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## **Social identity development in pluralistic societies : a study on the psychological stages of development of the Lebanese identity.**

Marwan Makarem Gharzeddine  
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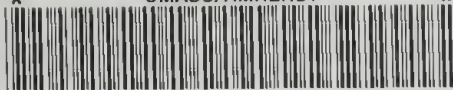
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**SOCIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT IN PLURALISTIC SOCIETIES: A STUDY ON THE  
PSYCHOLOGICAL STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEBANESE IDENTITY**

**A Dissertation Presented**

**by**

**MARWAN MAKAREM GHARZEDDINE**

**Submitted to the Graduate School of the  
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**September 1997**

**School and Counseling Psychology**

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**A Dissertation Presented**

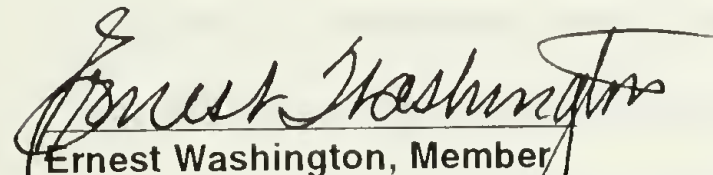
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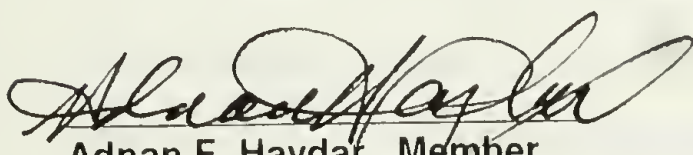
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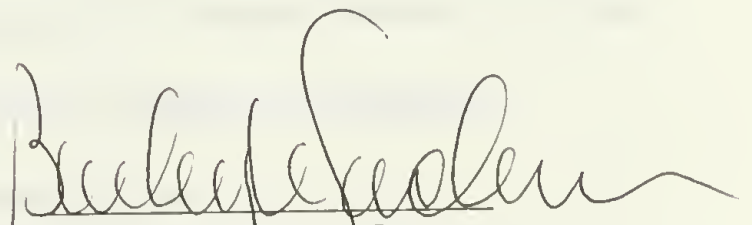
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **SOCIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT IN PLURALISTIC SOCIETIES: A STUDY ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEBANESE IDENTITY**

**SEPTEMBER 1997**

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An individual's social identity development in pluralistic societies going through an integration process has been little understood. A study was conducted on the Lebanese individual's social identity development. Based on a study of the theories of the psychology of social identity development, four Lebanese Identity development stages were proposed where an individual's social identity progresses from an unintegrated Lebanese, sectarian group identity, towards a more integrated Lebanese Identity.

To test the validity of these stages, two research studies, a qualitative and a quantitative study, were conducted to explore the Lebanese social identity. In the qualitative study, open ended interviews of a number of Lebanese community leaders were conducted and analyzed. While the four proposed identity stages were reflected in the subjects' views, the majority of their views reflected a higher stage of identity development where the emphasis was on a civic society and the satisfaction of the individual's rights and needs as a basis of the integrated Lebanese social identity. These results were in agreement with the proposed Lebanese Identity development stages.

Moreover, a quantitative research study examined the relationship between an individual's various socio-economic factors and their level of identity development. The results revealed that there is a strong relationship between an individual's level of identity development and the following socio-economic variables: Sectarian identity, profession, level of education,

source of data collection, and nature of dual Lebanese nationality. In general, it was concluded that individuals had higher levels of Lebanese Identity development when they enjoyed a more secure life, had higher levels of communication and exposure to others in society as well as higher levels of education.



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## INTRODUCTION

### The Statement of the Problem

Technological changes in the last century have made old cultural and geographical barriers between different human populations less significant. As more and more ethnically, religiously, and culturally different groups attempt to live in the same societies, the problem of understanding the change and development of people's social identities in such pluralistic environments becomes of utmost importance.

This is, however, not a new problem. Many old societies have been facing the problem of developing social identities in pluralistic contexts. Some examples come to mind, where long standing identity problems have afflicted people living in such areas as Northern Ireland, the Balkans, and Lebanon, just to name a few.

Although there have been numerous research studies on the racial, minority, or majority identity development of individuals living in majority societies, no research has been conducted on the psychological process of common identity development among individuals living within the same multi-ethnic society such as the Lebanese social group.

In Lebanon, past studies on the social identity of individuals have failed to explore the development of the Lebanese identity from a psychological human perspective. More specifically, the levels of consciousness of the common Lebanese identity and the development of that identity among individual Lebanese citizens have never been explored or described in a theoretical study.

Understanding the psychological development of the Lebanese identity among individuals and its relation to various socio-economic factors becomes especially relevant after the recent civil war that had its roots in the past disagreements of the different Lebanese groups around the definition of national identity.



Finally, understanding the Lebanese experience of identity development will hopefully shed some light on future approaches to comprehending identity issues that other pluralistic societies face as they share a common overall social experience.

### **The Background of the Study**

Many countries that are made up of multi-ethnic groups have to deal with the question of defining their national identity. Most often than not, the different ethnic groups attempt to project and impose their ethnic identity on the other groups. If one social group is much more powerful than the other groups, it usually succeeds in imposing its identity and culture on the others. That is why, as we shall see later, the different identity development models in existence explore the stages of awareness that minority groups experience as they discover their particular group identity.

In some cases, though, no particular social group in a country can successfully impose its identity on the other group or groups, and therefore, the question of defining the country's identity becomes especially problematic. This is reflected in the numerous conflicts that flare up around the world in multi-ethnic countries such as Lebanon, Bosnia, Ireland and Rwanda.

In Lebanon, the various attempts in the past to define the Lebanese identity reflected particular sectarian lines of thought and have, therefore, resulted in a multiplicity of definitions of the Lebanese identity.

More specifically, a lot of the discussions around the Lebanese identity in the past were limited to the question of whether Lebanon and its people should have an Arab identity or a Western Christian identity (Hanf, 1994; Salibi, 1965). In his book entitled Lebanon-Coexistence during the War, which was the result of 16 years of extensive research trying to comprehend all aspects of the Lebanese Civil War, Theodore Hanf (1994), refers to a number of Lebanese politicians, political party members and journalists who all believe that one of the main reasons

behind the Civil War in 1975 was the lack of one agreed-upon national identity among the different political and religious parties in Lebanon. Instead, according to Hanf, every group emphasized a certain unique identity for Lebanon, such as a Lebanon that is completely part of Greater Syria, or a Lebanon that has a clear Arab identity, or a Lebanon with some Arab identity but also with a Western influence and orientation.

Therefore, it seems that traditionally, the focus has been on the differences and not the common aspects in the perspectives of these groups, which naturally led to more divisions in the society and an increase in conflicts. According to the well-known scholar, Kabbani (1993), some of the major players that encouraged the differences and not the commonalities among the Lebanese have been the religious and missionary schools and institutions. By each school emphasizing its own religious agenda and curriculum, the students were only being taught to respect and admire their own school's teachings, which, with time, resulted in increasing the gaps among the various religious groups in Lebanon and eventually the hatred among them (Kabbani, 1993).

Discussions of the Lebanese identity that are focused around the above mentioned debates are simplistic and do not reflect the whole scope and complexity of the Lebanese identity issue. Such discussions fail to address those aspects of the country's (people's) identity that reflect the psychological common experiences resulting from the interaction of the different sectarian groups and the different cultures through time. Consequently, those simplistic identity debates fail to focus on the harmonizing aspects of people's identity and instead focus only on the conflictual aspects.

In order for a group self to exist in any group, commonalities among the group members have to be present and clearly defined (Hogg, 1987). The formation of a Lebanese group self is impossible to attain unless there is a conception among the people of their common characteristics, common interests, common needs, common goals, and common challenges as well as the common psychological processes they experience as they interact with each other.

Therefore, one way to increase people's understanding of their national identity is by exploring the psychological nature of their identity. This entails understanding the various levels of identity consciousness experienced by the Lebanese individuals as well as comprehending how the different consciousness levels relate to each other. Finally, through a developmental perspective, the Lebanese individual will be able to understand the conflicts and differences in society as part of the natural process of formation of a unified Lebanese identity.

### **The Purpose of the Study**

This study has a three fold purpose. First, based on identity development models of specific and general psychological groups, the researcher proposes a theoretical model that describes the psychological stages of development of the pluralistic Lebanese identity.

Second, the researcher attempts to describe the various aspects of the Lebanese identity that are reflected by the views of a group of Lebanese individuals representing different cultural, social, and political segments of society. The proposed Lebanese identity development model is used as the conceptual framework through which the subjects' views are analyzed.

Third, this study explores the levels of identity consciousness among a random sample of Lebanese individuals as well as explores the relationship that exists between some of the Lebanese individuals' socio-economic backgrounds and experiences and their level of Lebanese identity consciousness.

### **Research Questions**

First, through an exploration of the group psychology theories, the researcher attempts to answer the following questions: What are the basic psychological principles that shape an individual's social self? What are the common psychological characteristics of the development



of an individual's social identity in any social group? And how do these psychological characteristics manifest themselves in the particular circumstances that surround the Lebanese social group?

The answer to these questions, in turn, enables the researcher to propose a general model for the Lebanese identity stages of development based on general human psychological principles. Such a model can be used as a tentative conceptual framework for understanding the views of the different subjects whose views are to be explored in this research study.

Second, by studying the views of different Lebanese subjects, the researcher focuses on answering the following questions: How does a cross-sectional representative group of Lebanese individuals define and perceive the Lebanese identity four years after the end of a 17-year-long civil war? More specifically, how have the respondents come to understand the Lebanese society and the Lebanese individual in terms of their relationship with themselves, their human and their physical environments?

By categorizing the different views that are presented by the subjects studied, the researcher attempts to determine what specific and general Lebanese issues define the identity of individuals, and how these views can be understood within a psychological Lebanese identity developmental model. By doing so, the researcher hopes to be able to refine and expand the original model proposed at the beginning of the study.

As the first research study explores the world views held by individuals functioning at different stages, a second research study attempts to answer the following question: What is the distribution of a random sample of Lebanese subjects along the four stages of identity development proposed in this research study? Finally, what is the relationship between an individual's level of identity consciousness and his or her social and economic backgrounds?

## The Significance of the Study

By basing our understanding of the Lebanese identity and its development on general human psychological principles, we will be able to approach issues and problems related to the identity from a solid scientific point of reference. The process of the actual unification of pluralistic societies, such as the Lebanese society, indicates that individuals with different group identities would start to develop a social identity that is reflective of the overall common societal experience. Therefore, a better understanding of the psychological processes that underlie the development of an integrated identity as well as the factors that affect its development would contribute greatly to the psychological unification process.

Through an understanding of the different psychological levels of identity development, Lebanese individuals will be better able to negotiate and accept psychological changes that they feel they are going through as a result of their interactions within their society. Moreover, such an understanding of the levels of identity development also permits individuals from different segments of society to understand how they can better relate to each other.

Therefore, the model also helps to unify our perception of the different individuals of society along one common psychological developmental continuum. More specifically, the developmental model expands the scope of past identity discussions by: First, understanding the Moslem-Christian dialectic within a wider developmental framework, and second, it also helps incorporate the views of those individuals in society who do not perceive their identity in terms of the Moslem-Christian dialectic of the past studies.

Moreover, in identifying the different stages of the Lebanese identity development, we are able to suggest concrete cultural and educational programs as well as activities that address the problems inherent in each level of identity consciousness. The ultimate goal here would be to facilitate the process of strengthening the Lebanese group identity. In addition, understanding the relationship between the different socio-economic factors and an individual's stage of identity

consciousness further enables us to understand and develop focused educational programs to help individuals better negotiate developmental changes of their social identity.

Finally, it is the hope of the researcher that this study may serve as a basis for educational programs for young Lebanese men and women because it attempts to define the group psychology of Lebanese individuals in human development terms through stages that cut across sectarian lines and demystify the nature of the Lebanese problem, and because it contributes to our understanding of the identity problem in Lebanon in such a way that enables individuals in society to develop more sophisticated rational means for dealing with the complex social problems facing Lebanon.

### **The Nature of the Study**

Through a theoretical exploration of general group development and identity development theories as well as a review of publications related to the issue of Lebanese identity and Lebanese history, a tentative theoretical model is proposed to describe the stages of Lebanese identity development. Each stage in this model is operationally defined by a number of propositions that describe the psychological group and individual characteristics of people functioning at each stage.

First, through the use of the above mentioned operational definitions, a qualitative interview analysis of the views of a prominent group of Lebanese individuals is conducted with the aim of exploring and describing the main issues defining Lebanese identity and its state of development four years after the cessation of the Lebanese civil war.

Second, a quantitative study is performed on a random sample of Lebanese individuals in order to determine their distribution among the different stages of identity development as well as study the relationship between an individual's level of identity consciousness and his/her various socioeconomic characteristics.



## Literature Review Plan

The literature review consists of the following:

First, previous studies that attempted to explain the psychological basis of formation of a group self in the minds of people as well as the necessary and sufficient conditions for the presence of such a group self and its relationship to the individual's self identity are explored.

Second, a study of the group development stages as described by Wheelan (1994) in her study about general group processes is reviewed.

Third, some group identity development theories are explored. More specifically, the "Black Identity Development" theory suggested by Bailey Jackson (1976) and the minority identity development theory proposed by Sue & Sue (1990) are analyzed and common themes are emphasized.

Fourth, general behavioral patterns of Lebanese social groups are explored through a review of literature concerning the history and nature of Lebanon and its identity.

The goal of such a literature review is to integrate relevant aspects from the different psychological group theories into the construction of a Lebanese identity development model.

## Hypotheses

First, it is hypothesized that the Lebanese identity consciousness can be described in four different stages similar in some basic aspects to other identity development stages of other groups.

Second, it is my hypothesis that the major themes found in the qualitative analysis of the interviews can be categorized into one of the four suggested stages.

Third, it is hypothesized that, due to the effects of the war in Lebanon, the majority of the responses will reflect a high level of awareness of the common Lebanese identity.



Fourth, as for the survey, it is my hypothesis that the male group of subjects will be found to be functioning at a lower awareness level of the common identity than the female group of subjects.

Fifth, the amount of time the subjects have lived during the war will correlate positively with the level of identity development.

Sixth, the level of education will correlate positively with the individual's level of identity development.

Seventh, the group of younger subjects will reflect a higher level of awareness of the overall common Lebanese identity.

Eighth, different sectarian groups will differ in their level of identity development.

### **Definition of Terms**

#### **The Stages of Lebanese Identity Development**

It refers to the psychological levels of Lebanese identity consciousness of an individual as reflected by his/her perception of himself/herself, his/her environment, and the relationship between the two.

#### **Adequate Lebanese Identity**

It refers to the Lebanese identity definition that leads the different members of society to live harmoniously with each other, and which is based on a rational and objective understanding of a Lebanese individual's self, environment, and the relationship between the two.

### **Inadequate Lebanese Identity**

It refers to a Lebanese identity definition that is potentially conflictual to members of society, and which does not reflect a Lebanese individual's objective and rational understanding of himself/herself, his/her environment, and the relationship between the two.

### **Lebanese Group**

It is the group of all the Lebanese citizens regardless of their sectarian belonging, political party affiliation, or ethnic origin.

### **The Lebanese Group Self**

It is a description of the characteristics of that part of the individual self identity that is shared with a large number of other Lebanese individuals regardless of their religious or sectarian belonging.

### **Sectarianism**

This word is used to denote the negative aspects that result from sectarian ethnocentrism, sectarian division and sectarian conflict within the same multi-sectarian society. Moreover, it also refers to the rigid aspects of religious identities that are not adaptive to environmental changes, and which are, thus, not life and growth promoting.

## Assumptions

The assumptions in this study are three-fold: The first set of assumptions has to do with the nature of group identity formation while the second set relates to the sample subjects that are being studied, and finally, the third assumption deals with the nature of the methodology chosen for this study.

- 1- There are common psychological processes that underlie the development of the identity of individuals in any human group. This assumption justifies the use of various identity development models of other groups and, specifically, Jackson's BID theory and Sue and Sue minority development theory as a bases for the development of the Lebanese identity stages that is proposed in this study.
- 2- A rational understanding of human phenomena can help people develop rational ways to avoid conflict and destruction.
- 3- Whenever two group cultures interact, a new culture develops that is related to the two above mentioned cultures but that is different from both. Similar to the union of two people, their offspring carry some of the characteristics of the parents but are yet different from them.
- 4- It is possible to actively participate in the development and the consciousness-raising of the Lebanese identity by verbalizing, understanding, and defining its character and communicating these to individuals in society.
- 5- Due to the subjects' prominent roles in the Lebanese society, it is assumed that the different views verbalized by them are generally reflective of the most significant Lebanese identity issues among the overall Lebanese group.

## Limitations

In this study, I am interested in understanding the Lebanese individual's perception of the Lebanese identity. Since no psychological research studies have been conducted in the past around this subject, it is necessary to decide on a starting point from which the Lebanese identity could be studied. Therefore, the decision to propose the Lebanese Identity Stages of Development from theories of group development of other general and particular groups is considered as a first step in the understanding of the Lebanese identity. As is the case with all theories, this theory should always be subject to further refinement and improvement with the goal of further understanding the common human basis of the Lebanese identity.

Moreover, the choice of a limited number of group representatives, and not regular Lebanese citizens as the subjects of the first research study, limits the study in many ways. First, it has to be accepted at the time being that the subjects' views largely reflect their community's opinions and perceptions. This might not necessarily be true, but it is impossible at present to determine and make a differentiation between the subjects' idiosyncratic views and those views that really reflect their groups' perception.

Second, the subjects are a limited cross-section of group representatives and, therefore, a more comprehensive study would cover a greater number of elite subjects.

Third, the lack of previous research studies in this area makes it necessary to ask very general, open-ended questions in order to obtain a conceptual starting point for future studies. Consequently, however, this limits the current study from being able to understand the subjects' perceptions around certain issues in more detail.

Fourth, the fact that this proposed study does not explore the opinions of a large number of average Lebanese citizens through open ended questions around their understanding of their Lebanese identity is considered a limitation that deprives the research at hand from drawing a more comprehensive picture.



In order to compensate for the above mentioned limitations, the researcher has included a quantitative study that sheds some light on the identity characteristics of a broader and more representative sample of subjects. Therefore, while this second study complements the results of the first research study and can further increase our understanding of the Lebanese identity among individuals, it, in turn, suffers from a number of limitations.

As mentioned above, the absence of past empirical studies around the stages of Lebanese identity development leads the researcher to conduct a survey study to explore the general characteristics of the sample under question. A more detailed study of how specific factors affect the Lebanese identity development can only be done after we gain some initial understanding of the various factors affecting the Lebanese identity as this study is attempting to do.

## CHAPTER I

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF GROUPS

In the following chapter, I will focus my literature review around three general aspects of group psychology with the ultimate goal of utilizing this knowledge in understanding and analyzing the Lebanese group and the Lebanese group identity. I will initially review some contributions of the theories of evolution to our understanding of group behavior. In other words, the goal of this section is to explore the role of group behavior in the evolution of man as well as the role of natural selection in the evolution of groups. Later, I will review the major contributions of the field of psychology that revolve around our understanding of group behavior and the behavior of the individuals constituting these groups. More specifically, this review will focus on two aspects of group functioning, mainly, the individual psychological basis of group behavior as well as the psychology of group development and individual identity development of group members.

#### **Evolutionary Origins of Group Functioning**

In this section I will attempt to explore the major factors that have guided the evolution and natural selection of group behavior among human beings. Therefore, I will briefly discuss the evolutionary relationship between an individual's survival and his development of group behavioral traits. Moreover, the role that Man's cognitive development has played in the evolution of group behavior will be emphasized as well as the importance of the development of group culture along with the development of more sophisticated cooperative and competitive skills.

The evolutionary origins of group functioning among humans have been discussed by a great number of evolutionary theorists including sociobiologists, anthropologists, psychologists, ethnologists and sociologists. The two basic questions for scientists have been: (1) why did group behavior develop among individuals and (2) what role has group functioning played in the evolution of man in general?

### **Relationship between Individual and Group Behavior**

Some answers to these questions have been suggested by sociobiologists. Sociobiology is the branch of biology that explains social behavior among all species in terms of evolutionary biology that relies on Darwin, Mendelian and Hamiltonian ideas (Reynolds, Falger & Vine, 1987). The central idea in sociobiology surrounds the role of natural selection in the evolution of any biological system.

In his book, On the Origin of Species, Darwin's (1859) initial formulation of natural selection emphasized the central role of the individual in the evolutionary process. Darwin theorized that natural selection occurred at the individual level where the battle for survival indicated that only the fittest individual would be capable of donating his genes to future generations.

On the other hand, Wallace (1864)-the co-discoverer of the concept of natural selection-emphasized the vital role that groups must have performed in the evolutionary process of man. Wallace believed that an individual's ability to function in groups, which would have helped him in securing food and shelter by overcoming with others the challenges that the environment had imposed on him and his community, would have become subject to the process of natural selection. In the same way, Wallace explained that since the individual's physical characteristics became of lesser relevance to him, his moral and mental qualities must have been given more weight by the human race.

Later, in his book, The Descent of Man, Darwin (1871) placed much less emphasis on the individual's role in the process of natural selection and instead stressed the roles that intergroup conflict as well as intragroup cooperation must have played in the evolution of Man. Therefore, group interaction became much more significant to an individual's survival. In other words, group selection took over individual selection so that gene-based characteristics were naturally selected as to how they benefit the group as a whole rather than the individual alone. The better the individuals functioned within a group, the more selection at the group level took place.

It is important to emphasize that pure individual and pure group selection are only the two extremes of a continuum (Wilson, 1975). According to Dawkins (1982), the concept of natural selection is used here in a comprehensive form meaning that it must have taken place at many various levels, from the genetic level to the individual and family levels and, later on, to the level of larger groups. This means that a comprehensive analysis of human evolution requires that we understand how the different levels of selection, that is, individual, kin, group, genetic and cultural selection interact and function (Melotti, 1987).

### **Basis of Man's Relationship with Other Men**

How can we explain the evolution of the ability of individuals to function in groups and what is the relation between the evolution of purely group functioning capacities and individual capacities to function independently from groups?

According to Dunbar (1987), the Darwinian analysis of group behavior regards group behavior in terms of its adaptiveness to its environment and how this particular adaptiveness affects future gene frequency. Concepts such as natural selection, genetics and particularly inclusive fitness are the cornerstone of the evolutionary explanation (Reynolds et al., 1987).



Inclusive fitness, a term borrowed by sociobiologists, is intended to interpret how a particular behavior of a group member within his own group increases his chances of donating his genes to future generations. On the most basic level, in his theory, Hamilton (1964) explains how an individual's genes will extend when he acts in such a way as to, first, increase his own fitness or fruitful reproduction and, second, increase the fitness of other group members who are bearing the same genes. This would, in turn, mean that the individual must have evolved traits that help him transmit his genes to the future generations as well as help other group members carrying similar gene pools to transmit their genes too (Hamilton, 1964).

Group behavior among kin members is seen to have a high fitness value for an individual because a group can function as an organized unit whose members can enjoy the benefits of the division of labor and better guarantee their genetic survival (Dunbar, 1987). Furthermore, transmission of family norms that regulate the family members' relation to each other and the wealth of survival techniques happen at a more basic level than for larger groups.

Dunbar (1987) offers a more detailed picture and gives the following explanation: The individual's genetic survival is dependent on his ability to reproduce offspring who, in turn, must survive to the age of sexual maturity. However, before the individual accomplishes this goal, he must first consider other important survival problems that he faces on day to day basis. In other words, besides finding and consequently mating with his mate, the individual has to think of protecting as well as securing food and shelter for his family so that they can survive into next the generation.

However, since the human being's energy and time are restricted, it is unfeasible for him alone to implement the perfect solutions for all these problems (Dunbar, 1987). Therefore, he ends up compromising his idealistic solutions by replacing them with "an optimal mix of solutions that will yield the largest number of descendants" (Dunbar, 1987, p. 49). The human tendency for inclusive fitness further explains why the most naturally occurring groups in

societies are families and kin groups. The prevalence of this most basic group behavior is due to the simplicity by which different members come to understand their common plight.

### **Parallel Development of Complex Group Functioning Abilities and Cognitive Abilities**

With further human evolutionary changes, the organizations of groups was not restricted to distinct blood relations. Man developed a higher awareness of his environment which enabled him to develop a deeper understanding of his dependence on distant others and, therefore, to relate with more complexity with group members who were not necessarily blood relations. Therefore, having a higher awareness of an individual's inclusive fitness with others was associated with a higher level of cognitive evolution.

More specifically, before developing cognitive awareness, our human ancestors must have depended on knowledge of their environment through their own experience of their instincts. A major change in the nature of human functioning occurred with the development of human language and cognitive awareness.

During the development process of the human brain, man not only became capable of owning and being aware of a mental map that represents the world around him but also became consciously able to play with complex ideas and information (Vine, 1987). Moreover, Vine (1987) continues, human beings gained the capacity for self-objectification, which has been stressed by the symbolic interactionist theories stemming from the ideas of G.H. Mead. The development of this capacity results in a higher level of relatedness between group members. Man's interaction level with others developed from just being based on affective attachments to a new level where cognitive schemas are additionally used.

Humphrey (1983) argues that man's capacity to possess a mental map enables him to understand and predict a range of cognitive possibilities including the other individuals' state of mind. Ultimately, this mental capacity would prove extremely socially advantageous within

groups since it would provide the individual with the proper means to predict the behavior of others in advance and perceive their common shared characteristics and goals (Humphrey, 1983).

Similarly, Vine (1987) explains that these schemas enable a human being to represent mentally the social world in his mind where he can also enact the behaviors of others and relate them to the self. This capacity for empathy also enables an individual to represent in his mind the shared collective unconscious (Vine, 1987).

Moreover, since early on in man's evolution, Man's enhanced communication skills was the means through which social intelligence evolved and was, therefore, an essential condition for a productive adaptation to occur. The development of such skills facilitated the process of coordinating goals and the ability for planning and executing constructive collective activity to realize them. Consequently, the development of human language, which began with simple symbolic abilities, paved the way for a complex transmission of acquired knowledge. This kind of social learning was the foundation for a rapid cultural revolution (Vine, 1987).

### **The Role of the Individual, Group Culture, and In-group/Out-group Conflict and Cooperation in the Evolution of Humans**

Therefore, individual selection is not the only type of selection for, as Durham (1979) points out, there seems to be an intricate relationship between individual, group selection, and culture. On the one hand, Durham (1979) maintained that the cultural qualities of a social group are, to a large extent, the outcome of internal individual level selection. This does not mean that these qualities are usually in contrast with the interests of the group since the existence of a stable and functioning social group is necessary for the long-term reproductive success of its members. Hence, the individual's chances for survival is maximized when group members develop a culture where there is a balance between the adaptive qualities at the individual level of selection and group level of selection .



Moreover, the development of culture suggested that man's evolution was no longer dependent on the slow changes in an individual's genetic makeup but much more on the transmission of learned adaptive behavior to the next generation. According to Alexander and Borgia (1978), culture, which emerged as the result of war, can be easier transmitted than genes and more abruptly changeable. It is because of culture that tensions and differences between human populations get so much reinforced so as to create a state of competition in the same group as well as between groups. Furthermore, it is because of culture, represented by what one generation teaches the other, mainly knowledge and group organization, that group selection among humans occurs and is effective (Alexander, 1974).

In 1978, Alexander and Borgia further explained why, in their opinion, the human species is virtually a perfect illustration for effective selection at group level and the role of culture in that. The first reason is because human groups are made up of competing and hostile groups that have treated each other in similar ways as other species as well as have been able to quickly develop different competitive abilities due to their cultural innovations.

Secondly, human groups are the only species that is capable of working as a unit due to its ability to plan, predict and implement certain actions that are directly related to increasing the competitive positions of the group, whether through eliminating unsettling behavior from within the group or through taking direct collective action against competing groups.

Moreover, Bigelow (1969) elaborates more on the concepts of cooperation and competition and offers the following explanations: The primary biological advantage of primate group life was guarding the young and the females from predatory animals. However, while the use of weapons gradually provided humans with a sense of relative immunity from these animals, other groups of people began to represent the major new danger to them. As a result of that, Bigelow concludes that both intergroup competition and intragroup cooperation increased with the latter becoming of utmost importance to the group.



More explicitly, Bigelow (1969) explains that cooperation within a group was essential for survival purposes during a conflict situation with an outside group. On the other hand, Bigelow believed that those groups who were the least to cooperate with each other during a war situation were eliminated. Therefore, according to Bigelow, throughout man's evolutionary history, groups, who were known to be much more organized than others and who were more conscious of the importance of cooperating with other groups and acted accordingly, were considered to be more successful.

### **The Role of Stereotyping in Cultural and Group Selection**

Melotti (1987) cites Spencer who, in his study of evolution in 1893, was searching for a code that defined the field of human ethics in a scientific manner. Instead of finding what he was looking for, Spencer discovered that human beings through evolution have come to hold a double standard of morality. He called one standard the 'Code of Amity,' and the other the 'Code of Enmity.'

He explained that groups, by necessity, have found through their evolutionary voyage that they have to provide self-defense against the outside while obtain cooperation and friendship from the inside. This lead individuals to acquire two modes of thinking: The state of enmity towards the outside encourages the evolution of a language of aggression, conquest and revenge while internal peace meant that men evolved a second mode of thinking and behaviors favoring justice, honesty, cooperation, etc..

In extreme cases, what we have described above can result in what we call group ethnocentrism. More explicitly, group ethnocentrism is when a group manages to live in a state of in-group out-group differentiation in which the members of that group emphasize behaviors,

such as relative peace, solidarity, loyalty, devotion and internal cohesion within their own group as much as feelings of hostility towards outgroups whom they perceive as substandard, subhuman, and evil (Van der Dennen, 1987).

Abraham (1983) stated that, such extreme attributes, when used by one group against another reflect sophisticated elaborations of the act of categorizing groups into friendly and unfriendly factions, known as the acts of dehumanizing and stereotyping. A stereotype is defined as a magnified belief identified with a category whose function is to rationalize our behavior in relation to that category (Allport, 1954). Pinderhughes (1979) believes that the act of engaging in stereotyping may be a reflection of a genuine psychobiological need for cognitive stability about one's environment. According to this scholar, human beings have a drive to establish loving as well as aggressive relationships and, therefore, need to categorize their reality into positive and negative factions.

This tendency to dichotomize is so much integrated in the human psyche that it also leads members of one group to produce irrational thoughts and beliefs about themselves that will separate them from their enemy. Bigelow (1969) argued that each group needs something, such as an intimate idea or a fantasy, that every member can identify with and around which they can all cohere. The creation of such irrational thoughts and ideas, as opposed to rational ones, seem to help the members of a group promote and maintain their internal cohesion as well as keep themselves segregated from their enemies.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, group behavior evolved as the result of man's increased awareness of his interdependence with others for maximizing the chances of transmission of his genes from one generation to another. Moreover, a progressively higher cognitive ability is associated with an

increased understanding by the group members of their common goals and interests as well as the intricate relationship that exists between an individual's welfare and the overall welfare of the group.

Through the forces of evolution, individuals developed the capacity to learn and accumulate traits that allowed them to work cooperatively with other individuals with the intention to attain certain common goals that were beneficial to all of them. Group members, in addition to the successful transmission of their genes from one generation to another, also transmit their accumulated solutions to environmental problems through the group culture.

Therefore, group culture is associated in man's mind with the accumulated survival adaptive strategies and traits that have been selected through natural selection. More specifically, the continual process of competition and cooperation between different groups as well as within groups results in a constant selection of the most adaptive cultural traits in a group and the extinction of the less adaptive traits.

Most importantly, adaptation through group selection and culture selection can only take place as long as these traits work towards the survival of group members. Therefore, the evolution of group behavior among individuals means a progressive understanding by group members of the extent and nature of their interdependence as well as a progressive selection of group traits that maximize the survival of its individual member's gene pool.

Therefore, we must conclude that, a more developed group and group culture is that in which the group members have preceded members in other groups in:

- 1) Developing and finding group solutions to environmental challenges and demands that ultimately increases the chances of survival and well being of its individual members.
- 2) Developing an understanding of its members' interdependence and the knowledge of how to define and regulate each member's role.
- 3) Developing the flexibility to assimilate and accommodate more adaptive traits and knowledge while abandoning the less adaptive traits.



- 4) Developing better cooperative skills with non-competitive others as well as developing a better ability to minimize their losses in competitive situations with others.
- 5) Developing better means of communicating this knowledge among all its members as well as developing better means of transmitting this knowledge to the next generations.

### **The Psychological Basis of Group Functioning**

Now that we have explored the evolutionary basis and nature of group behavior, I will briefly focus in the following section on the psychological mechanisms that govern group behavior. As we shall see, the understanding of the psychology of groups has revolved around understanding the emotional nature as well as the cognitive nature of an individual's group behavior as he interacts with his physical and human environment.

#### **Early Group Theories**

**Le Bon's Theory on Group Functioning: Emotional Aspects.** Our initial scientific understanding of group behavior started with an increased awareness of the emotional aspects of groups. The earliest explanations of the psychology of group functioning was proposed by Le Bon (1897) who spoke primarily about specific kinds of groups, which either took the form of crowds or the form of racial and national groups.

He likened groups to living organisms whose nature can be compared to some extent to individual organisms. According to Le Bon (1897), people that constitute a crowd develop a collective or group mind. This idea of a group mind is what Le Bon calls, "the law of mental unity of the crowds" (p. 2), which is what makes the crowd a psychological group and hence, not based on physical proximity.



The psychology of the crowd, Le Bon believes, works differently from the psychology of the individuals who comprise it in that the group mind does not consist of the conscious individual personalities of its members but instead it is a reflection of the unconscious, essential, and shared attributes of the group in question. Therefore, the collective mind of the crowds is intellectually inferior; the members of the crowd are driven by instincts and emotion and thus, do not feel bound by the restraints of reason and logic or civilized life in general. Consequently, people that constitute the crowd do not possess any feelings of individual responsibilities.

Another significant characteristic of a crowd is the feelings of omnipotence that its members consider themselves to have. The power that stems from the sheer number of crowd members provides those individuals with a feeling that they can achieve anything (Le Bon, 1897).

In short, Le Bon was of the opinion that what determines the behavior of the group are the unconscious forces making it up. These unconscious forces are contained in the cultural heritage and language of such groups as races and nations. Moreover, Le Bon believed that groups in essence are slow changing in nature since they function like men according to values, ideas, sentiments and customs and, therefore, significant changes in the character of large naturally occurring groups such as nations are rare for "there is nothing so stable in a race as the inherited ground work of its thoughts" (p. xiv).

**Le Bon's Theory on Group Functioning: Individual Basis of Group Behavior.** Le Bon believes that the behavior of the crowd and the behavior of the hypnotized individual are very much alike. In order to understand why crowd members behave in the way we have just described, Le Bon (1897) discusses three processes that explain such group behavior.

One process is called the "deindividuation process" through which feelings of anonymity and immense power overcome the crowd members just for being part of that crowd. This

process leads the crowd members to lose their personal identity and feelings of personal responsibility.

In the second process, or the "contagion process," the crowd members begin to mutually imitate each other's actions and emotions as a result of which homogeneity and uniformity prevail. Consequently, personal differences disappear while the shared and collective interests of the crowd members become primary.

Finally, in the third process, or "suggestion," which is the basis of the contagion process, the crowd members are easily influenced and easily suggestible by a person or a group whom they regard with a submissive attitude as well as feel emotionally tied to.

**Mc Dougall's Theory on Group Functioning: Rational Nature**. Later on, building on Le Bon's group theory, Mc Dougall (1921) added more to our group understanding. He proposed that some degree of collective mental activity is what characterizes a psychological group. Therefore, he believed that groups are capable of functioning beyond their instinctual level when the collective mind evolves and, therefore, rejected Le Bon's concept of a collective unconsciousness.

More specifically, he believed that a group's mental activity has to be focused on some common idea, goal, subject, need, etc. so that all the members attend to and participate in the same things. As for the group's emotional activity, he believed that all the group members should react and feel similarly when dealing with the object of attention. Therefore, this meant that each member of the group should be influenced to some degree by the feelings, ideas, and cognitive processes of the other members. In other words, some kind of psychological interdependence should exist between group members as well as an awareness by each member of the group as a whole.

Another significant contribution by Mc Dougall (1921) was his description of the preconditions he thought necessary for group evolution. He believed in the importance of

continuity of existence of a group. Moreover, he believed in the existence of a group consciousness among individual group members which stands for some awareness of the group as a whole and all that defines it. This group self consciousness or group identity is represented through a body of traditions, customs and habits. Finally, group identity is promoted by intergroup relations and, therefore, the development of organization or social structure.

### **Psychoanalytical Theory of Group Formation: Groups and Leaders.** Freud (1921)

began his analysis of group functioning by comparing the crowd member in relation to the group's leader with a hypnotized patient in relation to his hypnotist. By doing so, he strongly believed that it was of utmost importance to include the role of the leader in any interpretation of group behavior. Therefore, he attempts to interpret the basic group processes in terms of the interpersonal dynamics that occur between the children and their parents. Moreover, regardless of the group's size, Freud categorized groups into two kinds: functional units and static conglomeration of individuals.

The functional units, which were the focus of his analyses, are characterized by two types of relationships that exist in them; one is a relationship between the leader and his followers and the other is a relationship between the members themselves.

Freud (1921) uses the concept of "identification" to explain the connection that exists between the group leader and his followers as well as between the group members. The identification process is a process in which a person, after having developed an emotional bond with someone, behaves as if he were the other person with whom he had established the bond.

According to Freud, the forces behind group formation are purely instinctual. Therefore, people become part of groups in order to satisfy their need for love which he defines in a very general way as "sexual love with sexual union as its aim" as well as "self love,..., love for parents and children, friendship and love for humanity in general, and also a devotion to concrete objects and to abstract ideas" (Freud, 1921, p. 90). Therefore, he explains that, similar to a child's



relationship with his parents, every group member loves his leader sexually. Since an individual can not act on his desires, his ego compromises by accepting to possess the leader symbolically through the process of identification where the ego introjects the leader and, hence, part of the ego becomes the superego, i.e., the ego ideal.

In the same token, the bonds between the group members themselves develop through identification in which each member identifies with the others after discovering a common characteristic among them and that is, their introjected group leader or, stated differently, the same ego ideal. In other words, part of each member's ego is transformed into the same superego, so in a sense each member's superego is interchangeable with other members.

Finally, Freud (1921) considers this superego to be the basis of civilization or "the common contract between the brothers." The substance of the superego is a representation of the original father figure, yet as one generation takes from the one before it, more superegos are added to the group's social culture of survival. Moreover, he states that this eventually led to the current state of individuals vs. groups. That is, he believed that in advanced societies an individual's ego develops from the participation of various groups. Freud (1921) states:

Each individual is a component part of numerous groups, he is bound by ties of identification in many directions, and he has built up his ego ideal upon the most various models. Each individual therefore has a share in numerous group minds-those of his race, of his class, of his creed, of his nationality, etc. (p. 129)

### **Later Approaches to Group Psychology**

**Behavioral Theories.** Unlike the before mentioned emotionally based approaches to the study of human groups, the later cognitive approach distinguishes itself by being an experimental approach. The new theorists stress the importance of providing empirical data to support any theory of group dynamics.



One of the earliest theorists to reject the non-experimental approaches was Floyd Allport (1924). He was a behaviorist who believed that all group phenomena can be understood at the individual level by applying the rules of stimulus-response psychology. He rejected the ideas of his predecessors, particularly Freud, which indicated that the group psychology represented a different reality than the individual psychology. Allport (1924) believed that "there is no psychology of groups which is not essentially and entirely a psychology of individuals" (Allport, 1924, p. 4).

Allport believed that when people behave differently in group situations it is because they learn to respond to situation-specific stimuli which in this case might include other people. This means that we behave differently in groups because we, individuals, have learned to do so.

**Interactionist Theories: Member Interdependence.** Cognitive psychologists stress the importance of the experimental approach but differ with the behaviorists in their focus. These psychologists (e.g., Sherif, 1967) viewed behavior as a reaction to how the individual perceives his social situation and his environment, i.e., how are external social stimuli mediated by the brain.

Moreover, the idea of a group as being nothing but an aggregate of individuals was rejected. Sherif (1936 & 1967) believed that an individual's nature changes in a group context. In order to explain group reality, he applied the Gestalt law of the "interdependence of parts." Basically, it states that individuals in a group do not experience isolated stimuli but rather individuals experience the organized wholes. The important aspect of this is that our perceptual organization of the stimuli into an interdependent and dynamic system means that new higher order properties are manifested which are different from the individual properties of the stimuli. Sherif and Sherif (1969) also emphasized that the formation of groups is necessary because it is only through co-operation and interdependence that shared goals of people could be realized.

In his studies of intergroup conflict and cooperation, Sherif (1967) introduced the notion that shared group identities and group organization come as a result of social interdependence for mutual need satisfaction. Sherif and other psychologists conducted their first experiments on intergroup conflict in 1949, 1953, and 1954.

One of the experiments was carried on 11 to 12 year-old boys in a summer camp (Sherif, 1962). During the first phase of the experiment, all the boys interacted with each other in one group where individual friendships developed. In the second phase, the boys were randomly divided into two groups. This led to the development of new strong intra-group ties and inter-group conflict that reflected the random division of the boys into the two groups. These new relations were no longer reflective of the original ties developed by different group members in the first phase of the experiment.

In the last stage, the experimenters introduced problems and conditions that were desirable by the groups involved but could not be achieved by each group alone. The result was that intergroup cooperation developed which eventually broke the old conflicts and led to the development of positive bonds across group boundaries.

As a result of the above mentioned experiment it became clear that the introduction of superordinate goals had the effect of the formation of a superordinate group. Furthermore, it was evident that group belonging was expressed by the creation of distinct symbols of the collective identity. Therefore, Sherif (1936) believed that when individuals interact in some form of closed system, they become a total functional system that leads to the development of new properties for the group as a whole which is represented by the group identity.

Sherif (1962) presented the following generalizations about how groups function:

1) Whenever individuals interact with each other towards the attainment of certain goals, where these goals require interdependent activity towards their attainment, the result is always the formation of a definite group organization with differentiated status positions.

2) A pattern of communication develops among group members which reflects the organization of the group.

3) As a result of this organization group norms are formed and stabilized which define the "latitude of acceptable behavior" (p. 5) of each member.

Sherif (1962) also made an extensive empirical and theoretical analysis of the formation of group norms. He concluded that perception, evaluation and judgment are relative concepts that are rooted in certain frames of reference that serve as the standards against which one compares things.

These frames of reference that are common to the group are found in the culture which provide the social norms in the form of costumes, standards, values etc. Furthermore, individuals adopt these cultural norms in their self-identity by constructing the ego or the "I" with the social norms. This socially constructed ego represents the social identity.

Sherif (1962) stressed that even though the references are produced in an external social context, they are psychologically internalized and then used as references. Individuals interacting in a group context will, by definition, perceive the same socially produced norms and will, thus, come to internalize the same social material.

**Interactionist Theories: Group Cohesion and Interpersonal Attraction.** In addition to interdependence, cohesiveness of the group as a whole, which is defined as the average magnitude of the forces acting on all the individual members (Hogg, 1987, p. 90), is the other major quality defining a group. Moreover, according to a number of scholars, an operational definition of group cohesiveness alludes to the interpersonal attraction among group members (McGrath and Kravitz, 1982; Turner, 1984).

Hogg (1987) further elaborates on the above by stating that an analysis of the social cohesion model means understanding the development of the forces of interpersonal attraction as well as the factors that define liking among group members. Examples of such factors are



physical closeness, common destiny, approval by the other, similar attitudes, a common enemy, cooperation and interdependence to realize common objectives, appealing personality characteristics, etc.

Hogg (1987) believes that it is known that people are attracted to those individuals or groups of people that make them feel rewarded. More explicitly, the reward that such people feel is due to a satisfaction of a personal need or desire accomplished by the other person(s) who happened to act in a certain likable way or possess a particular admirable trait or attitude. Consequently, Hogg states that the decision of a gathering of individuals to form a group depends on how much they are able of satisfying each other's needs and, hence, are dependent upon on each other. Finally, when group members have been mutually able of satisfying their needs through co-operative interaction, positive feelings of power occur in the group making it attractive and ultimately encouraging its members to stay within it (Hogg, 1987).

A different approach from the ones discussed so far, focuses on the function of similar values and attitudes between individuals in attraction and group formation. In this approach, known as the social comparison theory, Festinger (1950, 1954) explains that people are interested in validating their beliefs and opinions which is the main reason behind their association with others.

According to Festinger, people, when deprived of all kinds of nonsocial and physical means to evaluate their beliefs and capabilities, have to resort to comparisons with relatively similar others. If, as a result of such comparisons, the other persons, not groups, show a similarity in attitudes to that person, he would feel confident in the correctness and accuracy of his belief system and, hence, would be satisfying a basic human need, namely, self-evaluation. Festinger concludes by saying that the basis of group formation is the existence of mutual interpersonal attraction between individuals who express similarities in attitudes and views.

Another theory that also stresses the role of similarities in attitudes in group formation is Heider's (1958) theory which is based on the principle of cognitive balance. Since there is a



need for achieving a balance between different perceptions among humans, Heider believes that relations that reflect our liking for others as well as relations that reflect our sense of togetherness and being linked to each other have a tendency to go together.

**Social Identity Theory: Self-Categorizations**. Another approach that attempts to explain the reasons behind group formation and cohesiveness is the self-categorizations analysis or social identity approach. According to Tajfel and Turner (1985, p. 15), a social group is a "collection of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same social category." When asked to either define, describe or evaluate themselves, those individuals do so in terms of the social category they belong to. That is, there is in each member's mind a cognitive representation of the group, which can also be referred to as a social identification and, which guides in-group conduct (Tajfel and Turner, 1985).

More specifically, the social identity approach maintains that society is made of social categories which stand in power and status relations to one another. It is believed that the process of categorization brings into sharp focus a blurry and disorganized world by accentuating similarities within categories and differences between categories (Tajfel, 1957 & 1959).

One of the basic points in the self-categorization analysis that distinguishes it from other theories in the field is the distinction it makes between intragroup cohesion and interpersonal attraction. Focusing on the social identities of the group as a whole rather than the personal identities--which are a reflection of the reactions the group members have to each other in terms of their personal characteristics and individual differences--is a salient feature of the self-categorization analysis.

Yet, Hogg adds by saying that "many of the supposed empirical determinants of interpersonal attraction (e.g., proximity, similarity, shared fate) are still considered important in group formation but are reinterpreted as leading to category formation or enhancing the clarity and salience of some in-group category" (Hogg, 1987, p. 102). According to social identity

theorists, as long as a collection of individuals is behaving in terms of a shared in-group category, it is considered a group (Hogg, 1987).

Therefore, the self-categorization process is similar to the process of categorizing objects or people along agreed upon dimensions which ultimately lead to a highlighting of intra-category similarities as well as inter-category differences (Tajfel, 1981). In addition, the social self is a reflection of the stereotypes of the in-group while the self's representation of the others are also out-group stereotypes. In turn, the stereotypes provide the self with a prototypical mode of behavior and thinking that are made of prestige, evaluative status, goals, needs, emotional experiences, behavioral and attitudinal norms and personality traits (Turner, 1982).

**Social Identity Theory: Basic Mechanisms.** The self-categorization theory, or the social identity theory, consists of a number of connected suppositions and hypotheses about the social self-concept, in which the concept of self is pertinent to social interaction and based on comparisons with other people (Turner, 1987).

There are seven essential assumptions of the social identity theory:

(1) The cognitive component of the individual's psychological structure is the self-concept, referred to as the self. Every individual's self-concept is comprised of a number of accessible cognitive representations of self (Turner, 1987).

(2) Every individual has various concepts of self, which are only united as to make a cognitive system. These various cognitive representations of self can be easily distinguished from each other and can also operate relatively independently (Turner, 1987).

(3) The social self-concept functions based on the specific situation the individual is experiencing. More explicitly, particular situations trigger certain self-concepts in the individual as a result of which specific self-images get produced (Turner, 1987). The reason why a particular self-concept becomes activated as opposed to others is due to the unique interaction

that occurs between the qualities and traits of the perceiver and the situation at hand (Bruner, 1957).

(4) The cognitive representations of the self are produced as self-categorizations by the individual. Self-categorizations refer to the "cognitive groupings of oneself and some class of stimuli as the same in contrast to some other class of stimuli" (Turner, 1987, p. 44).

(5) Self-categorizations are classified according to a hierarchical structure of abstraction. What distinguishes one level of abstraction from another is the class inclusion, i.e., the higher the level of abstraction, the more inclusive the self-category. Besides, every self-category is completely a part of a category of a higher abstraction although it is not exhaustive of that more comprising category. Hence, it is assumed here that "the level of abstraction of a self-categorization refers to the degree of inclusiveness of the categories at that level" (Turner, 1987, p. 45).

(6) Three levels of abstraction of self-categorization are significant in the social self-concept: First, the superordinate level of the self as human being. This level is characterized by the self-categorizations that reflect our identities as human beings as well as the common qualities that we share with other human species. Second, the intermediate level consists of in-group-out-group categorizations that reflect the social similarities and differences between people who consider themselves as belonging to certain groups and not to others. And third, the subordinate level includes the personal self-categorizations which reflect how one distinguishes between himself as a distinctive individual and other in-group members who only see him as a "specific individual person" (Turner, 1987, p. 45).

(7) Saliency of self-categorizations at any level develop through comparisons of stimuli that are members of the next more inclusive self-category; that is, stimuli can only be compared as long as they have been categorized as identical or equivalent at some higher level of abstraction (Turner, 1987).



Based on the assumptions we have discussed so far, Turner (1987) inferred the following general hypotheses:

1) The way we perceive ourselves socially, i.e., along a continuum that begins with our self-perception as unique individuals and ending with our self-perception as in-group categories, leads one to hypothesize that an inverse correlation exists between the salience of the social and personal levels of self-categorization.

2) The perceived identity (e.g., similarities and interchangeability) that exists between the individual and his in-group members as well as the perceived differences that exist between the individual and the out-group, seem to increase as a result of particular factors that intensify the salience of our in-group-out-group categorizations. Consequently, these factors depersonalize the individual's self-perception so that he will no longer perceive himself as a person with a unique personality but rather "as the interchangeable exemplars of a social category" (p. 50). In other words, they engage in a process of self-stereotyping.

3)....."the depersonalization of self-perception is the basic process underlying group phenomena (social stereotyping, group cohesiveness, ethnocentrism, ..." (p. 50).

4) Groups form when two or more people perceive themselves in terms of some shared in-group-out-group categorization.

5) Individuals in a given setting are more likely to categorize themselves as a group when the subjectively perceived differences between them are less than the differences between them and other people.

### **Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation**

**Psychoanalytical Interpretations of Group Conflict.** In his book, Civilization and its Discontents, Freud (1930) explains out-group hostilities in terms of his displacement theory. In



order to maintain group cohesion, members have to obey authority, delay immediate gratification for the future satisfaction of common goals, and inhibit reactions to frustrations.

Failure to act in this manner might lead to internal group turmoil and, hence, would isolate the individual from his group on which he is dependent. The solution to this is that the individual projects his repressed feelings on an out-group and, thus, displaces all his prohibited feelings on that outside group. It must be noted here that, Freud's theory explains the causes of conflict in terms of internal group dynamics and does not consider the probable causes of conflict particular to each didactic in-group out-group situation.

Dollard et al. (1939), on the other hand, in a book titled Frustration and Aggression, attempted to explain social conflict by incorporating external factors as the causes of intergroup conflict. The original theory basically integrated Freudian concepts with learning theory concepts.

Basically, Dollard et al. consider that frustration always leads to aggression and that aggression is always caused by frustration. The idea, which is based on the original Freudian analysis of the relationship between aggression and the blocking of erotic impulses (Freud, 1917), is that when there is a blocking of erotic impulses, the individual's most basic reaction to the frustrating situation is aggression. Moreover, the theory states that since it is not always feasible to aim one's aggressive behavior towards the frustrating agent, the individual directs his aggression onto another object; that is, the aggression is displaced somewhere else. The assumption is that, aggression can only disappear and go back to its original resting state if it is dissipated either into the obstructing agent or some other replacement. In psychoanalytical terms, an individual who is frustrated can only get rid of the resulting aggression if he goes through a "catharsis."

Finally, the analysis presented by Dollard et al. introduces the notion that the type of aggression expressed is dependent upon a number of factors such as situational circumstances and internal variables.

**Cognitive Interpretation of Group Conflicts: Realistic Conflict.** The realistic conflict theory is based on the research done by Sherif (1962) of intergroup relations between groups of equal power. Sherif's basic assumption is that conflict between groups arise from competition from scarce resources. These resources vary from the concrete to the abstract, such as geographical territory and power and status. This theory makes three basic assumptions about human behavior which is approached from an economic perspective.

First, people are assumed to be selfish and are motivated to maximize their reward. Second, conflict is thought of as arising from incompatible group interests. Third, it maintains that the social psychological aspects of the group dynamics are determined by the compatibility or incompatibility of group interests.

This type of conflict led Sherif (1962) to believe that the following generalizations can be made about negative intergroup relations:

1) When groups engage in competitive conflicts, a victory or a gain of a desired goal by one of the groups results in the development of unfavorable stereotypes for the defeated group. These unfavorable stereotypes are standardized by the passage of time and this results in the placement of the out-group at a prejudicial distance.

2) Along with the rise of the prejudicial attitudes between the groups, self-glorifying attitudes towards the in-group are strengthened.

Cooperation between the groups, on the other hand, is promoted by:

1) Introducing superordinate goals that are compelling for all groups concerned.

2) It is necessary to vary a superordinate goal in accordance with the social reality in order to sustain cooperation over time.

3) Changes in the pattern of relations within the groups involved are necessary and should reflect the functional relations that exist between the groups and are of consequence to the groups concerned.

**Cognitive Interpretation of Group Conflicts: The Equity Theory.** Another approach or model that explains the idea of group cohesiveness focuses on the equity theory. Just and "equitable" interdependence between group members is the what defines this approach. Equitable, i.e., fair and just, interdependence causes the interpersonal attraction to occur between members which then leads to group cohesiveness. In the same token, it is assumed that unfair and unjust interdependence could either lead to an action to reinstate it or a discontinuation of it (Berkowitz and Walster, 1976).

Equity theory deals with the relationship between advantaged and disadvantaged individuals or groups. It assumes that individuals strive to maximize reward but in order to do this they must conform to certain norms of justice. Conflict is explained as a result from the distress that people feel when they perceive injustice. Justice is violated when there are disadvantaged groups whose fundamental human rights have been violated (Berkowitz & Walster, 1976).

