in the form of a new concept.[140] This is intentional, because, as Kraushaar and Lambach (2009:1) note, 'the

[139] NGO director – Bourj al-Shemali camp (Tyre), 15 June 2013.

[140] The term 'agnotological governance' is a practical shorthand for indicating the

social sciences certainly do not suffer from a dearth of concepts.' This has led me to locate my contributions in augmenting and linking existing concepts rather than adding yet another one to the already somewhat overcrowded and dissonant choir of concepts dealing with governance interaction (see Hagmann and Péclard, 2010:542; Luckham and Kirk, 2013:348-349). I see my development of the broader hybrid political order school as my most straightforward theoretical contribution (Wiuff Moe, 2011:148). I have strengthened the analytical potency of this body of literature in five main ways.

First, I have introduced the heuristic device of 'governance' into the realm of hybrid political order. While the term governance is often used in debates about public authority in hybrid order, it has mostly remained undefined. Hybrid political order theorists marvel at 'the surprising institutional interplay that can emerge between an insurgent organization and the incumbent government' (Mampilly, 2011:22) or ask for a 'renewed sociology of governance' (Raeymakers et al., 2008:9), but have, in general, not actually operationalized governance beyond defining governance actors and identifying governance domains.

Because I needed an interpretation of governance that would allow me to systematically describe empirical manifestations of interaction, I have linked the rather abstract idea of the hybrid political order, that is mostly used by political sociologists and anthropologists working on developing and (post-)conflict countries in the South, with the very concrete and detailed notions of governance developed by public administration specialists working on 'modern' states in the North. The resultant discussion of not only governance actors and domains, but also governance modes, levels and sites adds concreteness to the hybrid political order concept and helps to develop the analytical approach to governance (as opposed to its normative counterpart).

What is more, second, by incorporating refugee communities and spaces into the debates on governance in hybrid political orders, I have helped to render visible a very concrete realm of such governance interaction and the

informal, indirect, irregular, asymmetrical, politicized, nationalized and contested forms of governance I encountered in my research rather than a heuristic or analytical concept.

related mediated, negotiated and twilight forms of public authority. Considering that 'the creation of refugees is part of the modern system of sovereign states,' bridging the anthropology of the state and the field of refugee studies engenders new perspectives on states and statelessness and on the limitations of citizenship (Stepputat and Nyberg Sørensen, 2014:88; see also Bakewell, 2014:135; Edwards and Van Waas, 2014:290; Gibney, 2014:54).

Third, I have ameliorated the hybrid political order school by exploring and further conceptualizing not merely the coexistence of various governance actors, but their interaction and overlap. In so doing, moreover, I have underlined the importance of the productive and functional (if not necessarily positive) aspects of governance interaction. This offers a perception of governance 'beyond a perspective that centres either on consensus or on violence' (Lemke, 2000:3) and is in line with the forte of the hybrid political order school to approach the study of non-state governance as not exclusively *anti*-state. I have shown not merely that, but how and why, governance in hybrid political orders is interactive, mutually constitutive and overlapping. In the process, I have ventured at an increased conceptual differentiation of various analytical tools used to study hybrid political order by explicating which characteristics of governance interaction the mediated state, the negotiating statehood and the twilight institution respectively are best suited to explain.

Fourth, I have demanded attention for the working of power, dominance and hegemony in governance interaction, stressing that interactions might be productive and thereby constructive but certainly not benign. I have shown how 'hybridity,' in the form of institutional ambiguity, is often purposeful and reproduced through forms of subjectivation. This input in the hybrid political order debate manifests itself most clearly in my engagement with the concept of agnotology in article five which demonstrates how linking forms of knowledge and strategies of power can facilitate a 'more comprehensive account of current political and social transformations, since it makes visible the breadth and depth of processes of domination and exploitation' (Lemke, 2000:7).

A fifth and final contribution to the hybrid political order school emerges where my research reinstates how studying governance beyond the state

can shed important new light on that same state. In my articles I have given substance to Nielsen's (2007:695, original emphasis) contention that 'understandings of the state are produced and acted upon *even in the relative absence of the state*.' My dissertation can give new credence to the idea of the state as an 'evolving entity' formed by its interaction with other governance actors (Chabal and Daloz, 1999:4-5). Following Lund's (2006a:677) reading of Das and Poole (2004), in the process of interaction the state is often 'effectively conjured up through the production of its flipside, the "margin".' Thus, my respondents on the one hand lamented that: 'There is no state here, no government, no law. We live in a situation of chaos. No one is ruling on the ground, each one has its own laws that he applies according to his benefits. […] We're in the jungle, not in a state.'[141] At the same time, their own Popular Committees, as demonstrated in article four, effectively emulate and thereby bolster this Lebanese state that was said not to exist.

In short, the governance interactions I have researched should be understood not merely as forms of organizing public authority, but also as 'state effects,' the 'powerful, metaphysical effect of practices' that make the state 'appear to exist' (Mitchell, 1991:94). This enables an understanding of stateness beyond sovereignty that does more justice to the 'messiness' of actual governance (Menkhaus, 2006:7; see also Buur, 2006; Hagmann and Korf, 2012; Hameiri, 2007; Hansen and Stepputat, 2005, Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013). My dissertation has contributed to such an understanding in a tangible way. The articles I wrote have extended the analytical tools related to the hybrid political order to Lebanon, which, as part of the Levant, is geographically situated at the heart of the Middle East as well as the Mediterranean. This is an innovation considering that the mediated state, the negotiating statehood and the twilight institution all have their roots in African case-studies (Hoffmann and Kirk, 2013:6; Nielsen, 2007:697; Van Overbeek, 2014:45). Assuming that, as Hagmann and Péclard (2010:558) note, the state in Africa is not 'ontologically different from the state elsewhere,' these concepts can be enriched by their application to non-

[141] Focus group – Shabriha, 14 June 2013.

African cases, as Lund (2006a:679) suggests and as my dissertation, particularly article two, demonstrates.

Empirical contributions

'Empirical' here designates my specific research setting and refers to the academic debates concerned with Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and the Lebanese state. As such, the discussion that follows links back to the section that presents my empirical puzzle. There are three empirical debates with which my findings and conclusions resonate particularly. These are the debate about the segregation and/or integration of Lebanon's Palestinian refugees vis-à-vis Lebanese society, the question of the significance of the gatherings as a special category of camps and the discussion about the nature of the post-war state in Lebanon. Ultimately, these three issues all interrogate the 'exceptionality' of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

As evident in my empirical puzzle, Lebanon's Palestinians have often been described as an autonomous community that is spatially and institutionally segregated from Lebanese society. The CSI (2012:17) notes that Lebanese and Palestinian communities have historically fought side-by-side, prayed together, intermarried and done business. Thus, despite the impacts of poverty, unemployment and polarization, 'the main challenge is located in the formal institutional relations rather than in the community ties' (CSI, 2011:11; see also El Ali, 2011:4). My research addresses this 'challenge' and contends that institutional interaction, in other words engagement between Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors, does take place. The political dimensions of Lebanese-Palestinian relations in Lebanon, where 'hostility towards the Palestinians became unifying in the post-conflict era,' should not obscure the practical interactions in the domains of security, welfare and representation that permeate the everyday routine of Palestinian and Lebanese authorities (Peteet, 1996 in Martin, 2011:126).[142]

[142] The significance of these interactions is corroborated by the sparse other references to governance interaction, such as the Shatila's Committee of the Camp's Population that regularly met with the Beirut municipality, the Lebanese Water Company and EDL as documented by Kortam (2011:202-203). Indeed, the scarce other research projects studying governance interaction conveys an image similar to the agnotological governance interaction I found in Shabriha and Qasmiye. The CSI (2012:5-6) highlights the personal, ad-hoc, needs-based forms of interaction and the significance

Such institutional interaction is not so much forgotten by policy makers as it is evaded by them (Hovil, 2014:488). Nevertheless, refugees 'generate varying levels of locally based integration' (Hovil, 2014:488). This means, as also demonstrated by my research, that existing forms of governance interaction are usually informal, often illegal and mostly temporary (Hovil, 2014:489). Thus, interaction, if not integration, is there, but in its informal, indirect and irregular guise it is not always visible, which means that the impression of isolation endures.

