

Incoherence in the Process of Transformation of the *Metwali* into *Ja'fari Shi'a* and the Consequent Militant Mobilization of the Twelver *Shi'a*

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Abstract

*This article proposes a way to analyze discourses about regularization and the resistance to regularization with the aim of de-functionalizing the coherence of the discourse about the regularization of confessionalism proliferating around the Syrian conflict. A differentiation is identified in the coherence of the discourse about the recruitment and mobilization of Hezbollah into Twelver Shi'a militancy, which is correlated to the process of transforming the non-Arab identity of the Metwali into a Shi'a Arab identity, and the massive mobilization that took place to abolish confessionalism during the August 23rd, 2015 riots in Lebanon. The analysis employs an ethnographic research design that empirically bridges between Michel Foucault's framework of analysis, articulated in *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1972) and *The Subject and Power* (1982) and applied in *Society Must Be Defended* (1997), and Harold Innis' geopolitical analysis of the power relations between the center and the periphery in *Empire and Communication* (2007), and *The Bias of Communication* (1951).*

Keywords

Michel Foucault; Harold Innis; *Metwali*; *Shi'a*; Confessionalism; Lebanon; Sectarian Identity

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Introduction

Metwali, a word which means loyalist to the Arabs, is a racial classification that refers to foreign converts, including the Jews in Medina, that are classified by language¹ and this discursive formation is produced in Abbasid Caliphate historiography. *Al-Jahez* (775-868 A.D.) in his discussion of the *Metwali* in *al-Rasa'el* makes the distinction based on linguistically foreign Muslim converts or *A'jami* that became assimilated into Arab culture. The word *A'jami* does not have any link to the Persian language as it is commonly used in modern day Arabic. In his description Al-Jehaz linguistically associates Abraham's being *A'jami* to *Metwali*.²

Confessionalism, i.e. the mixing of religion with politics, as a system of government in Lebanon, is based upon the scrutiny of identities of communities of faith that has existed since time immemorial. In the professional literature, confessional identities in Lebanon, excluding the Muslim *Shi'a*, have been comfortably situated within their sectarian domains. While several studies view the *Shi'a* as a coherent group bonded behind its confessional leadership, other explanations of *Shi'a* coherence paradoxically relate this unity to a collective experience associated with two main factors: the *Shi'a* "identity crisis" and the *Shi'a* marginalization by the Lebanese confessional system of government.³ The "identity crisis" hypothesis, however, fails both to pinpoint the tensions that have fueled the differentiation of the crisis or to identify what the conflicting identities are. To understand the *Shi'a* identity crisis imagine the existence of a crisis in the coherence of one's historical continuity when one is trapped between the confessional regularization of the *Shi'a* identity bestowed upon one by the government after the creation of the

1 Mohamed ben Jarir al-Tabary, *Tarikh al-Ummān Wal-Muluk*, Vol I-V (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub al-Ilmiya, 1986), Vol. I, p. 558, Vol. II, pp. 49, 95, 100.

2 Abou Othman Ben Amro Ben Mahboub (Al-Jahez), "Manaqeb al-Turk" in *Majmou'at al-Ras'el* ["The Virtues of the Turks and the Rest of the Soldiers of the Caliphate" in the Messages of al-Jahez.] (Egypt: Matba'at al-Taqaqom be Share'h Mohamed A'li fi Masr, 1324H), [Egypt: Al Taqaqoum Press in Mohamed Ali Street], pp. 5-8.

3 Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2004), p. 7; Kais Firro, "The Shi'a in Lebanon: Between Communal 'Asabiyya and Arab Nationalism 1908-21," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (2006), p. 535; Yusri Hazran, "The Shiite Community in Lebanon: From Marginalization to Ascendancy," (Waltham MA, Brandeis University, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, June 2009), pp. 1-6, <https://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB37.pdf> (accessed: September 10, 2017).

State of Lebanon in the early twentieth century and the historically regulated *Metwali* identity bestowed upon one by the government of the Arab Conquest.⁴ William Tucker, quoting W. Montgomery Watt, notes that the *Metwali* were Aramean converts but also goes further and investigates several other possibilities that include Jewish and Christian roots. He then attributes Manichaeism, Gnosticism, and Mandaism, in addition to Jewish and Christian messianic traditions, to the development of millenarian sects in Islam.⁵

This article identifies a discursive differentiation that is being made between the two identities associated with the process of transformation of *Metwali* into *Shi'a* and challenges the validity of the claim that the confessionalism and marginalization instituted by the newly created government of Lebanon is the cause of the incoherence about the collective identity of the *Shi'a*. This is done by demonstrating that the collective identity of the abject *Metwali* pre-existed the government of Lebanon and was operational until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in WWI. It also asks the questions of how the process of transformation of the collective identity *Metwali* into *Shi'a* took effect, what mechanisms were institutionalized by the government to enforce the *Shi'a* identity and what the discourse of recruitment deployed by Iranian clergy was that was used to disperse the discursive formation *Metwali* and to redistribute it into *Shi'a*? The objective here is to identify the elements of struggle that reveal hidden identities and allow them to coherently coexist with the discourse of regulation. The aim of this analysis is to de-functionalize the coherence and ongoing discourse about the regularization of confessional identities that have been proliferating around the Syrian conflict.

The *Shi'a* identity crisis and ignorance about the *Metwali*

The “identity crisis” hypothesis is normally situated within a struggle over economic structure that is associated with the historic

4 They came from the disenfranchised; those who believed that they were deprived of their rights by the *Umayyads*. Hugh Kennedy, “The Caliphate,” in Youssef M. Choueiri (ed.), *A Companion to the History of the Middle East* (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005), p. 53.

5 William F. Tucker, *Mahdis and Millenarians: Shiite Extremists in Early Muslim Iraq* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 4, 128-129.

marginalization of the *Shi'a* by the newly created confessional system established by the government. Both factors are often used to explain the success of Hezbollah's Twelver *Shi'a* confessional recruitment and mobilization into taking part in a sectarian conflict. In the literature these explanations are assigned to the creation of the Lebanese confessional system of government in 1926 and the National Pact of 1943 which excluded them from any executive power in the government. The *Shi'a* and the *Metwali* are then grouped together as part of the coherence of the attempt to clarify the structural explanations and situate them within an economically determined modality that hypothesizes struggles of domination and subjugation.⁶ Their economic and political marginalization is then associated with the construction of confessional identities and are given as explanations for the success of the Iranian clergy, starting with *Musa al-Sadr* and continued by *Khomeini*, in mobilizing the militancy of an already existing confessional group.⁷ This analysis sees *Shi'a-Metwali* differentiation as a discursive division that has been introduced within the systems struggling for formation and situates this alliance within race relations.

Explanations for the success of confessional recruitment for militant purposes are abstractions of events of violence committed by the *Metwali* as a group that existed prior to the introduction of Lebanon's constitution. The *Metwali's* violent mobilization against the French alliance with *Amir Bashir el Shihab* and Mohamed 'Ali, governor of Egypt, which ended in the Egyptian occupation of the Ottoman provinces of Sham and Beirut including Mount Lebanon, however, tell a different story. Helena Cobban describes a conflict mobilized by the *Metwalis* of *Jabel Amil* in 1838. In 1840 another rebellion involved the mobilization of the Druze, Maronite, *Metwali*, and Greek Catholic notables of Mount Lebanon to oppose the

6 Stuart Hall, "Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debates," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1985), p. 93; Stuart Hall, "Encoding Decoding," in Simon During (ed.), *The Cultural Studies Reader* (London, New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 508.