**Cognitive Interpretation of Group Conflicts: Relative Deprivation Theory.** Stouffer et al. (1949) and Davis (1959) first introduced the concept of relative deprivation. Similar to the equity theory it deals with the disadvantaged groups. However, it differs from the equity theory in that it differentiates between two types of realities. It stresses that it is not the objective reality that defines the situation, but it is rather relative to each of the groups concerned. Central to this approach is the assumption that conflicts arise when subjective comparison are made by each group concerned.

**Cognitive Interpretation of Group Conflicts: The Social Identity Theory.** This approach deals with all aspects of relations between groups specially ones having unequal power. Its basic assumption is that people are motivated to maintain and achieve a positive self-identity.



Numerous empirical studies have shown that the discontinuous classification of individuals into two distinct groups is sufficient to generate intergroup competition. This phenomenon could be explained by the social identity's perspective which is based on the idea that all knowledge is socially derived through social comparisons including about the knowledge of the physical world.

Agreement between people through consensus gives one the confidence that one's views are true. When intergroup social comparisons are made people tend to maximize intergroup distinctiveness, specially on the dimensions which are socially relevant and reflect favorably upon the in-group. This, in turn, leads to the formation of negative stereotypes towards the out-group.

### **Group Development Models**

As we have seen in the previous sections, groups are dependent on the emotional and cognitive states of their individual members as they interact with the environment. Moreover, as groups progress in time, the nature of their members' cognitive and emotional states goes through progressive stages of change and development. These changes are experienced by group members as a development in their social group identities.

There has been a lot of studies written in the past about the identity development of different minority groups as well as majority groups. Models of the identity development of African Americans have been developed by Cross (1978, 1987) as well as Jackson (1976), while Atkinson, Morten and Sue (1993) focused on the development of adult minorities. Hardiman (1982) and Helms (1984) also proposed two models of White identity development. However, there has been no models that explore the identity development of pluralistic societies going through an integration process.

More specifically, Lebanon is a country made up of a number of groups with different sectarian identities. As the country proceeds in its integration efforts, we need to understand the process of identity change that takes place under these circumstances. Therefore, we need to understand the process of integration as the various members form a common identity as well as the process of change as the individual abandons some aspects of his past identity while developing the new integrated identity.

This leads me to conclude that a model of a Lebanese Identity Development should be based on the general psychological themes described in two types of group development models. More specifically, in the following section I will briefly explore the psychological stages of group formation as well as the stages of minority identity development. This will be achieved by first, examining the main conclusions reached by Wheelan (1994) in her extensive study of the various theories of group formation and, second, by reviewing the common psychological themes that underlie the two models of identity development proposed by Jackson (1976) and Sue and Sue (1990).

### **Stages of Group Formation: Wheelan's Study**

In her study of group processes, Wheelan (1994) reviews the different literature on group formation and concludes that regardless of the group type, duration, or task, there seems to be many similarities in the normal developmental process of groups.

According to Wheelan (1994), many groups may not follow the normal developmental process because they might not resolve a certain stage properly and, hence, may get stuck in it. But for our present study, we are interested in the normal developmental process of groups and will, therefore, review Wheelan's (1994) findings.

**The First Stage.** In general, the first stage of group development is when different parties come together to form a group. Wheelan (1994) concludes that this stage is characterized by a primary concern for inclusion and an overdependence on the leader. She explains that, at this stage, member interaction is insufficient to establish relationships and, thus, cannot be a source of support for each other. Moreover, since no coherent culture or social structure have formed yet, no collective action is possible.

As a result, the leader is depended upon to provide protection and support as well as relieve tension. He/she is perceived by the members as capable and benevolent and expect him/her to act towards them as a parent would towards a child. Moreover, the leader is idealized and thus, his/her competence is not questioned and is taken as a matter of faith.

Group cohesion at this stage is also very strong. Members want to be accepted by others and nobody wants to be perceived as deviant. Therefore, member's need for safety, inclusion, and the reduction of anxiety leads to high degrees of conformity. This conformity tends to inhibit discussion and a false sense of harmony tends to develop. No conflict is present at this stage between the members themselves or between the members and the leaders. Therefore, very little real work is done at this stage since work may precipitate conflict and that is what everybody is trying to avoid.

Once feelings of belonging are at an acceptable level and feelings of anxiety have been sufficiently reduced, the group is ready to move into the next stage.

**The Second Stage.** During the second stage, members enter into a state of conflict and counterdependency. Members fight among each other and with the leader. At the same time, different members start trying out different forms of coalitions. The presence of fight and conflict at this stage is important because it helps define the character of the group. Conflict enables the participants to move from having divergent to unified points of view. That is, they begin to tentatively define the goals, the tasks, and the different roles of their members.



The leader's authority, competence and control are also challenged at this stage. The leaders are now perceived as having an undue influence and members start feeling manipulated by them. In some cases, the group is unable to change its own perceptions or the perceptions of the leader towards the leadership role. This means that the group fails to develop to the next stage and will regress to the past dependency stage of group development. Group work is not achieved since the group would devote all its energy into power struggles.

Another characteristic of stage two is the emergence of coalitions where members feel freer to explore each other and thus form coalitions on the basis of some common factor. This new reality has the effect of threatening the group's past sense of unity and is thus met with a lot of hostility and suspicion from the rest of the group members. Still, the step is necessary for the proper development of the group since different points of view need to be negotiated in order to reach a consensus.

**The Third Stage.** Wheelan believes that the third stage is reached if the conflict in the second stage has been properly navigated. This developmental stage is characterized by more mature negotiations around group issues. The members start defining rules of conduct, communication patterns, goals, and structures. Therefore, group cohesion increases at this stage because the members now have a unified sense of mission.

Moreover, members develop more trust since they have gone through the worst part of the group experience and can thus feel more secure. Therefore, power struggles are much less than the previous stage and they tend to be related to the tasks at hand instead of hidden agendas or emotionality. Having released their emotional tension, they can now move into a more rational mode of operation.

Group perception towards leadership also changes in stage three. Instead of idealizing leadership or rejecting it as authoritarian, members now view leadership as playing the role of

coordinator or facilitator. The mythic qualities attributed to the leader in the past stages give way to the more human qualities of a man with a job to be done.

Coalitions at this stage still exist but are perceived as less threatening to the unity of the group by other members since the group has dealt with conflict in the past without falling apart. Moreover, coalitions and subgrouping have the additional function of taking on the subdivision of work needed for task achievement. Having focused mainly on defining goals, communication patterns, member roles etc. during the third stage, the members can now move into stage four which is mainly focused on goal achievement.

**The Fourth Stage**. This final stage is characterized by problem solving, performance, and productivity. The plans developed during the previous stage are implemented during this stage. Moreover, the type of communication tends to change for the proper functioning of the more complex task oriented group. The approach to problem solving, as in the previous stage, stays objective and focused on the task at hand. Group members have more experience in working together effectively at this stage and, therefore, there is significantly more goal consensus and work starts in earnest.

### **Minority Identity Development**

As mentioned earlier, Jackson (1976) as well as Sue and Sue (1990) have developed models of identity development of individuals belonging to different cultural groups. While Jackson proposed a model for Black Identity Development, Sue and Sue (1990) developed a cultural identity development model that is a refinement and an elaboration on the five-stage minority identity development model proposed by Adkinson Mortan and Sue (1989). In what follows, the two psychological models will be presented as parts of four general patterns of group development.

**Stage 1.** Jackson referred to the first stage of identity development as passive acceptance. According to him, the Black person accepts and conforms to the White person's cultural, social and institutional principles hoping to attain a number of things, such as, a sense of worth, approval of others, power as well as material resources (money, goods...). Moreover, the Black person is obliged to accept the standards of the White person's culture and institutions while totally rejecting and denouncing "all that is Black" ( Jackson, 1976, p. 28).

The word "passive," explains Jackson, refers to the Black person's unconscious way of not questioning things around him after having been influenced by a racist culture that emphasizes the idea that 'white is right' and 'black is wrong'. Therefore, a Black person in this stage, is neither in charge of his own life nor does he possess any kind of personal power due to his utmost dependence on the White person for providing him with a sense of worth and approval. Jackson concludes that forces other than the individual determine what is proper and improper thinking and behavior. Such forces are also responsible for determining the individual's position in society.

Similar to Jackson's "Passive Acceptance" stage Sue and Sue (1990) conceive of what they call the "Conformity Stage," where minority persons have a preference for the dominant cultural values over their own. Their own values are repressed or looked down upon and the White society's values are highly esteemed.

Members of the dominant group are held as role models and are believed to be superior in most human aspects. Individuals at this stage try to mimic behaviors and values held by the dominant culture. They also accept the dominant culture's world view of things and accept their stereotypes and internalize them as their own. Persons in the conformity stage find that their own real identity is looked down upon by the dominant culture and, therefore, reject that identity for it proves psychologically too painful to identify with, i.e., with the negative characteristics of the group promoted by the dominant culture.



**Stage 2.** According to Jackson, in the "Active Resistance Stage," people are characterized by the energy they put into rejecting the white person's cultural, social and institutional standards. A person in this stage also loses trust in all the criteria that he used to depend on in the past. Therefore, he rejects all the past societal values and goals espoused by him.

Similarly, Sue and Sue's believe that, following the conformity stage, the individual enters into a stage of dissonance . They explain that it is impossible for an individual to deny his or her cultural reality for sooner or later they will encounter information or have experiences that are inconsistent with their beliefs, attitudes and values that they held in the past. Therefore, an individual's current self-concept comes into question because of the challenge of disparate pieces of information that he or she has now experienced. Moreover, an individual can enter into this stage in a gradual way or, through the experience of a traumatic event, which may lead some individuals to move faster into the dissonance stage.

Jackson believes that a Black person reacts to this new awareness by becoming very militant and calls for black unity and power as a way of ridding himself/herself of past white power. A sense of pride at this stage is derived by espousing high levels of black ethnocentrism. Sue & Sue, on the other hand, believe that minorities react to this awareness by a stage of resistance and immersion where the person dedicates himself to reacting to the dominant culture by rejecting all that is related to it. They believe that this stage is characterized by affective feelings of shame, guilt and anger. These feelings of guilt and shame come as a result of the person's past belief system and, hence, anger is directed towards abolishing oppression.

This stage also marks the beginning of a self-discovery process of one's own history and culture. Feelings of pride and honor come from cultural characteristics instead of past shame and disgust. The individual strongly identifies with his minority group and feels a strong sense of connectedness with other members. Now, the cultural values of the minority group are accepted

without question. Individuals at this stage restrict their interactions to members of their own group.

**Stage 3.** According to Sue and Sue there are two reasons why the individual moves from the resistance/immersion stage into the introspection stage. First, the individual becomes drained by the feelings of anger characteristic of the last stage and feels that he/she needs to redirect his/her energy towards understanding himself/herself and other cultural groups. While the last stage is reactive towards the dominant culture, the introspective stage is proactive towards self discovery. Second, the rigidly held views formed about one's own group in the last stage start to pose a new problem for the individuals. The tendency to submerge into one's own group beliefs and values is done at the expense of individual autonomy. Therefore, the conflict is now centered around identifying the boundaries between individual and rigid group beliefs.

Similarly, In the redirection stage, Jackson believes that the Black person stops spending any energy towards anything that is white and withdraws from the white society. He or she seeks the company of individuals who are similarly withdrawn from the white culture and are perceived as similar to oneself. Moreover, in this stage, the Black person's role models cease to be the oppressor and are now sought among individuals who are perceived to have the same level of awareness.

Jackson states that the individual at this stage is specifically focused on establishing goals and values that will enhance his or her life. They seek to define a new identity that provides comfort and nurturing to the individual. Focus is directed towards establishing what is good for the black community.

Moreover, Sue and Sue believe that during this stage, the past sense of culturocentrism starts to give way to a more open attitude towards other minority groups and their experiences of oppression. Similarities and differences of experiences of oppression of the others become of interest to the individual's group. Therefore, the past feelings of mistrust, rejection, and anger

that characterized the individuals in the past stages give way to a more rational quest for the acceptable aspects of the dominant culture.

**Stage 4.** Internalization: This is the stage where a Black person experiences the integration of his newly-formed black identity with other aspects of his identity. Moreover, the person does not seek to interact with others that are similar but also include people who are different.

Therefore, at this stage an individual starts thinking of himself in a more holistic way and does not identify himself as a black person but also includes his other sexual, spiritual, family, etc. identities. A person is also free to interact with others in a freer manner for he has already satisfied his growth and developmental needs. He is now able to understand better his bicultural nature and he is better able to separate the oppressive aspects of society from the non-oppressive.

Sue and Sue also characterize the last stage by integrative awareness. They state that individuals make new attempts to differentiate between the good aspects of the dominant culture and the bad aspects. There is now an openness towards integrating the good parts into the new identity. Moreover, the individual understands that he/she is a unique individual as well as a member of the minority group and the larger culture.

Moreover, Jackson believes that, unlike stage two, the individual's gained awareness of the nature of power and power relations are not used to fight white standards but rather this awareness is used to educate others going through stage transformations. Therefore, at this stage, an individual has respect and understanding of all Blacks whatever their stage of consciousness is and engages them in a non-paternalistic way to educate and facilitate their growth process.



Finally, Sue and Sue also point that an individual has a greater sense of confidence at this stage, and he/she no longer feels in conflict if he/she wants to disagree with some of his own group's values.

### **Summary Outline of Developmental Stages of Identity Integration in Multi-Cultural Groups**

Unlike the minority development models of identity development, the dominant culture at the early stages of identity development of multi-cultural groups is not characterized by the culture of one specific cultural group. What defines the culture in the early stages of identity development in a multi-cultural society is the dominance of the culture of division. That is, regardless of the group constitution of the pluralistic society; what characterizes all groups in the initial stages of integration is a limited awareness of commonalities among groups and a greater awareness of the differences between groups as seen by the Wheelan (1994) study. Therefore, development in such societies means that individuals would undergo a process of rejection of the divisive culture in order to develop the common identity.

However, before the last stage is reached, individuals initially resist the divisive culture by trying to impose its own group cultural values as a means to achieve a more homogeneous culture. This attempt is bound to fail in pluralistic cultures where no group can impose its own interpretation of culture on other groups. Therefore, these societies enter a stage where their identity is defined by a new integrated culture which reflects the various cultural values of the different constituent groups. Again, the process follows a pattern similar to the one described by Wheelan (1994) in her study of group processes.

In the following outline, I will present a general description of the issues that might define the identity development of individuals going through the cultural integration process. A parallel will be drawn between the development that individuals undergo in her descriptions of group

processes, and the development that the members of each of the different groups undergo as the overall society is going through a process of identity development.

### **Stage 1:**

#### **Self Awareness:**

- a) Acceptance of divided dominant cultural values
- b) Rejection of own personal reality, needs, and values
- c) Lack of self esteem and a need for a sense of security
- d) Individuals derive self worth from acceptance by leader and own dominant subgroup culture

#### **Self and others in the larger society:**

- a) Lack of member/member support in the larger society across different groups
- b) No conflict is tolerated and inter-subgroup member differences are suppressed
- c) Limited interaction with and insufficient knowledge about other members in other groups
- d) False sense of harmony and group cohesion
- e) No collective action or work is possible
- f) Strong individual conformity
- g) Emotional dependence on leader who is idealized as very competent and benevolent towards members

### **Stage 2.**

#### **Self Awareness:**

- a) Beginning awareness of inadequacy of some old beliefs and values
- b) Definition of self in terms of rejection of dominant culture

- c) Increased feelings of guilt, shame and anger of past false identity
- d) Dominance of emotionality

Self and Others:

- a) Increased need for self disclosure and the emergence of differences
- b) Dominance of conflict and an increased feeling of anger and hostility among different group members
- c) Challenge to leadership due to increased feelings of leader manipulation and competence questioned
- d) Development of ties with various members and formation of different coalitions
- e) Beginning attempts to form new values

**Stage 3**

Self Awareness:

- a) Increase in rational functioning
- b) Increased awareness of individual needs and values
- c) Increased attraction and trust to other members
- d) Increased sense of commonalties with others on the individual human level and decreased focus on differences in personal idiosyncrasies as well as decreased group ethnocentrism
- e) Objective acceptance of positive aspects of the past and present as well as rejection of negative aspects of the past and present

Self and Others:

- a) Increase in rational discussions and negotiations
- b) Decrease in hostile feelings and power struggles



c) Gradual definition of overall group rules

d) Increased group cohesion

#### **Stage 4**

##### **Self Awareness:**

a) Integration of cultural identity with other personal identities

b) Individual geared towards more active realization of personal and new common group identity and group goals

c) Use of new knowledge is geared towards abolishing negative effects of the past

##### **Self and others:**

a) Overall group is more focused and work oriented towards abolishing or minimizing the effects of the past inadequate and inadapative behaviors, beliefs, and values

d) Increased involvement with others at other stages of development in order to help developmental transitions

e) Increased efficiency in levels of communication among all group members

#### **Integration**

#### **Conclusion**

From our evolutionary theories we have seen that group behavior has played a major role in the development of human nature. Man's most basic group behavior developed out of the interaction of our ancestral family and kin groups. In those most basic types of groups, man is seen to have developed group behavior because he became conscious of two major issues: First, very early on, our ancestors have found that the survival demands of their environments necessitated their developing cooperative strategies in order to accomplish mutual goals. The

instability of man's environment and the threats emanating from it meant that both individual behavior as well as group behavior were to be used in order to subdue the difficulties and reach the desired goals.

Second, man came to the awareness that his own individual genetic survival meant that he should cooperate with members of his own group who share his genetic makeup. This meant that certain behavioral traits were to be selected that would incorporate behaviors that have positive consequences for both himself and significant others. Therefore, altruistic behavior became an integral part of human behavior in groups.

As man continued on his evolutionary tract, these types of behaviors would be transmitted and taught by one generation to another and would, eventually, come to be represented by the culture of the group.

A very similar type of group phenomenon is manifested in the behavior of crowds. Even though crowds do not represent survival groups as such, the behavior in a crowd stems from a common collective unconscious which finds its expression when people follow a crowd leader who is a symbolic representation of the shared attitudes and emotions of a group.

Only the part of the unconscious that is relevant to the temporary emotional situation of the crowd, and which is represented by the group leader, will find expression as a collective action. The more the leader symbolized the crowd member's emotional state, the stronger the collective crowd behavior.

Freud bases his theory of group behavior on a family model. He emphasizes the emotional aspects of group behavior. A group becomes significant to its members if they can express their emotional needs for love and association. According to Freud, positive emotions are expressed among group members when they come to perceive themselves as similar or interchangeable in a certain aspect with one another.

Again, like Le Bon, Freud considers that the existence of the group leader is of major importance for group behavior to exist because he is an outside symbol of a shared superego

which gets introjected by all members. When group members come to perceive themselves as interchangeable, they begin to feel more safety in the expression of their love. This stems from the fact that all members of a group identify with and introject the group leader and, therefore, they are able to love each other as if they are loving a part of themselves.

Later, all cognitive theorists stressed the importance of interdependence among members of a functional group. The members are seen to be interdependent in the satisfaction of mutual needs and goals. These mutual needs and goals arise when the members of a certain group are able to perceive the shared characteristics among themselves. These shared characteristics represent many aspects such as, common norms, common destiny, common attitudes, common enemies, common objective, etc.

Therefore, at the core of the cognitive theory is the assumption that individuals form groups when they perceive themselves as belonging to the same social categorization. Most importantly, though, is that these social categorizations are situation-specific, that is, the type of social categorization experienced by each individual is a reaction to environmental demands. The perception of the group members that they are being subjected to the same environmental demands leads to the perception of being members of the same categorization.

These categorizations are, in turn, the means by which individuals come to understand how to react to the environmental stimuli. In each member's mind, categorizations are associated with stereotypical behaviors, attitudes and values. Therefore, the stereotypes serve as a blueprint for common group behavior. Finally, the social identity of a group of individuals represents the collection of categorizations that are shared by the individuals.

Conflict, on the other hand, is seen as a necessary outcome of group competition. First, groups compete for scarce resources such as food, shelter, etc. Second, different groups come to develop different strategies for dealing with the environmental demands and coherence is maintained within groups by elevating the group's beliefs above the other groups and, thus, giving rise to negative out-groups stereotypes. Therefore, in all cases of group formation an out-



group is seen as a source of contrast to the in-group and, hence, it helps the in-group better define what they stand for in relation to others.

Finally, it is important to understand that groups are not static entities and they develop in the same way that individuals develop. While some models of group development focus on the process of group integration that takes place between initially different group members or group cultures, other models focus on stages of identity development and transformation that individuals experience as they abandon the non adaptive parts of their past accepted belief and knowledge systems and replace it with a new more adaptive and evolved system.

### **Summary of Common Aspects of the Group Phenomenon**

**Integrity and Awareness of a Group.** A major assumption by all theories is the obvious necessity for all group members to perceive the group in a unified manner as well as the necessity for group members to have a clear idea of what the group stands for. This results in a group of individuals forming a functional closed system with structure and organization. This new living organism, i.e., the group acts and reacts to its physical and human environment in a unified fashion. Groups behave in a common agreed upon set of norms, values, history and future that gives them the integrity needed for proper functioning.

**Depersonalization of Individuals.** An individual is capable of behaving in groups because evolution has endowed him with the capacity for depersonalization. An individual functioning in a group becomes interchangeable or similar at a level that reflects their common social reality. Moreover, the psychological theories explain how the environment brings about the part of the self that is the social self and which represents all what is collective and common about the group members.

**Development of Bonds between Group Members.** In order for group members to have positive interactions with each other, there is always a need for the rise of positive emotional bonds. Members have to attain a certain level of satisfaction in their group interactions. The evolutionary theorists spoke of the reasons behind the development of positive group images, while Freud stressed the necessity of satisfying the emotional needs by group interaction. The cognitive theorists, on the other hand, spoke for the need of cognitive simplicity and balance in order for individuals to enjoy a healthy positive functioning with their environment.

**In-group Emphasis on Commonality.** Group behavior is made possible by the existence of commonalities among group members in many different social aspects. A solid group identity comes to represent in the minds of its members a common set of values, attitudes, history, beliefs, behavioral and physical characteristics. Moreover, all group members in a group have superordinate goals that represent the immediate and long-term direction that the group is to take.

**Major Role of Environment in Defining a Group's Identity.** Different levels of environmental demands impose on a group a common reality that is ultimately the reason behind the need for group formation and behavior, and ultimately shaping a group's social identity.

**Directions of Group Evolution and Development.** Group evolution and development entails an integration process of progressive movement by the different members away from dependency on leaders, separation of members, and minimal awareness of group commonalities, towards less dependence on leaders, closer member relationships as well as an increased awareness of group commonalities. Moreover, this process is associated with the development of

the individual's social and personal identity guided by a process of psychological separation and deindividuation from the past oppressive dominating forces and a rejection the oppressive parts of their past belief systems towards a freer and more independent psychological state. Higher levels of awareness are reached as individuals become more aware of the human aspects of their identity and are, therefore, better able to work towards the satisfaction of their needs and desires as well as relate to the same human aspects of other individuals.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE LEBANESE GROUP

Having discussed in the preceding literature review section the major psychological aspects that define any group, I will devote this review section to the exploration of the Lebanese group. More specifically, based on the knowledge gained in the previous section, I will attempt to briefly describe the Lebanese group as follows: First, I will explore the historical development of the various types of group identity awareness that the people of Lebanon experienced across time. Second, I will explore the nature of the Lebanese environment as well as the relationship of the Lebanese individual with his environment in terms of the types of adaptive skills he has used to negotiate his particular environmental demands and changes. In conclusion, the aim of this section is to identify the common environmental and psychological patterns that have shaped the lives of the Lebanese.

#### The Location of Lebanon

Lebanon is at the crossroads of land and sea routes that link Europe, Asia and Africa. Its unique geographical location on the Eastern shores of the Mediterranean sea and between three major continents has meant that it has been at the intersection of the world's most important trade routes since the earliest times (Cobban 1985; Hitti, 1967). This has naturally had a significant effect on the inhabitants of Lebanon in various ways.

First, Lebanon has always been affected by the state of balance of the major world powers. Since early times, the tensions between major powers like the Hyksos and the Egyptians from the North and South, between the Greeks and the Persians from the West and East and later, or between the Arab powers from the East and the European powers from the West, have had a significant effect on the lives of the Lebanese population (Gabriel, 1978; Hitti, 1967).

More specifically, according to Hitti (1967), at times of peace, Lebanon benefited from trade and, at times of war, it suffered greatly being in the middle of all invasion routes. The coastal cities of Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre, for example, have a long history of alternating between being totally destroyed by major world power conflicts, or flourishing greatly as centers of cultural and economic exchange between the different world powers.

Second, explain Gabriel (1978) and Hitti (1967), exposure to major world powers has also meant that the peoples of Lebanon had been throughout the ages, and still are, in the midst of major world cultures and cultural changes. Its earliest was the Canaanite culture which was later carried by the Phoenicians along with the alphabet to the peoples of the Mediterranean coastal cities. Later, the inhabitants of Lebanon were exposed to the Egyptian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, Persian, Greek as well as Roman cultures. Since then, the state of being of the inhabitants of the lands of Lebanon have been influenced by the Moslem Arab cultural and power centers to its East and the Christian power and cultural centers to its West.

### **The Nature of Lebanon**

Lebanon contains a chain of mountains bordering the Mediterranean Sea. Between these mountains and the sea lies a stretch of coastal land that includes the ancient cities of Tyre, Sidon, Beirut, Byblos and Tripoli. To the east of the Lebanon mountain range extends the Bika' Valley and another mountain range. This narrow stretch of coast-mountain-valley-mountain separates the Arab hinterland from the Mediterranean Sea.

That type of terrain made of hills and valleys tended to divide its inhabitants into separate communities since the earliest of times. For instance, the ancient Phoenicians, the people who inhabited Lebanon in approximately 3000 BC, were divided into similar but separate city states. This type of topography continued to foster separate communities that had little social

contact until that started to change early in the current century with the advent of better roads and more advanced means of communication (Hitti, 1965).

Moreover, as we shall see in the proceeding sections, Lebanon's geographical nature has also affected its historical development. On the one hand, the nature of the mountains made it somehow difficult for foreign invaders to fully or directly control the mountain's inhabitants, who, eventually, were able to enjoy some kind of autonomy. On the other hand, the strategic importance of the coastal cities had meant that these cities would experience rapid changes as a result of the changes in the dominant powers that would seek to control them. In conclusion, Lebanon's unique mountainous nature as well as its geographical location and its exposure to the sea through its coasts has had a distinctive effect on the psychology of its inhabitants.

### **Identities in Lebanon from the Phoenician Era until the End of the Greek Era**

#### **Early City State Identities**

Different civilizations passed through Lebanon over the years and left their marks there. The earliest inhabitants, the Phoenicians were culturally and ethnically Canaanites. As many historians have written (Badre, 1993; Hitti, 1965, 1967; Salibi, 1965), the Phoenicians were one of the first civilizations to establish independent city states, such as Tyre and Byblos, on the Lebanese coast. The Greeks were the ones who gave the Phoenicians their historical name, while, in fact, the inhabitants of each city named themselves in reference to the city they belonged to. Therefore, the Phoenicians identified themselves with their city of origin even though they all shared the same culture, race and language. Relationships between the different cities were those of independent city states.

In conclusion, I believe that the fact that the Phoenician people have never developed a sophisticated awareness of a common identity must have been the reason why they were never



able to build a civilization and an empire similar to those of the Greeks and Romans who came after them. However, it is important to note here that the different Phoenician city states were self ruled and that they controlled the trade in the Mediterranean Sea by having invaded and established other coastal cities, such as Carthage and Sicily (Badre, 1993). Furthermore, they were also one of the first ancient peoples to invent an alphabet.

### **Foreign Invasions and Identity Adaptations**

After the Phoenicians, Lebanon was invaded by numerous outside powers. The two most significant of these came from across its western borders: the Greeks, followed by the Romans. During those times, even though the Lebanese cities were subject to foreign rules, they were given by the invading powers a high degree of autonomy in the various political, administrative and cultural spheres (Deeb, 1993).

During the Hellenistic (Greek) period, for instance, the Lebanese cities did not lose their character nor even the local dialects that were common at the time. As for the spoken languages, Greek became the official language, while all the Semitic dialects, specifically Aramaic, continued to be the people's day to day spoken language (Deeb, 1993).

Moreover, the social classes remained the same with the aristocrats and the religious authorities receiving special attention and privileges from the invading powers in return for their loyalty and cooperation in serving as intermediaries between the external ruling powers and the local inhabitants (Deeb, 1993). During the Roman period, however, one of the privileges that the Lebanese ruling class was deprived of was the title "king", leaving the Lebanese aristocracy solely with the title of "rulers," which was a title that better reflected the power realities of the time (Deeb, 1993).

In short, I can conclude here that those Lebanese cities that submitted to the invading powers without much resistance were able to survive and adapt to the new cultures. More

specifically, the semi-autonomy enjoyed by the various Lebanese cities guaranteed that the people maintained their city identities as well as their cultural heritage while at the same time assimilating new cultural norms from the new invading cultures. This also meant that a submissive and cooperative attitude on the part of the city's indigenous elite was the most adaptive for the inhabitants of a city.

### **Identities in Lebanon during the Roman and Byzantine Periods**

#### **The Arab Cultural Identity**

By the fifth century AD, the Arabs as an ethnic group were quite dominant in the Lebanese/Syrian region with Arabic overshadowing the other Semitic dialects (Hazim, 1993). Moreover, during the fifth or sixth century, the classical Arabic language began to be used as a common literary language among various Arabs from different regions (Salibi, 1979). A significant number of these Arab tribes were Christians (Hazim, 1993).

#### **The Christian Religious Identity**

It is historically known that after Syria and Lebanon came under the influence of the Eastern Byzantine Empire, following the split of Rome into Eastern and Western divisions in 330 AD, many of the region's Christians held different religious opinions regarding the nature of Christ (Hazim, 1993). According to Hazim (1993), some of these Christians, who were mostly Arab tribes, began to associate themselves with different Eastern Christian sects. Some of these Christian sects that did not side with Byzantium on certain political issues suffered from a differential treatment by the central government, which they resented tremendously (Hazim, 1993). The Christian Maronites, on the other hand, who also were victims of differential

treatment by the rulers of Byzantium, were among the first minorities to seek refuge in the Lebanese mountains in the sixth century AD after suffering from political persecutions (Deeb, 1993).

### **Identities in Lebanon during the Arab/Moslem Era**

Even though there is some disagreement among historians over the exact origins of Lebanon's current population, one of the irrefutable historical facts is that all the prominent religious sects that constitute modern Lebanon were already living in the same piece of land, at least, since the 11th century AD (Salibi, 1988). According to Salibi, the majority of the people in Lebanon today can trace back their roots to the tribes that successively migrated from the Arab Peninsula between the fifth and eleventh centuries AD and settled in the region currently known as Lebanon. Therefore, the language most widely spoken today is Arabic. Some of the Lebanese, however, trace their descent to non-Arab regions, such as the Armenian Lebanese, who originally lived in the northern regions of Lebanon, and the Christian Maronites, who believe that they first arrived in Syria--and later took refuge in the Lebanese mountains--as "immigrants from another land" (Salibi, 1988, p. 88).

There are two major religious trends in Lebanon today: Islam and Christianity. Nineteen different sects compromise these two trends, and they are: The main Christian sects are the Maronites, Greek Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Protestant Evangelicals as well as Armenian Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants. The main Moslem sects, on the other hand, are the Sunnis, Shiites, and Druzes. Even though Lebanon has been affected by the presence of all these sects, it is especially useful to briefly review the history of four major sects whose interaction has had the most significant effect on the history of Lebanon, mainly that of the Sunni, Shiite, Maronite and Druze sects.



### **The Coastal Identities: The Arab Moslem/Sunni Majority Identity**

Lebanon remained under the Byzantine dominance until 641 AD. Then, it came under the Arab Moslem rule, which, in fact, consisted of different Islamic empires that governed the region for approximately 600 years (Hanf, 1993). The Prophet Mohammed started preaching Islam in the year 610 AD among the different Arab tribes in Western Arabia. After 632, his successors conquered the lands of Syria and Lebanon and drove the Byzantine forces out of the region (Salibi, 1988).

From that time until 1516, Lebanon was part of the territory of the different Arab/Moslem empires, mostly Sunni, that ruled the region. The only exception was the period between 1098 and 1291 when the Crusaders from the West dominated the Lebanese coasts (Salibi, 1988). Moreover, Arabic became the official language of the government after 700 AD when all the registers and records were completely translated into Arabic. (Hazim, 1993).

For most of the Arab/Moslem rule, the Lebanese coastal cities were inhabited by mostly Sunni Moslems, who represented the majority of the Moslem Arabs across the Arab regions, in addition to some Christian minorities. The settlement of mainly Sunni tribes in the Lebanese coast after the advent of Islam reflected the economic and military importance that these cities had vis-à-vis the stability and safety of any of the Islamic Empires that ruled the region. Moreover, all the coastal cities were, most of the time, directly ruled by the central powers of the successive empires through military commanders (Baydoun, 1993; Hazim, 1993; Salibi, 1979).

### **The Mountain Identity : The Christian, Druze, and Shiite Minority Identities**

It is important here to notice that, as Salibi (1988) explains, the history of Arabs in pre-Islamic times was one of tribes or principalities headed by tribal sheiks or princes. During Islamic times, however, the Arabs were supposed to owe their loyalty to the universal State of Islam,

regardless of who the ruler was or where he was from. Therefore, those Arab tribes from rural or isolated regions who wanted to maintain some degree of their past autonomy from the central powers without being branded as rebels, had to justify their autonomy by interpretations of Islam that were different from the dominant religious authorities at the time. In other instances, some Arab tribes who did not convert to Islam but remained Christian, also used their differences in religion so that they could maintain some degree of autonomy from the dominant powers.

Therefore, it was likely that the religious minority tribal groups that settled in Mount Lebanon and its surroundings must have had a common denominator, and that is a desire to maintain some degree of autonomy from the central powers. This autonomy could have been maintained by espousing a different religious or sectarian identity from the dominant powers, or by taking advantage of the relative geographical isolation that the mountains offered. Finally, one can conclude here that three basic facts must have played significant roles in the psychology of these minority religious communities: (1) holding different religious beliefs, (2) sharing a common fear of persecution from the central authorities and (3) desiring to maintain some degree of autonomy.

As was mentioned earlier, the Maronite Christians began to settle in the area during the Byzantine Era as a result of dynamics between them and the dominant Byzantine powers similar to the dynamics mentioned above by Salibi. Moreover, during the Moslem rule, mainly between the 10th and 11th centuries AD, similar psychological circumstances led to the last arrival of the Christian Maronites to northern Mount Lebanon (Salibi, 1988).

Other groups, however, such as the Druzes--a particular sect that developed from Islam--began to appear in different parts of Syria around that time, mainly in the southern parts of Mount Lebanon. Whereas some of these Druzes, who were Arab tribes and indigenous to the Lebanese mountains, converted to the Druze religion in the 11th century AD, others were tribes that came from other parts of the region and took refuge in the mountains after adopting the Druze religion (Salibi, 1988).

Finally, the Shiite Moslems (the other major sect of Islam) were present in the territory that separated the Druzes and the Maronites, namely the Kisrawan region as well as the Bika' valley, the Baalbek region and Jabal Amil. They differed with the Sunnni Moslems by accepting "neither the Umayyad caliphs, nor the Abbasids, as legitimate Imams [but] instead, they recognized different descendants of Ali as Imams, and therefore became divided into as many Shiite sects" (Salibi, 1988, p. 10-11).

### **Relations between the Various Religious Groups and the Dominant Powers**

Autonomy, however, did not mean independence for the people of the mountains. The different tribal groups associated themselves with the leading powers and submitted to their rule in return for protection and security. Mainly, as a community, the Druzes, allied themselves with the ruling Moslem governments throughout the Arab/Moslem rule and their members were often conscripted into the army (Hanf, 1993; Salibi, 1988). Moreover, the Druzes enjoyed a closer relationship with the various Moslem powers than the Christians because they were religiously closer to the rulers (Khalaf, 1987; Salibi, 1988).

The Maronites, on the other hand, were also allied with the dominant Moslem powers who permitted all Christians to practice all their religious rituals and beliefs without any inhibitions. In return, the Christians, being the people of the Book, were obligated to pay personal taxes to the Moslem government, which also guaranteed their protection in war situations (Hazim, 1993).

The only exception was when the Maronites rallied around the Crusaders at the end of the 11th century (Salibi, 1988). Moreover, in 1180, the Maronite Patriarch and his bishops, who wanted to gain stronger ecclesiastic command over their tribal followers, advocated a union of the Maronite and the Roman churches. This, however, caused an internal war among the Christians because many of them opposed a union with the Western Church.



Ultimately, though, the Maronite church established a formal alliance with the church in Rome, which still exists until today (Salibi, 1988). This alliance served the Christians well when the ruling Moslem powers were in good terms with the western powers. At other times, though, it worked against their well-being (Salibi, 1988).

At this point, it would seem that the majority of Arab tribes that settled in Mount Lebanon did that mainly out of their interest in maintaining some degree of tribal and religious autonomies as well as safety under the rule of the dominant authorities of the time--being that the Byzantine Empire or the different successive Moslem Empires that followed. Moreover, tribal leaders or/and religious clergy gave their loyalty to those outside powers that could best guarantee their safety and secure the highest degree of relative autonomy to their communities.

On the other hand, the Sunni tribes that settled the coastal cities were in a safer position, satisfied by their majority status, especially that that enabled them to benefit from the trade opportunities that the coasts offered during peace times. But, like their predecessors, the different city inhabitants suffered great losses during times of war when they resisted the power changes that took place at different stages of the Moslem Empires. Those city inhabitants and city elites who happened to be on the winning side of the warring factions survived and prospered while others perished.

Therefore we see, once again, that as far as the inhabitants of Lebanon's cities or mountains were concerned, survival often meant a capacity on their part to adapt to the changing realities of the power struggles around them. The flexibility of the communities to change loyalties and to cooperate and submit to the winning forces would have conferred on them a distinctive survival advantage. That is, such an environment would have made the selection of such adaptive tactics a primary characteristic of any surviving community and their elites.

Finally, the closer the identity of the tribe to the that of the ruling powers was, the more were the advantages conferred on them compared to other tribes with a more distant identity.

Therefore, since the nature of relations of the various tribes in Lebanon with the dominant powers were determined by the tribe's religious identification, the religious identity of an individual became the most salient identity in that environment.

### **Identities in Lebanon from the Ottoman Empire Until World War I**

As we have seen in the preceding sections, until the beginning of the Turkish Ottoman Empire (1516), the different Lebanese communities functioned under the rule of one or the other of the dominant Arab /Moslem powers. Each community, through its leaders, chose the alliances that best served its needs for security, autonomy and relative financial independence. Until that time, there was never any formal organization between the various Lebanese communities. This, however, started to change after the occupation of the Lebanese lands by the Ottoman powers in 1516. This is why many Lebanese scholars trace the roots of the modern Lebanese State to that period of time (Gordon, 1980; Khalaf, 1987; Odeh, 1985).

The story of the formation of Lebanon into its current form and structure after the advent of the Ottoman Empire can be likened to the story of the development of a human being as he progressively develops into a more complicated and differentiated organism. In the following section, I will briefly trace the major stages of the development of the Lebanese group into its current state. Therefore, the story of the physical development of the Lebanese group as well as its changes in nature, structural complexity, and the identity of self awareness of its members will be examined within the context of the environment and environmental changes that affected it.

### **The Mount Lebanon Region between the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Centuries**

**Early Formation.** Lebanon came under the Ottoman (modern-day Turkish) rule in 1516. Instead of organizing their Empire on a military/geographical basis like their predecessors, the

Ottomans instituted a sectarian based organization (Hanf, 1993). More specifically, they implemented a direct or indirect rule over their subjects in accordance with the similarities or differences between the subjects' identities and themselves (Hanf, 1993).

In other words, the Moslem Sunni Turks initially implemented a direct rule on the coastal Lebanese cities because (1) the city inhabitants and their rulers both shared the Sunni Moslem identity while still differed with them on the Arab /Turkish identity category and because (2) of the strategic importance of coastal cities. On the other hand, the remote mountainous regions, which were inhabited by Maronites, Druzes and some Shiite Moslem communities, were ruled indirectly through the mediation of the indigenous feudal community leaders whose primary obligation towards the Ottoman Empire was to pay taxes (Hanf, 1993). One can conclude here that under such an environment, an individual's sectarian identity became even more important than it had been in the past in terms of determining his status and survival chances under the rule of the dominant powers.

Here, it is important to note that the mountain community was organized into a common structure of two social classes, mainly, a feudal class of mostly Druzes and some Christian families who presided over a class of some Druzes and a majority of Christian peasants. The land was owned by mostly Druze families because the Druze community had a very close relationship with the different ruling powers and, unlike the Christians, enjoyed the privilege of serving in the military of these powers (Hanf, 1993; Khalaf, 1979; Salibi, 1988).

**Dependency and Oppression.** By the end of the sixteenth century, the Ottomans encouraged Emir Fakhr al-Din II, who was a Druze prince, to organize under his rule, with the help of their support, the mountain regions, and later to add to that the rest of what constitutes nowadays Lebanon, that is, the Biqa' valley and the Lebanese coastal cities. Therefore, the Ottomans supported the Druze leader, whose function was to organize under his rule the different feudal leaders of the various areas and to collect taxes from them in order to pay his



Ottoman rulers. The feudal leaders, in turn, had significant power in matters dealing with their tribal communities, while the Emir had almost no interference in such matters (Hanf, 1993; Khalaf, 1979; Salibi, 1988).

The mountain leader's political independence for the next two hundred years varied according to how much he was perceived to pose a threat to the influence of the Ottoman authorities. During Fakhr al-Din II's relatively politically independent period (1590-1635), before he was eventually exiled and later executed by the Turks, he encouraged stronger ties with Europe, built an army and many fortresses, and developed agriculture through modern technology that was brought in from Italy (Hanf, 1993). Another similar attempt was initiated by another leader, Bashir al-Shihabi II, in 1821, but like the first endeavor, it was eventually suppressed by the angry Ottomans (Hanf, 1993).

What stands out about the period that started with Fakhr al-Din's rule over Lebanon was the subtle symbiosis that developed during that period between the inhabitants of the mountain regions (Hourani, 1991; Salibi, 1988). In fact, many later attempts by external powers to fully separate the mountain communities resulted in failure (Salibi, 1988). Therefore, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, some Lebanese areas, especially the mountains, started to have a common social structural organization with only a limited level of autonomy for the first time ever. Moreover, in general, the mountain regions flourished and their people enjoyed some stability in their day to day lives. The common patterns that emerged during that period of dependency could be summarized as follows:

First, during that time, there was only one external power dominating Lebanon. Second, the Ottomans exercised their domination over the different communities through one mediating system, mainly by appointing a Prince who would preside over a feudal class of different sectarian affiliations, who, in turn, would organize the lives of the peasant class and collect taxes for the occupying power. Third, the Princes, regardless of their sectarian affiliation, developed different degrees of cultural and economic relationships with European powers that

helped them modernize many economic sectors. When the relatively independent behavior of the Prince exceeded a certain Ottoman comfort level, he was disposed of by the Ottomans and replaced by another more subservient Prince.

### **Lebanon Between the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries**

**Beginning of Identity Confusion.** Various historical accounts have been written about this period (Hanf, 1993; Khalaf, 1979, Salibi, 1988; Gorla, 1985). As the world's balance of powers started to change slowly, the different European powers, aware of the existence of various religious sects in Lebanon, began to take advantage of this unique situation to suit their own needs and political interests within the Ottoman Empire. This changing political climate ushered in a more insidious type of domination, oppression and dependency. The effect of this new situation was that the feudal, religious as well as the tribal leaders of the Lebanese communities started taking advantage of the competitive nature of the relationship of the external powers with respect to Lebanon.

Therefore, the various community elites started dividing along sectarian lines as a result of which each community began identifying, allying with and giving their loyalties to the various external powers. Some of these alliances were mere renewal and strengthening of past alliances, while others were new. Two general rules guided the alliance choices: First, each community allied itself with the outside power that best rewarded this loyalty in terms of promoting its interests. Second, communities tended to ally themselves with outside powers that shared their religious identities, although this was not always the case (Hanf, 1993; Khalaf, 1979; Salibi, 1988; Gorla, 1985).

**Multi-power Domination and Dependency.** Most often, this dependent relationship between the external powers and the sectarian communities was explained and justified in terms

of a community's need for protection. For instance, in 1740, the French established agreements with the Turks entitled "foreign privileges," in which they were given the right to "protect" all Christian Catholic sects in Lebanon that were associated with Rome. Similarly, Russia "protected" the other Christian sects that were not associated with Rome, while Great Britain found its way to the region through establishing relations with the Druzes (Hanf, 1993).

In other words, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, instead of a unitary feudal class that was subservient to and dependent on one common outside dominating oppressive power, Lebanon started having a divided class of sectarian leaders who were subservient to many different external powers. That is, the Lebanese society exchanged its uni-dependence for multiple dependencies. Moreover, the sectarian identity of an individual became of primary importance since it became the basis of the dependent relationship with the external powers.

It could also be safely argued that, attracted by a greater potential for reward and social justice and, therefore, better survival chances under an oppressive environment, some of the elites in the different communities must have looked for support from different external powers. That is, while still utilizing the same subservient and dependent survival strategies of their past heritage, there seemed to be a better chance of maximizing benefits and survival chances by "diversifying" their dependence on the different oppressive powers.

Moreover, it seems that another result of this new situation was that each external power would contribute different things to each of the various sects. Thus, for example, while the Sunni sect community might gain through being trade intermediaries between the Arab mainland and the Europeans, the Christian community would gain by acquiring new educational, technological as well as organizational skills from the French, etc. Therefore, even though there was a net gain for each community, the unparallel development modalities between the communities started creating real differences between the different sects. However, these newly adopted multi-dependency survival tactics, as we shall see later, proved to be even more oppressive to the Lebanese people than what the past uni-dependent situation had been.



## Lebanon between 1830-1858

**First Sectarian Conflict.** The first sectarian conflict between the Maronites and the Druzes broke out as a direct result of this new mode of sectarian multi-dependency on the various external powers. The changes in the balance of power led to a social mobilization by the previously disadvantaged peasant Maronite Christian community. More specifically, the changes were made possible through the European powers' political intervention in the area and the alliances that they created with each of the two sects, i.e., the Maronites sided with the French and the Egyptians, while the Druzes supported the British and the Ottomans (Khalaf, 1979).

After the Napoleonic conquest of Egypt, the French backed the Egyptian forces who proceeded to weaken the Ottoman hold over Lebanon and Syria. They were successful in occupying those territories. As a result of this, and with the help of the Egyptian power, the Christian citizens reaped the benefits of their alliance and were able to assert themselves and become big land owners and creditors. The Druze feudal class, who was more privileged than the Christians during the purely Islamic rules of the past, was significantly threatened and put on the defensive (Gordon, 1980; Gorla, 1985).

For these reasons, many members of the Druze ruling class, along with their followers, left the mountain regions and sought refuge in other parts (Khalaf, 1979). Thus, for the first time in two hundred years, internal social conflict and unrest along sectarian lines started affecting the mountain region.

Interestingly enough, the reign of Egyptians ended when the Mountain communities, both Druze and Christian, with the help of the European powers, joined forces in an attempt to rid themselves of the Egyptian authorities after they started demanding very high taxes from all the Lebanese people. But once the Egyptian forces left, the Druzes and the Christians turned against each other, with the Druzes demanding to regain some of their past influence and properties (Hanf, 1993; Khalaf, 1979; Salibi, 1988).

### **Second Structural Transformation and the Creation of a Sectarian Council .** A

serious outbreak of a civil war was averted by another external intervention. In 1841, through an agreement between the European powers and the ever weakening Ottoman power, Mount Lebanon was divided into two separate parts, a northern Maronite state and a Southern Druze state in order to partially satisfy the demands of both quarreling sides of both sects as well as their foreign protectors. However, the separation of Mount Lebanon into two separate artificial states did not succeed and almost led to a civil war, due to the fact that many families of both sects lived in each other's states (Hanf, 1993, Khalaf, 1979).

Later, a new attempt was made by the external powers to solve the problem through the establishment of a common advisory council for the two states and their rulers, consisting of representatives of most of the sectarian Lebanese groups. The function of this council was to take decisions and advise the rulers of both divided states on taxation matters. This was the first time in the history of Mount Lebanon that such a council was created to represent the different religious sects in the area. Moreover, this was the first step in institutionalizing the power of a sectarian ruling elite who represented the various sectarian communities as well as the different external powers (Hanf, 1993).

### **Lebanon between 1858 And W.W.I**

**Second Inter-sectarian Conflict.** While the first conflict between the different sectarian communities was a direct result of a shift in the external balance of power with respect to Lebanon and, hence, a shift in the balance of power of the Lebanese communities, an indirect result of this shift of powers led to a second internal conflict which was caused by an uneven development in social awareness among the differing communities. Throughout their exposure to the Republic ideals of the French Revolution and the human rights advances in Europe in general, the Christian community developed a higher level of awareness about public welfare

(Khalaf, 1979). Therefore, the past relationships between the feudal master and the peasant subjects started to be replaced by a new sense of political individuality (Harik, 1965).

Consequently, in 1858, the Maronite peasants in the northern state revolted against their similarly Christian feudal lords and other property owners thereby creating the first peasant revolt in the history of the area (Khalaf, 1979). Since the revolt was led by the Church, which was the main group allied with the French, and a change in the Christian internal leadership did not threaten the limited influence of the Ottomans, the peasant revolt succeeded in removing the ruler and all other prominent personalities from their ruling positions and confiscating all owned land to be divided among the peasants (Khalaf, 1979).

When a year later the revolution reached the other Druze state, the Maronite peasants, who represented the majority of the peasants even in the southern state, revolted against the Druze leaders and landlords for the same social reasons like their predecessors. The Druze leaders, along with their communities and with the support and encouragement of the Ottoman power, were soon capable of giving this social revolt a religious sectarian meaning and, hence, beginning a tragic civil war in which hundreds of Christians were slaughtered by the Druzes. It is significant to mention here that this bloody civil war (1860), which started between the Druzes and the Maronites, was soon transformed into a general civil war in different parts of the country whereby the Sunnis and the Shiites were on the Druzes' side and the other Christian sects on the Maronites' (Hanf, 1993; Khalaf, 1979).

In conclusion, this highlights the insidious oppressive effects of the multi-dependency tactic. The fact that, through the French, a perfectly normal social transformation was brought about by only one sect, was naturally looked upon suspiciously by the other sects in such a sectarianly charged environment.

**Third Structural Change and the Institutionalization of a Sectarian System with Multinational Support.** The dominant powers, unlike the Lebanese inhabitants, must have



realized that none of their interests in Lebanon could be achieved if the country was caught in bloodshed. Therefore, Small Lebanon, which consisted mainly of Mount Lebanon but also certain suburbs of Beirut excluding the city itself, was created by the help of the European powers and the Ottomans in 1861 to end the bloody conflict. Small Lebanon was provided with a privileged position in the region and, therefore, a special political regime was created for it (Hanf, 1993; Hourani, 1991).

Taking the responsibility of protecting this newly created entity, all the powers involved decided that Small Lebanon, a special Ottoman district, was to be governed by a non-Lebanese Christian and that a representative council of all religious sects was to be established (Gordon, 1980). This new council was the new political body that functioned as a representative of, and an intermediary between, the Ottomans and the European powers on the one hand, and the people, on the other. Therefore, feudalism was replaced by a constitutional structure as a system of tax gathering for the dominant Ottomans headed by a multi-sectarian elite group (Gordon, 1980). Moreover, the council included equal number of representatives of each sect until 1864, when it began to include a number of representatives proportionate to the actual size of the population of each sect (Hanf, 1993).

In short, the early informal feudal/peasant structure, through which one external power exerted its influence on part of the inhabitants of Lebanon during the early sixteenth century, evolved into a formal constitutional structure headed by different representatives of sectarian groups who at the same time served as representatives of the now multiple-external dominant powers. Meanwhile, those communities and their elites, who were best able to associate with, serve, and submit to the most appropriate outside powers, thought that they were in the best position to survive and thrive in the Lebanese environment.

## Lebanon between W.W.I And W.W.II

### Identity Differences

When W.W.I ended, the balance of world powers, once again, changed in a very specific direction. With the breakdown of the Ottoman Empire, the Arab provinces were to be reconfigured into new states under the mandate of the European Allied Forces (Abdul-Sater, 1983; Hourani, 1991; Khalifeh, 1993). A primary concern for the Allied forces was to maintain their influence in the area. They could best do this by protecting their relationship with the Christian sects in Lebanon through providing them with financial and physical securities. The different groups in Lebanon, however, had different visions of how their future should look like. The question of the Lebanese identity mainly centered around three options which reflected the opinions of the different sects.

**Greater Lebanon.** A group of Christians argued for the creation of an economically viable independent Greater Lebanon which would incorporate the Moslem areas of Beirut, Sydon, Tyre, Tripoli and the Bika' valley into Mount Lebanon. This group of Maronites argued that this Greater Lebanon had always had a special character that differed from the character of its surrounding areas (Naanai, 1993; Salibi, 1988). The only disadvantage of such an option was that the Maronites could not belong to an entity where they would have a comfortable majority as they did under the Small Lebanon of the past century and would thus have to share power with a significant number of Moslems and their external supporters.

As for the Druze and Shiites, they were not specifically against the idea of the creation of Greater Lebanon where they would enjoy the position of being minorities among other minorities as opposed to being minorities among a Sunni majority in a Syrian or Arab state (Haddad, 1985).

**Smaller Lebanon.** Another group of Maronite Christians called for the creation of an independent Mount Lebanon with strong ties with France. They were of the opinion that this geographic entity, where they will be a majority, should be given complete independence in the form of Smaller Lebanon. The argument was that they would feel secure from the possible dominance of the Moslem majority in the Area. The problem with this arrangement was that the new entity was not thought to be economically viable (Naanai, 1993).

**Lebanon as Part of a Syrian or Arab Nation.** The Sunni Moslems in various Lebanese areas believed that they should be part of either a Syrian or a greater Arab nation and resented the suggestion that they should be separated from their Moslem Arab environment. For them, the Syrian or the Arab option meant that they would feel comfortable being part of the Sunni majority rule. Therefore, they did not look favorably at the idea of a Greater Lebanon where they would no longer belong to the ruling majority and would become a minority under the influence of Western powers (Naanai, 1993).

#### **Fourth Structural Formation and the Establishment of Greater Lebanon in 1920**

Due to the long close historical relations the French had with the Maronite Christians in Lebanon, they looked favorably at the idea of creating a greater economically more viable entity where Maronites would have a slight majority. Therefore, in 1920, the French announced the creation of the new state of Greater Lebanon which was to remain under their mandate until the new entity was ready to run its own affairs independently (Abdul-Sater, 1983; Hourani, 1991; Naanai, 1993). This form of the Lebanese entity was not satisfactory to many groups in Lebanon as we have explained in the preceding sections. Later, the circumstances surrounding the events of W.W.II eventually led to the establishment of an independent Lebanon and the end of the French mandate in 1943.