The under-documented nature of governance interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities that my dissertation has defied is closely related to my second empirical contribution: putting Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings on the academic map. This matters because, despite the research overkill regarding Palestinian communities in Lebanon, little was known about the gatherings. This can be considered problematic in its own right as the gatherings house the most deprived among an already severely destitute community (Jacobsen and Khalidi, 2003:184; Ugland, 2003:254). Most utility services in the gatherings are worse than those in the camps due to the absence of UNRWA and many NGOs (Yassin, 2013; Ugland, 2003:257).[143] Palestinian political parties, too, seem less interested in providing to the gatherings.[144] In short, their institutional invisibility places the gatherings in an even bigger 'protection gap' than the camps (Knudsen, 2007, 2009).[145] In a way, then, focusing on the gatherings has

of precedents in the engagements between the Popular Committees of the Beddawi and Nahr al-Bared camps and the adjacent municipalities. In her study on the informal 'adjacent areas' to Lebanon's refugee camps, Hilal (2010:54) similarly concluded that interactions with municipalities exist, but are characterized by the absence of 'formal mechanisms for coordination or intervention.'

[143] Although Palestinians outside the camps are thought to be better off by some (Chabaan et al., 2010:xi; Hanafi, 2008:6; Ugland, 2003:18), this usually concerns the Palestinians living in Lebanese areas, not those living in gatherings.

[144] A Popular Committee member in Jim Jim complained: 'The PLO doesn't offer anything for us here in the gatherings, it's not just UNRWA that's absent. I'm a Popular Committee member and I'm telling you, the PLO doesn't provide anything for the gatherings either.' (Qasmiye, 7 July 2014)

[145] Which explains why, according to some social workers active in South Lebanon's Palestinian communities, 'many people prefer to call gatherings "camps" because this makes them sound more important.' (Al Bass camp (Tyre), 2 April 2013). Indeed, as a documentary by Felastini.com concludes, the gatherings can be seen victims of the label 'gathering' (youtube clip available here:

been a means to address this lack of attention; a response to the gatherings' residents' feelings of being the forgotten ones[146] among the forgotten people (Chabaan et al., 2010:7; Hanafi, 2010c:54).

On another plane, my dissertation demonstrates that acknowledging the gatherings as a distinct category of camps makes sense analytically because it reveals governance interactions between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities that are both qualitatively and quantitatively different from those in the official camps. The former district governor of Tyre agreed, noting that 'We have an official agreement with UNRWA concerning the recognized camps, we deal officially with them. But we don't care about the unofficial camps, they aren't part of the official agreement.'[147] Hanafi's (2010c:46) emphasis on the differences between 'closed' and 'open' refugee camps can be extended to the analysis of the gatherings, which might be Lebanon's only 'open camps.' The unique institutional setting of the gatherings – de jure excluded from state governance, but de facto entertaining substantial, if informal and ad hoc, relations with local Lebanese authorities – sheds new light on the manifestations of the institutional marginalization of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

A third academic debate that my research feeds into is concerned with the nature of the post-war Lebanese state (Long and Hanafi, 2010:676; see also Chabaan et al., 2010:3). This discussion regards the extent of 'stateness' in current day Lebanon as well as its character. With regard to the former, Kosmatopoulos (2011:116) rightfully notes that 'expressions such as '*Mah fih dawleh bi Lubnan*' (There is no state in Lebanon) or rhetorical questions such as '*Wen el dawleh?*' (Where is the state?) dominate popular discourse and have their sophisticated counterparts in academia' (see also Mouawad and Baumann, 2014).

My dissertation suggests that one fruitful way to approach and theorize the manifestation of this 'absent' Lebanese state system is to study its interaction with non-state governance actors. Exactly because the Palestinians have so routinely been envisioned as a non- or even anti-state,

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5aXtLygeVE).

[146] Fieldnotes Qasmiye, 10 June 2014.

[147] Tyre, 22 June 2013.

the relations they have with the Lebanese state system are telling (Czajka, 2012; Sfeir, 2010). In exploring how state institutions indirectly and informally govern the ambiguous spaces of the gatherings and through investigating how much of the functioning of these state institutions is mimicked and internalized by non-state governance actors,[148] my dissertation sheds new light on the Lebanese state as not merely weak, fragmented or failed, but rather mediated and hybrid. This, as argued in my section on theoretical debates above, offers more rewarding vantage points for further analysis of the workings of the Lebanese state's various 'hybrid sovereignties' (Fregonese, 2012; see also Carpi, 2015) and its 'quasi-schizophrenic' concurrent weakness and menace (Kosmatopoulos, 2011; Obeid, 2010).

In a nutshell, my empirical contributions have been to demonstrate that, first, governance interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities in Shabriha and Qasmiye exists and has distinct properties that suggest, second, that the institutional space of the gatherings merits an analytical approach that sets it apart from the official camps and, third, that the Lebanese state operates through a mediated logic that becomes visible in its relations with non-state governance actors. These three related conclusions in turn say something about how exceptional the governance of Lebanon's Palestinians is in comparison with Lebanese citizens and other stateless groups residing in the country – a question that has long determined the empirical debates about this topic (Suleiman, 2006:27). As noted in the section outlining my empirical puzzle, the situation of Palestinians in Lebanon is almost by default described as a 'state of exception' and the Palestinian camps have routinely been categorized as 'spaces of exception' excluded from the Lebanese rule of law.

It is important to explicate the political currency of this idea of exceptionalism (Bakewell, 2008:449). On the one hand, exceptionalism buttresses the nigh sacred dyad of championing return to Palestine and avoiding integration in Lebanon. The spatial relegation of the Palestinians to the camps and the subsequent discursive representation of the camps has been an important element of this exceptionalism (reflecting the

[148] See also Mampilly (2015), Reno (2015) and Sundar (2014).

underlying, and self-fulfilling, logic of: 'they are an exception so we put them in the camps; they are in the camps so they are an exception') as it maintains the 'continuous temporarity' of the 'Palestinian issue' (Doraï and Puig, 2008; see also El Ali, 2011:18; Hanafi, 2008:9).

My dissertation can function as an instigator to question this exceptionalism. I do not take issue with the claim that Lebanon's Palestinians face a unique regime of institutional marginalization. Following Deboulet and Fawaz (2011), Fawaz and Peillen (2003), Fawaz et al. (2012), Harb (2001, 2003) and the CSI (2013), I do suggest that the governance of Palestinian sites might have more in common with the rest of the country than is often acknowledged.[149] This would regard, for instance, the pertinence of clientelist mediation by Lebanese political parties (Gebara and Kibranian, 2008; Hamzeh, 2001; Leenders, 2012; Maktabi, 2000). The state of exception that is so often referred to in discussions on Palestinian governance indeed also partially holds for Lebanon at large. The mayor of Tyre confided in me that 'the actual situation of the municipality is constant crisis management and even the government doesn't provide solutions; because of the deficiency in the budget all we do is operating, running the place.'[150] Participants often referred to the fact that Lebanon has almost structurally been 'in between governments' since the early 2000s.