7 Max Weiss, *In the Shadow of Sectarianism Law, Shi'ism, and the Making of Modern Lebanon* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 24-25.

Egyptians and *Amir Bashir*.⁸ Ilya Harik describes this rebellion as a Maronite nationalist rebellion⁹ and quotes the declaration issued by the rebels which states “[We] the undersigned Druze, Christians, *Matawilah*, and Muslims, who are known as the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon [...]”¹⁰

What is noticeable in the declaration is that it does not refer to the *Metwali* as being either Muslim or *Shi’a* and is indicative of the fact that violent mobilization inside Lebanon pre-existed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Iranian Revolution. This not only makes the assumption that it is the confessional system of government marginalization that is the root cause of the *Shi’a* mobilization behind the confessional clergy in Iran a problematic proposition but it also reveals that people with the *Metwali* identity were already concretely operating in Lebanon at that time in the field of relations of normative identities.

It is possible to identify times when there was a transformation of the *Metwali* between two mechanisms being used by the government to regulate the registration of identity. *The Règlement Organique* 1861-1864, article six, categorizes the identities of the administrative council of the *Mutsarafiya* and identifies two types of Muslims: Sunni and *Metwali*¹¹ while the regulation of the *Shi’a* identity can be seen in articles twenty-four and ninety-five of the Constitution of Lebanon of 1926. The ambiguity of the use of names is also evident in the exclusion of the *Shi’a* from executive power in the National Pact of 1943. The exclusion of the *Shi’a* from the power structure led to protests by the newly born *Shi’a* identity group which had recently been the subject of regulation and a demand for political representation. In 1947 the *Shi’a* leadership was finally granted the position of the Speaker of the House.¹²

8 Helena Cobban, *The Making of Modern Lebanon* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1985), pp. 42-43.

9 Iliya Harik, *Politics and Change in a Traditional Society Lebanon, 1711-1845* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 245.

10 *Ibid*, p. 16.

11 Document can be found on *Digithèque de matériaux juridiques et politiques* <http://mjp.univ-perp.fr/constit/lb1861.htm#2> (accessed: September 4, 2017).

12 Michael Kerr, *Imposing Power Sharing, Conflict and Coexistence in Northern Ireland and Lebanon* (Dublin, Portland, Or: Irish Academic Press, 2006), pp. 125-135.

What was taking shape, starting with the independence of Lebanon onwards, was a process of transformation in the meaning of *Metwali*, which was being facilitated by an apparatus of knowledge fabrication. This transformation can be seen in the translation used for the name (and the identity) *Metwali*, which was the term used in the French regulation of 1864, to mean *Shi'a* in English. Subsequent Middle Eastern studies that analyzed the subject of confessionalism and the mass mobilization for militant purposes in Lebanon have constructed a narrative of historical continuity between the *Metwali* and *Shi'a*,¹³ when this has actually been a process of differentiation. This division can be observed in the field of the concrete relations that define meaning. The concrete relations that describe the *Metwali* identity being referred to are the relations with non-Arabs in the early stages of the Arab Conquest while the relations that describe the Twelver *Shi'a* make reference to an Arab partisan called *Al Hossein* during the Umayyad Caliphate of *Yazid*. This is the point in time at which the discursive formation that produced the term *Shi'a* begins to appear in history and it is also what constitutes its reproduction in the later process of regulation of the *Shi'a* identity.¹⁴

According to this analysis *Metwali* is correlated with secular or non-religionist anti-establishment mass action opposed to government confessionalism. This mass action was manifested in the August 23rd 2015 demonstrations/riots associated with the garbage crisis. The riots were blamed on something called *mundass*, meaning intruder, that makes reference to *Shi'a* youth who came from the suburbs of the city. The process of transforming the discursive formation *Metwali* into *Shi'a* is correlated to resistance manifested in the political demands to abolish confessionalism. This connection was established by referring to historical accounts of points of

13 See for example literature constructing continuity between *The Règlement Organique Metwali* and the confessional identity *Shi'a* of Lebanon by the process of translation in: Thomas Scheffler, "Lebanon" in Dieter Nohlen, Florian Grotz, Christ of Hartmann (eds.) *Elections in Asia and the Pacific: A Data Handbook: Volume 1: Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 173; Samir Khalaf, *Civil and Uncivil Violence in Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 274-276; Rainer Grote and Tilmann Röder (eds.), *Constitutionalism in Islamic Countries: Between Upheaval and Continuity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 391-391.

14 A confessional I.D. is issued by the registrar (*Ikhraj Qaid*) which includes the sect of any subject of regulation. When the sect entry is removed one cannot hold public office.

tension during the 1958 and 1975-1990 civil conflicts in Lebanon.¹⁵ In both civil conflicts, statements opposing confessionalism referred to discursive divisions within the familiar debates about systems of identity formation that were inciting violence. The regulation being contested in both cases was the application of article ninety-five of the Lebanese Constitution- a regulation in need of re-modification and reconsideration both because of the institutionalization of the *Mutsarafiya* on Mount Lebanon during the late nineteenth century and the National Pact in 1943.¹⁶

The claim being made is that the system of forming a regulation of identity was something that was produced by the government and is associated with an apparatus of knowledge fabrication. For the government regulation of the identity of the *Shi'a* a correlation can be established with opposition to government confessionalism since this kind of opposition was commonly seen in anti-establishment movements throughout the early twentieth century, mainly in the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and the Lebanese Communist Party's capacity to attract, recruit, and mobilize secular *Metwali* to form the bulk of supporters for these anti-establishment movements. This opposition is currently re-appearing with newly emerging "anti-establishment" political movements that make confessional leadership the target of their rhetoric together with the capacity of these movements to attract *Shi'a* secular and non- religionist youth into their ranks.¹⁷

The act of transforming the non-religionist *Metwali* into the confessional *Ja'fari Shi'a* was produced not by some Lebanese charismatic secular leadership but precisely because of the arrival of charismatic Iranian clergymen and the creation of an opposition mobilized by the *Ja'fari Shi'a -Musa al-Sadr*, the spiritual leader of

15 Abir A. Chaaban, *Sovereignty State Legitimacy and the Nation State: the Case of Lebanon* (Saarbrücken: LAP Lambert, 2016), pp. 96-114.

16 Oren Barak, "Lebanon: Failure, Collapse, and Resuscitation," in Robert I. Rotberg (ed.), *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), pp. 311-312; Cobban, *The Making of Modern Lebanon*, pp. 69-70; Meir Zamir, *Lebanon's Quest, The Road to Statehood 1926-1939* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 1997), pp. 30, 64.

