Civil Society and Good Governance: a positive link?

The case of Lebanon

Erasmus University
Faculty of Social Sciences
Department of Public Administration

Rotterdam, June 2007
Samira Abbadi
Student number: 259932

Under supervision of: Dr. A.R. Edwards
Co-reader: Dr. H.F.M. Daemen

Preface

During my years at university, the thesis was always described as the crone on your studies. I agree with this description of the thesis. It is a very personal achievement. I also saw the freedom of writing of a thesis as an opportunity to completely focus on my own interests. My thesis about Lebanon, the country I fell in love with during my stay there from September until December 2004, combines my interest and knowledge in two different academic disciplines. At the one hand public administration and political science and at the other hand Arab language and culture. Before we can describe and explain social reality, we first must be open to all 'facts' and try to understand them. Learning Arabic, learning about history of the Arab world gave me a good preparation for my stay in Beirut as well as a good introduction to my academic search for knowledge on Lebanon's civil society and governance. Being critical in what to read and how the perceive it is something all academics learn. In relation to cultures, religions and east-west fragmentation I learned a lot from Professor Richard van Leeuwen in his course 'Arabische Cultuurkunde' at the University of Amsterdam. I owe him special gratitude for that course and for his recent help to have a critical look at my thesis from his profession as an expert on Arab history. In short, this work combines what I learned from BOTH disciplines and both universities and what I learned from my stay abroad. During my internship in Lebanon at the Centre for Research, Training and Development, I had the chance to see how it works in real and how people perceive reality differently. I learned how social science knowledge and social reality influence each other.

The other thing I knew about writing a thesis, is that it is a road a student has to walk alone. This is something I agree with too. The most difficult was to get back at my thesis after an interruption of my studies for more than a year. Still, thanks to the encouragement of friends (Farsia, Judith, Marjolein, Naseem, Najoua and all the others I spend many afternoons and evenings drinking coffee with) and my family, who helped me through the hard moments and encouraged me, I went back to university and finished my studies. This makes this work not just an academic achievement but also a personal triumph.

I would like to thank my supervisor Arthur Edwards for sharing his knowledge with me, his careful way of giving critics and of coarse his patience in guiding me through the process. I also thank professor Daemen for his willingness to stay the co-reader of my thesis, despite his health situation. Finally, I owe special gratitude to the CRTD in Beirut, especially Omar Traboulsi and Lina Abou Habib for their help during my stay there and for thinking of sending me documents while the country just came out of the war (summer 2006). I hope this study contributes to their work in the complex and beautiful Levant.

Bi Idn Allah.

Samira Abbadi

2

Abstract

Lebanon is the country in the Arab region, which is known by its large civil society. It is also the Arab country where there has been political liberty since the early decades of the 20th century. In this thesis, we investigated the relation between civil society and good governance in Lebanon, in the light of the social capital theory of Robert Putnam's social. This theory says that there is a link between the *'civicness'* of a community and the quality of its governance. By *'civicness'* Putnam refers to a culture where people are involved in associational life, show solidarity and tolerance and where equality exists. Dense social networks create social capital. Social capital has the components trust, reciprocity and networks and through these, it leads to more political participation and better governance. The concepts civil society and good governance can have broad and different definitions. Here I have chosen the pragmatic approach and definition of the UNDP. Good governance will be defined along the eight dimensions as formulated by the UNDP: participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity & inclusiveness, effectiveness & efficiency and accountability.

It is important to reflect on the fact that we are dealing here with a country that has another history and societal culture than the countries where the theories have been developed. To avoid a Euro-centric analysis and give a broader insight in the case the second part of the thesis roots of Arab state building and both civil society and democratisation is discussed in the light of Arab history and theory.

Civil society is mapped and described. The state of affairs on governance is presented by showing statistics of the World Bank and date acquired in my own interviews. On all criteria, Lebanon performs badly according to the statistics of the World Bank. On responsiveness and consensus orientation, the results seem to be the least bad. Rule of Law and Accountability are dramatically bad. According to the theory of Putnam, there is a positive relation between civil society and good governance. However, in Lebanon we have found out that this is not the case. In contrast to the size and dynamic of its civil society, when it comes to governance, it is not much better then other Arab countries. Even so, this finding did not bring is to the rejection of Putnam's hypothesis. The discrepancy between his theory and the Lebanese practice can be explained by analysing the conditions that Putnam identifies before his theory is applicable.

These conditions are not met because of the Lebanese sectarian fragmentation and fragile political situation. Social capital does exist largely but within the borders of the different communities. This so-called 'binding capital' is less fruitful for the nation-wide cohesion than bridging capital. Bridging social capital evolves out relations between individuals that belong to different groups. Lebanese civil society is characterized by sectarian fragmentation.

3

The civil war still has its repercussions on the trust in fellow-citizens and on the trust in the political system/state. Large families still are the best safe nets for people. Associations that are based on kinship or religious affiliations are among most effective organisations in welfare and aid. In relation to the performance on governance, this sectarian fragmentation has negative consequences because the conditions for a civic community are not met. This explains why in the case of Lebanon civil society cannot contribute positively to the quality of governance.   An important theoretical point comes from Lijphart: for the unity of a nation, it is necessary that social-economic and ethnical dividing lines do not coincide.

It is essential that civil society in Lebanon becomes less sectarian, because the sectarian divisions have a spillover effect on every part of society and political life. It is important to raise awareness about the importance of social cohesion, because a lack of it causes too much disintegration and political instability. Civil society should work on mutual trust between different sectarian communities and build intersectarian networks. If it succeeds in facing this sectarian challenge, civil society will be more effective in contributing to better governance through social capital.

4

5

Chapter 1   Lebanon and Democratization in the Arab world

1.1   Democratization in the Arab world: not a new phenomenon

Since the appearance of the Arab Human Development Reports (AHDRs) there is a vivid debate on democratization of the Arab region in the media and policy circles. This part of the world, contrary to South America, East and Southeast Asia and sub-Sahara Africa, was not reached by the *third wave of democratization*[1]. Where the other third world states established democracies, took steps to modernization, economically and socially, the Arab people kept living under authoritarian rule. This situation was accepted for a long time and covered by the excuse of 'exceptionalism', *'Arab exceptionalism'*. In the old *orientalist* view, Arab culture and Islam, are concepts that are incompatible with democracy and modern values in general (Kedourie, 1994, Huntington, 1984). Harsh critics in the Arab media on the United Nations Development Program-research give the impression that the Arabs are indeed not hospitable to human rights, political liberalization and democratic governance.

Without referring to the Andalusian philosophers, who are always proudly mentioned in discussions about Arab civilization and development, I would like to emphasize that modern thinking and the appreciation of enlightening values are not exclusive to the western cultural legacy. More relevant for the democratization-debate is the so-called Arab Liberal Age, from mid 19th century till mid 20th century (Hourani, 1962). During this period, the political elite in the Arab world was relatively comfortable with Western ideas and institutions, and sought to harmonize them with Arab and Islamic concepts of governance, jurisprudence and more. A couple of years, in the first decade of 20th century, before Great Britain occupied Egypt, Egyptians were experimenting with democratic institutions. It was the pasha Mohammed Ali, inspired by Napoleon, who sympathized very with the west and modernized his country bureaucratically, economically and militarily according to western examples (Hourani, 1991).

Colonization left its marks and sentiments that were anti-western and against everything associated with it. Egypt, the center of Arab culture, was the cradle of the two most important (anti-imperial) movements: Arabism and Islamism. It was the Egyptian president Nasser, who is considered as the 'father of Arabism'. Nasser liberated Egypt from British tutelage, with the *revolution of 1952* and declared the Republic of Egypt. There was and still is a lot of criticism on the democratic quality of his governing.

---

[1] Samuel Huntington (1984) distinguishes in his work three waves of democratisation. The last one occurred in East-Europe and Latin-America

The minister of social affairs Diaaeddin Dawoud under Nasser says on this: *'The revolution, by contrast, managed in a relatively few years to liberate Egypt from British occupation and to achieve Egypt's most cherished hopes of introducing massive reforms aimed at abolishing social disparities and class discrimination. These things could never have been achieved by adopting democratic practices'* (Al Ahram Weekly, 2002).

 The above citation illustrates how ambiguous democratic leaders were in post-colonial states. Policy instruments were more often that not far from being democratic. Beside this, democratic regimes, or regimes that had this pretension, failed to live up to the high expectations they raised and could not address the needs of the masses. In the eyes of mass Arab democracy failed. The other movement that was born in Egypt (1928) and became cross-national as well is the Islamist ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood. It can be seen as a countermovement to the 'secular' Arabist regimes that experimented with democracy. Saadeddin Ibrahim classifies Arab political history in six 'legacies': an early liberal, a colonial, a middle liberal, a populist radical, an Islamic and a new liberal:

'...Whatever the mounting internal pressures, it was an external factor that triggered the commencement of each of the six legacies. The encroachment of the French, British, Italians, Israelis, and the Americans on this or that Arab country brought about geneses of modernity as well as unleashed forces of resistance to these foreign powers. With the fading of one legacy and the onset of another, certain social formations (e.g. classes, occupations, and ethnic groups) decline and new ones rise. Thus each legacy was associated with a particular social formation both as a propeller and as a beneficiary. The landed bourgeoisie championed the first liberal age; the middle class manned the second; the lower middle class dominated the populist radical legacy; and a mix of the lower and lowest urban formations sustained the Islamic legacy. A coalition of Western educated professionals and businessmen are the current force pushing for the return of liberalism...' Both movements began in Egypt and both ended to be cross-national, symbolizing Arab/Islamic unity and being both anti-capitalistic and anti-western. Islamism not only opposed the West but also the internal westernized political elite, who raised high expectations with their socialist ideology but failed to address the needs of other citizens than the high and middle classes (ironically).

Arab political history shows that democracy is not unknown in this part of the world. Before, during and after colonization there have always been intellectuals and politicians who advocated reform regarding human rights, women and socio-economic development. For example, in the second half of the 20th century, a leading Arab research center based in Beirut took the initiative to organize a series of public lectures on democracy in Arab countries. These meetings took place on Cyprus because no Arab country was willing to host them. In 1983 the Arab Organization for Human Rights, which created a breeding ground for many other initiatives was founded. What began as an NGO-initiative became twenty years later an issue that was discussed by Arab governments and about which common statements and goals were formulated and declarations signed (Awad, 1997). In the late 1990s a new generation of kings in Morocco,

Jordan and Golf stood up and introduced reform-minded programs. The changes were modest but still from the governments there were slight steps visible towards democratic reform.

In January 2004, during the Inter-governmental Conference on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the International Criminal Court, the Sana'a declaration was signed. Later that year president Mubarak hosted the conference, 'Arab Reform Issues: Vision and Implementation'. This conference was organized by the Bibliotheca Alexandria in collaboration with Arab NGOs and resulted in the 'Alexandra document', which included promising statements such as the elimination of emergency laws and the dissolution of special security courts. The Tunis Declaration of the Arab League elaborated vaguely on this by including two paragraphs on reform. 'Vague' was the word critics used who found that there were no real changes because the declaration of Alexandra left space for '*the specific conditions of each country*'. For example, in Egypt this means that The Muslim Brotherhood cannot participate in parliamentary politics because political parties based on religious grounds are prohibited. This is also the case in Tunisia for the Islamist party Nahda. (Young, 2004). However, this conservatism was criticized during the Arab Civil Forum of that same year in Beirut. There was a direct attack on the reserved/reluctant attitude of the governments in the Arab Summits. The largest fear and main excuse of political leaders used in the international community to avoid democratic election is the popularity of the Islamist movements, with Algeria kept in mind as specter. This is also one of the major reasons why democratization has not been given priority in the foreign policy of the US and some European countries (Wittes, 2004). Until 2001 the US has always supported undemocratic regimes like Egypt, Saudi-Arabia and Iraq. After the disaster of 9/11 the US changed its Middle East policy. In summer 2004 they declared the 'Great Middle East Initiative', a program that supported and financed projects that were contributing to democracy (Hudson, 1996).

The above paragraph shows that the democratization process in the Arab world has many players. It is not a black and white debate, where the 'West' is and always has been pro democracy and the 'Arabs' never. From the 'Western' side there was not much attention for democratization in the Middle East until after the Cold War (and extensively after 9/11). And within the Arab world there have always been calls for reforms and internal debates under intellectuals; only the political restrictions did not permit them much space. Another restrictive fact is the language-barrier. There is an immense amount of scientific articles and books *in Arabic* that criticize politics, the culture, which is completely unknown to scholars in Europe and North-America. The above section also shows that there are different players in this game, each with their own agenda. Since people 'stand where they sit', they will all have different views on democracy and democratization. When we analyze the reactions on the results of the AHDRs or other liberal/critical documents there are several actors we can identify: the Arab political leaders,

10

the Bush-governments and associated think tanks and research institutions, the UN and the European Union.

Then we could distinguish the liberal intellectuals who have been fighting for centuries for their human rights and finally the people, the so called 'Arab street' which (almost by definition) tend to be led by populist ideas and movements (UNDP; 2004).

The place of 'political Islam' is not necessarily founded in the Arab street; there is a range of parties, groups and organizations that vary in mindset, political orientation and social class.

Democracy is a long-term process that cannot be imposed top-down by any entity. Lebanon is one of the most democratic countries in the Arab region with potential for further democratization. This small country in the Levant has been shaped by a different history then its neighbors. A history that made the citizens more engaged then other Arab citizens and the state less oppressive then other Arab states. In the next section there will be a short description of Lebanon's political history and its position nowadays.

1.2 Lebanon

In the Arab world, Lebanon is considered a modern country. For the youngsters it is the country of popular scarcely dressed artists. The capital, Beirut, has a nightlife as bustling as the city centers of Paris, London or New York. The freedom and diversity of the Lebanese society has made it an attractive country for Arab tourists. Not just in fun but also in more serious matters the surrounding nations look up to Lebanon. For example, most Arabic books, whether fiction or non-fiction are published in Beirut, because there is no censorship in Lebanon. Due to its exceptional freedom, Lebanon has been a center of Arab intellectual endeavor, long before colonialism.

Constitutionally Lebanon is a multi-confessional state and the only state in the region where the Christians are a protected group[2]. From 1516 till 1918 Lebanon, Syria and Egypt were part of the Ottoman Empire. The various religious communities were allowed to arrange their own internal affairs and all had their own family law and law of inheritance. In 1909 the Ottomans established the constitution that was inspired by the French constitution of 1901. It issued a special law to regulate the formation of associations and it is still the basic law that regulates associational life in Lebanon today (LCPS, 1999). During the French mandate (1920-1943) the present political system came into existence. According to the Constitution of 1926 Lebanon had a parliament of one chamber where every confessional group was entitled to be represented. The president had to be a (Christian-) Maronite, the prime minister a *Sunni* and the speaker of parliament a Shiite.

---

[2] The presidency and a number of MPs are reserved for Christians based on an old census that showed them as a majority.

11

Under French rule the Maronites were a protected minority and given as much political power to as the other groups although these had a much larger population.

In the National Pact of 1943, an unwritten constitution, the Christians (represented by Bechara al Khoury) and Muslims (Riad el-Solh) agreed on a unified Lebanon, the Maronites accepting Lebanon's 'Arab face' and the Muslims recognizing Lebanon's special ties with the west. Both parties promised not to seek help from or union with other states. During the first decades of independence the state was weak and the president powerless because of a lack of national identity. Citizens identified themselves in the first place with the confessional group they belonged to. The president had to deal with leaders of strong religious and regional communities, the *zu'ama.* These were feudal landowners, clan leaders and dignitaries with great power. Influence and votes were bought with jobs, favors and money. The Suez-crisis of 1956 and the unification of Egypt and Syria in 1958 in the United Arab Republic had a great impact on public opinion in Lebanon. The Christians feared the upcoming Arab nationalism and wanted a continuous cooperation with the West. The Muslims were getting more and more anti-western and even had the vision of Lebanon joining in the Arab Union of Syria and Egypt. To put it in more ideological terms, since independence there always has been a great tension between Arabism and 'Lebanism' in Lebanon. *'Thus in Lebanon, from the very beginning, a force called Arabism, acting from outside and inside the country, stood face to face with another exclusively parochial social force called Lebanism; and the two forces collided on every fundamental issue, impeding the normal development of the state and keeping its political legitimacy and ultimate viability continuously in question. Each force, at the internal level, claimed to represent a principle and ideal involving a special concept of nationality; yet in each case one had to look behind the articulated argument to discover the real nature of the quarrel. ... But it was certainly no accident that the original proponents of Lebanism in the country were almost exclusively Christians, and for the most part Maronites, while the most unbending proponents of Arabism, as a community, were the Muslims.* (Salibi, 1993)

There has been extensively written about the causes of the Lebanese civil war that took place from 1975 to 1990. It is undeniable that many factors and especially many actors, both internally and externally, played a role. The weakness of the state, the social unrest, the ideological dissension and the identity crisis, the regional tensions (Israel, Syria) and the presence of a radicalized Palestinian community contributed to the war. The war (1975-1990) lasted for fifteen years and devastated the country literally and figuratively. The state was not just weak, but almost completely absent. Syria interfered to bring stability but ended up dominating Lebanon. Civil society flourished during and right after the war. It took over the tasks of the state and dealt with the consequences of the devastations. The religious organizations proved to be successful in fulfilling the needs of the people and made them even dependent on them. The religious

communities each have large networks of schools, hospitals, clinics, orphanages, retirement homes, youth groups, charitable groups and even women's groups (Salem, 1999).

Beside the constitution of 1926 and the National Pact of 1943, *the Ta'if Agreement* is another important document for the political structure of the Lebanese state. It was signed in 1989 (and implemented from 1991) and was meant to be a consolidation between the groups in war and to pave the way for a new Lebanon, 'sovereign, free and independent country and a final homeland for all its citizens.' It stated general principles and announced political reforms and other reforms in administration and the court. It changed the parliamentary seats ratio between Christians and Muslims from 6:5 to 1:1 and stated the abolition of political sectarianism as a fundamental national objective. The sovereignty of the State would be spread over all Lebanese territories which meant the disbanding and disarming of all militias and the withdrawal of Israel's troupes from the South. In the fourth article it acknowledges the special relationship with Syria 'that derives from the roots of blood relationships, history and joint fraternal interests.'

Lebanon has a very complex political history. It is a small country surrounded by countries with major political issues. Regional and international conflicts (even during the Cold war!) have always influenced Lebanese internal politics. Through all this turbulence Lebanon has since its independence been a model for social and economic development in the Middle East with impressive growth, high investment, and high scores on social indicators (World Bank). An impressive banking system and a merchant /entrepreneurial culture of the Lebanese, makes the economy very strong. An important source of income is the Diaspora (around 17 million) that makes capital flow in great amount into Lebanon. Not just economically, but also socially the standards are relatively high in Lebanon. Illiteracy is low and higher education has high quality institutions, where many Arab nationals form other countries send their children to. Due to the freedom and offered education, the media are well developed and civil society is large, diverse and dynamic.

We could state that in theory Lebanon has a societal and political culture where democracy could flourish much better or at least much freer then in other countries in the region. In the next section the problem definition of this thesis will be set out.

1.3 Problem definition

It is a fact that Lebanon has a large civil society that is very active on many essential fields; that it has hospitals and universities of (relatively) great quality and that many citizens are in one way or the other involved in community work or other voluntarism. It could be said that there is a sense of citizenship in Lebanon, when we compare it with for instance Jordan or any other state in the Gulf. There is a multi-party democracy with free elections and the parliament is a representation of society. Inspired by the book '*Making Democracy Work*' of Robert Putnam (1993), I will make an attempt in this thesis to find out what the relation is between the civil society in Lebanon and its performance in good governance. The central question is as follows:

"*How does the civil society in Lebanon influence good governance?*"

The central question cannot be answered without an analysis of civil society. It has to be asked how large it is, how active, how the associations can be categorized and on which fields they are mainly active. After presenting the state of affairs in good governance, it is possible to investigate the relation further. Then the last sub question is to what extent the identified societal characteristics are determinative in the performance of Lebanese government. These questions are formulated in four essential sub questions.

1. What are the characteristics of Lebanese civil society?
2. What is the state of affairs in good governance?
3. To what extent is this due to civil society?
4. How do typical Lebanese features/ characteristics influence this relation?

First I will draw a map of Lebanese civil society based on questions such as: how many organisations are there, in which fields are they active, are they secular or not? Then I will analyse the statistics of the UNDP on the level of good governance in different policy-areas. In the interviews, I will try to find out to what extent the state of good governance is related to, and influenced by the activities of civil society. Finally, it is interesting to find out whether the social and confessional structure is indeed the most important variable.

14

1.4 Theoretical framework and research methods

Putnam's book, *Making Democracy Work*, has inspired me to formulate the central question of this thesis. Reading his work was a revelation, especially because it is different from the mainstream public administration literature. In his book on democracy in Italy, Putnam explains the important role of social capital, a vague concept that can be subdivided in the concepts *trust, networks and norms of reciprocity*. He states that democracy is more than the sum of a constitutional state, parliamentary elections and an administrative system. It demands a certain political culture, a positive attitude towards the regime and between the citizens, networks, trust, and mutual benefits (Putnam, 2002). The social capital theory is the framework from which the central question will be answered and explanations will be given. In the next chapter, the theoretical framework will be discussed more extensively. It will be a challenge to apply the theory on an Arab country with a completely different history and societal structure than the countries Putnam has examined in his work.

1.5 Research Methods

Interviews with key-persons in Lebanese civil society are the principal research method. During my stay in Beirut, from September until December 2004, I took the interviews (questionnaire is included in the appendix) and got familiarized with Lebanese society and politics. Most key-persons belong to the most important civil society organizations and networks and were chosen on the advice of my colleague at the Center for Research and Training on Development, Omar Traboulsi. I tried to find a well-balanced and diverse sample of people to interview. The interviews were deliberately taken before any chapter of the thesis had been written and before theory was further analyzed. The fruitful conversations with Lebanese experts were the starting point of my thesis. It is my intention to avoid drawing conclusions beforehand based on my (Western?) knowledge and possibly biased perception. To complete the empirical research, especially on the matter of good governance, I relied on online sources of the UNDP, the World Bank, and the Human Rights Watch for the statistical and factual information about Lebanon on the national level. The reports of *The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies*, Omar Traboulsi (for the World Bank) and recent papers of the *Center for Research and Training on Development* (2004) were more specific and gave detailed information on civil society in Lebanon and Beirut in specific. Other noteworthy sources are the website of *the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies* and informative sites such as *Aljazeera*. Although *Aljazeera* is not a scientific source, it does provide information and especially more insights from an Arab perspective on political issues in general.Acquiring this knowledge and considering all these different points of view will contribute in avoiding a Euro-centric perspective in this thesis.

15

Another 'anti-Euro-centric' choice was to base a theoretical chapter on the work of Arab authors such as Hisham Shirabi *(Neopatriarchy, A theory of distorted change in Arab society)*, Ghassan Salamé (*Democracy without Democrats*) and Larbi Sadiki *(The Search for Arab Democracy)* who not only discuss concepts like democracy and civil society in an Arab context but also contribute to a definition of these concepts.

With this thesis I have the ambitious intention to learn more about Lebanon's state and society without distorting the truth with my prejudges. That's why I have chosen deliberately to take the interviews at a very early stage. Before reading *about* the Lebanese, I wanted to talk *with* them first. In a world were political reality is diffuse and difficult to grasp; it is very difficult to produce knowledge that is really knowledge in the academic sense of the word.

1.6   Outline

In the next chapter, I will discuss the social capital theory extensively. In the third chapter civil society and governance are discussed and in the fourth chapter the methodology. Chapter five is dedicated to views on civil society and good governance from the perspective of Arab history and theory. In particular, it reflects on the Western nature of these concepts and their applicability to the Arab world. The empirical results will be presented in the sixth chapter. The map of the Lebanese civil society is documented and the state of good governance shown. Very essential in this part are the interviews I held in Beirut with eleven prominent NGO-leaders. Chapter seven will treat the third and fourth sub question and will identify causal relations between civil society and good governance. In this chapter, the social capital theory will be related to the findings. Conclusions and recommendations follow in chapter eight.

Chapter 2   The Social Capital Theory

2.1   Introduction

Since the late 1990s, the concept of social capital has been widely used in various aspects and many social fields. The term on it self is not new, but it was Robert Putnam who made it famous with his books Making Democracy Work (1994) and Bowling Alone (2000). In the latter he argues that contemporary America has witnessed the weakening of the bonds of trust, reciprocity, and cooperation that constitute social capital and make civil society thrive. The World Bank picked it up and introduced it in the development-sector starting with a research program. Advocates of the social capital theory see it as a key component to build and maintain democracy.

Under the social capital theory lie the classical philosophical acknowledgments of authors like James Madison (The Federalist) and Alexis de Tocqueville (Democracy in America), who emphasized the relation between pluralistic associational life and democracy. According to Putnam (2000), the invention of the term goes back to early years of the 20th century. L.J. Hanifan, state supervisor of rural schools in West Virginia, used the term to describe 'those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people' (1916:130). He urged the importance of community involvement for successful schools. The urbanist Jane Jacobs (1961) made notable contributions in relation to urban life and neighborliness and emphasized the value of networks. Pierre Bourdieu made the first cohesive exposition of the term in his book The Forms of Capital (1983). He defines social capital as 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutional relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.' Putting it in the social context of education, sociologist James Coleman identifies three distinct forms of social capital: obligations and expectations, information channels, and social norms.

All these definitions and views have in common that social capital comes out of social relations, between individuals and between groups. It is not tangible but can lead to tangible collective benefits like baby-sitting circles, neighborhood watch schemes, car pools, and street parties (Newton, 1997). Social capital has both an individual aspect and a collective aspect and manifests itself on micro-, meso- and macro level. Individuals form connections that benefit their own interests; a good example is the importance of connections when one is in search of a job. Companies and organizations profit from the 'stock of active connections among people: trust, mutual understanding and shared values and behaviors that bind the members of human networks and communities and make cooperative action possible' (Cohen and Prusak, 2001).

On the macro level, society can't call it self a real society without a certain amount of social capital; citizens of a community should be and feel interconnected, should have a minimum of trust in their fellow citizens and should feel a sense of responsibility towards their (social) environment.

Social cohesion is critical for societies to prosper economically and for this development to be sustainable (Fukuyama, 1999). 'Social Capital refers to institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions. Social Capital is not just the sum of the institutions, which underpin a society; it is the glue that holds them together'. (The World Bank 1999). There are many definitions of social capital and it is a concept that has been applied to very diverse subjects. Putnam's described social capital as follows: Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called "civic virtue." The difference is that "social capital" calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a sense network of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital (Putnam 2000: 19).