Thus, perhaps the governance situation of Palestinians in the gatherings is not so much diametrically opposed to that of Lebanese as it is further down the same continuum of informality, irregularity and clientelist dependency. Even Hanafi (2010c:58-59) seems to acknowledge this when he muses that often, rather than representing a space of exception, 'the situation comes closer to a state of void, filled in a very *ad hoc* way as the result of the architecture of the power structure' – an architecture that is often very informal, indirect, irregular, asymmetrical, politicized, nationalized and contested for Lebanese as well.

Thus, while refugee settlements are formal spaces of exception, in the sense that they are beyond the rule of law, in practice they are rather 'spaces of

[149] A point I also made in Yassin et al. (2016).
[150] Tyre, 25 June 2013.

ambiguity;' the spaces that are de jure left blank are de facto being filled with much the same governance logics that permeate the rest of the country (Oesch, 2015:3). This is in line with observations made by Bully (2014:76) when he argued that the camps' 'spatial technologies of government' are not 'as exceptional as is sometimes claimed,' but are increasingly governed by mechanisms characterized by 'ambiguity, risk and uncertainty' that are similar to those of the host societies (see also Oesch, 2015:3).

If we are to go beyond the idea of a state and a space of exception, it might be important to find an alternative for the restrictive paradigm of refugeeness (Bakewell, 2014:127). I am aware of the frenzied political connotations this has and I do not propose to discard of the refugee perspective as a political agenda – which would imply giving up the right to return. Rather, I propose to let go of the refugee perspective as the dominant analytical lens through which the provision of security, services and political representation to Palestinians is approached.[151] Erni (2012) documents how young Palestinians in Lebanon, the fourth generation born outside Palestine, are now progressively more oriented towards Lebanese society rather than a Palestinian homeland (see also Afifi and El Shareef, 2010:40; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014:5; Khalidi and Riskedahl, 2010:8).[152] This means that it makes sense to move analysis of institutional relations between Lebanese and Palestinian representatives from the refugee to the governance frame – without thereby ignoring the pivotal importance of Palestine for Palestinians' identity and legal rights. Ultimately, this might tell us more about how 'lives and spaces forgotten by formal politics' are lived than the by now almost obligatory reference to the space of exception (Martin, 2011:241).

[151] Hanafi (2008:9) also notes that the refugee frame is concerned more with humanitarian conditions than with politics. He goes as far as arguing that 'the very concept of refugees as an artifact of the victimization discourse obstructs the possibility of advocacy that seeks to advance their return and statehood' (Hanafi, 2010a:56).

[152] In 2006, Suleiman (2006:9) documented that only twelve percent of Lebanon's Palestinians were still first-generation refugees born in Mandatory Palestine. This number will have significantly dwindled over the last decade.

Political contributions

My findings and contributions have real-life implications. The governance situation in the gatherings strongly correlates with the disproportionate poverty there (Chabaan et al., 2010; DRC, 2005; Hanafi et al., 2012:41).[153] And the gatherings' relations with neighbouring Lebanese authorities and the presence of Lebanese citizens inside or adjacent to the gatherings augments service delivery inside them (Yassin, 2013; Yassin et al., 2016). This raises the question of what could and should be done in light of the gatherings' marginalization. Should governance interaction be stimulated? If so, what aspects of it should be encouraged and how might this be done? Indeed, calls for 'promoting dialogue and communication between government institutions, local authorities, UNRWA [and] camps' Popular Committees' are a common feature of most reports on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (Hilal, 2010:10, see also DRC, 2005:iii).

Addressing these questions and suggesting 'policy recommendations,' however, risks putting me at loggerheads with my own findings as presented above. My main conclusion, after all, proposes that the agnotological governance interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities in Shabriha and Qasmiye is a consequence of intentional institutional ambiguity. I claim that a deliberate no-policy-policy exists to protect the interests of Lebanese and Palestinian political leaders; political

[153] In the gatherings, over half of the residents fall under the poverty line of US$6,- per day, the estimated minimum for covering basic food and non-food requirements for an adult Palestinian refugee in Lebanon (Chabaan et al., 2010:xi). 4.2 percent of the people living in the gatherings face extreme poverty, meaning that they have to live from less than US$2,17 per day (Chabaan et al., 2010:xii) – and this was before the influx of Syrian refugees that can be expected to have further stretched the resources of the gatherings' populations. Moreover, while overall gatherings have a lower poverty rate than camps, the gatherings in Tyre have exceptionally high poverty rates that exceed those of most official camps (Chabaan et al., 2010:xii). What has personally struck me most about such deprivation statistics is the extreme inequality that is hidden by them. In both Shabriha and Qasmiye, some residences were luxurious villas whereas many other houses did not meet basic shelter requirements. Similarly, while some people sported the newest smartphones that they got as a gift from relatives abroad, for other families it was indeed a daily struggle to put three decent meals on the table.

leaders who often do not want to know what is going on in the gatherings exactly because such not-knowing helps them evade responsibility.[154]

In such a context, prescribing policies would be naïve and inconsistent at best. At worst, it might contribute to the pretence of regular policy-making and make me complicit in the agnotological governance constellations described in my dissertation.[155] While 'relevance' can indeed

[154] The specifics of my research question have led me to focus on the role of the Lebanese state and Palestinian authorities respectively. This does not mean, however, that these are the only actors that are responsible for the governance interaction as I have described it in my articles. Nor is the irony of a researcher from a rich country that is itself regularly rebuked by Amnesty International for its treatment of refugees who is criticizing a considerably less resourceful country for its dealings with a considerably larger and more precarious refugee crisis lost on me. Lebanese state institutions specifically have borne the brunt of my criticism. And I stand behind my position that Lebanese policies have contributed to the 'atrocious situation' of Lebanon's Palestinian refugees (Schenker, 2012:70) – a conclusion few scholars would take issue with. Yet – and I have already made this point in my fifth article, but I think it is important enough to reiterate it here – the Lebanese state does not carry the sole responsibility for the current situation (Martin, 2011:40, 66; Suleiman, 2006:3). Indeed, I want to distance myself from the Orientalist inclination to elaborately discuss non-Western states as (deficient) research objects without critically exploring the role of Western states as (hegemonic) policy actors (Said, 1978). There is, as also noted in my articles (particularly article four), the secondary but still crucial complicity of the Palestinian leadership (Hanafi, 2010c:60). Ultimately, however, it is, of course, Israel, through its ethnic cleansing of Mandatory Palestine in 1948 and its refusal to allow Palestinian refugees their right to return, that bears most responsibility for the Palestinian refugees' plight. The 'international community' has an important stake in the Lebanese-Palestinian governance interaction described in my dissertation as well (Martin, 2011:74). It has helped to cause the *Nakba*, through its conjuring of the infamous Sykes-Picot (1916) and Balfour (1917) Declarations, and has failed to meet its obligations to redress the consequences of this disaster by systematically under-funding and under-mandating UNRWA, the agency created to relieve the plight of Palestinian refugees.