17 See for example statements in opposition to confessionalism made by two emerging anti-establishment parties: "Sabaa" <http://sabaa.org/> (accessed: September 10, 2017); "Mowatenoun wa Mouwatinat fi Dawlah" (Citizens in a State) <http://mmfidawla.com/> (accessed: September 10, 2017).

the *Amal* Movement, a secular *Shi'a* political party. Hezbollah's joining into the process of transformation constructed the regulated modality of the Twelver *Shi'a*, depicted as a continuity starting with the *Metwali* going through *Ja'fari Shi'a* and manifested in the historical battles fought by a people who have existed since time immemorial. This transformation was made possible by the Christians who promoted the confessional system of government because of the system that had formed the *Metwali* identity, which existed before the confessional system of government did. This process was facilitated by the French Mandatory negotiations with the *Ja'fari Shi'a* clergy and was supported both by the *Ja'fari Shi'a* elite to gain recognition for the *Ja'fari Shi'a* in confessional courts, and by the Higher *Shi'a* Council in return for their consent to abide by the constitution of Greater Lebanon.¹⁸ The object of the system that formed confessional identities in Greater Lebanon is consistent with the confessional system enforced by the government and its apparatus of knowledge fabrication and was sustained by the clergy.

The antagonism between strategies within struggles

This article utilizes a Foucauldian post-structural framework of analysis which proposes a way of analyzing the “enunciative function of statements”¹⁹ within a regulated field of discourse surrounding a material conflict by analyzing statements made which oppose regulation as they are manifested in an encounter with power. Working with an ethnographic research design, this form of analysis bridges a framework which was articulated by Michel Foucault in *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1972) and “The Subject and Power” (1982) and applied in *Society Must Be Defended* (1997) with a framework articulated by Harold Innis in *Empire and*

18 Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond A. Hinnebusch, *Syria and Iran, Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 117; Weiss, *In the Shadow of Sectarianism Law*, p.19.

19 Foucault's enunciative function of statements refutes Jacques Lacan's subject centered psychoanalysis. For Lacan the unconscious is structured like language whereas enunciation is a process that takes place in the unconscious signification of the use of words. Foucault takes the material object of statements in the field of discourse by underplaying the role of the speaking subject. See Lorenzo Chiesa, *Subjectivity and Otherness: A Philosophical Reading of Lacan* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2007), pp. 35-39; Jacques Lacan, *Écrits* (Paris: Éditions Du Seuil, 1966), pp. 834, 892.

Communication (2007) and *The Bias of Communication* (1951). This approach is geared to operate as a framework for the investigation of struggles within a “regulated field of discourse” and involves actual conflicts on the margins of centers of power. What is proposed is a way of classifying data obtained from participant observations of activities identified at points where power is manifested in a violent sense, and deployed through antagonistic strategies in statements of discourse. This manifested power can be seen at points of resistance to the governmental enforcement of “identity” regulation. The aim is to reveal abstracted identities derived in the process of building coherence and to allow them to coexist and correlate within the field of concrete relations. Such identities are the functions which de-functionalize the coherence which was established in the discourse of regulation.

Theoretical framework and methodology

The research done for this article uses mixed methods to collect data from multiple sites of analysis as well as Facebook pages and YouTube clips of anti-establishment political rap music complemented by participant observations as field notes²⁰ which were recorded as video recordings and images and included the demonstrations/riots of August 23rd 2015. Documentary research of statutory regulation and historiography are geared to establish the historical points in time and space by tracing when and where knowledge was produced and reproduced in the process of the Lebanese government’s regulation of identity.

The enunciative function of statements involves the enunciation of various units into a coherent modality that has the capacity to mobilize mass action. These units may be made up of fragments of a sentence, signs, audio-visual and other images, and a set of propositions. Instead of assigning meaning to them the enunciative function relates them to the field of objects they make reference to. Such material relations act as catalysts for understanding institutional transformations as they take shape in the form of statements of resistance to governmental regulation of identity.

20 Participation in cultural activities (2011-2015).

This kind of process analysis can be seen in Nietzsche's critique of institutional transformations in which he pins the process of the circulation of power to a counter discourse of resistance which redefines meaning by transforming the object relations made by statements so as to identify the "good", "the bad" and "the evil."²¹ The formation of the "evil" by making statements defines the target of mass mobilization since, according to this paradigm, meaning is produced by those who control the production of knowledge. It is, however, countered by discourses of opposition that enounce counteracting objects of relations in order to counter central power.

Building on Nietzsche, Foucault proposed two interrelated conceptual hypotheses which are examined in this article. The first proposition is that statements have an "enunciative function" within the field of discourse. The field of discourse here is defined as the actual existence of statements that cut across the vernacular (*le langage*) and formal language (*la langue*).²² Since the field of disciplinary education is a regulated field of discourse it enunciates a modality - which is a statement described as the existence of a group of signs allowed to exist in relation to a field of material objects. Discursive formations define the group relations that discourse must establish in order to speak about an object²³ and also define the group relations established in the process of the formation of confessional identities as objects of statements. The second conceptual hypothesis is that a discursive formation is the principle of the dispersion and redistribution of statements and the principle formation for the dispersion and redistribution of power.

Statements of opposition make object relations enunciate a counter modality that cannot be constructed by the "ideology" of the

21 Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* (Edinburgh: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 13-15, 21-34; Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in Paul Rainbow, *Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), pp. 83-88.

22 Kristeva distinguishes between four communicative capacities: *le langage, la langue, la parole, le discours*. Julia Kristeva, *Le langage, cet inconnu: Une initiation a la linguistique* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1981), pp. 11-13.

23 Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge, and the Discourse on Language*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 86-89.

centers of power²⁴ since it is born, it takes shape and is formulated by statements of opposition to central powers. The field of discourse regulated by “ideologies” of centers of power is thus overthrown by statements of opposition as they enunciate a counter system of formation. Within the operation of both hypotheses, discourse is defined as “the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation”²⁵ and a discursive formation is defined as something that is not unified by the logical coherence of its elements. The type of coherence attributed to a discursive formation works within a process that produces regularity through dispersion.²⁶

Harold Innis identifies geopolitical margins as the localities of the circulation of power. He distinguishes between time-biased communication which he sees as having been preserved in the vernacular oral tradition, and space-biased communication as reaching across space. The core of the process of the circulation of power can be found in the innovations that have taken place in the communication technologies that can reach across space to the margins and Innis attributes this circulation to two processes. The first is the bias in the communication that exists at the center due to the center’s production of knowledge whose object is to control space. This bias is also associated with an increase that has taken place in the centralization of knowledge production which constitutes a “monopoly of knowledge.”²⁷ Innis also attributes the circulation of power to a second process of time-biased communication that emerges at the margins and begins correlating, interworking and interconnecting with centers by using technological advancements in the medium of communication to reach across space.²⁸ The

24 Louis Althusser, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, 1970, *Marxism.org* <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm> (accessed: May 6, 2017); Stuart Hall, Hobson, D., and Lowe, A., & Willis, *Culture, Media, Language* (London: Hutchinson, 1980), pp. 29, 49, 174-176.

25 Foucault, *Archeology*, p. 107.

26 Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy towards a Radical Democratic Politics Second Edition* (London, New York: Verso, 2001), p. 91.

27 “Old Messengers, New Media: The Legacy of Innis and McLuhan,” *Library and Archives Canada*, 6 March 2007, <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/innis-mcluhan/030003-1040-e.html#b1> (accessed: May 6, 2016).

