



THE DISCRIMINATION OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

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Abstract

Lebanon has been a major host to the Palestinian refugees since the beginning of the Palestine-Israel conflict in 1948. Many of the Palestinians have been living in Lebanon for decades but continue to be denied citizenship. The Lebanese policies have been a major obstacle for the integration of the Palestinian refugees and have led to an exclusion and marginalisation in the Lebanese society today. Unable to return to their home country and marginalized by the Lebanese society, they are caught in a legal limbo with no prospects of the future. In order to understand the continuous discrimination of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the report will build on two explanatory hypotheses. One of them is that the Palestinians are discriminated in Lebanon because they are mainly Sunni Muslims and giving them equal rights would upset the delicate ethnic-religious balance in Lebanon. Finally, that the Palestinians are discriminated in Lebanon because it has been a political necessity vis-à-vis Israel. Granting the Palestinian refugees equal rights would mean acceptance of Israel's no responsibilities for the refugees.

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Summary

There are numerous of Palestinians refugees living in Lebanon. Many of whom have been there for decades and some have even been born in the country. Nevertheless, the Palestinians continues to be discriminated in Lebanon, such as denial of equal rights, including citizenship.

This internship report, will examine why the Palestinian refugees that are living in Lebanon continue to be discriminated. The report builds on two explanatory hypotheses

1. That the Palestinians are discriminated in Lebanon because they are mainly Sunni Muslims and giving them equal rights would upset the delicate ethnic-religious balance in Lebanon.
2. That the Palestinians are discriminated in Lebanon because it has been a political necessity vis-à-vis Israel. Granting the Palestinian refugees equal rights would mean acceptance of Israel has no responsibilities for the refugees.

The report will first present a literature review, presenting an overview of the academic literature within the research area of discrimination of Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon. In this literature review the first section will be tendencies found within the theoretical perspective of the literature, including 'social conflict theory'. The next section will include tendencies found in the methodology of the literature, including interviews, quantitative surveys and ethnographic fieldwork. The last section will include gaps within the literature that could be further studied, including multiculturalism and comparative case studies.

After the literature review a short presentation of the Palestinian displacement to Lebanon will be presented, a description of the so called 'protection gap' and a description of the discrimination that is happening towards the Palestinians in Lebanon.

Doing my internship at United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe (UNRIC), I have written several articles concerning Palestinians refugees and the issues that they are facing. These experiences that I have gained is the base for the methodology included in this internship report, including a press conference with the Commissioner-General of United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Mr. Pierre Krähenbühl. Furthermore, the methodology will build on qualitative methodology, including scientific sources and journalistic articles.

Following the literature, it is found that the discrimination of Palestinians in Lebanon, is highly provoked by power interrelations, such as influence from officials and politicians. The theoretical framework will therefore be based on Max Weber's definition of 'power relations'.

Weber sees power as a circle of three definitions, struggle-power-politics, where one definition leads onto the other one. The politicians have for years been hostile towards the Palestinians, and this has led to a further discrimination from the Lebanese people. The Lebanese politicians have a worry that by giving the Palestinians Lebanese citizenship, would jeopardize the 'right to return' and will move the responsibility from the international community to the Lebanese. Furthermore, the worry about losing the 'right to return' are also something the Palestinians are hesitant towards. The Palestinians have since the arrival back in the 1940s, had a wish to return to their country of origin. Another aspect that will be touched upon is the religious backgrounds of Palestinians vs. the Lebanese.

In the end of this internship report, an answer will be given to the two explanatory hypotheses, with a possible explanation of the discrimination of its nature. The explanation will highlight patterns found in the literature and the analysis, that can possibly explain why the Palestinian refugees have not been integrated in Lebanon even though they have been in the country for decades, and furthermore why they continue to be discriminated.

Literature review

Theoretical framework

The subject of discrimination of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon has been covered broadly by many different scholars, with different perceptions with different academic disciplines. The following section will cover the main theoretical framework that occur in the literature of the subject, that being social conflict theory.

Social conflict theory

Another clear tendency in the literature is that of many of the scholars using social conflict theory. Social conflict theory is a Marxist-based sociological theory. The scholars use this theory to describe how individuals, groups or social classes within Lebanon have access to different kind of resources, such as jobs, schools, citizenship, economic stability, etc. (e.g. Maadad & Rodwell 2010; Belényesi & Abuhaydar, 2017; Khalil 2011). With this theory, the scholars describe and interpret how more powerful groups, in this case the Lebanese politicians, civilians and society in general, use their power to exploit and discriminate groups with less power, in this case the Palestinians. The relationship between the Lebanese and the Palestinians is unequal, and the conflict theorist argues that in emerging economies favours the Lebanese citizens and their political elite, and it is in this type of unequal relationship, that the scholars illustrate that social relationships in general are about power and exploitation. This is among others illustrated in the discrimination of socioeconomic rights, like refusal of Lebanese citizenship, denied access to more than 20 professions, on access to public school, etc. (e.g. Maadad & Rodwell 2010; Belényesi & Abuhaydar, 2017; Khalil 2011).