[155] At the outset of my doctoral trajectory I saw the contributions of my research as providing 'information that several groups of stakeholders (Lebanese and Palestinian NGOs particularly) have indicated they need [...], but currently do not sufficiently have,' as I wrote in a draft research proposal in 2011. I believed, as put in another early version of my proposal, that 'through this new data and insights, then, the research will provide handles to various stakeholders – primarily Palestinian Popular Committees and political parties; Lebanese state institutions and political parties; and national and international non-governmental organizations (including UNRWA) – that could help them to (re)consider their interaction modalities with each other (i.e. more effectively use existing mediators, build on informal practices, target specific gaps in communication).' Following more policy-critical scholars (Duffield, 2007;

be considered an ethical obligation when studying marginalized groups such as refugees, such relevance lies in the eye of the beholder (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014). I do not believe it is ethical to pay lip service to a farcical policy-making discourse and see more relevance in helping to uncover the complicity of such policy-making illusions in the structural violence of the status quo. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al. (2014:16) conclude: 'in many areas, the causes of continuing suffering stem not from research gaps, but a lack of political will to recognize the implications of very clear research findings.' My mandate as an academic scholar does not lie in listing what needs to be done, but in facilitating an understanding of why the things that scholars and experts have already extensively suggested need to be done are not being done and will not be done. Agnotological governance and hybrid political order, in the end, are not easily captured or affected by policy.

In Lebanon's clientelist oligarchy one can thus hardly be too cynical about the prospects of formalization of Palestinian governance actors or the institutionalization of joint governance practices and responsibilities. As recognized by Long and Hanafi (2010), 'discourses of partnership and dialogue have been little more than fig leaves for all too familiar exercises of control and dominance by both the Lebanese state and the international community.' Despite interaction, mediation and in some instances institutionalization, the informality, irregularity and inequality of the governance interactions described here are evidence of the elaborate system of control and regulation that the Lebanese state has developed since the 1960s (Hanafi, 2010a:55; Khalili, 2010:128; PARD, 2011:7; Sfeir, 2010:21; Suleiman, 2006:4).

Klem, 2012), however, I am no longer convinced that simply providing information will have any (positive) effects. Many of my interlocutors had similar doubts. A community leader from Tyre (interview, 13 May 2013) noted that: 'All the political leaders, they're just talking. […] They visit camps and make speeches that they're with you and support you. And all the while the documents [that can really help the Palestinians] are in their drawers [and they don't sign them] and they don't help.' A naturalized Palestinian that holds a municipal council seat in Bourj al-Shemali (interview, 15 August 2014) warned me as well: Don't think you can succeed through meeting with the leaders. They will welcome you, but [nothing really happens].'

Keeping this firmly in mind, it is nevertheless important to note that the political and institutional climate in Lebanon might be protracted but is not static. Indeed, as also documented in the section on my empirical puzzle, cautious suggestions are increasingly being made about 'rapprochement' (Knudsen, 2009:66), 'normalization' (Doraï, 2011:71) and a possible 'new era' of Lebanese-Palestinian relations 'characterized by greater public and official Lebanese willingness to discuss Palestinian refugees' rights in a more rational though critical manner' (Suleiman, 2006:23). Czajka (2012:239) notices a tendency towards 'a more conciliatory relationship between Palestinian refugees and the Lebanese state and the latter's interest in a partial regularization of Palestinian refugee presence.' Puig (2010:110) suggests that 'the disappearance of the master narratives of Arab unity and the Palestinian revolution' leaves an ideological void, which might be filled by a more pragmatic approach to governance in and of Lebanon's Palestinian refugee spaces.

With the risk of falling into the trap of policy utility after all, I think that in this context of shifting meta-perspectives my dissertation makes a political contribution in documenting the current status quo of governance interaction between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities (for the gatherings at least). Identifying 'workable elements,' as Boege et al. (2009b:88) call them, might help prevent a tabula rasa approach to the development of institutional relations between Lebanese and Palestinian authorities. My reconceptualization of Palestinian non-state governance as an important instrument to prop up state authority, rather than as a threat to state sovereignty, might be most pertinent in this regard.

But although the governance interactions that are described in my articles contain many relevant precedents, most of these precedents would only become replicable if recognized and formalized to some extent.[156] Formalization, however, inevitably addresses the interests and claims of some to the detriment of others (Lund, 2006b:700). Being institutionally 'invisible' moreover, as outlined in article five, 'is a highly creative and, in

[156] I indeed cautiously proposed such formalization in the realm of tenure and housing issues in my working paper for Yale University's Governance and Local Development Program (Stel, 2015a).

many cases, effective coping strategy' that is undermined by formalization (Hovil, 2014:494).[157]

These perils notwithstanding, I think proposing formalization is relatively unequivocal in at least one case, namely the formalization of the Popular Committees. To formally recognize the Popular Committees as representatives of the Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon's camps and gatherings might, in fact, be my only real 'recommendation.'[158] It is a position that was widely shared by both residents of the gatherings, representatives of the Popular Committees and experts and scholars (see also Suleiman, 2006:24-25).[159] The Popular Committees' ambiguous position lies at the root of the informality, indirectness, irregularity and asymmetry characterizing relations with their Lebanese counterparts. While Lebanese actors, stately or otherwise, de facto deal with the Popular Committees as representatives of the Palestinian communities in Lebanon, they do not de jure recognize them. This leaves the Popular Committees vulnerable to criticism from their own constituencies and places them in a subordinate position vis-à-vis their Lebanese counterparts.

It has rightfully been noted, by myself as well, that the Popular Committees are precariously wanting in legitimacy as well as capacity. As Knudsen and Hanafi (2011:9) pointedly surmise, 'despite their appealing name, "Popular Committees" neither represent popular vote nor popular sentiments but are vested power bases of non-local political patrons.' Their claims that they represent the camps' and gatherings' residents should therefore be regarded with extreme caution (Allan, 2014:102; Hanafi and Long, 2010; Sayigh, 2011:60). Nevertheless, formalizing their status, if coupled with reform, might be a start to breaking the vicious cycle of non-recognition, non-representation and non-accountability. This is salient, again, especially for the gatherings, because, as one participant concluded:

[157] Which makes my 'contribution' of rendering the gatherings 'visible' problematic (Bakewell, 2008; Khalili, 2010; Landau, 2014). I say more about this in article five.
[158] As also proposed by me and my co-authors in Yassin et al. (2016).
[159] A Palestinian scholar and activist working on matters of civil rights represented this position when he wrote that: 'We hope that the official Lebanese parties recognize the committee, as a referral authority representing the camp, and not only upon the request to follow issues requested by the security apparatus concern. Thus there should be recognition of the committee as a reference to the camp refugees.' (El Ali, 2011)

'the most difficult situation is in the gatherings because there is no place for them and they don't belong to the camp nor to the municipality. […] No one talks in their name.'[160]

The Popular Committees are equally undercut and have the same unrecognized status in the camps as in the gatherings. Yet, arguably, this informal status is less problematic for the Popular Committees that operate in the camps as they function in spaces of relative Palestinian sovereignty. In the hybrid or ambiguous space of the gatherings, the informal status of the Popular Committees impedes their work more severely as they operate under Lebanese sovereignty and are thus more dependent on the (non-existent) recognition of Lebanese state representatives.

Because such formalization is unlikely to materialize through policy channels, as Lebanese authorities have little interest in it, it can only take shape as the culmination of a broader shift in Lebanese public opinion (Haddad, 2003, 2004). While currently against the odds, in this scenario my research might help to refashion Lebanese popular opinion about Lebanese-Palestinian governance interaction so that Lebanese do not see such interaction as zero-sum per se.

In this light, my dissertation could help to delegitimize the extremities of 'return' and 'settlement'[161] that make improving the living conditions for Palestinian refugees a politically sensitive topic. This, as Hilal (2010:70) shows, could assuage a significant hindrance for municipalities' engagement with Palestinian representatives (see also Weighill, 1997:308). My research could help envision *tawteen* not as a political conspiracy that inevitably results in Palestinian citizenship, but as the de facto, and often constructive, result of refugees' decades-long presence in the country that 'has taken place with no diminution of Palestinian national awareness or conviction' to return (Weighill 1997:308). This, ultimately, might help to finally do away with the destructive but dominant adage that 'Lebanon will either repress the Palestinians or be repressed by them' (Martin, 2011:91).