28 Harold Innis, *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951), pp. 33-34; Harold Innis, *Empire and Communications* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007), pp. 12, 26-27, 139, 192-195.

dependence of the center on the medium of communication across space allows the margins to initiate counter communication and to produce new knowledge by taking advantage of the medium.

The uses made by statements posted on new communication technologies like Facebook pages and YouTube clips produce marginal knowledge about Turkey and Iran both of which are central forces for the regulation of identities in the process of militant mobilization inside Syria. A discursive division of resistance operates vertically and takes the depth of time into account while a division that has been mobilized to secure territory operates horizontally across space. In the case of Lebanon, the social body and civil movements constitute a struggle that is essentially opposed to the confessional regulation of identities by centers of power.²⁹ An encounter in the process of abjection of the *mundass* during the August 23rd 2015 riots was identified and the knowledge produced around this point has revealed concealed identities that were preserved in the depth of time. They correlate to the processes of the circulation of power currently taking shape at the margins of the Syrian conflict and enunciate a counter system of formation that de-functionalizes the coherence of the confessional regulation of the Twelver *Shi'a* identity.

The discursive differentiation between *Metwali* and *Shi'a*

Confessionalism as the subject of regulation was a category utilized to divide the population of Israel, Lebanon and Syria along confessional lines. It appears in the King Crane Report issued in 1919 but it is also evident in academic discourses on nation and nationalism.³⁰ The discursive division/differentiation between *Metwali* and *Shi'a* can be observed in several analyses on Lebanon, the most particularistic of which were done by Kais Firro and Max Weiss.

Firro traces a study done in 1910 by a *Shi'a* scholar named *Ahmed Rida* in which the scholar identifies the core problem as falling

²⁹ See hash tag #*Kellon_Ya'ni_Kellon*, and #*You_Stink*.

³⁰ World War I Document Archives, "King-Crane Commission Report," August 28, 1919, Population Estimates <http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1918p/kncr.html> (accessed: August 7, 2017); C.A. Macartney, *National States and National Minorities* (London: Russell & Russell, 1968), p. 541; Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community History and Violence in Nineteenth Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 23.

within the field of the regulation of the objects of relations as part of the process of regrouping the material relations developed towards the *Metwali* and transforming them into a sub-entity of a Muslim, or Arab, or Ottoman *umma*. Rida argues that the concept of *umma* can be attributed to “a group of complex needs and that, with a comprehensive orientation it either comprises “several religions regrouped into one language,” or “several languages regrouped by one religion,” or “several languages and religions.” Rida then concludes that this community may be regrouped to become a sub-entity of either the Muslim religious *umma*, or the Arab national *umma*, or the Ottoman civic *umma*.³¹ This conclusion recognizes that reworking the objects of relations made by statements about the discursive formation of the non-Arab *Metwali* was necessary to transform it into an Arab-*Shi'a* identity.

Firro situates the identity crisis as a choice that was made in the material coherence imagined to exist between *Metwali* translated in his work as “loyalist to ‘Ali” and the narrative about the origins of *A'mili Shi'a*. He explains the “identity crisis” hypothesis semantically as being the result of a collective choice of a narrative of identity by a materially existing coherent group of people with two names designated in both cases as *Shi'a*. The thesis explaining the identity crisis does not indicate that there was a conflict in identity, since both are “loyalist to ‘Ali” and the narrative of *A'mili Shi'a* makes reference to the confessional identity *Shi'a*, but only in the coherence of the designation *Shi'a* when used in reference to a materially existing group, the *Metwali*.³² What requires warranting in this argument is the claim that a historical material existence of statements within its own time and space actually did make a relational connection between ‘Ali and *Metwali*. As a matter of fact, no such historical records specific to the era of ‘Ali and the Umayyad Caliphate exist. What thus needs to be located is the time and space that produced statements that created objects of relation between the *Metwali* and ‘Ali because it is at this point that the reproduction of statements was aimed at dispersing the discursive formation of the non-Arab *Metwali*.

31 Firro, *The Shi'a* pp. 536-538.

32 *Ibid*, p. 535.

Maz Weiss' work on the historiography of the late nineteenth, and early twentieth century European Orientalists pinpoints the moment in history when the discursive division *Metwali* was undergoing its transformation. This process can be analyzed from excerpts he quotes from the British and French Orientalist who deal with the abjection of the *Metwali* cultural practices and see a resemblance between their practices and appearance to those of Jews. While Irish historian Richard Robert Maddens (1798-1886) describes the *Metwali* as "heterodox Mohamedeans," who refer to themselves as orthodox Ottoman subjects he, nevertheless, believed them to be one of the *Shi'a* sects of *'Ali*. David Urquhart (1805-1877), on the other hand, observed that they practiced a strange religion and would not eat with Christians or Muslims, which distinguished the group as being different from the *A'mili Shi'a* based on race. The Belgian Jesuit Orientalist historian Henry Lammens (1862-1937) probably expressed the process of identity attribution in the clearest way. The objective of the dispersion and redistribution of objects, according to statements by Lammens, was the segregation of immemorially existent confessional communities by origins.

Lammens noted that the spoken Arabic of the *Metwali* in Lebanon sounded like Persian or Kurdish but connecting them to Persian and Kurdish origins represented a break with the continuity of origins in the narrative of the *A'mili Shi'a* which attributes their ancestry to the third century B.C migration of Yemenite tribes to the Galilee. While at Saint Joseph University in Beirut Lammens dealt with the controversial question of how to best situate the origins of the *Metwali* by regrouping the relations between the *A'mili Shi'a* and the *Metwali* to refute theories that relate *Metwali* racial differences to Persian, Kurdish or Jewish origins and instead argues that Yemenite migrants to the Galilee in the third century B.C. were also the ancestors of the *Metwali*.³³

The discourse of origin produced by European diplomats and historians viewed identity as an organic object existing in the state of nature that was carried through history, rather than correlating it with any government regulation of the identity of its subjects.

33 Weiss, *In the Shadow of Sectarianism Law*, pp. 46-49.

It is quite difficult to pin down the origins of the *Metwali* but it is not only possible to pinpoint the transformation of this identity by regulations institutionalized during the Ottoman Empire into those institutionalized by the government of Lebanon since it is also possible to pin the material relational connection made to this identity from the historiography of the Arab Conquest.

The 1864 *Règlement Organique*³⁴ was an attempt to reorganize the *Milla* of the Ottoman Empire into an administrative council that ruled over the *Mutsarafiya* of Mount Lebanon. What is evident in the categorization made of the subjects of the *Mutsarafiya* in the *Règlement Organique* is that the only group not classified in confessional terms was the *Metwali*. *Metwali* as a racial characteristic and race played a fundamental role in the process of discrimination and resistance during the early stages of Arab imperialism.