Scheme 1: The social capital theory
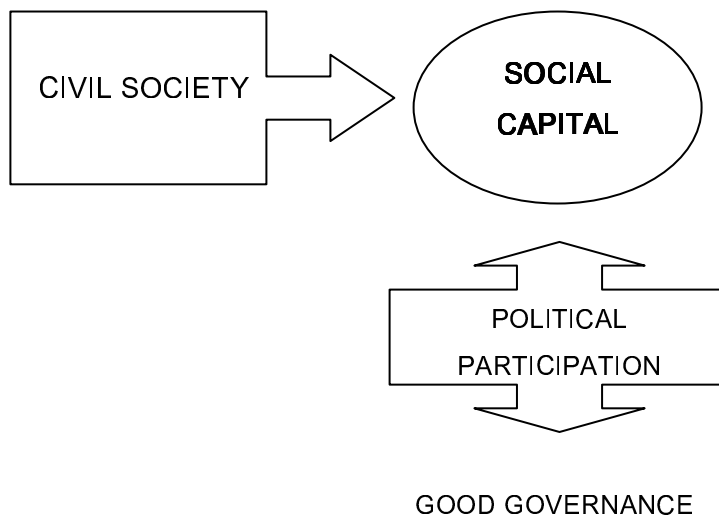
Source: Arthur Edwards (2003)

Scheme 1 shows the concepts used by Robert Putnam and the links between them (figure 1). Civil society thus, is the main source for social capital. Social capital contributes positively to political participation, which is on its turn beneficial for good governance. Furthermore, there is reciprocal relation between social capital and political participation, in that participation fosters social capital. Putnam does however formulate five conditions that a civic community should have before social capital can be fruitful. These will be further outlined in the next section.

2.2 Social Capital, a Putnamian approach

2.2.1 Introduction

The social capital theory as elaborated by Robert Putnam is the theoretical basis of this research. As mentioned earlier it differs from previous literature that explains government performance. His search for the connections between political culture, democracy and economic growth, fits in the tradition of new institutionalism (Putnam, 1993), where history and path-dependency are important elements. In this section there will be a close study of the theory and an exposition of the definition of the relevant concepts, civil society and good governance. Putnam states that there is a connection between the 'civicness' of a community and the quality of its governance. Social capital produced by such a community is beneficial for political participation and more participation will lead to good governance. As the above scheme shows civil society, social capital and political participation are interrelated concepts. Civil society, if it is dense and dynamic and if it has a civic community, will produce social capital.

Putnam formulates five conditions for a civic community: 1) political equality, 2) solidarity, 3) trust, 4) tolerance and 5) membership of associations. Political equality means equal rights and obligations for all citizens and a society that is bound together by horizontal relations of reciprocity and cooperation, not by vertical relations of authority and dependency. Solidarity among citizens is another building stone. Limiting it to paying taxes and having a not-in-my-back-yard-attitude is not prosperous. People should feel responsible for each other to a certain extent. Citizens should feel the urge to join an association and/ or give some of their time and energy in sake of supra-individual matters. In every interpersonal relationship, trust is an essential condition. Trust is a moral orientation that fosters a positive political climate. Fabrics of trust enable the civic community more easily to surmount what economists call 'opportunism', in which shared interests are unrealized because each individual, acting in wary of isolation, has an incentive to defect from collective action. Tolerance is another condition for a civic community; respect for diversity in opinions and identities is essential for a community to be unified and peaceful. The fifth condition

19

for a civic community, says Putnam, is membership of associations. The norms and values of the civic community are embodied in, and reinforced by, distinctive social structures and practices.

Civil associations contribute to the effectiveness and stability of democratic government, it is argued, both because of their internal effects on individual members and because of their external effects on the wider polity.

Internally, associations instill in their members habits of cooperation, solidarity, and public spiritedness (Putnam, 1992). In following sections I will present an extract of the book *Making democracy work*. This book is theoretically as well as empirically relevant for this thesis on Lebanon. The civic attitudes of the southern regions in Italy are in a way comparable with the civic attitudes of citizens in Lebanon and other Arab countries.

2.2.2   Making democracy work in Italy: about civicness and government performance

The central thesis in the work of Putman is the existence of a connection between the *civicness* of a community and the quality of its governance. He searches for the conditions that create strong, responsive, effective representative institutions. He began his research in 1970 when Italy established new political and administrative structures in the form of seventeen regional governments. For Putnam this was a unique experiment to study the relation between structure and culture. All these governments have the same structure and legal powers. However their performance varied; the northern governments performed much better than the southern did. In the search for explanations, he sets out three hypotheses. The first one is that institutions shape politics. The second hypothesis states that history shapes institutions, especially by the path of socioeconomic development. The new institutionalists agree on both these points. He tried to contribute empirical evidence to both these themes. 'Taking institutions as an independent variable, we explore empirically how institutional change affects the identities, power, and strategies of political actors. Later, taking institutions as a dependent variable, we explore how institutional performance is conditioned by history (1992:8). The role of social context has been neglected in previous literature according to Putnam. He states that social context is a determinant factor in the practical performance of institutions. In his Italian experiment, which took two decades, he finds empirical evidence for the important role of culture, 'civic' culture in particular, in developing successful institutions. He found that there was a very strong correlation between the level of performance of the regional government and the extent to which there is a civic culture. The more involved citizens are in associational life, the better the government performs. This difference in social capital distinguishes North Italy from South Italy. As mentioned earlier, Putnam defines social capital as the existence of norms of trust and reciprocity and networks of civic engagement. These horizontal (!) networks facilitate generalized trust and cooperation among citizens. Putnam assumes that associations and political parties that embody these networks not just facilitate norms of trust and cooperation but strengthen these values as

20

well. In the southern regions of Italy, these horizontal networks hardly exist. Public life is organized along vertical and hierarchic lines.

Political participation is low and if citizens show involvement, it is most of the time for personal motives. Putnam takes preference voting as an indicator for the absence of a civic community and makes a difference between the quantity and the quality of participation. The quality depends on the character of the participation. Politics in the southern areas is organized hierarchically and focused more narrowly on personal advantage.

Political involvement is impelled and constrained by 'personalistic', patron-client networks, rather than by programmatic commitments on public issues. Evidence for this is found in the fact that citizens in the less civic regions have much more frequent personal contact with their representatives than in the north. The reason why they contact their politicians is another indicator of opportunism. They do not go to politicians to discuss policy but to make requests for jobs and patronage (Putnam, 1992). Not just differences in the attitudes of citizens are revealing but also those of the political elite reveal a lack of *'civicness'.* Vertical relations of authority and dependency expressed in patron-client networks mark politics in the less civic south. '*In short, civics is about equality as well as engagement. It is impossible to sort out the complex causal connections that underlie these patterns of elite-mass linkages. It is fruitless to ask which came first –the leaders' commitment to equality or the citizens' commitment to engagement. We cannot say in what measure the leaders are simply responding to the competence and civic enthusiasm (or lack of it) of their constituents, and in what measure civic engagement by citizens has been influenced by the readiness (or reluctance) of elites to tolerate equality and encourage participation. Elite and mass attitudes are in fact two sides of a single coin, bound together in a mutually reinforcing equilibrium* (Putnam, 1992). An interesting conclusion in this aspect is that '*in the absence of solidarity and self-discipline, hierarchy and force provide the only alternative to anarchy'* (Putnam, 1992). In the context of Arab democratization, it is a very interesting statement made by an American author: because that is exactly the excuse anti-democrats and dictators tend to use; that the Arab people need an authoritative system to avoid anarchy and civil war. The civic community values solidarity, civic engagement, cooperation, and honesty. In the south cynical attitudes, distrust in politics and in fellow-citizens characterizes the political culture. In these societies, citizens feel more powerless and exploited and respond to this by cynical and corrupt behavior. In this political climate, where laws are to be broken anyway, people have faith in authoritarian leadership. In sum, Putnam observed a difference in the effectiveness of the regional governments between horizontally, North Italy, and hierarchically, South Italy, organized societies. Thus, equality is an essential feature of the civic community.

The next section gives us a closer look at the book *Making democracy work*. By expounding the historical differences between the South and the North, Putnam demonstrates how civic culture arises and social capital evolves.

2.3   Social capital and history

To explain the difference in (civic) culture and amount of social capital Putnam goes back in time. Until mid 19th century Italy was, in contrast to the modernizing European states, economically and politically underdeveloped in contrast to the prosperous years around 1100. Norman mercenaries from Northern Europe founded new regimes in the center of Sicily and made them advanced governments. Frederick II issued a constitution that included many of the principles of the centralized, autocratic state that would later spread across Europe. Economically, the region flourished under his régime. Critical point is that he insisted on state monopolies of much of the kingdom's commerce, which was a not a beneficial policy in the long-term. In essence, by the end of the 12-century Sicily was the richest, most advanced, and highly organized state in Europe. '*In its social and political arrangements, however the south was, and would remain, strictly autocratic, a pattern of authority that was reinforced by Frederick's reforms. His Constitutiones reaffirmed the full feudal rights of the barons and declared it "sacrilege" to question the ruler's decisions. In their comprehensiveness and detail, and above all in their concept of royal authority, Frederick's laws illustrate the singularity of Sicily in Western Europe. The regnum was held from by the Emperor from God himself'*. Putnam describes this kingdom as feudal, bureaucratic and absolutist where there was not much space given to communal autonomy. Civic life (of artisans and merchants) was not regulated from within like in the North but top down from the center.

In the same period, a communal republic, based on horizontal relations, was gradually emerging in the towns of North and Central Italy. '*The communes sprang originally from voluntary associations, formed when groups of neighbors swore personal oaths to render one another mutual assistance, to provide for common defense and economic participation".* These communes where democratic in that sense that citizens were involved in government affairs through committees and deliberation-groups. As communal life progressed, members of guilds and other local organizations began to press for broader political reform. Thus, after deliberation and inevitable conflicts, they professionalized public administration in the communal republic and developed systems of public finance, land reclamation, commercial law, accounting, zoning, public hygiene, economic development, public education, policing, and government by committee.

Unlike the wealth of the Sicilian Kingdom, based on land, the growing prosperity of the northern Italian city-states was rooted in finance and commerce (1992:128). ''*...The institutions of civic*

22

republicanism, the networks of associations, and the extension of solidarity beyond the bonds of kinship that had emerged in the northern communes were crucial for this trust and confidence to flourish". Putnam mapped the various regimes, corresponding to different degrees of republicanism and autocracy and showed the parallels with contemporary distribution of civic norms and networks.

He concludes that over the ten centuries (since 1100) the South has never been as civic in its norms and patterns of association as the North. This does not have much to do with prosperity. The mainstream literature in political and development studies sees economic development as a condition for civic engagement; Putnam argues that in the Italian case something else was the determining factor. The Northern regions did not begin wealthier and were not always economically better off then the south but they remained steadfastly more civic.

2.4   Theoretical and methodological concerns

As mentioned before Putnam places his concept of social capital in the context of institutionalism. He states that social context matters and tries to find *which features* of social context affect institutional performance. He discusses three schools of thoughts that explain institutional performance. The first school emphasizes institutional design as the independent variable and dominated until mid 20th century. Rooted in formal legal studies this school focused on "structural and procedural contrivance" (Putnam, 1992:9). In the Italian experiment, the institutional design is a constant; the variable factors were environmental factors such as economic context and political tradition. The second school emphasizes the socio-economic factors. There is common agreement that effective democracy and socio-economic modernity are closely associated. There is less agreement though on which comes first. The sharp socio-economic differences between the Northern and Southern regions of Italy made it possible to assess the complex relation between modernity and economic performance. Putnam is fundamentally not opposed to these schools. However, he subscribes to the social cultural view on the performance of political institutions. *"Tocqueville highlights the connection between "mores" of a society and its political practices. Civic associations, for example, reinforce "the habits of the heart" that are essential to stable and effective democratic institutions.* More contemporary in this stream is the (classical) civic culture study of Almond and Verba (1963). These scholars sought to identify which political culture was the best climate for a healthy and well-functioning democracy: the parochial culture, subject culture and participant-culture. The most familiar type is the participant culture. Here citizens believe that they can influence the (national) system and that they are affected by it. In the subject culture, citizens are subjects of the government, as with people under dictatorship. In parochial cultures, there is a (physical) distance between citizens and the central government like in tribal society that seem to be unaffected by decisions of national government.

23

They found out that the best civic culture is a mixture of all these three types. There should be popular control but not much considering the stability of the system and effective governance.

In his studies, Putnam follows the third school and explores the origins of effective government by finding out how the south and north *historically* differ from each other in civic culture.

This case demonstrated that good regional governments were found in the regions where civil society was most developed and attitudes of citizens are positive and pro-active. Tracing this back to medieval Italy, Putnam shows systematic regional differences in patterns of civic involvement and solidarity. *'These traditions have decisive consequences for the quality of life, public and private, in Italy's region today'*. He concludes that social capital is the potential cause of good governance and economic development, and that social capital is a result of path dependent historical legacies.

When he attempts to understand how norms and networks of civic engagement affect the prospects for effective, responsive governments and which traditions are so stable over long periods, his theory gets complicated. Putnam combines historical and rational choice perspectives to develop his theoretical approach. He does this by showing how important the role of trust is in every rational game. A culture of trust, where everyone assumes that the other will trust too and expect that the other is trustworthy, is necessary in collective action. The performance of all social institutions depends on how dilemmas of collective action are resolved. Success in overcoming these problems depends, according to Putnam, on the broader social context of the particular game. Voluntary action is easier in a community with a great stock of social capital, which is a civic legacy in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement. The denser networks are within communities the more likely it is that citizens cooperate for mutual benefit. Putnam believes in the working of dense networks of social exchange that grow out of networks of civic engagement. He claims that civic networks: 1) increase the social capital needed to cover the potential costs to a detector in any individual transaction, 2) foster robust forms of reciprocity, 3) facilitate communication and improve the flow of information about the trustworthiness of individuals and 4) embody past success at collaboration.

Finally, Putnam draws the conclusion that history shapes two kinds of social equilibriums. His view here is oversimplified, since he argues that when a society falls in equilibrium, it can never get out of it because both social equilibriums are vicious circles. The uncivic society represents the 'bad case', corresponding with South Italy where people rely on family in private affairs and in public affairs on force. The other equilibrium is that of the civic community. Here citizens are cooperative and trust each other.

24

History determines which of these two stable outcomes characterizes any given society. Putnam emphasizes the self-enforcing and cumulative nature of social capital. The more citizens use it, the more social capital grows. That is why Putnam concludes that the creation and destruction of social capital is a vicious circle. In sum, social context and history profoundly condition the effectiveness of institutions, through civic or uncivic culture.

The civic community has deep historical roots. However, this does not implicate despair for uncivic communities. Change is possible but demands time, generations of time even.

Making democracy work is an impressive study that combines qualitative and quantitative methods. Before we go to the next section, it is interesting to enlarge on that for a moment. How did Putnam measure *civicness* in Italy? He presents evidence using the next indicators: the vibrancy of associational life, newspaper readership, and electoral turnout and preference voting. The first two correspond to Tocqueville's broad conception of civic community. The latter refer more directly to political behaviour. The first was easy to answer thanks to a census in Italy. He makes a distinction between sports clubs (which represent 73% of associational life) and other associations. The newspaper is in Italy still the most important medium between citizens and politics. Newspaper readers are better informed than non-readers are. This makes them better equipped to participate in civic deliberations. At the same time, newspaper readership shows the citizens interest in community affairs. Electoral turnout is the classical indicator of political interest. In Italy's case, the preference voting provides important information on regional political practices. It reveals patron-client politics. Putnam takes preference voting as an indicator for the absence of a civic community and makes a difference between the quantity and the quality of participation. The quality depends on the character of the participation.

Politics in the southern areas is organized hierarchically and focused more narrowly on personal advantage. Political involvement is impelled and constrained by personalistic, patron-client networks, rather than by programmatic commitments on public issues. Evidence for this is found in the fact that citizens in the less civic regions have much more frequent personal contact with their representatives than in the north. The reason why they contact their politicians is another proof, not to talk about policy but to make requests for jobs and patronage (Putnam, 1992).

2.5   The dark side of social capital: too much fraternity

The most common substantive critique on Putnam's conceptualization was the view that social capital is not good and prosperous for society by definition. It has a 'dark side'. Often mentioned examples are the Ku Klux Klan or urban gangs; both are a result of collective action, based on trust, reciprocity and cooperation. Both know a strong sense of group feeling and solidarity. In his

book *Bowling Alone* that came out in 2000, Putnam responds to this critique by distinguishing two kinds of social capital: bonding and bridging social capital. The former refers to the value assigned to social networks between the homogeneous groups of people and the latter to that of social networks between socially heterogeneous groups. Bridging capital is beneficial for societies, governments, individuals and communities because it can generate broader identities and reciprocity. With bonding capital, Putnam tries to illustrate the reverse of the medal.

Self-serving and exclusive groups such as criminal gangs can be thought of as negative social capital burdens on society.

More generally, in *Bowling Alone* he discusses the classical dilemma between community and individualism, or speaking in terms of the French revolution between fraternity and liberty. In this part of the book, he wonders whether too much fraternity is bad and if social capital is at war with liberty and tolerance. According to the classical liberals, community ties restrict freedom and encourage intolerance (Putnam, 2000:351). Indeed, in the United States of the fifties there was more social capital but more conformity and social division as well. In addition from the mid sixties until the late nineties the Americans become more tolerant and less connected. However, these trends do not convince Putnam to agree with the liberal view on community. He points at data that show that individuals more engaged in their communities are more tolerant, than those who are not active. He proves that the relation between social capital and civic tolerance is positive one. *'Conceptually, at least tolerance and social capital are not opposite ends of a single continuum from extreme individualism to extreme sectarianism* (Putnam, 2000:355). The next table shows how he classifies society in four types:

Table 1: Social Capital and Tolerance: Four Types of Society

	Low Social Capital	High Social Capital
High Tolerance	(1) *Individualistic Community*	(3) *Civic Community*
Low Tolerance	(2) *Anarchic Community*	(4) *Sectarian Community*

The simple "liberty vs. community" interpretation highlights cells (1) and (4) – the individualistic society with much liberty but little community, and the sectarian society with much community but little liberty. Beside anarchy (2), there is (3) the ideal community, which combines social capital with tolerance. With figures, he shows that liberty and fraternity are mutually supportive. The most tolerant communities in the USA are those with the greatest civic involvement. Moreover, the

26

most intolerant individuals and communities are the least connected, not the most connected. Putnam does admit however that community ties can be oppressive. Bridging and bonding capital both have their function but the latter can have illiberal effects. These two forms are not by definition mutually reinforcing; the existence of the first can discourage the formation of the other and vice versa.

He describes this as the *Fraternity vs. Fraternity'-dilemma: ' What if we need to choose between policies that build a little bridging social capital and those that build a lot of bonding social capital?' (Putnam, 2000: 363).* Finally, he concludes that for the biggest collective problems the solution can be found in bridging social capital. This is more difficult to achieve than bonding social capital.

2.6   Social capital as a debatable concept: an overview of the critics

Putnam made an enormous contribution with his books and his research in the United States and Italy. His theory on social capital became famous among other scholars as well as policy makers and large multilateral organizations like the UNDP and the World Bank. At the same time, he received loads of critic. In his research on quality of performance between the Northern and Southern governments of Italy, Putnam concludes that the predictive power of the civic community is higher than that of economic development*: "The more civic a region, the more effective its government"* (Putnam, 1993).

In his article 'The Dark Side of Social Capital", Putzel (1997) criticizes the hypothesis that higher levels of social capital are inherently beneficial. In analyzing organizations and societies, he makes a clear distinction between *mechanisms of trust* and *political content and ideas.* Dense networks, with high levels of trust do not necessarily promote democracy. He argues that there is *"neither any evidence that the skills and habits learned in such associations are 'transferable, nor that they are relevant to the construction of democratic practice"* (Putzel 1997:947).

In general, both of his works triggered discussions among scholars about empirical and methodological issues. They doubt to what extent data are brought together accurately in the historical model. Blokland reviews the critic on Putnam in an article in the Dutch policy magazine *'Beleid en Maatschappij'.* According to Blokland, *Levi* criticizes the role of path dependency in the social theory of Putnam. He finds his elaboration generally spoken too metaphoric and analytically too rigid. She also points at the lack of a human factor or agency. And implicitly she finds Putnam's idea that institutions can memorize experiences and practices, underdeveloped. Beside all the above critique, Blokland describes the notions Putnam uses, as conceptually underdeveloped. Words like 'society', 'community' and 'whole', seem to be too vague for her; the same for words such as 'bridges' and 'networks'. Though she finds Cory Robin extremely negative about Putnam, he makes a point when he says that there is not much attention for

27

economical and racial inequality in Putnam's work. He reduces social inequality to a matter of contact, cohesion and community. Her greatest worry is that Putnam that does not show concern for exclusion and poverty of chances ('*Dat sociale ongelijkheden hun basis kunnen hebben in de structuur en organisatie van het 'geheel' zelf, staat analytisch buiten spel.* Beleid en Maatschappij, 2002).What Blokland actually tries to illustrate is that if we would link the social capital theory with poverty then this vision (poverty as a problem of social integration) will contribute to the idea that poor people owe their poverty to themselves. She states that social inequalities are founded in the structure and organization of the 'whole' itself.

Despite the sharp critic on his empirical research and the vagueness of his concepts, Putnam's concepts and social capital theory are widely used. As the writer of this thesis I certainly take this critic in consideration. However, social capital theory gives an interesting perspective on the relation between society and governance. There are other explanations for 'bad' governance then institutional design or socio-economic factors. It is important to have a good look at society and its structures and do historical research to find out how these structures have been shaped. The social capital theory does provide interesting and complementary insights to theory in mainstream literature. Besides, no single theory has exclusive rights to describe and explain reality.

2.7   Conclusion

The social capital theory of Robert Putnam is the theoretical framework of this thesis. His search for the connections between political culture, democracy and economic growth fits in the tradition of new institutionalism (Putnam, 1993), where history and path-dependency are important elements. Putnam's described social capital as follows: *social capital refers to connections among individuals –* **social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them.** *In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called "civic virtue." The difference is that "social capital" calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a sense network of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital* (Putnam 2000: 19). Civil society thus, is the main source for social capital. Social capital contributes positively to political participation, which is on its turn beneficial for good governance.

Putnam formulates five conditions that a community should have to be called civic: 1) political equality, 2) solidarity, 3) trust, 4) tolerance and 5) membership of associations. In the ideal civic society, citizens have equal rights and cooperate in networks that have a horizontal structure. Civic involvement is based on solidarity and trust and fosters a positive political climate where citizens believe in their governors. Tolerance is necessary to have citizens who can differ in

28

opinion, interest and identity, living together, being one society and more challenging being one polity.

The norms and values of the civic community are embodied in, and reinforced by, distinctive social structures and practices. Civil associations contribute to the effectiveness and stability of democratic government, it is argued, both because of their internal effects on individual members and because of their external effects on the wider polity. Internally, associations instill in their members habits of cooperation, solidarity, and public spiritedness (Putnam, 1992)

This chapter started with the elaboration of Putnam's theory as described in the book '*Making democracy work'*. This book is both theoretically and empirically relevant for this thesis on Lebanon. The civic attitudes of the southeren regions are in a way comparable with the civic attitudes of citizens in Lebanon and other Arab countries.He began his research in 1970 when Italy established new political and administrative structures in the form of seventeen regional governments. All these governments have the same structure and legal powers.

Still their performance varied; the northern governments performed much better than the southern did. In his Italian experiment, which took two decades, he finds empirical evidence for the important role of culture, 'civic' culture in particular, in developing successful institutions. He found that there was a very strong correlation between the level of performance of the regional government and the extent to which there is a civic culture. The more involved citizens are in associational life, the better the government performs. This difference in social capital distinguishes North Italy from South Italy.

In the Italian experiment, the institutional design is a constant; the variable factors were environmental factors such as economic context and political tradition. The sharp socio-economic differences between the Northern and Southern regions of Italy made it possible to assess the complex relation between modernity and economic performance. In his studies, Putnam follows the third school of institutionalism and explores the origins of effective government by finding out how the south and north *historically* differ from each other in civic culture. This case demonstrated that good regional governments were found in the regions where civil society was most developed and attitudes of citizens positive and pro-active. Tracing this back to medieval Italy, Putnam shows systematic regional differences in patterns of civic involvement and social solidarity. He concludes that social capital is the potential cause of good governance and economic development, and social capital is a result of path dependent historical legacies.

Putnam combines historical and rational choice perspectives to develop his theoretical approach Putnam believes in the working of dense networks of social exchange that grow out of networks

29

of civic engagement. He claims that civic networks: 1) increase the social capital needed to cover the potential costs to a detector in any individual transaction, 2) foster robust forms of reciprocity, 3) facilitate communication and improve the flow of information about the trustworthiness of individuals and 4) embody past success at collaboration. Finally, Putnam draws the conclusion that history shapes two kinds of social equilibriums. His view here is oversimplified, since he argues that societies hardly get out of the social equilibrium they have once got in. He emphasizes the self-enforcing and cumulative nature of social capital. The more citizens use it, the more social capital grows. That is why Putnam concludes that the creation and destruction of social capital is a vicious circle. In sum, social context and history profoundly condition the effectiveness of institutions, through civic or un*civic* culture.

Putnam received loads of critics. His works triggered discussions among scholars about empirical and methodological issues. This has to do with the unconventional way he combines an impressive large amount of statistical data with social theory and historic models. In a review of his critics, Blokland describes the notions Putnam uses, as conceptually underdeveloped. Words like society, community, the whole; bridges and networks are too vague. What Blokland actually tries to illustrate is that if we would link the social capital theory with poverty then this vision (poverty as a problem of social integration) will contribute to the idea that poor people owe their poverty to themselves. She states that social inequalities are founded in the structure and organization of the 'whole' itself. The most common substantive critique on Putnam's conceptualization was the view that social capital is not good/ prosperous for society by definition. It has a 'dark side'. In his book *Bowling Alone* that came out in 2000, Putnam responds to this critique by distinguishing two kinds of social capital: bonding and bridging social capital.

The structural base of a democracy is based on the ruled of law, together with the separation of the three powers separated and of course free elections. Beside this structural fundament, a certain political culture is needed as well. We cannot just implement a parliamentary system that works well country A and expect that it will work (in the same way) in country B. There are more factors to be taken account of. Putnam shows in his Italian experiment how history and culture make a difference in the performance of regional governments. Governments with a large stock of social capital, with citizens that share a civic culture, perform better. Governments that do not perform well have citizens with another attitude towards politics. Putnam traces these differences to historical differences in society, economy and culture. History shapes people and their institutions. History also shapes social capital. It takes time to build social capital. Changing a society by starting with changing its governmental structure is not enough. Context, whether historical, political, cultural or even religious, matters too much to leave it out of the picture when we take a close look at *any* democracy. This is what Putnam tries to show with his book on

30

democracy in Italy. There has been critic on the vagueness of the concept and on the measurability of trust but that is no reason to investigate social institutions and their performance with this framework. In the next chapters we will look at the relation between civil society and good governance in the light of the social capital theory.

Chapter 3   Civil Society and Good Governance: a conceptual Framework

3.1   Introduction

This chapter clarifies the concepts civil society and good governance and discusses their relation. The working definitions of the UNDP for civil society and good governance are the conceptual tools of this research. Good governance will be discussed twice. First it will be examined as it has been developed in Public Administration. After this, good governance will be discussed, as it exists in the policy, documents and statistics of international organizations like the World Bank and the United Nations.

3.2   Civil society

The classical defender of civil society is Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859). In his book Democracy in America, he discussed civil society extensively. This originally French scholar defines civil society as free associations that exist as intermediate institutions between citizens and state, and in which citizens can realize their social freedom and equality. In Western Europe and the United States he observed the rise of civil society around 1810-1820. He understood this social-political phenomenon as the result of private initiatives and free associations, which would contribute to the democratization and revitalization of society (Woldring, 1998:364). Tocqueville distinguished social and political associations. The social organizations gather people for social and cultural reasons without having a political agenda. Political associations go further in this and involve in political life as well. They use their collectivity as a power to influence the law, moral rules and public issues in general. His main thesis is that (effective) social and political organizations vitalize democracy. This leads to more social and political freedom (Woldring, 1998:). Tocqueville found evidence for his hypothesis in the United States, where there was room for different institutions such as churches and private associations to serve the American people. It was also a way to balance the power relation between state and society. Tocqueville's ideas show a parallel with Putnam's appreciation of civil society. He also emphasizes the individual benefits and learning possibilities for citizens that are engaged in associational life. To give people really a chance to develop their competences and responsibilities, the administration of a state should not interfere with or restrict associations in their affaires. Thus freedom is essential. Even though Tocqueville values civil society as opposed to the state, he also emphasizes that the state should be able to limit the power or self-regulation of associations. This has to do with the social and public unrest they might cause. Governmental management or centralization is essential but does not have to cover all social-political fields.The most important are the judiciary and foreign policy (defense). Thus, he prefers minimal state interference. In short, as for Putnam a flourishing civil society is for Tocqueville the basis of a healthy democracy.

32

Among scholars, there is no clear definition about what civil society is. To give two examples that contradict on one element, I will compare Hegel with Hague and Harrop. According to Hegel, civil society is *'that area of social engagement which exists above the state'* and it is a complex network of economic social and cultural practices based on friendship, family, the market and voluntary affiliation' (Blanc, 2001). For Hague and Harrop (2004,) '*civil society consists of those groups which are above the personal realm of family but beneath the state'*. Since, this study is not about the different ways of conceptualizing and defining civil society, I prefer to make use of the simple and pragmatic vision of the UNDP on civil society. Another reason for this (using the UNDP-definition) is the fact that a main part of the theoretical framework, here I specifically mean the good governance principles, is drawn from UNDP-sources. There must be, like on any popular-scientific document used in policy circles, critique from scholars on the UNDP's framework. Still, I prefer to confine my thesis to the pragmatic use of these concepts. Chapter three, however, will have a more political-philosophical nature. [But that has to with the angle of that chapter (compensate for Euro centric biases)].

Putnam is certainly not the only one who claims that civil society is vital for a state. In spite of definition problems, the concept civil society is widely used in the academic and policymaking sphere. Many seem to be convinced of its importance. It addresses social needs, gathers people, gives volunteers the opportunity to develop their skills and strengthens the community-spirit. In relation to the state, it has the ability to aggregate several interests, to mobilize people and to serve as mediator between the state and the citizen. In the last two decades, civil society is increasingly taken seriously as a discussion partner in public policy. The Civil Dialogue, initiated in the nineties by the European Commission, is a vivid example. It was Europe's first attempt to give the institutions of society –and not only governments and businesses- a voice at the policy-making tables in Brussels. This is also the case in the development sector.

Finally I would like to cite definition of the UNDP: *Civil society, lying between the individual and the state, comprises individuals and groups (organized or unorganized) interacting socially, politically and economically - regulated by formal and informal rules and laws. Civil society organizations are the host of associations around which society voluntarily organizes.* (UNDP, 1997).The definition of the UNDP includes trade unions; non-governmental organizations; gender, language, cultural and religious groups; charities; business associations; social and sports clubs; cooperatives and community development organizations; environmental groups; professional associations; academic and policy institutions; and media outlets.

Political parties are also included, although they straddle civil society and the state if they are represented in parliament.

3.3 Good governance

Governance and good governance are both words that are so much used in foreign policy and international practice that we forgot where they come from and how they have developed. In this study we are going to make use of a pragmatic definition of good governance. International organizations like the World Bank, the IMF and the United Nations contribute to the theoretical building of concepts like social capital, civil society and good governance as well. However it is important to distinguish the 'good governance' as we know it in the international community from the 'governance' and 'good government' we know in the tradition of Public Administration studies. The term 'governance' has its own conceptual history in the studies of Public Administration and this should be distinguished from the popular 'good governance'-idea that has been created by international policy makers. The following subsections will elaborate on this difference.

3.3.1 Governance and Good Governance in Public Administration theory

Studies of public administration have always been reflecting the developments of the government and public sector. The word 'governance' was almost absent in public administration literature in the time that governments where state-central institutions with a hierarchal internal organization. This was the fact until the 1980s in most European countries. When states liberalized in the years after, they did not just leave space for the market but also made more room for civil society. Beside this external openness, internally states decentralized, whether vertical or functional. This development led to the emergence of the concept 'governance' in public administration-literature. What we can say about the difference between government and governance is that governance includes government but that government does not include governance. Government is restricted to the state and its machinery; governance can include government or a governmental institution but can also actors from society and business-life. In the last two decades, there has been a large amount of books and articles discussing this term giving it different definitions and describing it from many dimensions.

Pierre and Peters (2000) show that there are different ways to think of governance. It can be seen as a process that leads to the solution of public problems. In this view, governance is often discussed in literature as a process of steering and coordinating society; a different style then the state-centered government has. Governance can be seen as a structure as well. This means that it consists of formal institutional arrangements. In structural terms, Pierre and Peter distinguish four kinds of governance (2000). First, there is the governance based on *hierarchies*.

This is the old-fashioned understanding which identifies a vertically and law-based organization of political system and bureaucracy. In this view, governance is 'good' if it follows the processes of the hierarchical system and if law regulates it. Then there is the more modern understanding of

34

governance as (*policy) networks*. Beside state institutions, networks include a variety of societal actors, whether profit or non-profit. They can all have a role in regulating and shaping policy. Here good governance entails openness towards these actors and to their input and power sharing instead of practicing top-down control. This will lead to the creation of widely accepted (thus more effective) policies. *Communities* can also be a central actor in governance. Governance as communities is an *'overly idyllic and philanthropic'* view according to Pierre and Peters. In this case, citizens show a far-reaching positive involvement. In this society, the state is too big and too bureaucratic to handle itself. Here, good governance requires a citizenry that is willing to participate and that is empowered to contribute to solutions to collective matters. The *market* perception on governance reflects the typical liberal idea that the market is the best allocative actor and good governance means giving it the space to do so.

Thus in the studies of politics and government, governance is a term that corresponds to the contemporary role of the state as not being the only actor in addressing public issues and to a manner of governing that does not have to be top-down from the (central) state to society. We can conclude that governance is a way of looking at governments and politics: it is an analytical framework. In the following section, we will elaborate on this matter from the normative perspective on governance. Public administration is not a strictly positivistic science; describing political and administrative reality is not its only task. It also identifies norms to judge it and rationalizes prescriptions that can improve public administration (Bovens, 't Hart, van Twist, Rosenthal, 2001). In this section, we will discuss the norms of good government as described in the Dutch classic of public administration. The four main criteria of good government are *democracy, legitimacy, effectiveness & efficiency, and integrity*.

Scheme 2: four main criteria of good government
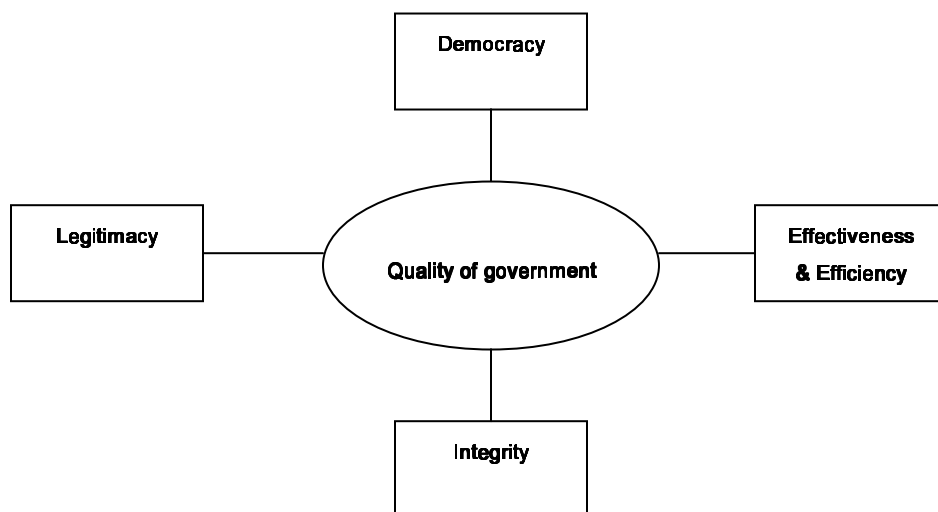
Democracy means that politicians and governors act in behalf of the people that elected them. Openness of the system to public participation guarantees *responsiveness*. Power cannot be absolute and should be controlled. That it is why government must be legitimate and be based on the rule of law is. Every governmental act and competence must be lawful. The degree of effectiveness and efficiency determines the quality of government as well. This entails goal achievement and an optimal use of means. Finally, good government requires integrity. This means that governors do not misuse their public power for personal purposes and always act ethically responsible. The quality and legitimacy of government in general depends, according to Bovens, 't Hart, van Twist and Rosenthal, on the way governors succeed in meeting these criteria, which together form an area of tension. As the above scheme shows, these authors still speak of government instead of governance.

In another and very recent Dutch study, Bekkers and Edwards (Bekkers, Dijkstra, Edwards and Fenger, 2007) design a conceptual framework to assess governance in practice. The different criteria they identify are placed in the three stage of a policy-system: input, throughput and output. For the authors of this work governance should be democratic legitimate in all three stages of collective decision-making. For input this means first of all that there are *opportunities for citizens to participate* in political decision-making beside the right to vote. In case of indirect representation or minimal participation, the *representation should be of a quality*, which guarantees an actual inclusion of peoples' wishes and interests.

Participation and representation should lead to a political agenda where citizens can recognize their demands and concerns in. That is why the *openness of the agenda setting* is a relevant norm for legitimate governance. In the process of collective decision-making, the so-called throughput, the rules and procedures by which binding decisions are made, should be legitimate. This process should be characterized by *mechanisms* that considers majority as well as minority interests and by *transparency*. *Checks and balances* must assure that the power of participating actors, which have good positions, is not unlimited. Government is also judged in its output. Norms of government performance are the *effectiveness* and *efficiency* of the output and the *responsiveness*. And there is the question of *accountability*; a condition for accountability is transparency in the decision-making process.

Table 2: Input, throughput and output assessment of governance

Input	Throughput	Output
➢ Opportunities citizen participation ➢ Quality of the representation ➢ Openness of the agenda	➢ Collective decision-making: aggregative and integrative ➢ Quality of participation (including transparence) ➢ Quality of check ands balances	➢ Government performance 1. Effectiveness & Efficiency 2. Responsiveness ➢ Accountability

It is noteworthy that in this work governance is described *'as the emergence of a political order that may challenge the traditional role of representative democracy and its institutions'*. This definition must be seen in the light of the research-question, which is to identify legitimacy problems and democratic deficits in governance practices. In this thesis, I will not study the democratic quality of the phenomenon governance; but take governance as a fact and relate good governance (as judged in statistics) to civil society. The following section discusses the pragmatically defined good governance.

3.3.2 Good governance as invented in the international policy practice

The above section explained the classic conception of governance as it has been evolving in public administration studies. This section will discuss 'good governance' as we know it in the international world. The following table that I have found in a Dutch thesis (Cornelissen 2003, *Performance Indicators for Good Governance*) about good governance as a criterion for development cooperation shows the different definitions that are in use in the international policy practice.

Table 3: different definitions of (good) governance

Definitions of (good) governance by international organizations
OECD Governance denotes the use of political authority and exercise of control in society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development. **World Bank** Good governance is predictable, open and enlightened policy-making –that is transparent processes- aimed at social and economic development; a government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society as participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law **UN** Governance is the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences. **European Union** Good governance is the transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for equitable and sustainable development. It entails clear decision-making procedures at the level of public authorities, transparent and accountable institutions, the primacy of law in managing and distributing resources, and capacity building for elaborating and implementing measures that aim to prevent and combat corruption. **Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs** Good Governance concerns the transparent, responsible and effective use of authority and resources by the public sector in dialogue with the population (1999) Source: Cornelissen, 2003

Relevant for this thesis are the definitions of the World Bank and the United Nations. This had to do with availability of the statistics on good governance. As one can read, the definition of the World Bank speaks literally of '*a government',* and thus does not take into account the broad specter of the term governance, as it is know in public administration theory. According to the UNDP, good governance is participatory, transparent, accountable, effective and equitable and it promotes the rule of law. '*Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision making over the allocation of development sources'* (UNDP,1997).

This definition contains eight characteristics that each represents a dimension along which we can judge government performance. These characteristics are *participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness& efficiency and accountability*. The following table presents the (definitions of the) principles the UNDP plies for (1997). After that, there will be some comments on each of them (based on the document of 1997).

Table 4: UNDP Principles of Good Governance

UNDP-principles of good governance (UNDP, 1997)	
A. Participation	All men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or thorough legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their intention. Such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech, as well as capacities to participate constructively
B. Rule of law	Legal frameworks should be fair and enforced impartially, particularly the laws of human rights
C. Transparency	Transparency is built on the free flow of information. Processes, institutions and information are directly accessible to those concerned with them, and enough information is provided to understand and monitor them
D. Responsiveness	'Institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders'
E. Consensus orientation	Good governance mediates differing interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the group and, where possible, on policies and procedures
F. Equity & inclusiveness	All men and women have opportunities to improve or maintain their well being
G. Effectiveness & efficiency	Processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs while making use of the sources.
H. Accountability	Decision-makers in government, the private sector and civil society organizations are accountable to the public, as well as to institutional stakeholders. This accountability differs depending on the organization and whether the decision is internal or external'

As the above table shows, the UNDP-principles of good governance overlap with both the norms as formulated by Bekkers and Edwards and by the authors Bovens, 't Hart, van Twist and Rosenthal. The latter identified four essential criteria: democracy, legitimacy, effectiveness & efficiency, and integrity to assess the quality of government. In a democratic state, citizens have the right to participate, directly through voting and indirectly through representatives or intermediary institutions. By measuring the *responsiveness* in the output we can assess how effective the *participation* was. Citizens should recognize their wishes and demands in the policy and activities of their governors. In addition Public policy and public service should cover the needs of all citizens, including the ones who can't afford it or who can't stand up for themselves. This requires attention for *equity and inclusiveness*.

Of course it is difficult and (unfortunately) unrealistic to satisfy the needs of every single person in a society. This makes it very challenging to serve many diverse interests. In this perspective, good governance demands mediation of the different interests in order to reach a broad *consensus*. This criterion is close to the throughput-orientated norm of Bekkers and Edwards that assesses the way collective decisions are made. It should not be a good mix of aggregative and integrative decision mechanisms to avoid for example neglecting strong visions of minorities. Two other important norms that are relevant for the decision-making process or throughput are transparency and the rule of law. Policy processes should be transparent and should be subject the procedures and rules as stated in the law. Information should be available for any citizen it may concern because knowledge is power and leaving information in the dark means making power invisible and intangible

The law, or actually the *Rule of Law*, is not only a process relevant criterion. Substantially it is a criterion as well. Every decision, implementation, act and product of governance should be based on the law. The state itself, its existence and structure are based on *law* that stands above the state. This requires fair legal frameworks and impartial enforcement. Other important elements are full protection of human rights (especially those of minorities), an independent judiciary and an impartial and incorruptible police force. It is also the law that forces political representatives to be *accountable* for what they say, decide and implement in the name of their public duty.

These eight criteria together represent the unique, complex and very diverse position of public administration. Together they represent the area of tension in which governors operate. Putnam's hypothesis is that the quality of governance depends on the social capital of its community and to put it even more in his words: it depends on *the civicness* of the citizens.

40

Virtuous citizens are helpful, respectful and trustful toward one another, have the political rights to be bound together by horizontal relations of reciprocity and cooperation and have the freedom and instruments to be active in associations. This kind of community will build and maintain a healthy democracy. Again good governance is an ideal. An ideal that is even not reached in countries in Western Europe where democracy is institutionalized for centuries and where economy is balanced. One could doubt whether it *should be* an ideal for non-western countries and argue that it is artificial to enforce democratic principles in societies that have a history and culture that is so different from the countries where these concepts find their origin. Because of its complexity, I prefer to elaborate on this issue in chapter three where the concepts civil society and good governance will be placed in a non-western context.
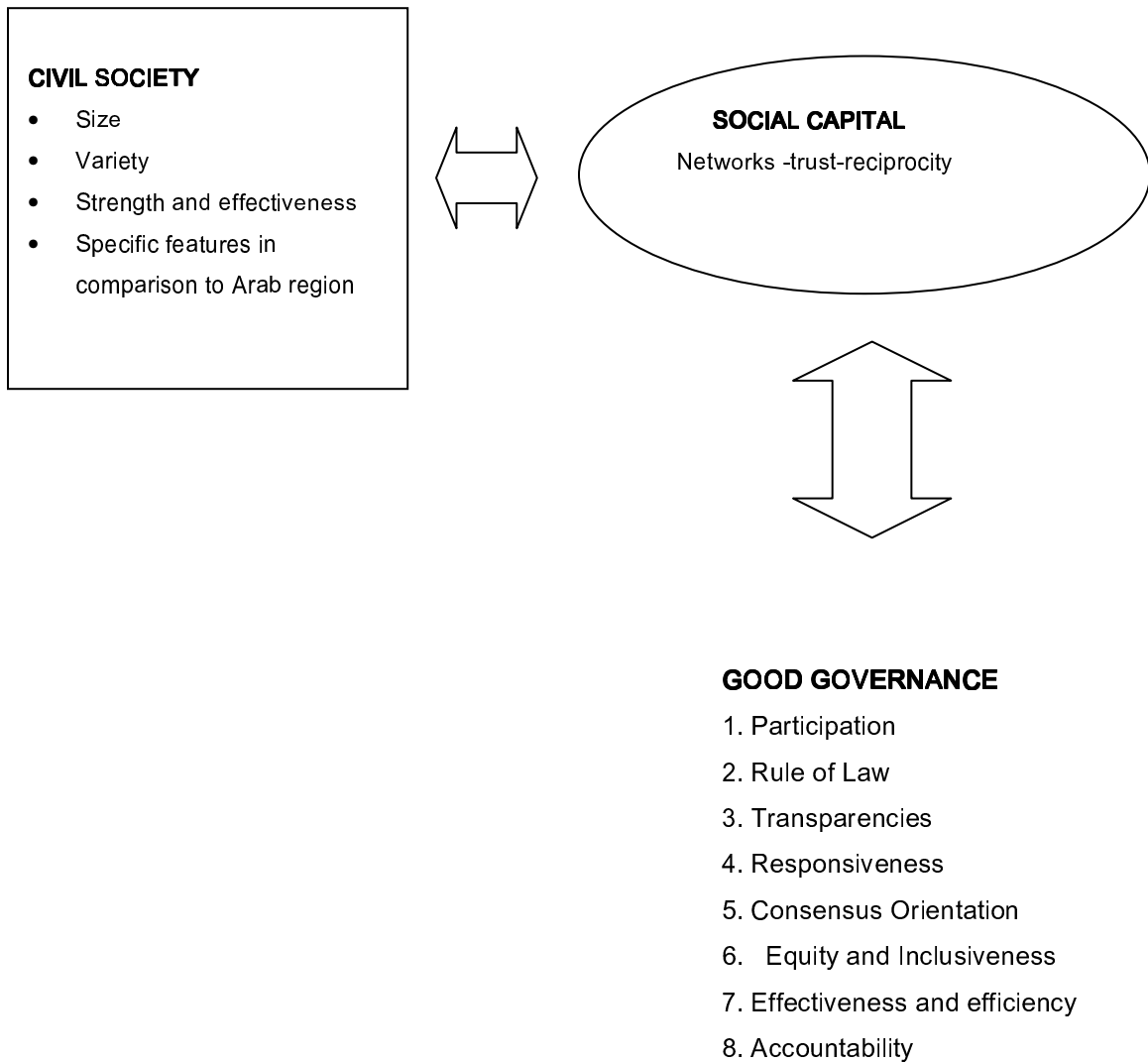
3.4   Civil Society and Good Governance: the link

Pippa Norris (2002) compares in her book *'Democratic Phoenix* systematic evidence for electoral turnout, party membership and civic activism in different countries (2002). She makes use of the social capital theory of Robert Putnam, and also comments that some elements of this theory are not very new and come near the theory of pluralism. As Norris describes Putnam's social capital theory has internal and external effects. The internal effects can be seen on the micro level, namely the fact that active citizens acquire certain norms and values and learn how to communicate and collaborate in public activities. The external effects of social capital are articulation and aggregation of interests. This part comes very close to the pluralist theory and the theory of mobilizing agencies. In these classical theories social networks are important for many reasons. They give active citizens the possibility to develop themselves, their skills and generate political awareness and identity. These networks are import resources for political parties. It is not unusual that citizens move on from being active in associations to getting involved in political parties (Norris, 2002).

To explain his statement that the civicness of a community contributes to the quality of governance, Putnam claims that horizontal networks facilitate generalized trust and cooperation among citizens. He assumes that associations (and political parties) that embody these networks not just facilitate norms of trust and cooperation but strengthen these values as well. He claims that civic networks: 1) increase the social capital needed to cover the potential costs to a detector in any individual transaction, 2) foster robust forms of reciprocity, 3) facilitate communication and improve the flow of information about the trustworthiness of individuals and 4) embody past success and collaboration. These mechanisms that exist in horizontal networks of civic life make social capital beneficial for the governance of a community.

The following scheme illustrates the operationalisation of the research questions. In this study I will investigate the relation between civil society and good governance in Lebanon. Civil society will be analyzed in its size, variety and strength and effectiveness. I will also determine the specific features of Lebanon in comparison to the Arab region. Good governance will be assessed along the eight dimensions that the UN ascertains. Although the social capital theory serves the theoretical framework of this thesis, the social capital will not be approached empirically; this means that there are no direct data available. The next chapter presents the way the data is collected.

42

Scheme 3: operationalisation social capital theory

CIVIL SOCIETY
- Size
- Variety
- Strength and effectiveness
- Specific features in comparison to Arab region

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Networks -trust-reciprocity

GOOD GOVERNANCE

1. Participation

2. Rule of Law

3. Transparencies

4. Responsiveness

5. Consensus Orientation

6. Equity and Inclusiveness

7. Effectiveness and efficiency

8. Accountability

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter clarified the concepts civil society and good governance. Both concepts are essential in the elaboration of my theoretical framework. It must be clear now that there is a wide range of definitions and interpretations of both words. We can also distinguish theoretical and more practical understandings of civil society and good governance. For the feasibility of my research, I have chosen to make use of the definitions of the UNDP. This chapter also discussed the link between civil society and good governance and the most important variables in the theory of Putnam. Civil society consists of networks of engaged people and associations. Between people and in associations essential norms, like social trust and solidarity (or reciprocity) are generated. These intangible sources produce social capital and at the same time they are also a product of social capital. Governance needs structure in the form of law-based institutions that have the power to implement decisions. The cultural component of the state machinery is social capital. Without social capital society cannot connect itself with state and politics. Social capital creates communication lines and flows of important resources such as information, manpower, and political support. Each state should be in touch with its society to know what it needs and how it can be served. Because in the end, democracy means that a state serves its citizens and not vice versa.

Chapter 4   Methodology

4.1 Introduction

In the first chapter, we formulated the research question and sub question. In chapter two, we discussed the theory of social capital as elaborated by Robert Putnam. The third chapter clarified the most important concepts and presented the conceptual framework. In this chapter we will discuss the methods of this research. First, a brief overview is given of the questions and the operationalisation as described in the previous chapter:

Central question:
How does civil society influence good governance?

The sub questions:
1. What are the characteristics of Lebanese civil society?
2. What is the state of affairs in good governance?
3. To what extent is this due to civil society?
4. How do typical Lebanese features influence this relation?

The hypothesis of Putnam in his social capital theory is that rich and dense civic networks foster social capital and this is positively related to the quality of governance.
Putnam defines social capital as the existence of norms of trust and reciprocity and networks of civic engagement. These horizontal (!) networks facilitate generalized trust and cooperation among citizens. Putnam assumes that associations and political parties embody these networks, not just facilitate norms of trust and cooperation but strengthen these values as well. He claims that civic networks: 1) increase the social capital needed to cover the potential costs to a detector in any individual transaction, 2) foster robust forms of reciprocity, 3) facilitate communication and improve the flow of information. Basically, in the case of Lebanon this would mean that a relative (compared to the region) large and dynamic civil society would lead to relative (compared to the region) good governance.

4.2   Methods of data-collection

Doing research means finding new knowledge and elaborating on existing knowledge. These could be empirical research and literature study. The next chapter treats the Arab history and theory of the concepts state, civil society and democracy. People can perceive societal issues, especially the ones that are politically delicate, very differently. Especially when we study civil society, governance and democracy in the Arab world, we should be aware of the fact that knowledge can be relative. Different meanings can be given to one single word. Facts should be placed in their context of time and place, history, and culture should always be considered when studying society and politics of non-western countries. That is why the next chapter is dedicated to the meaning of states, democracies and civil society in the Arab history and theory. I have also chosen to use the interviews in Lebanon as a starting point before reading a lot of theory that might be biased. Another method was the use of local documents to describe Lebanese society. I tried to describe society and politics through the eyes of the Lebanese activists and researchers. After that I investigated the available statistics. These were found on the websites of the World Bank mostly. In my empirical study, I combined statistical and qualitative data. Resources for the estimation of the size and [the facts about] variety of civil society are found in the papers of Traboulsi and the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies. The statistics for good governance are drawn from the websites of the World Bank, The Freedom House and Transparency International. Qualitative data are based on the interviews I took in Beirut. The empirical part of this study is three-fold.

1. Qualitative interviews with eleven prominent NGO-representatives[3] in Beirut
2. Local information on civil society by research in local libraries like the American University of Beirut and the library of the CRTD-A and the Library of the UN-headquarter in Beirut.
3. Acquiring statistical information through websites of the World Bank and the Freedom House.

For describing and 'measuring' civil society in Lebanon the following aspects are considered:
-Size
- Variety (in fields and policies)
-Strength and effectiveness
-Specific features in comparison with Arab region

---

[3] For more background information about the respondents view appendix VI.

Interviews

On the advice of my colleague in Beirut who is a specialist in Lebanese civil society I made a selection of interesting key-persons. I tried making a diverse and inclusive sample: conservative and progressive activists, academic researchers and professors and people with hands-on experience in the field and of coarse a reflection of all the sectarian groups in Lebanon. Unfortunately I did not succeed in a gender balance (only one woman out of eleven respondents). Here, I will describe the background of each respondent briefly.

1) Ziyad Baroud (34) is lawyer and partner of the Law Firm Haddad, Baroud, and Daher & Tohme in Beirut. He is lecturer on NGO's law at the French University Saint Joseph of Beirut. In the civil society field he is active as general secretary general for the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (www.ladeleb.org)

2) Paul Salem (38) studied Political Science at the University of Harvard and has written several books and articles about Lebanon and Arab Politics in general. At the time of the interview was held, he was director of the Fares Foundation. He now works for the Carnegie Endowment as Middle East expert.

3) Charles Adwan (28) studied political science and public administration at the American University of Beirut. He is executive director of the Lebanese Transparency Association. He used to be a researcher of the LCPS. He is also part of the research team ArabGovnet, which is an initiative of UNESCO.

4) Ghassan Sayah (61) studied psychology and Business Administration. Since 1975 he is full time chief executive officer of the VMCA in Lebanon. This organization is a worldwide Christian network. Beside this, he is founder and chairman of Lebanese Parliamentary Forum and founder and board member of Lebanese NGO Forum (umbrella-organization).

5) Ziad Majed (34) has a PhD. in political sciences and is political researcher and vice-president of the Democratic Left Movement, member of Cultural council for South Lebanon.

6) Nawaf Kabbara (51) is associate professor at the University of Balamand. He is president of the National Association for the rights of Disabled and president of the Arab Organization of Disabled People.

7) Salim Nasr (57 years) is senior researcher for the Lebanese Center of Policy Studies. He studied Sociology. He has published books and articles about Lebanese society.

47

8) Hassan Krayem (45) has in PhD political science, is policy specialist at the UNDP and professor at the American University of Beirut. He is active for different organizations he was from 2000-2002 secretary-general of the Lebanese Association for Democratic Election.

9) Fadia Kiwan (45) studied Political Science in Paris, Beirut. Is professor Political Science at the University Saint Joseph and director of the Institute d'Etudes Politiques of Beirut. She is an expert in theory about civil society in the Arab world. She is also Member of the National Commission of Lebanese Women.

10) Gregoir Haddad (76) studied philosophy and theology at the University of Jesuit Fathers. Between 1965, and 1975 he was a bishop for the Greek-Maronite church is founder of 'Mouvement Social' and involved in many social projects that contribute to the development of secularism.

11) Kamel Mouhanna (65) is president of the Amel Foundation and works in this field for more than thirty years. He is also coordinator of the Groupement of Social Voluntary Organizations in Lebanon.

It is important to place the answers of the respondents in the context of their background and work. A leftist (for example Ziad Majed) will we more critical on the Lebanese state than someone who is more affiliated to the state. Someone who has studied in the United States will perceive the Arab world differently then someone who got his degree from an Arab university. The respondents that were theoretically specialized in civil society and good governance (for example Fadia Kiwan) had a more rational view on things than the respondents that are mainly active in the field. In general, most of them were very critical (some even too) towards Lebanese society and government. Maybe as Lebanese they are more critical on state and society than a non-Lebanese expert would be.

Local knowledge

More exact data is found in the local documents that presented data about the size and variety of the Lebanese civil society. The numbers of these reports (the report of the World Bank and the reports of the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies) are based on the registration-record of the Ministry of Interior Affairs.

Good governance as defined by the UN has eight dimensions:

-Participation

-Rule of Law

-Transparency

-Responsiveness

-Consensus orientation

-Equity & efficiency

-Effectiveness & efficiency

-Accountability

In the interviews the respondents were asked to assess the performance of Lebanese governance and choose between the categories very good, good, sufficient, weak and problematically bad. Beside this, I used data of the Freedom House for the criterion participation. The World Bank displays the performance of countries by six governance dimensions: Voice & Accountability, Political Stability, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law and Control of Corruption. Not all these dimensions coincide with the dimensions that the UNDP distinguishes. Here we only used the World Bank data on Voice & Accountability, Government Effectiveness and Rule of Law. For the dimensions Consensus, Equity & Inclusiveness and Responsiveness there was no corresponding statistical data found in the sources of the World Bank. Transparence International provides the CPI-index and this has been used here for the good governance dimension Transparency. On social capital, which Putnam conceptually divides in trust, networks and norms of reciprocity, there are no empirical data. There is an indirect approach to this concept through the theoretical literature discussed in chapter two.

4.3   Conclusion

This last chapter of Part I gave a methodological introduction to what will follow in part II. The qualitative interviews with civil society representatives were an important starting point of the empirical research. The statistical data are based on statistical sources of the World Bank, the Freedom House and Transparency International. Beside this, local documents provided information about civil society and its main features.Before we present the empirical results, the following chapter will reflect on the most important concepts by describing them in the context of Arab history and discussing ideas of certain Arab scholars.

49

Chapter 5   Arab Democracy, Civil Society and Good Governance

5.1   Introduction

The object of this study is neither North American nor European. The theory however is derived from research in a western context. In this chapter, there will be a reflection on this complicating factor. We should be aware of the fact that a socio-political theory that has its origin in the west is being applied to the governance of a non-western country. Doing research in different cultures and settings requires a conscious and non-biased attitude or at least an awareness of a biased view. This bias could not only be social-cultural or social-communicative but also theoretical. This will be further explained in this chapter. In any case, doing research in Lebanon has implications that differ from doing research in, for example, the Netherlands. There are many kinds of factors to be taken into account. Language is a first barrier. If I would have mastered modern standard Arabic[4], I would have read much more and diverse articles on civil society and democracy and in general more references of Arab authors. Another difficulty is the use and meaning of concepts. For example, how do Arab scholars define civil society? It is interesting to mention here that in Arab literature the definition of civil society includes political parties. Another interesting question to ask is how civil society has developed in practice. And before that, when did Arab states arise and how did they implement democratic ideas. And what about the recent trend of good governance; how is it perceived? A more theoretical question: is the way these concepts are being used just 'copied' from the West or is there a different or special Arab way of defining and using these terms? Thus, even if we leave the language barrier aside, there can be problems with the conceptualization of terms like governance, civil society and democracy. As the above questions point out, doing research in another culture requires a conscious attitude and a deliberately chosen method and approach. It is interesting to examine what has been written on these issues. This chapter will discuss four essential concepts of this study from an Arab perspective, historically as well as theoretically. To have a broader view on and a deeper understanding of the democracy-issue in the Arab region I begin with the history of democracy in the Arab world, both the conceptualization and the reality of it. Then in the third and fourth section, civil society and good governance are treated in the same way. The last section is primarily focused on the specific democracy, history and political culture of Lebanon.

---

[4] Modern Standard Arabic is the official term for the written Arabic, which is the standard in all Arab countries. Beside this, each country has its own colloquial.

5.2   Roots of Arab state building and democracy

As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, democracy is not new in the Arab world, it is not a trend that came up in the 1990s for the first time in history; there are democratic aspirations from the last decades of the 19th century, and after colonization, there were attempts to bring them in practice. Before we continue on this matter, I will give a brief historical overview of Arab state building in general. This will give a better understanding of the subject. Between 700 and 1400, Islamic Arabs reigned in the largest parts of what we call the Middle East, the Gulf and North Africa (including Southern-Spain) now. First, the Umayyad reigned from the capital Damascus. After the fall of their empire, the Abbasid took over and made Baghdad the new center. The Ottomans took over the hegemony around 1300 and lasted until the 1920s. Because their empire was weakening, the Ottomans went in alliance with Western powers in the 19th century and signed the '*Treaty Free Trade and Friendship*', which incorporated the Ottoman economy in the international economic system. To bring society in harmony with this great change large-scale reform (*tanzimat*) to the western model were undertaken. Despite their attempts to make their Empire compete with the ascending western powers, the Ottomans lost their legitimacy more and more and regional powers (the Young Turks, or pan-Arabic movements) rose while the British and the French occupied territories in the Gulf and North Africa (Hourani, 1991).

In the first two decades of the 20th century, in the years the Ottoman Empire was slowly breaking down, silent agreements were made between Sharif Hussein, a prominent member of the Hashemite clan (descendant of the Prophet Muhammad and governor of Mecca) and sir McMahon, a British representative in Cairo. In return for collaboration with the British against the Ottomans, Hussein was promised an Arab kingdom, which would include the land of Great Syria, Iraq and a part of the Peninsula. This promise was never realized because Britain secretly signed the Sykes-Picot agreement with France, dividing the Fertile Croissant and the Gulf in areas of direct and indirect control (Hourani, 1991). The mandatory rights of Britain to Palestine, Iraq and Transjordan and those of France to Lebanon and Syria were recognized during the peace conference of 1920 in San Remo. In the League of Nations (1922), colonization was made official. The colonization profoundly affected Arab state building firstly because of the artificial borders it created which led to the existence of artificial states such as Iraq and Lebanon. Other profound changes which this colonization brought were the commercialization of agriculture and reform in socioeconomic infrastructure; '*most of the colonial powers sought to privatize the system of landownership, and consequently, redistributed land among those who exhibited readiness to cooperate, mostly among tribal sheiks and urban notables*' (Brynen, Korany and Noble, 1995). There was some form of political space and voice given to collaborating tribal sheiks, urban notables and aristocrats under Western hegemony.

51

After independence, the nationalists in countries as Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Iraq and Syria renewed the political balance and replaced the tribal and aristocratic leaders. These countries experienced in the 1960s rapid population growth and urbanization and the new rulers modernized the countries with educational and industrial expansions. Anyhow, it was by military coups that these nationalists arrived at their power. This form of power was also the instrument during their rule. The republics, except for a couple of democratic intermezzos, had single party rule from independence. The other countries, such as those in the Gulf and Morocco were based on family rule; most of these kings are (or claim to be) descendants of the Prophet; this is an important source of legitimacy for these rulers. Thus, generally there have been two governmental systems in the Arab world in post-colonial time. Both systems have in common that 1) the state had total control over the economy and limited or even forbad the development of modern horizontal associations, 2) access to power was monopolized and 3) bureaucracy was enormously expanded in the years between 1950 en 1980. The difference between the monarchies and the republics lies mainly in the instruments they used. Beside the above-mentioned use of force, the nationalist Arab rulers used the romantic appeal to national interest; especially president Nasser knew how to move the mass by his rhetoric use of symbols of Arab unity. The monarchies of Jordan and Morocco as well as of Saudi Arabia based their authority on their blood kinship with Muhammad and sought alliances with local clan leaders who were also suspicious of the modern horizontal associations. The countries of the Gulf and Saudi Arabia are called *'Rentier state'* in literature because the legitimization of their state is based on their oil revenues, which means that the state is not dependent of its citizens for tax-income. Thus in these *rentier-states* political participation is not a prerequisite (Brynen, Korany and Noble, 1995).

Economically, the post-colonial Middle East reached its zenith in the 70s (oil boom). From the late seventies most countries include the open door policy in their economic policy; this trend is called *'Infitah'* in literature. Countries like Egypt and Jordan liberalized their economies. Nevertheless, Arab regimes failed to meet the growing needs of their people. As said before, population grew dramatically and due to the democratization of education, a larger middle class evolved with demands which the government could not comply with sufficiently. Mismanagement made Arab states fall economically and administratively; combined with lack of participation and social injustice, this led to societal circumstances which eventually contributed to the growth and popularity of Islamic activism since the late seventies. It is interesting to end this section with the conclusion of S.E. Ibrahim that the mismanagement of the post-colonial Arab states led to two indigenous processes in the Arab world: democratization and Islamic activism (Brynen, Korany and Noble, 1995).

5.3   Civil society in Arab history and theory

The mainstream social science literature acknowledges a positive relation between civil society and democracy. Works of Hegel and Marx in the 19th century already emphasized the importance of civil society. This section discusses civil society from an Arab perspective. In civil society literature there is usually a distinction made between civil society, as we know it in modern terms, referred to as *mujtama' al madani* and civil society of a communal nature: *mujtama'a al ahli* (Brynen, Korany and Noble, 1995). This distinction immediately brings us to the greatest theoretical dilemma of Arab civil society: the difference and tension between the civil (or to speak in Putnam's words civic) and communal organization of society. Orientalists[5] like Elie Kedouri and Bernard Lewis state that the political culture of the Arab Islamic world did not meet the conditions required for the formation of a civil society as in the West. Weber for example totally dismissed the potential for the evolution of an Arab civil society. He argued that the norms of Arab culture were incompatible with the rational demands of capitalism and democracy. '*To constitute a full urban community, settlements as a whole displaying a relative predominance of trade-commercial relations with the settlements as a whole displaying the following features: 1) fortification; 2) a market; 3) a court of its own and at least, a partially autonomous law; 4) a related form of association 5) at least a partial autonomy and autocephaly.'* Weber could not recognize these features in Islamic society, as he studied it. Tareq Ismael disagrees and finds Weber's view selected and limited. One of his critical notes is that Weber based his analysis on the study of a certain époque, the *Mameluke* period. In this stage, the Islamic empire was falling apart. Ismael prefers to refer to the period when urban life and its population was flourishing and had the liberty to develop societal, business and industrial activities. According to Ismael, citizen, civil society and the state were subordinate to the Islamic law. He argues that Islam law allowed society a certain degree of autonomy. During this glorious period a Muslim bourgeoisie established an international trade and financial network based on a credit system which enabled them to transfer sufficient capital without much concern about fixed assets, and to build mechanisms for capital transfer in case of serious threat to the operation of free enterprise.' The fact that these financial institutions were beyond the scope of the state, symbolized the autonomy of the bourgeoisie who derived independence from the *'sovereignty of law, independency of judiciary and integrated matrix of society'* (Ismael, 1997).

---

[5] The word 'orientalist' is not a neutral concept anymore since the introduction of the concept 'Orientalism' by Edward Said. In general authors labeled as orientalists have a very critical (or even racist according to some) view on the Arab culture.

Nawaf Salam shares Ismaels opinion and opposes the oriental view on Arab Islamic political cultures well. In addition, he criticizes the other extreme viewpoint as well, which is the romanticized view of the apologists, to whom '*Islam has been from its beginning, no less than ideal home for civil society and democratic governance*'. Salam states that historically Islamic culture has known both participatory and authoritarian trends. However, the latter prevailed in the end. This had to do with the great value ascribed to the preservation of the *Ummah*. This meant that anything that could be a threat to the unity of the Ummah was watched closely. Despite this attitude, there was the liberty and space to form organizations such as guilds *(asnaf)* and the establishment of non-state institutions. Especially because of their support to the educational system and aid in social service delivery, these organizations had a central role in daily life. There was a certain degree of freedom for ethnic and religious communities and the Islamic men of learning, *Ullama* in Arabic, did not make part of the state-framework. Ullama did act as intermediary between the people and the rulers. Anyhow, Ismael and Salam both conclude that the necessary conditions for the formation of civil society were not completely absent in Islamic societies.

The end of the Arab empire and the emergence of the Ottomans led to the flight of capital and skilled labor to the periphery, which was under independent dynasties. After the Ottomans settled their power, they introduced military feudalism and initiated a whole range of system changes. The traditional urban industry (that had flourished under the Arab regime) suffered from this and became stagnated. Under the Ottomans the state became stronger, stronger than society; '*social prestige was attached to occupations in the civil service, and to religious and military professions*'. It was this age [by the way] that Weber analyzed and according to Ismael, this choice has flawed his logic and reasoning (Ismael, 1997). Around the middle of the 19th century industrialization brought modernization in Europe and European nations became imperial powers (again). At the same time, the Ottoman Empire became the 'sick man of Europe'; despite its attempts to modernize to the western model, it collapsed due to several factors, mainly European imperialism and Turkish and Arab nationalism. In the last decades of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, civic life in Arab capitals (especially Beirut, Cairo and Damascus) began to develop. Arab associational life inherited the legacy Ottomans left. The reforms of the Ottomans were not just liberating, but in a way facilitating as well. For instance, the 1901 law on freedom of association led to a mushrooming of intellectual clubs, societies and associations in countries like Egypt and Lebanon. The number increased during the years 1918 and 1939.

The new middle class that emerged in these years played a vital role in associational life and took at a certain moment a liberating role under colonial rule. Nevertheless, after independence civil society lost its autonomy due to strong populist-socialist policy of the new nationalist regimes.

54

Ismael says about this: *' in its quest to manufacture legitimacy, the state in the Arab world encroached on all aspects of civil society. In effect, the state became society, a role imposed on society through oppression, repression and monopoly of resources and control of all organizations and instruments of law. Under authoritarian regimes no room for autonomy of any movement or organization to say nothing of civil society as such'.* Associations in countries such as Egypt and Tunisia were watched attentively and eliminated if they formed a threat to the 'national interest'. Parties that were not too non-conformist had the option to cooperate with the state.

As stated in the section above where we discussed state building, post-colonial Arab regimes more or less failed to meet the (high) expectations of the Arab citizens. This was the case in several countries; in this discussion, we will focus on Egypt. In the erosion of the legitimacy of Arab states, two devastating events triggered new developments: the defeat of 1967 and the Gulf-crisis (1990-1991). In the seventies and eighties, the states retreated from socio-economic functions and many among them implemented the 'open door'- policy. The hold of the state on civic life became less tight and this created room for the revival of the old (pre-independence) associations and the emergence of new types of civil society organizations (political parties and professional syndicates are also included in civil society).

Many (demographic) factors contributed to the enormous growth of the civil society sector in the eighties. First, there was a massive urbanization in the sixties; this implied a huge increase of the socioeconomic needs. Governments did not succeed in meeting these. In the years of post-independence, there was a large expansion of the educated population; numerous Arab students studied abroad in Europe or North America and brought with them other (Western?) ideas and styles. Among this segment of the population ideas and initiatives sprang armed at establishing modern associations. The neo-liberal trend in the development sector worldwide made the position of local NGO's stronger by providing financial aid directly instead of via their governments. The political liberalization, that took place since the late eighties, facilitated this even more. Internet and satellite television contributed to the mind-expanding of the average (literate) Arab citizen (Luciani, 1990).

Ismael is very critical about the role of the West in stimulating the growth of civil society. *'However, western pressure does not appear to be motivated by higher values of liberty and democracy because reports on systematic abuse of human rights, and state tyranny in the Gulf states pass unnoticed by the West. In the West, civil society and state co-evolved free from foreign interference. In classical Islamic society, they evolved in a symbiotic relationship. Under Islamic Law, both state and civil society were created by a sovereign source of law.*

The Twentieth Century Arab civil society emerged characteristically dependent on state acceptance and international support.'

Beside the (anti-imperialist) view of scholars like Ismael, there are also critical views directed towards the Arab NGOs themselves. The main argument against these associations is that they 'put old wine in new bottles', referring to old community based organizations, based on primordial ties, that continue to exist but in the form of modern associations. It is the classical dilemma of civil society in Arab context. It is too often (still) communal, while it is supposed to be based on civil/civic values. This section showed what civil society means in Arab context, what the major theoretical dilemma's are and how did it develop historically since the last years of the Ottoman Empire. The following section discusses social capital from a certain Arab perspective.

5.4   Roots of Arab social capital: Arab social structures and the role of religion

In the fourteenth century, Ibn Khaldun studied pre-Islamic culture. His (what we would call now sociological) analysis of the tribal culture is still relevant and used in contemporary literature. His book *Al Muqaddimah*, which is also known by its Greek name *Prolegomena*, is a description of Arab history from a 'sociological' perspective. In his study of the tribal culture of North Africa, he develops the concept and theory of *assabiyaa*, which could be translated as tribal solidarity based on blood linkage. It is the sense of group feeling and solidarity that is fundamental for the (political) unity and survival of a community. According to this Andalusian philosopher social development and peace is not possible without subordination of individual interest to that of the group. He also explains the rise and fall of cities and states by the strength of the *assabiyaa* of their communities. It is *assabiyaa* that makes a group strong, successful and prosperous. Nevertheless, the more a community develops into a more prosperous society, the more this spirit will weaken. Eventually this erosion will lead to the breakdown of a society/community.

The discussion of the role of primordial ties/ tribalism/ clannism makes Ibn Khalduns work still very relevant. In most countries of the Arab world the family, the clan and the tribe still shape the structure of society. A (real) nation with one people within the borders of a country and an essential sense of solidarity to the national authorities is still not very common; and if it exists, it is reached by using (military) force (Egypt, Tunisia). Interestingly the theory of Ibn Khaldun seems to show parallels with social capital theory in a way. Both *assabiyaa* and social capital are products of (group) solidarity and loyalty. Both are necessary for a community to survive and/or to be successful. The decline of both will lead to the weakening of society. In the tribal analysis of Ibn Khaldun this means for example the decline of the military system or the decadence of city life. In Putnam's books decline of trust and other forms of social capital lead to an American society, which lost its sense of community and political involvement.

56

In his theory of neo-patriarchy Hisham Shirabi also speaks of the social structures of Arab societies. Arab societies seem to modernize, but Sharabi argue that it is superficial (based on imitations of the West) or too hybrid (still mixed with tradition) (Arab Studies Quarterly, 1987). He describes Arab societies as neo-patriarchies because they are in a stage between modernity and tradition. This scheme illustrates his thinking:

Scheme 4: Modernity vs. Neo-patriarchy

Modernity	Creativity	Active
Synthesis		
Criticism		
Neopatriarchy	Translation (imitation)	Reactive
	Tradition	

Source: Arab Studies Quarterly, Volume 1 Number 1

This scheme shows how Sharabi distinguishes modern societies from neo-patriarchal society. In neo-patriarchal society there is no genuine modernization but imitation of modern phenomena. Further, modernity is combined with traditional elements. To give an example, some civil society organizations Lebanon seem to be different from the old associations based on primordial ties. When you look at their presentation on the Internet or promotion material they do not seem to differ from the average western NGO, but in reality this is not more then a cover. This is what Sharabi tries to explain when he argues that modernization in the Arab world is superficial.

Another thing is the reactive nature of changes. In modern societies there is more initiative and active change. According to Sharabi this has to do with the fact that there is more room for creativity and criticism. A good example of a traditional element is the assabiyya; this still plays an important role in Arab societies even in the countries where urbanization has taken place. The Arab Human Development Report of 2004 also stipulates the role of Arab social structures and considers clannism/ al-'asabiya as *'the chain that stifles individual freedom. The report argues that it is damaging to the 'cohesive force of citizenship and its institutional manifestations'. 'The problem with clannism in Arab countries is that it produces types of social organization that are modern in form but objectively backward.* Many other societies know group culture. However, in contrary to the Asian miracle (traditional family based capitalism) for example, the Arab clannism did not lead to great developments but *'to a societal culture of submission, parasitic dependence and compliance in return for protection and benefits'* (AHDR 2004).

57

However, one should find a way to make use of the positive aspects of clannism and contribute to citizenship and good governance. In his postmodernist book *'The Search for Arab Democracy*, Larbi Sadiki distinguishes a foundationalist and anti-foundationalist view on democracy. Fixity and essentialism characterize the first, fluidity and relativism the latter. Democracy must be defoundationalized before it can be an option for other cultures. It is interesting that he argues that rejecting foundations for democracy is not a rejection of democracy. He finds that scholars of Arab politics are too much preoccupied with the defense of individualism and secularism as prerequisites fro democracy. Further, they show an uncritical reliance on Euro-centric definitions of democracy. His main thesis in the discussion of democratization in the Arab world is that neither democracy nor Islam are fixed concepts or rigid phenomena and that they do not have to be mutually exclusive. On the role of religion in Arab society he says: *'Generally, Islam has been interpreted in simplistic terms of 'traditionalism' and anachronism' positing it against modernization.'* He sees the current 'paradigmatic crisis' in social sciences as an opportunity to search for new/ other forms of democracy, adapted to for example the Arab Islamic setting. *''Only through questioning and revising can the twin search for democracy and Islamicity lead to cultural pluralism and syncretism'.* Sadiki emphasizes the role of religion and discusses scholars and their work in *orientalist* and *occidentalist* discourses. He is in search for democracy that harmonizes democracy and Arab Islamic legacy. An interesting point of Sadiki is that he argues that Islamist intellectuals should be given more attention to in the discussions on democracy and modernity especially their criticism on the democratisation process in the Arab region could be fruitful.

This section was a modest reference to some relevant arguments used by scholars in the discourse on the significance of Arab culture and Islamic religion for the political theory of Arab states. There are pessimists and optimists in the debate on democracy in Arab countries. Sadiki is in search of an Arab democracy that is adapted to the specific culture while the late Sharabi did not had much hope for progress on the short term. It is an interesting dilemma to discuss further, if we would consider democracy and Arab Islamic culture as mutually exclusive, to decide which one should adapt to the other: should we find a form of democracy that suits the existing society and its culture or should we change society and its culture to make democracy (as we know it) work?

5.5   Good governance, a western fashion?

History shapes culture, civic culture and political culture. As the above sections have shown, nation building, democracy and civil society formation have evolved differently. Arab history differs from European and North American history, which knew stages like Enlightenment, Industrial revolution, the French Revolution and the Protestant Reform (Sadiki, 2004). Every country has its own specificities whether it is the general history, culture, religion and other non-human factors like the availability of natural resources. Each phenomenon is influenced or even shaped by its social and natural environment. Leaving these differences per nation aside, we could make some generalizations about groups of countries in a region, such as the countries in the Arab world, in policy circles often referred to as the 'MENA'-region. As a student of public administration I wonder to what extent a concept as good governance is useful, not just in the Arab world but in general. Critics argue that it is used as an instrument in the allocation of financial sources of multilateral institution such as the IMF or the World Bank. Another theory is that good governance is a more acceptable term because it is depoliticized. It is less a threat to comment on for example the administration of a state then to accuse such a country of the violation of human rights. Suspicious non-western theories could argue that the good governance-trend in development cooperation is another way of the West to try to influence developing countries again; a kind of neo-imperialism. Thus, it could be doubtful to what extent good governance programs and projects are taking seriously. Maybe it is just another western fashion that will be replaced by another trend in a couple of years. It is also important to say something about the value of research and statistics on good governance [of the World Bank]. Rule of Law of Yemen is measured with the same methods as rule of law in Denmark. Interview results of citizens on their perception of the performance of their government are very difficult to compare. Someone who has been taught in Arabic and always lived in an Arab state will define and perceive basic terms like participation or transparency differently then a German or French respondent. It is important not to rely blindly on statistics, since statistics involve linguistic and social-cultural complications.

5.6   Lebanon

The political culture of Lebanon is of course a product of history and has been shaped by national and supranational events and movements. The reforms under Ottoman rule gave Lebanon a certain political liberty that other Arab countries never had. In the last decades of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century, a new political class was developing in Beirut (and in Cairo). Various civil organizations rose just before the period of the First World War During these decades, Beirut flourished as an intellectual center of the Middle East (LCPS, 1996). The political culture differs from the overall Arab political culture in the sense that it knows more freedom, mainly freedom of press and freedom of association. This was the case since 1904 when the Ottomans copied the French law of 1901. Two other important features of Lebanese political/ societal culture are the dominance of the academic world and the (ethnic and religious) diversity. The University of Saint-Joseph and the American University of Beirut both play an important role in the culture of political debate. Since their first years, they receive students from all over the Arab world and provide them in a way with a forum to express their political ideas (LCPS, 1996).

The diversity in Beirut is typically Lebanese. More Lebanese is the institutionalization of these sectarian differences; in the political parties, in the civil society organizations and of coarse the state system itself. To go back to the higher education; the University of Saint-Joseph is catholic and the American University is protestant. This is unique. Thus, all these factors, 1) the freedom 2) educational level 3) (institutionalized) diversity contribute to the vibrancy of the Lebanese political culture. We could conclude that historically Lebanese citizens are relatively more politically conscious then citizens in other Arab countries. This makes Lebanon in way more close to the West then any other Arab state.

5.7   Conclusion

This chapter gave some global insights on democracy, civil society, social capital and good governance in the context of Arab history and theory. It also gave a short impression of Lebanese political culture. The next chapter shows the empirical data found on good governance, which gives answers to the first sub questions.

Chapter 6   The Case: Lebanese Civil society and Governance

6.1   Introduction

Having Putman's theory at the back of our mind and [being] familiarized with the meaning and conceptualization of the key concepts of this thesis in Arab context, this chapter brings us to the first empirical part (of the core) of this thesis: the case of Lebanon in the year 2004.Compared to countries in the region, Lebanon has been, since Ottoman modernization, a country with a great degree of political freedom. Freedom of association is protected in the article 13 of the constitution of 1926 and goes back to the Ottoman law of Associations of 1909 (LCPS, 1996). Due to this, and to liberties like freedom of book publishing and of speech, Lebanese were able to be active citizens since the early years of the 21st century. Section 6.2 answers the first sub question *(What are the characteristics of Lebanese civil society?)* by describing and mapping civil society of Lebanon. Thereafter, the state of affairs in good governance is presented in section 6.3. Again, Lebanon is known as one of the Arab countries where people are quite well off and where the government succeeds well in post-war reconstruction and economic programs. Based on the statistics of the World Bank, the Freedom House and the qualitative interviews I took in Beirut, an answer will be given to the second sub question *(What is the state of affairs in good governance?)*. Before drawing conclusions in the last section, 6.4 analyses the large amount of findings in light of the social capital theory.

6.2   Civil Society

6.2.1   Overview of Literature

Gaining access to accurate and reliable data for scientific purposes is a difficult task. This is in general the case for non-western countries and specifically for a politically instable country such as Lebanon: '*Presenting a report on civil society in Lebanon at this stage therefore is fraught with uncertainty, generalizations, impressions, estimates and the like*' (LCPS, 1999). This description of civil society refers to several (some of which unpublished) documents compiled between 1996 and 2005. Research and reports that discuss civil society on the national level and on all sectors unfortunately were not found. The next works concern parts of Lebanon, mainly Beirut, and/ or subfields of civil society. There is the unpublished/preliminary draft of a report on *Associational Life and Public Space in Beirut: Dialects of Unity and Diversity* (Salem, Shehadé, Young and Majed, 1996). In 1999, The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS) published a report dedicated to entire Lebanon: *Civil Society and Governance in Lebanon, A mapping of civil society and its Connection with Governance*.

In 2001, Traboulsi wrote a report for the World Bank to assess the potential role of NGOs in poverty reduction. In 2005, the Center for Research and Training on Development issued a report on the role of NGOs in Lebanon, Egypt and Lebanon on engendered social entitlements and active citizenship and the implications for future policy. Other articles that are worth to mention: the article *Communal State versus Nation State: Obstacles to the Emergence of Civil Society in Lebanon* of Paul Tabar (no date) and the unpublished paper of Charles Adwan. All above-mentioned documents are used in this section as well in some sections of chapter 5.

6.2.2 Categorizing civil society

Due to the very large number of associations and organizations and to inadequate record keeping of the Ministry of Interior, it is difficult to actually 'measure' civil society in Lebanon. Before examining the size of civil society, it is useful to discuss the various ways of categorization. Some typologies refer to the basis of the activities, others to the mandate and objectives as expressed in the formal registration.

The government makes six broad categories: child welfare, family welfare, women welfare, specialized health, public health and other activities (Traboulsi, 2001).A clear, often-used typology in research is youth, disabled, environment and women. Finding this one too simple and not inclusive, I will follow the document of the LCPS of 1996, which makes the following categories:

1) NGOs: Social and Welfare Associations
2) Family and Neighborhood Associations
3) Religious Associations and Institutions
4) Sporting Clubs and Professional Associations
5) Economic and Professional Associations
6) Cultural Organizations and Institutions
7) Political Parties

I have included political parties in the analysis because the majority of the Arab researchers include political parties in their definition of civil society. Also for the UNDP, political parties constitute civil society.

62

6.2.3 Size and Analysis Lebanese Civil Society

In the 1999, the LCPS estimated the national number of associations on 2500; this was drawn from the information of the Ministry of Interior record that shows the registration of 1100 associations in Beirut. Traboulsi speaks of 3808 registered NGOs, of which most are centered on Beirut (2001). For several reasons it is not reliable to trust blindly on the records of the government. First there is lack of accurate administration from both sides: the government as well as the associations. This often results in existing associations not being registered or registered associations not existing (any more). In addition, the government's list does not include syndicates and unions, media and other institutions that could be defined as part of civil society. The reason for this is that they do not fit in the legal definition of *jam'iyyat* associations (LCPS, 1999). Following the above categorization, civil society will be analyzed now.

1) NGOs: Social and Welfare Associations

There are about 300 social and welfare NGOs that offer several kinds of services: emergency relief, food distribution, housing assistance, small loans, vocational training, small business training, and assistance to disabled persons. These associations are mostly by nature non-confessional (or multi-confessional) and largely depoliticized and service oriented. This character has a lot do with the Civil War, when many of them emerged. In the years between 1975 and 1990, civil society grew enormously to take over state-tasks and to meet the social, humanitarian and medical needs of the afflicted population. The aid flows of the international community made this financially possible. Due to their great role during the war and the contact with international NGOs, Lebanese NGOs grew more organized and professional (LCPS, 1996). Because they are not explicitly based on religious affiliations or kinship these organizations, have a significant value, especially in the light of the social capital theory. *'They were the organizations which socialized thousands of young people into the culture of public service in a non-confessional and civic atmosphere'.* (LCPS, 1999:10) I would say these are the organizations that would foster *bridging social capital* because they crosscut the confessional lines. *'The NGOs also began to draw a significant youth membership after the first few years of the war and after the rising generation grew increasingly disenchanted with political parties and militias that were waging the war, and more concerned with the human and material costs of the war; increasingly, they saw their path to public commitment and action through volunteer work with various humanitarian and relief oriented NGOs.' (LCPS, 1996)* After the war there was a new development. Western minded advocacy organizations rose and tackled 'modern' issues like environment, human rights, democracy and gender equality. Putnam would describe these associations as being civic. In Arabic literature, these organizations are called *madani (civic).*

2) Family and Neighborhood Associations

This kind of association is the one that is called *ahli* in Arabic; it is based on confessional identities and/or kinship affiliations or in the words of Tabar; primordial ties. This exclusive nature makes them *'uncivic'* by definition. On this part of civil society, there are no adequate scientific data available. The origin and development can be explained, though. Since the end of the 19th century, family and neighborhoods, as traditional informal forms of associations were visible in public life. However, modernization and mass emigration (of other groups?) to the large cities threatened the long-established structure (LCPS, 1996). Later on, during the mandate period, the traditional associations *'reinvented themselves as formal structures'*, and started to register with the state. The government has always been and still is cooperative to these associations. Until the civil war the growth of this sector was quite stable, especially among Sunnis, who are the native and most powerful inhabitants of the largest cities (Beirut and Tripoli). Interesting fact is that right after the war, the growth of family associations escalated beyond all previous rates (LCPS, 1996). The LCPS points at the decline of trust in government, leaders, law and fellow citizens; *'it is perhaps natural that people took refuge in the one social unit that still had not failed them-the family unit.'* These organizations are described as defense mechanisms against negative side effects of modernization and more specifically against the growing presence and influence of new groups (mainly the Shia from the south and the Bekkaa -area) from the rural areas. They are also instruments in the competition for economic, social and political advantages in the jungle of city life. Being part of a strong family or well-organized clan in Lebanese society somehow guarantees a better and easier life. These associations do have a formal structure as any other association: with general membership and an elected board. Their activities have a social nature (get-togethers, dinners etc.) but often an economic purpose (collect money for needy members, set up clinics) and political purpose (lobby). Critics like Tabar argue that consolidating primordial ties in civil society seriously hinder the development of (real) civil culture and democracy and are not positive for the nation-wide order and stability. *[The resulting state of constant rivalry and competition, particularly among the forward-looking members of the middle class, will continue to generate feelings of mistrust, anxiety and victimization. (*Tabar, no date). We will come back to this critical notion in the next chapter.

3) Religious Associations and Institutions

In Lebanon, it is difficult to overlook the role of religion. There are 19 official religious communities. They are recognized in the political system and have seats in parliament, government and the civil service, allocated on a confessional basis. They all have a personal status law court, which means that there are 19 personal status codes and 19 patterns of marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption etc. The different sectarian authorities play a large and central role in organizing civil society life.

64

Each religious community has a large network of schools, hospitals, clinics, orphanages, retirement homes, youth groups, charitable groups, student groups, and women's groups. The largest and best-organized groups are the Sunni community, Shi'i community, Druze community, the Maronites, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholics, and Armenian Catholics.

The largest religious institutions are:

- **Dar al Itfa**; the official Sunni authority headed by the Grand Mufti of Lebanon. It is responsible for the community's network of mosques and religious courts. It also hosts other social, educational, welfare, and health institutions. Dar al Itfa is economically powerful; possessing large amounts of property (through the *Awqaf*) all over Beirut and Lebanon.
- **Greek Orthodox Church**; is also in possession of extensive property and a broad network of schools, hospitals, clinics and other forms of social organizations.
- **Maronite Church**; the same structure as the Greek Orthodox but with less power.
- **Greek Catholic Church**; idem
- **Majlis al-Shii al Aala** (The Supreme Shiite Council); headed by a Sheikh. The Council plays an important role for Shiite interests but owns far less property than the other institutions and has less support due to the fresh presence of Shiites in the city. *'In recent years, it is also challenged in terms of money and networking by Hezbollah, with strong Iranian backing, it has bought property, built mosques, opened schools and clinics etc '* (LCPS, 1996).
- **Dar al Taifa al Durziyya**; this institution that serves the Druzes has the same structure and activities as the ones mentioned above, but its power is concentrated in a couple of small neighborhoods in Beirut and mainly in the mountains, where the majority of the Druze is still living.

It is important to note that the Sunni and the Greek Orthodox until these days are the most powerful communities in Beirut because of their long history there. The Maronites have strong positions since the French mandate. However the Greek Orthodox Church overrules the Church of the Maronites in social and organizational aspect. Having a wide and strong network (as Putnam also says) in a town or country depends largely on the history and on the time that is shared (with fellow-communities).

4) Sporting Clubs and Associations

Sport clubs and associations are the classical social binding institutions for lower-income groups. They serve as an outlet for especially the youngsters and also 'represent a focal point of identification and loyalty. Next to being a reflection of the confessional identities, the sporting

65

associations also cut across identities and '*provide new way of thinking about identities and groups*' (LCPS, 1996).

- Nejme (Sunni)
- Ansar (Sunni)
- Safa (Christian)
- Racing (Druze)
- Homenetmen (Armenian)

These associations seem to have certain innocence towards (confessional) politics. For example, the most aggressive battle (outside the field) was between Nejme and Ansar, which both belong to the Sunni community.

5) The economic and professional associations

Lebanon proved to be a resilient country. After the war, it revitalized its economy impressively and made business life flourish again. The post-war years are marked by high rates of growth, large job creation and good international economic relations. Economic and professional associations play an essential role as intermediator and mobilizer of economic interests. Since the war, they took over the role of political parties to '*keep the engine of democracy running*' (LCPS, 1996). In literature, they are described as a powerful and healthy section of society. The role of the state has always been minimal; since the war, however, the state (especial Rafiq Hariri, late president of Lebanon who was killed in February 2005) was more involved than ever in rebuilding the infrastructure of the country.

This increase of state interference is a hindrance for these associations to perform well. Nevertheless, even with this state meddling this sector shows strength and independence, like in the elections of board members. Despite the support of Rafiq Hariri, pro-government candidates lost from candidates that were not supported by the state politics, like Asem Salam in the Association of Engineers in 1995 and Chakib Cortbawi in the Order of Lawyers.

The most important organizations in this sub sector are:

- Association of Lebanese Industrialists
- Association of Lebanese Banks
- Beirut Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI)
- Rassemblement de Dirigeants et Chefs d'Entreprises Libanais (RDCL)
- Association of Engineers (AOE)
- The Order of Lawyers of Beirut

66

It is worth to cite the conclusion of the LCPS on this very effective sub sector of civil society:

'Economic and professional associations have experienced a revival in the last four years. They have assumed a bigger role in society than before. They have shaken off the "vestiges of the war" (moukhalafat al harb) in many ways. They have not, however, developed this new role in opposition to the state as much as in opposition to the "vestiges of war", by which they mean lawlessness, chaos, or the rule of militias which perpetuates itself in the guise of government institutions. RDCL, the Association of Engineers, the CGTL, and the Order of Lawyers are a vibrant and healthy part of civil society with a clear agenda. The other associations are just as vibrant, yet they are limited in their participation in the public sphere by a very focused professional agenda' (LCPS, 1996).

6) Cultural organizations and institutions

There are many cultural activities organized by different kinds of organizations, whether communal or civil. It is not a surprise that the first kind is more visible. In contrast to the sector of sport, the cultural field does intermingle with politics. Two important associations are:

- The Cultural Movement of Antelias
- Arab Cultural Club; founded in 1944 and affiliated with Arab nationalists

6.2.4 Sectarian division of society

As the section before illustrated, civil society is divided along sectarian lines. The one religious group might be stronger then the other, however they all have their little state within the Lebanese state. Their networks include institutions and organizations that cover almost any field of public sector: health, education, trade unions and sporting clubs etc. These are all quite effective in serving the needs of their grassroots-support. In sum, Lebanese civil society is sectarian by nature. This fact poses many questions to researcher, especially when it comes to the effectiveness of civil society. In the next chapter, there will be a closer analysis on the tie between the citizens, civil society and the Lebanese state.

6.2.5 Policy fields

The categories of civil society in section 2.3 represent the policy fields where civil society is visibly involved in. This means that civil society is involved in social policy, family legislation, economic policy, health, cultural policy and sports. A great contribution, which is also taken very seriously by the government, is the disabled policy. Due to the 15 years of ongoing violence, especially in the rural areas of the Bekaa that were full of mines, Lebanese people know many handicapped. Civil society knows an unusual amount of NGOs serving the needs of Lebanese that became deaf and blind in the years of war. An important governmental draft for this policy was largely drafted by civil society organizations. Beside this demand-based specialization of Lebanese

67

society, there are the more western oriented focuses of new NGOs. These involve mainly gender and youth. Many of these organizations cooperate with the local UNDP and are quite successful.

6.2.6 (Relative) Freedom of Association

It is important to have a look at the freedom of societal organization in Lebanon, because this is one of the factors that make it different from the region. Nevertheless, we should not overestimate it. Since the end of the civil war there is more state interference, and organizations of civil society are monitored. When one reads the documents (of the LCPS, Tabar and Traboulsi) more profoundly one can trace a critique on the vagueness of the NGO-laws. This contributes to the discretion of the ministry of Interior in dealing with associations.

6.2.7 Conclusion

Section 6.2 mapped and described the features of Lebanese civil society. Civil society in Lebanon is very large; it has been estimated at 2500 in 1999 and 3803 in 2001. It covers practically all public sector fields: social welfare, professional associations, sports associations, cultural clubs and economic organizations. Every sectarian community is represented in each of these fields. Civil society in Lebanon is characterized by sectarian division and by the existence of family, neighborhood or regional associations. But since the 1990s, there is the trend, influenced by global discourse, of new NGOs that really fit in the definition of civic organizations (inclusive, acquired membership etc). The fact that membership is based on kinship is something considered as undesirable by critics of Lebanese society. They argue that that consolidating primordial ties in civil society seriously hinder the development of (real) civil culture and democracy for the nation-wide cohesion and structure. This section showed us that civil society in Lebanon is large and active in a variety of fields. Robert Putnam says that a dense and dynamic civil society positively contributes to good governance. In the next section we will find out whether Putnam is right and examine how good governance is in Lebanon.

6.3 State of affairs in good governance

Good governance is an ideal that can be measured along several dimensions. In the theoretical definition exposed in chapter three, it contains eight characteristics. Each represents a dimension along which government performance can be measured. These characteristics are A. participation, B. rule of law, C. transparency, and D. responsiveness, E. consensus orientation, F. equity and inclusiveness, G. effectiveness & efficiency and H. accountability. In my interviews (see appendix) the respondents were asked to judge good governance, on these eight principles of the UNDP. Unfortunately, in official sources, I could not find statistical data that exactly reflect the categorization of the UNDP.

The reports of the Freedom House and Transparency International will be discussed as well but most of the following data is taken from the sources of the World Bank on governance. Before presenting the results, there will be a short explanation of the World Banks approach and a comprehensive chart will be shown for the sake of completeness.

The World Bank defines governance as *the set of traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised*. This includes (1) the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced, (2) the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies, and (3) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them.

The six dimensions of governance are Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality and the Rule of Law. It is interesting to consider the way the World Bank defines and constructs these governance indicators. The first two indicators capture the first part of the World Banks definition of governance; the process by which those in authority are selected and replaced. **Voice and Accountability** includes a number of indicators that measure aspects of the political process, civil liberties and political rights including the independence of the media. Behind the choice for index **Political Stability and Absence of Violence** lays the idea that *'the quality of governance in a country is compromised by the likelihood of wrenching changes in government, which not only has a direct effect on the continuity of policies, but also at a deeper level undermines the ability of all citizens to peacefully select and replace those in power' (World bank, 2003)*. The next indicators measure whether the government is capable of making and implementing good policy is. **Government Effectiveness** is focused on the inputs and includes measurements of quality of public service provision, the quality of the bureaucracy, the competence of civil servants, the independence of the civil service from political pressures, and the credibility of the government's commitment to policies. **Regulatory Quality** is more focused on the policies themselves and includes measures of the incidence of market-unfriendly policies such as price controls or inadequate bank supervisions, and perceptions of the burdens imposed by excessive regulation in areas such as foreign trade and business development.

The final two indicators measure broadly the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions, which govern their interactions. The index **Rule of Law** includes perceptions of the incidence of crime, the effectiveness and predictability of the judiciary, and the enforceability of contracts. According to the World Bank, these indicators measure the success of a society in developing an environment in which fair and predictable rules form the basis for economic and social interactions and the extent to which property rights are protected. **Control of Corruption** measures perceptions of corruption, which is defined as the exercise of public power for private gain.

69

The World Bank sees corruption as a lack of respect for the rules, which govern their interactions, and hence represents a failure of governance. The next chart shows each of the above indicators and the measurements on the government performance of Lebanon.

Figure 1: Lebanon 1998, 2004 and 2005 on all indicators
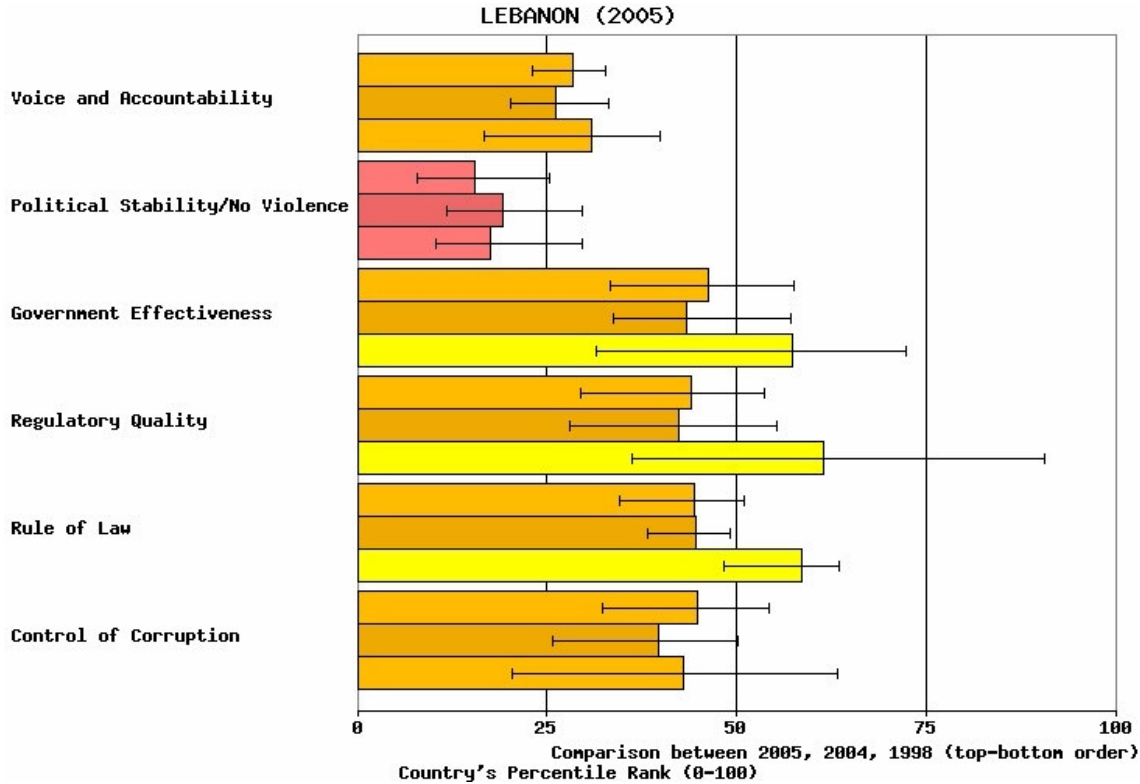
This comparative chart[6] gives a comprehensive view on the good governance performance of Lebanon in the years 1998 and 2004 and 2005, according to the World Bank.

The Civil War ended in 1990.One would expect that the reconstruction of Lebanon would go hand in hand with upward performance of governance. It does not seem to be logic to see that in 1998 Lebanon was politically less stable and safe but better off in government effectiveness, regulatory equality and rule of law then in 2004. The fact that Lebanon is a very small country and located in the hotbed makes it very vulnerable to political fluctuations due to both the internal complexity as

---

[6] This chart and the others that will follow for the different good governance dimensions, shows Lebanon's percentile rank on the governance indicator. Percentile ranks indicate the percentage of countries worldwide that rate below Lebanon. This means that higher values indicate better governance ratings (World Bank).

well as international politics. This could be an explanation for these fluctuations.In the statistics of the following section, there will only be a presentation of Voice and Accountability, Government Effectiveness and Rule of Law since they approach the three principles, Accountability, Effectiveness and Rule of Law, used in this thesis the most:

6.3.1   Overview statistics different sources and organizations

In this section, the principles, as defined by the UNDP, will be discussed in the light of the empirical information. The empirical results consist of the statistics and the in-dept interviews taken in Beirut. Since the UNDP does not seem to have compact statistics on good governance I will make use of proxy's of the World Bank', The Freedom House and Transparency International.

A. Participation

'All men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or thorough legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their intention. Such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech, as well as capacities to participate constructively.' (UNDP, 1997)

Several sources provide data on participation in Lebanon. Here I will start with the results of the Freedom House. Later on, I will point to the World Bank chart on Voice and Accountability, which is shown in the section on Accountability. Finally, extracts of the interview will provide completing data.

1.   Statistical data

According to the Freedom House, Lebanon is a country that is not free. In both reports of 2004 Lebanon is ranked with a six in political rights and a five in civil liberties. High ranking refers to a low level of liberty. This is in contrast to other progressive Arab countries (Jordan has 3.46 for civic liberties and Morocco even 2.84). Considering Lebanon's reputation as a progressive Arab country, the results shown by the Freedom House are surprisingly bad. With the rating of six for

Political rights Lebanon belongs to the group of countries that *'have systems ruled by military juntas, one-party dictatorships, religious hierarchies, or autocrats. These regimes may allow only a minimal manifestation of political rights, such as some degree of representation or autonomy for minorities. A few states are traditional monarchies that mitigate their relative lack of political rights through the use of consultation with their subjects, tolerance of political discussion, and acceptance of public petitions' (Freedom house Lebanon country report, 2005.* Even on civil liberties, Lebanon scores very low.

71

However, the methodological information on this rating explains a lot. ' *Countries and territories that have received a rating of 3, 4, or 5 range from those that are in at least partial compliance with virtually all checklist standards to those with a combination of high or medium scores for some questions and low or very low scores on other questions. The level of oppression increases at each successive rating level, including in the areas of censorship, political terror, and the prevention of free association. There are also many cases in which groups opposed to the state engage in political terror that undermines other freedoms. Therefore, a poor rating for a country is not necessarily a comment on the intentions of the government, but may reflect real restrictions on liberty caused by nongovernmental actors.* '

Analyzing the narrative report of the Freedom House, the role and influence of Syria stands out enormously. *''After the ouster of General Michel Aoun from east Beirut by Syrian forces in 1990, a new Syrian backed government extended its writ throughout most of the region…Over the next 12 years, Syria consolidated its control over Lebanese State institutions, particularly the presidency, the judiciary, and the security forces. However in return for tacit Western acceptance of its control of Lebanon, Damascus permitted a degree of political and civil liberties in Lebanon that exceeded those in most other Arab countries.'* Among these political and civic liberties are the freedom of press, a limited freedom of association, and freedom of religion. The fact that a certain Christian party is banned since 1994 has restricted the typically Lebanese Freedom of association. Beside this, NGOs including human rights groups are permitted to operate freely. Freedom of press is rooted in Lebanese political culture. Freedom of religion is guaranteed in the Lebanese constitution since 1909.   The Freedom House states that, even though the president is formally selected every six-years by the 128-member parliament, Lebanese people are limited in choosing their own governments*,' in practice this choice is made after Syrian authorization, known as the 'password' in the Lebanese media.'* (Freedom House Country report Lebanon, 2005).

2. Interviews

Looking at the results of the interviews, participation is one of the higher ranked criteria. There are many associations in Lebanon and many citizens are active in society. Though it is not weak at all, participation is problematic in Lebanon according to **Salem**. He argues even that there is too much participation: it is too strong. Beside that he says it is, 'messed up', and influenced by Syrian interventions. There is much interference even in the elections. **Krayem** also emphasizes the problems of participation. He sees the lack of youth and women participation as a great problem. He also points at the irregularity of the elections, which has to do with the specific political situation of Lebanon.

Further, **Baroud** said that participation since 1990 is not the same as it used to be before 1990. (The war was between 1975 and1990.) Before 1995 there was rule of law, Lebanese citizens could participate in elections and through civil society. Since the end of the war, the state tries to have more control over society. In sum, all of the respondents agree that the quality of the participation is not good enough yet.

B. Rule of Law

'Legal frameworks should be fair and enforced impartially, particularly the laws on human rights' (UNDP, 1997)

For the rule of law, the statistical data of the World Bank are shown. After that, the interview results on this issue will be treated.
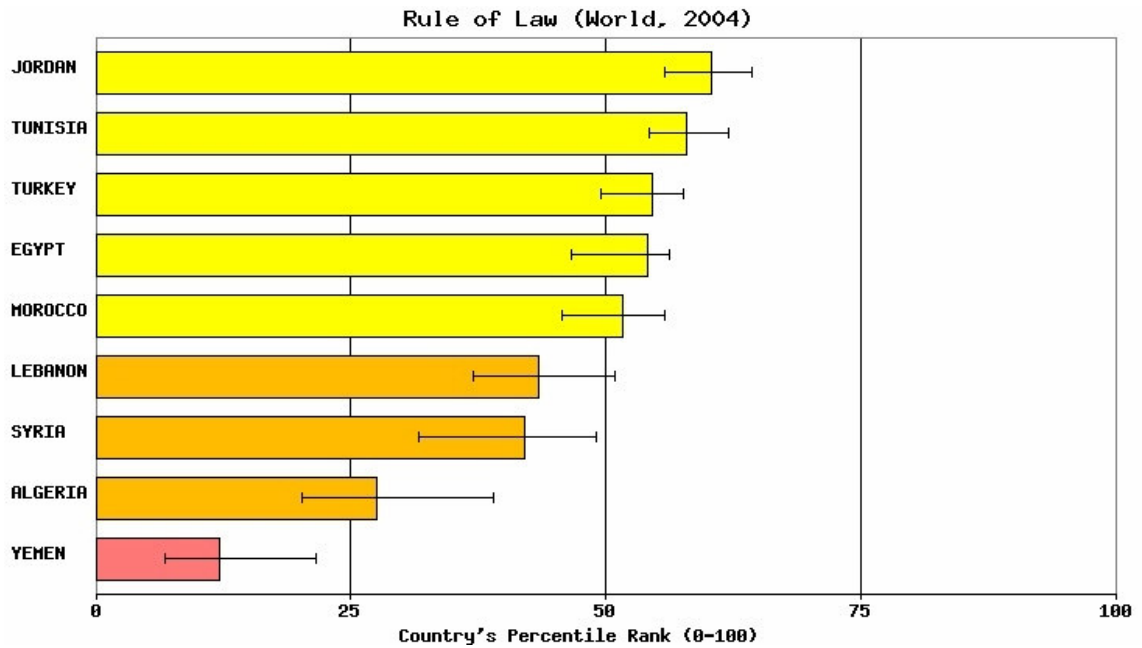
1.   Statistical data

On Rule of Law, the World Bank estimates Lebanon at a score of 43.5; this is low compared to the 95.2 of the Netherlands.

Figure 2: Rule of Law 2004 worldwide

73

Figure 3: Rule of Law regionally

When we analyze the regional performances it is surprising how bad Lebanon performs. Even the (repressive) state of Syria has better results.

2. The interviews

When it comes to the **rule of law,** the Lebanese story is quite complicated. First, there is an advanced judicial system (**Salem**) and very good laws (**Krayem**). However, there are serious problems with the implementation: 'To enforce the one that exist and to implement them consequently is a great challenge'. Salem says that the problems in rule of law are mainly the corruption of judges and the political interference in the work of judges. It often occurs that political pressure is put on judges. According to Ziyad **Baroud** rule of law was good before 1975 because the juridical system was in that time to a large extent independent. 'At least the constitution could not be amended. Before 1975 the laws were applied, as they should be. Since 1990, it is problematically bad. In 14 years the constitution was amended four times: 1990, 1995, 1998 and 2004.'According to **Fadia Kiwan** there is no rule of law in Lebanon. She emphasizes the difference between rule of law and rule of rights. *'There are two different stages. We did not come yet to the first, which is the rule of law. We should get our rules more in conformity with our rights. Rules may not be fair; we have to correct them.'*

74

C. Transparency

'Transparency is built on the free flow of information. Processes, institutions and information are directly accessible to those concerned with them, and enough information is provided to understand and monitor them. (UNDP, 1997)

1. Statistical data

The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) ranks 133 countries in terms of the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials and politicians. It is a composite index, drawing on 17 different polls and surveys from 13 independent institutions carried out among the business people and country analysts, including surveys of residents, both local and expatriate. This table, which is based on the sources of Transparency International, shows how corrupt Lebanon is compared tot the Netherlands and Italy.

Table 5: CPI Lebanon, the Netherlands and Italy 2003-2005

	Lebanon	the Netherlands	Italy
CPI score 2005	**3.1**	8.6	5.0
CPI score 2004	2.7	n.a.	n.a.
CPI score 2003	3.0	8.9	5.3

The difference between the Netherlands is again very large. As the table shows when we compare Lebanon with Italy, the country of Putnam's famous research, the contrast is less sharp.

2. The Interviews

The respondents agree with the results of TI. Lebanon performs badly on transparency. However, according to Paul Salem the system is not a black box; it is open: '*The good thing about Lebanon is that everybody knows in the end what is going on. The government is not closed because the government is a coalition of different parties and different groups. So it is hard to keep anything a secret. By nature of the political system it ends up being transparent. There is nothing we cannot find out; but it is not an unorganized transparency.* '

Hassan Krayem says almost the same: '*The system is liberal. Information is available and accessible.*' He defines lack of accuracy as the problem. Ziyad Baroud portrays

accountability as problematically bad since the civil war: '*nothing has been done to be accountable.*'

D. Responsiveness

'*Institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders*' (UNDP, 1997)

1. Statistical data

No statistical data is found that exactly measure responsiveness. Since it reflects the input possibilities of citizens, here also we could use the data of the World Bank on the items Voice& Accountability (see H.) in combination with those on Government Effectiveness (see G.)

2. Interviews

From all the good governance criteria responsiveness comes out the best in the interviews. Ziad Baroud says that before the war it was very weak. This is what some groups made go to war. During the war it was sufficient. The system as a whole is very rigid. On the micro-level it is very interactive. '*You cal always reach a depute and get your opinion across, you might get a response*'. On the macro level, thus on the national level, due to irregularity and other deficiencies of the elections, the state does not have mechanisms for macro-responsiveness (Salem). Krayem says: '*the institutional set up is there but they are not able to respond effectively and on time*'. Majed is the most critical about responsiveness. He judges it as problematically bad.

E. Consensus oriented

'*Good governance mediates differing interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the group and, where possible, on policies and procedures. (UNDP, 1997)*'

1. Statistical data

There are no numerical data found on consensus.

2. Interviews

Inherent to the political system the Lebanese system is consensus based.
According to Charles **Adwan** says there is 'too much' of it in Lebanon. It makes it inefficient to do anything. There is too much consensus building among communal society on all levels on all issues. '*You can't run a country by consensus*'.
 Surprisingly most of the respondents agreed with him. However, Baroud does argue that there is no alternative way, without going into war again.

76

Baroud: *Lebanese society is confessional and politically very pluriform. Consensus is the best way even if it is not good. The constitution divides parliamentarian seats among the confessional groups. There is no alternative way, if you don't want war again. We need reconciliation based on consensus. Lebanon can offer a good example of conviviality of confessions in a positive way.*

Also Salem sees consensus as a necessity even though it makes the government rigid and very unable to do anything. 'Because you have to have the agreement of everybody to have anything and everybody wants something'. Krayem's opinion is very different from the rest. He considers consensus as a positive thing. He thinks that the system in Lebanon is not performing well on consensus. Especially on the national level, there is no agreement on rules of the game. This is necessary for stability of the system.

## F.	Equity and inclusiveness
'All men and women have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being' (UNDP, 1997)

### 1.	Statistical data
There are no statistical data found on equity and inclusiveness.

### 2.	Interviews
Public services are provided: there is a social security system, a public health system and a public educational system, but they are all weak. Many people, namely the ones that have no job, are not able to benefit of social services. The post-war governments had a mixed approach in dealing with poverty. On one hand, they rather felt that they should concentrate on economic goals and maybe that by it self would be efficient; at other times they invested in social equity. Lebanon's scores on **equity and inclusiveness** are anyhow quite low. Ziyad Baroud emphasizes that it was the worse before the war.

77

G. Effectiveness and efficiency

Processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs while making use of the sources. (UNDP, 1997)

In the statistical part, I will make use of the data on what the World Bank refers to as 'Government Effectiveness'. As noted earlier the approach of the World Bank includes measurements of quality of public service provision, the quality of the bureaucracy, the competence of civil servants, the independence of the civil service from political pressures, and the credibility of the government's commitment to policies.

Statistical data

The government of Lebanon is not effective compared to countries of the OECD. It performs even extremely bad compared to the Netherlands.

Also compared to the governments of the countries in the region the Lebanese government performances are very low. Only Syria, Algeria and Yemen show better results.

Figure 4: Government Effectiveness 2004 worldwide

Figure 5: Government Effectiveness 2004 regionally
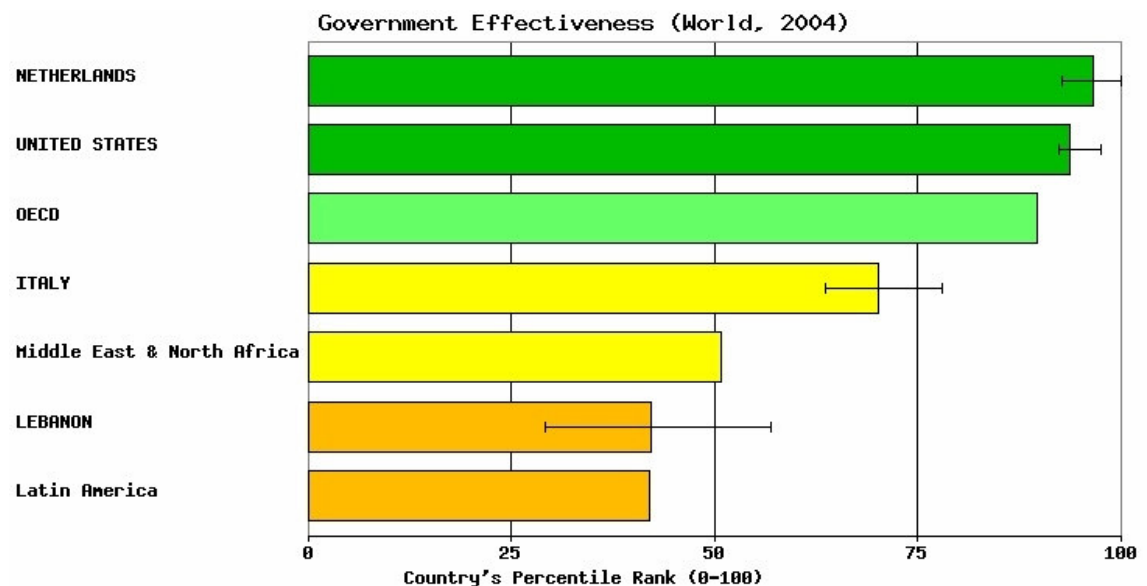
Government Effectiveness (World, 2004)
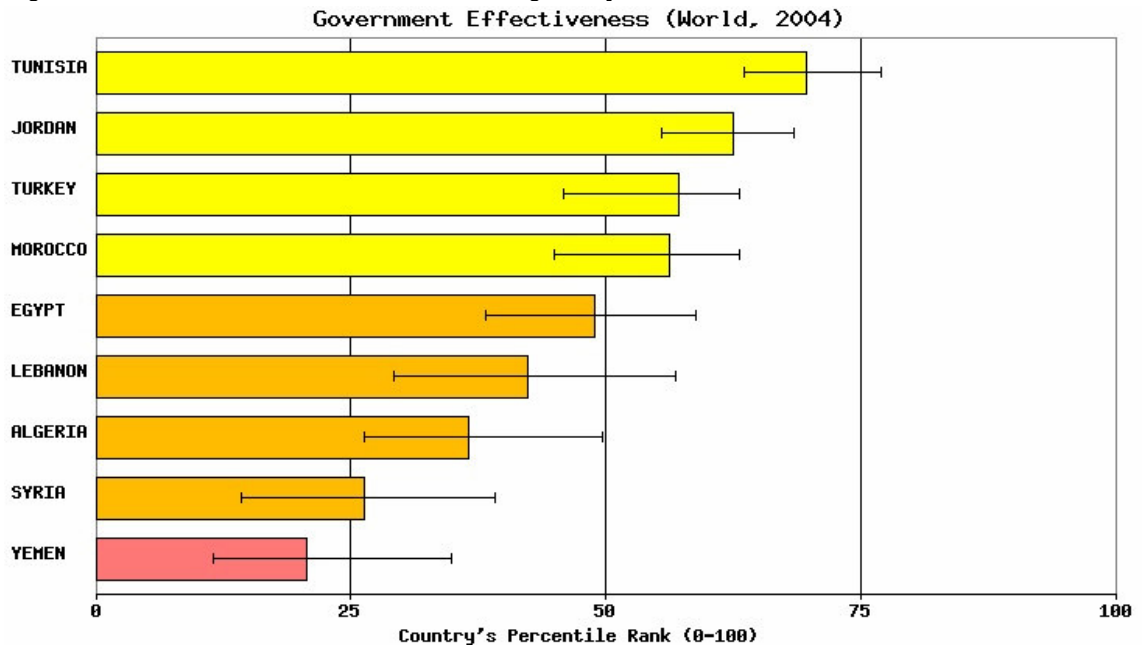
2.   Interviews

There are several major problems in the public sector. One is that there is no clear leadership. There is the prime minister and there is the president and there is the minister; power at the top is shared.   Second, the appointment of the public sector-employees is strongly influenced by politics. It is a small world; they all know each other and some help each other. Within the ministry rather then it being a clear administration top-down; every ministry has; it is hard t fire, hard to hire because of the politics. Third, the salary scales are very low. 'So what kind of quality people are you going to get and another thing how are you going to keep them from being corrupt'. They have to be corrupt to raise their family. *'There is an income problem which causes a whole bunch of other problems. It is very hard without paying people decent wages to manage them decently'* (Salem). Krayem says there is a lot of waste and corruption. Majed puts it more cynically by saying: *'problematically bad in terms of building a state and a country but they are very effective when it comes to defending their interest and protecting their post. They know how to win elections'.* Ziyad Baroud says that before the war it was very effective though it was not based on something solid. Economy was very good during the war because of the militias who were controlling it. There was a lot of work and Christian lobbies were very successful; they introduced civil administration in the mountains.

79

Generally, we can conclude that all respondents agree on the fact that government is far from effective.

H.   Accountability

'Decision-makers in government, the private sector and civil society organizations are accountable to the public, as well as to institutional stakeholders. This accountability differs depending on the organization and whether the decision is internal or external'. (UNDP, 1997)

1.   Statistical data

Accountability in Lebanon is very low compared to countries in other parts of the world. The whole region performs badly on this criterion. Three countries perform better then Lebanon does. Thus, on accountability Lebanon performs relatively better then on the other criteria.

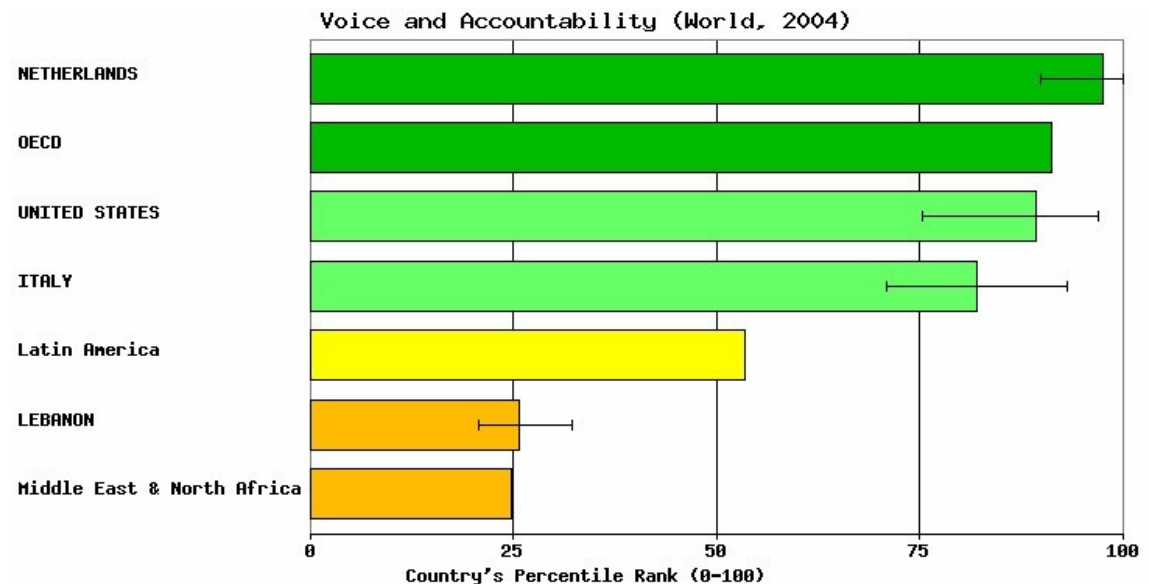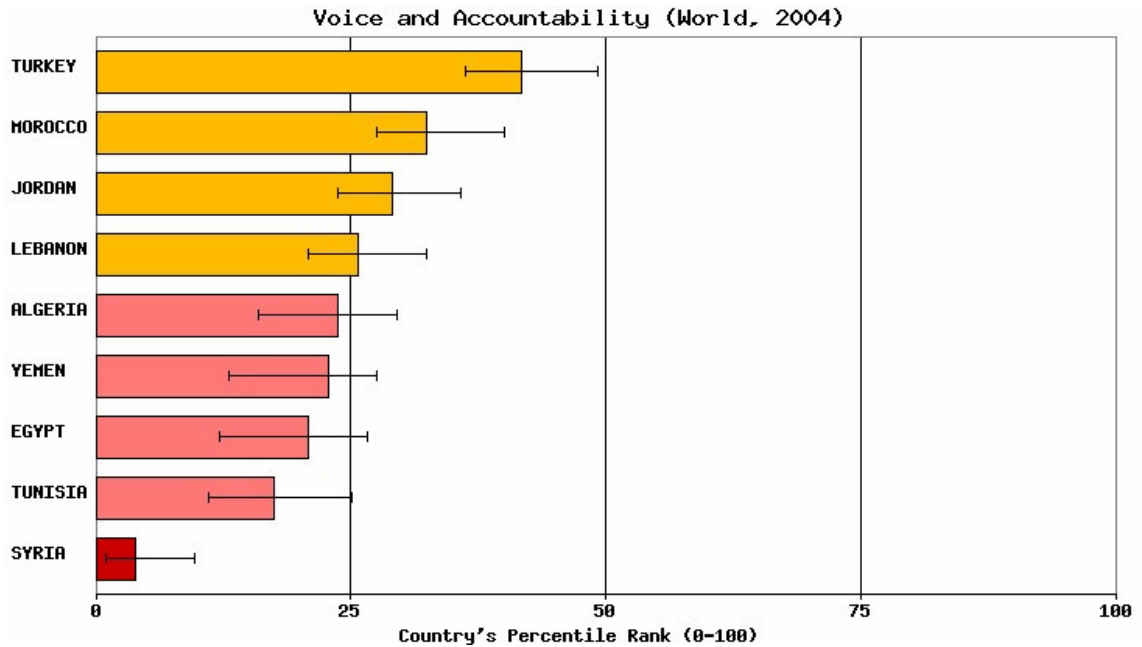**Figure 6: Voice and Accountability 2004 worldwide**

Figure 7: Voice and Accountability 2004 regionally

Voice and Accountability (World, 2004)

2.   Interviews

Accountability is problematically bad in Lebanon. This is partly due to lack of '*organized transparency'*. There is some accountability. It is not regular it is not very dependable, but several employees and ministers who were corrupt are now in prison. The problem is that it is not regular and not politically open. '*Why one minister did go to jail and the other not?* '*Twenty years ago you did not have to worry if you were a corrupt politician; now you worry...'if the political winds change, I might end up in jail '(It is another environment today because political winds do change' (Salem).* This was not present in Lebanon before and is not present on other Arab countries or 30 years ago; who do not have changes of political winds. Like Jordan, the king will be king for the next years 30 probably. If you are good would the king you do not have to worry. ''But in Lebanon, if you are good with a president and he is elected out in 2 years, what are you going to do? That atmosphere of shifting politics has an influence. We have elections and if you are really a bad politician...it I very hard to be elected. Therefore, there is indeed through elections an amount of accountability as well. It is weak but is near.'

81

Baroud is more critical then **Salem**. He argues that accountability never has been this bad. *'Nothing has been done to be accountable'.* **Majed** agrees with him. **Krayem** argues that there is a lack of accountability on all levels and says that in the history of parliament there has never been a vote of low confidence. There was not any accountability of criminal activity during the war. There was a general pardon. *'Do what ever you want and then escape'* (Krayem). Administratively it is weak as well. This is due to the confessional system, which places loyalty to (persons from) the community before other obligations. The employee is not accountable to the political leader who appointed him. 'There is no accountability in the right sense of the word.' (Krayem)

6.4 Analysis of the findings

Considering the large amount of data in this chapter, it is useful to recapitulate in short referring to the treated sub questions, before drawing conclusions in the next section. These (sub) questions are 1) *what are the characteristics of Lebanese civil society?* And 2) *what is the state of affairs in good governance?* This chapter provides an answer on these questions, based on the empirical data drawn from different official sources and the in-depth interviews taken in Beirut. As noted several times in this work, Lebanon is a country with a complex political history. For example, the war that lasted 15 years still has its repercussions in society at all levels. A concrete example is the amount of handicapped people that led to a huge growth of NGOs specially focused on the handicapped. This is just one example, but in general the consequences of the war are making themselves felt on any level and sector of society.

We can answer the first sub question by saying that Lebanon indeed has a civil society, which is very dynamic and large. This is due to factors like the freedom of association and the essential role civil society had to play during the civil war because the state was absent. On almost every public affair, one can find a civil society organization in Lebanon working on it: health care, education, social welfare, rural development social assistance, displaced resettlement, culture & arts. A cynical reference to Hezbollah would even make us state that the most essential governmental task, military defense, is also fulfilled by members of civil society.

In any case, Lebanese civil society differs from the civil society of any other Arab countries. The first difference is the fact that civil society exists and is allowed to exist in Lebanon.

82

In Syria for example we can hardly speak of a civil society. Another difference is that in Lebanon there are more associations of the modern kind, in Arabic: *mujmu3at al madani.* Lebanese civil society maybe not civic enough, but it is more civic than the civil society of other Arab countries. Nevertheless there is much critic on the communal nature of most of the associations; it is too exclusive. Another critical notion is the strength of civil society. According to half of the respondents, civil society in Lebanon is too strong in relation to the state. This is an undesirable situation. As explained in chapter three, Lebanese society is historically very strong. Regional powers always had a strong position due to several circumstances. We can conclude that civil society in Lebanon is large, dynamic and strong. The other important feature is its sectarian dividing lines. Two problematic issues are the strength and autonomy of society which is above measure and not healthy for the system on the national level.

2) Looking at the second sub question, we first have to admit that measuring the state of affairs in good governance in Lebanon is an immense challenge. Yet, there is a diverse and wide range of statistics found on most of the good governance principles that were stated form the beginning. At the first glance, we can conclude that Lebanon does not perform much better then other Arab states. Next to that, the freedom that Lebanon is so proud of seems to be a superficial one. To great extent this lack of real freedom is related to the dominance of Syria. Especially the report of the Freedom House is very clear about this. Generally concluding, we could say that good governance, leaving the successful economic policy aside, in Lebanon does not perform (much) better then other progressive Arab countries.

6.5   Conclusions

In the first part of this chapter civil society of Lebanon is mapped and reviewed. We showed that Lebanese civil society is very large, dynamic and active on all public fields. On some issues it can be very effective and strong in relation to the state. Sometimes, as critics argue, it is even too strong. An essential feature of Lebanese civil society is that is divided along sectarian lines and that relations based on kinship and other primordial ties are an important factor. Despite this 'clannism', Lebanese civil society is far more developed than the civil society of surround Arab countries. For a great part this has to do with Lebanon's war history and with its special juridical status under Ottoman hegemony and later under the French. More then other Arab countries, it had civic liberties from the early years of the twentieth century and thanks to the free academic spirit of Beirut it drew intellectuals from all over the Arab world and was an important intellectual center where political debate was possible openly and where associations could be started freely.

83

In contrast to its civil society success, Lebanon does not seem to stand out in the Arab region in the performance of governance. In the interviews the dimensions participation, responsiveness and consensus came out the best, while still very low. The Freedom House states Lebanese participation very bad though, in 2004 Lebanon was partly free; their negative judgment is based on the Syrian interference in Lebanese domestic politics. Rule of Law is even lower than countries; with a score of 43.5, it means that 66% of the countries worldwide perform better then Lebanon, including Arab countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. In the interviews the corruption of judges and the political interference in their work came out as the most serious problem for the Rule of Law. Transparency is very low, but the root of this problem lay more in the lack of accountability. In public administration sectarian loyalty seem to overrule other professional priorities like openness, honesty and quality. The performance of government policy and administration is low (Equity and Inclusiveness) on social policy, because of the fact that only working people has an assurance. Many public services like higher education and medical care are in the hands of private organizations. Governmental education and medical care seem to be of much lower quality. The management processes lack efficiency and effectiveness. According to the respondent one oft the main problems are the lack of clear leadership (because power is shared by different sectarian communities) and the extreme low salaries of government officials. This makes officials have several jobs beside their governmental function or even makes them corrupt.

In short, the data and facts presented in this chapter bring us to two main conclusions.

> ➢ Lebanese civil society is dense, dynamic, strong and diverse.
> ➢ Good governance is surprisingly weak.