[160] Tyre, 6 July 2013.
[161] As I have also done for a Dutch audience in my piece for *De Groene Amsterdammer* (see Annex 4).

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Annex I – Criteria for Publication-Based Doctoral Dissertations at Utrecht University's Centre for Conflict Studies

The criteria established for publication-based doctoral dissertations at the Centre for Conflict Studies are that: (i) the dissertation should consist of at least four peer-reviewed papers of which one can be a book chapter and a minimum of three should be journal articles; (ii) at the date of the defence, at least two papers should be published, one should be accepted for publication and one should be submitted for publication; (iii) following the ranking provided by the Research School for Resource Studies for Development (CERES), at least three journals should have an A or B ranking, while one paper may be published in a journal with a C or D ranking; and (iv) the doctoral candidate should be the single author of at least one paper and the first author of at least two papers, while the candidate may be a co-author of only one paper; and (v) an introduction is added that offers an elaboration on methodology and theory and provides a synthesis of the selected publications. In my dissertation, all criteria are realized: the dissertation (i) counts five publications (all journal articles), all of which (ii) are published at the date of defence in journals (iii) of which two have an A ranking and three have a B ranking according to CERES and (iv) of which four have the candidate as a single author and one has the candidate as first author. The synthesis consisting of a preface and sections that outline my empirical puzzle, theoretical debate, methodology and findings and contributions fulfils the fifth criterion.

Annex 2 – Fieldwork Weblog Entries

Publication date	Title	URL
17 May 2013	Navigating Research and Reality in an Informal Palestinian Camp in South Lebanon	https://www.msm.nl/navigating-research-and-reality-in-an-informal-palestinian-camp-in-south-lebanon/
29 May 2013	'PRS:' Problems Relating to Syria	https://www.msm.nl/prs-problems-relating-to-syria/
4 June 2013	The Continuous Identity Crisis that is Fieldwork	https://www.msm.nl/the-continuous-identity-crisis-that-is-fieldwork/
12 June 2013	The 'Political Situation'	https://www.msm.nl/social/nora-stel/page/20/
25 June 2013	Migration: Money over Morals?	https://www.msm.nl/migration-money-over-morals/
1 July 2013	Life and Law in Limbo	https://www.msm.nl/life-and-law-in-limbo/
8 July 2013	It's All in the Family	https://www.msm.nl/its-all-in-the-family/
23 July 2013	There is No Escaping the System	https://www.msm.nl/there-is-no-escaping-the-system/
29 July 2013	Electricity: Political Fireworks	https://www.msm.nl/electricity-political- fireworks/
6 August 2013	'Please Tell Your People We're Not Terrorists'	https://www.msm.nl/please-tell-your-people-were-not-terrorists/
11 June 2014	From the Categorized Coding of Deskwork to the Mandatory Mindfulness of Fieldwork	https://www.msm.nl/from-the-categorized-coding-of-deskwork-to-the-mandatory-mindfulness-of-fieldwork/

23 June 2014	The 'Why' of Doing Research and the Lures of Narcissism, Snobbism and Megalomania	https://www.msm.nl/the-why-of-doing-research-and-the-lures-of-narcissism-snobbism-and-megalomania/
9 July 2014	My First Steps in Qasmiye: Flags, Signs and Territories	https://www.msm.nl/my-first-steps-in-qasmiye-flags-signs-and-territories/
22 July 2014	From FIFA to GAZA: Ramadan Kareem?	https://www.msm.nl/from-fifa-to-gaza-ramadan-kareem/
25 August 2014	Paving the Road to Electoral Gain	https://www.msm.nl/paving-the-road-to-electoral-gain/
8 September 2014	The Clash Between Generations Revisited	https://www.msm.nl/the-clash-between-generations-revisited/
30 September 2014	Checkpoints: Who is Checking and Who is Checked?	https://www.msm.nl/checkpoints-who-is-checking-and-who-is-checked/
17 October 2014	Is There Anything Local About Local Governance? Decision-Making in an Institutional Vacuum	https://www.msm.nl/is-there-anything-local-about-local-governance-decision-making-in-an-institutional-vacuum/
27 October 2014	The Palestinians Again… The Bad PR of Protracted Victimhood	https://www.msm.nl/the-palestinians-againthe-bad-pr-of-protracted-victim-hood/

Annex 3 – The 'Why' of Doing Research and the Lures of Narcissism, Snobbism and Megalomania

Published as an entry on my fieldwork weblog on 23 June 2014
(see Annex 2)

As researchers, we are used to ask questions, not answer them. One particularly tenacious question that I am confronted with by my respondents, and to which a satisfactory answer continues to allude me, however, is the basic question of 'why are you doing this research?' Mostly, this question also explicitly or implicitly includes the, very justified, 'and what's in it for us?' clause. In my experience there are basically three main responses to this rather fundamental question about the meaning of social science research that vary in degrees of honesty and social desirability.

First, there is the 'I do this because the topic interests me so much, because I want to learn about and experience this intriguing phenomenon.' While this answer feels the most genuine to me, the people I interview more often than not interpret it as 'because I want to get a doctoral title.' Moreover, the problem with this answer is that it includes a lot of 'I' and very little 'you.' While this explanation for my outlandish presence in South Lebanon's Palestinian gatherings might make me feel like a properly reflective and postmodern researcher, it also ends up painting me as a narcissist. In light of the blatant marginalization and disenfranchisement that the Palestinians in Lebanon face and the Western imperialism and colonialism that have dominated much of the knowledge constructed about them, just being there because it fascinates, interests or excites me is simply not good enough – Edward Said has taught me that much at least.

An alternative answer would be along the lines of charting my envisioned scholarly contributions, theoretical innovations and academic publications. This response also feels relatively truthful, as my research is, after all,

related to my work as an academic: it is neither a hobby, nor a charity. At the same time, however, to refer to science practically guarantees estrangement and weariness among the people I hope to convince to become my 'respondents' – estrangement because people are hardly interested in the abstract world of academia that seems far removed from their daily hardship and weariness because they have seen or heard about too many researchers already. Consequently, playing the academia card makes me feel nothing so much as a snob.

The third, and broadly anticipated, reply would be to state that I am driven to 'give voice' or 'make visible.' It is the notion that the main motive for research is – or should be – to document respondents' stories and share them with a wider audience. This too, does not stray far from the reasons why I conduct this research. In fact, my incentives for doing the study I do are a combination of all three motivations described here. Yet, the problem with this third answer, this representation claim, is that it is almost without exception associated with promises of change and improvement as well. Indeed, such promises are eagerly awaited and often put into my mouth, no matter how often I distance myself from them. As Moe Ali Nayel has described in his gut-wrenching piece 'Palestinian refugees are not at your service:'

> This has been the Palestinian refugees' dilemma since 1948: watching groups of people from across the globe stroll through the misery of their camps and then leave. Making their personal plight and stories available to writers and advocates is for them a way to induce change and action and to advance their moral cause around the world.

In reality, however, there exists a gap – or rather an abyss – between representation and change. While I can safely promise to send my reports to state agencies, NGOs and the public, I cannot promise that anyone will actually read them, let alone that they will act on them. To claim that I conduct my research to help the people that feature in my studies, then, would make me an arrogant liar at best and a megalomaniac at worst: I do not control what others will do with my research.