With the exception of the Abbasside Caliphate until *Ma'moun*, Islamic imperial orders, throughout its Arab and non-Arab governments, discriminated against Aramean and Jewish converts who were colloquially called *Metwali* and paid taxes on the produce of their land under the Caliphate of Omar. They received harsh treatment by the Umayyad *Al-Hajaj Ibn Yousef* who demanded that they pay *jiziya*, a tax imposed on Christians and Jews if they moved to the cities. These discriminatory practices caused them to be attracted to the opposition camp of the Umayyads who demonstrated affinity with the North Arabian Hashemites who adopted the teachings of *Abu Hanifa al Numaan*, a *Muwali* from *Kufa*. In the same camp were Southern Arabian Yemenites who followed the teachings of *Zayd Ibn 'Ali and Zaydiyyah Shi'a* both of whom were categorized as Arabs and held positions within the Umayyad government. In addition to this the Hashemites included and were supported by *Shi'a* Arabs who were also also Hashemites.³⁵

It thus appears that the *Metwali* were not the *Shi'a*. The *Metwali* were associated with *Mu'tazelah*, which was a philosophy developed by prominent *Muwalies* in Basra³⁶ and Damascus.³⁷ The adherents of *Mu'tazelah* formed the core of the intellectuals who were translating

34 Khalaf, *Civil and Uncivil Violence in Lebanon*, pp. 278-280.

35 Tucker, *Mahdis and Millenarians*, pp. 4-5, 128-129

36 Abou al-Hassan al-Basari.

37 Ghailan al-Demashqi.

Greek and Persian philosophy which started the process of the linguistic assimilation of Syria and Iraq. This process was initiated by the Umayyad *ʿAbdul al Malek* and continued until the Abbasside *Maʿmoun*. The *Mamoun* followed their philosophical teachings and this led to a controversial polarization led by *Iben Hanbal*, an Arab traditionalist which was due to *Muʿtazelah*'s philosophical belief that the Quran was created by men rather than it being the words of God that inspired Mohamed, thus giving it a material rather than a divine character. The word *Muʿtazelah* means isolation and is derived from the belief in a divine command given to Abraham to detach his faith from religious conflict. Consequently, they detached themselves from the North Arabians' schism over the legitimacy of power and advocated no loyalty to *ʿAli* as did the "takfiri" *Khawarij* on different grounds. *Muʿtazelah* influence can be seen in the *Shiʿa* theology of the *Zaydiyyah* in Yemen who supported violent resistance against the Umayyad usurpation of power as a matter of right. The *Zaydiyyah* accepted the legitimacy of any ruler if this was achieved by a consensus that made it possible for them to recognize the legitimacy of the four Caliphs and reject the legitimacy of the Umayyads. The *Muʿtazelah* philosophy disagreed with *Jaʿfari* over the issue of *taqia*, which was the practice of non-engagement in any violent resistance against the Umayyads following the death of *Al Hossein* in *Karbalaʿ*. *Muʿtazelah* did, however, believe in free will and violent resistance in opposition to the Umayyad supported *marjeʿa* doctrine of determinism which was somehow endorsed within the *Jaʿfari taqia*. There was no philosophical affinity between the *Metwali* and the *Muʿtazelah* doctrine of free will or the North Arabian *Jaʿfari* endorsement of *marjeʿa*, although non-engagement is a concept incorporated in *taqia*'s determinism. The *Metwali* were not only denied the right to participate in government, which was an exclusive right given to Arabs, but were also considered to be heretics and were consequently not recognized as Muslims by radical Sunni orders starting with *Salahudin al-Ayoubi*.³⁸

38 Abdul Jawad Yassin, *al-Sulta Fi al-Islam: Naqd al-Nazariyah al-Syiassiah* (Beirut: al-Tanouir, 2012), p. 175; Nasr Hamed Abou Zaid, *al-Itijah al-ʿAkli fi al-Tafsir ʿend al-Muʿtazelah* (Beirut: Dar al-Tanwir lil Tibaʿa wal-Nasher, 1983), pp. 18-25, 28-32; Philip K. Hitti, *Syria: a Short History* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), pp. 113, 115; 129-130; Knut S. Vicor, *Between God and the Sultan, A History of Islamic Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 95.

The production of the discourse about recruitment into the Twelver *Shi'a* militancy started during the late nineteenth century in Iran and reached its climax with the Iranian Revolution. The seminal production of the era is a text attributed to *Ali* entitled *Mafatih el Jinnan* which was translated into Arabic in 1982 and is associated with a set of *Hadith* that claimed to be the words of the Twelve Imams that has produced knowledge which complements the Lebanese government's confessional regulation. After Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 the Iranian Twelver *Shi'a* discourse that regulated sectarian identities in the Arab conflict over power started penetrating *Ja'fari Shi'a* theology in Lebanon. It is at this point in history that the Twelver *Shi'a* doctrine is mobilized horizontally by *Khomeini's* doctrine of *Wilayat al-Faqih*³⁹ and takes over from *Ja'fari Shi'a's* vertical resistance to the confessional system of government mobilized by *Musa el Sadr* by taking advantage of his disappearance to fill the theological vacuum.

The coherence of the Twelver *Shi'a's* construction of there being continuity between the *Ja'fari* and the Twelver *Shi'a* doctrines is shattered by the historiography as exemplified by a text written by *el-Sharastani* (d. 1154 A.D.) which describes sects of Islam during the early eleventh century and identifies discontinuity and incoherence between the *Ja'fari* and the Twelver *Shi'a*. This schism erupted when *Ja'afar al-Sadiq* died and led to the birth of several sects within the *Shi'a* tradition. The first of these was the *Ja'fari sect* which halted the continuation of the concept of the Imamate due to the fact that *Ja'far's* oldest son *Ismail* died before him. A schism erupted between the followers of his deceased first son *Ismail* and the followers of his living son *Musa* in which the followers of *Ismail* gave the Imamate to *Ismail* whom they considered to be a hidden Imam and counted his son *Mohamed* to be the seventh Imam thus establishing the *Ismaili* sect. The Twelver *Shi'a* gave the position of Imam to *Ja'far's* son *Musa* and continued counting until the death of the Twelfth Imam, who was also considered to be hidden, in the ninth century.⁴⁰ What is

39 Hamid Algar (trans.), *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini* (Berkeley: Mizan Press Contemporary Islamic Thought, Persian Series, 1981), pp. 47-100.

40 Abi al-Fath al-Shahrastani (d. 548 H, 1154 A.D.), *al-Millal wal-Nihal* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'lmiyah, 1992), pp. 38-40, 144-145, 166-167, 177-176, 199-200.

significant in the process of rationalization used by the *Ismaili* and the *Ja'fari Shi'a* as described by *el-Shahrastani* is that the concept of the Imamate originates from Jewish tradition and emulates the biblical practice of designating priests from the Levites, whereas the *Kohanim* consisted strictly of descendents of Aaron and not even Moses, even if these were brothers. This might indicate that both sects, the *Ja'faris*, who stopped counting imams, and the *Ismailis*, who continued to do this through the first son, were influenced by Jewish converts with whom they were speaking at this point in history.