## Lebanon after W.W.II

### Fifth Structural Formation: Official Independence

Again, a new shift in the balance of power among the external powers that were involved with Lebanon led to yet another developmental change in that country. As the French Vichy regime, which was in power in Lebanon, started to weaken by the end of W.W.II, the different Lebanese elites took advantage of this new situation to achieve their independence from the French Mandate.

The new Lebanese Republic gained its independence in 1943 as the result of the cooperation of the Christian and Moslem elites in expelling the French from the country. This was accomplished when the different sectarian elites, known as the Lebanese Founding Fathers, agreed that the Maronites would give up their dependence on the French, while the Moslems would give up their dependence and demands for unification with a greater Arab nation. Moreover, they agreed to co-operate together in the development of an independent Lebanese nation (Abdul-Sater, 1983; Al-Jisr, 1993).

The new republic had a parliamentary democracy with a constitution adapted from the French constitution that guaranteed individual rights and freedoms for all its citizens (Abdul-Sater, 1983). But in light of its people's past interactions and external relations, and due to the pluralistic nature of the new entity, Lebanon was also to be a nation where the rights of the different religious groups would be protected and, therefore, the government would be used to represent the different sectarian groups.

## The Dual Nature of the Lebanese Entity after 1943

The Lebanese Founding Fathers believed that in order to maintain justice among the different sects, power had to be shared in such a way that no group could rule without the others. Therefore, in addition to the constitution, an unwritten informal National Pact was agreed upon by the different sectarian elites that stipulated how the power would be shared in the new entity (Al-Jisr, 1993). This national pact was an informal continuation of the sectarian system which had been institutionalized during the past century as the political system that represented the interests of various external as well as internal powers.

The National Pact divided power between the Christians and the Moslems following a 6-5 ratio, with every six parliamentary positions allocated to the Christians, five were allocated to the Moslems. Moreover, the president of the Republic was to be elected by the parliament but could only be chosen from the Maronite sect. Similarly, the prime minister could only be Sunni and appointed by the president. The speaker of the house was to be a Shiite elected by the parliament members. The special privileges that were given to the Christian Maronites were justified at the time as a means to guarantee their safety on the part of the Moslems of the country. Moreover, division of power among the different sects was not restricted to the top government positions, for this power-sharing formula permeated almost every aspect of the lives of the Lebanese society (Abdul-Sater, 1983; Al-Jisr, 1993).

It follows that both the Constitution and the National Pact reflected Lebanon's evolutionary dual nature, that is, its problematic, insecure, and dependent past nature as compared to a hoped for, secure, safe, and independent future. More specifically, on the one hand, the constitution determined the rules of an integrated, democratic, modern and independent Lebanese people and nation. On the other hand, the National Pact, which was an extension to the power arrangement that had evolved during the domination eras of the past centuries, and which was ratified on a temporary basis to deal with the pluralistic reality of the

unintegrated nation that existed in 1943, rendered the Constitution rigid and restricted (Shils, 1966).

Therefore, for all practical purposes, the new Lebanese system was a continuation of the elite sectarian system of the past that served as a vehicle of submission and dependency of the Lebanese people on the various external powers. In other words, the multi-dependency system was given new life under the shadow of a modern constitution and a supposedly independent country.

### **The Different Definitions of the Lebanese Identity**

**Early Identity Definitions by the Lebanese Founding Fathers.** The Founding Fathers attempted to define Lebanese identity in such a way that would reflect the sectarian basis that led to the agreement on the National Pact. This identity was best articulated by Michael Chiha, who was one of the main architects and visionaries in Lebanon during the early independence period.

In the words of Chiha, Lebanon was "basically a beautiful and noble experiment in peaceful cohabitation of religions, of traditions, of races. It is a natural experiment, which history offers as a still more decisive demonstration than that of Switzerland in the heart of Europe" (Hudson, 1985, p. 163).

Chiha believed that sectarianism in Lebanon is

the guarantee of equitable political and social representation for the associated minorities....[it] is above all a force for order and peace....Lebanon is composed of sectarian minorities. These minorities appear under the sectarian label because Lebanon has always been a refuge for freedom of conscience. Its role as a haven has always been possible because of Lebanon's geographical situation--in a mountainous land where it has always been possible to defend oneself and in a maritime land from which it has always been easy to take to the sea.... In spite of many errors and abuses, it is sectarianism that has taught tolerance to the Lebanese. The Lebanese equilibrium, based on sectarianism, is not an arbitrary equilibrium. It is by no means prejudice that has created it, but the necessity for recognizing the parochialism that cover as broad a range as do those among political parties. With time, these differences may blur and



slowly disappear. Actually the purpose of Lebanon's existence lies precisely in the sectarianism that characterizes it and manifests itself first in the arrangement of legislative power. (Hudson, 1985, p.117)

Moreover, Chiha verbalized the relationship between the Lebanese identity and the identities of non-Lebanese groups. Chiha writes:

I accept Lebanon's presence in the Arab world and admit that it has an 'Arab face'...Lebanon's value is as a bridge between East and West, an interpreter of each to the other, and a transmitter of culture in both directions; they would take pride in Lebanon's multiethnicity and be in favor of toleration and sharing power--provided, of course, that Lebanon's sovereignty and the integrity of the Christian communities were not threatened. (Gordon, 1983, p.12)

### **The Definition of the Lebanese Identity by the Various "Lebanese" Political**

**Parties.** Others, however, did not agree with Chiha's definition of Lebanese identity; their definitions still reflected the primary conflicts around the nature of Lebanese identity that were present during the discussions surrounding the creation of Greater Lebanon in 1920 and, and which persisted after Lebanese independence.

These identity definitions were best reflected by the different political parties that dominated political life in Lebanon after 1943. Some of these parties gave identity definitions in terms of a supra-Lebanese identity, while others gave definitions in terms of an intra-group Lebanese identity. None of these parties, however, provided a definition of identity in terms of a Lebanese group level.

Three political Lebanese parties rejected the idea of a Lebanon based on sectarian identities and instead believed in a secular Lebanon. The Lebanese Communist Party (LCP), which was established in 1944, became more noticeable with the growing political power of the Soviet Union. The LCP acknowledged Lebanon's independence in 1959 (16 years after the country's actual independence) but it kept on working towards political solidarity with all Arab efforts that were against colonization. The LCP was always taking the political side of the Soviet Union (Hanf, 1993).

Another communist party, the Socialist Movement Party, established by Arab nationals, was a more local Communist party which was interested in absorbing those Lebanese secular individuals who were open to leftist ideas. Even though many of this party's significant leaders were from the Greek-Orthodox Christian sect, its leading body also included people of all other sects. Its regular members, however, were mainly Shiite Moslems who entered the party just before the Civil War started in 1975 (Hanf, 1993).

The Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP), however, established in 1934 by Antoon Saadeh, was against the idea of Arabism as well as a Lebanese nation, and instead believed in a greater Syrian nation. The SSNP believed in a secular "Greater Syria" that would provide its citizens with various opportunities to build a modern nation far from any religious colors. For the SSNP, "Greater Syria" includes Iraq, Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon. The SSNP, as was the case with the Communist parties, included members from various religious sects, but mainly Greek Orthodox and Shiites (Abdul-Sater, 1983).

In addition, The Baath Party, which was established in 1940 in Syria but became known in Lebanon only in 1951, believed in a secular nation while considering religion, mainly Islam, an important part of Arab education. Sunni Moslems from Tripoli joined the Lebanese Baath Party in the beginning; later on, Shiite Moslems from other cities joined too. This party is a national Arab party; due to its breakdown into two factions in the mid-sixties after the establishments of new governments in Syria and Iraq, the Lebanese Bath Party also divided into two, one favoring the Syrian regime while the other the Iraqi regime (Hanf, 1993).

Other parties based their definitions of the Lebanese identity on the interests of their particular sectarian communities. The Kataeb Party (the Phalangists), for instance, was established in 1936 and had its ideology based on Lebanon's complete unconditional independence and was the major enemy for all the Syrian national and Arab political parties (Hanf, 1993). However, even though this party is considered to be open to all Lebanese, the

majority of its members are Maronites and, therefore, espouses the interests of the Maronite community (Gordon, 1983).

Similar to the Kataeb Party among the Maronite community, but on the Moslem Sunni side, was the Al-Najjadah Party, which supported Arab nationalism and a strong association between Arabism and Islam (Hanf, 1993). Finally, The Popular Socialist Party believed in a secular and a completely independent Lebanese nation as well as a strong association with the Arab world. Even though this party attracted a number of intellectuals from various sects, just like the SSNP, those who usually voted for this party were mainly Druzes from the Shuf mountains. Hence, this party was perceived as representing the interests of the Druze community (Gordon, 1983, Hanf, 1993).

### **Survival of the New Entity from 1943 to 1976**

According to Hudson, who conducted an analysis of Lebanon in 1967, the survival of the integrity of the Lebanese entity was dependent on the capacity of the power elite of the different sects to maintain a power balance between the different sectarian groups as well as deal effectively with the forces of change in the country (Hudson, 1985).

**Maintaining Power Balance.** The same survival tactics used by the different sectarian elites in the past century continued to be used well into the existence of the new Lebanese State. For example, in the foreign policy sphere, the relationship between the different sects after 1943 followed the same rules that govern relationships between independent states. The different groups established alliances with outside regional or international powers as a way to maintain the internal balance with the internal groups (Hudson, 1985).

Therefore, if the Christians leaders were to disturb the balance of power and cooperate with Western powers to increase their influence in the country, the Moslems leaders would then



cooperate with regional Moslem powers to re-establish that balance. When the external powers were in a state of confrontation over issues relating to the Middle East, the balance of power in Lebanon would be threatened (Hudson, 1985).

For example, in 1958, the Maronite president of the republic attempted to exert pressure on the opposing Moslem forces in the country by allying himself with the United States, which was interested in limiting the rise of Egyptian Nasserism in the Middle East. The Moslem side reacted by allying itself with Egypt in order to prevent the re-election of that president, and thus preventing a tilt in the balance of power. The result was a temporary outbreak of civil war which lasted until a new president, General Fouad Chehab, was elected. General Chehab followed a neutral external policy and thus re-adjusted the balance of power (Abdul-Sater, 1983; Gorla, 1985).

**Attitudes towards Change.** According to Hudson (1985), as Lebanon's needs and conditions developed, the confessional system survived as long as the power elite managed to control the forces of change that the country experienced. Integration of the different sects was perceived as a threat to the sectarian system of government and, therefore, it was resisted in a number of ways. First, the leaders of the different sects cooperated and compromised in order to avoid conflicts, while at the same time, they fulfilled the demands of their sub-communes in order to maintain control over them. Second, they cooperated in order to keep the sects apart, and thus keep them dependent on their leadership (Koury, 1976).

Moreover, the whole sectarian leadership would cooperate in order to thwart any attempt by a central government to implement integrative reforms that were designed to deal with the changes facing the country. Such was the case with the sectarian leaders' reaction to the integrative reforms instituted by General Chehab during his presidency. The whole group of sectarian leaders formed an alliance and made sure that his reform movement would not continue (Gorla, 1985; Hanf, 1993; Hudson, 1985; Odeh, 1985).

## Lebanon After 1976

### Causes of Lebanese Civil War

The Lebanese system and its leadership managed to avoid serious conflict from breaking out for around thirty years. But two compounding factors led to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1975. First, the changing nature of the Lebanese entity led to an increase in the social pressure with which the rigid sectarian system could no longer deal with. More specifically, changes in demographic ratios, the technological advance of the means of communications, the increase in education levels and the inability of the political system to adapt to such changes, led to the breakout of that conflict in 1975. Second, the changes in the internal power balance as a result of yet another change in the power balance of the external alliances of each of the internal groups (Goria, 1985; Hanf, 1993; Hudson, 1985; Khalidi, 1981; Odeh, 1985).

As was the case in the past century with the rise of the peasants in the mountains, what started out as a social mobilization on part of the Lebanese leftist forces was soon transformed into a sectarian war by the right wing forces in the system. While the Maronite Christians were the ones, this time, in a privileged position, the leftist forces were the ones demanding the deconfesionalization of the system to address the new inequities in the Lebanese society (Hudson, 1985; Khalidi, 1981; Odeh, 1985).

The perception was that the majority of the under-privileged in the country belonged to the Moslem religion, although not exclusively. Therefore, the class movement that fueled the rise of the multi-sectarian leftist forces was perceived as a Moslem threat on the country's Christians (Hanf, 1993).

As was the case in the past century, the demands for change were possible because of shifts in the external power balance, both in the Middle East and the world. A number of events in the Middle East led to an eventual concentration of Palestinian military forces in Lebanon in

the 1970's. This new strong Palestinian presence, most of whom were Sunni Moslems, threatened the Maronite Christian privileged power status because it shifted the internal Lebanese balance of power in favor of the leftist movement, which became closely allied with these new Palestinian forces. The Christians, on the other hand, responded to this threat by allying themselves with regional and international forces that were opposed to the Palestinian presence in Lebanon (Hanf, 1993; Hudson, 1985; Khalidi, 1981; Odeh, 1985).

Moreover, as Corm (1994) explains, soon after the breakup of the war, the various sectarian elites who were associated with the external powers started to utilize certain war tactics intended to polarize and divide the Lebanese community along sectarian lines. By doing so, these sectarian elites were taking advantage of the past sectarian insecurities in order to strengthen their political status among the different Lebanese communities, each of which started perceiving the military forces in their sects as their protectors against the others. Some of these tactics included the killing of individuals according to their religious identities as specified on their identity cards, sniping at civilian communities and bombing of residential areas (Corm 1994).

However, as the war continued, it soon became so complicated and dependent on outside factors that the country's leadership lost all control of the path of events (Hanf, 1993). Therefore, the original conflict that was transformed early in the war into a Moslem-Christian inter-group conflict was soon replaced and compounded by additional numerous intra-sectarian group conflicts with each of the different sides supported by some outside power or state. Soon, the country became divided into many different sub-groups. As Khalaf wrote in 1987, "the country is splintered into all sorts of quasi-groups, communities, confessions, neighborhoods, fronts, and militias--even the street is recognized as a political entity" (p. 254).



## The End of the War and the Ta'if Accord

In 1989, with yet another significant change in the world's balance of powers as a result of the threat of the Gulf war between (Iran and Iraq), the Lebanese civil war approached its end with the signing of the Ta'if Accord, which was signed in the Saudi Arabian city of Ta'if. As Maila (1994) explains, the Ta'if Accord is viewed as an agreement between the various Lebanese warring parties developed under the auspices of the Arab countries and the United States. The implementation of the Accord would be directly overseen and supported by Syria, whose relationship with Lebanon was also redefined as part of the Ta'if Accord.

Therefore, the Ta'if Accord represents yet another attempt by the different external and internal parties associated with Lebanon to find a new solution to its problem. As Maila (1994) puts it:

The Ta'if Accord is rooted in a well established "tradition" that renders Lebanon more of a contractual, consociative country than one based on a constitution. According to this tradition, the formal, legal framework is always subordinate to a pragmatic, consensual approach to mitigating conflict within the country, and to managing national communal strains. (p. 31)

According to Maila's analytical summary, on the internal level, the Accord first reconfirms that Lebanon is a country based on a pact that stipulates the coexistence of its various sectarian groups. Moreover, it adds that any authority that does not respect the national pact of co-existence would have no constitutional legitimacy. It also clearly declares that Lebanon is an Arab country that is a homeland for the Lebanese people and whose current borders are permanent. Therefore, this new identity definition calms the Christians' fears that Lebanon would be incorporated into a greater Arab country. Moreover, it accepts the Moslem definition of the Lebanese identity as being part of a greater Arab cultural identity.

Second, the Ta'if changes the past Christian Moslem power sharing ratio from 6-5 to 6-6. Moreover, it takes some of the powers of the Maronite Christian president and gives them to the council of ministers which is headed by a Sunni Moslem. In addition, it strengthens some of the

powers of parliament which is headed by a Shiite Moslem. Third, it reiterates the 1943 idea that sectarianism as a system of government should be eventually eradicated at some point in the future.

On the external level, the Accord defines the nature of the close and friendly relationship that exists between Syria and Lebanon as well as the nature of the Lebanese policy towards its Israeli enemy.

## CHAPTER III

### LEBANESE STAGES OF IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

#### Brief Integration of Literature Review

The brief exploration of Lebanon's long history was intended to highlight the major factors that have shaped the psychology of the inhabitants of the lands of Lebanon. More specifically, we have seen in our exploration of psychological theories that, in order to propose a Lebanese Identity Development Model, it is important to:

First, define the past survival tactics that have become maladaptive and which have to eventually evolve into new adaptive ones if survival is to continue.

Second, define the nature of the separation-individuation process that guides Lebanon's development and growth. That is, it is important to understand the nature of the process and its evolution from unawareness, fear, and dependency to higher levels of awareness, security, autonomy and independence.

And third, define the environmental factors that increase or decrease the Lebanese individual's awareness of his Lebanese identity.

In the same way that communities living in areas with harsh and unstable weather conditions have to develop specific physical adaptive skills to guarantee their survival, Lebanon has also had to develop certain cultural and political adaptive skills.

For most of the Lebanese history, the people in Lebanon have been subjected to rapid cultural changes and have been the victims of successive dominations by a large number of different groups. Under these conditions of domination and rapid change, the Lebanese have had to develop a set of survival tactics that could preserve their accumulated cultural knowledge as well as enable them to flexibly adapt to these changes.



Moreover, these communities and individuals who wanted to maintain some degree of autonomy and freedom from the dominant powers tended to settle in relatively isolated and peripheral areas to the power centers of these dominant groups. Paradoxically, Lebanon, due to its geographical location and its mountainous physical nature, also served as a haven for such communities. Therefore, the cultural heritage of the peoples of Lebanon have been characterized by the two psychological traits: first, a flexible capacity to deal with external domination and rapid cultural changes, and second, a desire for independence and autonomy.

The history of Lebanon would seem to show that one of the earliest adaptive tactics to external domination and change had been the development of a culture in which communities expected their leading elite class to possess sophisticated skills that enabled them to accomplish two parallel tasks: Protect the communities and help them maintain some autonomy in their day-to-day lives while, at the same time, guarantee that the needs and interests of the invading dominating powers would be satisfied with minimal loss to the communities in question. A cultural heritage that maintained a different view around the nature of power relations in the community and its external environment would have been extinguished in the process of natural selection.

As the major military powers and cultural trends in the world became defined in terms of Christianity and Islam, a Christian and Moslem group identity became the most significant identity for those communities living in Lebanon. That is, through these religious identities, a process of identification would take place between the Lebanese communities and the various external groups.

More specifically, the same subservient adaptive skills to external domination used in the past by the Lebanese communities continued to play a significant role in people's lives. However, with the goal of securing higher levels of independence from the oppressive influences of domination, each community chose to submit to the dominating power that best rewarded this relationship and was, thus, least oppressive, and which was in conflict with the other dominant

powers that were most oppressive to the community in question. As history shows though, this same survival tactic became oppressive with time because it meant that the Lebanese communities had to turn against each other every time the external balance of powers would go through any changes.

Development and evolution dictate that individuals acquire higher levels of awareness of their environment and higher levels of power and control over that environment and their destinies. Thus, as the life of the Lebanese individual became progressively more interdependent on others in the Lebanese community, the Lebanese communities, under the direction and help of various external powers, started to develop a structural and physical unity that tended to reflect the degree of complexity of this interdependence. Therefore, Lebanon moved from being a group of loosely associated individuals and communities into more structured and defined entity.

This partial development, however, was not accompanied by enough of a cognitive and emotional development of awareness of the Lebanese identity and nature. Some of the results of this developmental lag was, first, a continued psychological dependence and strong identification with the various external powers well into the period after the Lebanese official independence. This is reflected by the maintenance of a polarized sectarian culture and sectarian system of government.

Second, this developmental lag also meant that the Lebanese people continued to be subjected to internal conflicts caused by constant changes in the external balance of powers, which shift the balance of power among the different sectarian communities. Third, by maintaining a sectarian political system, the Lebanese maintain an environment where the day-to-day survival of their individuals is highly dependent on their sectarian identities, making it hard for individuals to develop other more adaptive significant individual and group identities.

Therefore, a more evolutionary advance of the Lebanese identity would entail an increased awareness of the negative and oppressive internalized aspects of their identities that

reflect their past inadapative skills and their dependence on a sectarian culture and external oppressive influences. Moreover, evolution would also entail an increased awareness of the overall interdependence and commonalties of individuals in the society irrespective of their sectarian identities.

In the following section, I propose a Model for the Lebanese Identity Stages of Development (SILM; this reversed acronym means Peace in Arabic) that integrates the major conclusions that have been made in this study up to this point. These stages will be divided into four levels of awareness as follows:

### **Proposed Model of Lebanese Identity Stages of Development (SILM)**

#### **Stage I: A Pseudo-Integrated Lebanese Identity**

**Individual Identity Awareness.** A true Lebanese group identity consists of the set of cultural values, attitudes, and beliefs that guide the individual's interactions with his environment and with others so as to lead a healthy, free, and productive life.

Lebanese individuals at this stage are aware that they belong to the same country but still lack the awareness needed to help them acquire or develop the cultural tools that would enable them to function properly and productively and practice citizenry with members of other groups. Instead, individuals gain resources and a sense of security by heavily depending on the cultural values provided by their traditional sectarian identities. Moreover, individuals also look up to their traditional sectarian leaders for direction and protection. As a result, people tend to reject or deny their own individual needs, rights, and values and, instead accept the sectarian value system promoted by the dominant sectarian power elite.



**Pseudo Identity.** The overall Lebanese identity held by individuals at this stage is inadequate in the sense that it does not represent a common awareness of, and an agreement on, common Lebanese cultural values that embody people's interdependency within the society and their deep and basic common interests and common fate. Instead, Lebanese individuals at this stage emphasize common global characteristics that do not reflect significant commonalities between the Lebanese people.

More specifically, the acceptance of the sectarian value system means that an individual's primary loyalty is to his/her sectarian group. Therefore, people at this stage accept the premise that members of the other sects are fundamentally different. The Lebanese identity at this stage has strictly two features: First, a common awareness among the Lebanese of belonging to the same country; second, because of their need for security, the Lebanese at this stage share a common desire to avoid conflict in spite of the differences that individuals feel exist between the different sectarian groups.

In fact, the lack of a true definition of the Lebanese identity in the minds of members of this group leads them to use identities of other outside groups as a reference for their own identity definition. That is, some individuals at this stage may feel a special closeness with non-Lebanese groups that are from their same sect, and, therefore, would define their Lebanese identity in terms of the identity of those strangers even if that meant excluding other Lebanese groups from the Lebanese identity.

For instance, Christians might identify very strongly with the dominant western cultural values, attitudes, and beliefs while denying or suppressing all other aspects of their true Lebanese identity experience that reflects other cultural values. The same could be said about other Lebanese sects whose reference group might be other Arab countries in the Arab world. Therefore, members from each group derive pride and self-esteem by adopting characteristics of external groups.

**Member/Leader Relationship.** Lacking both individual and social awareness, people at this stage are not able to develop adaptive cultural values that would guide their behavior within the larger Lebanese environment. All group members look to the leader for direction; therefore, individuals at this stage are highly dependent on the sectarian leadership class. Leaders are seen as protectors of an individual's sectarian rights which are supposed to be constantly threatened by other competitive sectarian groups.

The relationship between a member and a leader is similar to the relationship between a child and an adult. Sectarian leaders are idealized and given mythical characteristics. They are considered to be as all loving and benevolent as well as always having their subject's best interest in mind.

Moreover, sectarian leaders are perceived by individuals at this stage as possessing a special type of intelligence that enables them to deal with problems and make the best decisions. Hence, individuals of this stage do not feel the need to get involved in understanding the real issues affecting their lives. Instead, they are more interested in the appearances of certain events, such as, which other sectarian leader met with their own leader and how both looked (happy or sad faces) after the meeting was over. The issues that were supposedly discussed between the two leaders are of no genuine interest to people of this stage.

**Member/Member Relationship.** Members of different groups in the Lebanese society have very little understanding of their interdependence and individuals restrict their interaction to members of their own sectarian group.

Whatever relationship an individual might have with members of other sects is usually characterized by a high degree of superficiality and artificial politeness intended to maintain good relations and to avoid potential sectarian differences from surfacing. This interaction pattern among members of the overall Lebanese society prevents them from learning about each other

and therefore, prevents the development of trust between members of different groups, which further strengthens the false sectarian culture.

Communication patterns at this stage are also highly centralized and restricted, since members depend on their sectarian leaders to communicate their needs to the central authorities as well as to other members of their own group and other groups. Finally, an individual's lack of interaction with members of other groups and his dependence on the leadership to resolve conflicts prevents the development of independent conflict mediation mechanisms within the larger culture.

**State of Conflict and Cohesion.** At this stage individuals are not yet capable of having an interest in an integrated society. Instead, they believe in a tense side by side coexistence maintained between the different groups by the constant efforts of their sectarian leadership to negotiate conflicts.

This is reflected in the fact that individuals at this stage believe that the government should be made up of the different sectarian leaders whose primary function is to coordinate and balance the activities of the different sectarian groups in order to avoid inter-sectarian conflicts.

This false sectarian culture creates a volatile inter-group conflict potential which is used by the different dominant sectarian leaders in their power struggles. As long as the sectarian leadership group can maintain a satisfactory power balance among themselves, they suppress any conflicts and exert a lot of pressure on their group members to maintain a strong inter-group cohesion or coexistence.

This constant attention given at this stage to sectarian issues diverts people's attention from the real social issues that are non-sectarian in nature. Moreover, the excessive energy that individuals at this stage devote to the maintenance of inter-sectarian balance and avoidance of conflict means that, as a group, people at this stage are very unproductive.



**Oppressive Effects of Sectarian Culture.** The false sectarian culture that individuals accept at this stage is oppressive because it only emphasizes the differences and fears among people in the Lebanese society. The effect of this is that people's ignorance and lack of self-awareness of themselves and their Lebanese reality is sustained; this prolongs people's dependence on the oppressive sectarian leadership and the sectarian system of government which are, in turn, supported and maintained by external powers instead of popular internal support.

Moreover, individuals at this stage are not aware of the problems the Lebanese sectarian system creates, and has been creating for a long time; therefore, they reject the idea that the sectarian system discriminates against individuals. For instance, the Lebanese at this stage accepts the fact that certain government positions in the country are allocated to specific sects while denying the negative discriminatory effects of this system on an individual's right for equal opportunity and freedom.

In the same token, they also discard of the fact that the sectarian leadership can be abusive in its representation of them. Consequently, Lebanese individuals in this initial stage are not aware that they are not in control of their own fates and that their growth and survival are both dependent on forces external to themselves.

Moreover, individuals at this stage deny that a sectarian system is always dependent on external powers where the changes in the external balance of powers create constant frictions among the various sectarian communities.

## **Stage II: The Ethnocentric Stage**

**Development of a Sectarian Ethnocentric Identity.** Sooner or later, an individual's false self-awareness is bound to be challenged by environmental pressures. Events or obstacles

in the person's life develop that make him aware that he is holding an inadequate set of values, attitudes and beliefs, that have been unquestionably internalized in the past.

As individuals gain a satisfactory sense of security within their environments, they start realizing that their old belief system restricts their independence, personal growth and freedom. As a result of this realization, a feeling of dissonance develops which makes the individual realize that he needs to become more aware of himself and his personal experience with his environment.

The individual at this stage, however, is not able to identify his real needs and values, and therefore, true individual awareness and identification of the real source of oppression do not materialize. Instead, individuals going through this stage enter into a reactive state that is characterized by a high level of emotionality. This emotional energy is in the form of anger and rejection that are directed towards whoever or whatever is perceived as the source of the individual's oppression and false consciousness.

This period is characterized by the gradual breakdown of the individual's social system of beliefs, which starts by the individual's rejection of the old definition of the Lebanese identity. More explicitly, the loss of belief in the old cultural values, embodied by the false Lebanese identity of the last stage, creates a vacuum that leads individuals to look for a replacement. Before the individual is to recognize the full sources of oppression, he goes through a phase, namely the second stage, where all the sectarian tensions built within him in the last stage have to be released.

At this second stage, individuals start becoming aware of the discriminatory effects that are present in the sectarian culture. This happens when individuals start realizing that their future and their chances in life are pre-determined by their membership to their sect. However, a lot of individuals at this stage are unable to accept the fact that their whole social culture is oppressive. Instead, an individual's need for psychological stability leads him to hang on to his familiar sectarian identities and use it as a basis for defining a new Lebanese social identity.

Individuals at this stage of identity development reject their old Lebanese identity as well as the sectarian identities of other sectarian groups that are seen as responsible for the individuals' limited rights in the Lebanese society. Precisely, the individuals' line of reasoning is as follows: If we could marginalize the existence of the other sectarian groups, our rights in this society would not be limited and restricted. In conclusion, the individuals at the second stage tend to define their new Lebanese identity in its most militant sectarian form by completely rejecting and opposing all other sectarian identities.

**Member/Leader Relationship.** As expected, along with the loss of belief in the old system comes a change in attitudes regarding the type of leadership. Individuals at this stage start to realize that they are being manipulated by their sectarian leaders to accept the discriminatory sectarian culture; however, they are still not completely conscious of the full extent of this manipulation.

The individuals' anger at this stage leads them to reject moderate leaders of their own sects who are seen as failing to promote the individuals' interests and protect the individuals' full rights as well as leaders of the other sects who are seen as responsible for their oppression.

Instead, sectarian leaders that adopt militant positions tend to appeal to individuals at this stage because they give expression to the individuals' diffused anger. Moreover, these militant sectarian leaders encourage angry individuals to develop this new false sectarian identity that is defined in terms of its hostility towards other sectarian groups. By keeping individuals focused on sectarian issues, sectarian leaders ensure that the sectarian system from which they operate and from which they derive their power continues to survive.

**Conflict and Cohesion.** Individuals at this stage reject the past conciliatory sectarian culture that calls for inter-group cohesion and the suppression of sectarian differences. On the contrary, through the encouragement of the most ethnocentric militant sectarian leaders,



individuals believe that there are irreconcilable differences between themselves and members of other groups which they are no longer ready to deny. Hence, any member of the "other" group is assumed to be a competitor, while any member of the same group is regarded as naturally cooperative.

Therefore, individuals at this stage manifest high levels of ethnocentrism and show no regard to any feelings of Lebanese nationalism. The cohesion of the whole national group is much less important for individuals at this stage than the cohesion of their respective sectarian groups. Hence, one sees many of them calling for the separation of the different ethnic groups into independent ethnic entities.

Moreover, the individuals' loss of loyalty to the Lebanese group as well as their primary concern with the supremacy of their own group over other groups lead individuals to associate and cooperate with any group alien to the Lebanese society that would help them attain their goals.

Because of the influence of stage one on them, many individuals at this stage feel absolutely no loyalty to the Lebanese identity and are very open to adopting any new identity that promises to respect their basic human rights for equality and freedom. Therefore, a very large number of Lebanese people going through this stage decide to distance themselves from the Lebanese society and immigrate to other countries. Others choose to withdraw into their private worlds and refuse to participate in any activity with the oppressive forces.

**Member/Member Relationship.** Unlike the individuals in the first stage whose interaction with others was characterized by its limited, indirect, and superficial nature, interactions among individuals going through this stage are characterized by their high level of intensity. These individuals are highly emotional; their anger, fear, and suspicion motivate most of their interactions with their environment. In fact, they direct their anger at all others who are perceived as causing the problem.

Therefore, the nature of these intense interactions between individuals is determined by whether they belong to the same sectarian group or to a different one. At this stage, anger is directed at the members of other sects and contact with them is conflictual and competitive in nature, while members of the same sect, including complete strangers, are looked upon for support and safety.

Moreover, same sect members are also pressured to maintain high level of cohesion among themselves. Individuals are forced to conform to and accept the most ethnocentric aspects of their sectarian group, which is the culture imposed on them and promoted by the extremist sectarian power elite who derive their power from external parties. So once again, the individuals' own will, values, and attitudes, which differ from the dominant ethnocentric culture, have to be suppressed, hidden, or denied. As to their attitudes to members of other opposing groups, they dehumanize them, see them as absolute evil, inferior and definitely threatening.

**The End of Stage Two.** By the end of this period, the individual's way of thinking would have developed from a belief that conflict exists on the sectarian level, which can only be resolved by force, to the beginning of the realization that force is futile. Moreover, the original clarity of seeing the conflict in black and white terms, i.e., through sectarian eyes, is abolished forever. The individual will become aware that there is something more complicated at play here. The simplicity of sectarian logic is left behind after the person moves on from this stage.

### **Stage III: The Lebanese Identity Formation Stage**

**Development of Stage Three Awareness.** Individuals move on from a stage two consciousness level when they realize that their extreme ethnocentric identities are not satisfactory. The individuals' continued dissatisfaction at the end of stage two is caused by the

following three factors: First, the pressure to conform and subjugate their personal needs to the needs of the militant group during the second stage starts becoming very oppressive; second, they discover that engaging in long periods of hostility towards others is psychologically and materially very draining and destructive to the individual and to all those around him; third, the overall negative social atmosphere of the last stage creates an intra-group competitive and hostile environment that leads the individual to become more careful and suspicious of members of his own group.

Therefore, individuals that move into the third stage of identity development are those who become aware of the oppressive effects of the sectarian culture as well as the coercive effects of their own ethnocentricity and the ethnocentricity of others around them. Such individuals are no longer ignorantly accepting of social injustice as they had been during the last two stages. In fact, for the first time during their development, they are able to recognize the true sources of oppression and identify those who are responsible for it.

**Identity Definition.** At this stage, individuals start developing an awareness of their true individual and Lebanese selves. Once the Lebanese's anger and emotions had been played out during the last stage, the individual becomes now capable to perceive himself and his environment in a more rational way. Therefore, the individual at this stage begins developing his new identity based on a true reading of the facts about himself and others around him. More specifically, people at this stage focus their energy on developing a better understanding of their individual needs, values, and desires as well as their true relationships with others. By doing so, they start developing a new Lebanese identity based on overall community needs and human values where the Lebanese person's individual rights and the overall public rights take precedence over group sectarian rights.

Moreover, the individual's new awareness of the true sources of oppression at this stage helps him develop his new identity independent of any oppressive influences. This change can



be seen in two ways: First, the past oppressive sectarian group cultural values are ignored and dismissed as the search for the new identity begins. Individuals at this stage have more autonomy and, therefore, they hold on to the sectarian values that they individually feel comfortable with, regardless of what the sectarian group culture is. Second, the higher individual awareness that people possess at this stage leads them to develop a Lebanese identity that is separate from other non-Lebanese cultural influences with which the individual used to identify with in the past two stages. Instead of adopting the cultural values of one specific external group, individuals at this stage begin a process of adapting cultural values from the many groups to which they are exposed to in a way that would fit their needs and improve their lives. Therefore, the identity formed at this stage is a true Lebanese identity since it consists of the cultural values of an independent and integrated Lebanese people.

Real concrete concerns such as food and shelter, family survival, educational opportunity for self and/or for children and proper public services, are the primary focus of individuals at this stage, as opposed to the highly irrelevant and ideological issues that falsely preoccupied them during the last two stages.

Finally, the identity that the individual starts developing at this stage is more dynamic and flexible to the needs and circumstances of the real internal social environment as opposed to past subservience to external pressures by external groups.

**Member/Leader Relationship.** The individuals' new sense of awareness and independence also leads them to change their leadership preferences. Individuals at this stage perceive leadership in a much more realistic way than in the past. As individuals enter the third stage, they realize that many of the sectarian leaders from the different sects collude with each other in promoting a divisive and thus oppressive sectarian culture that helps them maintain their power base supported by the sectarian system of power. In fact, they recognize that their feelings have been manipulated during the last stage by those extreme sectarian leaders who

encouraged individuals to develop a false ethnocentric identity revolving around fear and hostility towards other groups from the same Lebanese society.

Therefore, sectarian leaders are no longer idealized and seen as infallible and individuals develop a skeptical attitude towards all sectarian leaders regardless of their group belonging. Naturally, persons at this stage become highly sensitive to manipulation by sectarian leaders and now reject those leaders who attempt to stir sectarian feelings among the Lebanese people.

Instead, individuals support and feel admiration towards competent leaders who are seen as sincerely working towards the common good of all the Lebanese by helping individuals and communities to lead a more comfortable life. Consequently, third-stage individuals support democratically elected leaders who are communicative and open with their constituents and who help people by coordinating their efforts in attaining their basic needs.

**Conflict/Cohesion.** By entering the third stage of identity development, the individuals' beliefs that 1) conflict exists on the sectarian level and 2) conflict can be resolved by emotional means, start to change as they begin to realize that fear, anger, and hatred towards members of other sects is misplaced and futile. A person starts to recognize that the oppressive sectarian system discriminates against all the Lebanese individuals regardless of their sectarian belonging.

Even though there is an inherent conflict between individuals at this stage and others still functioning at other levels of identity development, including the individuals' corresponding sectarian leadership group, conflict at this stage is no longer denied nor acted out. But, unlike the extreme emotional reaction of the last stage, individuals at this stage feel alienated from the rest of the sectarian culture and society and simply withdraw from it as a way of peaceful protest. Meanwhile, individuals start to develop rational ways for conflict mediation and conflict resolution. Disagreement between individuals is confined to disagreement over issues and it does not lead to personal animosities.

Individuals at this stage get support from others who are perceived as going through the same stage. Therefore, unlike the first stage where the major force behind the group cohesion was the avoidance of conflict between groups, group cohesion between individuals going through this stage is based on a sense of common experiences of their oppressive environment. Moreover, they are all motivated by the common desire to develop the proper cultural tools that would enable them to live together in a new environment that respects an individual's basic rights and freedom.

In conclusion, individuals at this stage become more receptive to engaging in cooperative behaviors with others who have common goals and common interests regardless of their social groups and, hence, start forming coalitions that are cross-sectarian in nature.

**Member/Member Relationship.** As individuals start gaining a more rational awareness of themselves and others, they become very careful of who they get close to and no longer develop emotional relationships that are simply based on sectarian membership. Instead, they start developing a more sensible awareness of the common plight and common experiences that they share with others.

Moreover, individuals at this stage start to identify and associate with those individuals who are perceived as having a similar level of awareness regardless of their sectarian belonging. They also begin to identify themselves as a group whose values reflect a true integrated Lebanese culture as opposed to a divided sectarian culture.

This increased awareness of commonalties with others is aided by more open and direct communication between members at this stage. The content of communication at this stage is centered around developing better means to resolve day to day concerns and to satisfy basic needs as well as the verbalization and rational discussion of the oppressive effects of the sectarian culture.



Finally, even though individuals at this stage start discussing their feelings about the effects of the sectarian culture, members from different sectarian groups are still not ready to discuss openly their personal feelings about the effects of the conflict that existed between them during the last stage.

#### **Stage IV: The Lebanese Identity Integration Stage**

**Identity Definition.** Individuals move into their fourth stage of identity development once they have a solid sense of self and awareness of the commonalties between self and others in the society. In addition to forming a core set of basic cultural values that reflect the mutual dependency and common interest of all members of society, the Lebanese individual finally develops positive flexible cultural values and mechanisms by which he is capable of constantly integrating and adapting to the cultural changes that the Lebanese society is exposed to due to its special geographical and demographic realities. More specifically, the Lebanese starts to actively discard and replace the past adaptive skills that promoted submissiveness and dependency and emphasizes its positive adaptive heritage that reflect autonomy and independence from the negative effects of external changes and conflicts.

Individuals at this stage have an autonomous identity that reflects a harmonious integrated self where contradictory and conflictual aspects that might arise from their individual, sectarian, family as well as national identity have been eliminated. Therefore, individuals at this stage are characterized by a new sense of safety and security that free up their energy to become more active and productive in their environment.

First, people are more active than the previous stage in eliminating negative effects that the sectarian culture has on society while maintaining those aspects that are positive and enriching. That is, persons focus more of their energy on stopping discriminatory and oppressive

practices of the sectarian culture while sustaining those elements that promote plurality, diversity and the respect for individual and cultural freedoms.

Second, having secured their basic needs, individuals at this stage participate and help develop cultural institutions that reflect and emphasize the diversity and integrative capacity and experience of the people of Lebanon.

**Member/Leader Relationship.** Similar to the last stage, individuals at this stage support leaders who work for the common good. But having developed more solid sense of self, individuals at this stage are much more active than before. First, individuals become less dependent on leaders for social change and show a much higher level of personal initiative than before. Second, individuals at this stage develop different and varied peaceful means to hold their leadership accountable for their actions. Third, individuals support and have great respect for leaders who take responsibility for and are active in eliminating the negative and discriminatory effects of the sectarian system and culture.

**Member/Member Relationship.** Unlike the last stage, where individuals restricted their interaction with others to only those who were perceived as having the same level of identity consciousness, individuals at this stage are much more open to all members of society regardless of their sect or level of identity consciousness.

The increased autonomy and more solid sense of self help individuals at this stage reach out to others who are seen as going through different developmental stages. Persons become much more active in helping individuals at different stages negotiate the process of their development in smooth ways. Moreover, they also start developing new mechanisms by which all members of society feel that their developmental needs are being met. Therefore, a more open dialogue develops between individuals who are part of the sectarian culture and those who have developed a more integrated identity.

Finally, individuals at the fourth stage respect the developmental needs of individuals at other stages. However, they are also keen on protecting their personal right to exercise their own integrated identity. In other words, the individual's right to choose is held as the highest priority by individuals at this stage.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is important to stress at this point that an individual's identity functioning level is dependent on the environmental demands placed on him. Even if an individual reaches a high level of identity development, changes in the environment can mean that he might regress to past levels as a means for survival.

More specifically, the process of identity development of each individual is basically a continual process of psychological separation and individuation from past self identity that is no longer adaptive in the present environment into a new self identity that is more adaptive and in harmony with the environment. This process entails that: First, individuals discard past identity aspects that are no longer adaptive while maintaining those past aspects that are still adaptive. Second, further develop additional identity characteristics that are adaptive to the individual's changing environment. Third, increased awareness of self and environment takes place along with an increased sense of security and safety in the environment.

These two processes feed each other in both directions. That is, the more secure an individual is, the more he is capable of developing higher levels of awareness. Similarly, higher levels of awareness of the environment mean that individuals can develop a more secure relationship with his environment. Finally, a decrease in a sense of security can also lead individuals to behave in more irrational ways as if there is a loss of the self's more rational awareness aspects and a resort to past less developed aspects of self.



Therefore, Lebanese individuals might react to the same situation differently at different times and might react differently to different situations at the same time depending on the emotional state that the situation represents for an individual. Overall, however, individuals tend to have a dominant stage of identity development that reflects the longer term emotional state of security from which they might fluctuate as the immediate conditions necessitates.

### **Operational Definitions of Lebanese Development Stages**

- Stage I**
- 1- Individuals have a superficial understanding of the commonalties among the Lebanese people and the Lebanese identity.
  - 2- Primary concern is to maintain peace even though there is a great sense that significant differences exist between the various communities.
  - 3- Strong belief in a sectarian system of government as a guarantee of sectarian rights. Individual and sectarian rights seen as interchangeable.
  - 4- Strong belief in sectarian leaders who are trusted and are not questioned.
  - 5- Different Lebanese groups strongly identify with different non-Lebanese groups.
  - 6- Very little awareness of effects of oppression of others on self.

- Stage II**
- 1- Individuals realize that their old belief system restricts their independence, personal growth, and freedom but are not yet ready to understand true source of oppression.
  - 2- Emotional energy is in the form of anger and rejection of their old Lebanese identity as well as the sectarian identities of other sectarian groups whose members are falsely seen as responsible for the individuals' limited rights in the Lebanese society.

- 3- Individuals tend to define their new Lebanese identity in its most militant sectarian form by completely rejecting and opposing to all other sectarian identities.
- 4- Individuals reject moderate leaders of their own sects and prefer sectarian leaders that adopt militant positions.
- 5- Individual's primary concern with the supremacy of their own group over other groups lead individuals to associate and cooperate with any group external to the Lebanese society that would help them attain their goals and defeat other Lebanese groups.

- Stage III**
- 1- Individuals perceive themselves and their environment in a more rational way and they attempt to define their identity based on a true reading of the facts about themselves and others around them.
  - 2- The persons at this stage focus their energy on developing a better understanding of their individual needs, values, and desires as well as their true relationships with others.
  - 3- Lebanese identity based on overall community needs and human values where the Lebanese person's individual rights and the overall public rights take precedence over conflictual group sectarian rights.
  - 4- Individuals become clearly aware of the oppressive effects of the sectarian culture on all the Lebanese as well as the coercive effects of their own ethnocentricity and the ethnocentricity of others around them.
  - 5- Individuals discard and reject the past negative and conflictual sectarian values and hold on sectarian values that they individually feel comfortable

with, regardless of what the coercive part of the sectarian group culture dictates.

- 6- Individuals develop a skeptical attitude toward all sectarian leaders regardless of their group belonging and become highly sensitive to manipulation by sectarian leaders and especially, reject those who attempt to stir sectarian feelings among the Lebanese people.
- 7- Individuals support democratically elected leaders who are communicative and open with their constituents and who help people by coordinating their efforts in attaining their basic needs.
- 8- Individuals at this stage feel alienated from the rest of the sectarian culture and society and simply withdraw from it as a way of peaceful protest and seek support from others who are perceived as going through the same stage.
- 9- Individuals are motivated by the common desire to develop the proper cultural tools that would enable them to live together in a new environment that respects an individual's basic rights and freedom.
- 10- Individuals at this stage become more receptive to engaging in cooperative behaviors with others who have common goals and common interests regardless of their social groups and no longer develop emotional relationships that are simply based on sectarian membership.
- 11- They also begin to identify themselves as a group whose values reflect a true integrated Lebanese culture as opposed to a divided sectarian culture.

**Stage IV** 1- Individuals have a fully developed sense of self and awareness of the commonalties between self and others in the society and are, therefore, ready to act on their new identities.



- 2- Individual's identity reflects a harmonious integrated self where contradictory and conflictual aspects that might arise from their individual, sectarian, family as well as national identity have been eliminated.
- 3- Having accomplished a satisfactory level of identity definition, individuals at this stage are ready to become more active and productive in their environment in terms of working towards the realization of goals and aspirations and the satisfaction of needs clarified in the previous stage.
- 4- Individuals are more active and focus more of their energy on stopping discriminatory and oppressive practices of the sectarian culture while sustaining those elements that promote plurality, diversity and respect for individual and cultural freedoms.
- 5- Individuals actively participate and help develop cultural institutions that reflect and emphasize the diversity and integrative capacities and experiences of the people of Lebanon.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHODOLOGY

The goal of this study was to understand Lebanese Identity as it is perceived by the Lebanese individuals from a psychological developmental perspective. Since no study has been conducted in the past about the psychological development of the Lebanese identity and the current stage of identity development among various Lebanese individuals, the researcher utilized two research designs to answer the different research questions presented in the past sections.

#### **Study # 1: A Qualitative Research of the Views of a Sample of Lebanese Group Representatives**

#### **The Qualitative Research Paradigm**

The strengths of qualitative research to answer certain research questions have been described by a number of writers. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) define five features that characterize qualitative research that can be summarized as follows:

- 1- Natural settings is the primary source of data in a qualitative research while the researcher is the primary research instrument.
- 2- Qualitative research is descriptive where the data collected are in the form of words or images. Results are presented along with quotations from the data in order to illustrate the presentation.
- 3- Qualitative research is concerned with understanding the process through which people make meaning of their lives, experiences, and their social world.
- 4- Qualitative data analysis is done inductively as the researcher builds abstractions, concepts, hypothesis, and theories from the particulars of the data gathered.

The lack of previous psychological studies around the Lebanese's individual identity development made a qualitative research design the best exploratory means to gain initial understanding of the issues in question. Also, since our initial aim was to understand the perspectives of individuals about their social identity, quantitative measures could not provide suitable answers to the subject under question. .

Moreover, even though a general theory around the Lebanese Identity Development was deduced from developmental theories of other social groups, this initially proposed model did not accurately reflect all the particulars of the Lebanese Identity development stages. Therefore, a qualitative analysis of the views of Lebanese individuals regarding their identity greatly enriched our understanding for the different developmental stages.

### **Research Design**

This study utilized the in-depth phenomenological elite interviewing method as a preliminary means to explore the Lebanese people's understanding of their social identity. Phenomenology is the study of the way in which people put their experiences together in order to develop a world view (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). This type of study carries the assumption that there is a structure and an essence that can be determined from people's shared experiences (Patton, 1990).

Since the goal of this study was to define and discern the subjects' perception of their Lebanese group identity, a phenomenological study of their social experiences was the best approach to use towards answering these research questions. More specifically, the study helped us to comprehend the subjects' perception of the following general aspects in relation to the Lebanese group:



First, it was important to grasp their perception of themselves as group members, that is, how they defined their group identity. Second, it was essential to understand their perception of the relation of the Lebanese group with its physical and human environment.

The fact that this was an initial exploratory study necessitated that we define the subject sample of our study in such a way that helped us best gain an understanding of the Lebanese's social identity. Elite individuals, as defined by Marshall and Rossman (1995), are considered to be the influential and well informed people in a community who are selected for interviews on the basis of their expertise in the areas relevant to research. Therefore, the focus of this study was to explore the views of various Lebanese representative of different social groups, who, in turn, reflected various perspectives that most of the group's members have of their Lebanese identity.

### **Researcher's Role**

The role of the researcher as the primary data collection instrument in qualitative research necessitated the identification of personal values, assumptions and biases at the outset of the study.

My perceptions of the Lebanese identity have been shaped by my personal experiences. I was almost thirteen years old when the Lebanese civil war broke out. Like a large number of Lebanese of my age, I spent most of the war years dedicated to continuing my education in the midst of chaos and destruction. Day to day survival concerns and making it to school, at times, took on equal importance in my mind and the minds of a lot of people like me. The inherent message of my parents and the parents of a lot of my peers was that dedication to education and the pursuit of knowledge and truth was somehow our generation's response to the craziness that surrounded most of us for almost 17 years.

Prior to that, my experience and perception of Lebanon had been shaped by my parents and relatives who belonged to the large group of Lebanese immigrants that had settled in

different parts of the world. My earliest knowledge about Lebanon was my awareness that Lebanon in the minds of my parents was always associated with the word "home."

Home, to most of the Lebanese that I grew up with during my early years, as I perceived it then, was simply a place where an individual could count on limitless love and support from faceless people who somehow I knew very well. Lebanon to me was a simple concept associated with positive feelings and was something worth of a lot of love and dedication no matter what an individual's circumstances were; circumstances such as those surrounding the lives of immigrants who had settled in very distant and environments different from that of their homeland.

My understanding of what Lebanon stood for had, therefore, been shaped by two very distinct and opposing set of images, memories, experiences, and concepts: War, destruction, death, chaos, on the one hand, and home, safety, love, dedication, loyalty etc., on the other hand. ....How could I, and many others like me, make sense of these perceived contradictions? The answer lied in part of our "Lebanese legacy," and that is our belief in the powers of education.

My decision to approach knowledgeable individuals about the Lebanese identity was motivated by my desire to understand and analyze the views and perceptions of the country's most influential social movers. Their importance lied in that they play a major role in shaping and reflecting people's perceptions.

Subjects were approached for interviews through various formal and informal contacts. The researcher presented himself to the subjects as a psychology doctoral candidate writing his dissertation and is attempting to study the subject of the Lebanese identity from a psychological perspective. More specifically, it was made clear to all the subjects that the research was not a politically-oriented research but rather an attempt to understand the human underpinnings of the Lebanese identity.

## Procedure

Collection of data took place during the summer months of 1995 in Lebanon. Subjects were interviewed at their homes or their offices in privacy and on a one to one basis.

Subjects chosen for this study represented different social groups that can be classified in the following manner:

- 1) Representatives of major religious sectarian groups
- 2) Representatives of major political parties
- 3) Representatives of media groups
- 4) Representatives of different cultural groups, such as peace organizations and human rights organizations

The interviews were semi-structured and open ended. They were conducted in Arabic and were recorded in their entirety. These interviews were translated into English and transcribed by the researcher.

The questions were intended to elicit the interviewees' views about the different psychological aspects of the Lebanese social self. Therefore, the interview consisted of questions around four aspects:

- 1) The perception of Lebanese social self
- 2) Perceived problems of the Lebanese identity
- 3) Suggested solutions to identity problems
- 4) Lebanese group goals



More specifically, the interviews were geared towards answering the following questions:

A) Perception of group self:

- 1) How do the subjects define and perceive the Lebanese identity?
- 2) What do they think the Lebanese people have in common and what characterizes the Lebanese individual?
- 3) What photographic picture do they have in their minds when they think about Lebanon?
- 4) How do the Lebanese people differ from other groups? How are they similar?

B) Problems and challenges:

- 5) What are the problems in the Lebanese identity?
- 6) What common challenges do they think face the Lebanese people in general and the Lebanese individual in particular?
- 7) What are the factors that are working against the peaceful existence of the Lebanese people within one country?

C) Solutions and goals:

- 8) How do they think the common Lebanese identity can be strengthened?
- 9) What do they feel should be future goals and aspirations of the Lebanese people?
- 10) What are the values that should be strengthened within the Lebanese society?

Keeping in mind that Lebanon had been out of a dangerous war situation for merely four years during the summer of 1995, the subjects were assured that their personal identities will remain anonymous and, therefore, none of their views that will be presented in the research analysis could be associated personally with any of the interviewees.

## **Data Analysis**

Marshall and Rossman (1995) indicate that the process of qualitative analysis is based on data reduction and interpretation. The researcher, therefore, analyzed the data by generating categories, themes, and patterns that can be detected in the interview responses.

The researcher used the general guidelines of the proposed model of identity development to organize the participants' various views into different levels of identity consciousness. Therefore, through an analysis of the participants views, we were able to explore the issues that played a part in shaping the Lebanese individual's at each stage.

Participants' views were classified and presented along a continuum of identity levels of consciousness. Moreover, the general concepts and themes presented were substantiated by direct quotations from the interviews. When relevant, some interviewees' socio-economic characteristics were revealed in order to give the quotations more conceptual meaning.

### **Study # 2: A Quantitative Research Study of a Sample of Lebanese Citizens**

## **Subjects**

The survey research was cross-sectional and explored the views of a sample of Lebanese citizens in order to generalize the views of the general Lebanese population. 724 respondents were selected at random from four different university campuses in the Greater Beirut metropolitan areas, various homes and working offices as well as from random E-Mail lists (see table 4.1 below). No stratification of the sample was conducted and, therefore, an attempt was made to collect the responses of as large a number of subjects as possible in order to

increase the representation of the various socio-economic characteristics among the subjects.

The data were collected during the first two weeks of May 1997.

**Table 4.1**

**Source of Data Collection**

Source of Data Collection	Count	Percent
Lebanese Village	37	5.11
Lebanese University/Main Campus	129	17.81
American University of Beirut/Main Campus	77	10.64
Jesuite University	12	1.66
Lebanese University/ Jal-El-Deeb	67	9.25
Homes & Offices	245	33.83
E-Mail	157	21.69
Total	724	100

The subjects' characteristics in terms of age, sectarian identity, profession, place of residence, nationality, years of war experience, and years of residence outside Lebanon are listed in tables 4.2 - 4.12 presented below:

**Table 4.2**

**Age Range**

Age Range	Count	Percent
Under 18	11	1.52
19-28	391	54
29-38	183	25.27
39-48	61	8.42
49-58	52	7.18
Over 59	26	3.59
Total	724	100

**Table 4.3**

**Sex**

Sex	Count	Percent
Female	320	44.26
Male	403	55.74
Total	723	100



**Table 4.4****Sectarian Identity**

Religious Sect	Count	Percent
Sunni Moslem	188	26.07
Maronite Christian	135	18.72
Druze Moslem	97	13.45
Shiite Moslem	142	19.69
Christian Eastern Orthodox	73	10.12
Christian Roman Catholic	42	5.83
Christian Armenian	19	2.64
Other	25	3.47
Total	721	100

**Table 4.5****Personal Status**

Personal Status	Count	Percent
Single	487	67.36
Married with children	37	5.12
Married without children	172	23.79
Other	27	3.73
Total	723	100

**Table 4.6****Current Place of Residence**

Current Place of Residence	Count	Percent
Lebanon	665	92.11
Europe	9	1.25
North America	37	5.12
Other	11	1.53

**Table 4.7****Number of Years Living in Lebanon During the 1976-1989 Lebanese Civil War**

Years Lived in War	Count	Percent
None	47	6.5
1-6	66	9.13
7-12	117	16.18
Over 12	493	68.19
Total	723	100

**Table 4.8****Number of Years Living Outside Lebanon**

Years Spent Outside Lebanon	Count	Percent
None	372	51.52
1-3	107	14.82
4-9	111	15.38
10-15	67	9.28
Over 16	65	9
Total	722	100

**Table 4.9****Highest Degree Attained**

Highest Degree Attained	Count	Percent
Lebanese Baccalaureate	122	16.9
High School	113	15.65
Bachelor's Degree	305	42.24
Master's Degree	89	12.33
Doctoral Degree	45	6.23
Other	48	6.65

**Table 4.10****Yearly Income in Dollars**

Yearly Income	Count	Percent
Less than 2000 \$	52	7.2
Between 2000-5000 \$	50	6.93
Between 5000-20,000 \$	143	19.81
Between 20,000-40,000 \$	62	8.59
Over 40,000 \$	40	5.55
Not applicable	238	32.96
No answer	137	18.98
Total	722	100

**Table 4.11****Dual Nationality**

Dual Nationality	Count	Percent
No	541	75.03
Yes, North American	49	6.8
Yes, European	65	9.02
Yes, Other	66	9.14
Total	721	100

Table 4.12

Profession

Profession	Count	Percent
Student	305	42.24
Professor or Lawyer	24	3.33
Engineer	55	7.62
Medical Doctor	23	3.19
School Teacher	31	4.29
Employee	138	19.11
Not Applicable	58	8.03
Self Employed	42	5.82
Other	46	6.37
Total	722	100

Materials

A survey was used in this study because of its economy of design and its ability to identify attributes of a population from a small group of individuals (Fowler, 1988; Babbie, 1990). The self-designed research instrument included two sections.

**The Lebanese Identity Development Scale (LIDS).** This scale was designed specifically for this study and it included 16 general statements to help determine each subject's dominant identity levels of consciousness. Each cluster of four items reflected a specific stage of identity consciousness. The item preference was graded through a 5-level Likert Scale. A five point score was given to responses showing high preference for an item and a one point score was given to responses reflecting low preference item preference.

Moreover, four scale sums were computed for each subject each ranging from a minimum of four points to a maximum of 20 points. The means and standard deviations were computed for the scale sums of each stage and the sample's data were normalized along each stage. Therefore, with four normalized scales, one for each stage preference, each of the



subjects' four z-scores were compared with each other. The stage with the highest z-score was determined to be the subjects' dominant stage indicator (Dsi).

The items included in the questionnaire were developed according to the following stage criterias:

Stage 1 identity scale: This scale generally tests for general belief in the presence of a peaceful but non integrated Lebanese intra-group existence. The questions included in the stage 1 identity cluster tested the subjects' belief in the presence of commonalties among the Lebanese various sectarian groups, belief in the importance of the role of traditional leaders as well as degree of belief in a sectarian based system of government. The stage 1 questionnaire items are numbers 1, 7, 11, 14 (see appendix ).

Stage 2 identity scale: This scale tests for the degree of the subjects' belief in the presence of inter sectarian group hostility and fear. Questions in the stage 2 identity cluster tested the subjects' preference for militant leader attitudes, degree of belief in hostility of other Lebanese sectarian groups towards one's own sectarian group as well as level of acceptance of help from other non-Lebanese groups against other Lebanese sectarian groups. The stage 2 questionnaire items are numbers 4, 6, 9, 12 (see appendix ).

Stage 3 identity scale: This scale tests the subjects' awareness of the oppressive and discriminatory effects of a sectarian political system. Moreover, it tests the subjects' level of belief that personal action geared towards changing this system is futile. Therefore, questions in the stage 3 identity cluster tested the subjects' level of disbelief that action can change the system, the system's leaders' behavior as well degree of withdrawal from public involvement. The stage 3 questionnaire items are numbers 2, 5, 13, 16 (see appendix ).

Stage 4 identity scale: This scale tests the subjects' level of belief that change of the discriminatory sectarian system can take place through the individuals' active involvement in public life. The questions included in the stage 4 identity cluster tested the subjects' readiness to actively resist the negative effects of the sectarian system of government, readiness to actively

encourage the establishment of a common Lebanese civil personal status law as well as readiness to take on personal leadership initiatives and rejection of leaders that are not democratically elected. The stage four questionnaire items are numbers 3, 8, 10, 15 (see appendix ).

Personal Data Sheet: The survey also included items that determined some of the subjects' socio-economic characteristics and experiences (see above tables).

Data Analysis. After the dominant stage indicator was determined for each subject, a statistical analysis was conducted to determine the dependence relationship between each of the subject's various socio-economic variables and his dominant stage indicator. Therefore, a Chi -Square value was calculated for each of the pairs of Dsi vs. Socio-economic variables analyzed.

Moreover, a statistical analysis was conducted to determine the dependence between various views expressed in each of the individual questionnaire items and the various socio-economic variables in order to take a closer look at the participants' attitudes towards specific issues.

Finally, a statistical analysis was conducted in order to determine the levels of dependence between the different items in the questionnaire and the subjects' dominant stage of identity development. The data generated will be used to examine the degrees of item discrimination across the four stage scales.

## Procedure

Participation in this study was voluntary. The survey distribution was conducted in three ways. First, the survey was translated into Arabic and was distributed by a number of volunteer university professors in various classes across four university campuses in Lebanon. Second, a

number of research assistants distributed the survey to various work settings as well as various family homes in various Lebanese areas in and around the Greater Beirut Metropolitan area. Third, e-mail surveys in the English language were randomly forwarded to Lebanese nationals in various countries. The e-mail addresses were obtained from an Internet directory listing of Lebanese e-mail subscribers.



## CHAPTER V

### QUALITATIVE RESULTS

The question of defining the Lebanese social self as perceived by the group of interview subjects was approached from a number of different angles. First, the subjects were asked to define the Lebanese social identity as they understand it. Second, the subjects were asked to describe any special feature that characterized the Lebanese individual or the Lebanese people. Moreover, they were asked to describe any commonalities that they perceived the Lebanese people share with each other.

Another approach to understanding the subjects' definition of the Lebanese self was to ask them to compare and contrast the Lebanese culture with the cultures of other Arab countries, with the Israeli as well as the Western culture.

Later, the subjects were asked to describe the factors that are impeding the development of a unified Lebanese identity as well as the collective challenges facing the Lebanese people in general. The researcher assumed that there is a lot to be learned about the Lebanese social identity he understands the problems that face the Lebanese individual in his attempt to realize his Lebanese social self. Also, the subjects' different views around the post war Ta'if Peace Accord were explored.

Finally, the researcher attempted to further understand the subjects' perception of the Lebanese social self by exploring the responses to the last projective question. The subjects were asked to describe a photographic mental image they associate with the Lebanese identity. The researcher's goal was to find any common themes in these photographic images that would characterize the psychological Lebanese social self as perceived by these subjects.

Twenty-four interviews were analyzed. Some interview responses, however, were more thorough than others. The following themes were emphasized throughout the subjects' responses in an attempt to answer a number of questions:

**Question 1: How do you define the Lebanese identity ? In other words, what do you mean when you say that you are Lebanese?**

### Lebanese Identity

#### Pre-Lebanese Republic

A number of subjects chose to answer the question about the Lebanese identity by initially explaining the background from which the Lebanese identity came into existence. One subject traced the roots of the Lebanese identity to the Canaanite period while others explained the issue of identity as it was perceived early in this century.

Subject 13, a Christian religious leader, started by explaining that all religions in Lebanon are descendants of the old Canaanite religion.

All the people on this whole shore line, in my opinion, kept the Canaanite religion. We still worship Baal and Ashtarout. Ashtarout is the goddess of fertility and thus sex since it is the tool of fertility. Our people is basically a hedonistic people. From here comes our affinity toward power and domination, as well as our attraction to physical pleasures. We place a lot of importance on marriage since a very young age. We consider that a girl does not develop and even have a meaningful existence if she does not have children. This is an archetype for our people. From here you see that women in all religions in our area mourn the death in the same way.

Subjects 10, 13, and 22 explained that different groups in Lebanon identified themselves differently prior to the creation of the Lebanese Republic in 1920. They explained that Lebanon, as we know it today, was not born in all the areas and among all religious sects at the same moment in time. They agreed that, in the past, when somebody said he was Lebanese, it usually meant that he was talking about a person from the Lebanese mountains since the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon identified themselves as Lebanese before others did.

Others, in today's Lebanon, did not identify themselves as Lebanese. The majority of the Bikaa' Valley inhabitants and the people in the South and Tripoli considered themselves part of

the Syrian Damascus province. While the inhabitants of Beirut, according to subject 10, a traditional Sunni Moslem leader, identified themselves as "Beirutis" and considered that geographically they were part of Syria until the founding of the Republic of Lebanon in 1920. He explains that "the difference between the Mountain inhabitants and the others is that the former identified himself as Lebanese through his geography and the latter through the law."

Subject 13 explains that those that identified themselves as Lebanese in the mountains were the Druzes, whose religion is considered an offshoot of Islam, and the Christian Maronites. However, he felt that, historically, being Druze, meant being Lebanese because:

The Christian was in a sorry situation in Lebanon because he had to constantly prove himself that he is Arab. He has a history of collaborating with foreign forces since the days of the Crusaders. This is why, the Christians felt they had to be pioneers in the Arab nationalist movement.

These various identities came to play a major role after the founding of the Lebanese Republic in 1920. As subject 22, a secular party leader, points out, the French declared the unification of the various Lebanese areas and the founding of the Republic of Lebanon in 1920 without taking into account the opinion of the majority of the people in Lebanon, which might have differed with the French plans at the time.

In 1920, as subject 13 explains, the majority of the Sunnis identified themselves as Arabs and considered that Lebanon should have been dissolved in the Arab nation since they considered the Lebanese entity as an artificial byproduct of a foreign deal between the British and the French.

Subject 10 was more specific:

When the French declared the founding of today's Lebanon, you could say that the people from the mountains liked the idea of unification, while the Beirutis did not mind the unification. Tripoli considered itself part of Syria too. And the South's loyalty was also in Syria.

Subject 22 explains that the original justification for the creation of Lebanon was to give the Christians a place where they would not be considered second class citizens as opposed to being second class citizens in a larger Arab entity where the majority would have been Sunni



Moslems. This, however, according to subject 22, placed instead the Moslems in Lebanon in a second class position. Therefore, in order to avoid one case of injustice, a second type of injustice was created.

Subject 13 feels that some Lebanese Christians tried to invent a Lebanese identity that could be traced back to the Phoenicians because they wanted to justify the separation of Lebanon from the Syrian inland which had a Sunni majority.

In general, therefore, according to subjects 10 and 13, and 22, the people in Lebanon after 1920 tended to identify themselves as either Lebanese nationalists, Syrian nationalists, or Arab nationalists.

### **Confused Identities at Time of Independence**

In light of the above responses, it is expected that some of the participants' responses would reflect these past pre-independence identity perspectives. Therefore, subjects 2, 4, 8, 10, 13, 14 and 16 emphasized the Moslem-Christian conflict around the definition of the Lebanese identity which could be traced back to the identity definition offered by the constitution at the time of independence in 1943. As subject 13 puts it: "I believe that the idea of a Lebanese started to form in the minds of people as we know it today since 1943 as a fetus."

However, subject 2, a leading Moslem Journalist, explains:

From the very beginning there has been a conflict around the issue of the Lebanese identity. It started when there was an ambiguous statement in 1943 that Lebanon has an Arab face. In order for the Christians and Moslems to appease each other, they left the issue of the Lebanese identity hanging in the air. So Lebanon was not from the West even though it is with the west and it was not from the Arabs even though it acknowledges its Arab surrounding. That is it acknowledges its geographic reality but does not acknowledge its history and politics. This conflict in my opinion was behind a lot of the political conflicts and political confusion that ensued Lebanon after its independence. For example, since Lebanon was not exactly Arab then it was not concerned directly with the Arab-Israeli conflict. And it should not be concerned with the Arab concerns.

Moreover, subject 16, a Christian party leader, further explains:

The first stage in the development of the Lebanese identity was the 1943 agreement which provided a negative solution to the Lebanese identity. This agreement, I consider, was built around the negative aspects of the Lebanese identity. Basically a negation of the identity. It said that Lebanon was neither West nor East. Lebanon was neither a passage point nor a center. Lebanon had an Arab face, which meant that it had other faces. The Christians explained this by saying that Lebanon had a Christian face. Others said that it had a Lebanese face that was distinct from the Arab face. Others interpreted that by saying that Lebanon had a Western face. This was what some called the creative ambiguity. You leave a shadow around a certain subject that you have no solution for. At that stage, a solution was not possible so we agreed around the Lebanese independence, that is, we said no to the French Mandate and no to the unification with Syria. Therefore, there was a number of Nos. The starting point for the Lebanese identity in 1943 was based on a negation.

Subject 16 continues, however, that this ambiguity helped extend the identity debate that was present before the 1943 independence in the form of two points of view: The first point of view said that there is a big Arab homeland, and since Lebanon was part of that homeland, it meant that there was no such thing as a Lebanese identity but only an Arab identity. The second point of view rejected the idea of a big homeland and instead defined the Lebanese identity from a sectarian group perspective where each sect defined Lebanon differently.

These two perspectives, according to subject 8, a traditional Moslem political leader, gave rise to a number of questions among the Lebanese:

... there was the question of whether Lebanon is for part of its people or is it for all its people, from then on you started having first class citizens and second class citizens. Moreover, was Lebanon part of its land or all its land, and was Lebanon a temporary homeland or a final homeland. There was also a question of whether Lebanon belonged to the Arab nation.

As a result of all this, subject 14 questions whether there really is a Lebanese identity:

I say that there is no Lebanese as such, but there are Maronites, Armenians, Shiites, Sunnis, each lives within his religious sect and understands Lebanon through his own sect's eyes. There are no national Lebanese feelings. Otherwise, how can you possibly explain that a lot of the Lebanese take a neutral stand with regards to the issue of the Israeli occupation. How can the Lebanese have national feelings and identify on the national level when you find in Beirut who would say that Beirut is Sunni. So people in Beirut from other sects are considered strangers. The same situation applies to Kisurwan. The South is for the Shiite, the mountains are for the Druze. Therefore, the Lebanese never unified on the national level but rather they unified within their religious sects. They are ready to destroy the country as long as the sect wins. The problem of the Lebanese is that they are not Lebanese.



## Lebanese Identity in Terms of Its Arab Heritage

Some subjects tended to emphasize Lebanon's Arab identity and also expressed their complaints about what they perceived as problems with other identity definitions espoused by other groups. Subject 7, a leader of a Moslem political party, explains that:

Before, the subject of the Lebanese identity could carry a number of connotations. Some thought of Lebanon as the descendent of the Phoenicians, while others thought of Lebanon a part of a whole, that is a part of the Syrian lands. And some others, and we are included in those, think that we can not separate Lebanon from its Arab surroundings.

Subject 4, a Moslem leftist political leader, also explains that there is still a conflict around the Lebanese identity and offers his definition of the Arab Lebanese identity:

Lebanon has an Arab identity. In contrast to everything that is said, no question there is still a problem, even at this time, around the Lebanese identity. Lebanon is an Arab country part of the Arab nation. There are those who believe in what is called "the Lebanization", that is, the Lebanese nation, the Lebanese language. There is an Arabic language and there is a Lebanese dialect. In the same way Lebanon has many dialects.

He adds:

The logic that I am Lebanese in such a way that it is separate from Lebanon's belonging to the Arab nation has created a state of isolationism in Lebanon's history. It created a situation where Lebanon is separated from its nation, and from its natural Arabic surroundings. These political movements, and thus these forces, and those individuals that still abide by these beliefs, have always had close, direct, and positive relationships with the imperial powers. These forces have served as the head spear of the imperial powers. Therefore, under the pretext that we are Lebanese, we are not Arabs, the Lebanese identity, that is, the Arab identity, was almost obliterated by the Lebanese isolationists who have always been used by all the imperial powers and were recently used by Israel against the Arab nation.

Moreover:

The isolationists think that all Lebanon should be theirs because they consider that this country came into existence for their sake. Had they not been here, there would have been no country! Therefore, if it is not, then they would have part of it for their own. This is not how you belong to a country. What kind of a country is this that changes size?

In a similar fashion, Subject 14, a Moslem leader, complains that some Christians want to marginalize the Moslem Lebanese identity:

There is a disagreement on the definition of the Lebanese identity between the Moslems and the Christians. The Christians consider the Lebanese identity a Christian identity



where the Moslems identity is marginal. Lebanon to them is the country that realizes for them their Christian character with all the elements of the self of that personality. Here you notice in the literature of the past Christian leadership that when they attack the Arabization of Lebanon, they are referring to the Moslem threat against this Christian particularity of Lebanon. When they question the individual's Lebaneseness, what they have in mind is that particularity, even if they do not express that openly.

He offers the following examples:

When they face the subject of the Arabs buying lands in Lebanon, they consider that a confiscation of Lebanon. Or when we talk about the settlement problem, they do not speak of it being the problem of the Palestinians' inability to return to their country, but it becomes the problem of the Lebanese because of a potential predominance of the Moslem element over the Christian element. Therefore, that would look as if that would hurt Lebanon's special situation. That is why you find that any activity that gives Lebanon an Arab touch or a non-isolationist touch makes them start speaking of separatism and the division of the country. That is, you get your Lebanon, and I get my Lebanon. But the Moslem in Lebanon does not think of an isolated Lebanon, instead he thinks of a liberal Lebanon and does not see any problem in the existence of Christians in Lebanon.

Some other subjects emphasized the Arab nature of the Lebanese identity from many different angles without talking about other definitions with which they might disagree.

Subject 12, a Christian representative, emphasizes a differentiated Lebanese Arab self:

According to him, "Lebanon is an Arab country, but it has its own characteristics."

Subject 20, a human rights advocate, points out Lebanons' responsibilities towards other Arab states: "Lebanon is part of the Arab countries and has, therefore, a mission to co-operate with the other Arab countries ... because even if our destiny is not one .... but it is at least very close."

Subject 10 alludes to different degrees of Arab openness to the West: "Lebanon is an Arab country with a special relationship with the West."

While subject 8, a traditional Moslem political leader, explains Lebanon's Arab role:

"Lebanon is an Arab treasure because Lebanon is an active witness to Arab civilization."

Subject 7 differentiates: "Lebanon is an Arab country which is made up of a group of minorities."

In a similar fashion, subject 14 clarifies:

The Moslems, they consider Lebanon just another Arab country out of the many Arab countries, some of them might think of some distinctiveness with regards to some of the

freedoms that exist here that do not exist in other Arab countries. The matter becomes a matter of details in the need of Lebanon to separate from the other Arab countries and thus can retain its special circumstances.

Subject 5, a leading journalist, expresses himself in this way: "The idea of Lebanon is the idea of Beirut before the war ..... where Beirut was an Arab city .....an Arab city with a lot of openness....."

Subject 3, political party leader , is more specific:

Lebanon is an Arab country made up of different Arab groups looking for a place to express themselves independent of the Sunni Arab majority..... Lebanon is Arab due to its geographic location and common interests with other Arab nations.

Subject 2 clarifies that "our Arab belonging is a historical fact that does not need agreement. As for an Arab unity, that is a political issue."

Moreover, he feels that Lebanon exists because of an Arab desire on the collective level:

I believe that the Arabs were the first to want an independent Lebanon. They wanted to show their religious acceptance and openness. The Arab nation wanted to make peace with itself by showing that it is accepting of the variety in it and that it will give the different minorities a breathing space in a sea of a Moslem majority.

### **Lebanese Identity in Terms of the Moslem-Christian Group Co-existence**

Some respondents, mainly subjects 1, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13 and 16 emphasized the Moslem - Christian nature of the Lebanese entity. These views were expressed in various forms.

Subject 16, for instance, emphasizes that a person's identity means a certain loyalty to the country. Therefore, he complains of other Lebanese whose loyalty goes to other Arab countries. Moreover, he emphasizes the loyalty to the Moslem/Christian distinctive nature of the Lebanese identity and complains of the sometimes rigid Arab mentality.

Subject 16 feels that his Lebanese identity means that:

First, I am Lebanese means that I am the son of a unique formula. The unique formula represents a small country within a conflict between big countries. Moreover, within this small country there is a big experience which is mainly the experience of the Moslem/Christian coexistence. The Lebanese identity can only have meaning to me when we talk about this mix, or existence, or dialogue, or interaction between the Christians and Moslems. The best way to express what I think about Lebanon has been



expressed by the current Pope, and that is that Lebanon is more than a country, it is a mission, a message. The message is dialogue. Lebanon has certain particularities, certain distinctive characteristics and a role that are not present in other Arab countries, and not even in other countries of that world. When I think of patriotism and Lebanese identity, I am thinking of this rare formula that is Lebanon. A Moslem Lebanon has no meaning, and a Christian Lebanon has no meaning. It is the formula that makes it special.

Moreover, he explains that:

The Arab mentality is one track minded. It says you are either an Arab like them or you are nothing. It is not true that all Arabs are the same. There are distinctive characteristics on the Lebanese national level. They accused us of isolationism because they were incapable of accepting our distinctiveness. We, that is, the liberal minded and western educated individuals, view this kind of logic as oppressive in nature.

Subject 8 considers that the geography and the demography of Lebanon constitutes a treasure, especially the co-existence of the Christians and the Moslems. According to him, "this has enabled Lebanon to be a permanent institution characterized by the Christian -Moslem dialogue which is absent in any other part of the world."

Whereas Subject 1 emphasizes Lebanon's religious roots:

My Identity is I am Lebanese, Arab, Christian, others are Lebanese, Arabs, Moslems. But being a Moslem or a Christian should not impede us from building a unified country. In actuality, Lebanon is a mission. The Lebanese people should be a very important symbol for all the world. Starting from the Middle East which is the source of all religions. Lebanon is the end product of all the religions that originated in this area. The basic tenant of these religions could serve as a basis for unifying people. I can not imagine religion telling people to go kill others or go steal others.

While subject 10 defines Lebanon in terms of pact:

In 1943, when Lebanon got its independence, there was what we call the national pact which is based on a duality. Lebanon is Moslem and Christian. This duality was the basis of unity among the Lebanese.

Subject 13 offers the following metaphor: "Lebanon is like having a husband and a wife who have a lot of conflict and who married against their will and are now enclosed in the same house and have to deal with each other."

Subject 14 offered a somehow similar definition:

We might find that the Lebanese could agree about Lebanon as Lebanon of the united religions, and they can agree on a free Lebanon, and open liberal Lebanon. I imagine that these might be the features of my visualization of a common Lebanese identity. That is on the collective level. But I also say that there is no Lebanese as such, but there are Maronites, Armenians, Shiites, Sunnis, each lives within its religious sect and



understands Lebanon through his own sect's eyes. There are no national Lebanese feelings.

### **Lebanese Identity in Terms of a Nationality and a Political Belonging**

Subjects 1, 2, 4, 10, 5, 11, 15, 19, 22 emphasized that a person's Lebanese identity simply meant that a person belongs to a political entity called Lebanon. Some felt the Lebanese identity is how we define ourselves to people in other countries.

Subject 15:

I am Lebanese means that I belong in Lebanon to a country that has a government, a political entity, and a certain geography. When I say I am a Lebanese in the outside, it means that I carry a Lebanese nationality, identification card, that I belong to a certain piece of land and a certain culture.

Others emphasized that the Lebanese are those who live within the Lebanese borders.

Subject 19 explains:

This particular circle of national belonging, meaning Lebanon, it consists of specific geographical borders and of people that live on this piece of earth under the shadow of an existing government which is capable of making Lebanon a significant circle of the various circles of feeling of belonging.

### **Lebanese Identity in Terms of Cultural Variety and Cultural Interaction**

Subjects 3, 5, 9 and 11 emphasized that the Lebanese identity is dynamic and ever changing and is basically shaped by the interaction of the many cultures to which the country is exposed, especially the Western and Eastern cultures, and is, therefore, defined by the process itself rather than the content of its culture.

Subject 3 on the identity's dynamic nature: "Lebanon has no defined identity- it is not static, it is not possible to talk about a static identity - Lebanon has a developing identity."

As Subject 9, a Lebanese intellectual, explains:

Lebanon's interactive nature is not imagined but rather comes out of its very nature. The Lebanese's essence of interaction has always existed....Interaction of the different cultures of the world.....therefore, Lebanon is defined by the process.

### **Lebanese Identity in Terms of Active Participation and Interaction with the Environment**

Subjects 11, 15, 17 and 21 emphasized that being Lebanese is defined by the nature of the individual's interaction with his environment.

As subject 15, a civic leader, explains:

I personally believe that identity is a relationship between what is cognitive and material. Identity has to be rooted in the land and nature. We can not say we are Lebanese if we do not have a relationship with the land. The manufacturer has a factory in Lebanon, therefore he is Lebanese..... the peasant works in the land, therefore, he is Lebanese. We can not just have a theoretical identity in our heads. It has to be rooted in the material reality. Relationship between self and nature and the land.

Subject 11, a leading journalist, puts it more succinctly: "Identity starts by act not thought..... Identity is being in reality.....'Being is becoming' ..... therefore, Being Lebanese is Becoming a Lebanese."

Subject 17, a political party leader also explains:

A person's identity is dictated by the realities on the ground and these result from what is called the territorial social union. That means, the sharing of day to day common existence or life of a people living on the same territory. This is not the same as the sharing of religious beliefs. It is a common existence. This common existence starts from a small village to wider social circles that share a common existence. The bonds that result from the common existence of the people of a village are stronger than the religious bonds. This bond of sharing a common existence is the most advanced type of bond that humans have experienced. The other types of bonds are less advanced. You can expand this type of bond as much as you want. What is happening in Lebanon is an awareness of this common reality.

Subject 6, however, differentiates between societal interaction and cultural integration:

What works today is societal integration as opposed to cultural integration, it is intended to increase people's societal interaction without touching upon the cultural issues. The societal integration makes the issue of cultural differences less important. Lebanon has a very rich experience in societal integration in the whole area.

**Question 2: What are the characteristics of Lebanon and the Lebanese people?**

### **Lebanese Characteristics**

Some subjects were reluctant and others refused to answer the question around the characteristics of Lebanon and the Lebanese people. However, some of them offered some characteristics once they were assured that the intention was not to develop a racial perspective of the Lebanese people but that the question was intended to increase our understanding of the Lebanese individual's life and sense of self.

### **The Physical Environment**

Subjects 1, 5, 17, 21, 22, and 23 feel that Lebanon has a particularly nice physical environment. For instance, subject 5 feels that "there are no special Lebanese characteristics except maybe that we have the climate of the Mediterranean .... but this is the climate of the Mediterranean and we share that with a lot of non Lebanese people...."

While subject 1 feels that: "We have an environmental particularity in Lebanon. We have a beautiful physical environment. That is one of the major Lebanese treasures."

### **Openness, Flexibility, Adaptability, and Cultural Variety**

Subjects 9, 8, 15, 6, 7, 19, 20, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, and 23 feel that Lebanon's particular geographical location has characterized the Lebanese individual with a continual openness to various cultural trends and cultural changes.



As subject 20 explains:

I do not like to talk about any special Lebanese characteristics.....Lebanon is an Arab country but it has a special geographic location which renders it more open to the West and the presence of the Western culture in it. Lebanon integrates between the Western and Islamic and Arab cultures.

Subject 17 warns, however:

I can not see any distinctive characteristics.....however, our people have a tendency towards openness. It's openness to the Mediterranean Sea. The Lebanese coast opened Lebanon to the Mediterranean and to the West which is something very important. But it could work both ways. If Lebanon does not have a solid character, this openness could cause it to lose its integrity.

According to subjects 6, 8, 9, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24, this openness has helped develop a Lebanese individual who is flexible and with a high degree of adaptiveness to environmental changes. This characteristic was expressed in different ways.

Subject 19: "The Lebanese individual is resourceful ..... he is flexible ..... versatile ..... dynamic ..... with a great capacity to adapt."

Subject 14:

In my opinion, the Lebanese's historical experiences as a tradesman has enabled him to become very flexible. Moreover, he has a degree of flexibility that no other people in the area possesses. Lebanon is rich in it's people and he is needed by all sides. The Lebanese can adapt to any societal environment. You find that the Lebanese who left Lebanon have been able to integrate in other societies with a lot of ease. This Lebanese open-mindedness originates from it's trading heritage.

Subject 16:

The Lebanese individual has personal initiative. The Lebanese is creative, a pioneer, dynamic. etc. The Lebanese are very flexible people. They have an excellent capacity for adaptation. The Lebanese can endure and adapt with the harshest of circumstances, such as the war we had for 20 years.

Subject 9: "Lebanon has a nature resulting from its reality ..... it mission of cultural interaction. The Lebanese is a pioneer in the Middle East in terms of leading in cultural innovation and progress."

Subject 15: "We have nice social traditions ..... we have openness ..... the curiosity to get to know others .... love of knowledge and travel ....."

Subject 22 reminds us that "Lebanon has a great responsibility due to this great advantage it has and this should be used in order to modernize and develop the country."

Moreover, subjects 3, 9, 13, 12, 16, 20, 22, 23, and 24 emphasize that the love for cultural variety and cultural diversity is an important Lebanese characteristic and it is a deep Lebanese value.

Subject 24, a leading journalist, explains: " Lebanon's diversity and the religious co-existence makes it special ..... these are positive characteristics ..... I do not mean a racist approach ..... it is just a characteristic ..."

Subject 9: "Any one individual in Lebanon has a multicultural-integrated culture."

Subject 17:

The Lebanese is used to diversity. Even though that creates the potential for conflict, it is still a kind of capital or even a treasure. The Lebanese diversity enables the individual to go to the United States and adapt very fast, and the American citizen comes to Lebanon and finds that he can fit easily in many places. It is the same with France. That has created a heterogeneous character for the Lebanese. Each characteristic could have a negative side, but I am emphasizing the positive aspects.

### **The Lebanese Emigrant Tradition**

Subjects 10, 14, 16, and 17 also felt that the Lebanese people were characterized by an emigration legacy due to their trading legacy.

Subject 16:

The Lebanese is characterized by his capacity to move, the Lebanese is one of the peoples that move the most around the world. The Lebanese immigration is legendary, and I think that this has to do with the Lebanese's proximity to the sea. The sea horizon is different from the desert horizon. The sea is always a way out. The Lebanese even move inside Lebanon.

Subject 14 explains:

The Lebanese emigration preceded any other Arab emigration. This is due to its trade heritage. I was often asked, can the Lebanese unify after this long war, and I would say that the Lebanese is a trader and trade people forget about their losses when the encounter gains.

Subject 10 points out that:

The Lebanese idea started off in the countries of Lebanese emigration. There was Egypt, the Lebanese who went to Egypt and started to call for the Lebanese idea. Others were in Istanbul. Others were in France, in NYC, and Latin America. All these influences helped shape the Lebanese idea.

### **The Light and Dark Sides of the Lebanese Personality**

A couple of subjects, subject 1 and 4, referred to two aspects of the Lebanese personality. They feel that the Lebanese have a strong instinct for life as well as death and destruction.

Subject 4 complains:

It is true that the Lebanese is generous; it is true that the Lebanese is hospitable; it is true that the Lebanese is free, and he is intelligent; he likes education; he likes openness. The Lebanese loves life and likes to enjoy life. Even if you put a Lebanese in a desert, he would get a small refrigerator, connect it to the car battery, get some water and would live in the desert. He has the will to persevere and face challenges. But I am sorry to say that the Lebanese has two negative aspects that render all the other meaningless. He has a lot of aggressiveness because what was seen during the war is not normal in civil societies. We were very aggressive, we all fought with a lot of aggressiveness. All of us experienced an explosion of very dangerous hostilities and rancor. There is no way that I would not imprint the Lebanese people with what happened. We should go back and examine what happened. For twenty years we witnessed aggression and hostility, we witnessed the instincts in ourselves.

Similarly, subject 1 explains:

There are positive aspects and there are negative aspects. The Lebanese people have demonstrated that they can be overtaken by instincts. Until now we still suffer from some peoples' behavior which is guided by instincts. But I believe that we have it in us to be one of the most peace loving and sophisticated people in the world. It just seems that every people goes through periods in their histories where they loose consciousness. We have had a lot of periods in our history where we lived in peace.

**Question 3: What, in general, are the cultural similarities and what are the cultural differences that exist between Lebanon and other Arab countries?**

The great majority of subjects were, initially, very resistive to this question. However, they proceeded to answer the question after they were assured that this question did not suggest in any way that the Lebanese and the Arab cultures were two completely distinct cultures but that



rather the goal was to understand in what various ways could we relate Lebanon's Arab culture and the Arab cultures in other Arab countries. Therefore, the great majority of subjects emphasized that Lebanon's culture is basically an Arab culture. However, some subjects felt it necessary to differentiate between the concepts of culture and cultural life, hence, the question was asked in both its forms. The following are some of the differences that subjects felt existed between the Lebanese cultural life, or culture, and the cultural lives in other Arab countries.

### **Lebanon vs. Other Arab Countries**

#### **Lebanese Higher Level of Openness to Other World Cultures**

Subjects 1, 5, 11, 17, 20, 21, and 22 felt that the Lebanese culture was different from the cultures in the other Arab countries in that it was more open to change and other cultural varieties.

Subject 7 explains:

Lebanon is distinct from the other Arab cultures in its openness to the other cultures and civilizations in the world. There are many civilizations in the world that are much older than Lebanon. But Lebanon is distinct in that it is like a kind of window, we are very good at receiving and integrating. You also see that in the fact that the Lebanese has an excellent capacity to integrate in the societies where he has emigrated. The other Arab countries have very little emigrants in the world.

Subject 11 feels that "the difference between Lebanon and the rest of the Arab world is its openness towards the sea frontier."

Moreover, subject 1 feels that:

The Arabs have gone through a very difficult period. They went through a period where nationalist feelings ran high to the extent that they rejected all that was foreign. This rejection of things from the outside held the Arab culture back. In addition, the foreign missionaries which were present in the Arab world, were closed during the above mentioned nationalist period that swept the Arab countries. All these things did not take place in Lebanon. In Lebanon, we benefited a lot from the foreign missionaries. You might want to call the foreign mission imperialism, still we did benefit a lot from them. Up to this day, many schools that have foreign roots have much higher standards of

education than local schools. Therefore, that is why there is a difference between us and the other Arab cultures.

Subject 17 blames the Lebanese people for the following:

We were supposed to be different, this openness should have helped the Lebanese be pioneers in the Arab area after seeing how democratic nations are built. They should have been the first to learn that nations are not built on myths. The Lebanese in general had a better opportunity for advancement than other Arab nation because of this openness to the West.

However, he adds, he is perplexed by the Lebanese behavior in Lebanon:

The interesting thing is that the Lebanese who believes in the ideals of democracy when he is outside Lebanon completely changes his mind when he comes back to Lebanon. All the things that he had learned in the outside are refused because these universal rules do not apply to the Lebanese people who are magically different than others. They think that the Lebanese will be able to advance and develop without following these universal rules because the Lebanese are different.

### **Religious and Cultural Variety**

Another aspect in the Lebanese culture that was emphasized by a number of subjects is the degree of religious and the cultural variety that the Lebanese people have as compared to other Arab countries.

Subject 14 explains that:

... we can consider that the religious variety in Lebanon can be considered one of the features of the Lebanese identity. This can be a blessing when it represents the intellectual richness, and could it be a disaster because of the ethnocentrism and rancor. When we say that Lebanon represents variety, we mean that it has a variety of cultural idioms, and this openness to different cultures is something popular. You might find cultural variety in other Arab counties, but you will not find the public living this variety.

Subject 10 feels that:

The distinctive feature of the Lebanese culture is that first it is an Arab culture and is more Arab than other Arab countries. This is because the Moslem says I am a Moslem and has the right to stay in the East. The Christian's situation demands that he says I am an Arab and he thus penetrates the Arab culture and becomes at the top of the culture. This is their reason for being in the East, that they are Arabs and they are ahead of everybody in the creation of the Arab culture and promoting it.

Again, subject 2 associates the Arab identity with the Lebanese cultural variety:

.....the Arabs were the first to want an independent Lebanon. The Arab nation wanted to make peace with itself by showing that it is accepting of the variety in it and that it will give the different minorities a breathing space in a sea of a Moslem majority.

Subject 20 adds:

The Lebanese culture has the Christian religious dimension that is not present enough in other Arab countries. It is an advantage that we have different and various cultural dimensions in our culture. Similarly, there are other countries that have not taken enough advantage of the Islamic cultural dimension.

### **Lebanese Freedoms**

Therefore, subjects 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 12, and 14, 16, 20, 22, 23 and 24 feel that what differentiates Lebanon from other Arab countries is the degree of freedoms that the Lebanese individual enjoys.

Subject 6 feels that:

None of the Arab countries have found ways to provide minorities with freedom and equality of participation. Lebanon, on the other hand, has found a way to deal with the minorities problem, we have a good system for managing different sociological identities. This is why I feel Lebanon is a victim of the Arab failure to deal with differences... Moreover, in Lebanon, no one group can dominate the other.

Subject 15 explains that:

..... the differences is that our society is not a homogeneous religious society .... this has prevented a totalitarian system from developing in Lebanon like in the other Arab countries ..... moreover, economically ..... we are liberal ..... the other Arab economies have controlled economies .....

Subject 5 feels that:

..... we are all the same .... we eat the same ..... we sing the same ..... we are absolutely the same ..... but there is more freedom in Lebanon ..... no basic differences .... just the political systems are different ..... if you think about the other surrounding Arab countries .... the environment is scary ..... there are no writers in the Arab countries ... people stop writing at an early age because the culture does not permit you to write ..... you can not write because you have to write about peoples' lives ..... and if you write about peoples' life you have to write about peoples' oppression ..... therefore, you are not allowed to write....



Subject 8 remembers that:

Lebanon had the voter system and public freedoms well before other Arab countries ..... Lebanon was also the source the Arab renaissance ..... the environment of freedom helped it play a major role in becoming an Arab cultural center .....

Similarly, subject 4 explains:

In Lebanon there is freedom to a great extent. You can live your cultural life as you want and express it as you want. In some Arab countries, the cultural life is dead. Our people want openness and our political system permits more cultural expression.

Subject 16:

I want to emphasize the freedom issue. The presence of freedoms in Lebanon makes it different from the other Arab countries. The journalistic freedom, the economic freedom, the freedom of thought. Lebanon is equal to freedom.

However, at times, these freedoms caused a lot of problems. Subject 16 explains:

Lebanon was considered at times a threat to the Arab regimes because of the freedoms in it. For example, the Lebanese press became the major danger to some other Arab regimes. The Arabs considered that this press and media were a loose thing, and not a freedom of thought. The freedom of thought was considered more dangerous than the Lebanese war.

### **Different Degrees of Oppression**

Some subjects, however, felt that even though Lebanon enjoyed a certain degree of freedom, what was still shared between the Lebanese people and the people in other Arab countries was the political oppression of the governing institutions.

As subject 15 explains:

... however .... nowhere in the Arab world and in Lebanon is there democracy ..... in Lebanon we never had real representation ..... we are still represented by the same people ... similar to the other Arab countries ..... I do not believe we have a lot of freedoms.....people in Lebanon are not equal in front of the law ..... no new elite class develops in Lebanon .....

Subject 21 complains of some Arabs who single out Lebanon:

.... they say Lebanon is not a legitimate country because it was created by the French ..... well ... in that sense ..... all the other Arab countries are not legitimate countries either ... they were all created by the French and the British ..... but all these countries created their own legitimacy and their own national identities ..... all except Lebanon

where the Lebanese individual in this system is not Lebanese but something else ..... all the other Arab countries have national identities ..... why not Lebanon ...?

**Question 4: What are the differences and what are the commonalties between the Lebanese culture and the Israeli culture?**

### Lebanon and Israel

#### Israel's Religious Ethnocentrism vs. Lebanon's Cultural Variety

The majority of the subject responses emphasized that the most basic difference between the Lebanon and Israel is that one country is based on religious ethnocentrism and the other is based on cultural variety.

Subject 7 explains:

The Israeli society, even though it gives the impression of being a civil society, it is still a racial society. That society rejects any other people unless he is Jewish. This is basic. The Arab society is much more tolerant of differences. Throughout the Arab history, the Jew never felt that he was prosecuted from his Arab neighbors and the society. But the Jews are very racial and believe they are different from other God followers. They are God's chosen people. That is how we are different from Israel. We do not feel the superiority that the Jews feel towards others.

Subject 1 emphasizes that:

Israel is a country that is rooted and is originated from a religion. The existence of Israel is based on religious fanaticism. The Israeli people are individuals that came from all over the world escaping from prosecution. They chose to live on this piece of land because their Torah which said that this piece of land is yours. God's chosen people. Israel is a Jewish state by definition. Their mere existence is the opposite of what Lebanon represents. Lebanon is a mission that stands for the co-existence of all the religious sects present in it, including the Jewish religion. In Israel, the idea of coexistence is not possible by definition.

Subject 21 asserts:

Our societies are multicultural ... their's is exclusive ..... There is also a qualitative difference between Israel and all other countries ..... there has not been any country like Israel in the history of the world ..... even the Crusaders were people who mixed with others ..... they can never exist without their Jewishness .....

Subject 14 explains the difference between two types of Jewish attitudes:

.... I would say that the Israeli individual is western on the surface but Jewish at heart, that is, he is ethnocentric. Jewishness has become a form of nationalism in which the Jew finds self affirmation, this is true of the Western Jews. As for the real Jew, it is a form of ethnocentrism in which they believe in their superiority over other peoples. The Jew represents a kind of national superiority. The Arabs, the Moslems, and the Lebanese, on the other hand, do not know isolation. The Arabs never had isolationist feeling against the Jews. The Jews lived among the Arabs without being hated. There could have been some minimal sensitivities, but the Jews lived well within the Moslem Arab society.

Subject 15: " .... we are opposites by definition ..... in Israel you have a homogeneous society....we have a very diverse society ....."

Subject 17 explains:

The Israeli society, unlike the 'Democracy' propaganda that they have in the West, which is a marketing ploy, is basically a closed society. Our culture is based on the acknowledgment of the other. Theirs is based on the refusal of others. The Lebanese that emigrated from Lebanon have followed the basic rules of life and have generally integrated into the societies where they have settled. As did the Greeks, as did the Italians, .. etc. All did that, except the Jews. They are the only ones that insisted in staying separate. If all people who emigrated to the Americas had behaved in the Jewish way, then there would not have been any new societies on the American continent.

### **Aggressive vs. Peaceful Goals**

Subjects 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, and 24 felt that the difference between the Lebanese society and the Israeli society is that Israel is an aggressive, an expansionist society while Lebanon has no such goals.

Subject 8 asserts that:

Israel wants to divide and disintegrate Lebanon because we stand at an opposite to their existence ..... Moreover, the Israelis have interests in dominating Lebanon's water resources .... and also destroy Lebanon's role in the region ..... Lebanon, on the other hand, has no goals except the maintenance of its freedom and sovereignty.

Subject 4 complains that the Israelis use others to attain their own interests:

..... biggest proof of that is how Israel used the Christians and then gave up on them, and how they used some Moslems and also gave up on them as well. Israel followed it's own interests. We do not need much evidence of Israel's pursuit of their own interests by using others.



Similarly, subject 13 asserts that "the Jews have no allies, they have people with whom they cooperate with but no equal partners. This is a theological fact."

Subject 5 feels that:

..... Israel as a country has a mission ... a goal .... Lebanon has no goal ..... Israel is a project to exercise control and dominate the Middle East region ..... you can not even compare us to Israel ..... Israel would not exist if it were not for its project of hegemony ..... take away the project and Israel will dissolve ..... there would not be any justification for this huge capital expenditures on the military arsenal .....

### **European Culture vs. Middle Eastern Culture**

Some subjects differentiated between the Israeli religion and the Israeli culture. They considered that the Israeli culture was basically rooted in the European culture, while Lebanon was based on the Middle Eastern Arab culture.

### **Developed vs. Underdeveloped**

Subjects 4, 5, 15, 15, 16, 20 and 21 compared Israel's level of development and approach to problems solving with the Lebanese underdevelopment.

Subject 15 explains:

... the Israeli political parties and the institutions have the capacity to plan and implement their plans...we can not do that .... they have a great pool of thinkers and a lot of advanced universities .....we do not have that ..... they conduct studies all over the world .... we still can not make scientific studies in Lebanon .....

Similarly, subject 16 feels that:

..... I always say that reality changes faster than thinking changes. So the best thing to do is to follow reality and try to catch up with our thinking. The difference between us and Israel is that they were always reading the international realities while we were always late in our readings ..... What we need first of all to read reality in terms of numbers. We need to know what our resources are, what our needs are etc. In Lebanon we do not have numbers but rather opinions. We have no census projects. We do not have research centers. In Israel, every book written by us is translated into Hebrew and is studied. We, on the other hand, have no idea what they do. Israel spends two to three times on research centers of what the whole Arab world spends on research centers. We

still think in terms of myths and images. We value poetry more than education. We are way behind in technology. Arabs have a romantic style of thinking, while we should have a scientific style when we come to understand politics and economics .....

**Question 5: What are the commonalities and what are the differences between the Lebanese and the Western Cultures?**

### Lebanon vs. the West

The subjects' answers to this question tended to be short. The majority of the subjects tended to associate the Western culture with mainly technological, scientific and human advances.

Subject 1:

The differences between us and the West lies in the fact that there are a lot of things that an individual gets in the West that are not existent in Lebanon. There is the political and social freedom that an individual enjoys in the West that you can not expect to get here.

Subject 5 feels that:

The Western Culture dominates the whole world ..... all the world is influenced and dominated by the Western culture .... the question becomes ... how is the Arab culture different within the frame of the Western culture? ..... how can we Lebanese evolve our cultural heritage within this western framework?

Subject 8 feels that:

Lebanon plays a role of the go between ..... we have brought a lot of Western things to the Arab world such as the democratic system .... the economic freedom ..... translation of books ..... there are a lot of Western aspects that have benefited the Lebanese ..... we are the window of the Arabs to the West .... Moreover, I do not believe in a Western and an Eastern culture .... we have a human culture ..... we take from the West what we need ..... some things could not and do fit in Lebanon ..... our social values are different .....

Similarly, subject 10 explains that:

We have an openness to the West in a moderate form, unlike the Algerians. Even though the Lebanese knows perfect English he still knows his Arabic perfectly too. Lebanon took from the West what suited the Lebanese's needs and adapted it to the Lebanese way.

Subject 20 agrees with the above stated and qualifies:

Not all the West is the same. We are asking to adopt those aspects of the West that are good and not those aspects that are not. Science is changing and we need to keep up with these changes.

Subjects 1, 3, and 14 feel the Lebanese have an inferiority complex when it comes to the Western culture. Subject 14:

.....why should we have a complex from our relationship with the West? We should not think in terms of an East/West complex, but rather we should think in terms of East/West interests. They have the good and the bad. The Western administrations operate on the basis of their interests, the West is no longer associated with Christian dominance, even though there are some Western countries that still carry some sediment against the Moslems. We can not separate from the West.

**Question 6: What are the problems facing the Lebanese unification?**

### **Problems**

The great majority of subjects believed that the primary factor impeding the development of the Lebanese people and the development of a unified Lebanese identity is sectarianism. These subjects' responses varied from emphasizing the reasons and roots of sectarianism to emphasizing the effects of sectarianism. In addition, various subjects discussed sectarianism in relation to numerous aspects of the Lebanese life and society, past and present.

Significantly, exposure of the problems of sectarianism was often presented in the form of criticism around the behavior and interactions of the sectarian leaders in Lebanon.

### **The Sectarian System**

**Oppressive Rule of the Sectarian Elite.** Most subjects talked about the divisive and abusive effects of having a leadership structure built around sectarian differences. Subject 6 considers that the problem with the sectarian leadership structure is that it creates a divisive



political and psychological atmosphere because it is by definition built around sectarian differences. This, according to subject 2, leads to the following: "..... where there has been no actual unification, the country ends up with a fragile government structure that creates oppression, abuse of power, and monopolies."

Subject 4 explains:

The Lebanese are still divided due to their heritage and their system of false leaderships. Even though we have a lot of things that unify us, there is still no intention to build on those commonalities. The false leaders are looking after their own interests and are using the people as if they are sheep.

Subjects 6, 17 and 22 emphasize that a small class of people keeps the power from generation to generation. Moreover, Subject 2 asserts that "it is very hard for me to differentiate between the Moslems and the Christians in power in what concerns their abuse of public affairs."

He adds:

The current form of government has at its core sectarian leaders that have raped the democratic institutions of the country and has come to power by riding and using the sectarian instincts as a vehicle to reach power, or have used the banner of poverty or the banner of political loss. This form of government created new interests and forms of gain. This situation has transformed the religions into profit institutions.

Similarly, Subject 16 explains:

In Lebanon, there is a political, economic and societal elite that even though they are adversaries still they have a strong alliance that unifies them. Since these forces are the product of a sectarian system, they unify in promoting the sectarian mentality in order to maintain their survival.

Subject 4 agrees with subject 16 and gives an example:

Five years after the Ta'if Accord and you still do not have these simple local town elections. At times they tell you those elections are dependent on the Peace negotiations in the Middle East, at other times they tell you the electoral lists are still not ready. It is all a lie. There are a handful of leaders that are afraid to lose their power and are afraid if the people speak out. It is prohibited to go into demonstrations, it is prohibited to speak out.

Subject 6 mentions another form of oppression: "Power elite accuses anyone who disagrees with them with treason."

**Individual Dependence and Marginalization of Qualifications.** Most respondents emphasized that this type of leadership structure creates a lot of problems that keep people and society from realizing their full potentials. One of the major complaints about the sectarian leadership is around the kind of dependence that it creates in individuals due to its power in determining an individual's chances of getting services and jobs in the country.

Subject 1 explains that "in today's Lebanon, an individual's chances of making it, of getting a job, of getting projects from the government is dependent on who that person knows in the governing class."

Subject 19 agrees: "Qualifications are not important in Lebanon, it is who you know."

Again, Subject 4:

.... individual qualifications are insignificant because no matter how much education he has, he has to go to his sect's leader because he holds the quotas and the individual has to take his rights from the leader. His future is in the hand of the leader.

Subject 2 emphasizes the government's responsibility in maintaining this situation:

When the government is providing you with your rights every body is well. But when the government fails to do that, then each one finds himself obliged to go get his rights from his sectarian leader or religious leader.

Similarly, Subject 17 feels that:

The way the system is set, the government is the major element that is impeding our society's unification. Moreover, it is not encouraging to qualifications of the people. It is destroying the society's chances for development and advancement.

All this, according to subject 9, increases an individual's dependence on the sectarian leader. He believes that "an individual holds on to the traditional sectarian leaders in the same way as babies hold on to their blankets--a need for security--they breed dependence by controlling an individual's source of basic needs."

Moreover, Subject 15 complains of the lack of people-people communication:

We do not determine our own interaction with each other. We come together when others want us to come together. All the discourse is limited to the upper echelons of society, which is, in turn, limited and associated with outside influences. Therefore, the interaction loses its meaning to the self. It is not self determined. In the past, on the internal level, there could never be a meeting or a new dialog between the Druzes and

the Maronites, for example, outside the parameters that were defined by the sectarian elite such as Pierre Jumayyel, Kamal Jumblat, Shammoun etc."

Subjects 6, 8, and 15 point out the irrational approach to problem solving caused by this kind of leadership structure. Subject 6: "People depend on 7-8 people that can solve national problems or create a crisis."

Subject 15: "Leaders define what issues are of national importance and which are not according to their personal opinions rather than scientific evidence and the conclusions of the intelligencia."

Subjects 4, 8 and 12 complain that sectarian leaders and the government are discouraging the new generation from participating in public affairs because they feel that they are not represented by either of them.

**The Institutionalized Divisive Sectarian Culture.** All subjects, without exception, focused on the divisive and oppressive effects of the sectarian culture in general. The issues they focused on were related to the ones they discussed in relation to the sectarian leadership as well as other issues.

Subjects 14, and 20 differentiate between sectarianism and religion.

Subject 20:

The most important of Lebanon's problems is sectarianism. And here we need to differentiate between sectarianism and Religion. Religion is a personal relationship between the person and his God. Sectarianism is opposite to what religion stands for. Sectarianism is used as a means towards an end more than it represents religious ideologies.

Subject 5 feels alienated in Lebanon because he feels that:

This is a place that is against people and this place belongs to the sects ..... to the leaders and to the oppressors ..... the enemy of Lebanon is its sects ..... these people who say Lebanon was made for them ..... the Maronites and the Shiites and the Druzes feel that this country is theirs because they are not present in other places as political minorities ..... they are the enemies of Lebanon...sadly enough .... we have not been able to develop an idea about Lebanon beyond those groups .....

Subject 2 wonders:



How can you have democracy when you have sectarianism? ... these are two contradictory concepts .... individuals end up defending the rights of their sects instead of defending their individual rights. I believe we have a long way to go to get to a democracy and I think we are going backwards.

Subjects 1 and 16 complain that sectarian identities are imposed on individuals since early on in life and are maintained throughout life with very little choice to break out of these sectarian identities.

Subject 16 explains:

In Lebanon the individual is born in a sect and dies in a sect, and when you are growing up, you go to schools that represent different religious groups. Moreover, in everyday life you see that the Christian wants to work with a Christian lawyer. And the Moslem with a Moslem. The current system got stuck to the financial economic system. The vicious circle. On the one hand, this sectarian system is producing political forces and an intellectual elite that defends that system. On the other hand, these elite are incapable of getting out of that system and thus they feed each other.

Subjects 16, 17, 21, 23 explain the role that the Lebanese form of government has on maintaining and promoting society's divisive sectarian identities:

Subject 17 explains that "you need your sect much more than your central government. You have to go through your religious sect in order to reach your government."

Subject 21 complains that:

People are made to remember their distinct religious belongings when they need something from the government. At those times the Christian has to go to somebody from his sect in the government that will help him with his necessities. The government nowadays is saying that if you want your civil rights you need to go through sectarian channels.

Subjects 1, 4, 5, 12, 20, 22 point out the relation between sectarianism and the current educational system as they ponder the reasons behind the Lebanese's problems with unification.

Subject 20: "Education, is also sectarian. The weakness of the public educational system is due to sectarianism. This is a great obstacle for unification."

Subject 5: "I believe a lot of problems stem from the current educational system and education ..... there is no common educational system.....there is no common civil education ..."

Subject 4: "The problem in Lebanon is that there is no agreement over the heritage and the history, and that is all due to the disagreement over the identity."

Moreover, the fact that Lebanese of different sects follow different personal status laws was seen by subjects 7, 20, 22, and 23 as creating serious differences among the Lebanese people.

Subject 22:

... there are no common laws .... the religious laws are different from each other ..... there is no common civil law which will subject us all to the same civil laws that can organize our lives ..... this is very important in terms of women's rights which differ significantly from one sectarian system to the other .....

Subject 20 reveals some of the illogical consequences that can result from the absence of a common civil law:

I am afraid that sectarian feelings are on a rise in Lebanon. Today, the Lebanese law accepts civil marriages provided it has been performed outside Lebanon and not in Lebanon. It is, of course, very illogical to not accept civil marriages performed in Lebanon especially that the Lebanese judges can have a say in the marriages performed in the exterior. How can you accept it and be able to judge it inside and still not accept Lebanese civil marriage.

On the other hand, Subject 5 warns of the prevalence of religious expression and fears that if it becomes the only form of expression it could create a divisive environment among people.

Subject 5 explains:

... religious expression can become very divisive when these religious expressions become representative of a sect ... then people from other sects react negatively to each other ..... imagine a Christian who thinks of the Shiites as those who do "Ashura" and hit their heads until they bleed ..... or the Christians who worship a cross can be seen as atheists by a Moslem etc. people generalize .....

Subjects 5, 17, and 21 complained of the divisive effects of sectarianism on city life. As subject 17 explains:

..... instead of the city blending people ..... the villages, instead, divided Beirut. The current sectarian system is transforming the city from a melting pot into a religious stock market, while each sect has its particular capitals in their corresponding areas. People from different religious sects come to Beirut to play their sectarian stocks. Different sectarian leaders come to the city in order to play their sectarian cards and try to provide favors for their sect's constituents .....



Subject 19 blames the election laws on maintaining a sectarian culture:

..... we have bad election laws ..... change the small electoral regions into one common electoral region. Small electoral regions increase sectarianism. In one electoral region, the discourse becomes national as opposed to sectarian and regional, moreover, we would feel responsible for each other ...

Subject 10 also warns of the dangerous role sectarianism can play in times of economic difficulties:

..... there is a danger when the economic and social machinery fail to reach the Lebanese individual. The continuation of a sectarian environment during a social and economic crisis threatens the Lebanese unity. Unity is a dynamic concept. When the Lebanese people do not have their basic needs ..... the Lebanese start blaming the others. Each sect blames the other. So justifying the self and blaming the other is very dangerous .....

In a related manner, subject 19 feels that "the more people feel oppressed, the more they feel sectarian."

The effects of sectarianism on personal initiative and motivation were also pointed out by subjects 4, 8, 17.....

Subject 17:

Sectarianism is not only having a negative effect on the level of identity, but it also has important negative effects on development. Why would people be motivated to work for obtaining educational qualifications when they know that is not what provides opportunities for them but rather their sectarian identity and their connections .....

Subjects 1, 4, 9, 7, 19 were also aware of the negative effects that the sectarian environment has on the country's development since it is causing a large brain drain from the country. Subject 4 explains:

A major negative effect of sectarianism is that all the positive aspects of the Lebanese people are not being invested nationally, on the public level. These great potentials, these great dreams, these great aspirations, all these are not being nationally invested. Well ... yes ... the Lebanese is intelligent, his intelligence is shown by the fact that he is resourceful .... wherever he goes around the world he is able to make it, in the States, in Venezuela, in Brazil, in Africa, etc. Why doesn't he live in Lebanon? Why can't we benefit from his intelligence in Lebanon? Here we go back to the original basic political problem that has forced the Lebanese to emigrate.



**Sectarianism and Foreign Relations.** Subjects 2, 8, 9, and 14 refer to sectarianism in terms of foreign relations. Subject 2 protests the use of foreign powers in internal conflicts:

I am against the Christians' use of the help of foreign powers to win over the Moslems and I am also against the Moslems' use of the other Arab forces to become stronger than the Christians. Moreover, in the same way that I was against the Christians when they exercised power over the Moslems, I am now against the Moslems overpowering the Christians. I can understand one political party winning over another, but can not accept one sect overpowering another. This is a formula to reignite the war.

Similarly, subject 7 believes that:

.... we need to stop the practice of falling back on our religious identities whenever a crisis arises and then we seek help from foreign forces that are allied with the respective sects. We have no other option than doing that, our common interests mandate that we accept each other as equal partners.

Subject 9 complains that:

Some groups in Lebanon trade in their identities. Lebanon is used by the Lebanese groups as a means towards an end. The Christians use Lebanon in order to protect themselves from the Arabs whereas Lebanon for Moslems was a first step towards an essential Arab unification. But no one works for Lebanon for Lebanon per se ....

Subject 24 adds: "You have to notice the political parties in Lebanon are sectarian parties or political parties that call for an identity that is supra-Lebanon ..... non of these are Lebanese parties ..."

### **Problems Caused by Other Sects**

A few subjects pointed out the responsibility that other Lebanese sectarian groups have in the failure to develop a unified Lebanese identity and Lebanese people.

**Christian Complaints.** Subject 1 explains that he has a problem in defining the Lebanese identity because:

We have a problem in defining what Lebanon should be. After the war, the Christian considers that he lost, while the Moslem considers that he won. This unbalance in thinking leads us to question what the Lebanese identity is.

Subjects 12, 16, and 22 explain that the Christians still have a fear of Islam. Subject 16 explains:

The Christian asks himself, 'What is my role in this vast Islamic world?' The Moslem Sunni has an extension in the Arab world. The Christian has no extension except in this small piece of land, or he emigrates, which is what is happening in reality. As long as this unbalance persists, and I am talking about the psychological unbalance, there will always be this question of what Lebanon is.

**Moslem Complaints.** Subjects 2, 4, 7 and 14 complain of the behavior of some Christian groups in terms of their effects on the Lebanese unity and the Lebanese identity. They criticize the tendency of some Lebanese to try to separate Lebanon from its Arab natural environment.

Subject 4 explains that:

..... this country can not be separate from its nation, its natural environment. This particular issue, even at this time, still poses a problem. The Lebanese Identity is in crisis because there are people who define the Lebanese identity differently ..... the isolationist party .... the imperialist party sought to create a situation where Lebanon is separated from its nation, and from its natural Arabic surroundings ..... they were used by the imperial powers who have always tried to obliterate the Lebanese Identity, which is the Arabic identity. These people are also arrogant because they consider that this country came into existence for their sake. Had they not been here, there would have been no country.

However, he later adds:

The differences are not in the people but in the political system that gives different political rights to different groups. A Maronite has the right to become a president even if he is not qualified, but people from other sects have no right to become presidents. You bury your ambitions from the moment of birth. It is the political system. What is worse is that those who benefited from this political system were not even a religious sect but rather a number of individuals.

Subject 7, though, considers that the conflict lies in two definitions:

This issue has been settled forever. There are some who say that Lebanon is made up of diverse distinctive cultures and that it is different from the rest of the Arab countries. I think this issue has been settled and Lebanon is Arab ..... an Arab country made up of minorities.

Moreover, they complain that some groups feel that they are not concerned with the problems of other Lebanese living by the Israeli border and that they fail to take a common stand with the other Lebanese with respect to the Israeli aggressions.

Subject 14 wonders out loud:

... how can you possibly explain that a lot of the Lebanese take a neutral stand with regards to the issue of the Israeli occupation? When you speak of the issue of resistance, they consider that a matter that concerns the inhabitants of the South of Lebanon.

**Question 7: What are the major future challenges facing the Lebanese people in general and the Lebanese individual in particular?**

### **Future Challenges**

#### **External Threats**

Subjects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22 and 23 emphasized the external challenges that Lebanon faces. Mainly, these subjects considered that the main challenge for Lebanon is to define itself in relations to the countries around it as well as define its future role in the overall global village.

Subject 15 reminds us:

We are also experiencing the emergence of a new tendency on the international level towards global integration. How are we going to define ourselves and determine what we want in the shadow of this new internationalization and world integration.

Subject 10 feels that the challenge is to find a common Lebanese challenge:

The challenge is finding a common point of view with regards to the big issues. Such as the relationship with the Arab countries, the relationship with Syria, etc. There is no one thing in Lebanon that is a challenge to all parties equally. For example, the Syrian presence, the two sides do not want it, but each in different degrees. And when one side becomes excited about a certain opinion, the other side takes the opposite stand. So there is nothing in Lebanon that challenges both parties equally.



Especially worrisome among the majority of the subjects is the challenge that the Middle East process poses for the Lebanese people. The challenges perceived were economic, political and cultural.

**Economic Challenges.** Subjects 12 and 15 worry that the Lebanese people are not preparing themselves for the peace process. Subject 15 explains:

We are almost jumping into the unknown. We do not know where the Lebanese will stand at the end of all these changes. Nobody is even thinking about this. What is Lebanon's role in these huge changes that are going to engulf the region. No information is available.

Subjects 1, 3, 4, 13, 16, 20 and 21 emphasize the important role that Lebanon plays in the Arab world and the possible Israeli threat to this relationship.

Subject 20 fears for Lebanon's intermediary role with the West:

Most of the dangers that the Arab world is going to face is amplified in Lebanon because Lebanon will be competing with Israel with what has characterized it, mainly its freedom and democracy and its openness to the West. Lebanon will have a competitor in terms of its advantage of having special relationships with the West.

Subjects 1, 16, and 21 worry about Lebanon's service economy. Subject 1:

Lebanon has thrived in the past when there was a no peace, no war situation in the Middle East. The Arabs used to place their money in Lebanon, and they used to come and spend some money during their vacations. Now Lebanon is dependent on the outcome of the peace process with Syria and Israel. What is going to be our role? Israel is trying to get through peace what it could not get through war. Economic power in the region. That only means that our importance in the Middle East is going to decrease.

Similarly, subject 16 explains:

Lebanon feels that it is a small country and that it serves as an axis to the others' economies. There is the feeling that it is possible to shut out Lebanon from its surroundings and thus killing its service economy. We do not have industry nor agriculture, therefore, our service capabilities are essential to our survival. The threat now is Israel's technological power. It is a danger not from force but from the economy. It is not an ideological challenge but rather a technological challenge. The focus among the Lebanese especially among the Christians has shifted from the ideological threat from the Arab countries to the technological threat from Israel. That is, the threat of the cooperation of Israel with other Arab countries, which would mean the diminishing of Lebanon's crucial role in the area.

Subject 7, on the other hand, feels that these fears are exaggerated:

No matter how much technological advance Israel possesses as well as its influence in the world, all that can not eradicate Lebanon's role in the area. For example, we encourage the development of a common Arab market. If Europe is breaking the borders nowadays, where it is planning to have a common monetary unit etc. Lebanon can play a cultural, human, and developing role. The Lebanese have an excellent capacity for adapting to new circumstances and environments no matter what these are.

**Political Threats.** Subjects 2 and 13 predict that the economic threat after the peace process will lead to political instabilities in the Arab region. Subject 2 explains:

The biggest threat is the political threat, that is, is your system of government viable or not, and this is a threat to all Arab countries. Even though Israel in reality is based on a military system, it is still capable of presenting itself to the world as a democracy. The Arab countries have been able to avoid democratic reform under the pretext that they are in a state of war with Israel and that all its energy needed to be directed towards facing the enemy's threat. At any rate, after the peace process, the people will demand change from their leaders. The mediocrity of the Arab institutions will be exposed because you are going to be in direct competition with the Israeli system. The current oppression can not continue, there is going to be, sooner or later, a minimal dialogue between the ruling and the ruled which is not the case now. The market forces will force the leaders to face reality which had been postponed before because of the state of war.

Subject 4 worries about the Israeli cultural threat in light of the internal Lebanese disagreements. He explains: "Lebanon has no immunity culturally speaking as long as it is in conflict over its identity. The conflict over our history, culture, and language etc."

Subjects 7, 13, and 17 emphasize the challenge posed by continual Israeli threat in the invaded Lebanese regions. Subject 7 explains:

The occupied territories are almost 10% of the total land area of Lebanon. Anything that happens within the occupied lands affects Lebanon very strongly. Let us remember the war of the "seven days". Around 350,000 Southerners were displaced, many of them went to Beirut, to the North and to the Bikaa. The majority of the refugees came to Beirut and had to stay in the schools and in empty buildings. This matter disrupted the whole living cycle in the capital. Therefore, Lebanon can not tolerate this kind of situation much longer.



## **Internal Challenges**

**Internal Reforms.** The other type of challenges that were emphasized by many subjects are the internal type of challenges.

Subjects 5, 6, 7, 8 and 17 stressed the importance of meeting the challenge of reforming the political system in such a way that it would help accomplish a number of things.

Subjects 7, 15 and 17 emphasize the role of government in unifying society. Subject 7: " .... there is the problem of belonging. What belonging is the individual going to have? Is he going to feel a belonging to only the small part that directly concerns his sect?"

Subject 8 feels that government should aim at getting more people involved:

The biggest challenge is to permit and convince and raise the awareness of the new generation to participate in the government and the public spheres .... Moreover, the Lebanese need the efforts of all sides to be rebuilt ..... you can not distance anybody ..... there is a lot of Lebanese money in the exterior and we need to encourage those to participate.

Subject 5 and 7 emphasize the service role of the role of government in providing people's needs. Subject 7: "The biggest challenge is answering the question of how can we create social organizations and systems that can serve the people....."

Subject 15 goes as far as saying:

What we are asking is for the government to take care of the people. Even from a sectarian basis, let the government take care of the Maronite people, the Druze people, etc...not even as a Lebanese. Give people their rights. Help them satisfy their biological needs. Education, health, economy. The sectarian government exists for itself.

Subjects 3, 12 and 16 emphasize the role of the government in solving the economic and challenges that face the people.

**Maintenance of Freedoms.** Subject 16 complains:

The challenges are many. There is the ideological challenge. The challenge of being the only liberal nation among many socialist regimes. It was a regime based on freedoms in an area where the most other regimes were based on obedience. Lebanon has a lot of freedoms. The journalistic freedom, the economic freedom, the freedom of thought. Lebanon was considered at times a threat to the Arab regimes because of what it represented. The Arabs considered that this press and media was a loose thing, and not



a freedom of thought and they used to consider the regime in Lebanon a threat to their national security.

Subject 20 explains:

Even though Lebanon is not completely free, it still has the highest degree of freedoms in this part of the world. But the challenge is to preserve these freedoms and the degree of democracy that it already has. Without these two there will be no Lebanon. One great challenge to these freedoms is that we need to build the proper basis upon which these freedoms can exist. These are economic and social basis. The middle class in Lebanon is shrinking today in Lebanon. Therefore, the freedoms are maintained when people have the proper social and economic structures to survive.

**Reality Testing.** A few subjects considered that a lot of problems that the Lebanese people experience are caused by a mythical type of thinking. Subject 15 complains of the mythical identities:

Lebanon is like any other country. I do not believe in the myth of a special Lebanese condition, these are myths we made up. We need to eat in dignity, we need to learn in dignity, we need to protect ourselves from the occupier. These are the realities, all other things are myths.

Similarly, subject 5 complains:

I believe that all those in the past who tried to define identities like Aflac and Saadi .... they created a problem to us with all these metaphysical stuff ..... they led us to a dead end ..... these things have no meaning ..... the issue is man...the issue is having a place that can provide you with man's basic needs of freedom .... human rights .... democracy ..

Subject 17:

We also have many myths in Lebanon that are considered truths by some. For example, there is the myth that Lebanon is a rich place that can survive economically no matter what. The favorable economic conditions that existed in Lebanon during the 40's, 50's, and 60's were a result of certain specific regional circumstances that the area was going through. This created a belief among the Lebanese that Lebanon was distinct and had special characteristics. This is not true. There were regional circumstances that helped Lebanon. This conditions are no longer present today. The country is destroyed and all our brain power is in the exterior ....

Subject 5:

..... what is left for Lebanon is the Lebanese myth....the myth created by the Maronites ..... this is a strong myth and based on a sect ..... they developed a different culture for themselves ... around which they developed a Lebanese identity ..... this identity has been destroyed after the war .....

Subject 14:

I say to the new generation, those who came before you lived in an imaginary world and because of that they fought each other and wanted to change reality. Even reality has to be changed with the tools of reality.

Subject 16 feels that:

In spite of the formation of many Arab states after the breakdown of the Ottoman Empire, the dream of a unified Arab nation and one Arab leader remained. This, in my opinion, had led to all the Arab vs. Arab wars because there was no real acceptance of the different Arab nations boundaries. The problem is that that ideology led to a denial of reality. When you acknowledge the particularity of each identity, then those identities would be able to accept the universal. As long as the universal refuses to accept the particulars, then the particulars would shut in.

**Question 8: What do you feel would help improve Lebanon's situation and increase its sense of unity?**

### **Solutions**

#### **Education and Awareness Raising**

Subjects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 emphasize the role that education should have in increasing people's sense of unity.

Moreover, these subjects felt that increasing people's sense of unity meant that educational efforts should be focused on raising peoples' awareness with respect to a variety of issues.

Subjects 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 felt that unifying the Lebanese history school book should be one of the first Lebanese priorities. Moreover, most of them emphasized that the only way to write a unified history book is to write about the realities of the people and their live circumstances.

Subject 6: "..... write history of people and not leaders ..... de-emphasize past leaders ..... emphasize people's struggles."

Subject 4: "Let us put the facts and the realities of this country as they are. Like all other countries."

Moreover, subjects 3, 5, 6 and 12 felt that it is very important to keep the memory of the civil war alive and learn from that experience of human suffrage.

Subject 3: "Emphasize common suffrage. Emphasize war memory. Develop strong memory of trauma instead of forgetting. Develop memory rituals. Remind people of the dangers of war."

Similarly, subject 5:

Write about the truth ..... let people write about the reality .... let us not deny reality and let us document the people's experiences during the civil war ..... let us stop preaching and describe reality as it is ..... the human experience ..... for twenty years of war ..."

Moreover, subject 12 feels that education should also focus on helping the Lebanese open up to each other. Subject 12 explains:

We have a whole generation that has not left its area of residence throughout the war. They need to get to know other areas and each other in order to have a better idea of what the Lebanese identity is. If you have friendships and have been to other areas in the country, then you start to care about those.

Subject 4 also feels that we should not forget to emphasize Lebanon's Arab heritage:

"For when we say an Arab Lebanon, that has its interpretation in the history book, in the civics book, in the generalization of the Arabic language. In generalizing the Arabic culture."

Subject 16, on the other hand, feels that the history book should also emphasize Lebanon's place in history.

..... agree on a common history. Basically, that Lebanon is not a historic mistake, but rather a historic constant for all the reasons we have mentioned above (refuge for the minorities, diversity, freedom, etc.). Even if Lebanon's border changed over time, the Lebanese' entity is no product by France or of imperialism. Lebanon is a historic permanent.

Subjects 3, 4, 6, 14, 17 feel that, in order to increase the sense of unity, it is very important to raise people's awareness to the common challenges that they face.



Subject 14 explains:

We can strengthen unity by educating the people about the serious problems that face all the Lebanese as a whole. We should take advantage of the crisis that affect all the Lebanese in order to make them more conscious of their common plight. Then you would be able to tell the Lebanese that there is no Christian type hunger and a Moslem type hunger. It is all the same. Reality provides you with a lot of means that you can use in unifying the Lebanese.

Subject 3 points out that "education should focus on directing people's attention away from petty sectarian struggles and towards the real challenges that face them."

Moreover, subject 4 feels that:

Our immunity, first of all, comes from becoming aware of the Israeli dangers and belief that danger is a common one. We should exercise our role in warning and making all our social groups aware of this danger.

Subject 6 also feels that people should be made aware of their common financial interests as well. Moreover, subjects 3, 6, 12, 16, 21 and 22 feel that people should be educated on human rights issues.

Subject 12:

... people need adult political education. There can be no democracy if there is no human and economic development. And there can be no such thing if there is no advanced political plan where part of it is to educate about the values like what democracy means. What are human rights? What are children's rights? There are many countries that determined what human rights are and we need to educate our people about that.

Moreover, subject 14 emphasizes that education needs to raise the Lebanese awareness on their need to get rid of their past psychological complexes from the East and the Western world and deal with others on a more rational level. He explains:

I say that the rudiments of the past has created in us a lot of complexes. A complex, for example against the Arab world, a complex towards the West. The problem is that our political activity is based on those complexes, and when your behavior is a reaction, that means that the other imposes on you his rules. You start living in the atmosphere of the other. Therefore, we need to stop approaching our political problems from a Psychological complex and we need to approach our problems from a reality based perspective. When I want to determine the kind of relationship that I should have with the Arab world, I need to determine the basis of my relationship with the Arab world. Do I have common spiritual and economic values that a separation from them is a separation of the self? What are my gains and losses in my relationship with the Arabs and the Moslems? Let us define that relationship on the basis of our values and interests. Then

we consider the West, why should I have a Complex from my relationship with the West, they have the good and the bad. The Western administrations operate on the basis of their interests, the West is no longer Christian, even though there are some western countries that still carry some sediment against the Moslems. We can not separate from the West.

He adds:

There is an Eastern kind of ethnocentrism, it is not religious ethnocentrism but rather an Eastern kind of ethnocentrism. The East is zealous, you find that the emotional side dominates the Eastern way of thinking. The way out is rationality and objectivity, I have always said that we should give our emotional side a rational dosage so that it will become balanced, and we should give our rational side an emotional dosage so that it can mellow.

### Government and the Civil Society

A number of subjects emphasized the role that government should play in decreasing the effects of sectarianism and increasing people's sense of unity. More specifically, most subjects felt that the government's civic role should be strengthened and it should make its primary focus the provision and protection of the individuals' human rights regardless of their sectarian identity.

Subject 3 clarifies the characteristics of a civic society:

... civic concerns override sectarian differences and makes them less important ..... a civic society is a pluralistic society based on a progressive and future reference. A Civic society will eliminate the identity ladder individual/sect/ religion .... in a civic society, the identity of individual is Lebanese before all other identities.

Subject 8:

..... we have to make religious trading a losing trade ..... we need coalitions that represent all the Lebanese ..... such as political parties under a civic government ..... this civic government is enough to guarantee the rights of the religions ..... this is why, we call for a civic system .... where individuals are free to exercise their rights .... Civil government that negotiates between the government institutions and the religious institutions ..... harmonize between the two and not the separation of the two .....

Subject 7 adds:

As much as we can attain a balanced development among the people, that is, as much as we take care of our sick till they heal. I do not believe that the Lebanese are fighting over serving God, but are rather fighting over the living matters such as services and



work and survival. The more we can create a civil society that helps the citizen provide his needs, the less important the differences would become between the groups.

Subject 2 feels that:

In order to take me away from my sect you have to make me belong to the state. The only hope is that the government of the people becomes stronger. This common fate and common life of the people can be only guaranteed by the state. You need to strengthen the civil institutions to enable these institutions to override the religious ones. Since this is originally a political entity and not a religious entity or a racist entity, that means that the guarantee for its existence is the state. This is the only institution that can protect the rights of its citizens.

Moreover, subject 16 explains:

I am not calling for the nullification of the sects, but to emphasize the primacy of the state. You should prohibit the intrusion of religious powers into the government decisions. It is important to take away from the sects all the sect rights that belong to the government. It is not acceptable that there should remain sectarian judicial courts. It is not acceptable that there can be no civil marriage.

According to subjects 8, 9 and 12, government can provide peoples' rights only if everybody gives primacy to the rule of law:

Subject 8 explains:

We need a government that is perceived by the citizens as the protector of his rights .... only then will individuals stop going to their leaders to get their rights ..... this can only happen if the government is one of laws and institutions ..... Moreover, only then can we develop external relationships that are based on the real interests of all the Lebanese and not based on making one group stronger than the other .....

Subject 12 adds: "We need the right people to apply the constitution. Today's leadership have agreements over deals and not over national plans and the application of the constitution."

Subject 1 feels explains that:

We need government institutions that are independent. In this country the government is divided among different individuals. Here in Lebanon, the prime minister considers the other ministers his assistants not independent ministers. This is ridiculous, we need government institutions that stand on their own.

A number of subjects feel that the government can not play its proper role unless it goes through a reform process. Subject 4 explains and complains:

You need to institute political and administrative reform. But I do not see in the horizon any intention to do that by those who are currently in power. The political reforms would organize the political life in the country around a democratic basis. The administrative



reform opens the possibilities for all the Lebanese, across sectarian affiliations, to participate in government institutions and help modernize them.

More specifically, subject 22 explains:

.... we need to reform the political system so that we can stop the current system of distributing jobs on a sectarian basis. Also institute competition on a political party level where the discourse forms around different political programs. All these factors together could probably increase the Lebanese's sense of unity.

Subject 5 and 9 feel that it is important to strengthen non governmental civil institutions.

Subject 5:

what makes a country is its society .... the civil society ..... besides the labor unions there are no independent non-sectarian civic organizations ..... we even criticize sectarian institutions through sectarian institutions .... so we need to develop more non-sectarian civic institutions that can work for protecting .....

While subject 9 suggests developing independent means to satisfy people's needs, that is, to depend more on the initiative of private institutions as opposed to governmental institutions.

A number of subjects emphasized the importance of the electoral process in strengthening the role of the government. Whereas some subjects felt that there should be at least regular elections in the country, others felt that the electoral process should be reformed and modernized to meet the growing changes that the country has witnessed in the last two decades.

Subjects 4, 8 and 12 stress the importance of the community level elections.

Subject 8 explains:

.... there needs to be Municipal councils and the mayoral elections .... then we can start building Lebanon from the bottom up ..... we also need new political parties that are based on a Lebanese identity ....

Subject 16 feels that the political parties laws should be reformed: "I say that we should make laws that would require the Lebanese political parties to have a membership from across the different religious groups."

Subjects 1, 19 and 24 also believe in changing Lebanon's electoral base. Subject 1 explains:

I believe in having one electoral base throughout Lebanon. Let us try to get out of the religious sect's rule. One electoral system might rid us from those problems. This way people are represented in the election. The Christian has a stake in the Moslem elected official.

**Question 9: Do you feel that the definition of the Lebanese identity at the Ta'if, which was added to the constitution, sufficiently defines the Lebanese identity?**

### The Ta'if Accord

The Ta'if Accord added to the constitution that Lebanon was an Arab state and its borders were the final borders of the Lebanese homeland. Moreover, it was the agreement that ended the 17 years of the Lebanese 1976-1991 Civil War.

### Complaints

**Problems in the Identity Definition.** Subject 4 complains that it is no longer possible to unify with another country:

'Lebanon is of an Arab identity and belonging and Lebanon is the ultimate/terminal/final homeland to all the Lebanese.' There is a contradiction in terms ... in the title! How can it be the ultimate homeland to all the Lebanese and be of an Arab identity and belonging? What if we want to unify with another Arab country at some point, it is now prohibited! Your entity/existence/being is final, you can not unify with another country. Moreover, we are on the verge of a peace agreement with Israel, and thus you are equating between Israel and Syria. This is a disaster. How does that confirm/maintain/emphasize the country's Arab heritage and history. Even if there is peace, I can not consider Israel and Syria on the same footing.

While subject 1 feels that it does not do much to decrease the Christian fears:

The new constitution was meant to make the Christians feel safe in being Arabs. But this is on paper, in reality, it will take time for the Christians to feel safe with the idea that Lebanon is Arab and not Moslem. That Lebanon is an Arab country, that is a fact. But this addition was included to say that Arabs can not be your enemies. You are them. For the Christians, Arabs means Islam. When you differentiate between the concepts of Arab and Moslem, then the Christians have no problems.

Some subjects also responded that they felt the Ta'if Accord was not a real solution to the real problem and that the issues it tackled were insignificant.

Subject 1 wonders:

What do you mean 'Lebanon is a final homeland.' Have you ever heard of a temporary homeland? Imagine in the French constitution saying that France is a final/terminal country for the French. That is ridiculous.

Subject 2 explains:

I believe there were a lot of lies in that deal. There was no need for this kind of hypocrisy to appear as if it is the solution to the problem. It is axiomatic that we are Arabs and it is axiomatic that Lebanon is a final homeland. That is not the real issue anymore. I believe that the whole accord was a political charade. We now need to agree on a system of government. In both the 1943 and the Ta'if Accord, the deals had a self destructive element in them. They both avoided the real issue of sectarianism in government.

Similarly, subject 17 adds:

The Ta'if has nothing to do with the definition of the identity. And if they think that it has defined the identity, then it is expressing the worst there is in terms of identity. The current formula will not lead to what is needed in the future and that is a civil society.

While subject 10 feels that the new definition is not a significant achievement:

I do not consider that there is anything new in the Ta'if Accord. Today it says that Lebanon is an Arab country while in 1943 it said that Lebanon had an Arab face. But in 1943 that statement was a much more courageous thing to say than saying today that Lebanon is an Arab country. In those days there was a great fear from France.

**Problems with Implementation.** A number of subjects feel that part of the problem of the Ta'if Accord is that it is not being implemented on the ground.

Subject 12 complains:

.... within the Ta'if it was agreed that it was necessary to have a unified history book, a unified civic book. Five years have passed since the agreement was struck and you still do not have a unified book. Schools still teach history and civics with different books.

Subject 7 feels that it is still not the time to act:

The Ta'if Accord stipulates that parliamentary committees should be formed whose responsibility would be to develop the political machine or program that would start the political system reform. But first you need to prepare people psychologically to accept the changes that might come.

While subject 8 feels that there are no longer any problems that would prevent the implementation of the Accord: "Now we have an open road towards the development of a common civic education program and the building of the government and all its institutions ....."



Subject 20 hopes for its implementation and explains about the human rights:

What is new in the Lebanese constitution is the inclusion of an introduction which was not there before. It included clear commitment of Lebanon to the International human rights laws. This is new and very important. It is a clear commitment. This would make enormous changes in Lebanon if we really started to implement this part of the constitution. But this part is not being implemented.

### **Good for Ending the War**

Some subjects expressed satisfaction with the fact that the Accord ended the war.

However, beyond that, they did not feel that it is useful for any other thing. As subject 22 explains:

First, there is the part that dealt with ending the war and what is being applied at this moment. The second part has to do with what is a potential, and that part is not being approached. The Ta'if, in terms of what is being applied at this point, has been taken to its limit and has been over used. They developed a formula to end the war, well, now the war is over. This, however, can not be used as a basis for the future.

### **General Satisfaction**

Some subjects felt satisfied with the results of the Accord for a number of reasons.

Subject 7 feels satisfied that, finally, Lebanon's Arab identity is clear:

The Ta'if agreement came along and settled the question of the Lebanese identity. Lebanon is an Arab country, while before Lebanon had an Arab face. So the Ta'if said that Lebanon has an Arab identity. The Lebanese nation can not be separated from its roots in its people and its Arab heritage.

Moreover, he feels that:

Lebanon being a final homeland settled the danger of having Lebanon dissolve in its surroundings. The Ta'if Accord circumvented all that, and now we should all fight for a unified Lebanon under a strong just government.

Subject 16, on the other hand, feels that the Accord has solidified the Lebanese identity.

He explains:

The advantage of the Ta'if Accord is that it finalized the issue of the identity in that in the final analysis, the identity is a Lebanese nationalist identity. The important aspect of this Accord is that the Moslems admitted in a definitive way that Lebanon is the homeland. That was always a Christian request. Moreover, before, there had always been an accusation from the Christians towards the Moslems that they think in terms of the Arab identity first and then the Lebanese identity. The accusation was that the Moslems were more concerned with the Arab issues and the Arab leaders than the Lebanese issues. The Ta'if Accord put an end to the accusations and counter accusations that the Christians' loyalty was towards the Western powers. It also canceled the other identities. You can no longer say I am an Arab first and then a Lebanese.

Subject 8 is satisfied for the same reasons as subject 7. Moreover, he feels that Lebanon's existence has become strongly justified due to what the Ta'if Accord stipulated around the form of the Lebanese political system:

In the Ta'if, there was an emphasis on the issue of peaceful co-existence between all the Lebanese sects ..... therefore ..... it stipulated a governing body where all sects are represented, this function of Lebanon is what justifies the existence of Lebanon .....

**Question 10: What photographic image do you get when you think of Lebanon?**

### Photographic Images

Some subjects offered images while others offered concepts they associated with Lebanon.

These are the subjects' responses which I will offer without numeral identifications:

- Children killed in a burning bus which is crossing between East and West Beirut.
- A man lying on the ground while still carrying a bag of bread, which is pierced through with the bullet that had killed him.
- Creativeness, creative ability. The whole Lebanese history represents creative ability. People came to this country and there was nothing here. The Lebanese has very little resources and he made a lot out of it. All Lebanese groups came to this piece of land and used it as a refuge from prosecution.
- You would have an individual who does not know how to behave or act.....a person whose image of himself and his reality are separate ..... this is why all his actions and behaviors are fabricated .... he does not talk well ... does not express himself well ... he listens to French songs at one time and then to English songs ..... he always wants give you the impression that he is what he is not .....
- I see the picture of a child whose determination is much stronger than his circumstances,

something coming out of the darkness and entering the light. Even though the Lebanese is going through a hard period now, he still has the momentum to get out of this reality, he is still proud and still wants the best for himself. Lebanon trapped in and surrounded by successive layers of fences.

-I am in great danger and my ability to defend myself is very limited.....I see somebody who is chained and surrounded by people who do not seem like they are going to release him from his chains.....

-I am able to move in a very wide playfield in spite of all the restraints that are placed on me. I feel that I am still different from other players on other playfields because of the blood I have on me, as a Lebanese, in the name of all the Arabs. We the Lebanese are the only Arabs who have been spilling blood for the last fifteen years. I am all of the Arabs. I have paid the most for the Arab cause.

-I see a map. If our neighboring brothers do not step on us, these boundaries can give me the opportunity to be open to all cultures and I can also breath freely here.

-I see the image of a rebellious people that insist on speaking out and are ready to die for the right to continue to speak out and be free.

-I see a ship where a carnival is taking place on it's top deck and a lot of people are dancing and having fun and doing all sorts of crazy irrational things. And I see a lot of people in the lower parts of the ship who are doing all the work to keep the ship afloat no matter what is happening on top. The base represents the Lebanese' strong desire for life, this is what carries the upper deck.

-The Lebanese Mountains covered with pine trees and a lot of fog.

-It is the Lebanese screaming, please save me, and wants to understand and wants to live in the safety of its society .

-I see a complete map of Lebanon.

-The statue of liberty.

-Christ on the cross.

-Martyr Square.

-I see Lebanon as a traveling ship.

-Mountains, Plains, Cedars.

-I see Lebanon as an old wise man sitting in the middle of a cross roads through which all cultures and civilizations make their voyage through time.



## CHAPTER VI

### QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

An integration of each of the four item clusters is summarized in the below section in order to facilitate the reader's understanding of the quantitative results as the variables relate to the dominant stages.

#### Stage 1:

Lebanon is a country made up of various groups with different identities who need to live peacefully together. Moreover, justice and equality can only be protected through a sectarian political formula and the efforts of traditional sectarian leaders.

#### Stage 2:

Lebanon is a country made up of different and hostile sectarian groups and ,therefore, it is best for the sects to live separate from each other. I also feel that it is preferable for my community to have sectarian leaders who fight and do not compromise with other sectarian leaders over the rights of my sect even if that means that my community should seek external assistance to protect us from the influences of the other sects.

#### Stage 3:

Lebanon is a country that has a rigid and unchangeable sectarian political system with a permanent sectarian leadership class which is oppressive and discriminatory against most individual Lebanese citizens. In order to avoid the sectarian problems , it is best for the Lebanese people to focus on the provision of their personal and family needs and to avoid public interactions, especially with those individuals who have strong sectarian views.

#### Stage 4:

Lebanon is a country where the discriminatory and oppressive effects of its sectarian system can best be challenged if individuals depend less on leaders and get more personally involved in activities that can promote equality and individual rights among the Lebanese public. Two such activities would be the rejection of all non democratically elected leaders and the institution of civil personal status laws that individuals can choose to use instead of the current mandatory sectarian laws.

The four stage means and standard deviations show that on average, people agreed the most with the stage 4 questions, followed by stage 3 questions and stage 1 questions. Moreover, people agreed the least with stage 2 questions.

Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	Minimum	Maximum
SUM1	724	10.0621547	3.4967290	4.0000000	20.0000000
SUM2	724	9.9944751	3.3930973	4.0000000	20.0000000
SUM3	723	12.0982019	3.3680155	4.0000000	20.0000000
SUM4	724	16.9765193	2.5443781	6.0000000	20.0000000

However, in order to determine each subject's stage of identity development , the subject's scores have to be computed in reference to the whole sample. Therefore, the subject's z-scores were computed and a dominant stage indicator was determined by comparing an individual's four z-scores and assigning the stage with the highest z-score as the dominant stage. This new calculation revealed that with normalized sample scores, individuals in the overall sample had a stage distribution as follows:

- 17. 68 % of subjects were classified in the 1 st Stage of Lebanese identity development.
- 24. 03 % of subjects were classified in the 2 nd Stage of Lebanese identity development.
- 21. 69 % of subjects were classified in the 3 rd Stage of Lebanese identity development.
- 36. 60 % of subjects were classified in the 4 th Stage of Lebanese identity development.

Moreover, a Chi-square analysis was conducted to determine whether there is a dependence between the subjects' dominant stage indicator and the various socio-economic variables. A dependence was found between the subject's dominant stage indicator ( Dsi ) and the following variables which are listed below with their Chi-square Likelihood Ratios:

1) Source of data collection:	$X^2 ( 18, N = 724 ) = 45.69, \quad p < 0.0003$
2) Sectarian identity:	$X^2 ( 21, N = 721 ) = 42.23, \quad p < 0.0039$
3) Level of education:	$X^2 ( 15, N = 722 ) = 27.69, \quad p < 0.0236$
4) Profession:	$X^2 ( 24, N = 722 ) = 57.47, \quad p < 0.0001$
5) Dual nationality:	$X^2 ( 9, N = 721 ) = 16.97, \quad p < 0.0492$

However, no significant dependence was found between the subjects' dominant stage indicators and the following variables: Sex, Age, Yearly Income, Personal Status, Place of Residence, Years of living in Lebanon during 1976-1989 Lebanese Civil war, Years lived outside Lebanon.



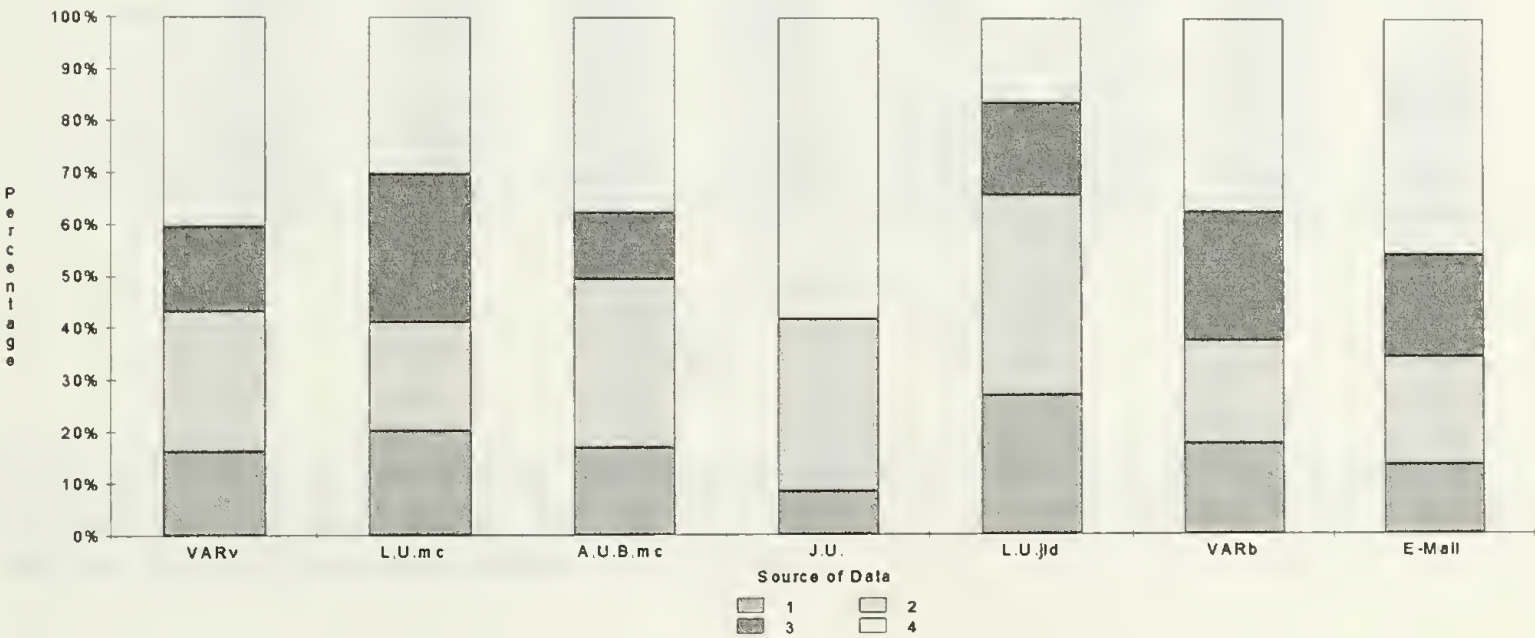
**Dominant Stage vs. Socio-Economic Factors**

**Source of Data Collection**

The four stage percentages for each variable was determined. The various variable percentages were compared along each stage and they were ordered in terms of approximate percentage rank for each stage. A comparison of the percent variations of the four dominant stage indicators across the various data collection sources revealed that (see Table 6.1, Figure 6.1, p.178 ):

**Table 6.1 . Source Of Data vs. Dominant Stage**

Source of Data Collection	1	2	3	4	Count
Village/Homes	16.22	27.03	16.22	40.54	37
Lebanese University/Main Campus	20.16	20.93	28.68	30.23	129
American University of Beirut/Main Campus	16.88	32.47	12.99	37.66	77
Jesuite University	8.33	33.33	0	58.33	12
Lebanese University/ Jal-El-Deeb	26.87	38.81	17.91	16.42	67
Beirut/Homes & Offices	17.55	20	24.9	37.55	245
E-Mail	13.38	21.02	19.75	45.86	157
Total					724



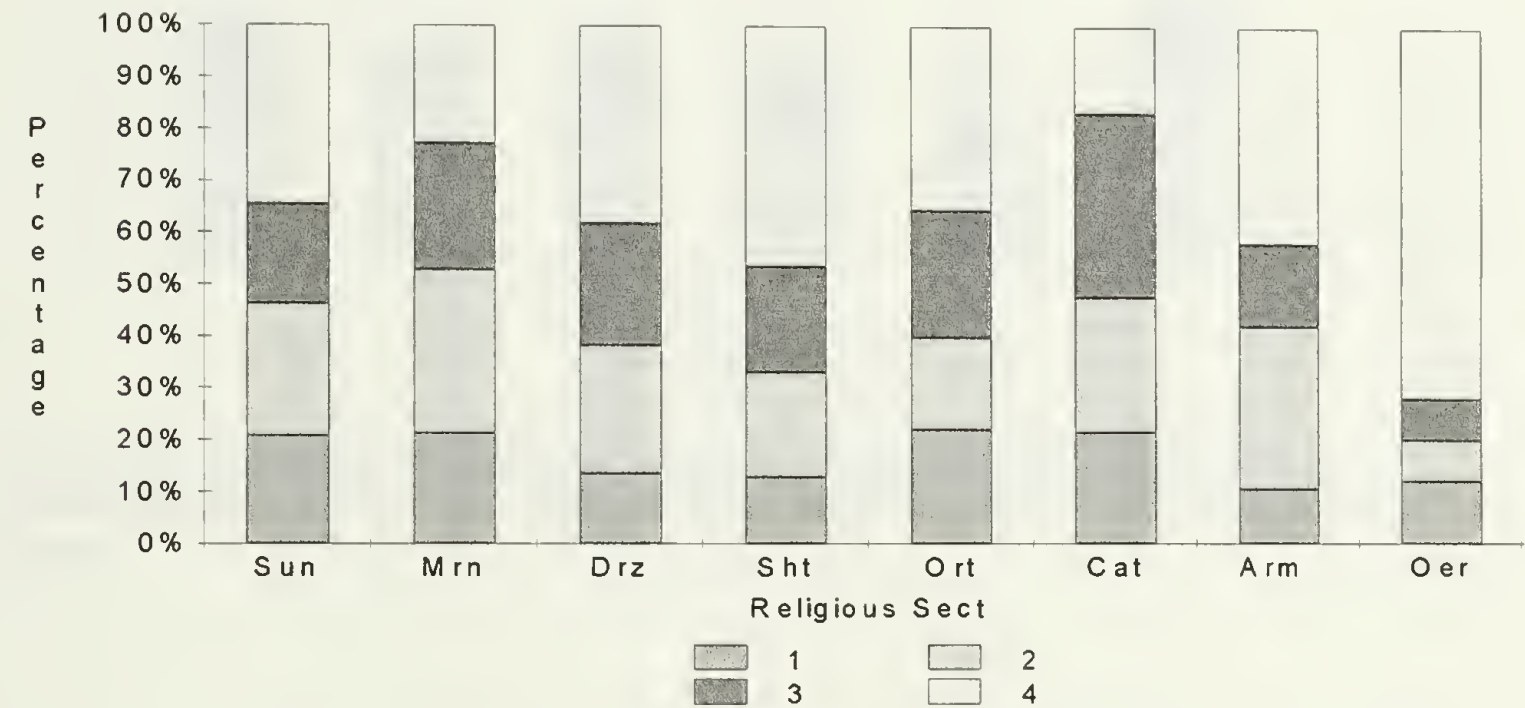
**Figure 6.1. Source of Data vs. Dominant Stage.** VARv = Various Village, L.U.mc = Lebanese University/Main campus, A.U.B.mc = American University of Beirut/Main campus, J.U. = Jesuite University, L.U.jld = Lebanese University/Jal El Deeb, VARb = Various Beirut, E-Mail.

**Sectarian Identity**

A comparison of the percent variations of the four dominant stage indicators across the various sectarian groups revealed that (see Table 6.2, Figure 6.2, p.179 ):

**Table 6.2. Sect vs. Dominant Stage**

Sect	1	2	3	4	Count
Moslem Sunni	20.74	25.53	19.15	34.57	188
Christian Maronite	20	29.63	22.96	21.41	135
Moslem Druze	13.4	24.74	23.71	38.14	97
Moslem Shiite	12.68	20.42	20.42	46.48	142
Christian Orthodox	21.92	17.81	24.66	35.62	73
Christian Catholic	21.43	26.19	35.71	16.67	42
Christian Armenian	10.53	31.58	15.79	42.11	19
Other	12	8	8	72	25
Total					721



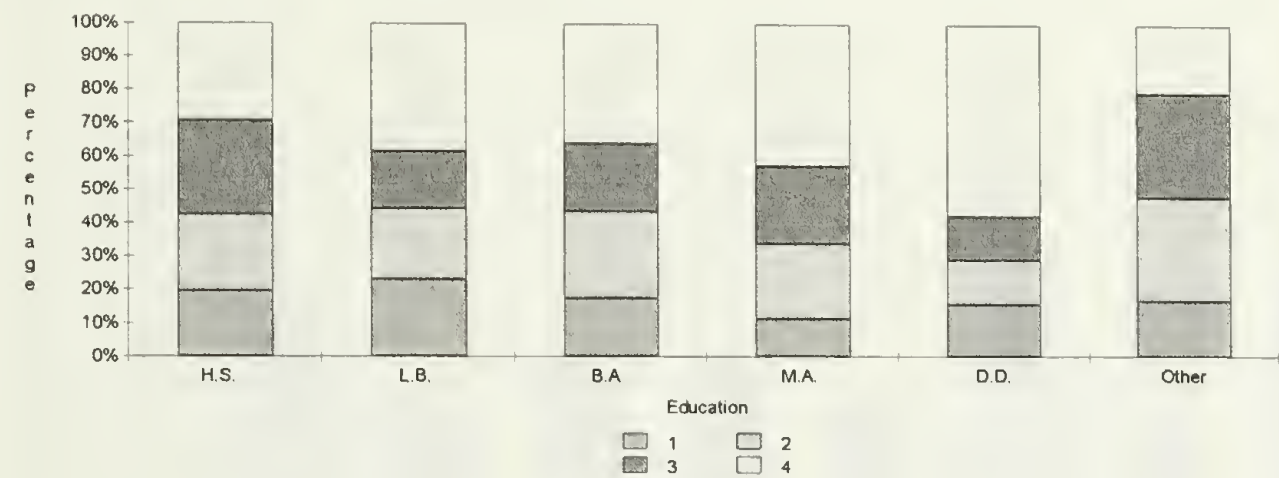
**Figure 6.2. Sectarian Identity vs. Dominant Stage.** Sun = Moslem Sunni, Mrn = Christian Maronite, Drz = Moslem Druze, Sht = Moslem Shiite, Ort = Christian Orthodox, Cat = Christian Catholic, Arm = Christian Armenian, Oer = Other

**Level of Education**

A comparison of the percent variations of the four dominant stage indicators across the various educational levels of individuals revealed that (see Table 6.3, Figure 6.3, p.180):

**Table 6.3. Education vs. Dominant Stage**

Highest Degree Attained	1	2	3	4	Count
High School	19.47	23.01	28.32	29.2	113
Lebanese Baccaleureate	22.95	21.31	17.21	38.52	122
Bachelor's Degree	17.38	26.23	20.33	36.07	305
Master's Degree	11.24	22.47	23.6	42.7	89
Doctoral Degree	15.56	13.33	13.33	57.78	45
Other	16.67	31.25	31.25	20.83	48
Total					722



**Figure 6.3. Education vs. Dominant Stage.** H.S.= High School, L.B.= Lebanese Baccaleureate, B.A.= Bachelor's Degree, M.A.= Master's Degree, D.D.= Doctoral Degree, Other



Profession

A comparison of the percent variations of the four dominant stage indicators across the various professional groups revealed that (see Table 6.4, Figure 6.4, p.181):

Table 6.4. Profession vs. Dominant Stage

Profession	1	2	3	4	Count
Student	18.69	26.23	20.33	34.75	305
Professor & Lawyer	20.83	12.5	12.5	54.17	24
Engineer	9.09	25.45	20	45.45	55
Medical Doctor	21.74	4.35	26.09	47.83	23
School Teacher	12.9	12.9	19.35	54.84	31
Employee	20.29	26.09	28.26	24.36	138
Not Applicable	32.76	24.14	12.07	31.03	58
Self Employed	7.14	30.95	30.95	30.95	42
Other	4.35	17.39	21.74	56.52	46
Total					722

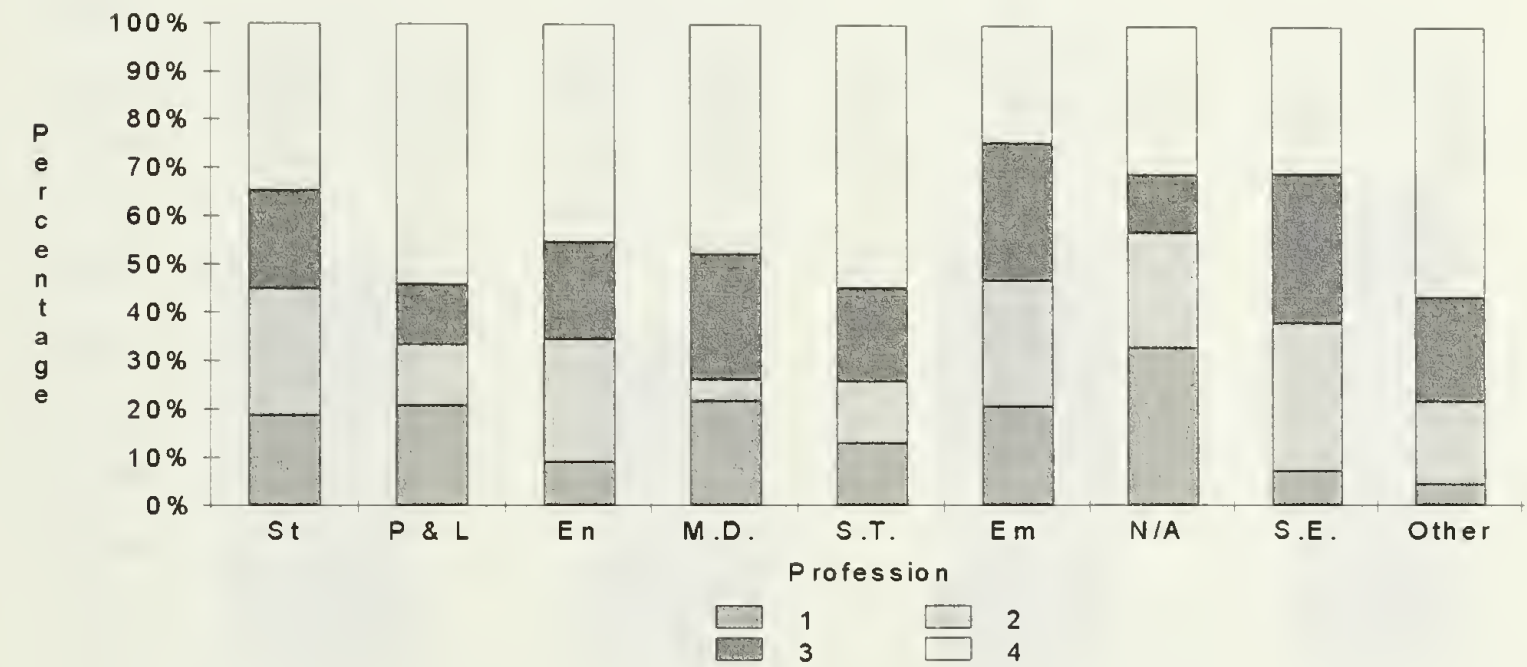


Figure 6.4. Profession vs. Dominant Stage. St = Student, P&L = Professors or Lawyers, En = Engineer, M.D. = Medical Doctor, S. T. = School Teacher, Em = Employee, N/A = Not Applicable, S.E. = Self-Employed, Other

Dual Nationality

A comparison of the percent variations of the four dominant stage indicators across the various Lebanese groups carrying or not carrying various dual nationalities revealed that (see Table 6.5, Figure 6.5, p.182):

Table 6.5. Dual Nationality Vs Dominant Stage

Dual Nationality	1	2	3	4	Count
Only Lebanese	17.56	23.48	21.81	37.15	541
North American	18.37	16.33	16.33	48.98	49
Europe	15.38	18.46	32.31	33.85	65
Other	21.21	37.88	15.15	25.76	66
Total					721

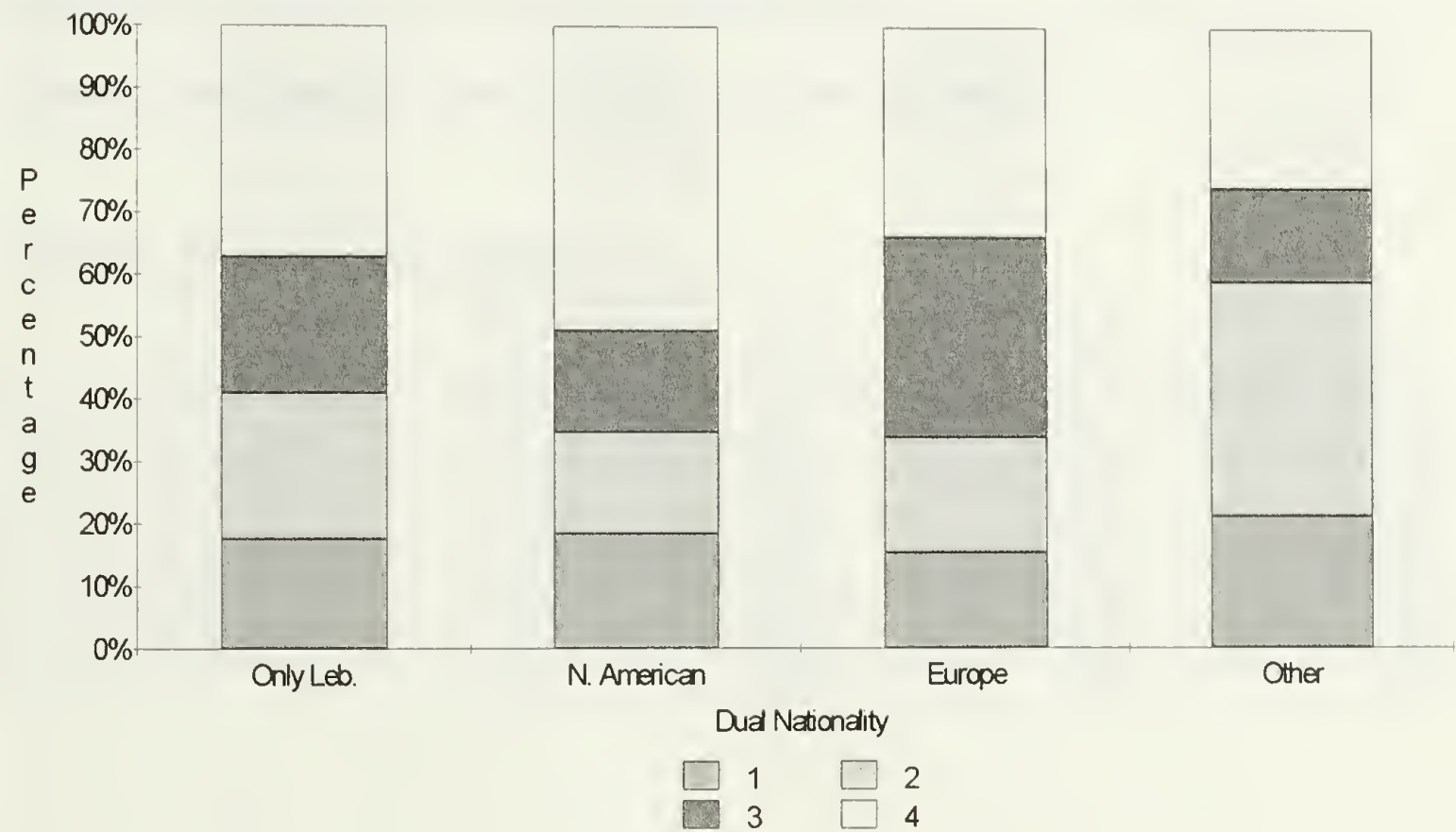


Figure 6.5. Dual Nationality vs. Dominant Stage. Only Lebanon, North America, Europe, Other .

## Questionnaire Items vs. Socio-Economic Factors

Questionnaire items that showed a dependence on some socio-economic factors are presented in this section. For simplification purposes, each respondent was given a score of 2 points for each "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" responses to indicate general agreement with an item. Similarly, each "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" responses were given a 1 score to indicate a general disagreement with an item. Finally, the "Not sure" responses were given a score of 1. What follows are the significant results of the analysis:

**Q1: It is best to trust and depend on traditional sectarian leaders to protect the rights of individuals in the various communities.**

The statistical analysis showed that there is significant dependence ( $p < 0.05$ ) between survey item 1 responses and an individual's sectarian identity as well as an individual's profession (see Table 6.6, Figure 6.6; Table 6.7, Figure 6.7 below ).

**Table 6.6. Q1 vs. Sectarian Identity**

Q 1 V s S e c t	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
S u n n i	1 1 . 1 7	9 . 0 4	7 9 . 7 9
M a r o n i t e	1 4 . 0 7	1 1 . 8 5	7 4 . 0 7
D r u z e	1 2 . 3 7	1 0 . 3 1	7 7 . 3 2
S h i i t e	4 . 9 3	4 . 9 3	9 0 . 1 4
O r t h o d o x	1 2 . 3 3	9 . 5 9	7 8 . 0 8
C a t h o l i c	1 6 . 6 7	7 . 1 4	7 6 . 1 9
A r m e n i a n	1 0 . 5 3	2 1 . 0 5	6 8 . 4 2
O t h e r	8	0	9 2



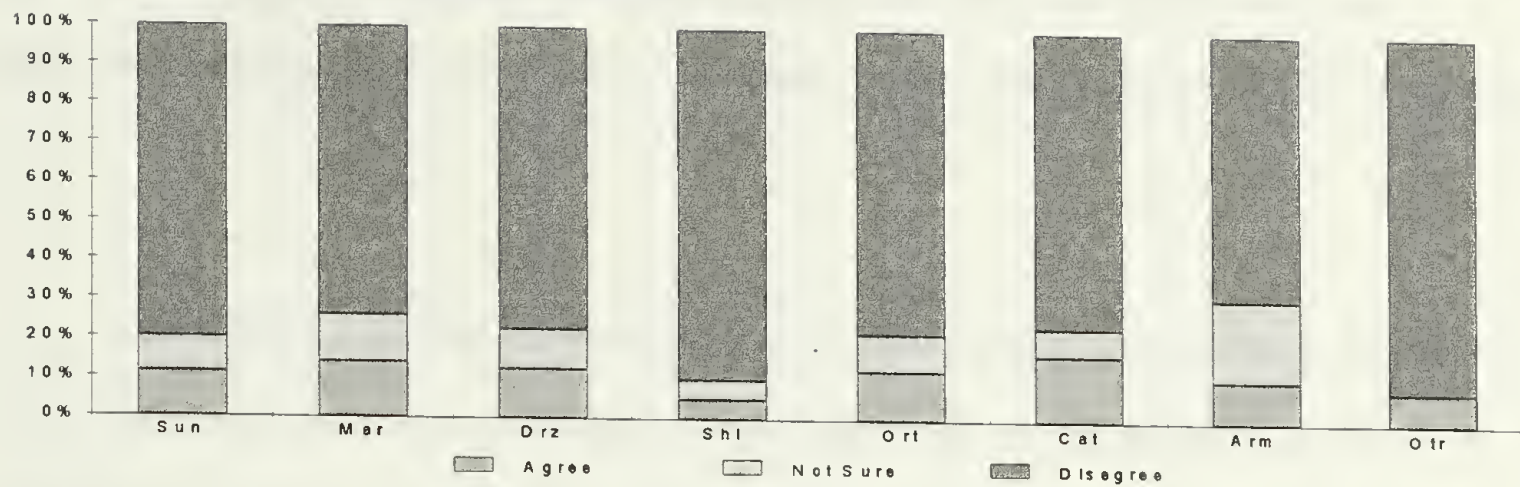


Figure 6.6. Q1 vs. Sectarian Identity

Table 6.7. Q1 vs. Profession

Q 1 V s P r o f e s s i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
S t u d e n t	1 0 . 8 2	1 0 . 1 6	7 9 . 0 2
P r o f e s s o r o r L a w y e r	1 2 . 5	8 . 3 3	7 9 . 1 7
E n g i n e e r	3 . 6 4	5 . 4 5	9 0 . 9 1
M e d i c a l D o c t o r	1 3 . 0 4	1 3 . 0 4	7 3 . 9 1
S c h o o l T e a c h e r	9 . 6 8	3 . 2 3	8 7 . 1
E m p l o y e e	9 . 4 2	7 . 9 7	8 2 . 6 1
N o t A p p l i c a b l e	2 7 . 5 9	5 . 1 7	6 7 . 2 4
S e l f E m p l o y e d	1 4 . 2 9	1 6 . 6 7	6 9 . 0 5
O t h e r	0	6 . 5 2	9 3 . 4 8

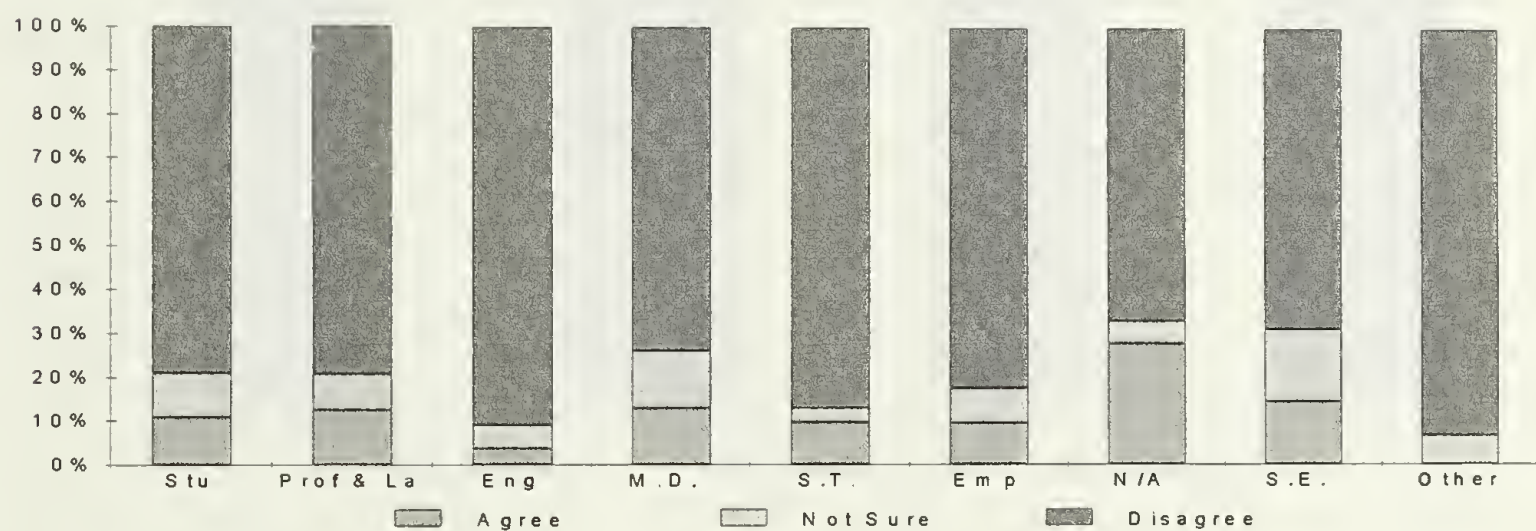


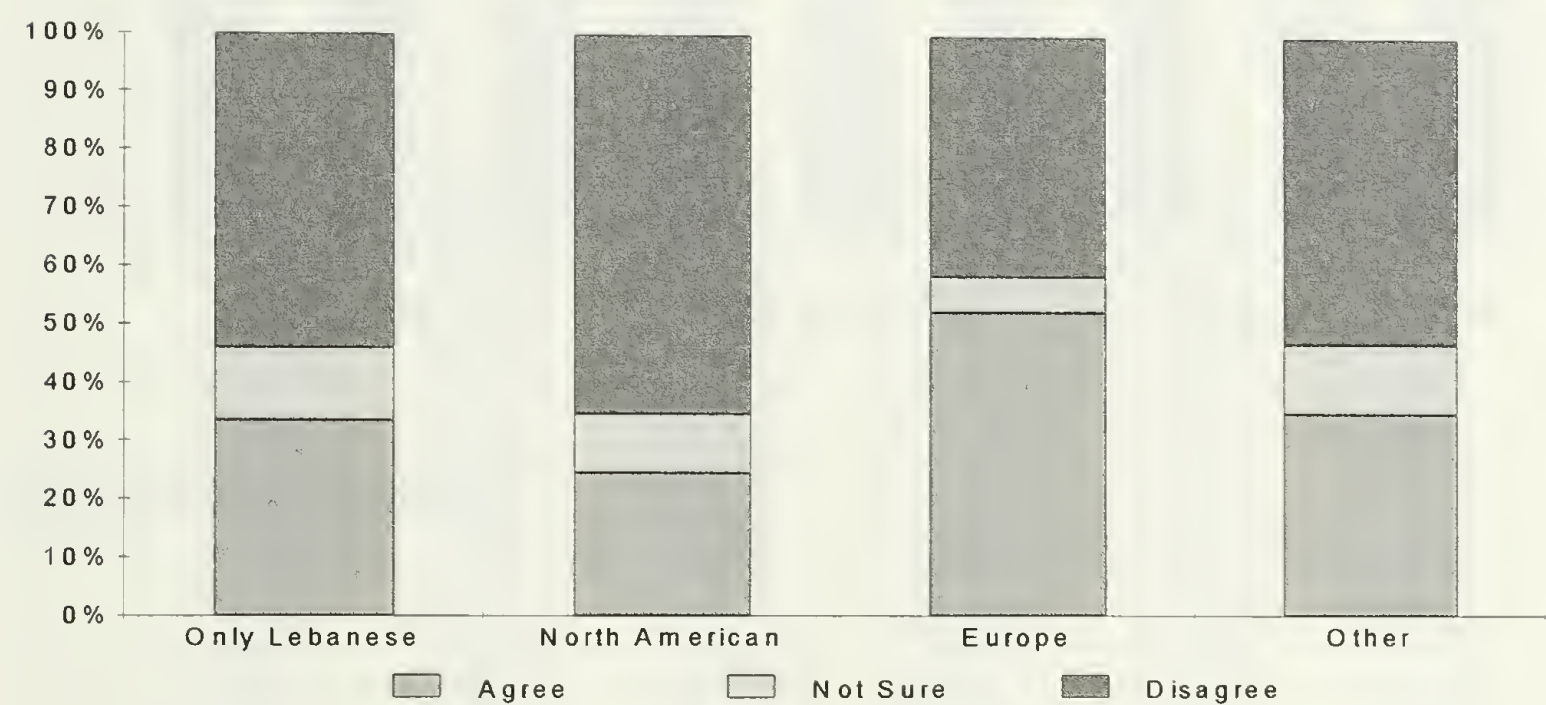
Figure 6.7. Q1 vs. Profession

**Q2:** Even though the sectarian Lebanese political system is discriminatory and oppressive against most individuals in Lebanon, there is very little we can do to replace it.

The statistical analysis showed that there is significant dependence ( $p < 0.05$ ) between survey item 2 responses and an individual's nationality status as well as an individual's profession (see Table 6.8, Figure 6.8 ; Table 6.9, Figure 6.9 below ).

**Table 6.8. Q2 vs. Nationality**

Q 2 V s N a t i o n a l i t y	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
O n l y L e b a n e s e	3 3 . 4 6	1 2 . 5 7	5 3 . 9 7
N o r t h A m e r i c a n	2 4 . 4 9	1 0 . 2	6 5 . 3 1
E u r o p e	5 2 . 3 1	6 . 1 5	4 1 . 5 4
O t h e r	3 4 . 8 5	1 2 . 1 2	5 3 . 0 3



**Figure 6.8. Q2 vs. Nationality**

Table 6.9. Q2 vs. Profession

Q 2 V s P r o f e s s i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
S t u d e n t	3 4 . 4 3	1 3 . 7 7	5 1 . 8
P r o f e s s o r o r L a w y e r	1 2 . 5	1 2 . 5	7 5
E n g i n e e r	2 7 . 2 7	1 2 . 7 3	6 0
M e d i c a l D o c t o r	3 9 . 1 3	4 . 3 5	5 6 . 5 2
S c h o o l T e a c h e r	2 9 . 0 3	1 2 . 9	5 8 . 0 6
E m p l o y e e	4 . 1 3	9 . 4 2	4 9 . 2 8
N o t A p p l i c a b l e	3 9 . 6 6	6 . 9	5 3 . 4 5
S e l f E m p l o y e d	4 0 . 4 8	2 1 . 4 3	3 8 . 1
O t h e r	2 6 . 0 9	4 . 3 5	6 9 . 5 7

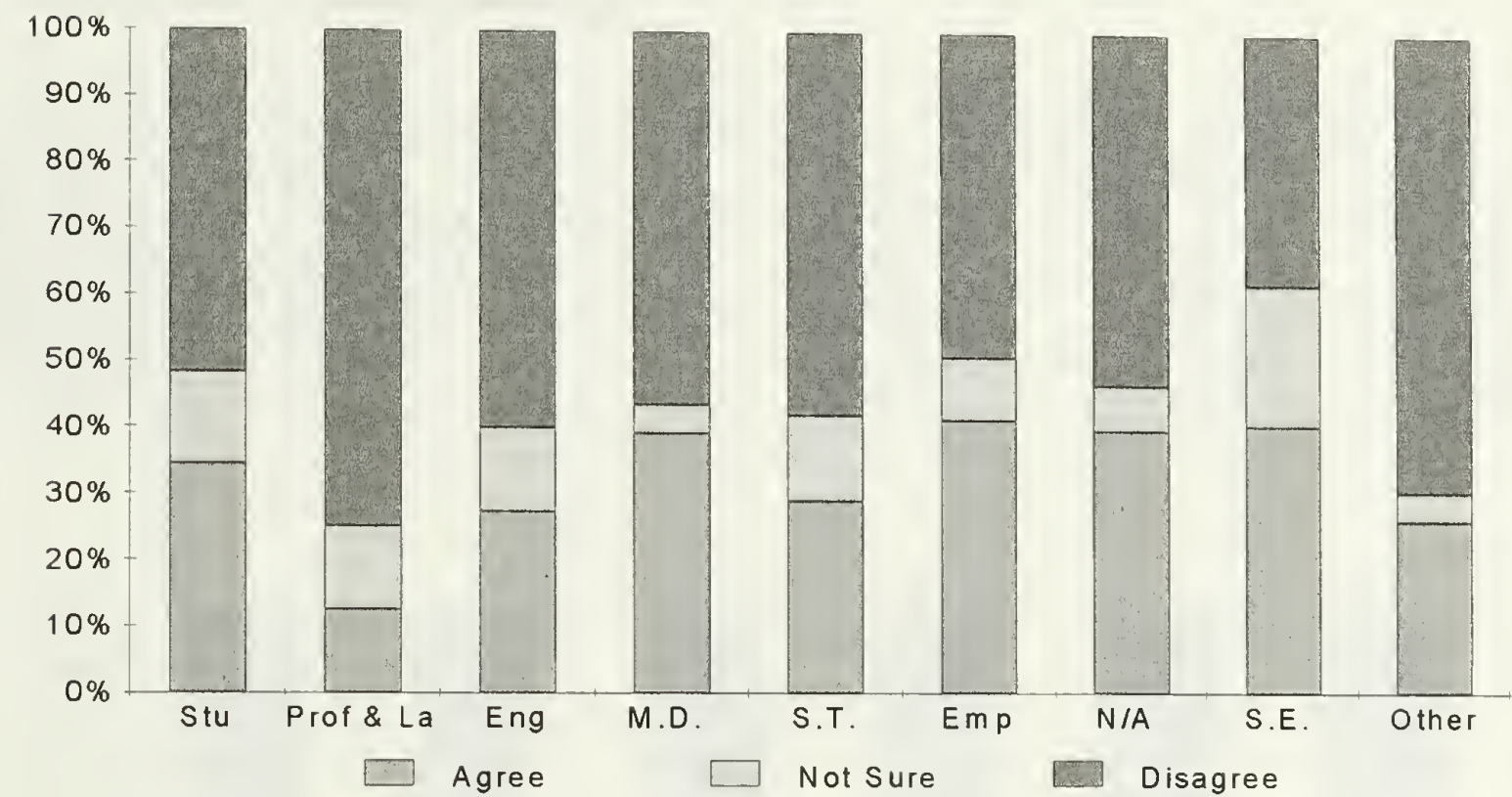


Figure 6.9. Q2 vs. Profession

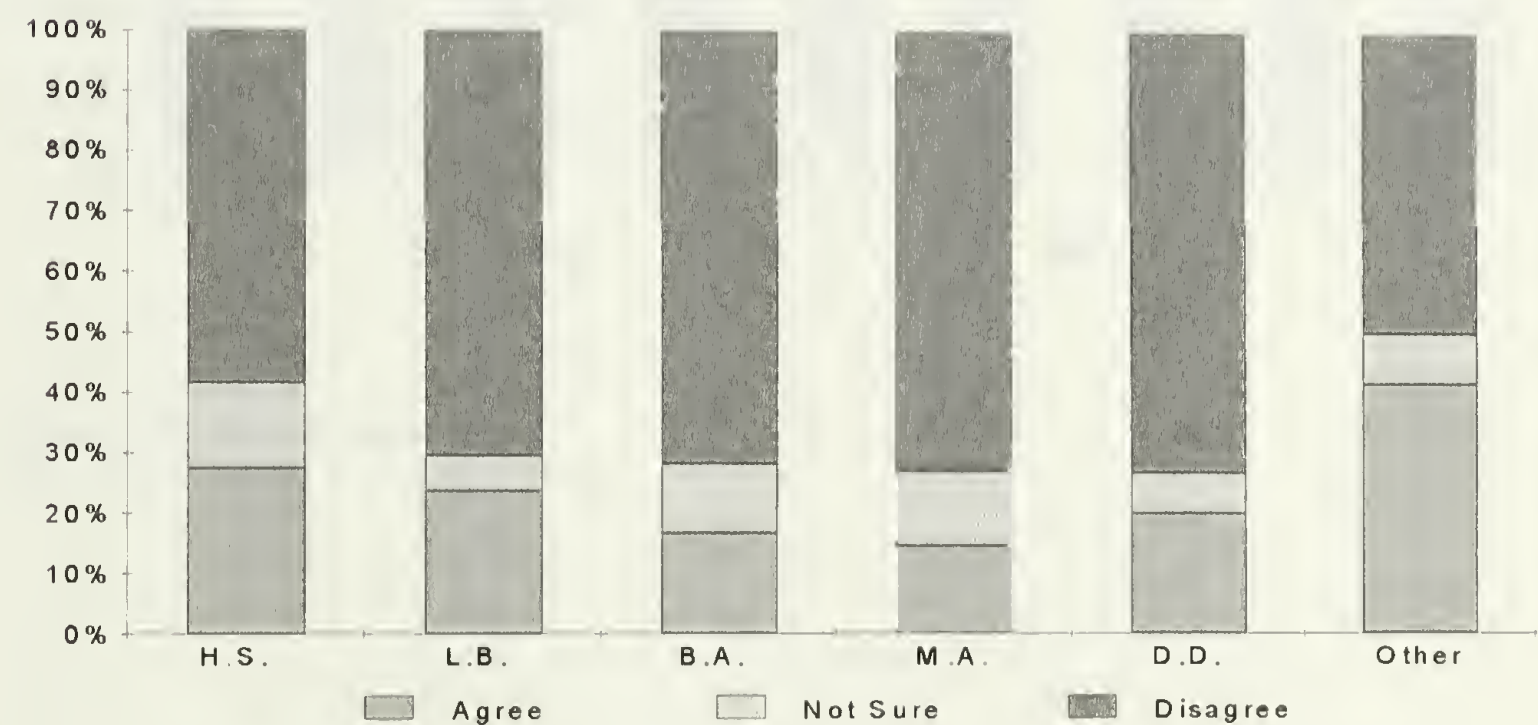


**Q4:** It is very important for my sectarian community to cooperate and get assistance from any friendly non-Lebanese group that is ready to help us protect ourselves from the influences of other Lebanese sectarian groups.

The statistical analysis showed that there is significant dependence (  $p < 0.05$  ) between survey item 4 responses and an individual's educational level and profession (see Table 6.10, Figure 6.10; Table 6.11, Figure 6.11 below ).

**Table 6.10. Q4 vs. Educational Level**

Q 4 V s E d u c a t i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
H i g h S c h o o l	2 7 . 4 3	1 4 . 1 6	5 8 . 4 1
L e b a n e s e B a c c a l e u r a t e	2 3 . 7 7	5 . 7 4	7 0 . 4 9
B a c h e l o r ' s D e g r e e	1 6 . 7 2	1 1 . 4 8	7 1 . 8
M a s t e r ' s D e g r e e	1 4 . 6 2	1 2 . 3 6	7 3 . 0 3
D o c t o r a l D e g r e e	2 0	6 . 6 7	7 3 . 3 3
O t h e r	4 1 . 6 7	8 . 3 3	5 0



**Figure 6.10. Q4 vs. Education**

Table 6.11. Q4 vs. Profession

Q 4 V s P r o f e s s i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
S t u d e n t	20.66	12.79	66.56
P r o f e s s o r o r L a w y e r	20.83	4.17	75
E n g i n e e r	3.64	12.73	83.64
M e d i c a l D o c t o r	8.7	4.35	86.96
S c h o o l T e a c h e r	25.81	3.23	70.97
E m p l o y e e	26.09	10.87	63.04
N o t A p p l i c a b l e	22.41	6.9	70.69
S e l f E m p l o y e d	38.1	9.52	52.38
O t h e r	17.39	8.7	73.91

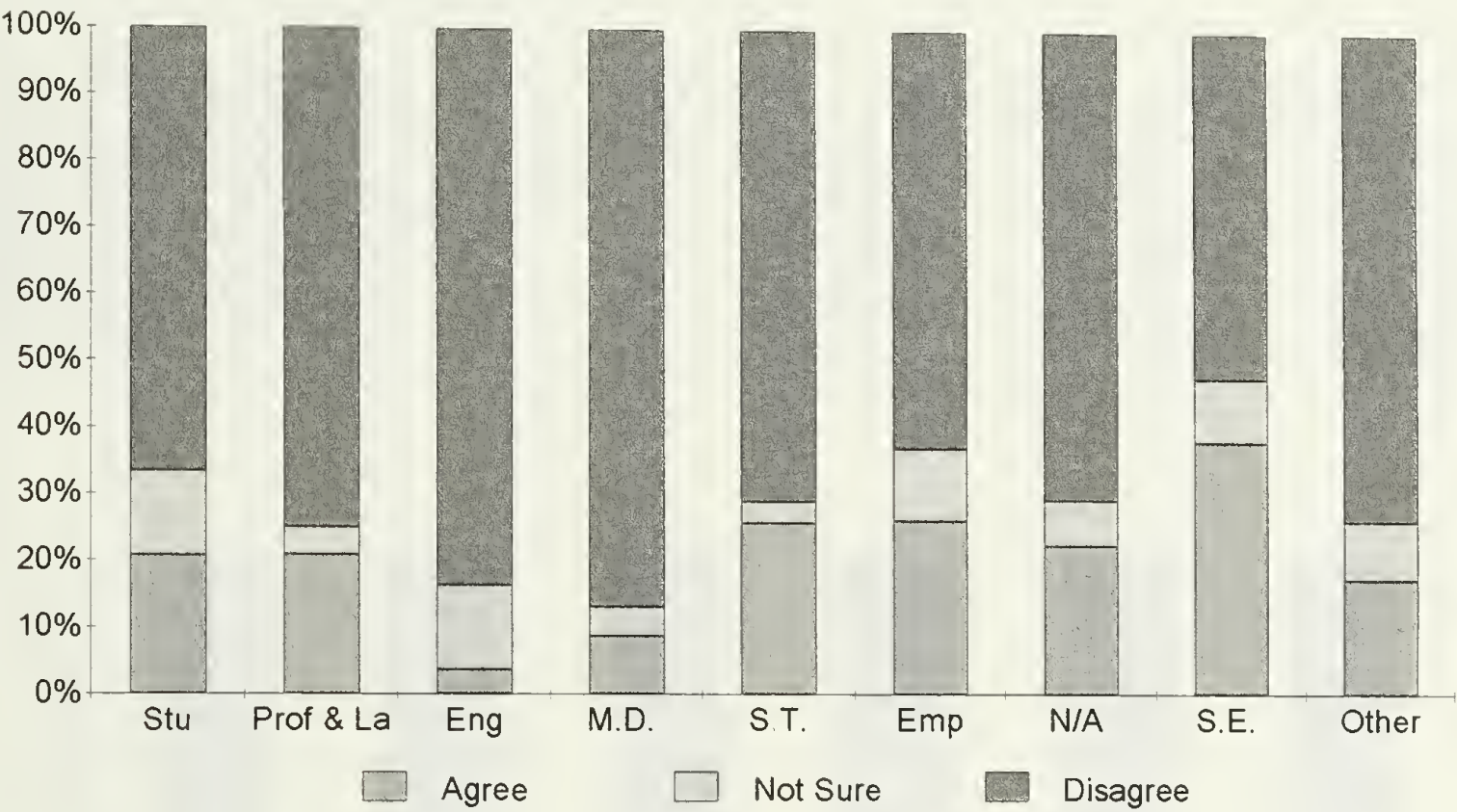


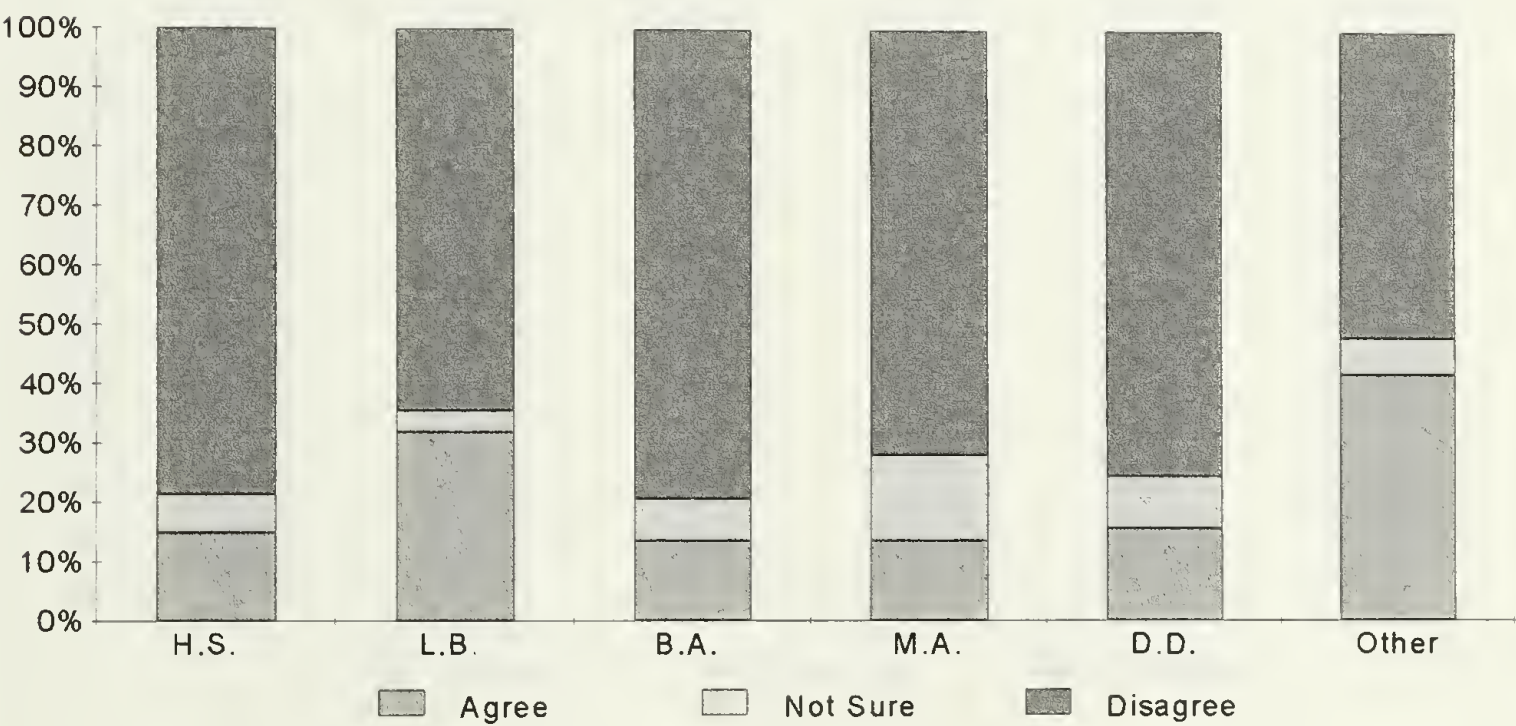
Figure 6.11. Q4 vs. Profession

**Q5: The best way for a person to deal with the negative effects of the sectarian culture is to restrict involvement in social or public activities and to focus on securing his individual and family needs**

The statistical analysis showed that there is significant dependence (  $p < 0.05$  ) between survey item 5 responses and an individual's educational level (see table 6.12, Figure 6.12 below).

**Table 6.12. Q5 vs. Educational Level**

Q 5 V s Education	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
H i g h S c h o o l	1 4 . 7 5	6 . 5 6	7 8 . 6 9
L e b a n e s e B a c c a l e u r a t e	3 1 . 8 6	3 . 5 4	6 4 . 6
B a c h e l o r ' s D e g r e e	1 3 . 4 4	7 . 2 1	7 9 . 3 4
M a s t e r ' s D e g r e e	1 3 . 4 8	1 4 . 6 1	7 1 . 9 1
D o c t o r a l D e g r e e	1 5 . 5 6	8 . 8 9	7 5 . 5 6
O t h e r	4 1 . 6 7	6 . 2 5	5 2 . 0 8



**Figure 6.12. Q5 vs. Educational Level**

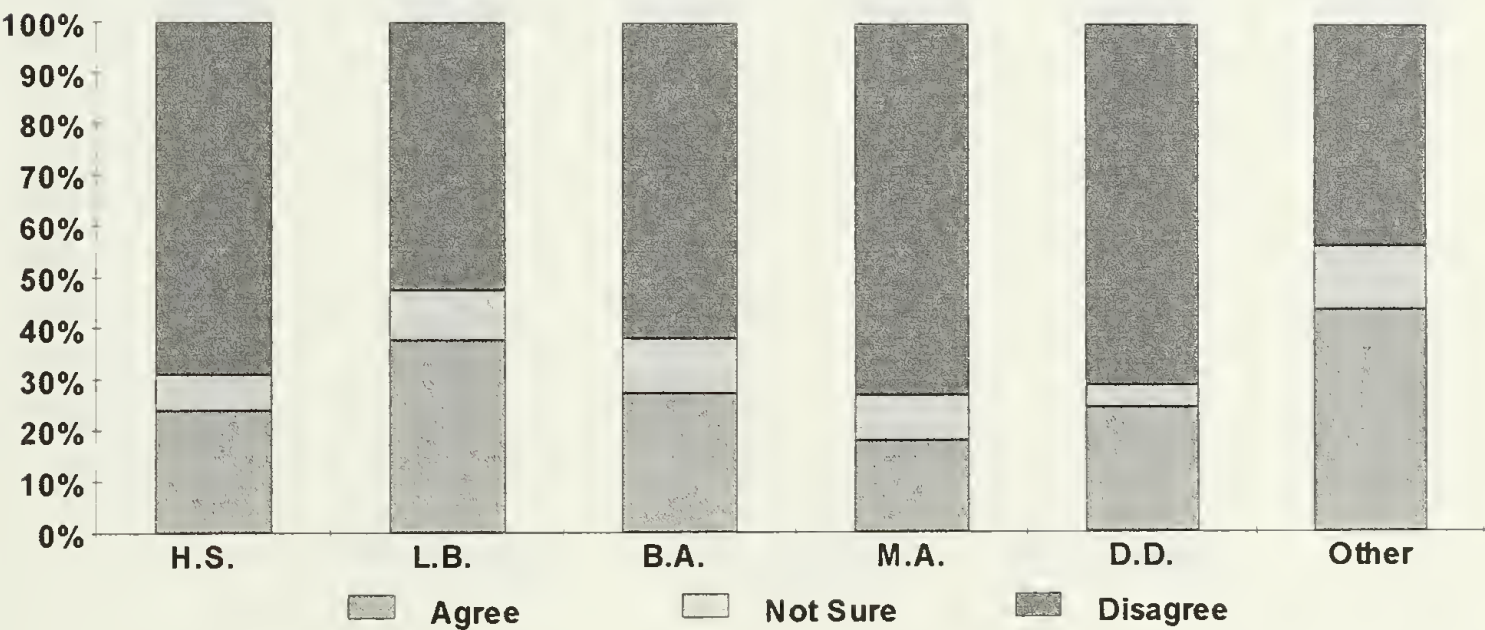


**Q6: I prefer my sect leaders to stand up and fight for the rights of my sectarian community rather than have them compromise with other leaders over some of these rights in the name of the "common good".**

The statistical analysis showed that there is significant dependence (  $p < 0.05$  ) between survey item 6 responses and an individual's educational level (see Table 6.13, Figure 6.13 below).

**Table 6.13. Q6 vs. Educational Level**

Q 6 V s E d u c a t i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
H i g h S c h o o l	23.89	7.08	69.03
L e b a n e s e B a c c a l e u r a t e	37.7	9.84	52.46
B a c h e l o r ' s D e g r e e	27.21	10.82	61.97
M a s t e r ' s D e g r e e	17.98	8.99	73.03
D o c t o r a l D e g r e e	24.44	4.44	71.11
O t h e r	43.75	12.5	43.75



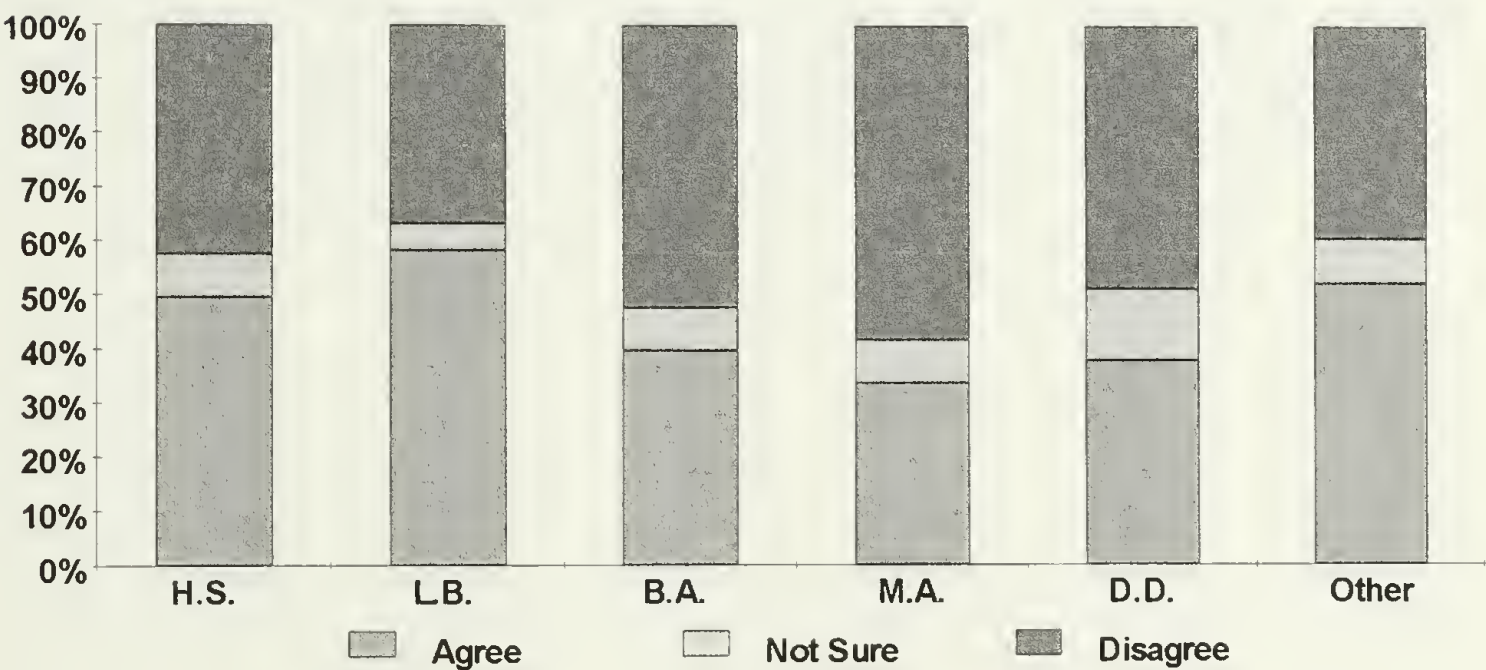
**Figure 6.13. Q6 vs. Educational Level**

**Q7: I believe there is no such thing as a common Lebanese identity; there are only groups with different sectarian identities living on the same piece of land.**

The statistical analysis showed that there is significant dependence (  $p < 0.05$  ) between survey item 7 responses and an individual's educational level (see Table 6.14, Figure 6.14 below).

**Table 6.14. Q7 vs. Educational Level**

Q 7 V s Education	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
H i g h S c h o o l	4 9 . 5 6	7 . 9 6	4 2 . 4 8
L e b a n e s e B a c c a l e u r a t e	5 8 . 2	4 . 9 2	3 6 . 8 9
B a c h e l o r ' s D e g r e e	3 9 . 6 7	7 . 8 7	5 2 . 4 6
M a s t e r ' s D e g r e e	3 3 . 7 1	7 . 8 7	5 8 . 4 3
D o c t o r a l D e g r e e	3 7 . 7 8	1 3 . 3 3	4 8 . 8 9
O t h e r	5 2 . 0 8	8 . 3 3	3 9 . 5 8



**Figure 6.14. Q7 vs. Educational Level**

Q11: Other than a common desire to live in peace, the Lebanese people have very little in common

The statistical analysis showed that there is significant dependence (  $p < 0.05$  ) between survey item 11 responses and an individual's educational level, profession as well as sectarian identity. ( see Table 6.15, Figure 6.15; Table 6.16, Figure 6.16; Table 6.17, Figure 6.17 below ).

Table 6.15. Q11 vs. Educational Level

Q 1 1 V s E d u c a t i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
H i g h S c h o o l	4 2 . 4 8	1 2 . 3 9	4 5 . 1 3
L e b a n e s e B a c c a l e u r e a t e	2 9 . 5 1	1 3 . 1 1	5 7 . 3 8
B a c h e l o r ' s D e g r e e	2 8 . 8 5	1 1 . 1 5	6 0
M a s t e r ' s D e g r e e	1 6 . 8 5	1 1 . 2 4	7 1 . 9 1
D o c t o r a l D e g r e e	3 1 . 1 1	2 . 2 2	6 6 . 6 7
O t h e r	4 3 . 7 5	1 4 . 5 8	4 1 . 6 7

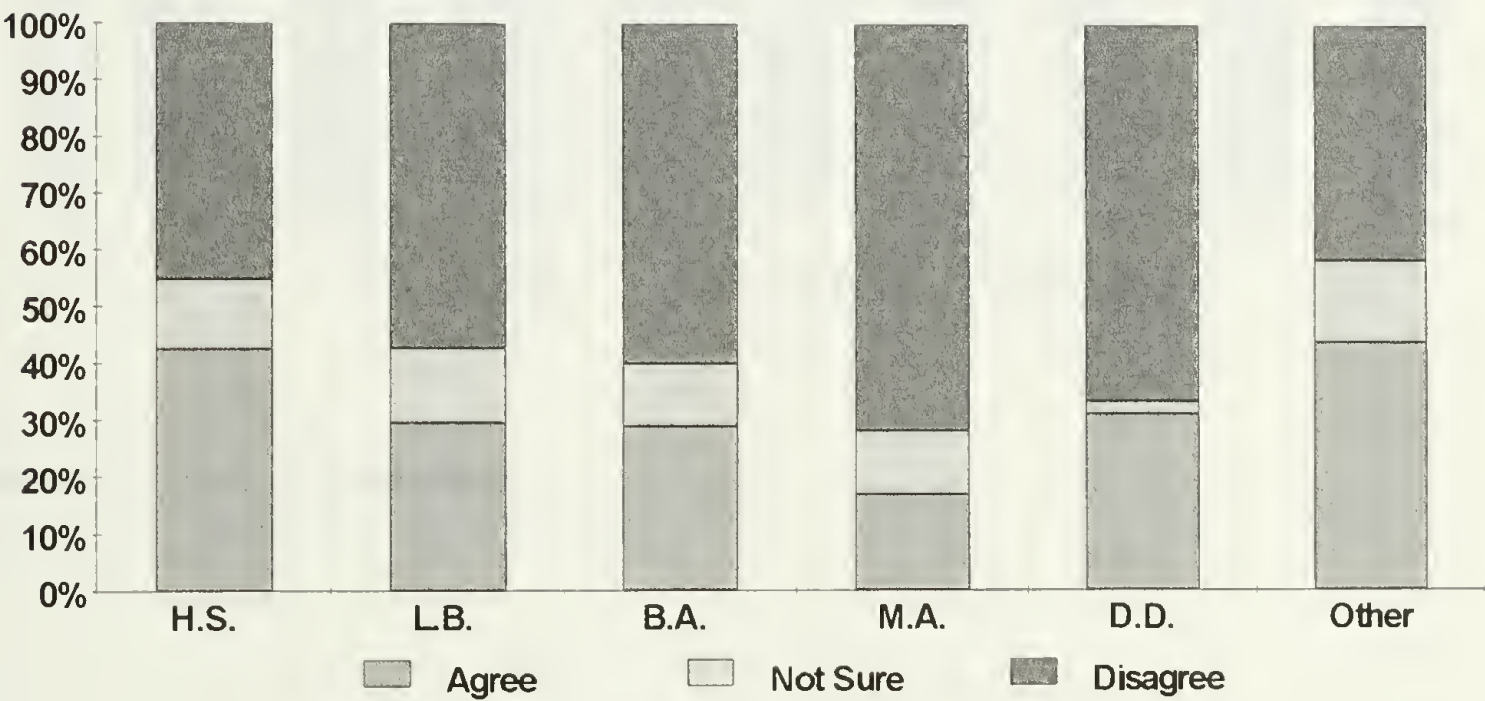


Figure 6.15. Q11 vs. Educational Level



Table 6.16. Q11 vs. Profession

Q 1 1 V s P r o f e s s i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
S t u d e n t	3 1 . 4 8	1 5 . 0 8	5 3 . 4 4
P r o f e s s o r o r L a w y e r	2 9 . 1 7	4 . 1 7	6 6 . 6 7
E n g i n e e r	9 . 0 9	5 . 4 5	8 5 . 4 5
M e d i c a l D o c	3 0 . 4 3	4 . 3 5	6 5 . 2 2
S c h o o l T e a c h e r	2 2 . 5 8	1 2 . 9	6 4 . 5 2
E m p l o y e e	3 5 . 5 1	1 0 . 1 4	5 4 . 3 5
N o t A p p l i c a b l e	3 9 . 6 6	1 2 . 0 7	4 8 . 2 8
S e l f E m p l o y e d	5 0	7 . 1 4	4 2 . 8 6
O t h e r	1 5 . 2 2	6 . 5 2	7 8 . 2 6

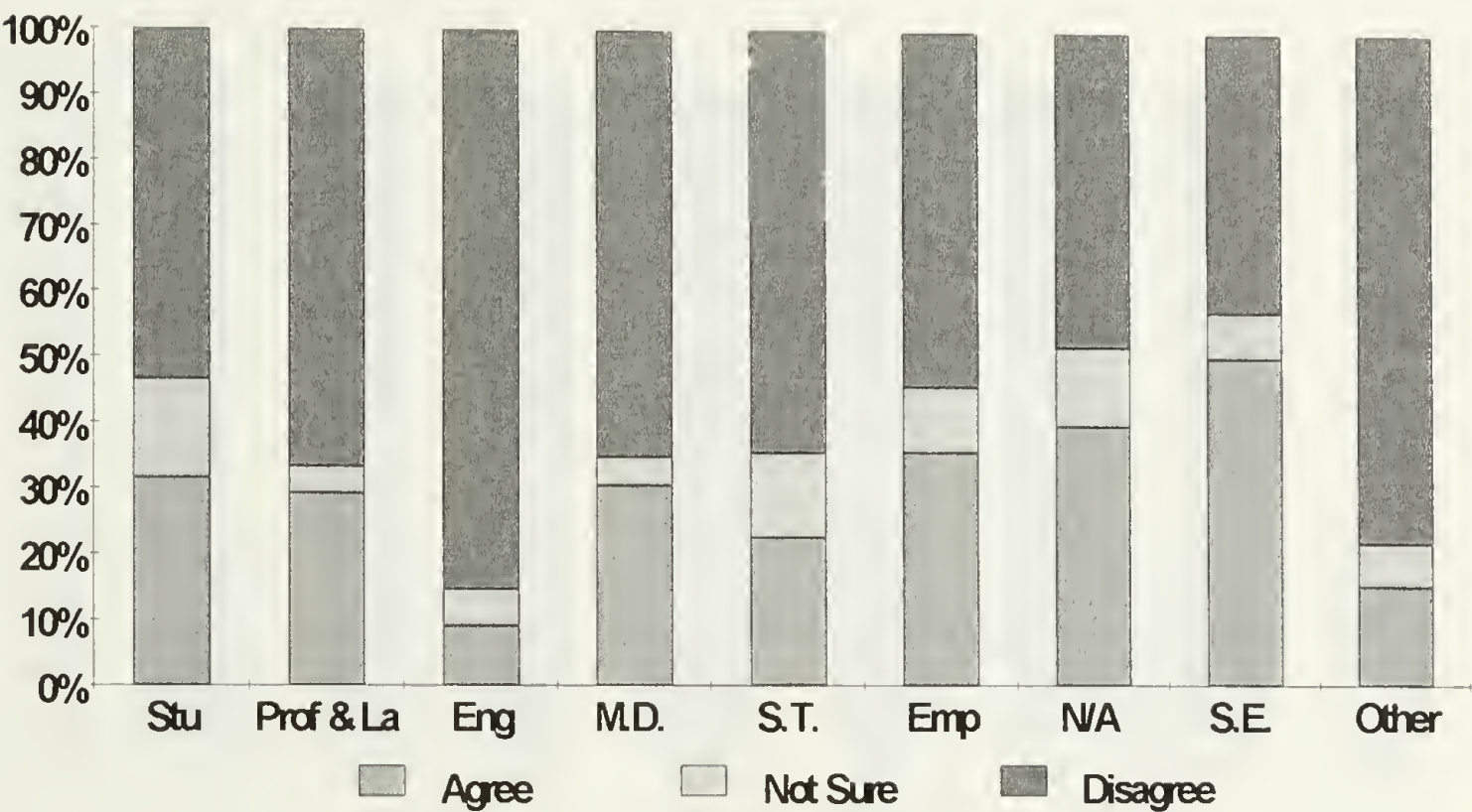


Figure 6.16. Q11 vs. Profession

Table 6.17. Q11 vs. Sectarian Identity

Q 1 1 V s S e c t	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
S u n n i	2 8 . 1 9	1 2 . 7 7	5 9 . 0 4
M a r o n i t e	3 9 . 2 6	8 . 8 9	5 1 . 8 5
D r u z e	3 7 . 1 1	8 . 2 5	5 4 . 6 4
S h i i t e	1 8 . 3 1	1 2 . 6 8	6 9 . 0 1
O r t h o d o x	3 4 . 2 5	1 0 . 9 6	5 4 . 7 9
C a t h o l i c	4 2 . 8 6	1 9 . 0 5	3 8 . 1
A r m e n i a n	3 1 . 5 8	5 . 2 6	6 3 . 1 6
O t h e r	2 0	1 2	6 8

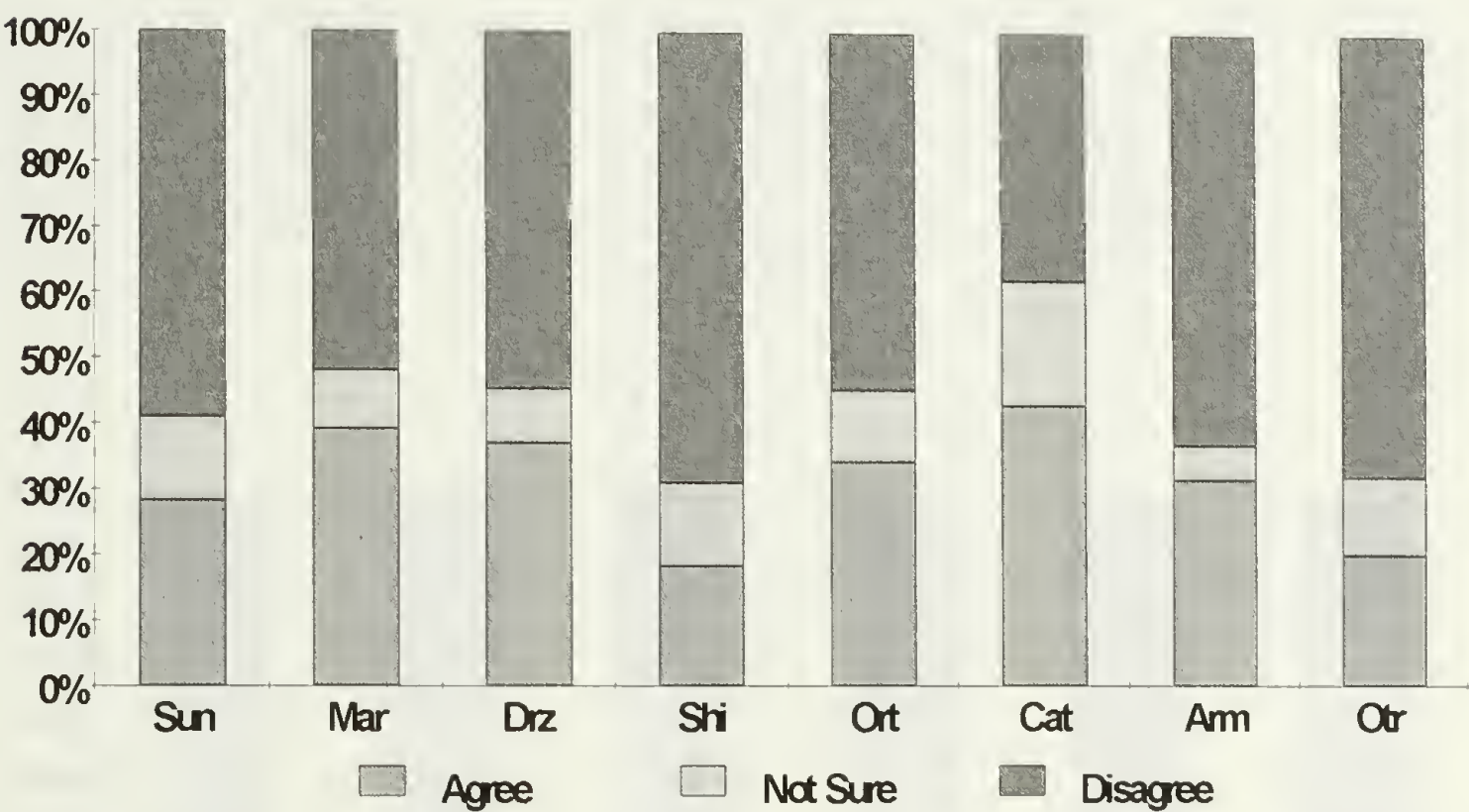


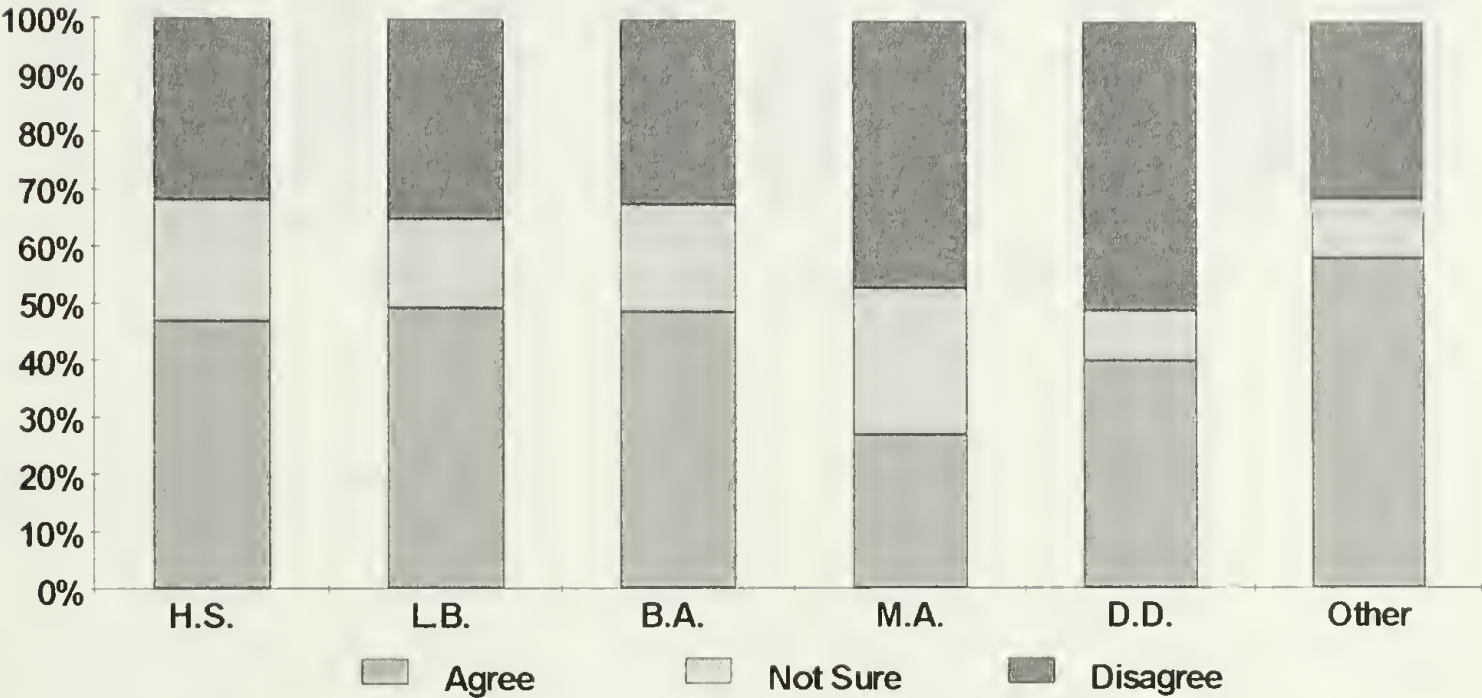
Figure 6.17. Q11 vs. Sectarian Identity

**Q12: Individuals in my sectarian community would live in peace if it were not for the fanaticism and militancy of the other sectarian groups who hope to control our lives.**

The statistical analysis showed that there is significant dependence (  $p < 0.05$  ) between survey item 12 responses and an individual's educational level and profession (see Table 6.18, Figure 6.18; Table 6.19, Figure 6.19 below).