Unfortunately, this nuance is lost on many people I speak with, setting them up for disappointment and me for being branded a fraud. It is these dynamics that sometimes make that the longer I am here, the better I

understand the frustration with 'all these researchers,' but also the more I start to wonder whether these researchers actually made the promises people now claim they have broken. Perhaps they, too, merely failed to defend themselves against the relentless hopes and expectations that 'your reports will bring more projects and funds, won't they?; they will be read by your minister and then they'll know how much we need help' that I struggle to tone down or deny day by day.

This misunderstanding vis-à-vis 'policy-makers,' those all-mighty wielders of funding, paradoxically seems to pervade the perspectives of many researchers as well as of the 'researched;' the idea that 'if only they would know, they would do something about it and things would change,' that there is a direct line from knowledge to appropriate action. I increasingly suspect that this is little more than an illusion and that things – at least when it comes to the Palestinians' plight – are not the way they are because of ignorance, but because of interest.

'Representation,' moreover, is a problematic concept even apart from the fact that I would not be able to live up to any promises of change. Because while I certainly seek to raise awareness – academic and political – of how the Palestinians, as an institutional category, currently suffer from being caught in a vacuum between UN mandates and state responsibilities, as a researcher I am obviously more than the mouthpiece of my respondents. I do more than document; I analyze. As such, there will be a significant difference between respondents' direct accounts, which are informed by their private reasons for participating, and my eventual findings and conclusions. As Kathleen Fincham writes about her fieldwork among Palestinian communities in South Lebanon:

> I strongly suspect that some participants agreed to participate in this study with the hopes that I would tell the international community about the injustices suffered by the Palestinians at the hands of the Israelis. Although I was clear and honest with all participants about the aims and objectives of the research study from the outset, was it ethical to take participants' comments, made with the objective of political posturing, and apply them in a different context?

Navigating between promises that are broadly encouraged, but empty, and justifications that are perhaps nihilistic, but largely realistic, turns out to be

a central issue in my fieldwork and presents me with a seemingly never-ending quest to give substance to my belief that it is both the duty and the privilege of the academic to be critical without directly providing a solution or alternative.

Annex 4 – Additional Publications (Partly) Based on my Doctoral Research

Peer-reviewed articles

Stel, N.M. (2016) 'Review Essay – Institutionalized Ignorance and Manufactured Oblivion: Reading Noga Kadman's *Erased from Space and Consciousness* from an Agnotological Perspective,' *Antipode*, online publication 24 November.

Yassin, N., N.M. Stel and R. Rassi (2016) 'Organized Chaos: Informal Institution Building Among Palestinian Refugees in the Maashouk Gathering in South Lebanon,' *Journal of Refugee Studies,* online publication 27 June.

Stel, N.M. and W. Naudé (2016) '"Public-Private Entanglement:" Entrepreneurship in Lebanon's Hybrid Political Order,' *The Journal of Development Studies,* 52(2): 254-268.

Stel, N.M. and I. Van der Molen (2015) 'Environmental Vulnerability as a Legacy of Violent Conflict: A Case Study of the 2012 Waste Crisis in the Palestinian Gathering of Shabriha, South Lebanon,' *Conflict, Security and Development,* 15(4): 387-414.

Stel, N.M. (2014) 'Governance and Government in the Arab Spring Hybridity: Reflections from Lebanon,' *Contemporary Readings in Law and Social Justice,* 6(1): 49-69.

Stel, N.M. (2013) 'Entrepreneurs in the Dark: The Impact of Fragile and Hybrid Governance on Lebanese Entrepreneurship – A Case Study of the Electricity Sector,' *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship,* 18(3): 1-17.

Book chapters

Duyvesteyn, I., G. Frerks, B. Kistemaker, N.M. Stel and N. Terpstra (2015) Reconsidering Rebel Governance. In J. Idriss Lahai and T. Lyons

(eds.), *African Frontiers. Insurgency, Governance and Peacebuilding in Postcolonial States*, pp. 31-41. London: Routledge.

Van der Molen, I. and N.M. Stel (2015) Conflict and Environment in North Lebanon: Vulnerability in a Volatile Socio-Political Context. In I. van der Molen and N.M. Stel (eds.), *Conflict and Environment in North Lebanon. Vulnerability and Resilience from a Multidisciplinary Perspective*, pp. 1-20. Enschede: Twente University.

Working and conference papers

Stel, N.M. (2016) ''Ignorance as Resistance? How Palestinian Refugees in South Lebanon Cope with Intentional Institutional Ambiguity,' paper presented at the *Resistance(s): Between Theories and the Field* conference, Université Libre de Bruxelles. Brussels, 14-15 December.

Stel, N.M. (2016) 'From State-Within-the-State to Mediated Stateness: PLO Governance in Lebanon,' paper presented at the *The Role of Non-State Armed Actors in the Provision of Security, Welfare and Political Representation During Violent Conflict* conference, Utrecht University (Centre for Conflict Studies). Utrecht, 8 September.

Stel, N.M. (2015) *Facilitating Facts on the Ground. The 'Politics of Uncertainty' and the Governance of Housing, Land, and Tenure in the Palestinian Gathering of Qasmiye, South Lebanon*. New Haven and Gothenburg: Yale University and Gothenburg University, the Program on Governance and Local Development.

Belhadj, S., C. Van der Borgh, R. Jaffe, M. Price, N.M. Stel and M. Warren (2015) *Plural Security Provision in Beirut*. The Hague: The Hague Institute for Global Justice, Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law.

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Annex 5 – Summary in Dutch

In Libanon wonen ongeveer 400.000 Palestijnse vluchtelingen die in veelal erbarmelijke omstandigheden leven. De Libanese regering ontmoedigt hun integratie bewust en beweert op die manier Israël onder druk te zetten de vluchtelingen terug te laten keren. Dit beleid betekent voor Palestijnen in Libanon dat zij geen burgerrechten hebben, geen land of vastgoed mogen bezitten en dat ze systematisch gediscrimineerd worden op de arbeidsmarkt. Een groot deel van hen woont, bijna zeventig jaar na hun gedwongen vertrek uit Palestina, bovendien nog steeds in vluchtelingenkampen. De wetenschappelijke literatuur beschrijft de situatie van de Palestijnen in Libanon dan ook voornamelijk in termen van isolatie en segregatie in relatie tot de Libanese samenleving.

Mijn dissertatie betoogt dat dit een vertekend beeld is dat de marginalisering van de Palestijnse gemeenschappen in Libanon bovendien mede in stand houdt. En belangrijke oorzaak van dit heersende idee dat Libanezen en Palestijnen grotendeels gescheiden leven, is de disproportionele nadruk die in veel bestaand onderzoek wordt gelegd op de situatie in officiële vluchtelingenkampen. Deze kampen worden beheerd door de organisatie voor Palestijnse vluchtelingen van de Verenigde Naties, UNRWA. De Libanese staat heeft er, door middel van het Cairo Verdrag dat in 1969 getekend werd door de leider van de Palestijnse Bevrijdingsorganisatie PLO ('*Palestine Liberation Organisation*') en de bevelhebber van het Libanese leger, grotendeels haar soevereiniteit afgestaan aan Palestijnse bestuursorganisaties.

Een aanzienlijk deel van de Palestijnse vluchtelingen in Libanon woont echter niet in deze officiële kampen, maar in zogenaamde '*gatherings*,' nederzettingen die overwegend buiten het mandaat van UNRWA en de afspraken van het Cairo Verdrag vallen. In deze nederzettingen zijn meer aanleidingen en meer mogelijkheden voor samenwerking tussen Palestijnse

en Libanese bestuursorganisaties als het gaat om dienstenlevering, het bewaken van de orde en het vertegenwoordigen van bewoners. Isolatie en segregatie hebben in deze nederzettingen dan ook een andere betekenis.