The *Ja'faris* attracted *Metwali* followers in Lebanon and Syria after the persecution of the *Mu'tazelah*. Consequently, one can say that the theological school of the *Ja'fari* courts that were recognized by the French Mandate and the institutional framework of its constitution as well as the framework of opposition produced by the entry of the *Musa al Sadr*, cannot be considered as evidence of continuity except according to Iranian Twelver *Shi'a* theology. This division reveals an institutionally antagonistic division that manifested itself inside Lebanon in the split that took place between the followers of the Lebanese secular *Shi'a* religious *marja'* *Sayyed Mohamed Hossein Fadlallah* and the followers of the Iranian *marja'* *Ayatollah Khamenii*.⁴¹

Within the regulated field of the discourse of the Twelver *Shi'a* one begins to find statements about the regulation of the *Shi'a* which attest to this strategy being a form of historical intelligence used to construct continuity for what are essentially discursive divisions. Objects of relational connections which become formulations for their being continuity between the *Metwali* and the Twelver *Shi'a* are dispersed in vernacular Arabic by the clergy in the *Hossainiya*. Then, by correlating them with religious texts and audio and video messages they take on the task of reworking and regrouping the connections made by these statements to the discursive formation of *Metwali*. The Twelver *Shi'a* discourse about the regulation of a militant identity is produced by Iranian theology which takes the

41 Hussein Dakroub, "Lebanon's Shiite Muslims Split on Feast Ending Fasting Month of Ramadan," *World Wide Religious News*, 5 December 2002, <https://wwrn.org/articles/7913/?amp;place=jordan-leb-syria> (accessed: September 10, 2017); "MESS Report/ The Late Ayatollah Fadlallah was an Islamist Cleric Unlike any Other," *Haaretz*, 5 July 2010, <http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/mess-report/mess-report-the-late-ayatollah-fadlallah-was-an-islamist-cleric-unlike-any-other-1.300185> (accessed: September 21, 2017).

Iranian Revolution and the knowledge production based on this as its constituent foundation.

Sunni, on the other hand, as the discourse of regulation that emanates from the Turkish-Arab *Sunni* theology, is used and repeated on militant *Sunni* posts in social media and takes the Ottoman Empire as its constituent point of mobilization. It constructs its target of mobilization from its historical conflict with the Safavid Empire and then reproduces knowledge to target the Safavid *Shi'a*. It correlates *Salahudin al-Ayoubi* and associated knowledge products that also target the way Christians view the Crusades, the way the Alawites view *Nusairiyah* and the *Mu'tazelah* belief that the Koran was created through an association with *Ma'moun*, the son of a Persian woman. This field of regulation then delves into the multiple identities that are opposed in the discourse of *Iben Taiymeiyah*, whose strategy is the re-working of the conflict by recruiting the regulated *Sunni* identity into the confessional conflict between the regulated *Sunni* identity which targets the Twelver *Shi'a* identity recruited by Iran and other minorities. References to statements in discourse, unlike propositions, need not be verified to be true or false since a proposition must refer to an existing object while a statement can make reference to a non-existing object which is its correlative referent. The current production of these fields of regulation is not bound by the historical existence of either the Safavid or the Ottoman imperial orders. A statement is bound by the material reality that produced it and this cannot, in fact, be replicated even within the same material conditions since this would make it into another statement bound by its new moment of production and space of regulation.

The *Sunni* and *Shi'a* discursive division cannot be analyzed by assuming a value of truth for the proposition that there is a progression of historical confessional conflict between materially existing groups of people. Confessional identities that involve militancy are produced and mobilized by systems of regulation within confessional centers of power. This was attested to in the peace talks held to resolve the Syrian conflict that took place in Astana, Kazakhstan in September 2017 in which Turkey, Iran and Russia became the guarantors for

upholding the peace within de-escalation zones⁴² which included the warring militants who were mobilizing confessional militancy. Russia as a center of power supports Assad but underneath this support is the existence of multiple hidden identities beneath the domains of the horizontal sectarian struggle being mobilized by centers of power and, within these hidden minorities, one can observe vertical struggles of resistance to confessional regulation.

Analysis of the struggle against confessionalism in Lebanon

When one begins to work with the identified discursive division *Metwali-Shi'a*, the process of data classification of statements collected from multiple sites starts with identifying material relations made by statements within a regulated field of discourse. Such identification does not look for the agency of the speaking subject, its associated narrative of origin and identity, or its intentions.⁴³ It looks instead for activities of resistance to the system of regulation at the points of the manifestation of power in a violent sense. It pinpoints oppositions by identifying the antagonism of strategies employed by two groups in a relation of force and then classifies statements according to the target of the statements. A statement cannot be defined either within the domain of the formal *la langue* or within the vernacular *le langage* because a statement is not a unit of analysis, since statements are classified by the material objects of relations, and are evaluated either as "individualizable groups of statements," or as "regulated practices that account for a certain number of statements."⁴⁴

Statements that make confessionalism their object of relations are themselves related. They are also related to regulated practices that make the target of exclusion opposite to confessionalism. The aim of this analysis is to prove the falsehood of explanations made about

42 "Russian, Iranian, Turkish Forces to Control Idlib's de-Escalation Zone," *Kazinform, International News Agency*, 15 September 2017, http://www.inform.kz/en/russian-iranian-turkish-forces-to-control-idlib-s-de-escalation-zone_a3065182 (accessed: September 18, 2017).

43 Harold Lasswell, "The Technique of Symbol Analysis (Content Analysis)," pp. 99-111, in Roberto Fransozi (ed.), *Content Analysis*, Vol. 1 (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, Singapore: Sage, 2008), pp. 90-100.

44 Foucault, *Archeology*, pp. 79-80.

the *Shi'a* "identity crisis," which is itself a hypothesis that operates from within a proposition that says that structural functional modality predefines struggles through the use of the economic marginalization of a coherent material identity constructed by the system of regulation.⁴⁵ This process makes the analysis of hidden identities possible and allows them to oppose and struggle against the coherence of the system of regulation in order to achieve the objective of de-functionalizing the coherence of the regulated identity. The claim is being made that a vertical binary opposition operating beneath the central system of regulation exists. This counter system of formation has been observed in statements of opposition to confessionalism that proliferated around the riots on August 23rd 2017. The material relation of the force used to separate between the regulation of the *Metwali* identity and the government's confessional regulation can also be seen in the prohibitions and exclusionist mechanisms being used to prevent anti-confessionalism from coming into being in the field of statements that are made within a regulated field of discourse. Three types of prohibitions have been investigated that cover 1. Objects; 2. rituals with their surrounding circumstances; and 3. the right to speak of a particular subject.⁴⁶ By identifying the multiple positions of opposition adopted at the points of exclusion one can identify the struggling system of formation.

The *Metwali* correlated with anti-confessionalism

Statements of opposition to confessionalism proliferating around the riots by the *Metwali* rap music of *Al Touffar*, (meaning the outlaws) in Baalbek, which were posted on YouTube, are related to all the statements that make the confessionalism of the system their material market. The anti-confessionalism of the lyrics deconstructs the coherence of the confessional identities and makes the relations to discontinuous historical systems of regulation material. *Ja'afar al Touffar* in his song *Hakawmat* relates to the historical material existences of regulation that delineate the identity crisis and thus separates himself and his community from identifying with the

⁴⁵ Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony*, p. 18.

⁴⁶ Foucault, *Archeology*, p. 216.

central confessional identity of any of these systems of regulation. He sings, "History is not made by God but was made by people [...], they made us forget that prior to Israel's occupation, they occupied us." While he speaks of systems of regulated identities by historical imperial orders that imposed the regulation of identity, he is not resisting the system from within the paradigm of an economically marginalized *Shi'a* subject of regulation and positions himself as an outlaw outside the system of regulation. *Nasser Deen al Touffar* in his song *Allah* makes the statement "*Allah* does not have a party or a *Salaf* movement [...], *Allah* has rights even if he has no rockets." He separates himself from Hezbollah's discourse of regulation more than speaking from within the coherence of the confessional regulation of identity.⁴⁷

Anti-confessionalism takes the object of its relations - the *Metwali* as its target for dispersing the coherence in the discourse about the confessional regulation of identity. It reveals that the Twelver *Shi'a* confessional identity is not an accurate representative of the social body it claims to represent politically and militarily inside Lebanon because of the conflict in identity. The *Metwali*, within the boundaries of the material existence it had during the French Mandate correlates and coexists with an existence that is expressed in the lyrics of rap music and performed in concerts in the vernacular. Proverbs and tales told by the lay people then complement it and in one example of this, the proverb "*Matawelah* changes a hundred sides to prevent a loss", still exists in the vernacular and coexists within the field of material relations.⁴⁸ These statements function in the role of de-functionalizing the coherence of the narrative of the Twelver *Shi'a* and its capacity to enunciate a material existence between the Twelver *Shi'a* and the *Metwali* and separate the *Metwali* from the Twelver *Shi'a*'s field of identity that has been regulated by the centers of power.

The divisions that can be seen in the *E'id* holiday between the secular *Shi'a* followers of *Fadlallah* and the religious-political *Shi'a*

47 See for example Nasser Deen al-Touffar, "Allah," *YouTube*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qd9GjIjsz4>; and Ja'afar al-Touffar, "Hawawmat" *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R03iWmCrH_8 (accessed: September 19, 2017).

48 *Ento le mtawleh meet albeh w wallah ghalbeh*.

followers of *Khamenii* are also related to anti confessionalism. In 2017 Iran, Turkey, and Syria together with the Higher *Shi'a* Council, in conformity with the *Sunni Dar al-Fatwa*, declared that *E'id* on June 24th would be based on the traditional method of moon sighting. *Fadlallah's* office then announced that the celebration of *E'id* would be on June 25th, based on astronomical calculations.⁴⁹ The difference here is an expression of the practices that are being used to delineate a separation between modernist secular Lebanese *Shi'a* in opposition to the practices of Iranian Islamic traditionalism. They amount to being regulated practices that correlate, coexist, and speak to the *Metwali* in the space in which they create their material relations with history and identity and this is expressed in the lyrics of the rappers of *al Touffar*.

The Excluded Subject

Instead of the people demanding that the existing system of government resolve the garbage crisis they took part in riots which revealed a violent and massive targeting of the confessional system. A *New York Times* article observed that “[w]hat began as complaints about the government’s inability to clean the city’s streets has escalated to calls for a sweeping overhaul of the country’s sectarian-based political system.”⁵⁰

YouTube clips that proliferated around the event show the resentment expressed towards the confessional system and the sarcasm of its participants.⁵¹ According to the dialect being used and the appearance of most of the protesters observers claimed that the majority of the protestors initiating the riots were *Shi'a* youth coming from the suburbs of the city.

49 “Eid el-Firt to Begin June 25: Fadlallah Office,” *The Daily Star*, 19 June 2017, <https://www.pressreader.com/lebanon/the-daily-star-lebanon/20170619/281573765688605> (accessed: September 19, 2017).

50 Ann Barnard and Hwuaida Saad, “Government and Protesters in Lebanon Weigh Next Move in Trash Dispute,” *The New York Times*, 24 August 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/25/world/middleeast/protests-in-beirut-over-uncollected-garbage-turn-violent.html?mcubz=3> (accessed: September 19, 2017).

51 See Bou Nasser al-Touffar “Nehna wal-Zebel Jiran,” *YouTube*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uTdlfAkwpJ0>; and al-Rahel al-Kabir, “Kellon Ya3ni Kellon,” *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3StogLz_ZU; and “The Great Departed - Madad Baghdadi,” *YouTube*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKaE8-faPRI&list=RDCKaE8-faPRI&t=44> (accessed: September 19, 2017).

Following the riots, a process of abjection proliferated in the media stories and Facebook pages of the civil society movements that targeted the identity of the rioters and referred to them as *mundass* meaning intruders.⁵² Their dialect and “tattoos” were mocked and accusations were made that included labeling the rioters and protesters as if being sectarian thugs mobilized by the *Amal* Movement while disregarding the obvious statements that were targeting confessionalism.⁵³ The object of this exclusionist behavior was to target the statements made according to the perceived subjective identity of the rioters who made them. Anti-confessionalism within the ritual of mass demonstrations is the target for exclusion as seen by the fact that it excludes the hidden subject of the *Metwali* and the regulated subject of the secular *Shi’a* and denies their right to speak about the subject of abolishing confessionalism in mass demonstrations. Because of the targeting of the identity of the protesters and rioters the bulk of the protesters became alienated from the idea of being included in the concept of civil society. Being told that “You Stink” made public statements that called for the exclusion of the rioters from civil society movements as though they were 53 but intruders into the public cause.⁵⁴

Analyses of the mass mobilization of August 23rd 2015 look at the agencies of “You Stink” and the event of the garbage crises as units for analysis that work with a proposition inferred from a correlation made between the agency and the masses which had the effect of producing a mobilization in the interest of the public good.⁵⁵ This kind of analysis cannot explain the failure of the same agency

52 “Bel Souar: Mouwjahat bayn al-Qewa al-Amniya wa Mutazahereen: Tel’et Reihetkom to len Insehabaha Men al-Share’ al-Youm,” *al-Nahar*, 23 August 2016, <https://www.annahar.com/article/261524-> (accessed: September 22, 2017).

53 Anna Maria Luca, “Man Houm al-Moundassoun fi Tazahorat tel’et reihetkom” *Now Lebanon*, 28 August 2008, <https://now.mmedia.me> (accessed: September 22, 2017).

54 Hwuaida Saad, “Clashes Break Out during Protests over Trash Crisis in Lebanon,” *The New York Times*, 23 August 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/24/world/middleeast/lebanese-protest-as-trash-piles-up-in-beirut.html> (Accessed on 19 September 2017).

55 Mark Attallah and Scott Fletcher, “Lebanese Garbage Crisis,” *Participedia*, 19 December 2016, <http://participedia.net/en/cases/lebanese-garbage-crisis> (accessed: September 19, 2017); Sami Nader, “Why Lebanon’s ‘You Stink’ Movement Lost Momentum,” *al-Monitor*, 23 October 2015, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/10/lebanon-civil-movement-protests-violence.html#ixzz4t83zWGNy> (accessed: September 19, 2017).

to mobilize masses of people following the riots to make political demands, including the call by “You Stink” made in May-June 2017 to target the new electoral law. This may suggest that the *Amal* Movement is the sole agency mobilizing en mass, which is a gross oversimplification. It is more plausible to suggest that young people came to the demonstrations on their own in response to the call to express the agenda of their own frustration with the confessional political system of government. The failure of “You Stink” to mobilize people after the riot was due to the process of excluding *mundass* that proliferated in the media following the riots.