The theory views social life as competition, and the theory is made up of individuals competing for limited resources, as many of the scholars used in this literature review are describing. Which is being expressed in the describing of the hostility towards the Palestinians in Lebanon, that the Lebanese state is unwilling to set up specific instruments for the refugees, or to undertake their integration into Lebanese society and its welfare system (e.g. Maadad & Rodwell 2010; Belényesi & Abuhaydar, 2017; Khalil 2011). C. Wright Mills who is the founder of modern conflict theory argues that social structures are created because of conflict between differing interests. In relation to Mills argumentation, it is important to highlight the view that many of the scholars have described, such as the Palestinians role in the civil war in Lebanon, Palestinians laziness, religion, etc. (e.g. Maadad & Rodwell 2010; Belényesi & Abuhaydar, 2017; Khalil 2011).

Theorist of social conflict theory are often concerned with social change and who will benefit from social change. Furthermore, they are often drawn to mess social phenomena such as the Arab Spring and its repercussions such as mass migration of people as refugees, in this case the mass migration of Palestinians that happened between 1948-1949 to Lebanon (e.g. Maadad & Rodwell 2010; Belényesi & Abuhaydar, 2017; Khalil 2011).

Methodology

The following section will present a review of the methodological tendencies that have appeared in the literature concerning the discrimination of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. That of being grounded theory approach, interviews, quantitative surveys and ethnographic fieldwork.

Grounded Theory Approach

Some of the scholars in this literature review focus on the research methodology; grounded theory approach. This approach operates inductively, which means that the scholars have proposed the observations and theories at the end of the research, as a result of the observations. This allows the scholars to follow leads, that they have been given in relation to their findings (e.g. Maadad & Rodwell 2010; Maha 2014; Knudsen 2009)

Interviews

One of the dominating methods for gathering empirical data within the literature reviewed, is that of interviews. This method allows the scholar insight to the subjective perspective of, in some cases Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon and in other cases also the Lebanese citizens (e.g. Meier 2010; Shuayb 2014; Hammoud 2017).

Interviews gives the scholars an opportunity to get the authenticity of the Palestinian refugee experience, understand the Palestinian-Lebanese cultures' internal structures and their approach to each other. The method also allows the scholars to understand the basic dimension of the discrimination that is happening towards the Palestinians living in Lebanon. The skeleton of questionnaires consists among other questions about communication, culture importance, power distance, importance of religion and the degree of social collectivism and control (e.g. Knudsen 2005; Knudsen 2009; Belényesi & Abuhaydar 2017; Haddad 2003). Scholars have been focused on getting a diversity of respondents, to get the diversification of the refugee experience (e.g. Meier 2010; Shuayb 2014; Belényesi & Abuhaydar 2017; Haddad 2003).

Informal

There is a clear tendency in data collection process of interviews, that they are primarily undertaken through in-depth, open-ended interviews with refugees of all ages, gender and socioeconomically status. Many of the scholars are clear in their way of choosing a diversity of respondents (e.g. Maadad & Rodwell 2010; Belényesi & Abuhaydar 2017). This form of interview allows the scholar to follow additional points and change direction. In-depth, open-ended interviews are more informal, and the scholars have primarily done this in the form of coffee-discussions and dinner-talks, this technique allows the respondents to be in control of the interview. (e.g. Maadad & Rodwell 2010; Belényesi & Abuhaydar 2017).

Semi-structured

Other interviews were semi-structured interviews, where the scholars have used interview guides. This method gives the scholar the lead the interview how they want it to be answered, but it also allows the interviewer to ask further in-depth questions (e.g. Meier 2010; Shuayb 2014; Hammoud 2017; Knudsen 2005; Knudsen 2009).

Quantitative survey

The quantitative surveys that scholars have done within the literature, consists of surveys for both Palestinians and Lebanese (e.g. Shuayb 2014; Hanafi, Chaaban & Seyfert 2012; Belényesi & Abuhaydar 2017).

For the surveys for Lebanese citizens, some scholars targeted the middle- and upper-class Lebanese society, mainly between 20-75 years, because this is the group that the Palestinian refugees interact the most (e.g. Hanafi, Chaaban & Seyfert 2012; Belényesi & Abuhaydar 2017; Haddad 2003).

As for the scholars doing interviews, the scholars doing quantitative survey with the Palestinian refugees, are the scholars here also collecting their data from households in different campsites of Lebanon (e.g. Hanafi, Chaaban & Seyfert 2012; Shuayb 2014; Belényesi & Abuhaydar 2017; Haddad 2003).

The scholars have a clear tendency with these survey, that they mostly want to explore cultural behaviours and social habitats. Huge diversity, with gender, age, etc. (ibid.)

Ethnographic fieldwork

Among the scholars engaging with the discrimination of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the inductive methodology is widely used, among others included quantitative ethnographic fieldwork in refugee camps within Lebanon and focus group interviews with students, teachers and parents (e.g. Shuayb 2014; Knudsen 2009; Khalil 2011; Ibrahim 2008). With this method the scholars interpret, analyse and extract general tendencies from the collected set of data, and draw conclusions that are seeming to have explanatory significance to the particular study, in this case elements of discrimination of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (e.g. Shuayb 2014; Knudsen 2009; Khalil 2011; Ibrahim 2008).

Gap in the literature

Throughout this literature review, it has been found, that there is an important part missing. In this section, the main gap in the literature will be presented, which is the multiculturalism. Lebanon being a county with a huge diversity of religious backgrounds, multiculturalism is an important factor that scholars have to take into consideration.

Multiculturalism

The literature on the discrimination of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon with a multicultural perspective is quite limited. In the literature concerning the multiculturalism aspect, the scholars have mainly been focused on similarities between the Palestinian culture and the Lebanese. Furthermore, these scholars ask questions of “why are the similarities not taken advantages of?”. None of the scholars are looking deeper into this question, they just mention it. Furthermore, as many of the scholars are touching upon, is that of Lebanon being a small multi religious society that is home to 25 different religious backgrounds.

“Almost all countries have multicultural and multilingual populations, requiring policies that are designed to accommodate diversity and protect the rights of minorities. Globalization reinforces the need for a universal recognition of multicultural policies, and human rights enforcement.”

(Richmond, 2010, 718)

Since Lebanon is home to the vast majority of Palestinian refugees, a multicultural perspective is of the greatest importance for this field of studies.

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon: A brief history

Palestinians are one of the largest national groups among refugees worldwide and one of the largest stateless communities in the world (Khalil, 2011, 682).

In 1948-1949 around 100.000 Palestinian refugees fled to Lebanon following their emigration from Israel (UNRWA, 2014). After the Cairo Agreement in 1969, Lebanon became a base for guerrilla attacks against Israel, but Israeli retaliatory attacks caused a high number of victims, including direct attacks on refugee camps (ibid.). The beginning of the civil war in Lebanon in 1975 and the invasion of Israeli forces, led to a destroy of a number of refugee camps and a massive loss of Lebanese and Palestinian civilian lives. The war ended in 1982 with the massacres in two refugee camps, where more than 3000 refugees were killed. In the following period (1982-1987) war broke out between Palestinians and the Shia Amal militia. And in the most recent period (1987 - present) economic support from UNRWA and PLO to the Palestinians has been severely reduced.

In 1987 the Lebanese government unilaterally retracted the Cairo Agreement. This meant that they ended the guerrilla warfare and also removed refugee privileges, among others the right to work, freedom of movement and residence (Ibid.).

Today Lebanon host close to 450.000 refugees. With 4.1 million citizens in Lebanon, the Palestinian refugees represent an estimated 10 percent of the population. The Palestinians are not formally citizens of another state and are therefore unable to claim the same rights as other foreigners living and working in Lebanon, including citizenship and denied work in as many as 20 professions (Belényesi & Abuhaydar, 2017, 254).

Many of the Palestinians have lost their nationality, and have continued to live without any citizenship since the 1948 Israel-Palestinian war (Belényesi & Abuhaydar, 2017, 254)

According to numbers from the United Nation Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, UNRWA, does Lebanon host the highest percentage of Palestinian refugees in abject poverty (UNRWA, 2014).

Most of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are from northern Palestine and the Galilee region where Israel rejects their right of return. This mean that they are barred from returning to their homeland and therefore suffer from progressive marginalization in Lebanon (Knudsen, 2005, 218).

The protection gap

Many scholars use the term ‘protection gap’ to describe the position of Palestinian refugees and how they are being discriminated in host countries like Lebanon. The term suggests that international protection mechanisms are rare, and often absent. Palestinian refugees are therefore often left without legal protection, and are completely dependent on the domestic legal systems of concerned states (Khalil, 2011, 685-693)

The gap is a result of an exclusion of Palestinian refugees. The international community and the Arab states are keeping Palestinian refugees separate from the global refugee protection regime, by maintaining a system of separate agencies to address their situation. an example of an agency like that, is the United Nation agency UNRWA (Khalil, 2011, 684). This is also connected to the non-applicability of the 1951 convention to Palestinian refugees under the pretext of their being subject to separate international agencies.

Furthermore, some of the major host countries like Syria and Lebanon, are not legally bound by the 1951 Convention and its protocol, because they have not ratified the it (Khalil, 2011, 686). Many of the articles in the Convention even seems problematic if applied to Palestinians, especially article 1(C), which provides a list of cases in which the convention ceases to apply to any person falling under the terms of section A, which include, *inter alia*, where he/she ‘has acquired a new nationality, and enjoys the protection of the country of his new nationality’ (Khalil, 2011, 686-687). In other words, would the Palestinian refugees be covered by the convention, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon would automatic lose their status of ‘refugee’ by virtue of accepting Lebanese citizenship, on the contrary, under UNRWA regulations, the obtained citizenship does not terminate refugee status (ibid.)

The Palestinian refugees are excluded from the international protection regime and treated as a case apart by all concerned actors. Furthermore, are many of the Palestinians striving to move back to their

homeland, and do not want to be assimilated into the country in which they currently reside. Giving them citizenship would jeopardize their right to return to their homeland.

Short description of the discrimination of which the Palestinians are facing in Lebanon

The Lebanese government has given the Palestinian refugees the legal status as foreigners, which has, as mentioned above, negatively affected their right to education, health care, social services, property ownership, etc. As a result, most of the Palestinian refugees that are living in Lebanon, suffer from abject poverty and unemployment, and are completely reliant on agencies like UNRWA (Ibrahim, 2008).

Many of the Palestinian refugees have been living in Lebanon for decades and many have even been born and raised in the host country, but the Palestinian refugees still continues to be treated as foreign nationals in the country, of which many of them have never been outside its borders (Khalil, 2011, 698).

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is the right to nationality fundamental for human right. The convention implies that individuals have the right to acquire, maintain and change nationality. Stateless persons, like most of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, face major economic, social and cultural obstacles when dealing with the host country's representatives. Stateless persons and refugees fall under the law of the host country (Belényesi & Abuhaydar, 2017, 254)

Mentioned here are some of the obstacles and legal frame that disempower Palestinians in Lebanon and hinder their opportunities of personal growth within Lebanon (Belényesi & Abuhaydar, 2017, 257):

- Young refugees have restricted access to public schools.
- Palestinians banned from 20 professions.
- Palestinians do not have access to public health services.
- Refugees have not been given land to expand on, and they are prohibited from building vertically, past a certain limit.
- To repair their homes, they must first acquire a permit, that may be rejected, and the materials they may use, are controlled.

- As foreigners, the Palestinians do not qualify to own Lebanese land, and therefore do not have the option to own land outside of the camps.
- No Palestinians can leave Lebanon without an exit visa and in order to return must have a re-entry visa.
- Inhabitants of the camps have to provide identity documents when leaving and re-entering the camps.

Since 1990 and onwards, the Lebanese government have actively encouraged Palestinians to leave the country. Among others, Knudsen is arguing that this is expressed by the stringent designed policy measures within the refugee camps. The policies are designed to keep the refugees trapped inside the cramped and squalid camps and shanty towns, from which there is no escape, only by actively leaving the country (Knudsen, 2009, 60).

According to Belényesi and Abuheydar, the discrimination is often based on social class, gender, religion and political affiliation (Belényesi & Abuheydar, 2017, 263-264). With this report I will try to put light on the discrimination toward the Palestinians in Lebanon, that is now going on it's 70 years.

One of the interviewed Palestinians in Belényesi and Abuhaydars article, are pointing out that in order to avoid discrimination, when interacting with the Lebanese, Palestinians tend to avoid a reference to their Palestinian background (ibid.). Some say that they are tired of being referred to as 'Palestinian refugees' and not just 'refugees'. Putting the Palestinian first and underscoring that this refugee is from Palestine, is just worsening the discrimination of this group of refugees, and leading to a further marginalization of an already marginalized group of people. So when the Palestinians are asked where they are from, many of them lie, as they do not want to be associated to Palestine.

The respondents of Hanafi, Chaaban and Seyferts survey, refer to themselves as the 'forgotten people'. They feel that they live in a hostile environment, where they are denied basic human rights (Hanafi, Chaaban & Seyfert, 2012, 42).

Methodology

In the following I will explain my methodological approach to the field of studies; the discrimination of Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon. I have primarily been focusing on qualitative methodology, including scientific sources and journalistic articles. Furthermore, I have used the experiences I have achieved doing my internship at United Nations Regional Information Centre of Western Europe (UNRIC) as the base for this internship report, including 7 articles written by me about Palestinians and a attendance at a press conference with the Commissioner-General of United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Pierre Krähenbühl.

Internship

My internship at UNRIC has strengthened my interest in Palestinian refugees and the issues that they meet. I have throughout the internship written seven articles about the situation of the Palestinian refugees, including Palestinian refugees in Gaza, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Especially one article i wrote has strengthen my interest for the discrimination of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The article followed a press conference with Pierre Krähenbühl, UNRWA, that was held at UNRIC's office in Brussels in January. The press conference came following the announcement from the United States that they will make drastic cuts in their contributions to the UN agency UNRWA. Krähenbühl came with an appeal to the international community, to continue their support for the UN-agency after the announcement from the United States. Krähenbühl underscored that every effort will be made to continue its work in education and health for Palestine refugees despite the announcement (UNRIC, 2018).

At the press conference Krähenbühl expressed worries about the situation that the Palestinian refugees meet in Lebanon, and that the issues will not go away, that it will only get worse for the Palestinians if the agency does not get the money somewhere else. He talked about the continuance of discrimination and exclusion that the Palestinians have meet for decades now, and he expressed worries about a "total lack of a political horizon," for the refugees (ibid.).

"We will continue our efforts to keep the schools open, keep the clinics open," Mr. Krähenbühl told a press conference at UNRIC in Brussels, "because we fear that otherwise that the parameters of hope and aspirations which we have kept alive for millions of Palestine refugees would be at risk." (ibid.)

I will use the experiences and knowledge that I have gained throughout my internship at UNRIC as a base for this internship report.

Theoretical perspective

The theoretical perspective of this internship report, has mainly been developed by working, because after along with the findings, a development of the theories perspective was done, as a result of the qualitative data collected. This allowed the report to follow leads, that was given in relation to the findings

The report's theoretical perspectives for the analysis, is Max Weber's definition of power. The definition will be used to analyse the 'conflict' between the Palestinians in Lebanon, and the Lebanese society, that has developed to the discrimination towards Palestinian refugees.

Power

Weber sees power as a circle of three definitions, struggle-power-politics, where one definition leads onto the other one. Power (Macht) is defined as "Any chance within a social relation to impose one's will also against the resistance of others, independently of what gives rise to the change". Struggle (Kampf) is defined as "A social relation should be called *struggle*, if action is pursued with the purpose to impose one's own will against the resistance of social partner or partners" (Lebow, 2017, 100). Weber distinguishes between violent and peaceful struggles. For this internship report, the theoretical framework will focus on Weber definition of power.

Analysis

"If you meet members of this community, if you meet Palestinian refugees wherever they are, this is what they face, they can identify no structured political process that would lead them to believe that they have a way forward," UNRWA Commissioner-General, Pierre Krähenbühl, told at a press conference at UNRIC, "and at the same time it is very important to mention, that there is not only a lack of political horizon but also a personal horizon." (UNRIC, 2018)

The UN-agency is lacking funding, and has been forced to put on hold some of their instruments that are helping the Palestinian refugees in among another Jordan, Gaza and Lebanon. Krähenbühl said at

the press conference at UNRIC, at the Palestinians need help from the international community now, more than ever.

In the following I wish to interpret and analyse the case of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and the discrimination of which they have been facing for decades, this is despite the fact that many of them have been living in the country for more than 70 years, and some are even born in the country.

Multi religious society

Lebanon is a small multi religious society. The country is home to 25 different religious backgrounds, but not a country that is giving rise to powerful Islamist groups. The denominations can be fitted into two main opposing ethno-religious groups: Christians and Muslims (Hammad, 2003, 32).

The majority of the Palestinian refugees that resided in Lebanon after the civil war were composed of mainly Sunni Muslims (85%) and secondarily non-Maronite Christians (15%). The presence of the Palestinians shifted the Muslim-Christian demographic balance in favour of the Muslims, which threatened the Maronite population (ibid.). According to Shuayb, a neutralisation of the Palestinians would cause an even more dramatic demographic shift to the disadvantage of the country's Christians, and would therefore upset the balance between Muslims and Christians as well as Sunni and Shia Muslims (Shuayb, 2014, 22). The power struggle between the two opposing religious groups, is according to Weber an example of the inevitable struggle and hierarchical differentiation in the competition for life changes in social relations (Lebow, 2017, 101). The Christians was the opposing group at the time of the arrival of the first Palestinians back in 1948, and they did not wish to give more power the Muslim parties, which they assumed would happen if the demographic balance would change. According to Hammad, do the demographic balance especially concern the Maronite's, who fear that the Muslims will increase their political representation, and that Lebanon therefor would be converted into a Muslim state (Hammad, 2003, 32).

A neutralization of Palestinians in Lebanon is considered a recipe for conflict between Christians and Muslims, and also something the Lebanese political leaders have been determined to resist. Consequently, a lot of the Lebanese citizens consider Palestinians a threat to the country's stability (Knudsen, 2005, 222). Today the majority of Palestinians in Lebanon are Sunni Muslims, about 10 percent of Lebanon's population (around 3.5 million).

Furthermore, the 100.000 Palestinians that came to Lebanon between 1948-1949, are believed to have tripled by the end of 1990. The permanent settlement of these refugees, where most of them are Sunni Muslims, was opposed by the Maronite Christians. As mentioned did the Christians feared that a naturalization of these refugees, would further skew the demographic balance and political power in favour of the Sunni and Shia Muslims. This was also one of the reasons why Lebanon did not ratify the 1951 Convention (Knudsen, 2009, 56-58). The 'Lebanese formula' was the key demand, which meant keeping the confessional balance and putting the needs of the country first.

Since the civil war ended, there have been growing tensions between Christians and Muslims and a resurgent sectarianism in present day Lebanon. The hostility from the Lebanese population towards Palestinian refugees, is also originated from the perceptions of the role the Palestinians played in Lebanon's lengthy and destructive civil war, where as many blame the Palestinians for provoking the civil war (Shuayb, 2014, 22).

Culture

In relation to the multi religious aspect and the treat towards the Christian community in Lebanon, it is also a good idea to examine the cultural aspect.

Culture is unique and include a set of values, behaviours, roles, beliefs and norms. Culture affects the way we live, behave and interact in the daily life. The Lebanese and the Palestinian culture have many similarities and regularly overlap, but even then have both societies chosen not to take advantage as such (Belényesi & Abuheydar, 2017, 258). In a research done by Pál Belényesi and Zina Abuheydar, they found that 60% of the Palestinian respondents and 60% of the Lebanese respondents agreed that the two cultures are very similar (Belényesi & Abuheydar, 2017, 262). They both have a huge focus on religious norms, though they might be different, meaning that in the Lebanese society are more diverse religious norms, while the Palestinians are more on the Sunni religion (Ibid.). Despite these similarities, the Palestinians are still being discriminated and excluded from the Lebanese society.

Of all the countries hosting Palestinian refugees, Lebanon has the highest percentage of camp-dwellings. According to Knudsen, is this because of strict policies in Lebanon, that is designed to restrain refugees to the camps like prisoners and prevent integration.

Sovereignty

Different cultures and the current refugee crisis are a huge threat to a country's sovereignty. According to Khalil is the current international system is based on sovereign states. A state's sovereignty is being challenged by refugees, who force international actors to consider ethical principles and issues of human rights that are part of their international obligations (Khalil, 2011, 696). This could also explain why Lebanon did not ratify the convention, they do not what the UN to rule the politics within the country. Furthermore, this challenge to the country's sovereignty, has become a power struggle between the international actors and Lebanon. Lebanon has throughout its modern history been hesitant to rule according to political and territorial arrangements to safeguard the country's autonomy and sovereignty (Haddad, 2003, 6).

According to Knudsen, rejecting Palestinian refugee settlement in Lebanon became a rallying cry that unified the Lebanese people, which was summed up in the slogan 'Lebanon for the Lebanese' (Knudsen, 2009, 56).

In relation to the multi religious society as Lebanon is and from the inception of sovereign state, there has been a tension between the 'Lebanese' identity and a 'pan-Arab' identity. The 'Lebanese' identity was especially more attractive to the Christian majority in Lebanon, who did not wish for more power to the Muslim majority in Lebanon, which would happen with the Palestinians in Lebanon. The Christian majority dominated the government at the time of the arrival of the Palestinian refugees, but since the Palestinians were largely Muslim, admitting them to the Lebanese society would have seriously altered the demographic and political balance and threaten the sovereign state. Even though the majority of the Palestinian refugees remained excluded from the state, they still have had a significant impact on Lebanese politics (Meier, 2010, 112).

Socioeconomic

Palestinians are as mentioned stateless refugees and have been denied citizenship in Lebanon. In other words, this means that they have difficulties getting a job and the employment that are available to Palestinians is of low status, precarious and insufficient to lift them out of poverty, and they therefore not able to secure their existence and provide for their families (Hanafi, Chaaban & Seyfert, 2012, 51). According to Hanafi, Chaaban & Seyfert, is the situation of un- and under-employment, likely to be a consequence of the macro-economic conditions within Lebanon (Belényesi & Abuheydar,

2012, 51-52). When there is not enough jobs for the Lebanese citizens, why should they then give the few they have to the Palestinians.

Societies that are affected negatively by social and political instability and exclusion, such as the Palestinian society in Lebanon, are often taken advantage of through manipulation and exploitation, such as the above mentioned about Islamism organisations and their workforce (ibid.). As a consequence, the Palestinians have as mentioned been excluded from several professions, and are often taken advantage of, by offering them minimum wages jobs that are insecure and unsafe working conditions. This happens because of the uneven power relationship between the two groups. The Palestinians are desperate to get an income, and the Lebanese are exploiting their power and the position of the Palestinians.

The economic troubles in Lebanon have sharpened the conflict between the Palestinians and the Lebanese population. Many of the Lebanese citizens blame the influx of refugees for increasing food and housing prices and for undermining wages (Lischer, 2017, 86). According to Khalil, the heated debate over Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, is often related to community balance (Khalil, 2011, 706). Many of the Lebanese citizens have a common perception, that the Palestinians dependency on external support is motivated by laziness and that they gravitate towards a disinclination to activity and solely rely on UNRWA and other NGOs to provide them with the necessary help (Hammoud, 2017, 138).

Politics

The presence of Palestinians in Lebanon, is also a highly politicized and emotional problem. In Weber definition is power intrinsically related to the definition of 'politics', where the inevitable differentiation of life changes in any social order is ultimately connected to the threat or use of physical violence and the competition to take control of it (Lebow, 2017, 102). In general Lebanon lack a legal framework for refugee governance.

The Palestinians are often viewed as a mounting parasite and the cause of all political chaos in the country (Hammoud, 2017, 138). According to the scholar behind the book '*The Palestinians in Lebanon*', Rebecca Roberts, the politics that were implemented primarily after the civil war was mainly implemented for two reasons; first of all that the Palestinian refugee community are considered a threat to the international stability, which is also connected to sovereignty, and second

that by imposing restrictions is a way of impeding the daily life (Hammoud, 2017, 140). The last reason could provoke the Palestinians to leave Lebanon and seek asylum somewhere else.

The politicians have a certain power, and people rely on the actions of them. The politicians can therefore easily affect the Lebanese citizens, and according to Belényesi & Abuheydar have the Lebanese politicians exploited prejudice and fears to the public that portray the Palestinians as inhumane, violent and a treat to Lebanon's stability (Belényesi & Abuheydar, 2017, 257-258).

Granting the Palestinians citizenship in Lebanon, would jeopardise their return to their country of origin. The 'right to return' is sometimes used to justify discriminatory policies against the Palestinian refugees, and that their legal status still remain that of foreigners (Hanafi, Chaaban & Seyfert, 2012, 42).

After the end of the civil war, the Taif Agreement was made to mark the end. In the agreement it is underscored that 'there shall be no fragmentation, partition, or settlement of non-Lebanese in Lebanon' (Knudsen, 2009, 56). The fact that the rejection of naturalisation of Palestinian refugees was included in the Taif Agreement shows the political importance connected to this issue for Lebanese national interests, as well as confessional concern over the permanent settlement of refugees in the country (ibid). This shows that the support for Palestinian refugees, since the ending of the civil war in Lebanon, has been diminishing and gradually been displaced by mistrust and legal and political discrimination.

Furthermore, according to Khalil, there has been a political perception that integration will compromise the ultimate objective of the 'right to return' (Khalil, 2011, 681).

Widespread poverty in Lebanon has strengthened Islamist sentiments among Shia and Sunni Muslims, and increased support for alternative Islamist forms of government (Ibid.), including Hizbollah. Some Palestinians have formed alliance with Hizbollah, which can be explained by desperation for a political voice in Lebanon. The organisation is also known as a mouthpiece for the Lebanese Shia, and provides social welfare to Palestinian refugees (Knudsen, 2005, 224).

Other Palestinians support Sunni-based Islamist groups, such as Jamaa al-Islamiyya, this group advocates for a Islamic state in Lebanon, and has called for a holy-war against Israel, this group also provide social welfare to Palestinians.

The naturalization discussion was seen by some groups, as politically motivated and that it was used for personal gain (Knudsen, 2009, 58). In 1998 the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Saad Hariri, said on national television that the situation with the Palestinian refugees, and condition in the camps were extremely bad, but an improvement of their living conditions would facilitate their permanent integration into Lebanon, and Lebanon was not prepared to foot the bill for that (Knudsen, 2009, 59). In a later statement that same year, he said, "Lebanon will never, ever integrate Palestinians. They will not receive civic or economic rights, or even work permits. Integration would take the Palestinians off the shoulder of the international agency UNRWA that has supported them since 1948" (Knudsen, 2009, 60). In the latest statement, it seems that the Lebanese are arguing, that by integrating the Palestinians, they would have done the work of UNRWA, and they will not do someone else's job. Other Lebanese officials have justified these policies for example by saying that encouraging the integration of Palestinian refugees, would undermine their 'right to return'. Furthermore, if the Palestinians were fully integrated and could get citizenship in Lebanon, that would probably affect the international community's interest in attempting to implement the UN resolution 194 (Hammoud, 2017, 141).

The responsibility of Israel

According to Knudsen there are different reasons for the Lebanese authorities' policy of preventing citizenship to the Palestinians. He explains it as a mix of foreign policy objectives demanding that Israel honour the refugees' right of return and domestic pressures related to the country's political system (Knudsen, 2005, 221-222).

Lebanese officials showed a small support for the Arab cause, when the Arab-Israeli war formally broke out in May 1948. The pro-Western Lebanon expressed worries about the creation of a Jewish state, that it would influence large numbers of Palestinians. Of all the Arab nations, it was only Jordan and Lebanon who acknowledge the Palestinian refugees, and after the war the Israeli authorities refused to allow them back in (Haddad, 2003, 29).