In mijn dissertatie richt ik me op de institutionele dimensie van deze Libanees-Palestijnse interactie in twee informele Palestijnse nederzettingen in Zuid Libanon. Ik onderzoek de betrekkingen tussen de Palestijnse Volkscomités ('*Popular Committees*'), die namens de PLO verantwoordelijk zijn voor het dagelijks bestuur in de Palestijnse kampen en nederzettingen in Libanon, en lokale Libanese overheidsinstanties (zoals gemeenten, nutsbedrijven en '*mukhtars*,' gezagsdragers op wijkniveau).

Mijn proefschrift bestaat uit vijf gepubliceerde artikelen en een synthese, die de empirische vraagstukken, theoretische debatten, methodologische aanpak en de bevindingen en bijdragen zoals die in de artikelen worden besproken verder uitwerkt. De overkoepelende onderzoeksvraag van artikelen en synthese is: *hoe ziet de interactie tussen Libanese staatsinstituties en Palestijnse autoriteiten in het besturen van informele Palestijnse nederzettingen in Zuid Libanon eruit en waarom neemt interactie deze specifieke vorm aan?* Deze vraag heb ik proberen te beantwoorden met behulp van een kwalitatieve casestudy van twee nederzettingen, Shabriha en Qasmiye, waarin ik in beide gevallen vijf 'vignetten' (of microcasussen) heb bestudeerd die draaiden om concrete gevallen van bestuursinteractie. Ik heb gedurende tien maanden politiek antropologisch veldwerk door middel van diepte-interviews, focusgroepen, observaties en documenten data verzameld over de interactie tussen Palestijnse en Libanese bestuursorganisaties in Shabriha en Qasmiye.

Deze data heb ik met behulp van het programma NVivo op een iteratieve manier geanalyseerd. Mijn analytisch raamwerk draait om de begrippen 'bestuursinteractie' (*governance interaction*) en 'hybride politieke orde' (*hybrid political order*). Het concept van de hybride politieke orde kan geplaatst worden tussen enerzijds de staatcentrische literatuur die zich bezig houdt met het begrijpen van fragiele en gefaalde staten (*fragile and failed states*) en anderzijds de literatuur met een antistatelijke focus die zich richt op rebellenbestuur (*rebel rule*) en staten-binnen-staten (*states-within-states*). Bij de hybride politieke orde staat juist het begrijpen van de politieke en institutionele samenhang, interactie en symbiose tussen statelijke en niet-

statelijke bestuursvormen centraal. Ik heb drie specifieke analytische instrumenten uit de school van de hybride politieke orde gebruikt om de interactiepatronen die ik aantrof te verklaren. Dit zijn het idee van de 'bemiddelaarsstaat' (*the mediated state*), de notie van de 'onderhandelingsstaat' (*the negotiating statehood*) en het concept van 'schemerinstituties' (*twilight institutions*).

Het eerste artikel van mijn dissertatie, in 2013 gepubliceerd in *Middle East Policy*, is een overzichtsessay waarin ik door middel van een literatuuronderzoek de basis leg voor het bovenstaande theoretische kader. In mijn tweede artikel, dat in 2015 verscheen in *Mediterranean Politics*, richt ik me op een specifiek kenmerk van de interactie tussen Libanese en Palestijnse gezagsdragers in Shabriha, namelijk haar indirecte aard. Deze indirecte vorm van interactie, waarin Libanese en Palestijnse politieke partijen functioneren als tussenpersonen, analyseer ik aan de hand van het concept van de bemiddelaarsstaat. Mijn derde artikel, in *the British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (in 2015), zoomt in op de ongelijkwaardigheid van de Libanees-Palestijnse bestuursinteractie in Shabriha. Dit aspect van interactie, het overwicht van Libanese autoriteiten en de ondergeschiktheid van Palestijnse vertegenwoordigers, verklaar ik aan de hand van het concept van de onderhandelingsstaat. De informele aard van de relaties tussen Libanese en Palestijnse bestuursorganisaties in Shabriha en Qasmiye staat centraal in mijn vierde artikel dat in 2016 werd geplaatst in *Development and Change*. Deze component van bestuursinteractie, haar persoonlijke en ongedocumenteerde karakter, analyseer ik verder aan de hand van het idee van schemerinstituties.

In mijn vijfde artikel, in 2016 gepubliceerd in *Antipode*, ga ik in op een vierde belangrijk kenmerk van bestuursinteractie in de Palestijnse nederzettingen die ik bestudeerde, namelijk haar onregelmatigheid. Om de onvoorspelbare en ad hoc manier van besturen in Shabriha en Qasmiye te begrijpen, maak ik gebruik van het concept van agnotologie (*agnotology*). Dit concept richt zich op het in kaart brengen van opzettelijke onwetendheid en bewuste passiviteit in de context van besluit- en beleidsvorming. Het idee van agnotologie valt buiten de school van de hybride politieke orde, maar is er ontologisch gezien sterk mee verbonden en kan er een waardevolle aanvulling op zijn.

Op basis van deze artikelen het ik het volgende antwoord geformuleerd op mijn hoofdvraag. De interactie tussen Libanese staatsinstituties en Palestijnse autoriteiten in informele Palestijnse nederzettingen in Zuid Libanon is overwegend indirect, informeel, onregelmatig en ongelijkwaardig. De betreffende bestuursinteractie is bovendien door beide zijden betwist, sterk gepolitiseerd en kan vaak niet zonder regionale of nationale interventie van Libanese en Palestijnse politieke elites tot stand komen. Dat de interactie tussen Libanese en Palestijnse bestuursorganisaties in Shabriha en Qasmiye deze vorm aanneemt, heeft verschillende complexe oorzaken.

De belangrijkste hiervan is de opzettelijke institutionele ambiguïteit waaraan de Libanese regering de informele Palestijnse nederzettingen onderwerpt. Dit beleid, dat respondenten het 'geen-beleid-beleid' (*no-policy-policy*) noemden, heeft zijn basis in de juridische marginalisatie van de Palestijnse vluchtelingen (die geen burgerrechten genieten in Libanon) en manifesteert zich verder in het niet erkennen van de betreffende nederzettingen en haar Palestijnse vertegenwoordigers. Op deze manier ontstaat een grote mate van onzekerheid en onduidelijkheid omtrent elke vorm van bestuur in de nederzettingen. Deze ambiguïteit vormt een belangrijk fundament onder de dominante positie die de Libanese staat, ondanks haar eigen capaciteitstekort, bestuurlijke verlamming en politieke fragmentatie, inneemt ten opzichte van de bewoners en bestuurders van de Palestijnse nederzettingen.

Deze conclusies hebben implicaties voor verschillende wetenschappelijke debatten. Op theoretisch gebied heeft mijn proefschrift bijgedragen aan het operationaliseren van de notie van hybride politiek orde. Enerzijds door die te koppelen aan een concrete en gedetailleerde conceptualisering van bestuursinteractie die vormen van dominantie en hegemonie expliciet maakt en anderzijds door het samenbrengen van de literatuur over vluchtelingengemeenschappen (*refugee studies*) en de antropologie van de staat (*the anthropology of the state*). De manier waarop ik niet alleen de gelijktijdigheid van statelijke en niet-statelijke bestuursvormen belicht, maar ook hun institutionele verwantschap en wederzijdse afhankelijkheid blootleg, is nieuw. Ik heb op deze manier handen en voeten gegeven aan de veronderstelling dat het functioneren van, en de beeldvorming over, een staat in belangrijke mate tot stand komt in haar wisselwerking met niet-

statelijke tegenhangers. Terwijl het gros van de literatuur over hybride politieke orde en de antropologie van de staat zijn wortels heeft in Afrikaanse casussen, zijn deze theoretische bijdragen bovendien een van de eersten die zijn gemaakt op basis van een casestudy die in het Midden-Oosten gesitueerd is.

