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The Palestinian Presence in Lebanon

A study on the Palestinian Humanitarian Rights in Lebanon

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Where shall the birds fly after the last frontiers, where shall we go after the last sky?

Mahmud Darwish, Palestinian poet

Abstract

This paper analyzes the impact of the contradictory discourses of the confessional composition of Lebanon on the Palestinian humanitarian rights in Lebanon. In addition to this, it analyzes the correlation between gaining these rights and the Palestinian right of return to Palestine. The Palestinian refugees' issue creates divisions among Lebanese in handling their situation between supporters and opponents. This paper examines the existing theories of the most commonly aspects that have constructed the Palestinian refugees national identity through different phases. It also analyzes the aspects of their exclusion according to demographic domains and variables. This paper uses a qualitative research method of narrative and semi-structured interviews to answer the questions. The results of this paper prove that the political use of the confessional composition of Lebanon has contributed at different stages to restrict gaining the basic humanitarian rights of Palestinians. However, gaining these rights will not affect or substitute the Palestinian right of return to Palestine.

Key words: *Palestinian refugees, Palestine, Lebanon, national identity, exclusion, inclusion, confessional composition, right of return*

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This work is dedicated to my son Ibrahim; the new generation to read and to know the meaning of being a refugee. It is also dedicated to those who are still holding the keys, memories and passing love and belonging to Palestine.

List of Abbreviations

DFLP	Democratic Front for Liberation of Palestine
LNM	Lebanese National Movement
P.L.O	Palestine Liberation Organization
PFLP	Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine
PFLPGC	Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine General Command
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East

Table of contents

1	Introduction	7
1.1	Research problem and questions	8
1.2	Structure of the paper	10
1.3	Limitations	11
2	Litreture Review and Historical background	12
2.1	Litratue Review	12
2.2	Historical background	15
3	Theories	17
3.1	Nationalism and Identity	17
3.2	Social Exclusion and Inclusion	22
4	Methodology	26
4.1	Research Strategy	26
4.2	Research Approach	27
4.3	Data Collection and techniques	28
4.4	Narrative Interviews	29
4.5	Semi-structured Interviews	30
4.6	Limitations	31
5	Analysis	32
5.1	The Construction of the Palestinian identity	32
5.1.1	Narrative interviews	36
5.2	Contested identities, Discourses and Conflict	37
5.2.1	Narrative interviews	40
5.3	The Imagined Palestinian identity	43
5.3.1	Narrative interviews	44

5.4 Economic aspects of the Palestinian exclusion	45
5.4.1 Semi-structured interviews	48
5.5 Aspects of Palestinian Social and political exclusion.....	51
5.5.1 Semi-structured interviews	53
5.6 Resettlement: a real threat or a justification of exclusion	54
5.6.1 Semi-structured interviews	56
6 Conclusion	58
7 Executive Summary	59
8 References	63
9 Appendix	68
9.1 Interview guide.....	68
9.2 List of Respondents	70

1 Introduction

The Palestinian issue is a contemporary complicated issue that has left millions of Palestinians stateless, living in Diasporas and exiled. It has also generated and perpetuated the stereotype of Palestinians as being a refugee society in various parts of the Arab countries and the world. One of the most serious consequences of occupying Palestine occurred on 15 May 1948 and is known as the *Nakbah*, which translates into 'the disaster' or 'catastrophe', marked by the forcible expulsion of more than 750 000 Palestinians deprived of their homeland and properties (Smith, 2004) thus being the reason why the refugee issue emerged in the first place. Thereafter, Palestinians became refugees and camp life started in the surrounding Arab countries such as Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon.

According to UNRWA, "Palestine refugees are people whose normal place of residence was Palestine between June 1946 and May 1948, who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict" (UNRWA). The number of the registered refugees in Lebanon at UNRWA is 455,373 people.

The status of refugees in these countries vary; some refugees are advantaged and to a certain extent are offered the basic humanitarian and civil rights in certain countries such as Jordan, Egypt, Syria and formerly Iraq prior to the American occupation of 2003. However, in Lebanon, Palestinians have a different situation represented by strict rules that limit the Palestinians' basic rights in terms of professions, education, the social security system, the right of movement, free careers, the right to property and integration. In other words, Palestinians encounter exclusion in many aspects including socio-economic -and to a certain extent political- exclusion (Hanafi, 2012).

Lebanese policies and practices have not granted the basic humanitarian rights of Palestinians. This illustrates that the composition of the Lebanese state has special characteristics that are different to the surrounding Arab countries where Palestinian refugees experience a markedly improved set of living conditions. The most distinctive characteristic of the Lebanese state is the confessional nature of its political legitimacy and power -which includes all Lebanese entities (El-Khazen, 2000:23-24). In this respect, Lebanese society consists of several sects and religious ethnicities such Christian Maronite, Catholic, Orthodox, Armenians, Muslim Sunni, Shiite and Druze. This can be perceived as a major problem when it comes to combining and balancing the internal demographic composition of the country. Being predominantly Muslim, the presence of Palestinian refugees will have an inevitable influence

on balancing the composition of Lebanon. This also means that the Palestinian presence will empower and advantage certain sects such as Muslims Sunni, Shiite or Druze. However, the Christian Maronite will be disadvantaged. This division reflects the diversity of Lebanese society as divided between supporters and opponents of the Palestinian presence and gaining basic humanitarian rights (El-Khazen, 2000).

1.1 Research problem and questions

As mentioned earlier, the Palestinian refugees' presence in Lebanon is different and exceptional in comparison with the status of refugees in the other surrounding Arab countries. In this sense, the practices and procedures of the successive Lebanese governments have not granted the fair treatment of Palestinians in accordance with the international conventions for refugees. Therefore, Palestinians in Lebanon are encountering difficulties in their lives in a variety of aspects such as socio-economic, represented by the lack of access to the labor market, employment, free professions, education, property, the health care system, the social security system and the right of movement. In other words, they are excluded, marginalized and vulnerable.

The issue of refugees has a historical development and that has witnessed different phases since 1948. The common denominator is that they are suffering from segregation and exclusion during the whole period of their existence in Lebanon. There are various reasons and causes for this issue that can be explored and analyzed in this paper in order to diagnose the reason of their exclusion. Lebanon has its own characteristics due to the confessional composition of the country. Some groups such the Muslim Sunni, Druze and Shiites support the Palestinian presence. Also, they emphasize the necessity to offer the Palestinians improved humanitarian and civil rights. However, the Lebanese right wings as represented by the Christian Maronite opposes Palestinian rights or at least are protective and sensitive towards offering the Palestinians basic humanitarian rights. This has also affected Palestinian-Lebanese relations leading to the development of an internal conflict. The Lebanese civil war characterizes this confessional division; Palestinians were part of this civil war as well. The supporters of the Palestinians have been advantaged by their presence because the Lebanese composition was unbalanced after the independence of Lebanon in 1943. The Lebanese constitution after independence has triggered this division. This means that Lebanon has an intrinsic and severe sectarian problem.

This also shows the existence of contradictory discourses towards dealing with the refugee issue. The supporters' claim that these rights should be offered due to brotherhood ties, religion, nationalism, sympathies with the Palestinian cause. Also, the Lebanese economy will be advantaged by fairly involving the Palestinians. The opponents on the other hand consider gaining these rights will make an inevitable demographic change together with the economic factor that will negatively affect Lebanese identity and Christians as a minority in the region.

Therefore, there is a strong fear in Lebanon of the so-called *Resettlement* of Palestinians in Lebanon, known in Arabic as *Tawteen*. This means that Lebanon will be a substitute homeland for Palestinians. It will also substitute the Palestinian right of return to Palestine according to the UN resolution number 194 which approves the return of the Palestinian refugees who were forced to leave their homeland in 1948. However, the right of return constitutes a vital standing point for Palestinians themselves to reject any resettlement in any Arab country, particularly in Lebanon. In other words, there is consensus among both Palestinians and Lebanese in emphasizing the right of return. This paper aims to focus on the confessional division of Lebanon and its contradictions in relation to Palestinian humanitarian rights or lack thereof. In addition to this, that the right of return is essential and it can be categorized as a 'holy' right for Palestinians. This paper will discuss whether Palestinians would choose Lebanon as a substitute for their homeland in the event that they gained these rights and it will investigate the causes of this situation throughout all phases that Palestinian-Lebanese relations have witnessed between supporters and opponents. With this in mind, the research questions will be:

What is the impact of the contradictory discourses of the Lebanese confessional composition on Palestinian humanitarian rights in Lebanon?

What is the correlation between gaining humanitarian rights in Lebanon and the Palestinian right of return to Palestine?

In order to answer these questions, I will look at various aspects presented in previous discussions and studies on this topic. It will be crucial to examine and analyze the different phases that the Palestinian issue has witnessed in Lebanon since 1948 so that we can have a clear understanding of the Lebanese practices and procedures that have restricted Palestinian integration. It will be beneficial to examine the effects on Palestinian identity and its development during these years. How will gaining these rights affect their identity? Also, what might Lebanon lose to offer these rights? The aim of this paper will examine the topic

by looking at the various confessional backgrounds on the Lebanese side represented by the supporters and opponents of the Palestinian existence. In other words, this paper will explore the contradictory discourses and their influence on these rights.

This paper will take into consideration the confessional nature and political diversity of Lebanese society and their attitudes towards rejecting or accepting Palestinian rights. Therefore, this paper will present facts in an attempt to be unbiased on any part. It must be mentioned that in Lebanon it is difficult to be unbiased, however, there is consensus in Lebanon by all parties that the Palestinian refugees are suffering in their lives. Also, the academic field requires presenting the facts in a neutral way in order to avoid being biased to any part so that we gain adequate and concrete understanding of the whole issue and this paper strives to be academic.

1.2 Structure of the paper

This paper will be structured in the following way: I will begin by providing a literature review of the previous discussions and studies on Palestinians in Lebanon. Then I will provide a historical background of the Palestinian issue, which will particularly focus on the refugees' issue where Palestinians were forced to leave to Lebanon. Then I will begin with the theoretical part by describing the notions of 'Nationalism and identity' and exclusion-inclusion'. I will give an explanation for the choice of these theories and how they can serve and be appropriate for my topic and how these notions are relevant to the refugees' case.

This will lead to a discussion of the methods that have been used to answer my research questions. I will provide justifications and explanations for the choice of these methods. I will also describe in detail how the analysis was done and data gathered.

After that I will begin with the analysis chapter. I will try to find the possible connection between the theories and existing literature of the Palestinians. It will also be reflected in the interview data. I will try to find the identification between theories, previous discussions and the interviews in order to answer the research questions concerning the contradictory discourses and their impact and influence in gaining basic rights for Palestinians. Then I will highlight the major relevant points that can answer the research questions, finding the similarities and differences of these discourses and their reflection on interviewees and the relevant material that has been employed in this paper. I will then provide a conclusion and recommendations based on what has been discussed in the paper so far then I will list all

references that have been used for this paper before presenting the executive summary. I will also provide the interview guide, questions and the interviewees' names and other related information.

1.3 Limitations

As the major aim of this paper will be based on exploring the impact of the contradictory discourses of the Lebanese confessional composition on the Palestinian refugees' humanitarian rights and restricting these rights, this paper will be limited in dealing with the Lebanese procedures for citizenship or denizenship. This is due to the exceptional situation of Palestinians whose citizenship is neither Palestinian nor Lebanese.

Another limitation of this paper will be on the situation of the Palestinians refugees in the surrounding Arab countries; comparisons and contrasts between the Lebanese case and the other Arab countries will be limited. This paper will handle the refugees' status in Lebanon only. Another limitation is the use of the Lebanese civil war, which will be explained as a development and a consequence rather than considering this factor as a major indicator of excluding the Palestinians. The marginalization of the refugees started earlier than the civil war; hence, the use of the civil war will be as a development of the events that have worsened the situation.

2 Literature Review and Historical Background

2.1 Literature Review

The aim of this paper is to examine the impact of the contradictory discourses of the Lebanese confessional composition on the humanitarian rights of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. In addition to this, to examine the correlation between gaining these rights and the Palestinian right of return to Palestine. This requires including the most appropriate studies that have covered this topic.

Different scholars have written on the historical roots of the Palestinian issue represented by the expulsion of Palestinians to become refugees in the Arab states that started earlier in the twentieth century; Smith, (2004) "Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict" explores the historical origins of the conflict and its development until the recent time. He also clarifies the Palestinian *Nakbah* by using detailed facts, maps, meetings, declarations, the international conditions, UN resolutions, and organized massacres against Palestinians and so on. This is similar to Quigley (2010) "The Statehood of Palestine", Pappé (2007) "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine"; they emphasize the origins of the collective expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland and the creation of Israel as a colonial project due to the British Mandate support of the Zionist movement to establish a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine (Pappé, 2007:22-23).

At the same time the Lebanese situation has its historical development as well with the involvement of the French Mandate and the creation of a confessional political structure. El-Khazen (2000) "The Breakdown of the State in Lebanon 1967-1976", it reveals the uneven distribution of political power among Lebanese and according to confessional hierarchic. Khalaf (2002), Hudson (1988) emphasize El-Kahazen's premise by highlighting the difficulties to govern Lebanon because of the fragmented political culture; it is ruled by various subcommunities and they have a sort of primordial characteristics such as sectarian bonds, kinship and religious affiliations. The socio-economic factor has advantaged the Christian elites (Hudson, 1988:225-228). Also, the mobilization and legitimization have been reinforced according to sectarian tendencies (Khalaf, 2002:230-232). This will serve the issue by emphasizing the origins of the dichotomies of these discourses and their development in order to clarify the impact of the supporters and the opponents on Palestinian refugees.