The Lebanese government have directly opposed to any form for economic integration of the Palestinian refugees, and according to Hammoud, this could be because of the fact that an economic integration of the Palestinian refugees would affect the international community's perception of the

issue. They would be less likely to pursue the implementation of the UN resolution 194. This in turn creates a precedent for the imposition of Israeli solutions (Hammoud, 2017, 135).

“Arab governments have consistently focused on keeping alive the issue of Palestinian displacement and preventing primary responsibility from being shifted from the source country (Israel) to the host country” (Belényesi & Abuheydar, 2017, 254). The Lebanese officials want Israel to take responsibility for the Palestinians, and by accepting them into the Lebanese society and granting them civic rights would lead to an acceptance of missing action from Israel.

According to Khalil, the heated debate over Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is often also related to the role of Palestinian refugees in the Lebanese civil war (Khalil, 2011, 706). Many of the Lebanese think that the Palestinians’ igniting the war, and many blame therefor the Palestinians for the country’s misfortunes (Knudsen, 2009, 56).

Furthermore, for the refugees themselves, the right of return is the key demand because accepting naturalization would delete the refugee problem and let Israel evade its historical responsibility for the refugee problem (Knudsen, 2009, 68).

Partial conclusion

The issue of discrimination of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is a complex and widely spread problem. The discrimination can be dated back to the beginning of the Israeli-Palestine conflict, when the first wave of refugees came to Lebanon.

First of all, have the Palestinians for decade been hesitant to receive Lebanese citizenship, because of a fear of losing the ‘right to return’ to the country of origin. According to Khalil, are the Palestinians striving to be repatriated to their homeland, not to be assimilated into the host-country of Lebanon. The Palestinians fear that a refugee label would render them an anonymous mass of exiles rather than recognize their national identity and desire to return (Khalil, 2011, 687). The ‘right to return’ has also been an excuse for the Lebanese government to exclude the Palestinians from the society.

Secondly, the Palestinians derived from the fact that their predicament differs from that of other refugee groups who are covered by the Convention, which has developed the so called 'protection gap', where the host state can 'hide' and excuse their exclusion.

Furthermore, the sovereignty state of Lebanon plays a significant role in the discrimination of the Palestinian refugees. The Politicians have used their position and power, to colour the opinion of the public. Furthermore, some have actively rejected the country's responsibility of the refugees, and some have even exploited fears to the public that portray the Palestinians as inhumane, violent and a treat to Lebanon's stability.

Explanatory hypotheses

No doubt that the Palestinians have been seriously discriminated for years in Lebanon, and continue to do so. The two explanatory hypotheses tried to come up with an answer of how come this discrimination of several layers continues to happen.

The first explanatory hypotheses, that the Palestinians have been discriminated by the Lebanese society, because they are mainly Sunni Muslims and giving them equal rights would upset the delicate ethnic-religious balance in Lebanon.

According to the findings this explanatory hypothesis will be accepted. A lot of the scholars have found that because of the fact that the Palestinians are mainly Sunni Muslims, the neutralisation of them have mainly been opposed by the Christian Maronite population in Lebanon. They fear that giving them equal rights and allowing them into the society would shift the Christian-Muslim demographic balance in favour of the Muslims further. The Christian population of Lebanon fear that by giving the Palestinians equal rights, would mean more power to the Muslim population, especially on the political front. The Christian population have not been interested in a mainly Muslim state, which they fear would happen. Furthermore, would a neutralisation of the Palestinian refugees mean, that they would lose the 'right to return', and both the Palestinians and the Lebanese citizens does not wish for this.

According to Weber is the power struggle between the two opposing religious groups, an example of the inevitable struggle and hierarchical differentiation in the competition for life changes in social relations. Giving the Palestinian citizenship and equal right as to the Lebanese is therefore seen as a

recipe for conflict between Christians and Muslims, and as mentioned something that the Lebanese political leaders have been determined to resist.

The Christian population does not want the Palestinians in Lebanon, as for the Lebanese politicians. The discrimination as such have therefore continued for decades now, and the Palestinians are trapped in the camps, living in bad conditions, with no prospectively of getting out of poverty.

The second hypotheses are that the Palestinians have been discriminated in Lebanon because it has been a political necessity vis-à-vis Israel. Granting the Palestinian refugees equal rights would mean acceptance of Israel has no responsibilities for the refugees.

The findings show that the Lebanese does not oppose to granting the Palestinians citizenship because of a need for Israel to take responsibility, but rather for a wish of the International community to take responsibility. According to the findings, granting the Palestinians equal rights, would mean that the responsibility is moved from the International organisations, such as UNRWA, on to the Palestinians. This explanatory hypothesis would therefore be rejected.

Some of the scholars have even found, that some Lebanese think that the laws are outdated, and that it is about time that the Palestinians will be included in the society. According to them, is the publics opinion towards the Palestinians highly affected by these laws, and from the Lebanese officials that talk about the Palestinians as lawless, careless people. These opinions mainly come from Lebanese that have daily contact with people from the Palestinian society.

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