**Table 6.18. Q12 vs. Educational Level**

Q 12 V s E d u c a t i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
H i g h S c h o o l	4 6 . 9	2 1 . 2 4	3 1 . 8 6
L e b a n e s e B a c c a l e u r e a t e	4 9 . 1 8	1 5 . 5 7	3 5 . 2 5
B a c h e l o r ' s D e g r e e	4 8 . 5 2	1 9 . 0 2	3 2 . 4 6
M a s t e r ' s D e g r e e	2 6 . 9 7	2 5 . 8 4	4 7 . 1 9
D o c t o r a l D e g r e e	4 0	8 . 8 9	5 1 . 1 1
O t h e r	5 8 . 3 3	1 0 . 4 2	3 1 . 2 5



**Figure 6.18. Q12 vs. Educational Level**



Table 6.19. Q12 vs. Profession

Q 1 2 V s P r o f e s s i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
S t u d e n t	4 5 . 5 7	2 0	3 4 . 4 3
P r o f e s s o r o r L a w y e r	3 3 . 3 3	1 6 . 6 7	5 0
E n g i n e e r	2 5 . 4 5	2 5 . 4 5	4 9 . 0 9
M e d i c a l D o c	4 3 . 4 8	1 7 . 3 9	3 9 . 1 3
S c h o o l T e a c h e r	2 9 . 0 3	2 9 . 0 3	4 1 . 9 4
E m p l o y e e	5 1 . 4 5	1 5 . 2 2	3 3 . 3 3
N o t A p p l i c a b l e	5 6 . 9	8 . 6 2	3 4 . 4 8
S e l f E m p l o y e d	6 1 . 9	1 4 . 2 9	2 3 . 8 1
O t h e r	4 5 . 6 5	1 9 . 5 7	3 4 . 7 8

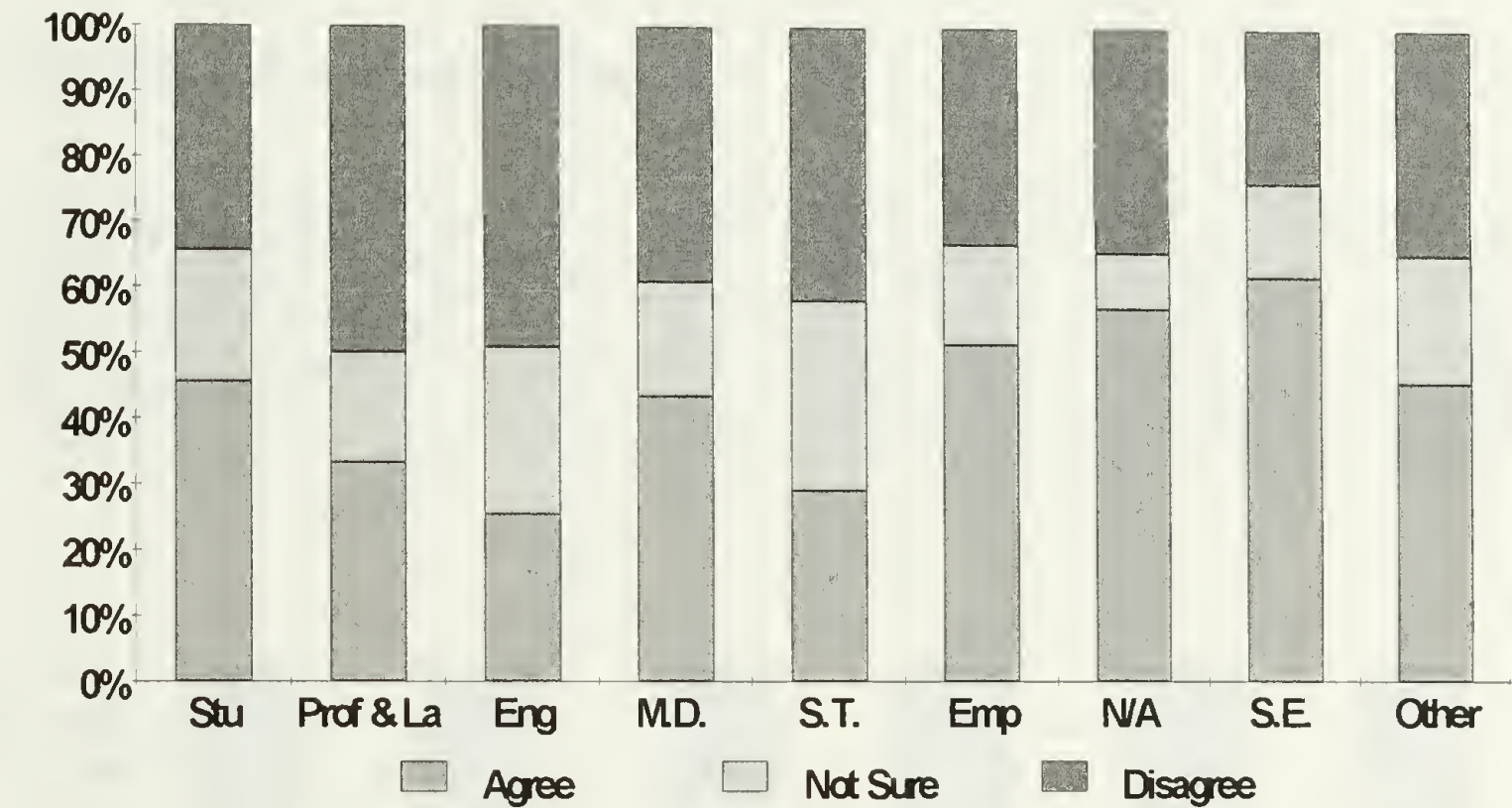


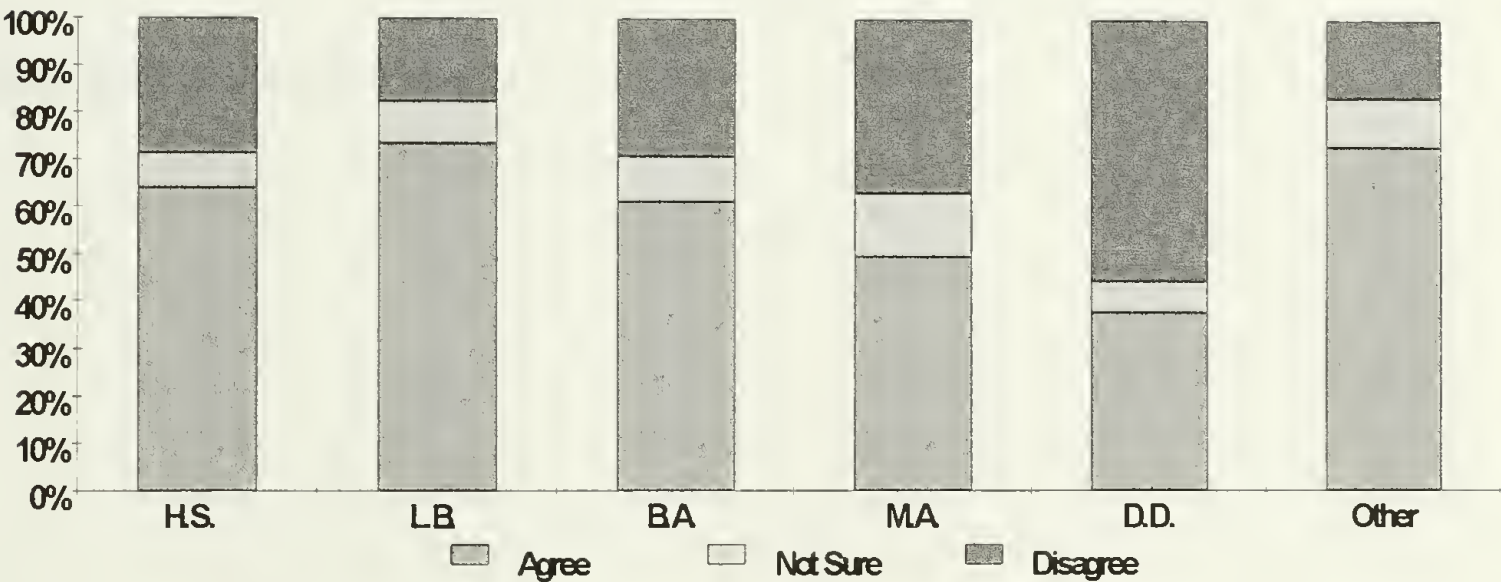
Figure 6.19. Q12 vs. Profession

**Q13: There is little the Lebanese can do to change the fact that most leaders in Lebanon represent their own personal interests and the interests of various outside countries more than they represent the interests of the Lebanese public.**

The statistical analysis showed that there is a significant dependence (  $p < 0.05$  ) between survey item 11 responses and an individual's educational level, profession, sectarian identity as well as dual nationality status ( see Table 6.20, Figure 6.20; Table 6.21, Figure 6.21; Table 6.22, Figure 6.22; Table 6.23, Figure 6.23 below ).

**Table 6.20. Q13 vs. Educational Level**

Q 1 3 V s E d u c a t i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
H i g h S c h o o l	6 3 . 9 3	7 . 3 8	2 8 . 6 9
L e b a n e s e B a c c a l e u r e a t e	7 3 . 4 5	8 . 8 5	1 7 . 7
B a c h e l o r ' s D e g r e e	6 1 . 1 8	9 . 5 4	2 9 . 2 8
M a s t e r ' s D e g r e e	4 9 . 4 4	1 3 . 4 8	3 7 . 0 8
D o c t o r a l D e g r e e	3 7 . 7 8	6 . 6 7	5 5 . 5 6
O t h e r	7 2 . 9 2	1 0 . 4 2	1 6 . 6 7



**Figure 6.20. Q13 vs. Educational Level**

Table 6.21. Q13 vs. Profession

Q 1 3 V s P r o f e s s i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
S t u d e n t	5 9 . 5 4	8 . 8 8	3 1 . 5 8
P r o f e s s o r o r L a w y e r	3 7 . 5	0	6 2 . 5
E n g i n e e r	4 0	2 0	4 0
M e d i c a l D o c	6 0 . 8 7	4 . 3 5	3 4 . 7 8
S c h o o l T e a c h e r	7 4 . 1 9	9 . 6 8	1 6 . 1 3
E m p l o y e e	7 1 . 0 1	8 . 7	2 0 . 2 9
N o t A p p l i c a b l e	6 8 . 9 7	8 . 6 2	2 2 . 4 1
S e l f E m p l o y e d	6 9 . 0 5	9 . 5 2	2 1 . 4 3
O t h e r	5 8 . 7	1 0 . 8 7	3 0 . 4 3

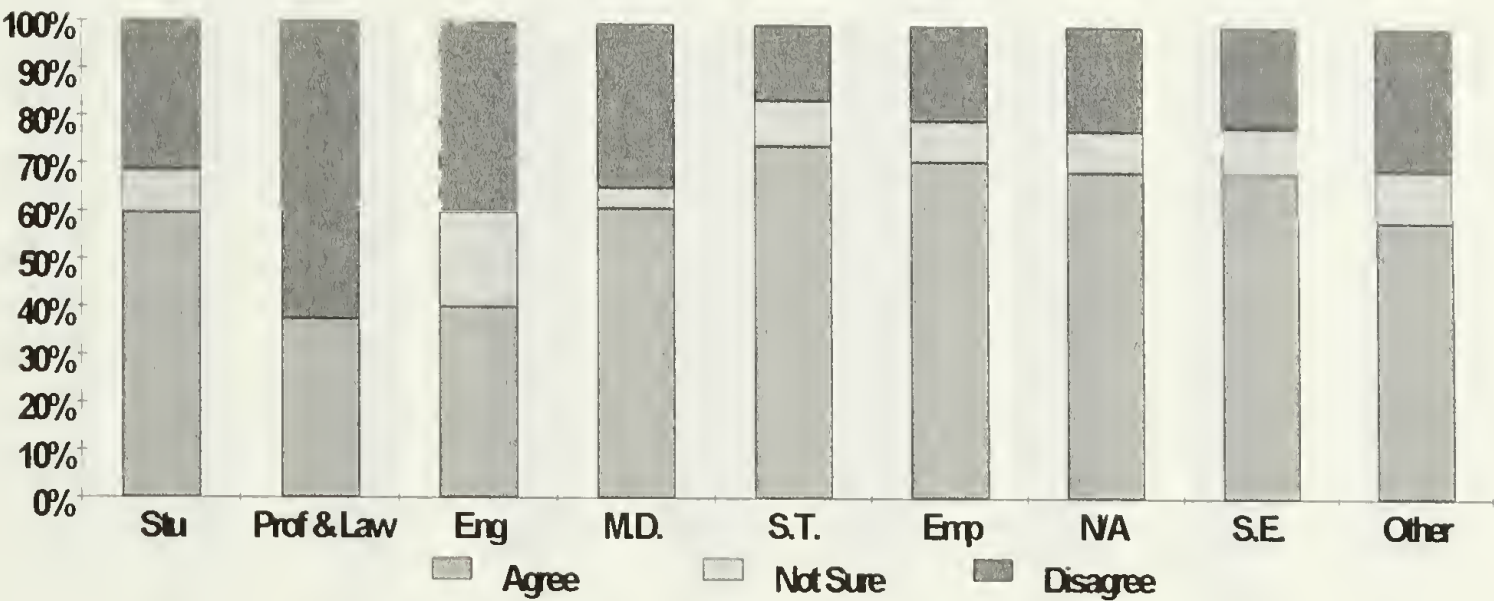


Figure 6.21. Q13 vs. Profession



Table 6.22. Q13 vs. Sectarian Identity

Q 1 3 V s S e c t	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
S u n n i	5 7 . 2 2	8 . 5 6	3 4 . 2 2
M a r o n i t e	6 8 . 1 5	8 . 8 9	2 2 . 9 6
D r u z e	6 9 . 0 7	6 . 1 9	2 4 . 7 4
S h i i t e	5 5 . 6 3	1 4 . 0 8	3 0 . 2 8
O r t h o d o x	6 3 . 0 1	6 . 8 5	3 0 . 1 4
C a t h o l i c	7 8 . 5 7	7 . 1 4	1 4 . 2 9
A r m e n i a n	4 2 . 1 1	1 5 . 7 9	4 2 . 1 1
O t h e r	4 4	1 2	4 4

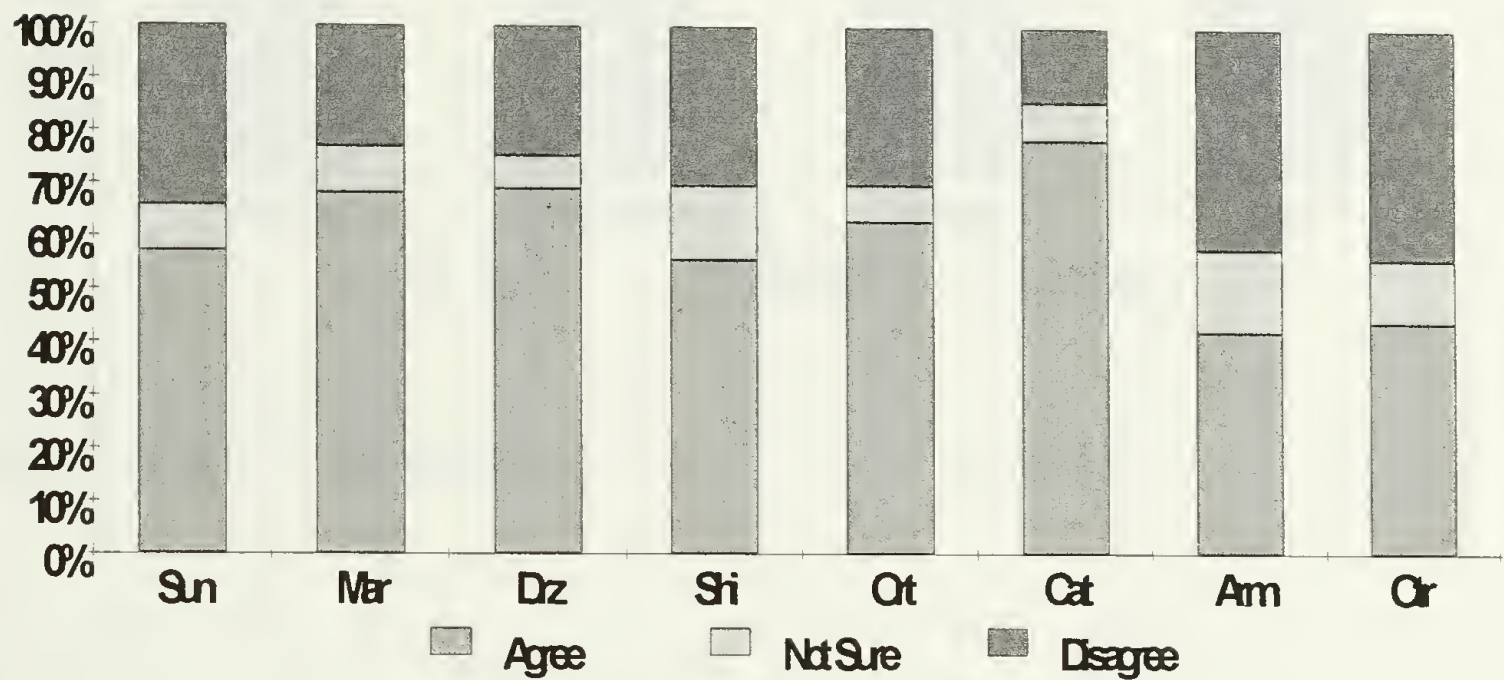


Figure 6.22. Q13 vs. Sectarian Identity

Table 6.23. Q13 vs. Nationality

Q 13 V s N a t i o n a l i t y	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
O n l y L e b .	6 2 . 7 8	9 . 4 4	2 7 . 7 8
N o r t h A m e r i c a n	3 8 . 7 8	1 6 . 3 3	4 4 . 9
E u r o p e	6 6 . 1 5	7 . 6 9	2 6 . 1 5
O t h e r	6 3 . 6 4	6 . 0 6	3 0 . 3

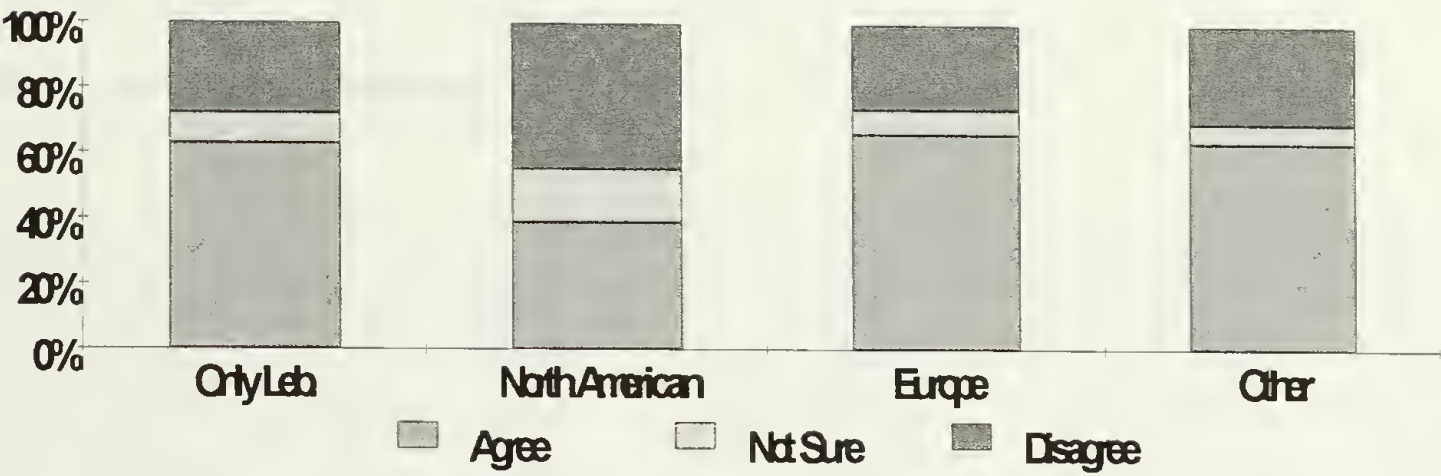


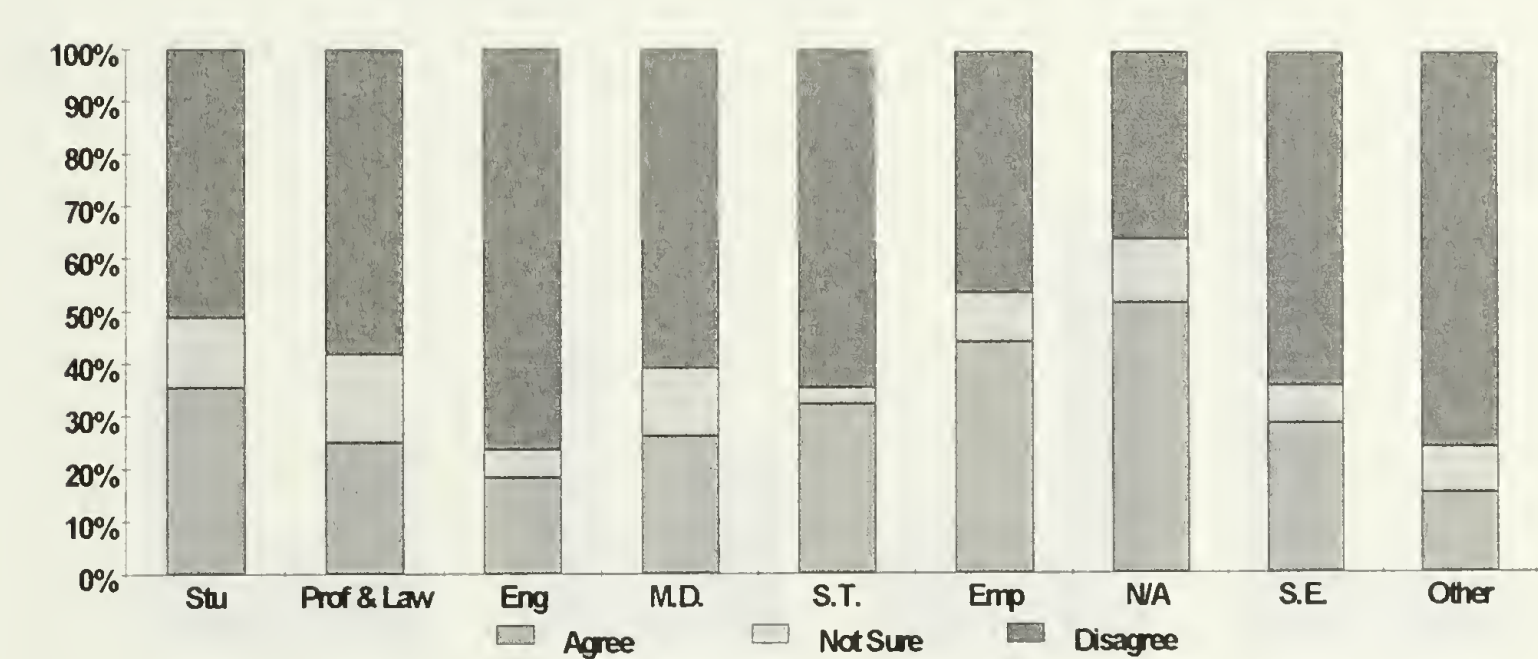
Figure 6.23. Q13 vs. Nationality

**Q14: A democratic political system that is not based on a sectarian political formula, could never guarantee the equal opportunity and equal human rights of individuals in Lebanon.**

The statistical analysis showed that there is significant dependence ( $p < 0.05$ ) between survey item 14 responses and an individual's profession. ( see table 6.24 below ).

**Table 6.24. Q14 vs. Profession**

Q 1 4 V s P r o f e s s i o n	A g r e e	N o t S u r e	D i s a g r e e
S t u d e n t	3 5 . 4 1	1 3 . 4 4	5 1 . 1 5
P r o f e s s o r o r L a w y e r	2 5	1 6 . 6 7	5 8 . 3 3
E n g i n e e r	1 8 . 1 8	5 . 4 5	7 6 . 3 6
M e d i c a l D o c t o r	2 6 . 0 9	1 3 . 0 4	6 0 . 8 7
S c h o o l T e a c h e r	3 2 . 2 6	3 . 2 3	6 4 . 5 2
E m p l o y e e	4 4 . 2	9 . 4 2	4 6 . 3 8
N o t A p p l i c a b l e	5 1 . 7 2	1 2 . 0 7	3 6 . 2 1
S e l f E m p l o y e d	2 8 . 5 7	7 . 1 4	6 4 . 2 9
O t h e r	1 5 . 2 2	8 . 7	7 6 . 0 9

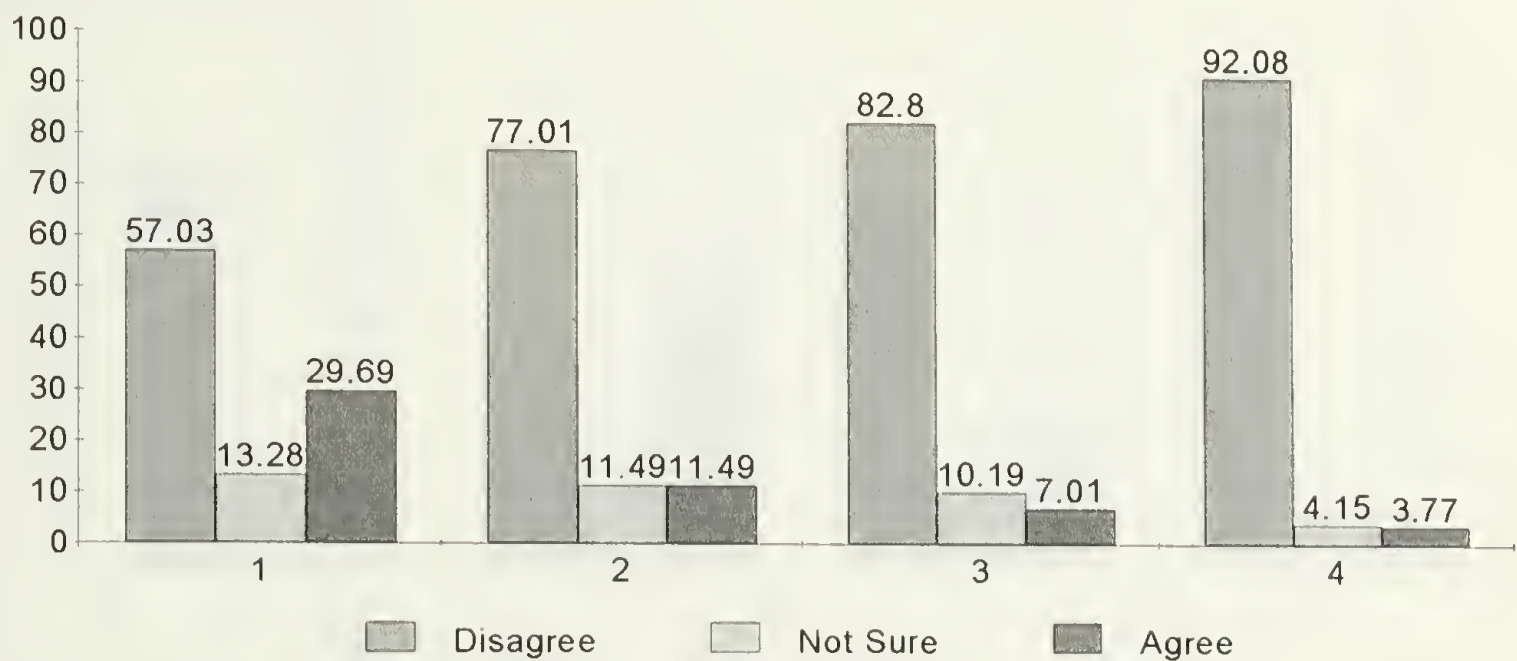


**Figure 6.24. Q14 vs. Profession**

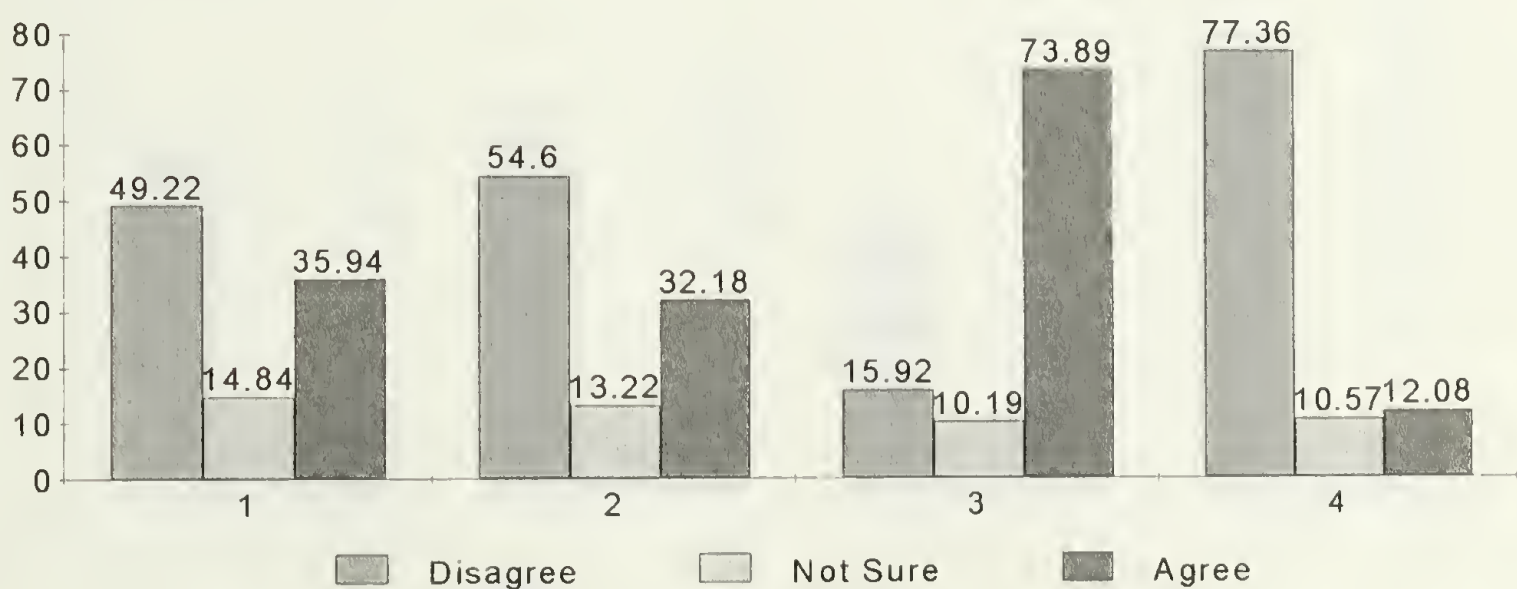


### Item Data Analysis

Each question was assigned a stage, therefore, it would be expected that the individuals in that stage would have the highest agreement among all subjects for that particular question. However, what is of special interest is to examine the patterns of agreements, not sure, and disagreement of the other subjects to see if they comply with the stage theory. This section is presented to analyze the discriminatory nature of each item in terms of a subject's Dsi. Table numbers are percentages where each column sum is a 100% .