Mijn bevindingen dragen ook bij aan drie empirische debatten. Dit betreft allereerst het discours over de relatieve segregatie dan wel integratie van Libanon's Palestijnse vluchtelingen, waarbij mijn proefschrift betoogt dat bestuurlijke interactie tussen Libanese en Palestijnse vertegenwoordigers op lokaal niveau wijdverbreider en veelvuldiger is dan doorgaans wordt aangenomen. Een tweede empirisch debat draait om de vraag in hoeverre de nederzettingen die in mijn dissertatie centraal staan, gezien moeten worden als een nieuwe categorie vluchtelingenkampen. Mijn uitkomsten tonen aan dat de nederzettingen een beduidend andere vorm van bestuur kennen dan de officiële kampen waarop het merendeel van onze aannames over het leven van Palestijnse vluchtelingen in Libanon is gebaseerd. De aard van de naoorlogse[162] staat in Libanon is het onderwerp van een derde empirische debat aangaande de Palestijnse gemeenschap in Libanon. In mijn dissertatie laat ik zien dat, ondanks de vaak veronderstelde zwakte en fragiliteit van de Libanese staat, Libanese overheidsinstanties in de interactie met Palestijnse bestuursorganisaties een dominante positie innemen. Dit toont aan dat vormen van hybride bestuur niet per definitie staatsondermijnend hoeven te zijn, maar ook kunnen leiden tot een vorm van indirect bestuur (*indirect rule*) en statelijke machtsconsolidatie.

Mijn dissertatie sluit af met een discussie over de politieke en beleidsmatige implicaties van de gepresenteerde bevindingen. De vraag of, en zo ja, hoe Libanees-Palestijnse bestuursinteractie in informele nederzettingen bevorderd moet worden, roept een fundamentele paradox op. Enerzijds stel ik in mijn dissertatie dat het formaliseren van de Palestijnse Volkscomités die, hoe problematisch en rudimentair ook, het dagelijks bestuur van de nederzettingen vormen een belangrijke stap zou zijn. Het kan de vicieuze cirkel van gebrek aan vertegenwoordiging en erkenning die de problematische vormen van bestuur in de nederzettingen

[162] De betreffende oorlog is de Libanese Burgeroorlog (1975-1990).

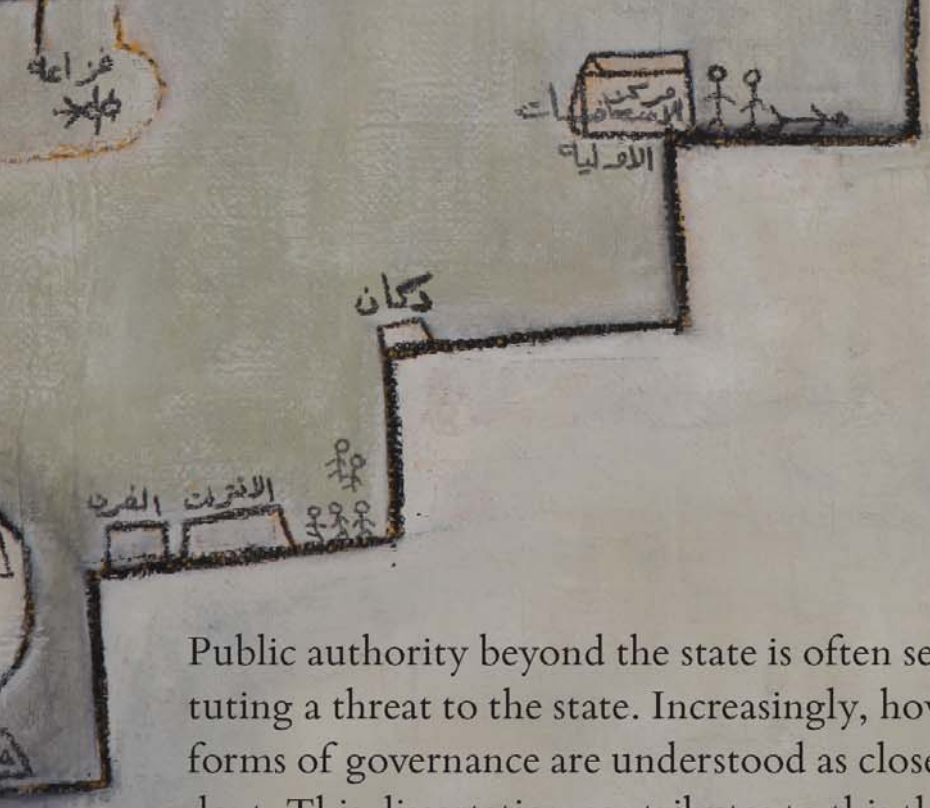
veroorzaakt, doorbreken. Anderzijds laat mijn dissertatie juist zien dat het niet erkennen van Palestijnse vertegenwoordigers en het niet opstellen van enige vorm van formeel beleid bewuste strategische keuzes zijn van Libanese beleidsmakers die de belangen van Libanese, en in mindere mate Palestijnse, politieke elites beschermen. Dit betekent dat het doen van beleidsaanbevelingen in deze context uiteindelijk een farce is en dat de toegevoegde waarde van mijn proefschrift niet ligt in het aanraden van nieuw beleid, maar in de kritische analyse van de gevolgen van het gebrek aan bestaand beleid.

Annex 6 – Curriculum Vitae

Nora Stel holds a BA in History (Radboud University Nijmegen) and a cum laude MA in Conflict Studies and Human Rights (Utrecht University). She works as Assistant Professor in Governance and Human Rights at Maastricht School of Management.

Nora is an affiliated scholar with the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut. Previously, she interned at the Netherlands Institute for Academic Studies in Damascus, Syria, and worked as a junior researcher for Utrecht University's Centre for Conflict Studies in Ramallah, Palestine. Nora was also a consulting fellow for the United Nations University's Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology.

Nora's work revolves around the political anthropology of governance, authority and legitimacy in hybrid political orders, with a particular focus on refugee communities and informal settlements in the Middle East. She has done fieldwork in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Burundi and Ethiopia for which she has been awarded several research grants, including one from Yale University. Nora has published with Oxford University Press and in journals such as *Antipode*, the *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *Development and Change* and *the British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*.



Public authority beyond the state is often seen as isolated from or constituting a threat to the state. Increasingly, however, 'state' and 'non-state' forms of governance are understood as closely connected and interdependent. This dissertation contributes to this theoretical shift by means of a qualitative case-study of two informal Palestinian refugee settlements – so-called 'gatherings' – in South Lebanon.

Based on extensive fieldwork, it explores the everyday interactions between Lebanese local state institutions and the 'Popular Committees' that govern inside Palestinian settlements. Lebanon's Palestinian camps are routinely characterized as 'states-within-the-state' that undermine the sovereignty of the Lebanese state. The de facto interactions that occur between Lebanese and Palestinian governance actors in informal settlements, however, instead produce a form of mediated stateness. As such, the Palestinian Popular Committees might in important ways prop up rather than challenge the Lebanese state, demonstrating that state and non-state forms of authority can be mutually constitutive.

Nora Stel did her doctoral research at Utrecht University's Centre for Conflict Studies. She currently works as Assistant Professor in Governance and Human Rights at Maastricht School of Management and is an affiliated scholar with the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut.