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by Elizabeth Picard

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Lebanon is characterized in the introductory paper as a « deviant » case in comparison to other cases of restructuring of state power in Arab countries in a time of globalization. Concerning the security sector, the main transformation of national security in the Middle East can be summarized as follow:

- The diversification of armed forces
- Externalisation of security missions to either foreign, international, private or para-statal agencies
- The securitization of state-society relations, *in relation* to the extension of the power of the police state and the judiciarisation of politics
- But also the search for accommodation of armed forces by political powers either in a democratisation move (Huntington) or through an authoritarian pact (Stepan)

I will argue that Lebanon is deviant not so much because of the peculiarities of its social fabric and political institutions but due to the singular temporality of its change process. In Lebanon, change in institutions as well as in practices, of the kind that took place during several decades (since WW2) in other Arab countries, is taking place in a limited time span. As a result of this acceleration, diverging and eventually antagonist processes could be observed simultaneously.

During the fifteen years following the end of civil war (1990), change in Lebanon's defence and security sector took simultaneously two opposite directions: on one hand, the military and security forces were being reconstructed according to the already obsolete model of the national Arab army, and security strategy was tightly submissive to Syrian priorities. But, on the other hand, change was happening in the post-bipolar era and in a fluid political environment marked by looming regional insecurity and growing Western intervention. Such a hazardous environment contributed to a "post-modern" renewal of security priorities and military options playing against the state's military doctrine as inspired by its Syrian patrons.

The effect of the combination between these two opposite trends was an ideological and power struggle between pro-Western actors on one hand and pro-Syrian and/or pro-Iranian actors on the other hand within various state constituencies. As of today, the outcome of this confrontation remains open. Still, it is rich of lessons for those interested in the various implications of globalisation and the redefinition of the balance of power for local state restructuring in the Arab Eastern regions.

This communication is organised along two major issues:

1) Firstly, it questions the reform process observed in the Lebanese security sector since 1991 by confronting its actual institutionalisation (particularly through adoption of

general conscription) with the looming fragmentation of the state's security missions under the pressure of re-communalisation of politics.

2) Secondly, it examines changes in the definition of the objectives, functions and modus operandi in the security sector, and uses them as indicators of the waning of the Lebanese state's sovereignty in spite of its recent autonomisation from Syrian tutelage.

I UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS CAN A REFORMED SECURITY SECTOR HOLD TOGETHER A FRAGMENTING POLITY?

A. *Institutional reconstruction*

During the civil war, the Lebanese army did not escape the division of the country and national security functions were progressively taken over by non state actors. In the framework of the Taef agreement (1989) which put an end to the war, the reunification and consolidation of armed forces were meant to be the main vehicle for the restoration of the state. Armed and security forces were intended to become the backbone of the nation state.

The project was not really new for Lebanon: namely, it was inspired by Fuad Shihab's presidential experience (1958-1964). President Shihab, who had previously been C-in-C of the Lebanese army, had in mind the "neutral army" *(jaysh muhayid)* model which might help him challenge the traditional rule of communal notables. In Shihab's view, the army should be an independent center of power and project to the public the image of an institution with political and social stances distinct from those of civilian actors. The model was briefly re-activated under Amin Gemayel's presidency in 1983, with intensive US support, but to no avail. And when Emile Lahoud became the first post civil war C-in-C in October 1989, immediately after the Syrian army had expelled Michel Aoun, he was in many respects inspired by the Shihabist doctrine of a strong army for a unified state.

Therefore, the new Lebanese armed forces were anachronistically rebuilt according to the classical model of the Arab military (Sayigh; Picard) altogether from a developmentalist perspective and in the prospect of involving these forces in the political struggle for power (Owen, 1992).

The real novelty resided in the fact that Western countries traditionally supporting Lebanon (France and the U-S), became reluctant to help rebuild the Lebanese security sector as long as the state remained under Syrian control. The new Lebanese security sector remained therefore tightly interconnected to the powerful Syrian forces stationed on the country's territory (30 000 men in 1990, still 20 000 in 2001), at least until Syrian military retreat in April 2005.

1. Institutional reform

-       Concerning armed and security forces, an important change on state level consisted in the implementation of Law 102 (1983) creating the Supreme Council of Defence headed by the president. The C-o-D was composed of the ministers of Interior and Defence, the PM and vice PM, the C-in-C, the head of Internal Security Forces (police), the head of General security and the head of State security. Clearly the

composition of the C-o-D reflected the priority of domestic security over defence as well as of the minInt over the minDef. It also outlined a very centralised and hierarchical chain of command in the security sector in relation to close Syrian monitoring. Moreover, a National Security Council was established in 1991 in order to centralise previously competing information networks as well as to coordinate the operations of the military and civilian security services inside Lebanon. The army intelligence services and the directorate of the Sûreté générale (Internal security) were reformed respectively in 1990 and 1998, and successively entrusted to the same pro-Syrian officer. To complete the move, the judiciary, one of the most damaged sectors of the state during the civil war, was reorganised in close submission to the executive.

- During the civil war, armed forces and police had been trimmed down to a mere 12,000 men. They were untrained and fragmented. From the early 1990s on, they went through a deep and rapid reconstruction process: selective recruitment aiming at re-establishing their communal balance through the enlisting of 59% of Muslims between 1991 and 2001, then through an effort to attract young Christians; training of some 3,000 officers (half Christian half Muslim); re-organisation of the army into brigades subsequently reshuffled to make them more multi-confessional; rapid promotions, and strengthening of discipline.

On the whole, military and security reform was being conducted in a very "classical" manner, according to the nation-state paradigm.

2. The new armed forces, a melting-pot for Lebanese citizenship?

The Shihabist tone of the Taef agreement was especially illustrated by two initiatives in relation with the reconstruction of armed and security forces, seen as the backbone of the future Lebanese nation-state. The first one was DDR (disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration) of the war confessional militia (1991); the second was the adoption and implementation in 1993 of universal conscription in order to support national integration. However, twelve years later both initiatives appear to have missed their point:

- Only around 4,000 ex-militiamen (of whom 85% Muslim) and only a few dozen officers joined the regular armed forces while the main current of the Christian *Lebanese Forces* was excluded and more importantly, Hizbollah's Islamic resistance remained exempted from demob.

- As for the military service it brought yearly 10,000 and at its peak (in 2000) 20,000 recruits – three quarters of them Muslims. The operation was costly and raised growing protest among all sectors of the society especially among Christians. Young conscripts were trained only three months and often remained unoccupied during a full year. Conscription was suspended in 2005.

These anachronistic and failed initiatives are worth analysing in comparative perspective within and also outside the Arab region.

3. The new Lebanese army as a typical « Arab army ».

Although rebuilt after the bipolar era, the new Lebanese armed forces bore several traditional characteristics.

- Men in arms in the public service (either army or security) saw a fourfold increase between 1991 and 2001, thus representing a high percentage of the country's population. Security and defence budget culminated at 23% of government's budget in 1994 and remained higher than 10% during the all period. This was exorbitant with regard to state budget deficit (interviews mDef Kh. Hrawi 28 Feb 01 & economist K. Mehanna 8 June 02). Add that, except for a few special units there was little technical military modernisation. The growth of armed forces was a mere window dressing process and possibly a covert way of fighting unemployment. A deep discrepancy could be noticed between central and peripheral parts of the country with regard to modernisation of the infrastructures and equipment of armed forces.

- Military and security officers were granted various social and economic privileges. The move helped enhance recruitment of quality candidates but also gave rise to new corporatism, separating armed forces from the political elite and the communal society at large. Rather than sharing an ethic of « nation in arms », officers regrouped in a kind of « military party » (Rouquié). In a context of aggravated budget deficit, they tended to stand up collectively for their corporate interests (attack of the minFinances in 1999 when Siniora tried to cut the army budget).

- The new Lebanese armed forces were rebuilt under tight Syrian political control. The Syrian Special forces and various intelligence services spread over the country used a mix of corruption and threat to keep the Lebanese army and police under their order. They had direct access to the Lebanese military hierarchy at every level up to the Supreme Council of Defence.

On the whole, the relationship between the security and the political sector in post-war Lebanon bore several characteristics inherited from the Arab nationalist authoritarian state of the 1960s and 1970s.

B. *Armed and security forces as reflecting the social and political communal mosaic*

1. An unfinished de-confessionalisation process

Political de-confessionalisation was on the agenda of the Taef agreement but remained on the shelves. After a decade of *troika* rule (a Christian president under Syrian tutelage, a Shiite speaker of parliament allied with the Syrian regime, and a Sunni pm struggling for governmental autonomy) came a phase of re-confessionalisation of politics as observed in the Legislative elections of 2000 and 2005, through deeper Syrian intervention and also due to growing inter-communal competition within state constituencies.

2. The subsequent fragmentation of security institutions

Each security agency and many army officers became tightly linked to communal and/or private interests through clientelist and primordial *('asabiyât)* networks. What was at stake was the control of specific state institutions, with the various status and financial advantages attached. What was at work beyond alleged secularism within army and police was the selective recruitment of agents according to specific communal identities (e.g. in the Presidential guard or in the Government guard).

- The result was a dangerous unbalance between and within security forces in comparison with national demography as well as a looming privatisation of security functions. A good illustration is the case of the rehabilitation, reshuffling and expanding of ISF as revealed by general Rifi when he took them over after Syrian departure in 2005. ISF were suspected of communal preference toward the Sunnis (see their management of the February 2006 Islamist demonstration at Tabaris); corruption in their daily control of local populations; and involvement in trans-national mafia networks (as exposed in the Mehlis-Brammertz inquiry and the Bank al-Madina scandal also involving Syrian military top-brass in Lebanon.

- A side effect of the communalisation of state security was the re-activation of illegal communal and private militia groups as illustrated by the case of the *Lebanese Forces* which had been forced to go underground in 1994 and were being trained and equipped anew since 2001, possibly with Western (US) support. Hence the risk of resumption of civil war which might be ignited by multiple local communal military encroachments.

- However my hypothesis is that the military themselves have been able to escape the doom because they had the means to shield themselves from politics. The reasons are to be found less in the nature of their mission (we will see in part II that they mainly fulfil police tasks) and rather in their pre-1975 heritage (the model of the neutral army; a generation of committed officers recruited before the civil war had become the commandants and generals of today); in the post-war exclusion of top-brass previously involved in militia activities; and possibly in the counter-productive effect of officers' attendance of Syrian training schools (80% of all non-commissioned officers and 40% of all officers having followed a training session abroad) - strangely enough the Syrian authoritarian rule had the effect of de-politicising them; not to forget their corporatist interests mentioned previously.

- A confirmation of this hypothesis can be found in the management by the army of the large popular demonstrations in 2005 and 2006: sectarian tension within the army barracks was cleverly defused and responsible efficient officers sent on the ground while Western allies pressed the army command to avoid civilian massacres (Douard). Today the situation remains open as long as civilian leaders refrain from advising their partisans to leave their army assignment (Jaber).

In this respect, the Lebanese case is worth comparing to other Arab countries also characterised by ethnic and religious pluralism. In the absence, or deficiency, of democracy, each minority or peripheral group tends to privatise its collective defence, either covertly

(within homogeneous state military units) or directly (by forming a militia). While in other countries the majority rule does not guarantee equal security for every citizen, the Lebanese armed forces remain prone to fragmentation and dissent in order to guarantee the security of each communal and local group. In this respect, the privatisation of security is as much the effect of globalisation and the waging of new wars (Kaldor) as of specific path dependence.

II SECURITY AND THE RECOVERING OF STATE SOVEREIGNTY

This part of the presentation deals with the various functions fulfilled by military and security agencies with regard to the recovery of the Lebanese state's sovereignty. Its main assumption is that there is a paradoxical contradiction between the official (Lebanese and international) pledges for state sovereignty based on Westphalian criteria (the world being organised into independent and equal statal units) and Weberian criteria (the state as unique legitimate user of physical force) on one hand, and the current exercise of power in today's Middle East. Under American hegemony, the world, especially the Arab Middle East, tends to be organised along unequal hierarchised units, and criss-crossed by a network of trans-national actors.

Examining change in the definition of the objectives, functions and modus operandi of various security sector agencies since the end of the civil war, offers an opportunity to re-assess the sovereignty of Lebanon.

A. *Externalisation of defence. Blurring of army and police tasks*

1) The Lebanese army has been deprived of its defence main function altogether by domestic and foreign political decision.

- There is no consensus among state elites concerning the definition of national threat and main enemy. The result is political paralysis and the lack of strategy.
- Moreover, the Syrian power forbids any autonomous political or military Lebanese initiative on the Israeli frontline. Even after the Israeli withdrawal of 2000 and the Syrian withdrawal of 2005, Damascus keeps using pendent Israeli-Lebanese border encroachments (Shebaa, Ghajar) to promote its Golan Heights' strategy.
- Western powers deny the Lebanese army offensive and lethal armaments because they might threaten the IDF military superiority. The Lebanese army only intervened marginally in the South beside the Islamic resistance (Hizbollah) during the 1993, 1996 and 2006 invasions, and in the Ansarieh battle of 1997.

2) The Taef agreement itself, then several political decisions taken during the 1990s made the military a support and even a substitute for failing police forces. The army, submissive to Syrian command and president Lahoud, their past commander-in-chief, not only assisted the police but took the lead in execution: road blocks, curfews, identity controls, repression of social movements, stopping demonstrations, breaking strikes, tapping telephone lines, extra-judiciary arrests, abductions, extra-judiciary imprisonments at army headquarters.

- E. g. : against Hezbollah demonstration, 13 September 1993 ; arrest of Lebanese Forces leaders, 1994 ; policing in the Druze Shuf, 1994 ; arrest of Sunni militants after the assassination of sheikh Halabi, 1996 ; curfew against workers union (CGTL) demonstrations, 1997 ; crushing Tufayli's insurrection in Baalbeck, 1998 ; arrest of sovereignist militants in Christians areas in 2000 and 200

Although Lebanon remained far from the Arab *mukhâbarât* states whose society was caught between fear of, and complacency toward the regime, and where the public sphere was silenced, the post-Taef state has become much more coercive than the consensus state of the 1960s and 1970s. The political class and some segments of the society felt threatened by the new security priorities and methods that used to be blamed on brotherly Arab regimes. A new political cleavage appeared between those supporting the intervention of armed forces on the domestic scene (who more than often happened to be Syrian proxies) and deputies and leaders of various denominations who stood up together for the independence of the country and respect of the rule of law. Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Sfeir complained about security forces' abuses and illegal arrests. Prime minister Rafic Hariri denounced anti-constitutional measures while Druze leader Walid Jumblatt claimed that since president Lahoud's election, Lebanon was "living under a military regime".

3) All in all Lebanon was being rebuilt Lebanon as a weak state with a limited margin of manoeuvre in security matters, altogether submissive to Syrian rule and to new global (Western) security priorities. It was rebuilt as a minorised local force contributing under external authority in the struggle against (Islamist) terrorism, illegal migration and unlawful traffics.

Military operations against Islamist radicals and Jihadists illustrated the new trend:

A large security operation was undertaken by the military against a Sunni Islamist group of 200-300 guerillas on the eve of the year 2000. The group had taken refuge in Dinniyeh, a mountainous northern region. While presented as a domestic security operation, the attack had been decided in compliance with "regional" (Syrian) interests. It took place under the supervision of Damascus and with the support of the Syrian army. The army command appeared strongly committed to fight scattered Sunni groups who represented the only potential challenger to the 'secularist' regime in Syria. At the same time, the suppression of Islamist militants had been insistently demanded by the US in search of al-Qaida militants. The Dinniyeh campaign was followed by multiple skirmishes between army units and Salafi groups, and a series of crackdowns. Hundreds of Islamic militants were rounded up while thousands of police files were scrutinized by Lebanese intelligence in cooperation with Syrian and U.S. security services.

Various operations against Sunni militants showed that Lebanese security agents from the "B2" (the army intelligence services) or from the minInt had now gained capacity to implement tasks like interrogations and searches that had been the preserve of the Syrians and their local proxies (such as SSNP and local Ba'thist militants) since the end of the civil war. And it was hardly paradoxical that such capacity had been acquired through training and advice from Western powers such as France and Germany, making Lebanon a junior partner in the "global war against terror".

At this stage, a conclusion might be that the reconstruction of the Lebanese armed forces made Lebanon resemble more the Arab "police state"; however a new kind of "police state", submissive to the new world order of hierarchised states.