This discussion can lead to the origins of the Palestinian military presence in particular the PLO and its impact on creating and constructing the Palestinian national identity as a specific

national movement based on the armed struggle and resistance (Cobban, 1984:43-46). Also, according to Cobban (1984) this presence has widened the gap and the division among the supporters and opponents towards dealing with Palestinians. However, the development of the Palestinian identity in different phases in Lebanon can be identified with Hassassian argument (2002) “Historical Dynamic Shaping Palestinian National Identity”, Sayigh (1977) which illustrate the identification with the various contested concepts of Nationalism and its relevance to the Palestinian case until it has reached the form of the Imagined Community. Identity construction is based on what the generations have been taught by their communities, UNRWA schools, the PLO about the national belonging and their distinguished case (Hassassian, 2002:50-55, Sayigh, 1977). However, Bowker work (2003) “Palestinian Refugees: Mythology, Identity and the Search for Peace”, Litvak (2009) “The Palestinian Collective Memory and National Identity” these works embody the narrative role in shaping and constructing the Palestinian identity because it is based on memories, narratives of history of the Palestinian dispossession until the current situation of refuge life (Bowker, 2003:61-65). Further, this argument reinforces Cobban’s work by the impact of the PLO in creating not only resistance characteristics of the Palestinian identity; it exceeds this concept to approach the intellectual, knowledge and cultural aspects in constructing the Palestinian identity (Litvak, 2009).

Another theme of this paper is the right of return to Palestine according to the UN resolution No 194 which constitutes a basic standing point and inseparable factor of the Palestinian national identity and belonging. It has also rhetorical, existence, sentimental and political significance (Bowker, 2003; Litvak, 2009; Sayigh, 1995; Haddad, 2004). The emphasis of this right has its essence on this paper because it is highly connected to the rejection of offering the Palestinian humanitarian rights underground resettlement (Tawteen) (Hanafi et al, 2012:42; Haddad, 2004: 471-475).

Another topic has been discussed in the literature is the “Social Exclusion of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon”, Hanafi et al (2012) this work will be helpful because it will lead to empower the major theory of social exclusion to be reflected on the practical aspects of the Palestinian exclusion in the camps such as access to professions, health care, social security system and so forth. On the other hand, this work will simplify answering the research questions because it is based on major domains and indicators of social exclusion-inclusion according to demographic variables (Hanafi et al, 2012). Consequently, these studies will enrich the topic by explaining the aspects of exclusion-inclusion in more detailed approach

and to combine it with various examples of different economic, social and to a certain extent political dimensions.

These aspects have been covered in more details by the contributions of Al-Natour (1997) in his work “The legal Status of the Palestinians in Lebanon” He examines the legal status in terms of the exceptional position of their presence –which is different than the other refugees all over the world. Further, He analyzes the Lebanese practices and procedures of the laws that have restricted the Palestinian rights and their economic and social integration (Al-Natour, 1997). Further, Al-Natour (2011) investigates the current and previous amendments of the Lebanese labor and the social security system laws. However, Ibrahim, J (2008) “The Discrimination against Palestinian Refugees Living in Lebanon”, Knudsen (2009) “Widening the Protection Gap: The ‘Politics of Citizenship for Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, 1948-2008”, Abbas et al “Socio-economic Conditions of Palestinians in Lebanon” (1997) who contribute effectively in posing the specific treatment of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and the aspects of poverty, segregation, the camps conditions, the lack of access to the labor market and so forth. These sources show the situation development at different stages as well with reinforcing the historical facts of the Palestinian marginalization. In addition, these sources concentrate on the extraction of the humanitarian aspects of refugees rather than citizenship, because of the political rejection among both Palestinians and Lebanese to prevent resettlement.

The literature also examined the Lebanese fear of the Palestinian resettlement, Sayigh (1994) “Palestinians in Lebanon Harsh Present, Uncertain Future”, Haddad, (2004) There are variations among this point because different parts consider gaining these rights will lead to substitute Lebanon as a homeland for Palestinians; while many consider gaining these rights will not lead to resettlement (Sayigh, 1994; Haddad, 2004). This will make an inevitable connection to find the correlation between the confessional composition of Lebanon and the correlation between these rights and the right of return. Lebanese in general according to Sayigh (1994) reject resettlement and support the right of return; however, the literature also discussed the essence of this right and its importance on the Palestinian identity. Also, the variation of these discourses uses resettlement as a justification of exclusion (Hanafi et al, 2012; Sayigh, 1994; Al-Natour, 1997). This literature review will be beneficial in complementing this research.

2.2 Historical Background

As mentioned earlier, the Palestinian issue is considered a very complicated contemporary issue. It has its historical roots. By this, I mean that this issue has emerged as an imperialistic project by occupying Palestine and the expulsion of Palestinians to the surrounding Arab states. Almost all Arab countries, particularly in the Mediterranean region were under mandate. Lebanon and Syria were under French mandate, while Jordan and Palestine were under British mandate. Therefore the Palestinian issue has historical roots because of the existence of a British mandate as the ruler of Palestine earlier, during the twentieth century (Smith, 2004). Britain has simplified, supported and legitimized the occupation of Palestine by offering it as a national homeland for the Jews. This is known as the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917. It has promised to establish Palestine as a national homeland for the Jews with full recognition as a Jewish state. This declaration has been issued to the Zionist movement (Smith, 2004:68; Quigley, 2010:14) and has encountered huge rejection among Arabs and Palestinians who tried to resist the British project. However, the acceleration of the events and the disarmament of the Palestinians under British rule have led to increased migration of the Jews from the whole world to Palestine. Various events and revolutions have occurred earlier, in 1929 and 1936 to resist this declaration (Smith, 2004: 124-29).

Moreover, Pappé (2008) and Quigley (2010) argue that the UN has issued, with British support, resolution number 181 on November 29, 1947 that partitioned Palestine into two states - one Jewish and one Arabic. This resolution has been rejected by Palestinians and thereafter, the Zionists gangs of the Hagana, Irgun and Lehi (or Stern) were well armed and trained. They started attacking the Palestinian villages and cities. Many atrocities were committed by these gangs in 1948 in numerous Palestinian cities and villages such as the massacres of Dayr Yasin, Tantura, Haifa, and Jaffa (Smith, 2004: 194; Pappé, 2008:90).

The collective forcible expulsion of Palestinians from their land started the refugee journey. The state of Israel has emerged while Palestinians call it *Nakbah* or disaster. Western, European and UN countries such as France, Britain, the U.S.A and Russia officially recognize the state of Israel (Pappé 2008: 127; Quigley, 2010:101-102) while not much recognition is given to the fact that more than 750 000 Palestinians have been forced to leave their country in the process. A large number of Palestinians left to Lebanon in particular from the northern Palestinian cities and villages such as Galilee, Acre, and Haifa. They lived in southern Lebanon and some have fled further north to Beirut and different Lebanese cities.

The UN was the legal patronage of the Palestinian refugee issue, more specifically, UNRWA, which has been established by virtue of resolution Number 302 (D-4). UNRWA represented the Palestinian refugees' as an entity; it substituted the absence of the political entity that represents Palestinians. In addition, it has supported the right of return represented by UN resolution No. 194. UNRWA provided Palestinians with various humanitarian relief services in terms of humanitarian aid, education, social services, responsibilities on the camps, livelihood and employing Palestinians. This organization embodies a symbol of the legal responsibility for the refugees' tragedies (Bowker, 2003: 123-126).

Like Palestine, Lebanon suffered from the French mandate. The political system of Lebanon after the French mandate established the National Pact in 1943. This system is based on establishing as Hudson calls it a 'consociational democracy'. The composition of this sort of democracy includes a government of a grand coalition, concurrent majority rule, distribution of high positions among the major sects, and offering a certain amount of autonomy for each segment to rule its own affairs (Hudson, 1988:226-227). This system has created binaries and advantaged certain sects like the Christian elites Maronite and the Muslim Sunni. It has marginalized the Druze and the Shiite. Therefore El-Khazen argues that the uneven distribution of political power and communal disparities among Lebanese created dissatisfaction (El-Khazen, 2000:57-58). Thus the system was problematic and made Lebanon vulnerable because it was based on confessional distribution.

3 Theories

The issue can be explained by two major theories ‘Nationalism and Identity’ and Social Exclusion-Inclusion’. Nationalism as a theory can be classified as a multidimensional concept, which has contested approaches towards understanding the roots and development of this concept. It exists as a natural case or phenomenon like the Primordialism concept. The Modernism and Internal Colonialism concept deals with the social construction of national identities. Another concept is the Imagined Communities; all of these concepts explain and explore the notion of Nationalism and its impact on forming and shaping national identities (Özirimli, 2010; Smith 1991). The essence of this theory will simplify explaining the construction of the national identity in different cases either as being negative, which can lead to conflicts, or as being positive and create solidarity among people. It gives a clear explanation of nationalism as a contested concept for the confessional societies, which will serve the topic of this paper.

Social Exclusion-Inclusion deals with the marginalized communities which are facing poverty, unemployment and lack of access to the labor market. The concept of social exclusion-inclusion has gained more attention in Europe in comparison with the developing countries. It deals with the excluded minorities such as immigrants, foreigners and refugees (Bhalla& Lapeyre, 1997; Berman& Philips, 2000). While these excluded minorities are encountering these difficulties they shall gain basic rights in terms of inclusion and access to the labor market, rights that should be affordable for any citizen in any community according to the EU Commission and the UNDP (1992). This module will be applied to examine the identification with the Palestinian refugees’ case.

3.1 Nationalism and Identity

Nationalism can be perceived as a multidimensional concept which has various contested approaches towards understanding the roots of this concept and its development and existence among societies. Nationalism has various contributions in identifying the reasons for triggering ethnic and nationalist variations, clashes and conflicts among people (Özirimli, 2010:1-2). However, it can be a positive factor helping to achieve solidarity and unifying people to give them identity (Smith, 1991). It will be crucial in the beginning to define

nationalism as “ an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation” (Smith, 1991:73).

We can gather from this definition that nationalism embodies the emphasis that the world is divided into nations with special focus on individuality, history and destiny. Also, the nation constitutes a combination of political and social structure that requires prioritizing loyalty to the nation. Individuals need to identify themselves with a nation to gain a certain amount of freedom and self recognition. Further, nations require security and freedom when peace and justice are prevailing in the world (Smith, 1991:74). However, nationalism as a concept has various contested approaches. This requires explaining these approaches in order to reach a concrete perception of its development. Further, this will provide a clear explanation of these approaches and their contributions to be identified with the research questions.

There are several approaches of Nationalism that can be selected as identical explanations to the Palestinian-Lebanese case in this paper, such as Primordialism, Modernism and Internal Colonialism and the Imagined Community. Primordialism refers to nationalism as an inherent, given or a ‘natural’ part of human beings. The term Primordialism is related to the existence of human beings. In this sense, nationalism exists as a natural, basic or given part of life. This kind of nature or givenness is derived from existing in a certain community, language, religion, culture and following certain social practices. It is also transmitted from one generation to another as an essential characteristic of social existence in terms of following blood ties, kinship, customs, traditions and so forth (Özirimli, 2010:49/60).

There are four main versions of Primordialism; the nationalist, socio-biological, culturalist and perennialist approaches. They all have emphasis and belief in the nature and antiquity of nations. Therefore, human beings must be identified with a nation that expresses their belongings; the nation is the source of legitimacy, political power and sovereignty (Özirimli, 2010:52). However, the socio-biological approach focuses on kinship, race and ethnicity as the major elements of a nation (Özirimli, 2010:53). The culturalist type of Primordialism is mainly based on considering the primordial attachments as natural or spiritual and sentimental or emotional. This is why primordial sentiments are ineffable and the individuals feel attached to the community and its practices (Özirimli, 2010:55).

As a development of this classical explanation of the origins of nationalism as a concept, Modernism has emerged as a contested critique and complementary of Primordialism

(Özirimli, 2010:61). Modernism considers the nature of ethnic and national identities as being socially constructed. Hence, it emphasizes the impact of the individual will, choices, tactical decisions and political structures as different possibilities of their construction.

As a response to the Primordialism premise, modernism has emerged to challenge the view of Primordialism that nationalism is natural or given. It considers nationalism as intrinsically related to the revolution of modernity in particular the emergence of modern processes such as capitalism, decolonization, industrialization, secularism and the modern state (Özirimli, 2010:72).

Modernism can be classified as a vital module with substantive contributions to the study of nationalism. This module represents the work of Michael Hechter on Internal Colonialism. This premise reinforces the understanding of the exploitation of the community and the uneven exchange between the territories of a given state as a consequence of the market forces for the economic strategies that have intended distributional consequences for the regions (Özirimli, 2010:78). The essence of this view is based on its concern for the regions that are disadvantaged and culturally distinctive from the core or the advantaged regions within the host state (Özirimli, 2010:78).

In this regard, Hechter considers the problem of ethnic/minorities conflicts as highly connected to assimilation and nationalism. He presents the view of the assimilationists; however, He thinks that this view is too optimistic. The assimilationists' arguments consider that the ethnic/minorities' dissatisfaction, poverty and frustration are mainly a consequence of isolation from the national culture, values and traditions that exist in the ghetto communities (Özirimli, 2010:79).

This means that governments need to cope with these communities by employing resources in education and social integration in order to solve the problem of the disadvantaged poor communities of the ghettos. This way is known as the national development approach –which is also known as the diffusion model of development (Özirimli, 2010:79). This approach suggests three major stages in the process of national development. The first stage is the pre-industrial where the core and periphery are separated from each other in terms of economic, cultural and political institutions. The core represents the advantaged or the rich communities, while the periphery represents the poor or the marginalized regions, also referring to minorities. The second stage appears as a result of the increased communication between core and periphery through the process of industrialization. This situation reinforces the diffusion

of the developing into the disadvantaged periphery. Consequently, the third stage appears when the cultural forms and economics of the periphery being isolated are advantaged by the progressed core (Özkirimli, 2010:79).

This model assumes that industrialization will reduce the regional differences and gaps between core and periphery. This will create cultural homogeneous in terms of economic, political and the ethnic differences will disappear (Özkirimli, 2010:79). However, Hechter considers that this model too optimistic, therefore, he argues that internal colonialism is more appropriate to diagnose the variations between core and periphery. He assumes that the core is able to dominate and exploit the periphery both politically and economically. Also, the spread or the regional communication will not achieve national development (Özkirimli, 2010:79-80).