**Figure 6.25. Q1 vs. Dsi**



**Figure 6.26. Q2 vs. Dsi**



Figure 6.27. Q3 vs. Dsi

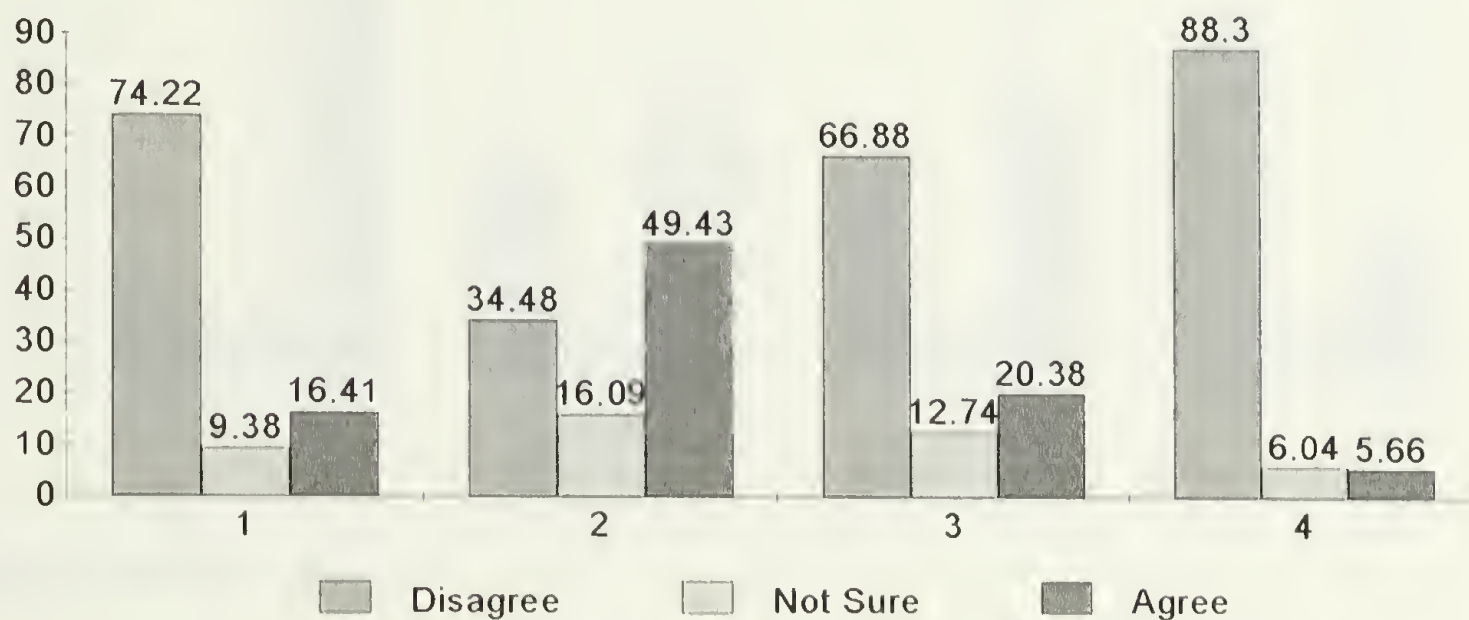


Figure 6.28. Q4 vs. Dsi

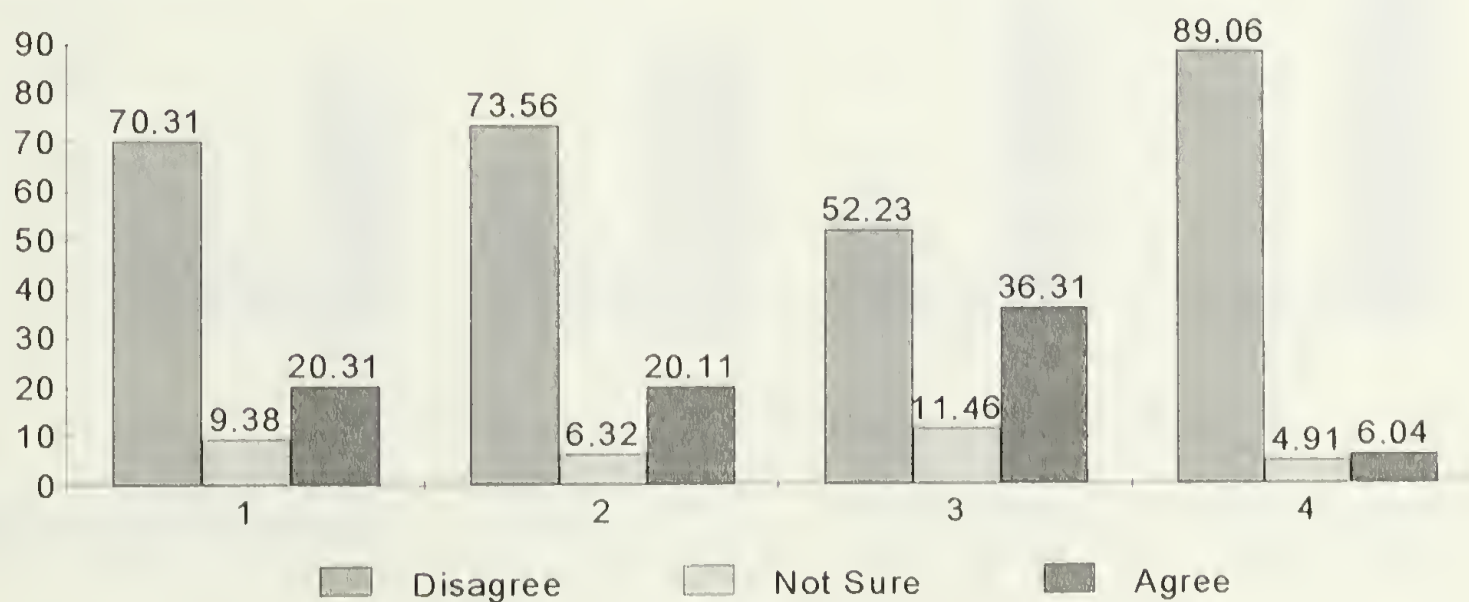


Figure 6.29. Q5 vs. Dsi

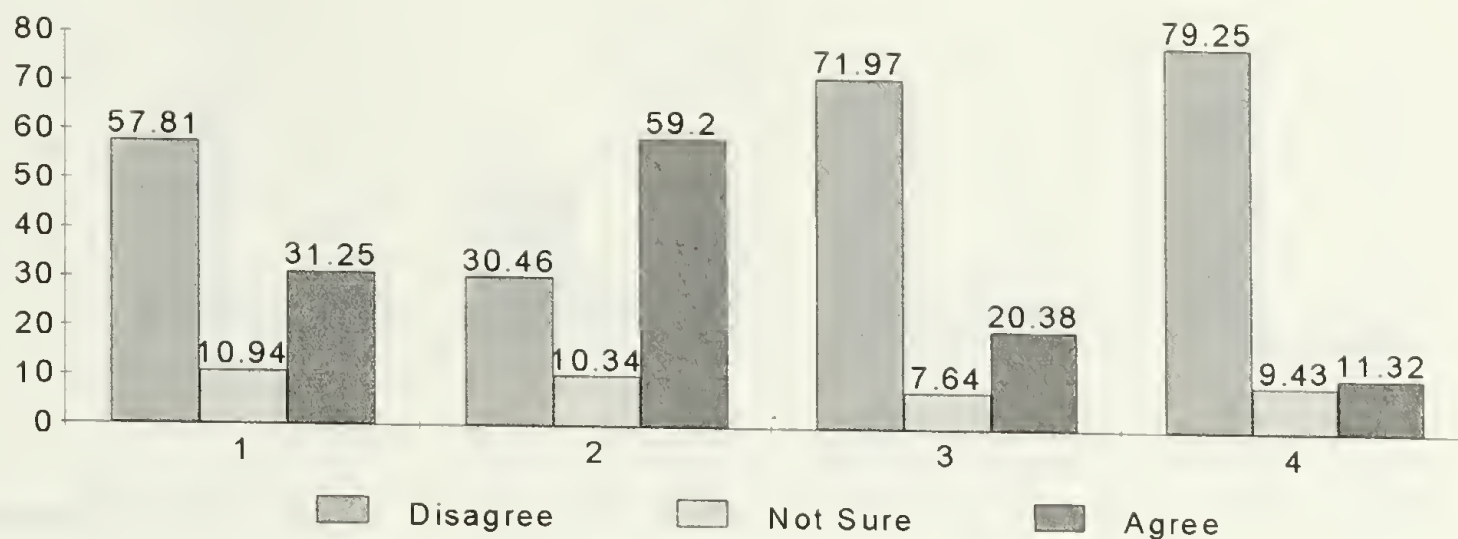


Figure 6.30. Q6 vs. Dsi

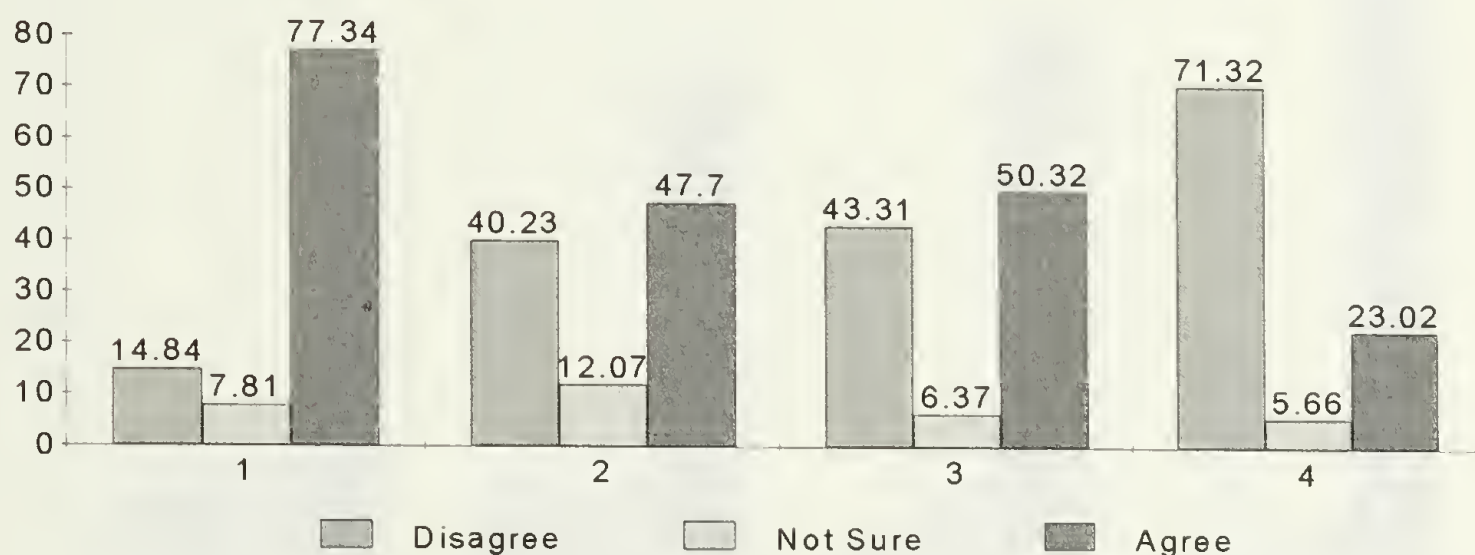


Figure 6.31. Q7 vs. Dsi

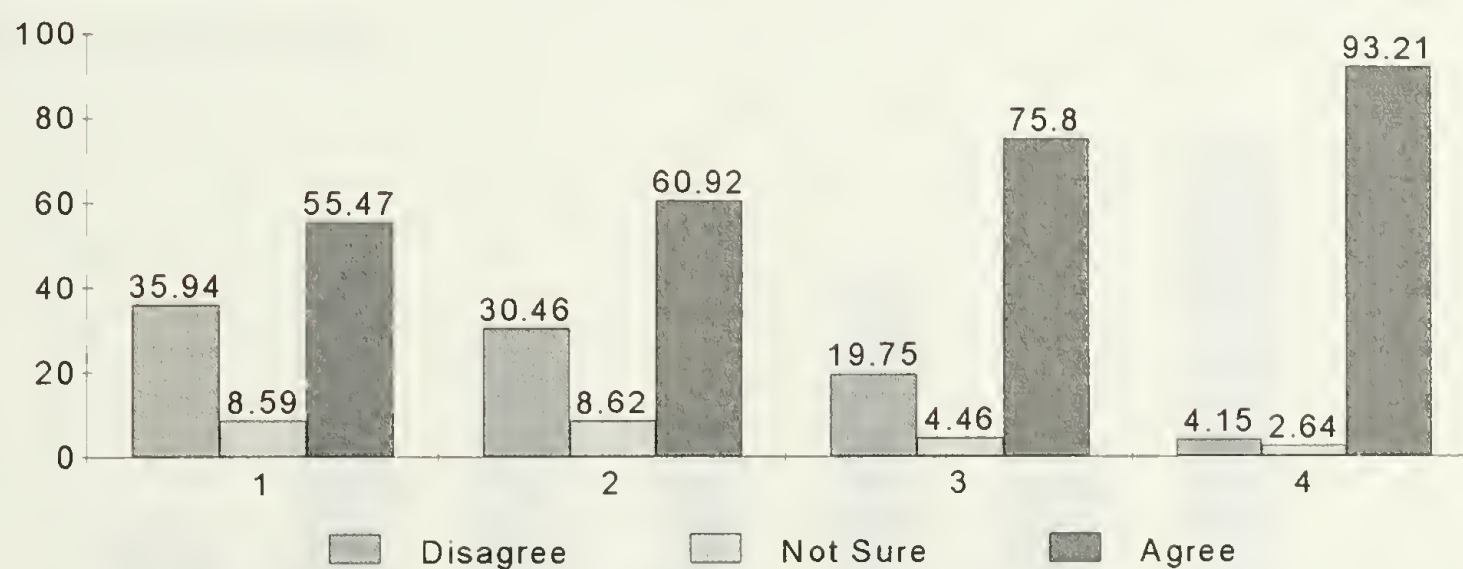


Figure 6.32. Q8 vs. Dsi



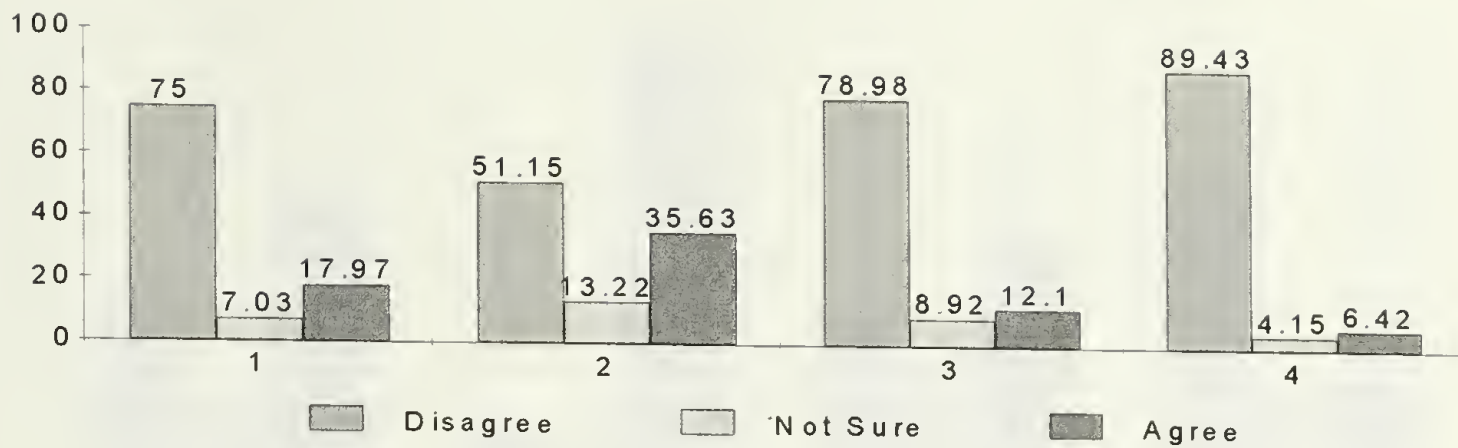


Figure 6.33. Q9 vs. Dsi

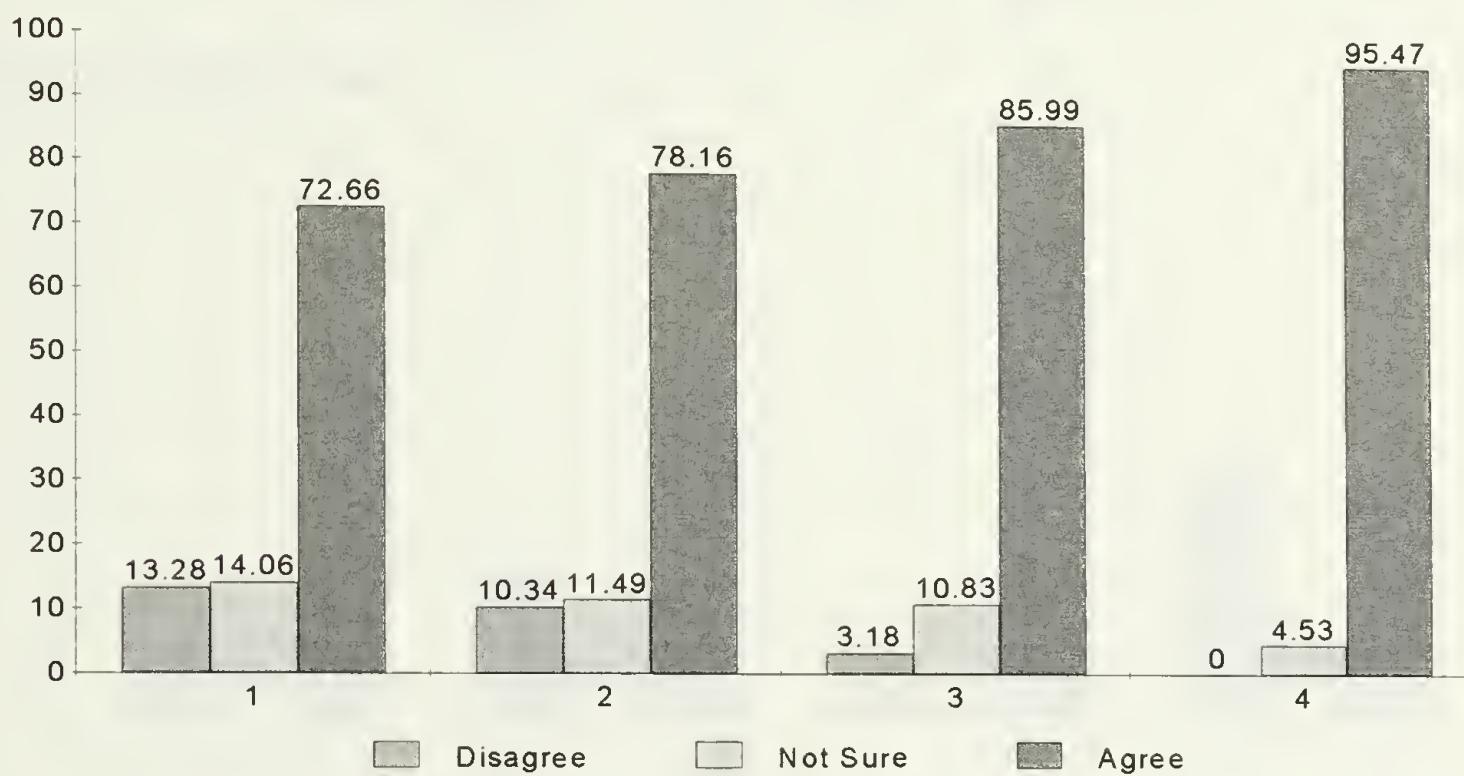


Figure 6.34. Q10 vs. Dsi

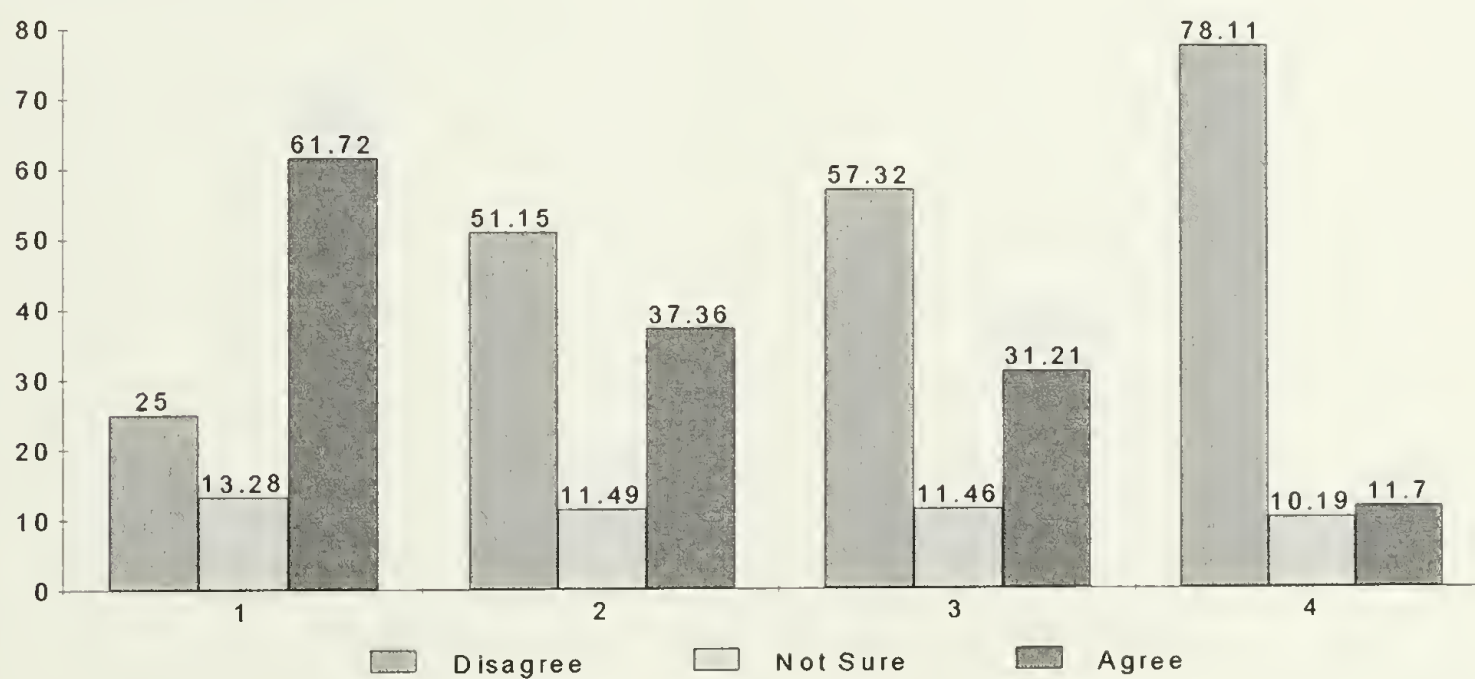


Figure 6.35. Q 11 vs. Dsi

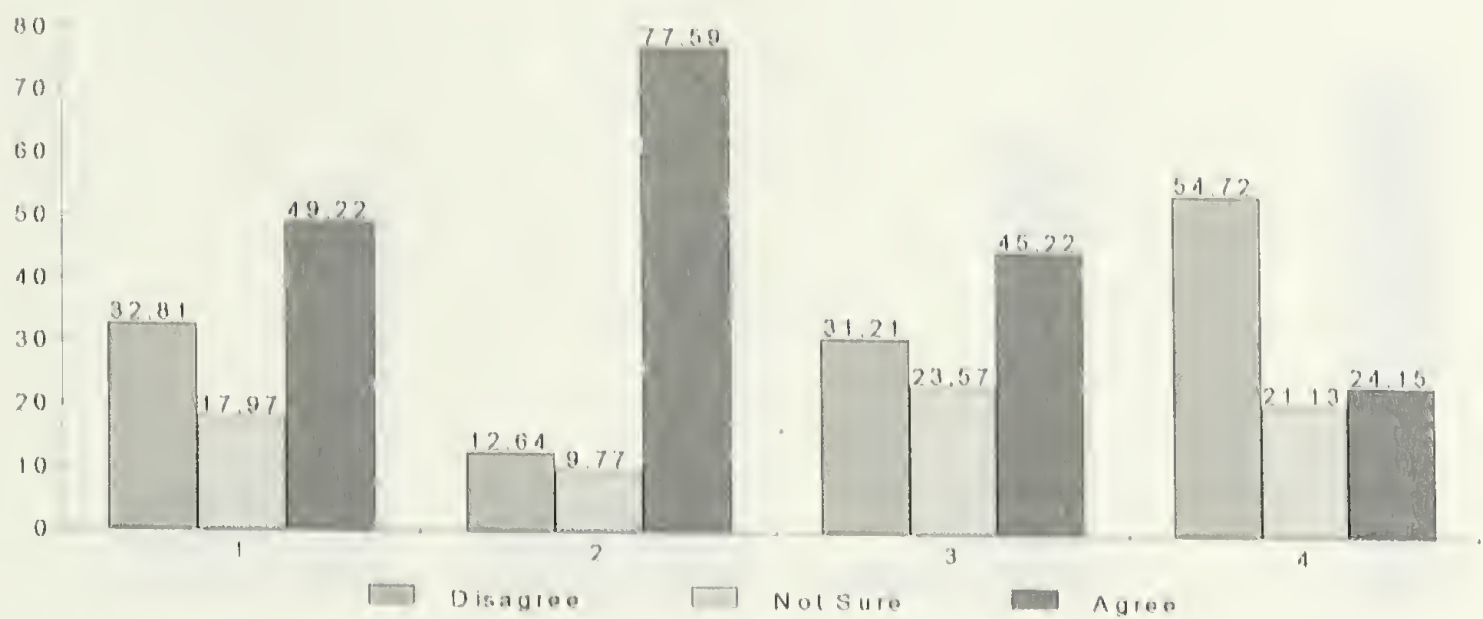


Figure 6.36. Q12 vs. Dsi

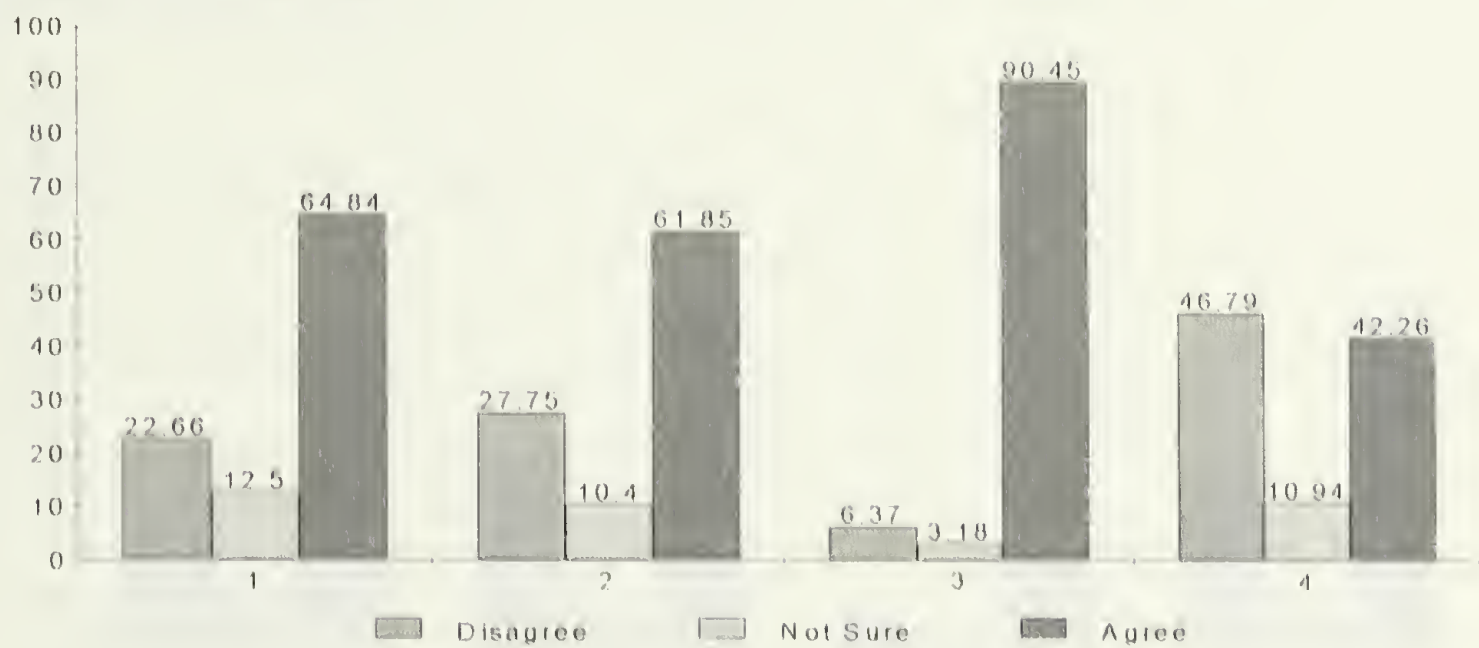


Figure 6.37. Q13 vs. Dsi

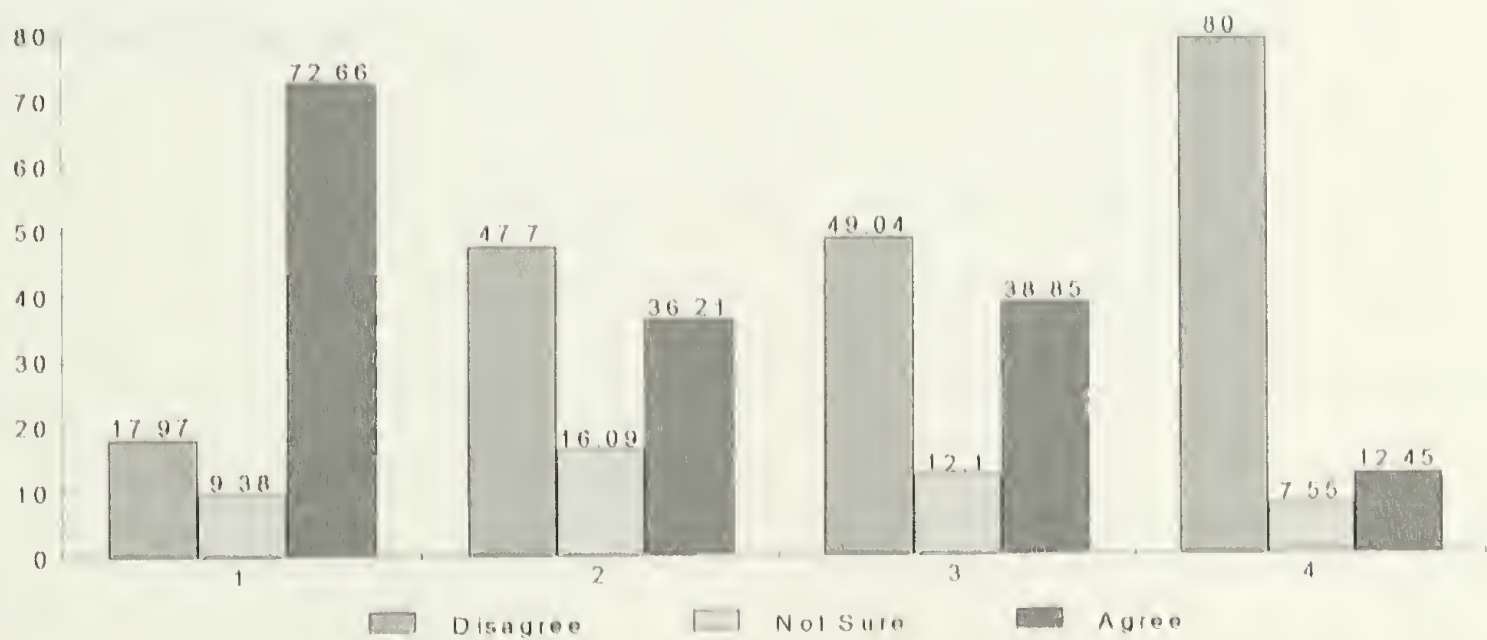


Figure 6.38. 14 vs. Dsi

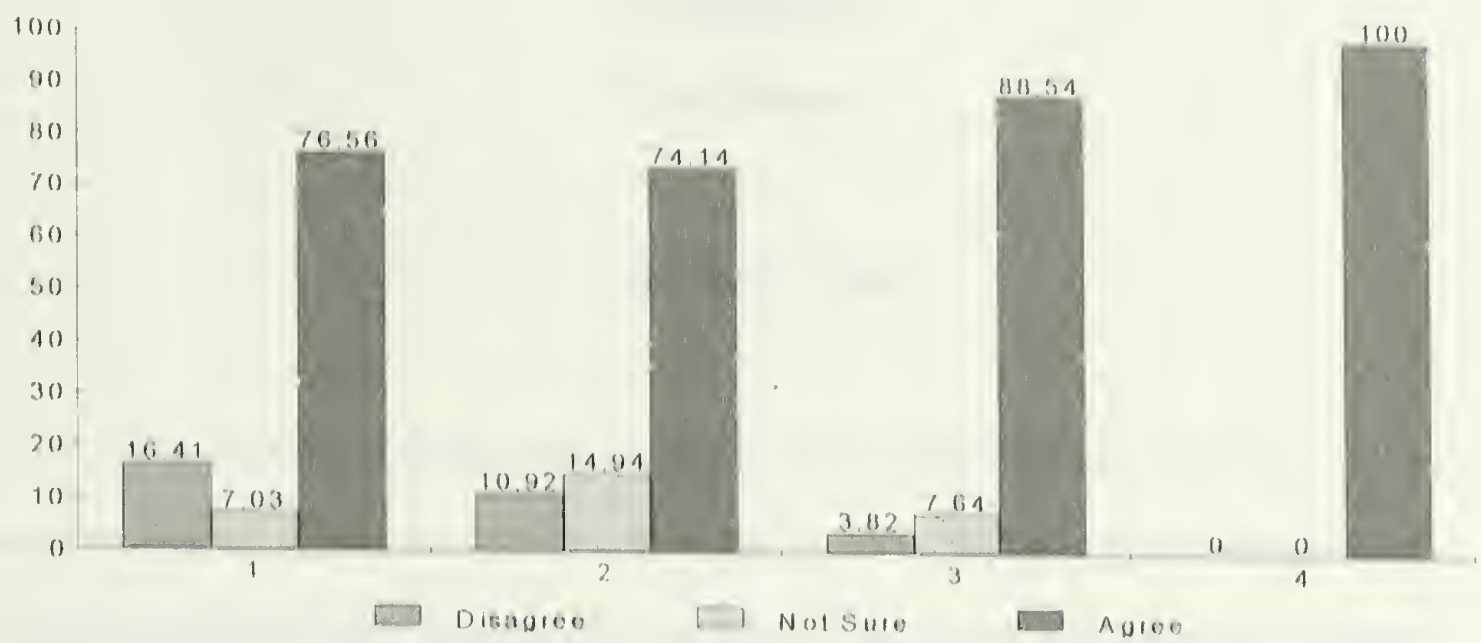


Figure 6.39. Q15 vs. Dsi

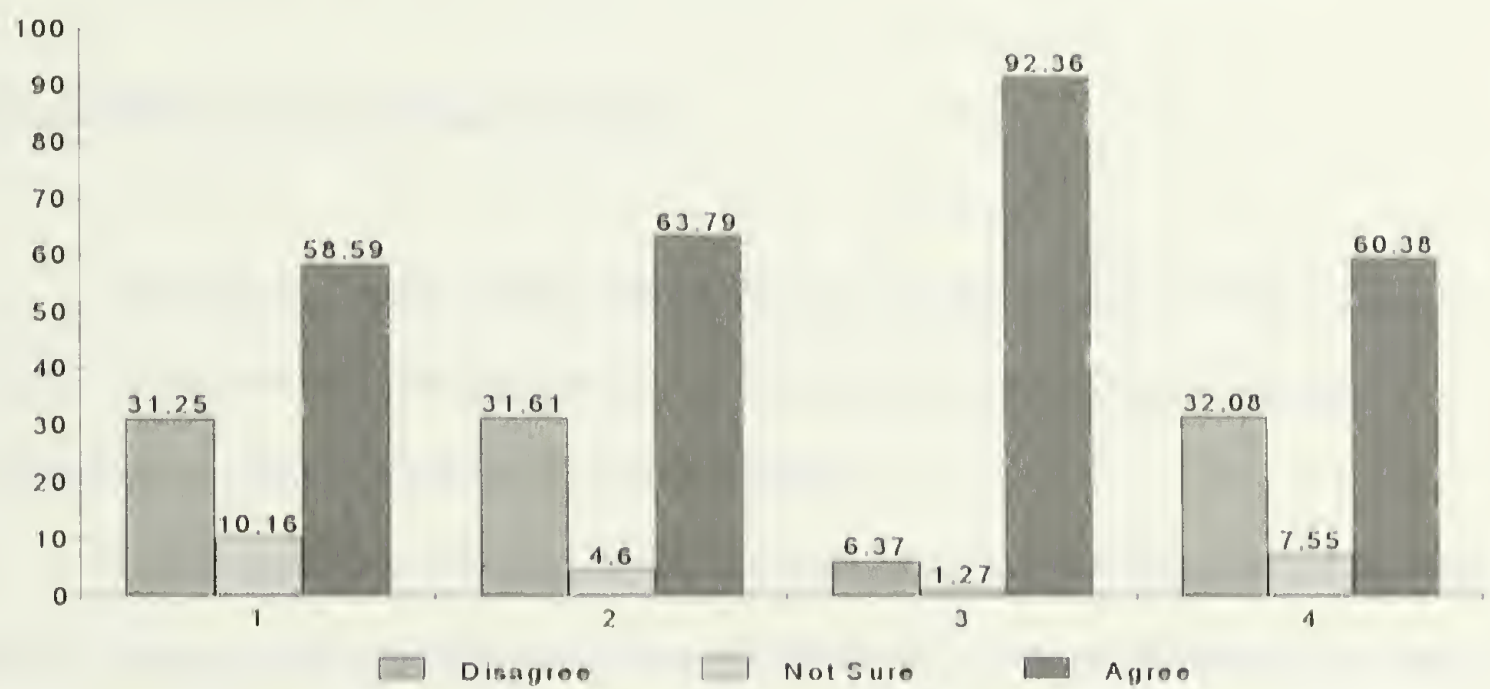


Figure 6.40. Q16 vs. Dsi



## CHAPTER VII

### DISCUSSION

#### Qualitative Data

The qualitative study results show that there are different levels of identity consciousness among the various research subjects. These levels of consciousness were revealed directly and indirectly through the subjects' interview responses. In the following sections I will briefly discuss the subjects' responses to each of the questions asked.

#### Initial Definition of the Lebanese Identity

The initial exploration of the subjects' views around their definition of the Lebanese identity, through the first interview question, showed that there were various aspects of the identity that were emphasized by the various subjects.

Some subject responses emphasized the supra-Arab identity nature of the Lebanese identity, while others emphasized the inter-sectarian nature of the Lebanese identity. Moreover, some responses defined the Lebanese identity as simply an individual's ownership of a nationality and a belonging to a country defined by a set of borders and a political system. Other responses offered a more dynamic view and felt that the Lebanese identity is defined by a continuous process of development and integration of various human and cultural trends, which directly result from the interactive process between the Lebanese individual and his specific physical and human environments.

As the results show, sometimes the same subjects emphasized various aspects of the Lebanese identity, while others emphasized one aspect only. Therefore, we can see that these different response patterns correspond to the various stages of Lebanese identity consciousness

described earlier in this study where individuals differ in their emphasis and awareness of the Lebanese social self.

Especially significant, subjects who defined the Lebanese identity as mainly a supra-Arab identity complained that others who define the Lebanese identity differently are attempting to destroy the Arab identity as well as the Lebanese and the Arab interests. Others, however, felt that those who do not emphasize Lebanon's identity in terms of its Moslem-Christian character, are attempting to deny the Lebanese self.

On the other hand, sometimes, those who defined the identity in terms of an inter-sectarian identity complained of either the Moslem Arab oppression of the Christian Lebanese nature or the Christian-Western oppression of the Moslem Lebanese nature.

These subject responses are reflective of some of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 levels of identity definitions, where the subjects who offered the definitions with no complaints were more likely defining the Lebanese identity at a Stage 1 level, while others were more reflective of the Stage 2 level of identity definitions.

Subjects who were reluctant to define the Lebanese identity as anything other than simply carrying a nationality might be more reflective of Stage 3 identity definitions because they are defining the Lebanese identity in function of characteristics that exist at the Lebanese social self level and not at a supra or inter sectarian level. However, these definitions do not reflect any of the deeper Lebanese identity characteristics.

Also, those subjects who defined Lebanon as an Arab nation but qualified their definition by adding that Lebanon had some specific circumstances that differentiated it from other Arab nations, such as the minorities in it, or its cultural variety, can also be considered to reflect a Stage 3 identity definition because these responses can be considered more integrative than the more polarized one-side identity definitions.

However, those responses that emphasized the interactive and dynamic nature of the Lebanese identity as it results from the individual's relationship with his physical and human

environments can be considered to be more reflective of Stage 4 identity levels of development. The reason for that is because it focuses attention on the psychological characteristics that result from such an interactive process.

### The Lebanese Characteristics

However, a different, less polarized, pattern of self awareness began to emerge across the interview subjects as other questions were asked about the Lebanese self. This pattern first started to become clear as the subjects answered the question about the Lebanese characteristics. As mentioned before, there was some resistance, almost a fear, on the part of some subjects when this second question was asked. But once some of the initial hesitations were overcome, there appeared to be a high level of agreement among the subjects around the characteristics of the Lebanese people.

According to the subjects' responses, what basically defines the Lebanese people, is that they are Arabs living on the Mediterranean coast whose daily life circumstances have required them to develop a relatively high degree of flexibility, adaptability, and acceptance of variety and acceptance of change. The subjects offered the following examples as proofs of the above mentioned heightened Lebanese psychological characteristics: The well known traditions of the inhabitants of Lebanon in the fields of trade, travel and emigration, cultural innovations and knowledge.

These descriptions of the Lebanese characteristics are very much a reflection of a Stage 4 understanding of the Lebanese identity since they are basically descriptive of the psychological effects of the Lebanese individual's interaction with his natural environment. It should be noted here that, when the subjects were asked about their *definitions* of the Lebanese *identity*, their responses were different and sometimes polarized. However, when the subjects were asked to simply describe the Lebanese characteristics, and after their initial hesitation, almost all



respondents described some psychological aspect reflective of the common Lebanese theme of dealing with the rapid changes in the various environmental demands that are placed on the Lebanese individual.

### **Lebanon Vs Other Arab States**

The subjects' perception of the Lebanese identity was further revealed through the examination of the response patterns to the questions about the Lebanese self and the external other. In comparing the Lebanese culture, or cultural life, with that of other Arab nations, all subjects agreed that the Lebanese culture is solidly rooted in the cultural Arab heritage. However, having established that the Lebanese share the same cultural heritage with other Arab nations, the majority of the subjects referred to a number of dimensions on which the Lebanese and the other Arab nations differ in terms of degrees. Most significantly, subjects felt that Lebanon is defined by a higher level of personal and religious freedoms, a higher level of acceptance of change and acceptance of the new, a higher acceptance of variety, a faster exposure to and acceptance of technological and human cultural advances, and a higher tolerance of differences with others.

It must be emphasized here that most of the psychological characteristics of the Lebanese people that were mentioned by the subjects in the last two questions, appeared to be defined in reference to the state of affairs of the other Arab countries off the Mediterranean whose majority populations are Moslem Sunni Arabs and whose political regimes are mostly highly restrictive of individual and religious freedoms and the expression of cultural variety. More specifically, there was a clear differentiation among the subjects between identification with the Arab cultural heritage on the one hand, and the rejection of and a non identification with other forms of expression of this Arab heritage, as manifested by the different Arab nations of today, on the other hand.

## **Israel and Lebanon**

Once again, the subjects emphasized that the main Lebanese characteristics of acceptance of cultural variety and differences represented the polar opposite of what the Israeli culture stands for.

In addition, a few subjects pointed out that real and significant developmental differences exist between the Lebanese and the Israeli states in terms of technological and scientific advance as well as differences in the efforts placed by each of these nations into developing and implementing scientifically researched programs. The Lebanese state, the subjects feel, is far behind Israel in all these fields of development.

Finally, the Israeli state was seen an expansionist and aggressive political and military entity whose goal is to dominate other nations in the Middle East area. While Lebanon was perceived as a non aggressive state whose primary goal is to live in dignity and freedom and under a state of sovereignty within its internationally defined borders.

## **Lebanon and the West**

The majority of the subjects associated the West with a different set of social values as well as technological, and human advance. Therefore, the West was defined more in terms of a source of modernization and development for the Lebanese people. The subjects also emphasized that, even though the West is a source of more advanced survival strategies, it is very important to adopt and adapt these advanced survival strategies to the realities of the Lebanese environment and carefully maintain the past accumulated survival strategies that the Lebanese people have developed and that are still relevant in today's environment.

While some believed that it is possible to develop rational relationships between the Lebanese people and the various Western nations based on a true reading of the common

interests of both, others felt that the West's immense technological advances could result in a Western cultural domination and cultural hegemony over the Lebanese people.

These various views about the West show that there is a general awareness of the importance of the West for the Lebanese people in terms of development and advance in a variety of fields. However, there seemed to be different levels of sense of security in the Lebanese self of the subjects. Those with a lower sense of security feared that openness to development would lead to the disintegration and the marginalization of the Lebanese social self, while others felt secure enough of the Lebanese self to develop mutually beneficial rational types of relationships without fearing that these relationships would lead to domination and loss of self.

### **Obstacles to Unification**

The question around the unification obstacles revealed that the blame for not fully realizing the potential of the true and natural Lebanese social self was placed on the oppressive institutionalized sectarian system which maintains, and is maintained by, an oppressive sectarian leadership class. That is, all respondents were aware that the Lebanese sectarian environment and the sectarian system were responsible for the oppression of the Lebanese individual and the Lebanese common identity.

Each subject, however, was able to describe only part of the picture of the negative effects of sectarianism. Some of the subjects believed that the divisive and negative effects of sectarianism was caused by the misbehavior of some specific sects, while others blamed the sectarian system as a whole but differed in terms of their level of awareness of the scope of problems caused by the sectarian system. This, again, reveals different levels of identity consciousness. The higher the depth and scope of awareness, the more advanced is the stage of identity development. Whereas those going through earlier stages have a more limited and specific awareness level of the destructive aspects of sectarianism.



Most significantly, most of the respondents pointed out different ways in which the sectarian system, which is led by a sectarian leadership elite class, imposes sectarian identities on the individuals in society. Some of the systemic sectarian mechanisms that were mentioned included the government as it plays a role in failing to properly protect its citizens' basic rights and in relegating this responsibility to the different sectarian elites, who exercise this responsibility in a selective and self serving way, thus putting the citizens at the mercy of the whims of individuals instead of being solidly protected by institutional standards.

Moreover, the government was also seen as responsible for the country's maintenance of a sectarian educational system, its maintenance of scattered religious personal status laws, its maintenance of election laws that promote sectarian feelings, as well as its maintenance of financial differences along sectarian lines, etc. That is, all these means are used in order to discourage the citizens from developing their individual identities and national identities and accept as a matter of need and survival their sectarian identities as defined by the system.

The detrimental results of the sectarian system was also seen by the subjects as affecting all growth and development aspects of the Lebanese people. They pointed out the divisive and corrupt type of environment it creates where sectarian loyalties and leadership loyalties are reinforced through financial and status rewards while an individual's educational and experiential qualifications do nothing to help him survive in his environment.

Moreover, the important economic and political decision making processes at the collective levels are guided by the extent to which these decisions can maintain and promote the power of the sectarian leadership class. Rational actions that promote the citizen's, the public's growth and well being are discarded.

In terms of foreign relations, some subjects blamed specific sects for getting assistance from external sources and using this power to attempt to dominate the other sects. Others, however, point out that the sectarian system is basically responsible for creating an

environment where divided sectarian foreign loyalties is seen as a necessary survival and defensive tactic by the various sect leaders and their followers.

### **Challenges**

The subjects' responses to the question about the Lebanese challenges emphasize Lebanon's identity in terms of its function in the cultural, economic, developmental, and technological interchange that takes place between the developing Arab countries off the Mediterranean and the developed Western countries.

First, a number of subjects showed concern over Lebanon's role in the aftermath of a Middle East peace agreement between the different Arab states and the Israeli state. Israel's competitive edge over Lebanon was seen as a threat to Lebanon's traditional role as a cultural and developmental interface between the Arab East and the West, especially that the Lebanese do not feel secure in regards to the expansionist and dominating intentions of the Israeli State.

Second, Lebanon's oppressive sectarian environment was also seen as a threat to Lebanon's ability to develop and face its future challenges. This was emphasized by the need to reform the political system and the necessity of strengthening, maintaining and respecting the Lebanese freedoms as a prerequisite for any type of development and developmental role that Lebanon is currently playing and expects to play in the future.

Moreover, most subjects emphasized the immediate Lebanese challenge of developing a just and sound economy in order to face the immediate dangers of poverty and underdevelopment.

## Means of Development and Unification

The subjects were in most agreement when asked about the means to developing a more unified Lebanese environment and the minimization of its current problems. Some subjects emphasized the importance of the role of education and some subjects emphasized the importance of developing better means for providing individuals with their basic human needs. Some felt that the government should take a leading role in reforming the current situation while others felt that the chances for development are dependent on the activity and strength of independent civic organizations who should take a lead in moving the government in the direction of civic reforms.

Most significantly, the majority of subjects emphasized in one way or another that the point of reference of any future developmental efforts should be based on the basic human individual aspects of the Lebanese self. While some subjects called for the development of educational curricula that emphasize certain specific cultural aspects of the Lebanese people, most other subjects emphasized that the curricula should be focused on teaching the Lebanese all about the common human aspects of their present, past and future. Examples were given, such as maintaining the war memory of people's suffrage and collecting and developing stories about people's daily struggles.

Moreover, most subjects emphasized that unity can be strengthened if the collective emphasis is on serving the individuals in society instead of focusing on the needs of whole sectarian groups where defining Lebanese commonalties becomes difficult and mostly irrelevant to the everyday man.

Therefore, most individuals are aware that stage 4 identity solutions, where the individual human aspects of the Lebanese people is the focus instead of the group aspects of the sects, are likely to solve the Lebanese problems and unify the Lebanese people. It would seem that even if the subjects' conscious awareness is focused on the sectarian concerns, instinctually



they seem more concerned and aware of the importance and universality of individual human concerns and needs.

## **Ta'if**

The different opinions about the Ta'if Accord can also be a reflection of the different levels of Lebanese identity development. More specifically, it would seem that individuals who are satisfied with the overall outcome of the adjusted sectarian formula bias of the Accord are more likely to have a stage 1 identity level of identity development, that is, they are more likely to have a non integrated level of Lebanese identity development. Similarly, those who complain about the Accord because it is not satisfactory enough to the needs of their particular sects, are also more likely to reflect a stage 2 identity development.

Moreover, stage 3 and 4 levels of identity development are reflected by the responses which emphasize the positive aspects of the Accord in terms of its provisions around strengthening the individual rights and the civic rights of the society. Moreover, they are more likely to reject the sectarian aspects of the Accord and feel that the Accord did not live up to their expectations and aspirations.

In short, most subjects agreed that the Accord was good because it resulted in, at least, ending the Civil War. However, they start to differ around how satisfied they are about the extent to which the Accord is being fully implemented in actuality as well as around the content of the Accord itself. Finally, these differing views seem to follow patterns that are dependent on the individual's level of identity development.

## **Photographic Pictures**

Most importantly, I feel, are the psychological image associations that the subjects provided regarding their perceptions of the Lebanese self or the Lebanese identity.

While some subjects offered concrete types of images such as a map drawing, or a pine tree, or a mountain, others offered richer and more abstract images in terms of their symbolic contents. Since images and art bring out different subjective emotions in the observer, I have decided not to offer any theoretically based psychological interpretations of these images. I will, however, present my own personal list of word associations to these images. I also hope that the readers will form their own associations to the images which will help them better understand and share the Lebanese reality and sense of self as experienced by this select group of subjects.

My personal associations are the following: Sense of oppression, suffrage, pain, desperation, bondage, pride, responsibility, sense of duty, rebelliousness, ambition, determination, confusion, acting out, refuge, creativity, fear, submission to overwhelming force, sacrifice, physical sense of self, liberty, desire for life, life Vs death, travel, adventure, voyage, timelessness, witness, awareness...

## **Conclusion: Levels of Identity Development—Cognitive and Emotional Levels of Functioning**

In the above passages I have attempted to understand and analyze the subjects' varied and wide ranging views around the Lebanese self within the four general levels of Lebanese Identity Development presented in the SILM model earlier in this study.

In general, it was seen that most of the subjects' views are reflective of the various stages of identity levels of awareness. Moreover, it must be emphasized that within the same subject responses, various levels of identity development were reflected at various times.

It was noticed that the most polarized views around the Lebanese self were brought about by direct questions about the "Lebanese Identity." However, other questions about the Lebanese group or Lebanese social self that did not mention the "identity" issue brought about more common themes across the subjects' responses. Specially significant, is that those subjects who offered stage 1 and stage 2 identity definitions and identity characteristics, also offered a lot of concepts and characterizations of the Lebanese self that were more relevant to higher stages of identity development. That is, it seemed that individuals functioning at less advanced levels of identity development did not lack a higher sense of awareness, but it would rather seem that they were more likely to initially offer lower level identity definitions and concerns since they might not have resolved the emotional conflicts relevant to these stages.

On the other hand, those individuals with higher levels of identity development seemed to be those who emphasized the higher level identity concerns, while minimally mentioning lower level identity definitions or conflicts. This would suggest that these subjects have successfully negotiated the conflicts faced at the earlier stages.

Therefore, we can generally conclude that, the results of the qualitative study show that identity of the Lebanese individuals seem to be more developed at a conceptual level than it is at an emotional level. This conclusion is in agreement with the theoretical basis of the Lebanese identity development model, since the model suggests that less advanced levels of development around attitudes towards certain issues are more likely to be affected by unresolved or unsatisfied emotional needs, such as fear and security, or sense of deprivation or justice, etc.

This phenomenon might also be reflective of the specific oppressive Lebanese environment where an individual's declared loyalty to a certain definition of the Lebanese identity could sometimes become a matter of life or death. The same phenomenon could be clearly seen in instances during the Lebanese Civil War where militia road blocks were set by the various sects all over the Lebanese areas. When individuals passing through the road blocks were asked



about their identities, their responses had better be the right response, that is, the proper sectarian identity for that specific road block, or else their lives would be very much over.

If, however, we were to ask the individuals going through these road blocks who they really are, at a time when they were feeling safe, you would find a common answer among all the Lebanese who have experienced that. This answer would probably be something like this: "I am a Lebanese individual who unfortunately happened to pass through this road block manned by criminals. My misfortune also lied in the fact that if I did not declare the right sectarian or family identity, I was going to be dead." Therefore, this second, more relevant response to our understanding of the individual's social psychological identity, is more likely to be offered by individuals who have already safely negotiated the danger situation than others who still feel in danger.

### **Quantitative Data**

#### **General Results**

The initial data analysis showed that most subjects agreed much more with the questionnaire items that were classified as stage 4 items. This would give the impression that most subjects in Lebanon are functioning at a stage 4 level. While it might be true that the majority of the Lebanese people believe in democracy and in the importance of civic institutions and public participation, it is still important to understand these beliefs in the general context of the other beliefs that an individual might hold.

Therefore, the data normalization was intended to factor in the effects of the individual's other beliefs in trying to determine his dominant stage of development. As I have compared each of the individual's score to his other scores as well as to the other subjects' scores, it is important to remember that the results derived from the normalization of the data are more indicative of

relative scores as opposed to absolute scores. That is, when we say that 36 % of the individuals in the sample have a dominant Stage 4 level of identity development, what this means is that 36 % of the sample had a higher level of identity development than the other subjects in the sample. In other words, in this study, it would seem that most subjects are in a stage 4 level of development. But by normalizing the data, we are saying that within this overall developed sample, there are still developmental differences between subjects that can be highlighted by including their other responses to items reflecting other stages of development.

### **Dominant Stage of Identity Development vs. Socio-Economic Factors**

The analysis of the results in this section reveal that the primary psychological factors affecting an individual's level of Lebanese identity development can be summarized in three concepts: level of education, psychological security, and exposure to others. This conclusion is derived from the fact that the empirical results show that an individual's level of identity development is most affected by his sectarian identity, his level of education, his profession, his nationality, and his environment.

### **Sectarian Identity vs. Lebanese Identity Development**

**The "Other" Group.** The group with the highest percentage of individuals with a Stage 4 identity level of development are those who classified themselves as "others." This can be explained by noting that the great majority of those who classified themselves as such, added the word "Lebanese" in the "Specify" space provided on the questionnaire. In other words, this group identified itself as the "Lebanese Sect." Therefore, the fact that this subgroup turned out to have the highest percentage of individuals with advanced levels of identity development should not be any surprise since they had also made it indirectly clear that they refuse the

sectarian classifications. Moreover, this particular set of results also reflect the appropriateness of the research instrument since it clearly reflected the "other" group's high identification with the integrated Lebanese Identity defined by a stage 4 level of development.

**The Maronite , Armenian and Catholic Groups.** The results show that the Maronite and the Armenian sects have the highest percentage of individuals at a stage two level identity of development. However, the Catholic and the Maronite groups have the highest percentage of individuals in the combined stage 1 and stage 2 levels of identity development. This might seem like an understandable result since they might be more likely than other sect members to feel that they have had the greatest losses during the war in terms of power and influence in the overall life of the Lebanese Republic.

In addition, these particular Lebanese sects feel the farthest from, and identify the least with, the majority Sunni Arab environment in the Middle East, and would therefore be the most likely sects to feel insecure about their sects' future and well-being in light of the war losses that they have had. Moreover, the high percentage of Catholic individuals with a stage 3 level of identity is indicative that they seem to be the group who are most aware of the Lebanese real situation but also the most with a feeling of disempowerment.

It must be noted that the Armenian group also had the second highest percentage of individuals at a stage 4 level when compared with individuals in other sects. This would suggest that there might be a significant percentage of Armenian individuals who feel fully integrated in the Lebanese society. Further studies need to be done to explore this issue in more depth because the sample number of 19 Armenian individuals in this study is too small to make any significant general conclusions.

**The Shiite Group and the Sunni Group.** The Shiite group of subjects had the highest level of individuals among all the other sectarian groups who had a stage 4 dominant level of



development. This might be explained by the fact the Shiite sect has gone through a significant demographic growth and has gone through fast changes in economical development when compared to the other Lebanese sects. This has probably led to a faster rate of modernization which would have meant that the Shiite individuals are less likely to have maintained strong traditional beliefs in traditional leaderships and traditional feudal style practices, and would, therefore, have a stronger identification at the national Lebanese level. Moreover, their increased population and their increased influence in the Lebanese political and social life might have made them safer in the Lebanese environment which would also explain why they would have a higher percentage of individuals at advanced levels of identity development.

The Sunni sample group had the lowest percentage of individuals with a combined stage 1 and stage 2 levels of identity development within the general Moslem group of subjects. This might be a reflection of the Sunni Moslem traditional position in relation to the Sunni Arab majority in the Middle East where they have traditionally identified more than other Moslem groups at the supra - Lebanese Arab identity level than at the Lebanese national level. The fact that the other Moslem Shiite and Druze groups have the highest percentage of individuals with a combined stage 3 and stage 4 levels of identity development might also be a reflection to the fact that they feel more secure with a Lebanese identity where they are still part of the traditional Moslems majority, but they are minorities within minorities in Lebanon and are not directly subjected to majority rule of the Sunni Arab sect.

### **Educational Level vs. Lebanese Identity Development**

The results of this section clearly show that the higher the individual's educational level, the higher this level of Lebanese identity development. Moreover, if we combine the stage 3 and stage 4 individuals in each educational category, we also find the higher levels of education are correlated with higher levels of Lebanese identity development.

It must be noted here that the "Other" group is mainly made up of those individuals who classified themselves as having a technical type of degree. As a group, these individuals feel the most disempowered and the most angry among all the other educational classifications.

### **Profession vs. Lebanese Identity Development**

In general, the results suggest that the more secure the individual's profession is, the higher his level of identity development. Moreover, those individuals in the humanity fields are less likely to have a stage 2 of identity development. This can be seen in the case of the medical doctors and the school teachers. This would suggest that the type of exposure that an individual has with others is likely to affect his level of Lebanese identity development. This would also suggest that a greater awareness of the human aspects of individuals would positively affect the individual's feeling of social integration.

### **Dual Nationality vs. Lebanese Identity Development**

The results show that the individuals' specific type of nationality affects his level of identity development. It would seem that those Lebanese individuals with an additional nationality from one of the developed countries are more likely to have a stage 3 or a stage 4 level of identity development. Moreover, those individuals who have a European dual nationality seem to be less likely to believe that they can have any personal effect on change for the better in Lebanon while those with a dual North American nationality are more likely to feel that their participation in public life can lead to democratic improvements in Lebanon.

The group that has a dual nationality from the "Other" countries are mostly individuals who carry a nationality from one of the developing countries. This group has the highest percentage of individuals who are functioning at a stage 2 level of identity development.

These results can easily be explained by pointing out the fact that the North American identities are more representative of the idea of change and development. While the European countries are as developed as the North American countries, individuals in Europe are more tied down with older traditions and political systems and, are therefore, less likely to feel that change is too easily achieved.

The fact that the "other" group is more likely to have high numbers of individuals at a stage two level of identity development could be a reflection of their maintaining traditional views at the time of their emigration and not having a chance to develop more enlightened views in the country where they have emigrated since they are more likely to lack the individual rights that most individuals enjoy in developed nations. Moreover, they might also reflect the feelings of those individuals who have had to leave Lebanon and settle somewhere else due to the war and feel that they are still at a disadvantage because in addition to losing the connection to their homeland, they did not gain much in terms of increased individual rights with their additional nationality.

### **Source of Data vs. Lebanese Identity Development**

The differences that appear among the various sources of data collection suggest that the educational and work environments of individuals have a significant effect on their level of identity development.

Most significantly, those individuals who answered the survey through e-mail seem to have the highest percentage of individuals with higher levels of identity development. This would be logical in light of the fact that, those with an e-mail account and who were ready to volunteer and send back their questionnaire answers, are more likely to have higher levels of Lebanese national feelings.



## Integration

In this study I have attempted to show that the events and dynamics that have made up Lebanon's history in the past decades can all be understood within a human development framework that guides the behavior of any human society. However, two aspects of normal development are especially problematic in the Lebanese society, mainly, modernization and social integration. This Lebanese problem has been emphasized by numerous other Lebanese researchers such as Hudson (1985), Khalaf (1987), and Odeh (1985) among others.

As we have seen through this presentation, both of these two processes are hampered by the rigidity of the current form of the Lebanese sectarian system. While the current system evolved from a real need to protect and maintain sectarian equality and justice, this system is basically fit to deal with the dynamics that result from the interactions and the psychology of a society going through the first two stages of identity development proposed in this study. As history has shown, the system itself has made Lebanon incapable of going through the normal social mobilization that always accompanies development and modernization without turning into a sectarian conflict. Moreover, the survival needs of the various sects within this system have rendered Lebanon highly vulnerable to changes in the balance of power of external groups associated with Lebanon, which most of the times gets translated into a sectarian conflict of one form or another.

The key to understanding the causes behind the vicious developmental circle that Lebanon finds itself in is in realizing that the current sectarian system is unnatural, in the sense that it neither gives voice nor does it represent a very large segment of society that is functioning at levels three and four in their Lebanese Identity development. While the current system fully portrays the traditional and insecure elements of the Lebanese society through representing the Lebanese people at the sectarian group level, it strongly fails to represent the Lebanese people at the individual civic levels as well as the forces of change and the future.

In order to resolve this Lebanese problem, a serious scientific approach should be adopted geared towards developing the current system until there is a form of an institutionalized dialogue between the two developmental forces affecting Lebanon. On the one hand, the system should represent the traditional concerns of the Lebanese people at the sectarian group level, as the current system does, while, on the other hand, the system should be able to clearly represent the civic aspects of the Lebanese individual as well as the future directions that the society sees itself taking.

In that case, society would be able to move through its development according to the results of the dialogue between the above mentioned institutional forces. Under such conditions, all Lebanese individuals, regardless of their identity level of development, would be able to find representation in the political system.

Finally, along with the development of a political system that better fits the Lebanese reality and psychology, it must be emphasized here that normal development can be greatly facilitated and enhanced by decreasing the insecurities and fears currently present in the Lebanese society. While this fear and suspiciousness in society is partly due to the after effects of the collective trauma of the civil war, another cause of this fear is the sense in society that speaking out has negative consequences on the individual and, therefore, most people opt to stay silent and stay away from participation in public matters and voicing out their concerns and opinions.

In conclusion, as the results of this study show, the strains on the Lebanese integration forces and the current fears seem to be best counteracted and resisted by increasing the education and the awareness of the Lebanese people about their objective human reality as well as strengthening their sense of security and belonging. This is best achieved by protecting the individuals' human rights and increasing their sense of physical and economic securities in the absence of all forms of physical and psychological oppression.

**APPENDIX**  
**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

Approximate completion time = 10 min.

Please read the whole statement carefully and indicate your preference by placing a mark in the appropriate space below:

Strongly Agree = 5

Agree = 4

Not sure = 3

Disagree = 2

Strongly Disagree = 1

- 1) It is best to trust and depend on traditional sectarian leaders to protect the rights of individuals in the various communities.  

( ) 5 Strongly Agree

( ) 4 Agree

( ) 3 Not Sure

( ) 2 Disagree

( ) 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2) Even though the sectarian Lebanese political system is discriminatory and oppressive against most individuals in Lebanon, there is very little we can do to replace it.  

( ) 5 Strongly Agree

( ) 4 Agree

( ) 3 Not Sure

( ) 2 Disagree

( ) 1 Strongly Disagree
- 3) The Lebanese should actively reject those leaders whose source of power is not based on the fair democratic choice of the people.  

( ) 5 Strongly Agree

( ) 4 Agree

( ) 3 Not Sure

( ) 2 Disagree

( ) 1 Strongly Disagree
- 4) It is very important for my sectarian community to cooperate and get assistance from any friendly non-Lebanese group that is ready to help us protect ourselves from the influences of other Lebanese sectarian groups.  

( ) 5 Strongly Agree

( ) 4 Agree

( ) 3 Not Sure

( ) 2 Disagree

( ) 1 Strongly Disagree
- 5) The best way for a person to deal with the negative effects of the sectarian culture is to restrict involvement in social or public activities and to focus on securing his individual and family needs.  

( ) 5 Strongly Agree

( ) 4 Agree

( ) 3 Not Sure

( ) 2 Disagree

( ) 1 Strongly Disagree



6) I prefer my sect leaders to stand up and fight for the rights of my sectarian community rather than have them compromise with other leaders over some of these rights in the name of the "common good".

( )5 Strongly Agree      ( )4 Agree      ( )3 Not Sure

( )2 Disagree      ( )1 Strongly Disagree

7) I believe there is no such thing as a common Lebanese identity; there are only groups with different sectarian identities living on the same piece of land.

( )5 Strongly Agree      ( )4 Agree      ( )3 Not Sure

( )2 Disagree      ( )1 Strongly Disagree

8) Given the chance, I will definitely vote in favor of the institution of a national civic personal status law that can be used by individuals as an option instead of the currently used religious personal status laws.

( )5 Strongly Agree      ( )4 Agree      ( )3 Not Sure

( )2 Disagree      ( )1 Strongly Disagree

9) In light of the differences that exist between the different Lebanese sects, it is best for individuals from different sectarian groups to live relatively separate from each other.

( )5 Strongly Agree      ( )4 Agree      ( )3 Not Sure

( )2 Disagree      ( )1 Strongly Disagree

10) I try to participate in activities or organizations that work to promote Lebanese unity through fighting the effects of sectarianism and divisions in society.

( )5 Strongly Agree      ( )4 Agree      ( )3 Not Sure

( )2 Disagree      ( )1 Strongly Disagree

11) Other than a common desire to live in peace, the Lebanese people have very little in common.

( )5 Strongly Agree      ( )4 Agree      ( )3 Not Sure

( )2 Disagree      ( )1 Strongly Disagree

12) Individuals in my sectarian community would live in peace if it were not for the fanaticism and militancy of the other sectarian groups who hope to control our lives.

( )5 Strongly Agree      ( )4 Agree      ( )3 Not Sure

( )2 Disagree      ( )1 Strongly Disagree

13) There is little the Lebanese can do to change the fact that most leaders in Lebanon represent their own personal interests and the interests of various outside countries more than they represent the interests of the Lebanese public.

☐ 5 Strongly Agree      ☐ 4 Agree      ☐ 3 Not Sure

☐ 2 Disagree      ☐ 1 Strongly Disagree

14) A democratic political system that is not based on a sectarian political formula, could never guarantee the equal opportunity and equal human rights of individuals in Lebanon.

☐ 5 Strongly Agree      ☐ 4 Agree      ☐ 3 Not Sure

☐ 2 Disagree      ☐ 1 Strongly Disagree

15) I believe that the Lebanese people should depend less on leaders and get more actively involved in developing civic organizations and non-sectarian political parties that can promote public and individual rights.

☐ 5 Strongly Agree      ☐ 4 Agree      ☐ 3 Not Sure

☐ 2 Disagree      ☐ 1 Strongly Disagree

16) I often try to avoid interacting with people who have strong sectarian views.

☐ 5 Strongly Agree      ☐ 4 Agree      ☐ 3 Not Sure

☐ 2 Disagree      ☐ 1 Strongly Disagree

Please answer the following questions by marking the appropriate box:

17) What is your age?

☐ Under 18      ☐ 19 to 23      ☐ 24 to 28      ☐ 29 to 33

☐ 34 to 38      ☐ 39 to 43      ☐ 44 to 48      ☐ 49 to 53

☐ 54 to 58      ☐ 59 to 63      ☐ Over 63

18) What is your gender?

☐ Male      ☐ Female

19) What is your sectarian Identity?

☐ Sunni      ☐ Maronite      ☐ Druze

☐ Shiite      ☐ Greek Orthodox      ☐ Roman Catholic

☐ Christian Armenian      ☐ Other\_\_\_\_\_ (Specify)

20) What is your civil status?

- ☐ Single      ☐ Married with no children      ☐ Married with children  
☐ Divorced with no children      ☐ Divorced with children  
☐ Widowed

21) What is your current place of residence?

- ☐ Lebanon    ☐ Arab country other than Lebanon    ☐ Europe  
☐ North America    ☐ Africa    ☐ South America

22) How many years did you live in Lebanon during the 1975-1989 civil war?

- ☐ None      ☐ 1 to 3      ☐ 4 to 6  
☐ 7 to 9      ☐ 10 to 12      ☐ More than 12

23) How many years of your life have you lived outside Lebanon?

- ☐ None      ☐ 1 to 3      ☐ 4 to 6  
☐ 7 to 9      ☐ 10 to 12      ☐ 13 to 15  
☐ 16 to 18      ☐ 19 to 21      ☐ More than 21

24) What is the highest degree you have attained?

- ☐ Lebanese Baccalaureate    ☐ High School  
☐ Bachelor's Degree      ☐ Master's Degree  
☐ Doctoral Degree      ☐ Technical Baccalaureate  
☐ Vocational Degree      ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Specify)

25) What is your yearly estimated income? [You can choose not to answer this question]

- ☐ Less than 2,000 \$      ☐ Between 2,000 and 5,000 \$  
☐ Between 5,000 and 10,000 \$      ☐ Between 10,000 and 20,000 \$  
☐ Between 20,000 and 30,000 \$      ☐ Between 30,000 and 40,000 \$  
☐ Between 40,000 and 50,000 \$      ☐ Between 50,000 and 70,000 \$  
☐ Over 70,000 \$      ☐ Not Applicable



26) What is your profession?

- ☐ Student      ☐ Professor      ☐ Lawyer  
☐ Salesman      ☐ Engineer      ☐ Medical Doctor  
☐ School Teacher      ☐ Skilled Laborer      ☐ Employee  
☐ Not Applicable      ☐ Self-employed      ☐ Other\_\_\_\_(Specify)

27) Do you have a Lebanese nationality?

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No

28) If yes, do you carry an additional nationality?

- ☐ No      ☐ Yes , a North American nationality  
☐ Yes, a South American nationality      ☐ Yes, a European nationality  
☐ Yes, an African nationality      ☐ Yes, another Arab nationality  
☐ Other      (Specify)

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