B. *Toward a redefinition of state sovereignty*

Since 2004, the US strategy of «democratisation» in the broader Middle East combined with the French fall out with Bashar al-Asad's regime has made the full recovery of state sovereignty a Lebanese priority. However, the new Western injunctions as illustrated by UNSC 1559 (Sept 04) and 1701 (Aug 06), and the redefinition of national defence under the influence of external actors put the contradictions within the Lebanese state in full light: (1) the absence of internal consensus on the notion of national defence; (2) the substitution of a communal militia for paralysed state armed forces; and (3) the submission of the Lebanese army to an international force enforcing its own view of local and regional security.

1) Historically and even more since Rafic Hariri's assassination and the withdrawal of Syrian armed forces, there was no national consensus on the designation of the country's main threat (Syria or Israel). For that reason, the army remained nearly absent from the Israeli frontline since 1949 (although their motto was "to the South, walk and persist"). After the 2000 Israeli withdrawal, the army and ISF sent a joint limited force of lightly armed 1,000 men south of the Litani.
The rift between the present pro-Western ruling coalition (Siniora, the 14-March leaders) and its contenders (Hezbollah, Aoun) who welcome the support of Syria and Iran deepened after the Israeli war in Lebanon in the summer of 2006, in relation to the sectarian distribution of power. Each political-sectarian party defines national defence according to what they consider the dominant sensibility of their constituency, thus shattering the national identity of the state. National security is also a venue for foreign sectarian oriented intervention (US and France equipping, training and assisting the ISF; Iran doing the same for Hezbollah).

2) Hezbollah, a surrogate for state defence forces.
Since 1985, Hezbollah has become *the* military actor confronting Israel in Lebanon. It was acknowledged as the main national resistance group and Shiite representative in the Damascus agreement of 1988, and exempted from DDR in 1991.

- Hezbollah is a paragon of new warfare and military structures born from with the "revolution in military affairs".
As seen in its recruitment and the blurring of the military, the party, and the Shiite society. Its recruits are drawn through family and communal connections. Horizontal solidarity networks crisscross a strict top-down authoritarian hierarchy.
As observed in its operational means (well-equipped, small, mobile units, with intelligence capability) and strategy (around 10,000 combatants with light high-tech arms available on the international market, even the use of suicide militants). It is organised for a new kind of warfare where high technology is coupled with improvisation. + The role of media and information technologies, and its capacity for trans-national mobilisation and funding.

- Hezbollah has the capacity to mobilise by religion, history and identity, to modify the structure, norms and ethics not only of the Shiite society but of the Lebanese

entity, and to promote a kind of state formation different from the communal state which was a legacy of Ottoman and colonial rule.

- Although they seem competitors at first sight, there has been covert and open strategic cooperation between Hezbollah and the military under Syrian tutelage, especially since Emile Lahoud presidency (1998-). Hezbollah leadership refers to a "conceptual continuity" between them as illustrated by the April 1996 arrangement ending the Israeli operation "Grape of Wrath", the prisoners' exchange with Israel in 1998 and 2004, and various public stances after Israeli withdrawal in 2000. The understanding between Hezbollah and Aoun's Patriotic Current in 2005 is to be read in the same context. While this remains a subject of contention among army officers and feeds inter-sectarian cleavages (between Sunnis and Shiites) and intra-sectarian cleavages (between Christians), it is also leading to a redefinition of the boundaries of state authority and state legitimacy.

3) Since 2004, the reconstruction of the Lebanese armed forces and the redefinition of their missions by external actors illustrate the "neo-trusteeship over a weak state" model (Fearon & Laitin). It is worth comparing with the relationship of the PA on the one hand, and the GCC states on the other hand, with the US.

- Western powers (especially EU countries, the UK acting as a substitute for the US) are now willing to reform and train the military and the police, *but only* in relation to their regional strategic priorities as attested in recent meetings on security sector reform held in Geneva, Beirut and Amman. Their understanding of Lebanese security comes along their own understanding of the identity of the Lebanese state, of its relation to specific communal groups, and of Lebanese national interest. They are subsequently contributing to enforce a redeployment of the Lebanese state.

- External defence of Lebanon has been pre-empted by UNIFIL + since September 2006. In spite of official declarations and the sending of several thousands troops, the Lebanese do not have the military lead in the southern area between the Litani and the Israeli border, neither in the control of the Syrian border, nor in their territorial waters. At best they can put forward their dissension with the UN rule (e. g. Siniora's seven point plan in August 2006). But rather than expressing state sovereignty, this dissension sheds light on the current crisis over Lebanese national identity.