Furthermore, modernization and industrialization will create an uneven wave among territories. Internal colonialism will divide the territories among advanced and less advanced regions (Özkirimli, 2010:80). The disadvantaged periphery will be dependent on the core. This uneven relationship and uneven distribution of resources will cause the cultural division of labor. It will also allow the core or the advanced class to regulate allocation of the social roles to fit with its own members (Özkirimli, 2010:80).

This kind of discrimination will cause inevitable dissatisfaction among group members of the disadvantaged regions to identify themselves with their ethnic groups in order to develop a sense of distinctive ethnicity or minority recognition and identification (Özkirimli, 2010:80). This will also create a sort of solidarity among them to gain equality. This can be seen as a social awareness and communication will come as a result of collective oppression that will contribute effectively to achieve solidarity among people.

This premise can be developed further by indicating the influence of nationalism for nations without states and the marginalized groups as a standing point in order to explore how the isolated groups of a certain community can be identified with nationalism as a discourse of the marginalized communities. Ethnic ties or minorities in any community can work effectively to spread intensified awareness of the people who lack political institutions and cultural structure in order to simplify the proliferation of national movements. Two main actions that can reinforce nationalism are cultural resistance and armed struggle to challenge the dominant groups of the state. These actions can also affect the state's stability (Guibernau, 1996:100-101). The cultural resistance deals with employing all kinds of the national

minority's identity. This will make an inevitable symbolic break from state control by shifting the focus towards discontent among people (Guibernau, 1996:104). Armed struggle refers to total war or a civil war between the state members. This form identifies with the nation that controls the state and the national minority which tries to break away from the dominating nation (Guibernau, 1996:106).

Total wars or civil wars will cause the problem of refugees in the surrounding countries. Therefore, nationalism can be seen as an element to shift the conflict towards the host countries of the refugees who are almost civilians because they will encounter their competitors. Also, refugees will impose huge economic costs on the host countries. They will affect the cultural identity of the host countries in particular when they form a large community. They can be seen as a political force for the host countries concerning the issues that are related to their country of origin (Guibernau, 1996:106-107). Subsequently, the issue of refugees will affect peace and security. This means that the situation requires the involvement of the international community and bodies such as the United Nations to intervene and solve the crisis.

This requires extracting the positive dimension of Nationalism where the imagined communities as represented in the work of Benedict Anderson are sentimental and a positive form of nations and nationalism. Anderson's view is optimistic; he does not consider Nationalism as a passive way to create conflict or discrimination. The basic argument of this premise considers the nation as a form of community rather than an object of ideology (Smith, 1991:359). Therefore, the nation can be classified in the context of an imagined political community; it is imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign (Smith, 1991:359).

The reason why the nation is an imagined community is because the nation's members will never know most of their fellow members neither meet them nor hear of them. It is rather imprinted as an image of their communion. Anderson argues that modern technology represented by 'print-Capitalism' and the media has played a major role in the creation of imagined communities (smith, 1991:360).

3.2 Social Exclusion-Inclusion

Social exclusion can be considered as a multidimensional concept that has special focus on isolated communities on different levels such as political, economic and social aspects. It is crucial to distinguish between being excluded voluntarily, according to the choice of the individual/group or minority; and coercive exclusion. That is why the focus will be based on coercive or deliberate exclusion. Exclusion is highly connected to certain minorities or ethnicities. Therefore, there are different consequences of this phenomenon in terms of increasing poverty, unemployment, social segregation, and deprivation from access to proper education, healthcare services and encountering social injustices in comparison with the inclusive majority. It can be perceived as a cause of concern because certain communities or minorities are facing social injustices (Barry, 2002:20). Social exclusion has gained more attention in Europe in comparison with the developing countries. It refers to the situation of dissatisfaction that can lead to a breakdown of the relationship between society and the individual (Bhalla& Lapeyre, 1997).

According to Saraceno "... social exclusion occurs in the presence of, or as a consequence, material deprivation of some kind, if one understands social exclusion as an expression of social dis-integration and of individual detachment from the social order, that link is by no means necessary" (Saraceno, 1997:159). According to the EU commission, social exclusion occurs when the citizens are unable to secure their basic social rights in terms of employment, housing, health care, education and so forth. These rights shall be gained for any citizen in any society (EU Commission, 1992:7).

We can deduce from these definitions that social exclusion is a multidimensional concept that has a special status as a field study in Europe which concentrates on minorities and/or immigrants and refugees. It covers economic and social significance. Also, it covers to a certain extent a political importance. However, social exclusion encompasses different aspects other than poverty and unemployment, as major components of the economic aspect. It includes socio-economic aspects such as unemployment, poverty, lack of access to the labor market, health care system, education and social security system (Bhalla& Lapeyre, 1997).

I will begin by exploring the interconnection between the social and economic dimensions of social exclusion. The essence of social exclusion as a relevant concept to poverty, as Sen (1992) argues exceeds to a certain extent the economic dimension, it includes the

social aspects as well. In this sense, it refers to economic as (distributional), or the lack of resources and social (relational) or aspects of deprivation. It consists of the lack of social ties with community, family, friends, state services, institutions and property rights (Sen, 1992:35-36; Bhalla& Lapeyre, 1997: 417-418).

Sen (1975), (1992) emphasizes that economic deprivation has something to do with entitlements and capabilities. Also, for Dasgupta (1993) economic deprivation covers the equal and unequal assets. The disadvantaged poor will encounter a lack of entitlements owing to lack of incomes, assets and employment. Also, their capabilities to access employment and resources will be advantaged according to the higher levels of their consumptions (Sen, 1992:36-37; Dasgupta, 1993). Further, Singer (1997), Bhalla& Lapeyre 1997 argue that a large amount of the socially excluded people contain the ones who are excluded from basic sources of income. The ones who have good access to the labor market or the employed individuals will gain recognition because the aim of employment is to reduce and allocate poverty. Therefore, employment offers self recognition and social status to the employed individuals by allowing them to access the labor market. This will ensure human dignity which will reduce the harmful effects of exclusion. (Sen, 1975:5-6; Bhalla& Lapeyre, 1997:418-419). Also, employment confers a social aspect to the notion of exclusion.

The political dimension of social exclusion illustrates the denial of certain humanitarian and political rights of certain populations. According to the UNDP (1992) these rights include personal security, rule of law, freedom of expression, equality of opportunity and the work of unions (UNDP, 1992:29). However, the relevance of the political dimension to social exclusion embodies the impact of the state to grant the basic rights and civil liberties –when the state is dominated by certain classes in a society. Therefore, the state actions can be categorized as discriminatory between the locals and outsiders by including and excluding certain population (Rodgers, 1994).

Social-exclusion as mentioned earlier includes domains and indicators in order to diagnose the situation of a certain excluded community. Berman& Philips (2000) investigate the domains and indicators of social exclusion-inclusion according to demographic variables. They transcend the criteria of age, sex, region, ethnicity, community and employment. They included the so-called objective and subjective indicators in order to diagnose the issue of social exclusion-inclusion.

The objective indicators reflect the impact of life chances and the degrees of satisfaction in terms of poverty, disability and pollution, to name a few. The subjective indicators refer to a holistic approach by investigating the individuals of communities to offer an evaluation of their quality of life (Berman & Philips, 2000:329-330). The essence of using social-exclusion-inclusion according to objective and subjective indicators will develop a comprehensive understanding of social quality in comparison with poverty. These indicators handle the issue in a multidimensional approach. While exclusion refers to disintegration and detachment from society in different levels; social quality according to Beck et al, refers to "...[T]he extent to which citizens are able to participate in the social and economic life of their communities under conditions which enhance their well being and individual potential (Beck et al, 1997:2). Therefore, social quality exceeds the standards of poverty because it encompasses the criteria of the degrees of economic security, level of social inclusion, social cohesion, solidarity and the level of autonomy (Beck et al, 1997:3). Berman & Philips (2000) have set social inclusion according to eight domains and indicators as follow:

- Inclusion in social security system; this domain refers to the distribution of access to social security services and low income according to demographic variables.
- Labor market inclusion; this domain represents the distribution of discrimination in access to work whether full time or part time, it is also according to demographic variables.
- Housing market inclusion; it follows the distribution of access to neighborhoods, subsidized and protected housing, according to demographic variables.
- Health services; they follow the distribution of access to health services, according to demographic variables.
- Inclusion in education system; it covers the distribution of access and discrimination in educational and cultural services by demographic variables.
- Political inclusion; refers to the restrictions on eligibility to stand as an elected representative or member of a government.
- Inclusion in community services; follows the distribution of access to leisure facilities and neighborhood services.

- Social status inclusion; includes equal opportunities and anti-discrimination legalization and the distribution of access to social and leisure facilities (Berman& Philips, 2000:334).

These indicators represent the standards of social inclusion according to demographic variables. These demographic variables arouse the attention to the ethnic characteristics and composition of societies. As noted above, Berman& Philips explore the indicators of social exclusion-inclusion by using subjective and objective standards on demos and ethnos levels. They developed their argument to include two sets of social exclusion-inclusion domains related to the ethnos level or the community level; the first one is known as identification and the second one is participation. Domains, identification and participation are highly connected to the situation of minorities and refugees; they both focus on the processes and procedures rather than the outcomes (Berman& Philips, 2000:343-344). The identification domain includes membership and self-identification, common interests, feeling of belonging and language as social indicators. The participation domain includes social indicators in terms of organizational affiliation, cultural and leisure activities and the use of free time. Both domains have psychological characteristics and classified as subjective. Therefore, they emphasize the consciousness and importance of the interaction between individuals and their identified communities (Berman& Philips, 2000:345). This form manifests the fragile relationship and dissatisfaction between individuals and communities for the excluded communities.

Both theories explain the research questions concerning the Palestinian presence and humanitarian rights in Lebanon from two major perspectives. Nationalism focuses on a constructed social environment and national identity. It can be a tool for two possibilities: on the first hand, it can create solidarity by giving a specific form of belonging, which can be classified as a positive indicator. On the second hand, it can be a negative tool used to create conflict and instability. The various models that have covered nationalism as a contested concept reflect the identification with the contradictory confessional discourses of Lebanon leading to clashes, conflict and having affected the Palestinian humanitarian rights.

While social exclusion focuses on poverty, unemployment, segregation, and lack of access to the labor market according to demographic domains with special focus on minorities or refugees communities. The social exclusion theory gives further explanatory factors of this

exclusion such as demographic constraints, religious variations, socio-economic and political aspects and confessional factors.

4 Methodology

4.1 Research strategy

This paper will focus on qualitative research methodology in order to fulfill the major goals of this research. The qualitative research part is mainly based on interviews. Flick argues that qualitative interviews can be considered a powerful research tool categorized as an adequate method by collecting data that has been used profoundly in different researches (Flick, 2009).

In general, qualitative research combines a variety of methods of data collection such as interviews, review of documents and observations. However, the most appropriate and common types of interviews are standardized interviews or structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, narrative interviews, unstructured interviews and ethnographic interviews (Creswell, 2007). The essence of philosophical assumptions represented by epistemology, axiology, and ontology, rhetorical and methodological assumptions can contribute to the individual choice of the qualitative research (Creswell, 2007:15-18).

Despite the paradigm of the research being constantly developed and changed, qualitative research still reflects post positivism, pragmatism, participatory and constructivism (Creswell, 2007:21-23). This also means that the selection of the qualitative research requires investigating certain assumptions. These philosophical assumptions contain a good way towards understanding the nature of reality. This will help the researcher to take into consideration the impact of values in the research, the language of the research and the methods that need to be followed in the research (Creswell, 2007:23).

The whole research shall contain clear and systematic approaches to explore all relevant issues according to the research questions. This paper will analyze the impact of the contradictory discourses of the confessional composition of Lebanon on the humanitarian rights of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. In addition to this, to examine the correlation between these rights and the Palestinian right of return to Palestine. It will be crucial to explore and investigate the issue from different perspectives and actors. This means that this research requires taking into consideration the diversity and variations among both the supporters and the opponents of Palestinian humanitarian rights. In this respect, various sources of data shall be employed and an effective combination of the relevant philosophical assumptions is required to carry out various practices in the whole research. Therefore, it will be beneficial to take advantage of the participants' experiences and quotes in order to support the paper by providing evidence from different perspectives (Creswell, 2007:17).

Additionally, the researcher needs to be involved in the field study to cooperate with the participants and witness the authentic situation of the study. Also, the researcher's main goal is to make values of the research, thus, the researcher is preferred to report these values by using unbiased and subjective interpretations of the collected data from the participants in the field study (Creswell, 2007:22).

4.2 Research Approach

The qualitative research shall be developed by determining an approach of research inquiry or research framework (Creswell, 2007). There are different research approaches which have different characteristics in terms of inquiring, exploring and analyzing the empirical evidences (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2003). Consequently, the choice of adequate research approach, which is helpful to conduct research is a crucial step and shall be a considerable decision. Yin (2003) argues that there are different conditions that are helpful for the researcher in order to determine the use of a certain strategy. These conditions are represented by the types of research questions, the researcher's ability to access the available resources and the degree to which the researcher concentrates on and combines contemporary and historical events of a certain issue.

This way will be beneficial because this research consists of how Palestinians affected - and were affected by - Lebanon in terms of nationalism and identity, social exclusion-inclusion, socio-economic and political factors. There are multidimensional impacts on

both the Palestinian and Lebanese sides that can be reflected in this study: why their existence affected Lebanon and How; and why they are excluded. This can be examined through different phases related to the historical development of the Palestinian refugee issue. According to Yin the resources shall cover the questions of how, why and what.

Eleven interviews have been conducted in Beirut, Lebanon, in different places and with different people. Some interviews that are related to the Palestinian side have been conducted at Palestinian camps such as Shatila, Borj El-Barajneh, Mar Elias, Ayn EL-Hilweh camps and the Palestinian embassy. The interviews that covered the Lebanese side, whether opponents or supporters of Palestinians; have been conducted in various places in Beirut. These interviews were divided into seven semi-structured interviews for both sides. Four interviews have covered the narrative interviews. One Palestinian citizen gave his nickname, the rest have offered all their personal information. I will provide all details regarding the interviewees' information and positions in the appendix of this paper. I will also provide an interview guide and a list of frequent questions that have been asked to the respondents'. The interviews and the questions were categorized according to three main parts:

- Questions related to the historical phases of the refugees issue.
- Questions related to the Palestinian National Identity.
- Questions related to granting and restricting the basic humanitarian rights of Palestinians.

The differences between the narrative interviews and semi-structured interviews have been taken into consideration. All interviews were prepared earlier and there was effective cooperation from all respondents to collect the data and cover the topic.

4.3 Data Collection and techniques

Collecting data can be considered a repeated process because of the use of various sources of evidence. Therefore, it will be vital to prepare for data collection. Preparing for data collection is important. It can be complicated and challenging and can affect the whole research if it was not prepared in the right way. This requires the researcher to take into account that the data collection is affected by different factors. Yin (2003) says that there

are different methods of gathering information and evidence in the qualitative research field. These methods consist of interviews, interpretation of documents and observations. In this paper, I have used techniques such as audio recording, writing notes while interviewing participants and depending on face to face interviews. These interviews have been translated from Arabic to English and then transcribed with special focus on the questions that are relevant to the research questions.

4.4 Narrative interviews

Despite narrative interviews being able to be used as an alternative to the semi-structured interviews, they can also serve the study with historical facts about a certain topic (Flick, 2009). The aim of this type of interview is to allow the researcher to approach the interviewees' experiential world in an adequate way (Flick, 2009:177). Narrative interviews focus on the process of recording the oral history of a community; in order to cover a communal history narrated by a witness or an expert. (Kvale, 2009:155).

The whole idea of narratives is characterized by outlining the initial situation of a certain issue, and then the relevant events of the narrative are chosen from the whole experience and presented as a coherent progression of events. The final situation at the end will be presented (Flick, 2009:177).

In this research, the Palestinian issue or in particular the issue of the refugees in Lebanon has witnessed different historical phases. These phases are represented by the occupation of Israel in Palestine and the *Nakbah* of 1948 until the issue of refugees has emerged as a consequence of this occupation. The refugee issue has been affected at different phases with various developments that have accompanied the Palestinian existence in Lebanon such as the Palestinian resistance, the Lebanese civil war and Palestinians living in Lebanon in recent times.

The essence of this type of narrative interview will be limited to cover the historical origins of these phases. It will be crucial to introduce or to summarize the elements of the narrative interviews. The narrative interviews begin by using a generative narrative question which is highly related to the research question and is intended to stimulate the

interviewee's main narrative (Flick, 2009:177). The interviewee's main narrative is followed by the stage of narrative probing in order to make the narrative fragments complete. The last stage is known as the balancing phase, which requires the interviewee to answer questions that aim at theoretical accounts of what happened (Flick, 2009:178; Kvale, 2009:155).

The narrative interview is characterized by responsive structure and experiences. It has the ability to reconstruct the internal logic of processes that stress the narrative with more than statements and facts (Flick, 2009:183). The use of this method shall take into consideration that interruption will affect the interview, therefore, it will be recommended to give the whole time of the interviewee to narrate the story or the events of a certain issue.

The use of narratives in this paper has mainly focused on specialists, researchers and people who have witnessed the different development phases of the Palestinian issue, in particular the ones who were born in Palestine or remember the Nakbah in detail. Their work is also usually related to Palestinian-Lebanese affairs. This way also can reinforce the use of semi-structured interviews.

4.5 Semi-structured interviews

In this research I conducted semi-structured and narrative interviews. As the topic requires interviewing different counterparts represented by the opponents and the supporters of Palestinian rights, Lebanese government representatives, researchers and specialists in the Palestinian-Lebanese relations, ambassadors and refugees, it will be helpful to use semi-structured interviews. The use of semi-structured interviews has increased recently because they have open-ended design characteristics. This proves that they are adequate and beneficial in comparison with standardized interviews and questionnaires (Flick, 2009:150-151). This type of interview will simplify determining the points of strength and weaknesses in the issue. Therefore, the aim of the semi-structured interviews will create a clear idea for the informant about the study.

One of the major characteristics of the semi-structured interviews is its ability to give the interviewer the opportunity to determine the types, forms and order of the questions that need to be handled during the interview. In addition, semi-structured interviews have the

ability to make balance between the interview guide and the interview structure. This means that the interviewer needs to construct a rational sequence between questions and answers. This method will ensure that the course of the interview is preferred by the interviewee (Flick, 2009: 172).

Another important characteristic of adopting semi-structured interviews is that we can be advantaged by the given examples. These examples can be obtained through observations that can be noticed while interviewing. This will reinforce and motivate the interviewees to speak openly and freely about the topic and to motivate encourage speaking about their experiences and sharing their knowledge about the topic to be observed clearly while speaking (Flick, 2009).

Semi-structured interviews will combine a number of elements such as the interview guide and a set of questions relating to the impact of the confessional composition of Lebanon on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and gaining humanitarian rights. It will also reflect on the correlation between gaining these rights and the Palestinians' right of return. In other words, asking whether gaining these rights will lead to the resettlement of Palestinians in Lebanon, will Lebanon become a substitute country or will gaining these rights keep the Palestinians clinging to the right of return.

Semi-structured interviews are characterized by having predetermined questions with special focus on open and unlimited discussions because this type of interview focuses on valuable meanings of the interviewees (Kvale, 2009). The open-ended questions will give the opportunity to discuss certain questions in more detail. This will create a certain amount of freedom for the interviewees to scrutinize original responses.

For this research, there will be an interview guide that will be compared with respondents' answers and discussions on the topic. The questions that have been selected for the interview guide are highly connected and similar to the research questions. However, there will be a careful division of these questions by having preparations and general discussions with interviewees in order to get them speak freely and openly about the topic.

4.6 Limitations

The major limitation of the current study is the use of qualitative research methods. While they allow one to explore more on the topic, and draw the possible hypothesis, they do not allow the researcher to test the hypothesis with a large scale sample. In addition, most

qualitative methods are subjective in terms of data validity, thus subject to criticism both from the side of the respondents and the researcher.

Another limitation will be based on narrative interviews. As this part has focused on the oral narration of the Palestinian refugees as a community, it will be mainly based on the experience of the Palestinians as a whole community rather than focusing on the respondents' own experience. Therefore, the questions have focused on the collective history rather than the individuals' experience.

5 Analysis

This chapter will analyze the different phases that the Palestinian refugees issue has witnessed and it will be explored in connection with both the first theory of Nationalism and Identity and the existing literature on the Palestinian identity. Also, these aspects will be reflected on the empirical part of the narrative interviews.

Further, the exclusion of Palestinians will be analyzed on different aspects such as the economic, social and political aspects according to the impact of the contradictory discourses of the confessional composition of Lebanon. It will explore the Lebanese procedures and practices that have led to this exclusion. These aspects will rely on the second theory of exclusion-inclusion and the existing literature on the Palestinian presence in Lebanon –which has dealt with these aspects. Then the analysis will be examined on the empirical part represented by the semi-structured interviews.

5.1 The construction of the Palestinian national identity

Palestinian national identity has been shaped by the experiences of refugees and the Diaspora. It can be categorized as a ‘Collective Memory’ and/or ‘Imagined Community’ that distinguishes Palestinians from other Arab countries. This collective memory as Bowker (2003) argues has been attached to the narratives of Palestinian history. Moreover, it has reached this particular form of collective memory as an outcome of a sequence of developments towards Palestinian nationalism. It will be beneficial to analyze this

development from 1948 until 1969, the year of the Cairo agreement which authorized the Palestinian military presence in Lebanon.

The contested concepts of nationalism can reveal the historical developments of Palestinian national identity and its construction in particular for the most disadvantaged Palestinians: the refugees in Lebanon. The inspiration for the primordial model as Litvak argues manifests the natural existence of nationalism as an intrinsic composition of the Palestinian entity, as connected to Arabism due to the kinship ties, religion of both Christians and Muslims, geography, culture, language and traditions (Litvak, 2009:2-4). This view aligns with Sayigh's argument (1977) that Palestinian identity was attached to Arabism due to the simplicity of life pre-Nakbah; different Palestinians have introduced themselves as Arabs or referred to the cities and villages of their origins (Sayigh, 1977:9). This is due to the axiomatic aspects that exist in Primordialism. However, the shock of the *Nakbah* widened the gap between Palestinians and the Arab regimes, not the nation or people. As she argues, a common belief emerged among Palestinians that they were left behind without any serious support by the Arab regimes. Thus their existence in the surrounding Arab countries has always been searching for an authentic representation attached to their environment.

Despite the UNRWA being the official representative that handles the refugees' relief, services, education and so on; it is still significant to indicate according to Hassassian that the awareness of the Palestinian national identity has emerged through camps, schools and universities. It was not monolithic and it did not lack a mass-based political entity. It was within the pan-Arab ideology of freedom and socialism (Hassassian, 2002:55). However, the Palestinians in Lebanon during this period have lived a difficult life in particular during the 1950s. Brynen illustrates the impact of the Lebanese Intelligence Bureau (Deuxieme Bureau), that it exercised an extreme power over the camps. This bureau was established during the President Shehab period in the 1950s and lasted later until 1968 (Brynen, 1990:28). It was also seen as a means of humiliation and discrimination against Palestinians by the Lebanese agents who were controlling the camps and the peoples' movements. It created a state of oppression and dissatisfaction among camp dwellers. Bowker (2003) and Khalili (2007) argue that during this period not only in Lebanon, but also in general, Palestinians lacked the representation of their entity, except for the contributions of national awareness of their cause in UNRWA-run schools and the local communities of the camps before the emergence of the P.L.O.

The revival of the P.L.O in 1965, as a national movement to represent Palestinians and their needs towards liberation and returning to their homeland has constituted a decisive shift point in forming the Palestinian identity (Hassassian, 2002:56-57). Despite it having emerged as a product of Arab nationalism because of its connection with Nassirism, it has empowered the political and cultural bonds among Palestinians. It has also created a form of independence in the Palestinian political decision-making process. In other words, it has in some ways shifted their annexation towards Pan-Arabism in particular after the defeat in 1967 of the Arab armies by Israel (Cobban, 1984:28-29).

According to Cobban the P.L.O has incorporated and coped with a variety of trends and perspectives among the Palestinian people; whether Socialist, leftist or Arab nationalist. It also represents and combines the various organs and squads such as Fateh, PFLP, DFLP, and PFLPGC and so on. The P.L.O adopted the 'Road of Return' (to Palestine) as its slogan and believed it could be achieved through armed struggle (Cobban, 1984:29-30). The role of the P.L.O was crucial not only because it was the source of political legitimacy, representation and as a military power, it also gave a specific meaning to the importance of retrieving the collective memory and self recognition in a cultural frame work. This view is reminiscent of Litvak's argument on the role of the P.L.O in establishing culture and cultural institutions to embody and empower a feeling of national identity. It has worked effectively in the context of creating or reconstructing a distinct collective memory and history, as the major step towards assuring their distinguished identity (Litvak, 2009:103). This can be achieved by strengthening the national awareness of the ancient past and the life before Nakbah.

Consequently, according to Cobban (1984), thousands of Palestinian youth joined the P.L.O and its various squads. It has taken its main operations in Jordan to fight Israel however; the clash of the P.L.O with the Jordanian regime ended the Palestinian military presence after the Black September of 1970. The shift point was Beirut, Lebanon as the second step to continue with the armed struggle. This view is reminiscent of Guibernau argument concerning the minorities or stateless people and their solidarity when it comes to creating a national awareness in order to gain a form of autonomy or to pose their issue. However, it can be problematic for the host countries. This is the basic connection between the Palestinian case and the surrounding Arab countries a relationship that developed later into a disastrous conflict in Lebanon.

As mentioned earlier, the Cairo agreement of 1969 authorized the Palestinian military presence to start military operations from Lebanon against Israel. El-Khazen (2000) argues that this situation created contradictory discourses and divergence among Lebanese in handling the Palestinian military presence; these divisions were mainly confessional and national (El-Khazen, 2000:149-151). The Leftist and national Lebanese blocks and the Lebanese Muslims (Sunni, Shiite and the Druze) supported the Cairo agreement. These powers were named as the Lebanese National Movement (LNM) and included the Communist Party, the Progressive Socialist Party and Amal the Shiite movement, formerly known as the Deprived Movement. On the other hand, the Lebanese right wing and the Christian political elites opposed this presence and were represented by such groups as the Phalanges Party, the Free Tigers and the Guardians of the Cedars.

This can be considered as the origins of major Lebanese division beyond the minor sectarian distinctions. The opponents have seen the Palestinian presence as a threat to state sovereignty and security and have emphasized the lack of the Lebanese resources to cope with such a presence in comparison with other Arab countries such as Egypt, Syria and Iraq. This does not mean that Christians do not support the Palestinian cause in general; it rather reveals the nature of the Lebanese fear of the power shift and its weakness to cope with the military actions due to the limited abilities of Lebanon.

Also, the support was based according to El-Khazen not solely on the justness of the Palestinian cause, rather to support it without endangering Lebanese stability (El-Khazen, 2000:150). However, the political composition of Lebanon has been established on uneven distribution after the independence of 1943 (El-Khazen, 2000). In other words, it has advantaged the Christian elites in account of the other sects. The Lebanese National Movement led by Kamal Jumblat has found the Palestinian presence as a positive step due to the national, social and political ties with Palestinians. This means that this presence fits with the ideology of the LNM. The presence will also empower the disadvantaged Lebanese due to the uneven distribution of political, economic and social powers amongst the Lebanese.

The essence of these aspects reflects the variations of these discourses on identities and as the major origins of the oncoming confrontations between these parts. The opponents have seen the Cairo agreement as a threat to the Christian existence. The supporters have seen identifications and sympathies with the Palestinian cause. Therefore, Palestinians will offer advantages and power to the supporters' existence. The presence will also reinforce the

Palestinian position as the major cause of Arab nationalism and their belief in this cause. Subsequently, according to El-Khazen, the situation of refugees has been enhanced economically, politically and socially because of the military presence. It also imprinted the national identity with revolutionary characteristics.

This requires reflecting upon this period and the development of reconstructing the Palestinian national identity in relation to the respondents' experiences to clarify this period and its impact on the Palestinian presence on Lebanon.