According to the social capital theory of Robert Putnam a dense and large civil society leads, through political participation, to good or better governance. Does this mean that we have to reject the Putnam's theory? Or not? Is it a matter of social-cultural context and/ or specific political problems? Thus, how could we explain the Lebanese situation?

These questions are treated in the next chapter, which will start with the third and fourth sub question.

84

Chapter 7   Analysis: Making Democracy work in Lebanon

7.1   Introduction

The previous chapter treated the empirical questions of this thesis. This chapter will treat the sub questions. It differs from the previous chapter in the sense that *relations* between the concepts civil society and good governance are further analyzed. According to Putnam there is a positive relation between a dense civil society and the governance of a country. We have concluded in the previous chapter, that Lebanon's performance on good governance is below average, even compared to the region. The third sub question of this thesis '*To what extent is this due to civil society?* is therefore difficult to answer. This is also the case for the fourth sub question: '*How do typical Lebanese features/ characteristics influence this relation?'* As said earlier this study has an explorative nature. We used data based on statistics but the main source is the qualitative interviews taken in Beirut in December 2004.

The next section analyzes the relation between civil society and state more in depth and discusses the third sub question. In section 7.3 typical Lebanese features will be identified and placed in the context of the political culture and governmental situation; this analysis will provide answers to the fourth sub question. Section 7.4 summarizes the wisdom exposed in chapter 5 and analyzes the social capital theory in the light of Arab political theory. After that, all the relevant theories and concepts, Putnam's as well as the ones of Arab scholars, will be related with the practice of Lebanon. Lebanon is analyzed on the national level, including the whole of civil society and the relation with the performances on the matter of good governance. Finally a conclusion will follow in section 7.6.

7.2   Link between Civil Society and Good governance

In this section I will explain to what extent the state of affairs in good governance (in Lebanon in 2004) is due to civil society. I will begin with the relations that exist between state and civil society, which is, as usual when explaining social phenomena and the relations between them, a difficult task. Many factors influence the governance of a country. Many factors also influence the good governance of a country. There is the management of state apparatus itself, the quality of its personnel, and the availability of financial resources. There is the natural environment. A country with a dry climate is harder to govern then a country with more water and a more fruitful land. There is the size of a country and the size of its population. Beside the natural environment there is also the social environment and the political environment, which are both a legacy of history.

85

The history and culture of a society are very important in determining the political culture of that country. Lebanon has a society that is historically fragmented. Beside the sectarian fragmentation, society has always been strong and dynamic, especially in opposition to the state. Some say it is even stronger then the state. It is also very dynamic; there is a wide range of activities and initiatives. This also has to do with the (political) history of Lebanon. Lebanon has always been autonomous, whether under Umayyad, Abbasid or Ottoman rule. There has always been room for regional autonomy, which gave the different (religious) groups the space to develop into strong entities.

In Lebanon, society has a strong position in relation to the state. Taking the statistics in account, the state does not seem to perform that well. Much government tasks are fulfilled by the free market or NGO-world. The best example is the higher education system in Beirut. There are around 17 universities. Still, education could be better organized, if the government would interfere. Another example is the public health. The best hospitals are the private clinics. This means that the ones that the poor can afford are performing below standards. Due to its important role, civil society is developed and relatively professional. In the fields of education and public health it is even more professional then the state. This is one of the reasons why the state is overruled by civil society. In the analysis of the relations between state and (civil) society three kinds of relations or communication channels can be identified. The Social Economic Council formed the formal link between civil society and the Lebanese government. This institution existed between 2000 and 2003 and was established with the purpose of having a communication line between the government and leaders or other important actors within (civil) society. It lost its mandate in 2003. Critics say it had no more then a symbolic function. It was an advisory council and it could only give consultative advice. Other formal connections have a more adhoc nature. Committees or workgroups that are set up for one single issue include partners/organizations/people from civil society. Religious groups are traditionally very powerful in these initiatives. Another great power is the business world or the Bar of Lebanese Lawyers. Thus, in sum the only formal platform and forum for state and civil society is the Social Economic Council; which lost its mandate since 2003. Beside the formal communication lines, there is a second kind of relation between state and society through lobbying. On the micro- and meso-level, there is an exchange of information and ideas between lobbyists and parliamentarians. In this Lebanon does not differ from any other (western) country.

More specific and typical for Lebanon and other countries with low transparency and traditional culture, the third kind of relationship between state and society, is the relationship that is based on patronage and clientelism. In a way there are too many good contacts between some political parties, politicians and citizens' groups. One of the respondents said that responsiveness on the micro-level is very effective in Lebanon; his words did not have a negative connotation but it is hard to deny that personalistic politics is practiced in Lebanon. A good example is the establishment of an NGO by a politician or his wife. These kinds of phenomena, which occur quite often, illustrate how intermingled politics and society are in Lebanon. One respondent argued that there is too much participation and that it is 'too strong but also messed up and influenced by Syrian interventions'. National politics between the sectarian groups *and* international politics (mainly Syria's 'protection') make Lebanese politics difficult to grasp, in practice as well as in theory. In general, relations between state and society are very complex. In the case of Lebanon, they are even more complex for the following reasons. First, it is a small country where the political world is extremely small. Especially Beirut is the centre of politics, economics and civil society and people know each other through various networks (university, family etc). This contributes to the short distance between state and society and to the lack of clear boundaries between them. The state in Lebanon does not really stand above society and civil society is very influential. In the next section, I will go further in the special characteristics of Lebanon.

7.3   Typical Lebanese: the confessional system and other factors

Above, we have analyzed the relation between state and (civil) society in Lebanon. It is impossible to understand this relation without taking the typical Lebanese features in account. This section will lead us to the fourth sub question of my research: ***which features that are typical Lebanese could influence the relation between government and state?*** I will discuss different factors that influence the political culture and governance of Lebanon. The points that will be discussed are: the high educational level of the Lebanese population, the open political system and the formal liberties, the vibrant economy and the role of the worldwide Diaspora and the sectarian fragmentation in Lebanon. I will begin with this last factor because the sectarian fragmentation is visible in most fields of society.

The confessional nature of Lebanon is guaranteed in the constitution. It is by the law of the constitution for example that the prime minister is Sunni, the president is Maronite and the speaker of parliament is Shiite. This institutionalized confessionalism makes Lebanon different from the other countries in the region. It could be seen as a society where differences are

87

tolerated and where the political system is open to societal demands that are based on socio-ethnic and religious differences. Some respondents were proud to say that Lebanon is a multicultural and open society. Christian minorities in Egypt, for instance, see the Lebanese Maronites as a role model. Societal dividing lines are not bad by definition. It is interesting here to mention the theory of professor Lijphart. In his analysis of the consensual democracy of the Netherlands, where society was divided, he states that ethnical-social dividing lines are not dangerous as long as social-economic dividing lines crosscut them. Another important condition for the politics and government of a divided society according to Lijphart is that elites of the groups have a basic trust in each other. Based on this trust and common (sense of) responsibilities they will cooperate on governmental level. Thus, from Lijpharts point of view we do not have to see large social, ethnic and religious differences between large groups of citizens as having negative implications for the cohesion and security of society. However, most respondents did mention the sectarian fragmentation as a problem for the effectiveness of civil society and for its 'not-good-enough'-influence on good governance. These critics argue that as long as membership of associations is based on whether one is Christian or Sunni, civil society organizations will not have the impact they should have, which is to bring more 'civicness' to society in order to improve governance; to make governance better for citizens and citizens better for governance.

The sectarian system and the communal logic of civil society is considered as a hindrance by most of the respondents. As Adwan also Putnam argues civil associations should be open to all citizens, and not exclude on the basis of ethnical or religious background. How effective is a social welfare organization that only serves the needs of Shiites or Maronites? How can all these fragmented organizations lead to good governance in Lebanon? Equity is one of the principles of good governance (which also embraces the concept of inclusion). All citizens should have the same rights and the same public benefits. Of course the legacy of the civil war plays a role in this. One of the explanations for the strongly developed civil society (taking into account its sectarian fragmentation) is the essential role it played during the war. This made the several Sunni, Christian or Shii-associations have strong roots in society. It would be unrealistic and perhaps even undesirable to demand that all these organizations can be changed according to the civic principles Putnam and Adwan list.

The state is constitutionally and society is historically divided along the main sectarian groups: Maronites, Sunni and Shii. This is an important factor that really characterizes Lebanon and influences state-society-relations as well as the performance of the Lebanese government.

88

In the rest of this section I will briefly discuss the other factors that I find typical for Lebanon and that in one way or another influence the political culture, on the relations between state and (civil) society and thus on (good) governance. Remarkable about the Lebanese, especially the ones living in Beirut, is their high level of education. The large number of universities makes Beirut a city with a strong academic climate; in comparison to for example citizens in Morocco or Yemen, the Lebanese are in general quite well educated. This contributes indirectly to 'civic' culture. For example, one of the indicators of civic culture according to Putnam is the purchase of newspapers. It is logical that the more educated people are the more newspapers are read and bought. This has also a lot to do with the freedom of press. In Lebanon there are various newspapers, which can be bought (and are bought commonly) at the corner of each street. Anyway, since the last decades of the 19th century, Beirut is one of the political and intellectual centers of the Arab region. Since their establishment the universities have been receiving students from all over the Arab world. This of course contributed, in combination with the formal political liberties that are so typical for pre-colonial Lebanon, to the intellectual, political and *'civic'* culture of Lebanon. These formal political liberties were rooted in laws, like the law of 1909 on the freedom of association; the Ottomans who were inspired by the French constitution of 1901 issued them. Thus, the existence of several quality universities and the (early) existence of political liberties are among the factors that have contributed to a political culture, which is different from the political culture of the surrounding countries (Tabar, no date). It could be stated that in Lebanon there is more breeding ground for a civic culture such as Putnam portrays than in most of the Arab countries.

Other factors that are relevant for governance and typical for Lebanon are the strong economy, which is based on the liberal policy and the role of the Diaspora. I will begin with the latter. The majority of the Lebanese lives abroad. This is the case since about more then 4 generations. Right after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, for example, large groups migrated to Canada, the U.S.A. and countries in Latin America, where they were known as Turco's. Also in African countries, such as Madagascar and Nigeria, live large Lebanese communities. Because of their close ties with France, many are also living in France since generations; they have been integrated well and quite successful professionally. The Lebanese are worldwide known for the spirit of enterprise, in Europe, Africa and America.

Lebanese are historically and geographically 'doomed' to live on cross-cultural borders. Abroad, this makes them well-integrated immigrants and successful businessmen and -women. However, the ties with and loyalty towards their home country are strong in many senses. Emotionally and socially, but also economically Lebanese abroad are linked with their country. The financial

89

support from outside is of great importance for the Lebanese economy, not just on a micro level, which is often, the case in migration-based flows of money.

The support occurs through professional channels on large scale. The more recent labor migration to the Gulf States is one of the greatest sources. Illustrative is the late president Rafik Hariri; he was actually a Saudi Lebanese, who came back to Lebanon and contributed to the reconstruction of Lebanon, through large investments from outside. The fourth factor is the strong economy of Lebanon, which is based on liberal principles. Before, through and after the war Lebanon's economy was kept alive. This has to do with the fact that the economy stands quite loose from the state. Because of the typical Lebanese laissez-faire economic policy, economy in Lebanon is not very dependent on the state. Surprisingly, the economy was never as good as during the war (this is said by four respondents). Thus, like civil society, private economic life is strong and autonomous. This explains its resilience and immunity vis-à-vis political fluctuations and vitality. In this section, I have discussed factors that can influence (good) governance and that are typical for Lebanon. The next section will go into social capital.

7.4   Social capital as building stone of Arab democracy

7.4.1   Back to Putnam in the light of Arab culture

The above sections gave an answer to the last sub questions of my thesis. In the following sections, I will make syntheses of the theory and empirical results, starting with a recapitalization of the essence of Putnam's social capital theory, which will be applied to the Arab context. According to Robert Putnam there is a link between the civicness of a community and the performance of its government; this has to do with the stock of social capital, which grows out of active and dense networks of associational life. Social capital consists of the elements: trust, reciprocity and networks and through the positive relation it has with political participation, this is beneficial for good governance. With this perspective Putnam emphasizes the role of culture and social context and even places it above the other factor that conditions (modernization, development and) democratization, namely economic development. He concludes from his study in Italy that the Southern regions perform less well than the Northern regions because of the less 'civic' culture. How civic a community is depends on the extent to which the following conditions are met: 1) political equality, 2) solidarity, 3) trust, 4) tolerance, 5) membership of associations. In any case, the political culture of the south is not characterized by civic norms; politics here are organized hierarchically and political involvement is impelled and constrained by personalistic affairs, rather than by programmatic commitments on public issues. The political elite does not show much *civicness*, considering the fact that vertical relations of authority and dependence expressed in patron-client networks mark their way of doing politics.

90

What Putnam says about the growth of social capital and political culture in Southern Italy, could also be applied to the democratization process in the Middle East. Democratization includes much more than the settlement of a democratic political structure. Political reform entails a change of political culture; in Putnam's words, democratization asks for the (further) development of a civic culture. His central hypothesis is, that there is a connection between the *civicness* of a community and the quality of its governance. (The development of a civic culture requires a long process since history is a determining factor for the structure of a society. Placing democratization as a priority issue in development policy is not completely based on common agreement in international discourse, because economy is seen as an important source and indicator of development as well. I do not feel the necessity to go deep into this point because then I would be entering an egg-chicken discussion. However, it is important to realize that thinking about and demanding democracy can be seen as an elitist concern. A good economy is basically one of the most important conditions to make democracy work or actually to make the state credible in the first place. Post-colonial governments did not disappoint Arab citizens because they were democratic (or not democratic) but because they failed to live up to their expectations in meeting their socio-economic needs. Nowadays, an average Arab (citizen) from the street would say: who cares about democracy when poverty is ruling? A good example is the sale of books. What would the average deprived human being do with his only penny: would he really buy a book instead of food, a newspaper instead of bread? One of the objections of Blokland to Putnam is that he doesn't blame the structure of the whole (of society) for social inequality. She refers to Cory Robin who is extremely negative about Putnam. She finds that he makes a point when he says that there is not much attention for economical and racial inequality in Putnam's work. He reduces social inequality to a matter of contact, cohesion and community. And she considers the popularity of his ideas among policy makers and governors worrying, because their institutions are not blamed but the communities themselves (Blokland, 2002). Leaving the critics aside now we will discuss possible 'Arab forms' of social capital.

7.4.2   Inspiration for Arab forms of social capital

In this section, I discuss Arab authors who investigated Arab culture and/or politics. I will do it chronologically and begin with the classical theory of Ibn Khaldun on tribal culture in North Africa. He invented the concept *asabiyya,* which could be seen as a 14th century precursor of Putnam's social capital. Also interesting and relevant in our search for an Arab form of social capital is the cultural critique of Hisham Sharabi He states in his unconventional theory of *neopatriarchy*, that Arab history knows a long tradition of authoritative rule in social organization. He brings this view even down to the micro-level of the nuclear family where the father is the absolute head. This neo- patriarchal culture is resistant to (manifestations) of liberal and democratic values.

91

Sharabi argues that democratizing a country takes more then one generation because it is a matter of re-education: Arabs need time to learn how to deal with freedom and equality. In all sectors and levels of society, the authoritarian and closed way of dealing with people and issues should change before the implementation of democracy can succeed. His long-term perspective on democratization/ liberalization approaches the view of Putnam on the historical conditions for a democracy-friendly society.

7.5   Lebanon, civil society & good governance

After the theoretical refreshment in the previous sections, this section brings us to the synthesis of the empirical findings on Lebanese civil society and good governance with the theory of social capital. Central point is the hypothesis of Putnam that there is a positive relation between the *civicness* of a community and the quality of its governance. The central question here is, whether and how civil society in Lebanon has a link with good governance. Looking at the facts, we can say that Lebanese people are active citizens and associational life is particularly dynamic compared to that of their neighbors. According to Putnam's hypothesis, in Lebanon this would lead to good governance, or at least to better governance then the neighbors, since civil society is also much 'better' (or much more existent). Because the hypothesis also says that a dense civil society creates stocks of social capital: trust, reciprocity and networks exist in the Lebanese communities. However, in Lebanon civil society does not seem to contribute to good governance. How can we explain this? Why does social capital not lead to as much good governance? To give an answer to this question I will rely on the other bestseller of Putnam, *Bowling Alone*. In this book, which is a response to the critique he received on his book *Making Democracy Work in Italy*, he introduces the concepts *bridging* and *bonding social capital*.

The critique on social capital was that it has a dark side; that it can be harmful for the cohesion of a complete society if associations (especially those with values or objectives that oppose democratic principles like rule of law) or certain groups have a strong inner solidarity. He refers the example of the KuKluxKlan that is exclusive by nature. For Putnam this kind of organizations have too much fraternity; too much because they detriment the behavior towards people outside these structures, while they are fellow-citizens of the same nation. In the case of Lebanon, Putnam would state that there is too much of bonding capital and not enough bridging social capital to make the large and dynamic civic society that exists beneficial for governance. There is much social capital and civicness, but they exist within the borders of each sectarian community. Therefore, Lebanon can be seen as a society with too much fraternity with*in* the sectarian groups. Without the necessary 'bridging' of the sectarian boundaries, it is difficult to consolidate common policy on the national level.

92

In *Bowling Alone,* Putnam discusses the role of tolerance in his theory. The following table of Putnam (2003) classifies four types of society based on a combination of high or low tolerance and high or low stocks of social capital.

Table 6: Social Capital and Tolerance: Four Types of Society

	Low Social Capital	High Social Capital
High Tolerance	(1*) Individualistic*	(3) *Civic Community*
Low Tolerance	(2) *Anarchic*	(4) *Sectarian Community*

If we would like to place Lebanon in this scheme, then the fourth type would be the most logical one. Lebanese society can be seen as a sectarian community with low tolerance; because on the one hand social capital is high, because of dense networks of civic involvement, reciprocity (based on solidarity) and trust (based on group loyalty) and at the other hand tolerance and between groups is insufficient to form a national civic community on the macro-level. Civil society in Lebanon is large and dynamic, but the fact that it is organized along sectarian lines makes it unsuccessful in fostering a national civic community. Thus, it will not lead to the kind of political participation that benefits good governance. These findings could bring us to the superficial conclusion that the theory of social capital is not applicable to Lebanon. This could be ascribed to the different cultural and historical contexts; Lebanon is neither European nor North American and has not been through the same development. This would mean that we would have to reject the hypothesis of Putnam that a dense civil society is beneficial for good governance, because in Lebanon civil society is indeed large, dynamic and dense, but it does not have a positive influence on good governance. Or can we put in differently: is Lebanon, as Charles Adwan states in an unpublished paper, a counterexample to the western paradigm on the relation state-civil society?

Instead of drawing immediate conclusions, it is wise to have a better look at the theoretical framework. Before the theory of Putnam can be applied and valid, a civic community must meet the conditions of: 1) political equality, 2) solidarity, 3) trust, 4) tolerance and 5) membership of civic organizations. The conditions that Putnam finds necessary before his theory is applicable seem not to be found in Lebanese society. Political equality legally exists, but in reality power is centered in the Maronite community and some Sunni families in Beirut. These power relations are historically determined; for example as a result of the priority-policy of the French towards Maronites. Solidarity and trust do exist, but within the borders of family, clan or other forms of communal organization. Externally there is still hostility. So we could conclude again that there is enough bonding capital but not enough bridging capital. Consensus exists in Lebanon in a way (as someone said it is either this or civil war) but it is fragile and artificial.

Sectarian fragmentation also touches on the last condition: even if we take account of the trend of new civic associations, we can conclude that membership of CSOs in Lebanon has a communal nature and thus is often based on kinship. So we could also reflect on the applicability of this theory applicable and whether Lebanese society meets the conditions required of a civic community. This can lead us to not rejecting the hypothesis of Putnam.

Lebanese civil society is active on almost all fields. Even on the fields, which a government should be responsible for. Private health clinics and private education institutions perform even better than public ones. Social service is a field, which they cooperate in. The ministry of Social Affairs initiates regularly adhoc- partnerships with CSOs because they have the know-how and the networks. Empirical results point indeed at the positive contribution of civil society organizations to the performance of governance. Though transparency and accountability is more complex; the International Transparency Organization and more specific the Lebanese Transparency Association show us evidence that civil society organizations themselves lack transparency and accountability and actually democratic governance in general. The outcome that civil society themselves don't practice good governance in their internal structure is another counterargument against the thesis that civil society and good governance (of the government) are positively related.

Coming back to the transparency and accountability and fuzziness of Lebanese policy processes, we have to take into account the widespread clientèlism and patronage in Lebanon. Political Beirut is a small world run by a couple of prominent families/ clans where nepotism is a daily reality. The lawyer Baroud emphasizes the importance of governmental neutrality in funding civil society organizations; he mentions the lack of it as one of the problems for civil society. In his analysis of Lebanese civil society, Adwan emphasizes the difference between the communal and the civic sector.

In Arab it is the difference between *ahli* and *madani*. *'Between civil society and communal society, the communal-ascriptive principles have gained principles over extra-communal civic principles. In Lebanon, civil society implies communal society, despite the existence of some institutions and NGO's that can be considered as conforming to the modern model. (Adwan, unpublished paper).*

94

7.6   Other factors influencing performance of Lebanese governance: geopolitics

Other factors influencing performance of Lebanese governance are of geopolitical nature. Though some respondents referred to the presence of Syria as an overrated problem, there is common agreement that the dominance of this (repressive) country is not beneficial for Lebanese society as a whole and its national politics more specifically. This also influences the performance of the Lebanese government of course. For example, since 1990 the constitution has been amended four times due to Lebanese-Syrian conflicts. This is damaging for the political stability of Lebanon. The other factor is Israel, in general as a neighbor, and more specifically, the presence of Israeli troops in the south. International politics especially those of Israel, Syria, Iran and the US, have an impact on Lebanese society that should be not underestimated.

7.7   Other complementary theories explaining the Lebanese case: Lijphart

Lijphart's theory of consensus-democracy provides a complementary explanation for the case of Lebanon. One of his main theses is that having social-ethnical dividing lines is not problematic as long as social-economic dividing lines crosscut them. Thus, if socio-economic and ethnical/religious diffusions coincide then stability is not guaranteed. Another condition Lijphart identifies is the elites of groups having a cooperative attitude towards each other; this was the case in the Netherlands of the 20th century (Lijphart, 1985). From this perspective we could conclude that one of Lebanon's major problems is the fact that sectarian and social-economic dividing lines coincide. And beside that, elites do not consequently show the ability to cooperate. The problem is that the ' intrasectarian' cooperation is too strong and exceeds all political, administrative and economical boundaries. Loyalty and solidarity based on clannism rules in Lebanon's small and dynamic society.

7.8   Conclusion

In this concluding section I would like to present the Edwards' scheme, presented in chapter two, which summarizes the social capital theory of Putnam. I completed it with the empirical findings presented in this chapter and the one before.

Scheme 5: Social Capital and empirical findings

"… connections among individuals-social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them."

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Below regional average
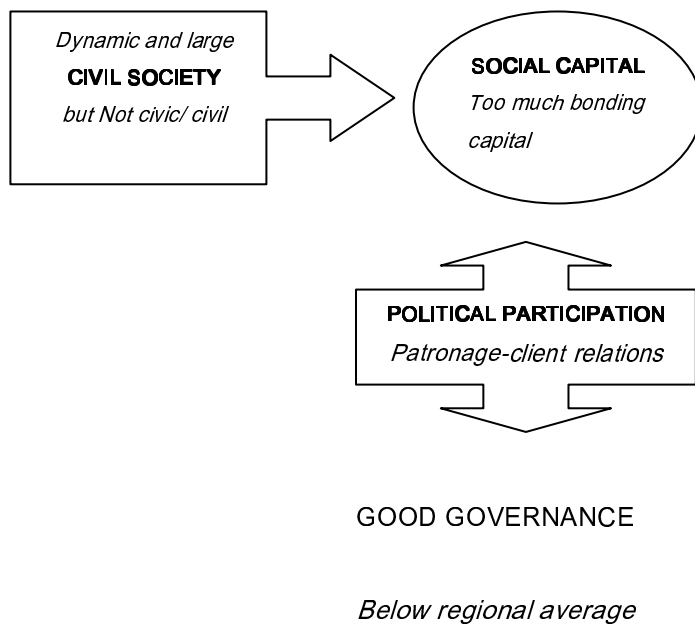
It is interesting to take into account the conclusion Adwan makes in his paper

' From Civil Society to Civil War: The Lebanese Case'. It is ironic how civil society is usually linked to democracy; and its strengths correlated with the weakness of the state. The irony is that we have a weak state in Lebanon, a strong civil society, yet no democracy. The fact that civil society is not very democratic itself, and what is even worse, not very civil. …. In Lebanon people join civil society institutions to deny, exclude or alienate the other…in Lebanon the relation is a parasitic one where the civil society organization and through the state institutions and its apparatuses…. (Adwan, unpublished paper).

Adwan shows a very critical attitude towards civil society in Lebanon. Not all the respondents held such a strong view. We could make some final conclusions that are quite near his point of view. I

96

would do this by using Putnam's conditions for a civic community. First we can say that political equality may exist formally but that in reality some groups are better organized than others or have more sources and means than others. Second, solidarity exists but within sectarian groups; externally we can still speak, even now seventeen years after the civil war, of a hostile attitude between the different groups. Social trust also exists mainly within the borders of each sectarian community or family/clan.

Fourth, tolerance and consensus are artificial and fragile. Like one Dutch woman, who was living for a couple of years in Lebanon, said: '*People stopped fighting; but it is still war*'. She referred to the distrust among Lebanese and the superficiality of the present state of peace. In Lebanese society, it is still very important to which family and (religious) group you belong. This is also seen in the membership of civic organisations, which is most of the time based on communal ties rather then civic principles. In the next chapter the complete conclusion of this thesis will be given before we make recommendations.

97

Chapter 8   Conclusion and Recommendations

8.1   Introduction

In this final chapter, the conclusions of the research done for this thesis will be presented. Based on the conclusions and my insights and experience during my stay in Lebanon I will finish with making recommendations.

8.2   Conclusion

The central question is *Does civil society has a positive influence on good governance in Lebanon.* The following two subsections summarize the findings that are presented in chapter six.

8.2.1   The Facts

1) What are the characteristics of Lebanese civil society?

We can answer the first sub question by saying that Lebanon indeed has a civil society, which is very dynamic and large. This is due to factors like the freedom of association and the essential role civil society had to play during the civil war because the state was absent. On almost every public affair, one can find a civil society organization in Lebanon working on it: health care, education, social welfare, rural development social assistance, displaced resettlement, culture & arts. A cynical reference to Hezbollah would even make us state that the most essential governmental task, military defense, is also fulfilled by members of civil society. In any case, Lebanese civil society differs from the civil society of any other Arab country. The first difference is the fact that civil society exists and is allowed to exist in Lebanon. In Syria, for example we can hardly speak of a civil society. The second difference is that in Lebanon there are more associations of the modern kind, in Arabic: *mujmu3at al madani;* Lebanese civil society maybe not civic enough, but it is more civic than other Arab civil societies. Nevertheless, there is much critique on the communal nature of most of the associations, which are too exclusive. Another critical notion is the strength of civil society. According to half of the respondents, civil society in Lebanon is too strong in relation to the state. This is an undesirable situation. As explained in chapter three, Lebanese society is historically very strong. Regional powers always had a strong position due to several circumstances. We can conclude that civil society in Lebanon is large, dynamic and strong. The other important feature is its sectarian dividing lines. Two problematic issues are the strength and autonomy of society which are both above measure and not healthy for the system on the national level.

2) What is the state of affairs in good governance?

Looking at the second sub question, we first have to admit that measuring the state of affairs in good governance in Lebanon is an immense challenge. Yet, there is a diverse and wide range of statistics found on most of the good governance principles that were stated from the beginning. I will discuss all criteria in short. **Participation** is according to the statistics low; this has to do with the low score on political rights (5) and civic liberties (6) (Freedom House). This is in contrast to other progressive Arab countries (Jordan has 3.46 for civic liberties and Morocco even 2.84). Considering Lebanon's reputation as a progressive Arab country, the results shown by the Freedom House are surprisingly bad.

Analyzing the narrative report of the Freedom House, the role and influence of Syria stands out enormously. The Freedom House states that, even though the president is formally selected every six-years by the 128-member parliament, Lebanese people are limited in choosing their own governments,*' in practice this choice is made after Syrian authorization, known as the 'password' in the Lebanese media.' (Freedom House Country reports Lebanon, 2005).* Looking at the results of the interviews, participation is one of the higher ranked criteria. There are many associations in Lebanon and many citizens are active in society. However, all respondents agree that the quality of the participation is not good enough yet. On **rule of law**, the World Bank estimates Lebanon at a score of 43.5; this is low compared to the 95.2 of the Netherlands. Compared to the countries of the OECD it performs quite badly on the rule of law. When we analyze the regional performances, it is surprising how bad Lebanon performs. Even the (repressive) state of Syria has better results. The interviews showed that the situation of **rule of law** is quite complicated. First, there is an advanced judicial system and good laws. However, there are serious problems with the implementation. The problems in rule of law are mainly the corruption of judges and the political interference in the work of judges. Another problem is the fact that in 14 years the constitution was amended four times: 1990, 1995, 1998 and 2004. All respondents agreed that Lebanon still has a long way to go.

Based on the sources of Transparency International we can conclude that Lebanon still lacks the necessary **transparency.** The difference with the Netherlands for example is very large. Compared to Italy, the country of Putnam's famous research, Lebanon is relatively less corrupt. The respondents agree with the results of TI. Lebanon performs badly on transparency. However, according to Paul Salem, the system is not a black box. The system is open and liberal. Information is available and accessible. Bottleneck here is the lack of 'organized transparency' and accuracy.

99

From all the good governance criteria, **responsiveness** comes out the best in the interviews. Before the war, it was weak. This is what made some groups go to war. During the war, responsiveness was sufficient. The system as a whole is very rigid. On the micro-level, it is very interactive. 'On the macro level, thus on the national level, due to irregularity and other deficiencies of the elections, the state does not have mechanisms for macro-responsiveness '.

Inherent to the political system national Lebanese politics is **consensus** based. Most respondents agreed that there is too much consensus especially among communal society on all levels on all issues. Lebanese society is confessional and politically very pluriform. The constitution divides parliamentarian seats among the confessional groups. Lebanon could be a good example of conviviality of confessions in a positive way. Consensus is a necessity even though it makes the government rigid and unable to do anything. Public services are provided: there is a social security system, a public health system and a public educational system. However, all of them are weak. Beside this, jobless people are not entitled to benefit from social services. The post-war governments have a mixed approach in their socio-economic policy. On one hand they feel that they should concentrate on economic goals and maybe that by it self would be efficient; at other times, investments are made in social equity. Lebanon's scores on **equity and inclusiveness** are anyhow quite low. However, they are better than before the war.   The government of Lebanon is not **effective** compared to countries of the OECD. It performs extremely bad compared to a country such as the Netherlands. Also in comparison to the governments of the countries in the region the Lebanese government performances are very low. Only Syria, Algeria and Yemen show results that are worse. According to the Lebanese respondents, there are several major problems in the public sector. One is that there is no clear leadership; power at the top is shared. The head of the state consist of three persons: the prime minister, the president and the minister; and not one of them is really in charge. Second, the appointment of public sector-employees is very much influenced by politics. It is a small world; they all know each other and some help each other. Decisions to hire and fire people are based on personalist politics. Third, the salaries are very low. This has consequences for the quality of the staff and for their ethical behaviour. There is a lot of squandering and corruption. Besides, without paying people decent wages, it is very hard to manage them decently. All respondents agree on the fact that government is far from effective.

Accountability in Lebanon is very low compared to countries in other parts of the world. The whole region performs badly on this criterion. Three countries perform better than Lebanon. So on accountability Lebanon performs in the region relatively better then on the other criteria. Still, accountability is problematically bad in Lebanon. This is partly due to lack of 'organized transparency'. Three respondents argue that accountability of war crimes has never occurred. There was a general pardon. In the history of parliament, there has never been a vote of low

100

confidence. According to two respondents, this is due to the confessional system, which places loyalty to (persons from) the community before other obligations. The employee is not accountable to the political leader who appointed him. 'There is no accountability in the right sense of the word.'

In sum, we can conclude that Lebanon does not perform much better than other Arab states. On some criteria, it performs even below the regional average. Next to that, the freedom that Lebanon is so proud of seems to be a superficial one, according to the Freedom House. To great extent, this lack of factional freedom is related to the dominance of Syria. Especially the Freedom House report of 2005 is very clear about this. Generally concluding, we could say that in good governance, leaving the successful economic policy aside, Lebanon does not perform (much) better then other Arab countries like Jordan, Morocco and Yemen who belong to same group of progressive countries that are doing quite well since a couple of years.

8.2.2   The relations

The answers to the third and fourth question overlap. Because of this, I have chosen to discuss them in the same section.

3) To what extent is this due to civil society?

The Social Economic Council formed the formal link between civil society and the Lebanese government. This institution existed between 2000 and 2003 and was established with the purpose of having a communication line between the government and leaders/ important actors from (civil) society. It lost its mandate in 2003. Critics say it had only a symbolic function. It was an advisory council, not binding. Other formal connections are of more adhoc nature. Committees or workgroups that are set up for one single issue do include partners/organizations/people from civil society. Religious groups are traditionally very powerful in these initiatives. Another great power is the business class and the Bar of Lebanese Lawyers. Thus, in sum the only formal platform and forum for state and civil society is the Social Economic Council, which lost its mandate since 2003.

Beside the formal communication lines, there is the second kind of relation between state and society through lobbying. There is on the micro- and meso-level exchange of information and ideas between lobbyists and parliamentarians. On this Lebanon does not differ from any other (western) country. More specific and typical for Lebanon and other countries with low transparency and traditional culture, the third kind of state-society relationship, is the one based on patronage and clientelism. In a way there are too much and too good contacts between some political parties/ politicians and citizens groups.

101

Thus, politics and society are intermingled in Lebanon. National politics between the sectarian groups *and* international politics (mainly Syria's 'protection') make Lebanese politics difficult to grasp, in practice as well as in theory. In general, state and society relations are very complex. In the case of Lebanon, it is even more complex. First, it is a small country where the political world is extremely small. Especially Beirut is the centre of politics, economics and civil society and people know each other through various networks (university, family etc). This contributes to the short distance between state and society and to the lack of clear borders between them. The state in Lebanon does not really stand above society and civil society is very influential. In the next section, I will go further in the special characteristics of Lebanon.

4) Which Typical Lebanese features/characteristics influence this relation?

Factors that influence state and society and their relation and that are typical for Lebanon are: the high educational level of the Lebanese population, the open political system and, the formal liberties, the vibrant economy and the role of the worldwide Diaspora and most important, the sectarian fragmentation in Lebanon.

The state is constitutionally and society historically divided along the main **sectarian** groups: Maronites, Sunni and Shii. This major factor really characterizes Lebanon and influences civil society state-society-relations as well as the performance of the Lebanese government.

Important for the political and 'civic' culture, are the existence of several quality universities and the high level of **education** among the population. In combination with the (early) existence of **political liberties,** this contributed to a political culture, which is different from the political culture of the surround countries. It could be stated that in Lebanon there is more breeding ground for a civic culture like Putnam portrays. Further, like civil society, private **economic** life is strong and autonomous. This explains its resilience and immunity vis-à-vis political fluctuations and vitality. This strength of the Lebanese economy is also a result of large-scale financial support from the Lebanese **Diaspora**; it became more and more professional since some decades.

8.3 Recommendations

In the tradition of the Erasmus University's Public Administration department, which is known by its pragmatism, I will make some recommendations based on my field research and literature study. It would be a bit overconfident to make here recommendations to Lebanese society and state. Especially since my research was not a very large one based on my own quantitative research, I based my empirical data mainly on the statistical sources of the World Bank. The qualitative data, however, are based on the interviews I held with eleven representatives of different civil society organizations, most of them had an academic background in social sciences or law. It was also based on documents that are not available online or in a library or shop,

102

mostly written by local researchers and some of them were actually a preliminary draft. I found them in the library of the CRTD-A, the NGO where I did my internship. The reason why I am getting in detail her on my research-'style' is that I would like to make recommendations that consider doing research in Lebanon or another country in the Middle East or North Africa in the subsection that follows. After that, recommendations for civil society will follow in section 8.3.2.

8.3.1   Recommendations for researchers

Here I address to independent scholars on this region, research institutions and think tanks in the Netherlands where the academic focus on the Arab world is growing but where the ties with these countries are historically weak. There are four recommendations I can make:

1). It is necessary to have staff that masters the language of the region/ country that is being studied; if this is not the case, there will be no new knowledge.
2) In the schedule of the research, it is best to plan field search in the earliest stages; in order to know what knowledge is lacking. Beside that, it is useful to have as a starting point how communities themselves see their society and its problems.
3) It is also interesting to take research (documents) of local scholars, libraries and other institutions more seriously. Even though they do not seem to meet the scientific conditions at the first glance, they can provide a lot of (new) information.
4) This last recommendation has to do with the attitude of a researcher. He or she (of course) should be open to and… aware of the fact that his or her perspective could be biased. I actually would like to say here '…should be open *and free of prejudges'*…But that is not realistic, because it is human (and not typically American, Dutch or French) to have them. I am writing this because western scholars are sometimes accused of being too prejudged in their work on the Arab world.

This could be the case in some occasions but it is not always the case that western research is based on and biased by 'orientalist' assumptions. These kinds of delicate issue have a long history and became even more complex since 9/11. This makes doing research properly not always easy in the MENA. Part of this last recommendation, is having diversity in staff in gender but also in ethnical and social background and age. Being myself of Moroccan origin, I have noticed that the respondents tell me more than they would tell someone who is completely Dutch or French; they are in a way less defensive and more open about the negative sides of things. This was also the case during my internship where I could compare the way people treated me and the way they treated my Danish fellow-intern. Not just ethnical but also social background plays a role. Evidence for this is the criticism on the research team behind the critical AHDR: they may be Arabs but they are considered (too) elitist and/or neo-liberal. Age also can make a

103

difference. Respondents feel less threatened by a student than by someone from a prestigious think tank. Young researchers that experienced a less authoritative education style/ school system than their parents or grandparents also have a different way of doing research; it is less rigid and this unconventional style can be very fruitful.

In sum, I recommend that when doing research in Lebanon, researchers should master Arabic, begin early with the fieldwork, consult local sources for data, and in general have an open attitude and think a bit out of the box.

8.3.2 Recommendations for civil society

Civil society in Lebanon belongs to the most developed in the region. Lebanese are active citizens and involved in many ways in a wide range of fields. Still, its quality could be much better. This would be of course for the sake of Lebanese society and especially for better governance. Based on the interviews with Lebanese NGO-leaders and on local research documents, two problems of civil society can be identified. First, there is a lack of 'civicness' in the values and membership conditions of associations. Second, civil society could show more self-criticism and should practice what it preaches. CSOs should be assessed with the critical eye they assess the state. They should do more to improve their internal governance according to good governance principles like transparency or inclusiveness. Based on this problem analysis, I have two concrete recommendations to make:

1. Initiate civil society conferences that address the issue of sectarian fragmentation of civil society.
2. Initiate awareness-raising activities on the good governance of civil society.

Bibliography

Aarts, P. and M. Fennema. (2000). *Cultuur, hoezo cultuur? Politieke cultuur en democratie in Midden-Oosten Latijns-Amerika en Europa.* Amsterdam: Leeronderzoek Politieke Cultuur en Democratie, Universiteit van Amsterdam.

Adwan, C. (no date). *From Civil Society to Civil War : The Lebanese Case.* Unpublished paper for Professor H. Krayem. Beirut: American University of Beirut.

Essam El-Din, G. (11-17 July 2002). All is not lost. *Al Ahram Weekly-online.* Issue no. 594.

Antoun Saadeh, S. (1993). *The Social Structure of Lebanon, Democracy or Servitude?* Beirut: Editions Dar An-Nahar.

Awad, I. (1997). The external relations of the Arab human rights movement. In : *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Winter 1997.

Bekkers, V. Dijkstra, G. Edwards, A.R., M. Fenger (2007). *Governance and the Democracy Deficit: Assessing the Democratic Legitimacy of Governance Practices.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Ben Nefissa, S. (2002). *Pouvoirs et associations dans le monde arabe.* Paris : CNRS éditions.

Blanc, M.E. (2001). *Is civil society emerging in Vietnam? The case of anti-AIDS organizations and others into community.* London: 3rd Euroseas Conference on 6-9 September 2001.

Blokland, T. (2002). Waarom de populariteit van Putnam zorgwekkend is. Een bespreking van Robert Putnams benadering van sociaal kapitaal. In: *Beleid en Maatchappij*, 2002, 29, no. 2, 101-109.

Bovens,'t Hart, van Twist, Rosenthal (2001) *Openbaar Bestuur, beleid, organisatie en politiek.* Alphen aan de Rijn: Kluwer.

Bourdieu, P. (1983). The Forms of Capital. In: Richardson, J.G. (red.). *The Forms of Capital*, New York: Greenwood Press, 241-258.

Brynen, R. Korany B. & P. Noble (ed.) (1995). *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World*. Volume 1: Theoretical Perspectives. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Brynen, R. Korany B. & P. Noble (ed.) (1998). *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World*. Volume 2: Comparative Perspectives. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Cohen D., L. Prusak (2001). *In Good Company: How Social Capital Makes Organizations work*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Coleman, J. (1990). *Foundations of Social Theory.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Corm, G. (2003). *Le Liban Contemporain; histoire et société*. Paris: Editions La découverte.

Cornelissen, W.C *(*2003). *Performance Indicators for Governance*. Rotterdam: thesis Erasmus University

Dasgupta, P., I. Serageldin (1999). *Social Capital: a multifaceted perspective*. Washington: The World Bank.

Deth, J. W. (1999). *Social Capital and European Democracy.* London: Routledge.

Donahue, A., S. Kanafani, H. Masri. (2005) *Active Citizenship and Gendered Social Entitlements: A Review of Literature on Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine.* Beirut: Centre for Research and Training on Development.

Eberle, S. D. (2003). *Social Capital and Good Governance: The Impact of Civil Society on Government Performance*. Konstanz: thesis University of Konstanz.

Fiorina, Morris. (1999). "Extreme Voices: A Dark Side of Civic Engagement." Chapter 11 in: *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*. Edited by Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Fukuyama, F. (1999). *Social Capital and Civil Society. Fairfax: Institute of Public Policy, George Mason University.*

Hall, J. A. (1995). *Civil Society Theory, History, Comparison*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hourani, A. (1991). *A History of the Arab people.* London: Faber and Faber.

Hourani, A. (1983). *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age.* Revised edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hudson, M. (1977). *Arab Politics: The Search for Legitimacy.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Huntington, S.P. (1991). *The Third Wave. Democratization in the Late Twentieth century.* Norman, University of Oklahoma Press.

Ibrahim, S. E. (2004). *Arab Liberal Legacies. Full Circles.* Final Draft.

Ismael, T.Y. (1997). *Civil Society in the Arab World: historical traces, contemporary vestiges.* Arab Studies Quarterly (ASQ), winter.

Karam, K. (2006). *Le mouvement civil au Liban. Revendications, protestations et mobilisations associatives dans l'après-guerre.* Aix-en-Provence Paris : Karthala-IREMAM.

Kedourie, E. (1992). *Democracy and Arab Political Culture.* Washington: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Kingston, P., (no date). *Struggling for Civic Space: NGO's in Postwar Lebanon.* Toronto: Department of Political Science, University of Toronto.

Kingston, P., *Patrons, Clients and Civil Society: A Case Study of Environmental Politics in Postwar Lebanon.* Paul Kingston, University of Toronto.

Kiwan, F. (autumn 2003). *Consolidation ou recomposition de la société civile d'après-guerre?* Beirut: Université Saint Joseph de Beirut. *Travoux et Jours* n 72.

Kisirwani, M., Postwar Institutional Development in Lebanon. Published in: *Remaking the Middle East*, ed. By Paul J. White and William S. Logan, Berg Oxford New York.

Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (1999). *Civil Society and Governance in Lebanon, A mapping of Civil Society and its connections with Governance.* Beirut.

Lijphart, A. (1985) *Power Sharing in South Africa*. Berkeley Institute of International Studies, University of California.

Luciani, G. (ed.). (1990). *The Arab State*. London: Routledge.

Mclean, G. F. (1997). *Civil Society and Social Reconstructio*. Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.

Neuman, W. Lawrence, S. (2000). *Social Research Methods. Qualitative and quantitative Approaches*. Allyn ad bacon, University of Wisconsin.

Newton, K. (1997). Social Capital and Democracy. In: American *Behavioral Scientist*, 40, 576-586.

Norris, P. (2002). *Democratic Phoenix. Reinventing political activism*. Harvard University, Cambridge University Press, New York.

Owen, R. (1992). *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*. London: Routledge.

Peters, R. (2001). *Inleiding tot de Arabische Cultuurkunde.Een handleiding*. Amsterdam: Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen.Leerstoelgroep Arabisch en Islamitische Studies.

Pierre, J and B.G. Peters. (2002*). Governance, Politics and the State. Political Analysis Series*. Hampshire and London: MacMillan Press.

Putnam, R. (1993). *Making Democracy work; Civic Traditions in Modern Italy.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Putzel, J. (1997). Accounting for the Dark Side of Social Capital: Rereading Robert Putnam on Democracy. In: *Journal of International Development* 9 (7): 939-949.

Sadiki, L. (2004). *The Search for Arab democracy. Discourses and counter-discourses*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Said, E.W. (1978). *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*., London: Penguin Books.

108

Salam, N. (2002). *Civil Society in the Arab World. The historical and Political Dimensions*. Occasional Publications 3, October 2002, Cambridge: Islamic Legal Studies Program, Harvard Law School.

Salem, P. et alli, (1996). *Associational Life and Public Space in Beirut: Dialectics of Unity and Diversity* (preliminary draft of report), Beirut, Lebanese Center for Policy Studies.

Salem, P. (1994) *Bitter Legacy, Ideology and Politics in the Arab world*, New York: Syracuse University Press.

Salamé, G. (1990).Strong and weak states: A Qualified Return to the Muqaddimah, in *the Arab State*, ed. by G. Luciano. London: Routledge, pp29-64.

Salamé, G. ed. (1994). *Democracy without democrats? The renewal of politics in the Muslim World*. London-New York: Croom Helm.

Salamé, G. (1987). *The Foundations of the Arab State*. London: Croom Helme.

Salem, E. (1994). A Decade of Challenges: Lebanon 1982-1992. Beirut: *The Beirut Review*. No.3, spring 1994.

Salibi, K. (1988). *A House of many Mansions. The history of Lebanon reconsidered*, New York: I.B. Tauris.

Schwedler, J. (ed.) (1995). *Toward a Civil Society in the Middle East? A Primer*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Sharabi, H. (ed.) (1990). *Theory, Politics and the Arab World. Critical Responses*. New York: Routledge. Published in cooperation with the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University.

Sharabi, H. (1989). Cultural Critics of Contemporary Arab Society. In: *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Volume 9, Number 1.

Tabar, P. (no date). Communal State versus Nation State: Obstacles to the Emergence of Civil Society in Lebanon, (Lessons for Lebanon: The relevance of Acknowledgement, Forgivement &Reconciliation to the Resolution of Profacted Intercommunal Conflict)

Tessler, M. (2002). Islam and Democracy in the Middle East: The Impact of Religious Orientations on Attitudes toward Democracy in four Arab Countries. In: *Comparative Politics*, 34 (April 2002): 337-354.

Traboulsi, O. (2001). *The World Bank. Mapping and Review of Lebanese NGO's.* Beirut: Center for Research and Training on Development.

Tueni, G. (1993). Democracy in Lebanon: Anatomy of a Crisis. Beirut: *Beirut Review*, fall 1993, no. 6.

UNDP (1997). *Governance for Sustainable Development. A UNDP Policy document.* New York: United Nations

UNDP (2005). *Arab Human Development Report 2004, Towards Freedom in the Arab World.* New York: United Nations.

UNDP (1997). *A Profile of Sustainable Human Development in Lebanon.* Beirut: United Nations.

United Nations (2002). *Globalization: towards a Lebanese agenda. National Human Development Report: Lebanon 2001-2002.* Beirut: United Nations Development Programme. .

Yacoubian, M. (2005). *Promoting Middle East Democracy II: Arab Initiatives.* Washington: United States Institute of Peace, May 2005, special report No. 136.

Young, M. (2004*). Republics of fearlessness. On conjugating liberalism in Syria and Lebanon. An interview with journalists and author Samir Kassir.* On: Reason Online. June 2004

Warren, M. E. (1999). *Civil Society and Good Governance.* Washington: Georgetown University, U.S. Civil Society Project.

Weber, M., Kalberg, S. (2005). *Readings and Commentary on Modernity.* Boston: Blackwell.

Wittes, T.C., S.E. Yerkes (2004). *The Middle-East Partnership Initiative: Progress, Problems and Prospects.* Middle East Memo, Saban Center at the Brookings Institution, November 29, 2004.
Woldring, H.E.S. (1998). State and civil society in the political philosophy of Alexis de Tocqueville. In: *Voluntas International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, volume 9 (1998), p363-373.

Appendix I **Figures, Schemes and Tables**

Figures

Figure 1: Lebanon 1998, 2004 and 2005 on all indicators, chapter 6, p

Figure 2: Rule of Law 2004 worldwide

Figure 3: Rule of Law regionally

Figure 4: Government Effectiveness 2004 worldwide

Figure 5: Government Effectiveness 2004 regionally

Figure 6: Voice and Accountability 2004 worldwide

Figure 7: Voice and Accountability 2004 regionally

Schemes

Scheme 1: Social Capital Theory, Chapter 1

Scheme 2: four main criteria of good government, chapter 3

Scheme 3: operationalisation social capital theory, chapter 3

Scheme 4: Modernity vs. Neo-patriarchy

Scheme 5: Social Capital and empirical findings, chapter 7

Tables

Table 1: Social Capital and Tolerance: Four Types of Society, Chapter 2

Table 2: Input, throughput and output assessment of governance, chapter 3

Table 3: different definitions of (good) governance, chapter 3

Table 4: UNDP Principles of Good Governance, chapter 3

Table 5: CPI Lebanon, the Netherlands and Italy 2003-2005, chapter 6

Table 6: Social Capital and Tolerance: Four Types of Society, chapter 7

Appendix II   Glossary & List of abbreviations

Glossary

Andalusian	refers to the Spain between 756-1031
Arabism	Arab 'nationalism', reached its zenith in the time of Nasser
Arab exceptionalism	the idea that the Arab culture is by nature
Asnaf	guilds in the time of the Mameluke
Assabiyaa	the group feeling that exists in Arab tribes and clans
Infitah	economic open door policy of the Arab countries in the nineteen eighties
Mameluke	Arab dynasty that between 1250-1517 in Egypt and Syria
National Pact	the pact the Maronoite and Sunni leader made in 1943
Al Muqaddimah	the title of Ibn Khalduns most known book
Mujtama'a al ahli	civil society of a communal nature:
Mujtama' al madani:	civil society based on primordial ties
Neo-patriarchy	Sharabi's concept for the hybrid state of modernization the Arab world
Orientalism	refers to the book and theory of Edward Said that links the western academic interest in the Arab world with colonisation
Ta'if agreement:	the Lebanese reconciliation agreement made in the town Taif (Saudi-Arabia)
Tanzimat:	the reforms under Ottoman rule
Rentier-states:	the oil states that gain state income from their oil revenues instead of tax
Ulama	Islamic scholars
Ummah	the Islamic community/nation worldwide
Umayyad	the first Islamic empire (661-750), which had Damascus as its capital.

List of Abbreviations

UNDP	United Nations development Programme
LCPS	Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies
AHDR	Arab Human Development Report
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
CSO	civil society organisation
CRTD	Centre for Research and Training on Development

112

Appendix III   **Interview questionnaire**

1)   Civil society in Lebanon…

     a. How large?

     b. How strong and effective?

     c. In which fields/ on which policies?

     d. How is it different from the civil societies of the surround countries?

2)   How is Lebanon performing on…?

     These principles of good governance:

     a. Participation

     b. Rule of Law

     c. Transparency

     d. Responsiveness

     e. Consensus oriented

     f. Equity and inclusiveness

     g. Effectiveness and efficiency

     h. Accountability

     These policy fields:

     i. Social security

     j. Education

     k. Health

     (1.excellent, 2.good, 3.sufficient, 4.weak, 5. problematically bad)

3)   a. What are the formal and informal connections between civil society and government?

     b. Is there a structural meeting/platform between government and

       civil society?

4)   a. Is the possible weakness of the Lebanese civil society due to its sectarian fragmentation?

     b. To what extent?

     c. What could be the other factors?

     d. Can you think of ways to build social capital in Lebanon?

Appendix IV   **List of Respondents**

1. Paul Salem, Fares Foundation.

2. Nawaf Kabbara, President Lebanese Council of Disabled People.

3. Ziad Majed, vice-president Democratic Left Movement.

4. Ziyad Baroud, lawyer HBDT.

5. Fadia Kiwan, professor at the University Saint-Joseph, Beirut.

6. Charles Adwan, director Lebanese Transparency association.

7. Hassan Krayem, professor American University Beirut.

8. Salim Nasr , Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies.

9. Mgr. Gregoir Haddad, founder of Mouvement Social.

10. dr. Kamal Mouhanna, president of Amel Foundation.

11.Ghassan Siyah, head of VMCA.

115