5.1.1 Narrative interviews

Fouad Youssef was born in 1937, a member of the Palestinian National Council and a member of the PFLP in Lebanon. He narrates the Palestinian experience pre-1948 until 1969.

Youssef describes the life in Palestine pre-1948 as a wonderful life and simple; people were living in peace in their land, cities and villages. People from the surrounding Arab countries such as Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Jordan used to work in Palestine either in agriculture or in the main cities such as Haifa, Gaza, Jaffa, and Acre. Haifa was a metropolitan hub with its harbor, trade and small industries. The airport of Al-Lid and the railway prove that Palestine was an influential economic country in its heyday. However, Britain was preparing an unknown destiny for Palestinians.

Despite the existence of Palestinian national awareness and resistance to the British project to offer Palestine to Israel, the uneven distribution of power led to their Nakbah. Palestine was occupied as an imperialistic project led by the Western powers. The massacres and the organized terror that have been committed by the Zionist gangs have also led to the Palestinian Nakbah. Palestinians were forced to leave their land and become refugees in the surrounding Arab states who have not offered much to the Palestinian cause due to the uneven distribution of powers on both sides.

A large amount of Palestinians fled to Lebanon living in different places in southern Lebanon and various other regions beginning refugee camp life. The conditions of these camps made

them unpleasant places to reside and support was limited to the services of the UNRWA services. However, the worst period was during the 1950s, as Youssef explains, under the control of the Intelligence system for the camps. It was humiliating and intrusive into people's lives as was the prohibition of work, exploitation and controlling movements.

“People felt that our suffering increased and we were deserted by Arabs”. Despite this, national awareness has emerged to be connected to Arab nationalism at UNRWA schools and universities. The best way to encounter this miserable situation was education. The formulation of student unions contributed effectively to draw attention to our cause by using incorporating Palestinian folklore, national songs, stories and tales by fathers about Palestine in order to pass it to the new generations. This has strengthened the awareness of the return. Palestinians also found sympathy from certain Lebanese who were also deprived and disadvantaged in different villages and cities. The best development was the establishment of the P.L.O. and the rise of the Socialist movements in the Arab world that gave Palestinians self recognition and esteem.

“The P.L.O also adopted the principle of the armed struggle as the standing point to liberate our occupied homeland. The defeat in Jordan after black September created frustration yet it gave Palestinians in Lebanon (after signing the Cairo agreement and later the presence of the P.L.O guerrillas) a special status. It preserved our existence and ended the humiliating actions of the intelligence system. The less advantaged Lebanese were empowered also due to the identification of ideologies, ties, motives and for their similar economic deprivation”.

As we can gather, this presence spawned varied discourses between supporters and opponents; this draws our attention to the inevitable clash between these variations. This can be developed further to analyze the inseparable impact of the Palestinian presence on these events, because their military presence formulates a decisive impact on the balance of power, demography and on the variety of Lebanese identity.

5.2 Contested identities, discourses and conflict

The dichotomies of the Lebanese confessional and political discourses reached its peak during the Palestinian guerrillas' use of Lebanon as a platform for its operations against Israel. These dichotomies identify with the Modernization and Internal Colonialism approach of nationalism. However, it reveals and identifies more with the Lebanese-Lebanese internal conflict case as well as the Palestinian because they were an essential actor. This period was after the evacuation from Jordan therefore, it will be beneficial to analyze the resistance period between 1969 until the evacuation of the Palestinian military presence from Beirut in

1982. This period also triggered the Lebanese civil war. Despite the Lebanese civil war being a limitation of this paper, however, the use of these events is to extract and highlight the contradictory confessional discourses and their impacts on the Palestinian presence. Further, the examination of these events will be beneficial in understanding the development of the Palestinian identity as inseparable from the military actions of the P.L.O.

As noted earlier, the Lebanese National Pact of 1943 gave the political elites of the Maronite sect supremacy over the rest of the country. This was seen according to Rabinovich (1986), El-Khazen (2000), as a product of French colonialism to give political privileges to the Maronite sect by handing the presidency to a Maronite leader, the Prime Minister position to a Sunni Muslim and the Parliament headquarters to a Shiite Muslim whose authorities were weak and the decisive power was controlled by the Maronite leader. Further, the Maronite also enjoyed socio-economic privileges, while the Shiite sect was marginalized politically as well economically (Hudson, 1988:228-229). It created uneven economic distribution between the Lebanese regions; however, Lebanon was still seen as the only authentic democratic state in the Arab world. Most of the sects and religious minorities have enjoyed the freedom to practice their rituals and traditional celebrations; nevertheless the hierarchy of the political power was discriminatory (Rabinovich, 1986:60-62). This can be perceived as a form of deprivation and identifies to certain extents with Internal Colonialism. The Palestinian presence has not intervened with the Lebanese hierarchy of power; it was rather rhetoric and fit with the ideology of the LNM, being Arabic, socialist or leftist. Thus this presence as Rabinovich claims increased the fears of the Maronite sect of a possible take-over of the country at the hands of the Palestinians.

This period embodies the most critical shift point of Lebanon in all aspects. Identities have clashed among the Lebanese. The deterioration of Lebanese-Lebanese relations has developed and reached the stage of political, religious and sectarian mobilization of armaments to prepare the country for an unknown destiny (Khalaf, 2002:227). However, it must be noted that the Palestinian guerrilla operations increased against Israel thus causing Israel to respond by destroying and killing Lebanese to stop the Palestinian attacks.

The Phalanges has seen the Palestinians as violating the Cairo agreement which states that the coordination with the Lebanese state shall be respected. Also, they considered these actions as a real violation of Lebanese state sovereignty. Conversely, the LNM and Kamal Jumblat

considered that Palestinian actions should be supported by the Lebanese (Khalaf, 2002:222-223). The rifts have been exacerbated between Palestinians and their allies in the LNM through the interference of the Christian right wing. This has increased the armaments and hostilities among all parts. The political use of the identity in this period was characterized by identifying oneself as belonging to a certain sect or a minority rather than the state or even the whole confessional system (El-Khazen, 2000:238). In other words, identity was used and shaped as a tool for mobilization and it has been used not only by political elites, but also by religious powers whether Muslim Sunni or Shiite, Christians or Druze and involved in violence.

They legitimized the involvement of violence in underground spiritual practices with the intended outcome to reconstruct the identity with passive characteristics (Khalaf, 2002:230). The situation deteriorated into an issue of survival on all sides. Khalaf argues that all the confessional parties wanted to preserve their existence whether supporters or the opponents of the Palestinian presence. Palestinians also wanted to protect their military presence and to avoid losing Lebanon as the last platform of their resistance against Israel.

It is vital to indicate that Palestinians committed mistakes in Lebanon and that the behavior of some Palestinian squads was arrogant and threatened state sovereignty. Many Lebanese as well as Palestinians have seen the role of the P.L.O as a state within a state (Cobban, 1986:60-62). Despite the P.L.O leader, Yasser Arafat trying to avoid being involved in the Lebanese-Lebanese rifts, his allies in the LNM pushed the P.L.O into engaging in violence. The Lebanese civil war did not come only as a consequence of Ain el-Rimmaneh incident; it was rather as an outcome of sectarian congestion.

The war developed and Lebanon became a theater for the competing regional and international powers. The Western world supported the Christian Maronite. The Soviet Union supported the Socialist powers and the P.L.O. The events accelerated and Syria intervened in Lebanon to help the Maronites and then turned against them (Cobban, 1986). Another development is the establishment of relations between Israel and the Christian right wing, in particular the Phalangists. The involvement of Israel in the Lebanese civil war aimed to stop the Palestinian resistance and to help the Maronite against the LNM. Therefore, Israel intervened and invaded Lebanon in 1982; Beirut was blockaded for more than 80 days and the Israeli bombardments were bombing Beirut from the air, sea and ground. The P.L.O evacuated from Lebanon to Tunisia (Cobban, 1986:124-125).

The Lebanese response to this evacuation varies; the LNM sees it as a great loss, while the Christian right wing sees it as a victory and the beginning of a new era. Palestinian refugees are left without any support despite the written undertaking of Philip Habib, the US delegate to Arafat that constitutes the safety of the Palestinian civilians during and after the evacuation from Beirut. One day after the assassination of Bashir Gemayel, the new elected president of the Phalanges party and the opponent of the P.L.O; the Lebanese Forces commit the massacres of Sabra and Shatila camp (Aljazeera Channel, 2001; Cobban, 1986:129). Atrocities are committed at this camp, which are supervised and organized by Israel. Further, the Palestinian witness the presence of another conflict after the evacuation of the P.L.O from Lebanon with Amal the Shiite movement; it is known as the war of the camps (Knudsen, 2009:55). It has lasts from 1985 until late 1987. The reason seems to be to dominate Palestinian political decisions but is rather a conflict organized by Syria against the Fateh leadership, namely Yasser Arafat. The camps are blockaded and many atrocities are committed against the camp's inhabitants.

According to Shahid (2002) and Cobban (1986) the importance of these events in shaping Palestinian identity is not only that it reinforces the collective memory; it also attaches the Palestinian identity with the consequences of resistance and the massacres that are reminiscent of their history since 1948, the massacres of Deir Yasin until the recent time or in particular their presence in Lebanon and the outcomes of the Lebanese civil war (Shahid, 2002:39).

The developments of these phases have shaped Palestinian national identity through these events that have affected the Palestinian presence in Lebanon. This requires scrutinizing the situation in relation to the respondents' points of view and their contributions towards highlighting and narrating these contested discourses during that period.

5.2.1 Narrative interviews

Soheil Al-Natour, a Palestinian researcher at the Human Development Center and a specialist in Palestinian-Lebanese affairs narrates the period from 1969 until 1987. Certain parts will also be covered by a direct narration of these contradictory discourses by another Lebanese respondent from Amal movement.

Al-Natour narrates this period and the improvement of the Palestinian refugees' status because of the P.L.O presence after the Cairo agreement. It has followed the expulsion of the

intelligence agents outside the camps. However, he considers the hierarchical system of the Lebanese confessional structures as the major obstacle and the source of dissatisfaction among the less advantaged Lebanese as well as the Palestinians. Also, the confessional rifts among Lebanese always transcend their social borders to involve Palestinians with their rifts. The rise of the P.L.O has empowered the Palestinian refugees and several cultural, economic and social institutions have started to operate to serve the camp communities. The most important events were the national awareness of organizing resistance against Israel.

The Lebanese have emphasized the necessity to support the justice of the Palestinian cause, while the right wing opposed the military presence. Consequently, the variations amongst Lebanese have led to mobilization according to sectarian congestion, which has transferred into conflict between all these parts including Palestinians. Several incidents occurred before the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war; however, Palestinians were not a major actor or an inducible factor to trigger the conflict. Still, the necessity to protect the coalition and the ideological, rhetorical and national convergence with the LNM has engaged Palestinians with the conflict. Further, the international and regional circumstances represented by the clash and competition between the Western and the socialist powers and their interests in the region have contributed to the increased armament to trigger the situation. Therefore, the Lebanese confessional system was the typical environment for such a conflict.

The contradictions reached their peak during this period; The Lebanese were fighting together with Palestinians against Israel in the south kindling a unity of destiny between Palestinians and the LNM. At the same time Palestinians were a major part of the Lebanese civil war. Undoubtedly, Palestinians committed mistakes against Lebanon and its sovereignty that abuse the principles of resistance however, the responsibilities lay among the Lebanese parts as well, in particular the right wing that often violated truces for the reason that Lebanon was vulnerable to the external powers. Also, even though the role of the P.L.O ended in 1982, the targeting of Palestinians continued and several massacres were committed at Sabra and Shatila and were followed by the disastrous war of the camps until 1987. The Palestinian presence was always affected by the events in Lebanon.

Even after the end of the civil war the deteriorating situation is still continuing not only as related to security and the civil war but the security has widened and worsened the gap between all parts. For instance, Palestinians have submitted most of their weapons at different stages to the Lebanese state in accordance with the Taef accord except the small firearms for

self defense in order to give Palestinians their basic humanitarian rights. The Lebanese state did not take the major weapons in order to use the Palestinian weaponry issue as a justification to prevent gaining these rights.

Some clarifications of this period as noted earlier can be reinforced by the member of the political bureau of Amal movement, Hassan Qablan.

Qablan refers to the old confessional Lebanese system as being discriminatory after independence in terms of demarcating the political map of Lebanon. This has caused the deprivation of different Lebanese communities. The identification with Palestinians embodies the strong belief in this cause because of the brotherhood and ties. Therefore, the official and national position of the Islamic communities represented by the Shiite sect during that time expressed the necessity to support this cause. In this sense, the official position of the movement was expressed by Imam Musa Al-Sader, the leader of this sect, that the identification between the ones who are deprived from their land (Palestinians) and the ones who are deprived at their land (Amal, the Shiite sect) share a similar destiny. Therefore, solidarity is necessary to encounter Israel and to achieve justice in Lebanon.

Later, the actions of some Palestinian squads were irritating and intervening in private Lebanese issues has affected their existence. Their actions make them vulnerable and give opponents proper justification to end their presence. The evacuation has also left space and grief among the supporters of their cause. It is still crucial to indicate that Amal movement at a certain period had conflict with certain Palestinians, mainly Fateh. It has created hostility and sensitivity among both parts. But this does not mean that Amal is forever opposed to Palestinians; It was rather a temporarily dispute. However, the overall position of Amal is supportive of the refugee issue and assuring their rights.

These stages show the development of the refugee issue in Lebanon and the influence of the contested perspectives that have led to these variations. Further, we can imagine the disastrous outcomes of conflict. Undoubtedly, these events at these phases have effects on constructing the identity beginning with civilian refugees to those involved in resistance and internal conflict with a number of Lebanese counterparts.

5.3 The imagined Palestinian identity

As noted earlier, the necessity of reconstructing the Palestinian identity coincided with the Palestinian presence in the Arab states. The P.L.O as Litvak (2009) argues contributed in reconstructing the ancient Palestinian history in the camps and refugee life. It has introduced Palestinian history and all of the cultural features through the curriculum of schools, the Palestinian Atlas, the Palestinian encyclopedia, the Palestinian research center, poetry and literature in cooperation with the Arab states (Litvak, 2009:103-105). However, according to Litvak (2009) and Bowker (2003) the current situation of the identity in the Diaspora after the Oslo accords and its complications and/or failure, has an inevitable influence on people's attitudes due to the difficulties of the resistance, which has reached the Palestinian Authority to negotiate with Israel on the refugee issue and the Palestinian state. Compensation as a substitute for return is often raised but has low political priority and morally unaccepted among Palestinians (Bowker, 2009:106). This approaches the sentimental aspects of preserving national identity; however, an important element of reconstructing the Palestinian identity is the right of return to Palestine according to the UN resolution 194.

The concept of identity also transcends the limitations of the Palestinian state to the West Bank and Gaza strip and the borders of these territories because the construction of identity was based on its historical connotations.

“An important component of this enterprise has been the construction of an official historical narrative of Palestine and the Palestinians from prehistoric times to the present, which simultaneously weaved itself into Arab and Islamic history demonstrated by its unique Palestinian traits” (Litvak, 2009:112). Thus the construction differentiates between the state and the home.

The right of return for Palestinians represents an existence issue, therefore according to Bowker, they are taught this right at schools in the refugee camps and it has become a national symbol and a symbol of self recognition of their past and future. Despite this right embodying sentimental connotations and constituting the standing point of the Palestinian national constants, it transcends this concept to embody a political mythology with the highest political and cultural significance (Bowker, 2003:96-97). This right has created the image of return as a part of the Palestinian memory and existence that has been constructed and passed

on to following generations. The Palestinian memory is also mixed with the actions of the new settlers and how they changed the features and obliterated the national identity of their cities, villages and land of origins.

Furthermore, this right arouses the attention of Palestinians to the political responsibility of the international community because it is based on implementing international legitimacy (Bowker, 2009:110-111). The denial of this right by Israel, so that Palestinians become assimilated into the surrounding Arab states, increases the Palestinian determination to return to their homeland.

With this in mind, the imagined and collective memory can be developed further in the empirical part of this paper to be reflected in the respondents' views and their experience on the construction of their identity that have reached this module until it passed on to the new generation.

5.3.1 Narrative interviews

Abu-Ibrahim a Palestinian refugee at Shatila camp was born in Galilee, Palestine in 1923. The extraction of shaping the identity whether at the sentimental or the political level at different stages in particular recently can be expressed explicitly according to his experience.

“The past is not different to the present; it feels like we have just arrived in Lebanon. The only difference is that people have experienced different leaders, events and few changes of our situation becoming more positive. Probably the most significant one was the P.L.O presence and the resistance, we felt closer to return. The revolution empowered us; it gave people a strong hope however, it was difficult because of the civil war and its atrocities. People here are equal they share sorrows and joy as well. Above all what unifies the camp's community is their collective destiny and miserable situation. At the same time as you can see the Palestinian national slogans are present in every street, ally, shop, corner, wall, house and room in all the camps in Lebanon. The factor that distinguishes Palestinians from any society is their lost land, heritage and the previous memories, which shall all be transmitted and taught to the new generations like the language. This is the most proper way to preserve our continuation and that's what people do. Homeland is more precious than our sons. A good example, I have 12 sons and daughters, my grand children number 52 but I don't have a homeland. You may have children, but you can not get home. At this age the dream of return is still and if you will give any one even a cottage at his homeland he/she will be happy and satisfied. People believed in the past in different Arab leaders and they will return Palestinians home; but all of them are the same. No one worked seriously for our cause, we left behind. Even the new situation after Oslo accords and the two states solution have not assured the return or changed anything. Also, will these agreements assure our return to the cities and villages of origin – which we were forced to leave. The common denominator that unifies refugees is their determination to return. But still in Lebanon, refugees are deprived of the basic

rights underground we will resettle in Lebanon. Is this a convincing reason for this marginalization?”

This proves that the contested concepts of nationalism such as Primordialism, imagined/collective communities and internal colonialism as stated above, identify with the construction of the Palestinian identity. On the other hand, these concepts clarify the connection with the Lebanese confessional structure due to the variations of these discourses on the Palestinian presence. The years that followed the P.L.O evacuation has increased the marginalization of the refugees in all aspects of life, the economic, social and political. This will be analyzed in the following in relation to social exclusion-inclusion theory.

5.4 Economic aspects of Palestinian exclusion

As the concept of social-exclusion-inclusion has covered poverty, segregation and lack of access to the labor market as a major consequence of this phenomenon according to demographic variables, this identifies with the current situation of the Palestinian refugees. In this sense, the legal status of Palestinians has rendered them to be treated as foreigners, thus according to the Lebanese labor laws, practices and decrees Palestinians are subject to several restrictions applicable to all foreigners in the labor market (Al-Natour, 1997:366, Abbas et al, 1997:384).

The labor law No. 17561 constitutes the principle of reciprocity and work permits for foreign workers. Reciprocity refers to the agreements between Lebanon and other states according to certain agreements concerning work. However, Palestinians lack a state that represents them. This means that they are banned to have a work license or even a work contract according to the Lebanese labor law; they are exempted from the reciprocity principal (Al-Natour, 2011: Article 59 of the Lebanese labor law, 1964, decree No. 17561). Foreigners need work permits or a license involving very complicated procedures and fees to obtain it. It is obligatory to assign a ratio of three Lebanese workers in a company for every one foreigner that is employed there. It must also be announced on three Lebanese local newspapers in order to avoid competing with Lebanese citizens in the labor market.

These procedures have restricted the involvement of Palestinians in gaining employment. There are two types of jobs that Palestinians are not allowed to practice; the first one is subject to the reciprocity clause such as the liberal professions, for example, medical careers

whether pharmacists, doctors, laboratory technicians, nurses and hospital owners, and other areas such as engineering, teaching and law. The second group of professions is the ones that are restricted to Lebanese citizens such as journalism, technician roles, real estate agents, taxi driving and publishing (Hanafi, 2012:43-45; Sayigh, 1995:44). This proves that the amount of economic exclusion is very high. The numbers of professions that are prohibited for Palestinians to practice number more than 70. Palestinians are also excluded from the end of service indemnities (Halabi, 2004:42, Knudsen, 2009:66).

Neither are Palestinians allowed to own property according to the amendment of the 1969 decree No. 11614. These properties include apartments, shops, land and firms. The new amendment adopted in 2001 (296, dated 3 April 2001) allowed for foreigners including Palestinians to have the right to real estate and property of a certain size. Palestinians were allowed to own an immovable property up to 3.000 square meters in Beirut, while outside Beirut it is up to 5.000 square meters. The ownership was granted and simplified to foreign investments, however, excluded Palestinians (Knudsen, 2009:64-65; Hanafi et al, 2012:45) after an amendment later in 2001 to this decree that prohibited those who do not have nationality to own any property nor renew it nor to pass it to their children. This law has encountered a huge criticism from Palestinians and also international critics. The European Parliament in 2003 urged Lebanon to stop this discrimination and to ratify the Geneva Convention of 1951 (FIDH, 2003:16). Petitions were signed by thousands of refugees to allow them to have properties. Three supporter blocks including Hezbollah in 2004 requested the Lebanese government to allow Palestinians to own land up to 5.000 m, a provision that is granted to other foreigners (Knudsen, 2009:65).

However, the Lebanese constitutional committee rejected their appeals. The committee stated that this law preserves national interests and prevents the naturalization or assimilation of Palestinians (Knudsen, 2009:65). Despite these complications the situation has developed and a positive step has been taken by the Lebanese Prime Minister Foud Siniora who asked for a Lebanese-Palestinian dialogue committee in 2005 in order to solve many obstacles among both parts (Knudsen, 2009). This step has been followed by a project presented by three parliamentary members from the Democratic Gathering Block, Walid Jumblat, Alaa Eldine Terro and Elie Aoun. They presented four major bills to the Lebanese parliament in March 2010 (As-Safir Newspaper on March 2nd 2010) mainly based on improving Palestinian rights by making amendments to the rules and decrees that restrict Palestinian rights in terms of work, social security system, prosecution and the right to real estate property.

The project has encountered opposition from the Christian majority and minorities in the parliament, therefore, the proposals were transmitted to the committee of administration and justice (Al-Natour, 2011:16). Further, the other Lebanese blocks such as the Syrian and National Social Party (as the second Block) and The Future Movement and The Lebanese Forces Party gathering have also presented bills that are different in terms of granting Palestinian rights to the ones that have been presented by the Democratic Block. For example, the bills of the Democratic Block have granted more rights and were more flexible when compared to the bills of the other blocks (Al-Natour, 2011:16-17). This proves that the Palestinian rights are facing contradictory discourses between supporters and opponents and according to confessional or political belonging. According to Al-Natour (2011) The Lebanese parliament has voted with a majority supporting these bills with some amendments that allow the Palestinians to gain a certain amount of these rights. However, the Christian Maronite and the Christian minorities have rejected the bills.

The basic principle of the amendment of the Lebanese labor law Article 59 concerning Palestinians who are registered in the Lebanese Ministry of Interior has exempted them from the reciprocity principle and the work permit of the foreigners as mentioned earlier. However, the amended law gives the Palestinians benefits in terms of end of service indemnities and social security law as awarded to the Lebanese. As this can be achieved through a separate independent account for the contributions belonging to Palestinians, it does not bear the treasury or the social security fund any financial obligations. The persons who are included in the rules of this law are not allowed to get benefits from the presentations of sickness, the maternity and family assistance funds (Al-Natour, 2011:22-23; Palestinian Human Rights Organization, 2010) and according to Hanafi et al (2012) this does not show that the amended law will assure that Palestinians will be able to practice the liberal professions. It prohibits Palestinians from practicing more than 30 syndicated professions (Hanafi et al, 2012:43) and according to different Palestinians and Lebanese, as well most of the interviewees of this paper the amendments of these laws have not been implemented yet since their issuance in 2010.

This requires scrutinizing and developing the issue further with reflection on the semi-structured interviews and the respondents perspectives concerning the economic factors of Palestinian marginalization from different points of view, whether Lebanese or Palestinian official positions, supporters and/or opponents. There was consensus among all the interviewees about the Palestinian exclusion in all aspects.

5.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

The interviews have focused on presenting and comparing the variation of these discourses and their views on the work issue as the major obstacle. The interviews have been conducted with the opponents or the most protective parts in Lebanon towards Palestinian rights. They were as follow: Melkar El-Koury; the Lebanese Phalanges Party, Jan Anton; the Lebanese Forces, Joseph Hindi; a Lebanese citizen. These representatives and the Lebanese citizens argue, in general, that the Palestinian refugee issue in terms of work currently has a major obstacle represented by the economic recession in the Lebanese labor market. Melkar and Joseph argue that the Lebanese state debts are more than USD50 billion, the rates of unemployment among Lebanese, very high. Lebanese are also migrating to Europe, the Gulf Arab States and the USA. Lebanon itself cannot afford achieving these rights without the cooperation of the international community and the Arab league.

Another aspect that has been emphasized by all of them is the severe relationship between both Palestinians and Lebanese because of the civil war. This makes both counterparts lack the confidence to achieve integration or the employment of Palestinians due to insecurity. Anton considers the Palestinian arms of the PFLP GC outside of the camps as an obstacle to the improvement of the situation. He considers the amendments to the Lebanese labor law are being used as a political tool by certain parties in Lebanon who act like supporters of these rights for political gain and interests rather than improving the refugees' status.

Melkar emphasizes the idea of this political use by considering the hindrances in implementing these amendments as a good evidence. Concerning the right to real estate property Melkar and Anton agree that this right will make an inevitable demographic change. Anton says that this problem is facing the Lebanese themselves because certain sects may buy land or houses in a Christian town or village for example. Many villages have been changed demographically due to the interconnectedness between the Lebanese sects. In this case, we always appeal to the church to intervene so that many Christian villages will not lose their identities. The protective respondents also argue that if Palestinians own property, this will lead to their resettlement in Lebanon.

Supporters of these rights such as the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, Dr.Salim Al-Hoss, consider the economic inequality and lack of the right to property to be due to the restrictive procedures in terms of professions. These problems are also related to the confessional composition of Lebanon.

He says that these rights will affect the demographic nature of Lebanon and He does not consider the Palestinians as burden on the Lebanese economy. However, Lebanon, as He argues, suffers from an intrinsic problem represented by the sectarian tendencies. He states that these amendments on the laws and procedures could have been implemented a long time ago and that the labor work was unfair from the beginning. The right to work should be granted in any community and Palestinians should not be deprived from this basic right, "This should be offered as a humanitarian commitment of Lebanon towards our Palestinian brothers". A former Lebanese ambassador Samir El-Khoury who currently works as the Head of the Committee for Employment of Palestinians refers to the labor law and the system of reciprocity by treating Palestinians as foreigners because they lack the state, as the major legislative factor of their economic exclusion in particular, the right to work. He thinks that the Lebanese economy can employ and manage Palestinians. He states that the Lebanese are wrong when they consider Palestinians as competitive to the Lebanese laborers. Like Al-Natour (2011), Hanafi et al (2012), He states that the new amendments to the labor law do not give the Palestinians the right to practice free professions.

The new amendments have restricted their right to get benefits from the presentations of sickness, maternity fund and the family assistance. El-Khoury and Al-Hoss argue that the opposition to implementing these rights stems from the fear of assimilation or resettlement (Tawteen) when Palestinians own properties or become included like Lebanese, however, they say that this reason has been used repeatedly as a scarecrow by different parts. They indicate that this is an exaggeration and it is not a convincing reason to restrict the Palestinian right to employment or owning property. They also think that improvements will be achieved gradually through the cooperation of all parts.

The Lebanese official position represented by Ziad El-Sayegh, representative of the Lebanese ministry of labor considers in general the year 2005 as a shift point in Lebanese-Palestinian relations and that the most severe complications arose in the decades leading up to this period. He considers the Palestinian presence as witnessing a new era after the evacuation and the end of the Syrian tutelage in Lebanon.

He thinks that Lebanon has suffered from external Syrian intervention in its politics. Therefore, Lebanon is now enjoying a truer form of sovereignty that can help establish positive mutual relations with Palestinians. He states that the Palestinian Representative Bureau was closed during the last period due to the conflict between Syria and the P.L.O, in

particular Fateh. However, the new era has started an influential dialogue with the P.L.O and the Palestinian squads and camps civil committees. He emphasizes that the Palestinian presence should be handled according to three dimensions: human security, sovereignty and diplomacy. These dimensions are interconnected and are considered as the basic principles to deal with Palestinians. Human security requires organizing the Palestinian weaponry to be submitted to the state. This will emphasize the state's sovereignty as the legislative actor to handle the situation. The diplomatic dimension reflects the Palestinian-Lebanese cooperation required to deal with all of these obstacles. Concerning the economic situation, El-Sayegh states that Lebanon is suffering from unemployment and He emphasizes that Palestinian life is very difficult and it should be improved. He does not consider the nature of the Lebanese demography as a major obstacle. He states that the new amendments have legitimized the right of work thus the situation will improve gradually. However, the liberal professions cannot be afforded because these professions belong to the Lebanese unions. This means that the unions are independent institutions and have their own rules. So, state authority is limited over these institutions; it is difficult to include Palestinians directly. Thus, He states, a system of quotas can be introduced depending on the Lebanese labor market, these professions and their needs. In other words, the quota system for example will examine how many doctors or engineers the market needs and then the Palestinians will be included and prioritized according to this system.

El-Sayegh illustrates the Lebanese position on the right to property ownership. Like Anton, He argues that there is a Lebanese-Lebanese difficulty due to the demographic changes in many parts of Lebanon. He suggests the system of long-term rent should be adopted with the possibility of inheritance.

The Palestinian official position represented by the Palestinian ambassador in Beirut, Mr. Ashraf Dabbour argues that Palestinians are excluded economically as well socially due to the Lebanese laws that have restricted or prohibited Palestinians to participate in the Lebanese economy or to gain property. Although the new amendments have not been implemented, He indicates that there are focused efforts and cooperation with the Lebanese parties to overcome these obstacles. Concerning the view of restricting rights because of security, He does not think that the Palestinian presence constitutes a real threat to Lebanese security so Palestinians should not be deprived from the right of work on those grounds. He argues that the Palestinian military presence ended in 1982 after the evacuation of the P.L.O from Lebanon. The Lebanese civil war has continued until 1990 which indicates that Palestinians

are not threatening Lebanese society and that relations are not hostile towards their Lebanese brothers.

5.5 Aspects of the Palestinian Social and Political exclusion

The social exclusion-inclusion theory emphasizes that this concept exceeds the limits of poverty to include social and political dimensions. As mentioned earlier, the European Commission has determined that each citizen has the right to be part of a social security system, employment opportunities, education and an adequate health care system. Further, the above mentioned eight domains and variables of social exclusion-inclusion as presented by Berman & Philips (2000) can be explicitly examined against the Palestinian case.

Al-Natour (1997) illustrates the basic problem of Palestinians concerning their legal status is that they have been treated as foreigners rather than refugees. Consequently, like the right of employment and professions, Palestinians lack the right to a social security system. Lebanese social security law allows foreign workers to benefit from this system if they have official work permits and if the conditions of reciprocity are implemented (Al-Natour, 1997:369). Therefore, Palestinians, who lack the nationality or a state to represent them or achieve reciprocity with Lebanon, are prevented from benefiting from the benefits of the Lebanese social security system. They depend on UNRWA as their primary supplier of health care.

They also depend on the Palestinian Red Crescent to provide them with basic health services and hospitalization (Sayigh, 1995:43-44). In this case refugees have to pay higher fees in order to get medication at Lebanese public or private hospitals. This situation is connected to the Lebanese labor law which prevents Palestinian physicians from working and Palestinians from having a dedicated hospital for refugees in which they can also exercise their professions. In regards to establishing a hospital in line with decree No. 9826 issued in 1962, an amendment was made in 2003 that specifies the hospital must be Lebanese for more than 10 years (Human Development Center, 2006:69). Foreigners follow the system of reciprocity when establishing hospitals, like when applying the labor law. It follows that Palestinians are also banned from having a private hospital to medicate people.

The Palestinian camps are suffering severe infrastructure problems. The 12 camps in Lebanon are overcrowded and reflect urban segregation. The physical structure of these camps is crumbling and many buildings and houses are ready to collapse. These camps are characterized as slums because they are in urban areas with close-space buildings, unlike the

camps in Syria and Jordan, which have open-space buildings (Hanafi et al, 2012; Ibrahim, 2008). Palestinians were forced to build vertically not horizontally, thus the roads or the alleyways between houses are very narrow and dark.

Most of the electric wires are intermingled with the buildings exposing the residents to danger. These camps are encountering sanitation difficulties, bad ventilation, dampness and exposure to extremes in temperature in the summer and winter because of the poor quality of the construction system implemented in these camps. The Lebanese government has not provided the Palestinian camps with sewage systems neither is the garbage collection system of the nearby municipalities offered to these camps while restoration of the existing sewage system damaged in the civil war takes place. Therefore, Palestinians depend on the UNRWA's own sewage network and garbage collection system, while more than 14 percent of the camp's households are not covered by a sewage network (Ibrahim, 2008:87-88).

Abbas et al (1997) attributes the extent of poor health conditions at the camps to be a result of urban exclusion. The poor environment in the camps inevitably has a detrimental effect on the inhabitants' health, giving rise to diseases such as asthma and increases in cardiovascular diseases and infections (Abbas et al, 1997:394-395). These severe conditions are handled, according to Ibrahim, by NGOs and the UNRWA with the absence of any Lebanese involvement.

Education constitutes a vital aspect in the lives of Palestinians who are generally eligible to enter the basic system and higher education. Al-Natour (1997) argues that the Lebanese educational system is very large and has two major systems, the public and the private. Palestinians are eligible and entitled to access the Lebanese educational system. The UNRWA also has a free educational system for the Palestinian refugees; it offers the elementary and preparatory stages. The UNRWA schools are located at the camps or where the Palestinian populations are concentrated (Abbas et al, 1997:389). However, the number of secondary schools on offer are limited, therefore, Palestinians join Non-UNRWA schools at the secondary level. At the Lebanese governmental schools, ten percent of places on offer are reserved for foreigners and Palestinians combined. The UNRWA covers certain amount of school tuition at the secondary school level (Al-Natour, 1997:371-372). Despite Palestinians being eligible for the educational system, there are some exceptions at the University level, where some have specializations only for Lebanese nationals such as is the case at the faculty of arts in Lebanese Universities. Also, some vocational and training programs are only

available to Lebanese citizens (Al-Natour, 1997:372). Education can be classified as affordable and inclusive to a certain extent for Palestinians when compared to the other aspects of exclusion such as profession, health care and social services.

The social exclusion-inclusion variables of Berman & Philips (2000) and social exclusion theory of Bhalla & Lapeyre (1997) and Sen (1992) encompass to a certain extent the political dimension. The social dimension as a variable refers to the degrees of freedom of expression and speech, other liberties and the forming of associations and unions. The Lebanese constitution and law assure these political rights within strict bounds. The decree No. 4082 of 2000 Article 21 constitutes the right to form an association, NGO or union but it must be approved by the Lebanese Ministry of Interior. Forming an association requires a license from the department of political affairs. The activities of associations should not conflict with the objectives for which they were originally set. These associations must offer annual reports of their activities and implement the rules and laws of associations (Human Development Center, 2006:42). Palestinians formulated civil ties and commissions to represent their local communities in various camps. These commissions were based on strengthening the ties among them. However, these commissions or associations lack the legitimacy of the Lebanese government. The work of these associations cannot be exercised overtly. Subsequently, in order to get a license for the association, the application of the association must be driven by a Lebanese citizen to whom the Palestinians must report to and the head office of the association must be located outside of the camps (Human Development Center, 2006:43). In other words, a Palestinian employs a Lebanese to manage the establishment of the NGO or the association. Therefore, the involvement of the Lebanese citizen partly constitutes a fake procedure to get the license by using the name of a Lebanese collaborator. This will lead us to discuss such phenomena from the interview respondents' points of view.

5.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

The respondents' views vary in terms of the social aspects, particularly the social security system and the conditions of the refugee camps. Melkar and Anton think that this should progress gradually, slowly starting with the most necessary and affordable aspects, then moving on to the other aspects. They refer to the health care system as the first priority. However, the social security system in general is not affordable at this time because most Lebanese are not included in the social security system. Therefore, they think it is difficult to include Palestinians when Lebanese are not even included.

Melkar and Hindi think that the new amendments to the social security system are positive because they have stated that an independent fund not related to Lebanon has covered this aspect. It is financed by international or Arab donors and supervised by the Palestinian Authority and the UNRWA. This view also identifies with the Lebanese official position as stated by El-Sayegh who says that two third of Lebanese lack the right to the social security system. He thinks that Lebanon alone is unable to cover this aspect. He refers to the independent fund that covers the social security and the health care systems (sustained by the donations of Arab countries to the UNRWA) as the main financial source that should be used to improve the conditions of the camps.

Supporters think that the new amendments to social security law have not granted enough cover for the Palestinians. El-Khoury argues that the social security system has complications because it already is weakened by existing burdens. However, the amendments to laws pertaining to the independent fund are not fair.

They have urged the employer and the Palestinian employee to contribute 23.5 percent of earnings while the benefits only amount to 8 percent with no maternity or sickness benefits offered. Al-Hoss also thinks that this law should grant at least the 23.5 percent that the employed Palestinians pay. El-Koury argues that the Palestinian should benefit fully from his or her contributions. The Palestinian ambassador also agrees with these views. He describes the complications and the camps conditions like the supporters. He states that the sewage system of the camps creates problems and poor health conditions. The entangled electrical cables, the water system, housing and general health conditions constitute a real threat for the camp's communities. The political dimension of Palestinian exclusion has not gained more attention because the laws and procedures refer to the P.L.O and the Palestinian embassy as the main political organs and Palestinian representatives as stated by most of the interviewees. Al-Hoss, El-Khoury and Dabbour argue that Palestinian humanitarian rights in all aspects are always facing the opposing view that gaining these rights will lead to the Palestinian resettlement by different parties. This leads us to discuss this aspect and the variations in both Lebanese and Palestinian points of view.

5.6 Resettlement: a real threat to Lebanon or a justification for exclusion?

The essence of this aspect will cover the focal points of the argument of this paper. When Lebanese are divided into supporters versus protectionist towards implementing humanitarian rights for all inhabitants, scrutiny of these contradictory discourses is required. The nature of

the Lebanese confessional composition will have an inevitable impact on these rights as noted earlier. Haddad (2004) argues that there is consensus among the supporters and the opponents of Palestinian resettlement in Lebanon because it is mainly based on the demographic nature of Lebanon. Resettlement will make an inevitable demographic change that cannot be absorbed. This change will empower the Muslim sect and not that of the Christian because Palestinians are entirely Sunni Muslims. An economic factor also emerges as Lebanon is historically a country of emigration rather than immigration; the Lebanese economy is weak and suffering from high unemployment rates. The third factor being political refers to denying the Palestinian right of return to Palestine (Haddad, 2004:471-472).

It is mainly emphasized according to Haddad by the Taef accord in 1989, which rejects the idea of the resettlement of Palestinians in Lebanon and therefore, does not grant the Palestinian humanitarian rights (Halabi, 2008). It is crucial to determine the standing point of such rejection. Salam (1994) argues that Lebanon rejection of resettlement is not only based on demographic criteria, it transcends this aspect; it does not mean the collective evacuation of Palestinians in Lebanon. However, this rejection should entail a refusal to offer a Lebanese citizenship to Palestinians (Salam, 1994:24).

However, according to Al-Natour (1997), Sayigh (1994) Palestinians themselves reject the idea of resettling in Lebanon and/or gaining Lebanese citizenship; they emphasize their right of return according to the UN resolution No.194. The question of all questions is whether the claim that Palestinians want to settle in Lebanon permanently is being used merely as a justification to prevent Palestinians from receiving basic humanitarian rights and whether that is due to the cost of providing these rights or does the permanent settlement of such a large number of Palestinians pose a real threat to Lebanon as mentioned earlier.

Hanafi et al (2012) describes the resettlement (Tawteen) as a scarecrow used by certain parts to restrict these rights. He argues that the latest debate in the Lebanese Parliament concerning the new amendments to the laws has been described by various newspapers and Lebanese sections as a step towards resettling Palestinians (Hanafi et al, 2012:42). Knudsen (2009) argues that the rejection of Palestinian resettlement has national interests and confessional concerns (Knudsen, 2009:56). Similar to Hanafi, Ibrahim (2008) considers the resettlement claim in light of shifting the sectarian balance as a justification or pretext being used by the Lebanese government to discriminate against Palestinians who are often blamed for triggering

the Lebanese civil war (Ibrahim, 2008:88). Thus She considers them asking for their basic humanitarian rights rather than implanting themselves in Lebanon.

The variations in these discourses can be explicitly developed in the respondents' perspectives and their involvement in this topic. Despite the common denominator between all parts being the ultimate support of the right of return, the gaining of humanitarian rights always collides with the fear of resettlement.

5.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

Melkar, Anton and Hindi argue that the Lebanese support the right of return because there is a strong belief among all parties that the Palestinians have suffered greatly throughout the years. However, the Lebanese are against their resettlement because they fear that this will affect the Lebanese demography to the point that it will negatively affect all aspects of life economically, socially and politically.

They also agree that opposing or being protective regarding the distribution of these rights is related to both the political use of the refugee issue and the Lebanese confessional composition. On the other hand, they acknowledge a noticeable improvement in Palestinian-Lebanese relations. Anton argues that the Lebanese Forces that used to be the most rigid party towards Palestinians has changed positively. The latest declarations of Samir Geagea, their leader, prove that we have overcome the past and the effects of the civil war.

The official Lebanese position is also supportive of the right of return and rejects local resettlement. El-Sayegh argues that a major impending demographic change in Lebanon does not justify denying rights and that; subsequent demographic change will not affect Lebanon, socially, economically or politically. Palestinians would use the improved conditions and equal access to human capital as a means of return to their rightful homeland. The Palestinian right of return has a humanitarian dimension because it is based on international legitimacy. Therefore, El-Sayegh says we should not talk about resettlement because it has negative connotations despite containing a positive significance. It also constitutes an international pressure to pose this right as a priority.

The supporters on the second hand consider that gaining these rights depends basically on the variations of the Lebanese discourses. El-Khoury argues that whenever Palestinian rights in terms of work or their social situation is posed in Lebanon, different political parties connect it to resettlement. Therefore, they use it as a scarecrow to justify their opposition to allocating basic human rights. This does not mean that Palestinians will not gain these basic humanitarian rights, but it slows down the process while the sickness, suffering and poverty continue. The temporary nature of residence is widely accepted but even so, should be accompanied by a basic level of comfort and protection. It is well known by now that Palestinians also reject the idea of permanently settling in Lebanon and that this is not their primary goal. El-Khoury thinks that these parties are exaggerating by using resettlement as reason to oppose the implementation of basic human rights. Al-Hoss argues that the Lebanese are divided in dealing with this issue due to sectarian tendencies. For example, He states that the Sunni Muslims will support these rights more than the Muslim Shiites; however, the Christian will oppose gaining these rights on the grounds of sectarian change and resettlement.

The Palestinian ambassador agrees to a large extent with EL-Khoury and Al-Hoss. He says that whenever the Palestinian situation or these rights arise, the resettlement aspect comes to the Lebanese mind. The Palestinian position in light of these claims is very clear and that is, they refuse to resettle in Lebanon. A good example, as He argued on May 15, 2011 during the annual memory of the Palestinian tragedy or Nakbah day: Palestinian youth have tried to cross the borders between Lebanon and Palestine. The best of our youth martyred when Israel shot them while they were trying to approach their homeland. The message must be clear by now, to the whole world including Lebanon, that Palestinians want to return home and will never accept to choose anywhere as a substitute for their homeland.

This shows that the contradictory discourses are affecting Palestinian rights. There is also a strong correlation between gaining these rights and the right of return as has been outlined many times in this paper. Despite everyone in Lebanon supporting the ultimate right of return, it is still clear that many parties will oppose gaining all of the other day-to-day rights because of the strong fear of resettlement. It is still crucial to indicate that Lebanon is also suffering from severe economic recession however the overall impression that comes across is still the variations in these discourses towards Palestinians. The good news is that the situation can be enhanced gradually because of the positive changes detected in the attitudes, beliefs and actions of some parties and the efforts of the dialogue committee.

6 Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that the contradictory discourses of the Lebanese confessional composition has not granted the basic humanitarian rights of the Palestinian refugees. Also, the issue has witnessed different developments that have affected Lebanese-Palestinian relations. It is crucial to indicate that the Lebanese political system was fragile from the very beginning because it had advantaged certain political and religious elites in account of the others. Also, the political use of sectarianism has affected the refugee issue. However, the Palestinian national identity has been constructed and imprinted with resistance characteristics due to the conflict with Israel by using the Lebanese land as a platform.

Unfortunately, it has increased the fear among Lebanese, mainly the right wing to control the country and subsequently there will be an inevitable demographic change in Lebanon. Nonetheless, gaining these rights will never lead to the resettlement of Palestinians as expressed by the Palestinian official position and the rest of the interviewees. This is because the right of return constitutes a Palestinian national constant. It has also shaped the Palestinian identity towards posing this right as a part of their existence. This is the positive indicator that illustrates the correlation between gaining these rights and the right of return. Palestinians will inevitably return even if they gain these rights because these rights should be afforded to any community.

It is still crucial to acknowledge that Lebanon has suffered from a severe civil war and suffers from a higher amount of unemployment and a complicated economy. Lebanon has also paid a huge price in comparison with the other Arab states. Therefore, the UN, Arab League and the international community should support Lebanon in implementing these rights and contribute to the reduction of Palestinian exclusion. The problem of exclusion-inclusion theory has not gained special attention in the developing countries that identify with Lebanon however; cooperation should be reinforced to enhance the refugees' situation.

Moreover, international legitimacy should be achieved by granting and supporting the right of return according to the UN resolution 194. Therefore, the international community should intervene and put pressure on Israel to solve the refugee issue.

7 Executive Summary

The aim of this paper is to examine the impact of the contradictory discourses of the Lebanese confessional composition on the humanitarian rights of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. In addition to this, to examine the correlation between gaining these rights and the Palestinian right to return to Palestine. The introduction has discussed the origins of the refugee issue which began during the British mandate to Palestine. This mandate authorized Palestine as a national homeland to the Jews. The events were followed by the forcible expulsion of Palestinians by the Zionist gangs (known for Palestinians as Nakbah) this occurred in 15-05-1948, and until then Palestinians became refugees in the surrounding Arab countries. Therefore, the situation of Palestinians in Lebanon is very difficult from the very beginning in Lebanon in comparison with the situation of the other Palestinian refugees in the surrounding countries.

The introduction discussed the origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the refuge life of Palestinians. However, the focus was mainly on the Palestinians in Lebanon. The introduction also highlighted the hierarchic political structure of Lebanon after the independence in 1943. The division of the political structure was based on confessional hierarchic power which advantaged the Maronite elites in comparison with the other sects. This can be considered as the predicate of Lebanese to clash later among themselves as well among Palestinians. The introduction was followed by the research problem, structure of the paper, limitations of the paper and so on.

This paper has used literature review in order to explain the major previous studies that have covered this topic. The literature review consists of different types of studies that will cover the connection between the research questions and the relevant studies of the Palestinian refugees' issue. Ultimately, there were different studies related to the history of Palestine, refugees' studies, Palestinian national identity, the Lebanese civil war, previous literature on the situation of the Palestinians in Lebanon and so forth. The historical background has discussed the Palestinian society during the British mandate and the British declaration to support the creation of Israel. It has discussed the major resolutions that have been taken before and after the Nakbah, such as UN Resolution 181, the partition of Palestine. Also, Resolution 194 which constitutes the return of Palestinians. The paper focused on the role of UNRWA, as the responsible agency to serve Palestinians and in some ways to represent them.

The theories that have been used in this paper are Nationalism and Identity Theory and the Social Exclusion-Inclusion Theory. There was an explanation for choosing these theories and their adequacy to serve the topic. Nationalism and Identity has explained certain contested approaches such as Primordialism, Internal Colonialism and the Imagined Community –which identify to a large extent with the Palestinian identity; because it has experienced these models. The paper started to explain the different developments of the concept because it is categorized as an expansive topic. Thus the uses of these selected concepts are relevant to the Palestinian case. In addition, they suit the refugees issue because the research questions are based on the confessional composition of Lebanon. The Social Exclusion-Inclusion Theory dealt with issue by clarifying its adequacy to the case of certain minorities, refugees or foreign communities. The theory has been developed and focused on different aspects of exclusion and its consequences on the marginalized communities such as poverty, unemployment, social disintegration, dissatisfaction and so on. The theory has clarified the aspects of inclusion according to demographic variables and domains in order to examine the identification later on with the Palestinian case.

The methodology of this paper was based on the qualitative research method. The paper has illustrated the advantages of selecting this type and its relevance to the refugees' case. The qualitative approach was mainly based on choosing narrative interviews and semi-structured interviews. The former is relevant to this topic because as stated earlier in the paper that the Palestinian issue has witnessed different phases and developments after the Nakbah. Therefore, this type is appropriate to narrate and summarize the major events that this issue has witnessed. Further, this type of interviews will enrich the topic because it distinguishes the paper relevance to nationalism and its development through the contested concepts of this theory. It has rather served the nationalism theory.

The semi-structured interviews have covered the practical aspect of this paper concerning the Lebanese laws and practices that have restricted the Palestinian integration in different levels such as the economic, social and political levels. Semi-structured interviews have handled unemployment, access to labor market, the social security system and so forth. In other words, the characteristics of the open-ended question identify with analyzing the social exclusion-inclusion aspects.

The analysis part was divided into two main sections. The first one analyzed the situation of refugees in relation to the previous studies of the refugees issue and its development through

different phases. Further, this part analyzed the extraction of the Palestinian national identity through their presence in Lebanon during different phases –which have contributed in constructing and distinguishing the Palestinian identity. It has covered the beginning of the Nakbah until the end of the war of the camps. These events and the construction of the Palestinian identity were reflected on the narrative interviews by the respondents' involvement during that time; who are specialists and have broad knowledge about the topic. Also, it has focused to connect between the Palestinian presence and the right of return to Palestine.

The analysis of the social exclusion-inclusion theory has explained the identification with the Palestinian case to a large extent according to the demographic domains and variables at different aspects as stated earlier. The empirical part represented by interviews shows the variations of discourses towards approving these rights between supporters/protective as well their justifications of their positions. The resettlement part constitutes the focal point of this paper because it shows the explicit variations among these discourses and the Palestinian position. It also reinforces the narrative part because it has dealt with the Palestinian identity and the rejection of resettlement. The interviewees are familiar with the topic because they reflect the dichotomies of these discourses.

However, the common denominators among them have been clarified such as the segregation of Palestinians, poverty, the effects of the civil war, resettlement and so on. Moreover, the variations have been analyzed and illustrated according to the official position of both sides. The analysis part answered the research questions; the impact of the confessional composition on the Palestinian humanitarian rights. The confessional composition has been politically used towards restricting the Palestinians rights. In addition to this, the correlation between gaining these rights and the right of return has been clarified by the rejection of Palestinians to resettle. Further, they emphasized the significance of this right as a part of their existence and identity.

The conclusion has summarized the major components of this paper. It has emphasized the connection between the research questions and their theoretical and empirical relevance. Also, it has handled what can be done to the refugees' issue according to the humanitarian commitments towards the international and regional cooperation to improve their conditions. Further, the international community shall assure the importance of implementing the

international legitimacy represented by the UN resolution 194 to return the refugees to their homes.

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9 Appendix

9.1 Interview guide

General questions

- 1- Introduction of the thesis topic, introducing myself as a researcher, objectives of the topic, taking in consideration the interviewee confidentiality
- 2- Age, occupation and general information about the respondent
- 3- Where do you live?
- 4- What are the general impressions of the Palestinian issue?
- 5- In general, what is your opinion of the Palestinian refugees' situation in Lebanon?

Narrative interviews

Questions related to the historical phases of the refugees issue

- 1- Can you describe life in Palestine before 1948?
- 2- How did the Nakbah occur?
- 3- Can you describe the feeling of the Palestinians?
- 4- Can you talk about the refuge life in Lebanon after 1948 and how did the Lebanese state handle the situation of the refugees during this period?
- 5- Can you talk about the camps during the 1950s until 1969, before the Cairo agreement?
- 6- How was the situation of refugees after the arrival of the P.L.O in 1970 until the beginning of the Lebanese civil war 1975?
- 7- What happened during the period of the civil war from 1975 until 1982 and how was the situation of refugees as well for the Lebanese people?
- 8- What happened after the evacuation of the P.L.O from Beirut in 1982 and what was the feeling among the refugees?
- 9- Can you talk about the period of the war of the camps from 1985 until 1987?

Questions related to the Palestinian National Identity

- 1- What factors have affected identity formation regarding national belonging or non belonging in Lebanon?
- 2- What is the role of the Palestinian cultural institutions in empowering the national awareness of the refugees' issue?
- 3- What does Palestine mean for you?

- 4- Do you think gaining the humanitarian rights will affect the right of return?
How?
- 5- In which ways did the old generation or the Nakbah generation, the local communities of the camps, families and so on influenced the new generations about the Palestinian issue?
- 6- How did the PLO contributed in creating national awareness among refugees?
- 7- What are the major mistakes that have been committed by the PLO in Lebanon and in which ways did these mistakes affect or affecting the refugees?
- 8- What are the reasons for certain parts in Lebanon to reject offering the basic humanitarian rights for Palestinians?

Questions related to restricting and granting the basic humanitarian rights of Palestinians

- 1- What are the factors that affect your attitude towards giving Palestinians in Lebanon their humanitarian rights?
- 2- How has your attitude towards Palestinians changed during the recent years and why?
- 3- What might change your attitudes towards giving the Palestinians these rights?
- 4- How giving the right of employment in all professions will affect the Lebanese?
- 5- How do you think of allowing Palestinians to own property in Lebanon? Why not allowing them to do so?
- 6- Do you think the Lebanese practices and procedures on labor, health care system, right own a real estate property and social security system are fair towards Palestinians? Why?
- 7- How will in your opinion granting the Palestinian refugees humanitarian rights in Lebanon affect their right to return to their homeland of Palestine?

End of the interview

- 1- Are you optimistic that the situation of refugees will be improved in the future?
- 2- Is there anything you would like to add about the topic?
- 3- Do you have any more suggestions on the topic?
- 4- Is it possible to contact you again in case I need to ask more questions?

9.2 List of respondents

- 1- Dr. Salim Al-Hoss, the former Prime Minister of Lebanon
- 2- Mr. Ashraf Dabbour, the Palestinian ambassador in Lebanon
- 3- Mr. Samir El-Khoury, former Lebanese ambassador and the Head of the Lebanese-Palestinian dialogue committee on the refugees issue
- 4- Mr. Fouad Abdullah Youssef, member of the Palestinian National Council and member of the PFLP
- 5- Mr. Ziad El-Sayegh, Policies Advisor, Expert in Palestinian refugees issues and Middle East peace process, an advisor of the Lebanese Ministry of Labor
- 6- Mr. Soheil Al-Natour, Palestinian Researcher at the Human Development Center, Mar Elias Camp, specialist in the Lebanese-Palestinian Affairs
- 7- Mr. Melkar El-Khoury, the Phalanges Party Headquarter, The Head of MP Sami Gemayel Bureau
- 8- Mr. Jan Anton, Coordinator of Lebanese Forces, Ba'abda Area
- 9- Mr. Hassan Qablan, member of the Political Bureau of Amal Movement
- 10- Mr. Abu-Ibrahim, Palestinian citizen, Shatila Camp
- 11- Mr. Joseph Hindi, Lebanese citizen, Ain El-Rimmaneh, Beirut