The discursive formation that enunciated the modality of mass action was anti- confessionalism but it is the material relations made by the multiple subjectivities about the confessional system that are at work in the process of the mobilization of mass action and not the agency of “You Stink”. Among these masses were the *Metwali* and the secular *Shi’a* who were excluded from participating in the system of confessional regulation by both the government and the Twelver *Shi’a* Hezbollah. The garbage crisis was the event that ignited action after action and produced a counter modality that worked from within its own system of formation.

The Establishment’s action in response to the riots

Vertical resistance to the establishment has motivated establishment public officials to organize new “anti-establishment” political parties. The two major parties’ that were aggressively recruiting youth targeted the containment of the rioters’ demands, by presenting alternatives in order to save the system of regulating confessional identities since both parties have a stake in sustaining the National Pact of 1943. “*Sabaa*” is a newly organized party that is targeting the establishment and an article published by *Al-Monitor* named public official Ziad Hayek, the Secretary General of the Higher Council for Privatization of the Republic of Lebanon, (created in 2000 under the leadership of Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri).⁵⁶ as the Director of the Board of the party. The party does not demand the abolition of the confessional system of government but proposes the building

⁵⁶ Higher Council for Privatization, <http://neovision.me/hcpgovlb/> (accessed: July 10, 2017).

of a multi-confessional party system whose objective would be to change the agency of the existing confessional leadership and would be geared to operate within the confessional system of identity regulation. Its platform for reform is the privatization of the public services sector and job creation and it rejects the interference of both Saudi Arabia and Iran in domestic decision making within Lebanon. The targets of the recruitment statements are the excluded *Metwali* and secular *Shi'a* which demonstrate animosity towards the Arabs and the alienation of Hezbollah. The second major party is "Citizens in a State" which demands the introduction of a civic state constitution in what it identifies as "primordial" multi confessional communities. It is silent about the implementation of article 95 of the Constitution or the abolishment of the National Pact of 1943. The party is led by Charbel Nahas who was a member of President Michel Aoun's Change and Reform ministry. Between 1986 and 1998 Nahas worked in the banking sector and was also involved in the post-war modernization of the Lebanese banking sector.⁵⁷ The organization by establishment officials of "anti-establishment" political parties has come in response to, and in order to, contain resistance that might emerge from the *Metwali* and the secular *Shi'a* who have been excluded by the government confessional system and the recruitment of Hezbollah. The objective of statements made by the two major "anti-establishment" political parties has been to save the system of the regulation of confessional identities with the object of guaranteeing its survival.

Conclusion

This analysis has sought possibilities for positioning units collected from multiple sites within possible subjective positions by placing them into the material domain of coordination and coexistence within the local space in which they are used and repeated. The aim has been to de-functionalize the coherence of the construction of the Twelver *Shi'a* identity of regulation in order to prove the falsehood of the explanation of a struggle founded on the economic marginalization of a coherent Twelver *Shi'a* confessional identity.

57 Charbel Nahas https://charbelnahas.org/?page_id=82 (accessed September 21, 2017).

Structural, functional and constructivist explanations are used to legitimize the confessional system of government in Lebanon. The Twelver *Shi'a* identity is presented as being representative of a coherent material group of people to justify the legitimacy of consociation confessional democracy.

The existence of a discursive division between the *Metwali* and the Twelver *Shi'a* over historical depth and cultural practices has been identified. The *Metwali* have been the object of a group of statements made about the material relations of a group of people in a vertical relation of struggle against the government's confessional regulation of identity. This regulation has been reinforced by a group of statements whose object is the relations of the Twelver *Shi'a* and the point of resistance is pinpointed as falling between two systems of regulation. A system enunciating an existence produced by statements orally expressed by the clergy in the vernacular at *Hosseiniyah* and produced in religious texts is being opposed by a system of resistance observed in statements spoken in the vernacular and through cultural activities and practices and this system of opposition leads to the need to analyze concealed identities. These revealed identities fulfill the function of de-functionalizing the coherence of the discourse about the confessional regulation of identity. The introduction of hidden identities into the analysis has made the process of constructing coherence abstract and one can observe the dysfunctional mechanisms within the government's regulation of identities. Correlations with this can also be established with the dysfunctional Lebanese system of government.

The confessional recruitment mobilized into the Syrian conflict is a horizontal war effort whose centers are in Iran and Turkey and whose aim is to secure sovereignty over territory. Hezbollah in this analysis cannot be situated as a force of resistance since it exists and operates within a horizontal struggle operated by centers of power and survives because of the confessional system of regulation. The discursive division *Metwali-Shi'a* is correlated to the split in the institutional regulation of the Lebanese secular *Shi'a* identity advocated by *Fadlallah's* modernisms which oppose the Iranian confessional and political Twelver *Shi'a* traditionalism. Material

relations perceived in the *Metwali* are not only observed in cultural practices like video clips posted by *al Touffar*, the outlaws of Baalbek, but are also passed on orally in proverbs that have been preserved in the depth of time.

The Metwali is an object of relations within a field of material objects that has the capacity to enunciate a coherent modality from below. This object has been observed by identifying the processes of the abjection of *mundass* from the civil society within the ritual of mass demonstrations that took place in response to the call of the civil society movement "You Stink" for action. The point of exclusion is pinpointed at the target of mobilization and the subjective identity of the *mundass* while the target of exclusion is the secular demand by the *Shi'a* and *Metwali* to abolish the confessional system within the ritual of mass demonstrations. The target of the secular *Shi'as* and the *Metwalis* mobilization was in conflict with the target of statements made by the civil society movement "You Stink" which wanted the privatization of public services sector by public officials to operate from within the system of government.

The abjection of the *Metwali* existed prior to the confessional system of government and continued to operate in cultural practices, mechanisms and regulations of exclusion. Abjection is not limited to civil society movements that demand public sector reform like "You Stink" and has been particularly observed as existing in the exclusive membership in Hezbollah's militancy of the followers of the doctrine of *Ayatollah Khomeini's Wilayat al-Faqih*. This exclusionary process of recruitment does not represent any change from the practices of the *Metwali* alienation that existed under the Umayyads and *Salahudin al-Ayoubi*. What has changed is the institutional identity of the center of power, which has redistributed mechanisms of exclusion by dispersing the administrative identity of the *Metwali* and regulating it within the excluded administratively established identity of *Shi'a*. While the regulation of the *Shi'as* following the independence of Lebanon does not operate in the time and space that governs the material relations between *al-Hosseini*, the *Shi'a*, and the Umayyads, Hezbollah's recruitment has been geared to militarily sustaining the confessional system existing in Lebanon at a time and

space regulated by the Lebanese confessional system of government and its alliance with Iran.

The analysis of binary oppositions by bridging cultural practices expressed in the vernacular that cut across formal regulations of identity identifies the existence of a hidden field of discourse. Innis locates the margins of the above as localities within the circulation of power due to the durability of time-biased forms of communication that have been preserved in stone. The material significance of the archeological findings in the locality of Baalbek prevents the discursive formation of the regulation of the Twelver *Shi'a* from building coherence because it has a material relation to identity and de-functionalizes the coherence of the narrative of regulation by its very existence. The identification of such hidden fields is important for our understanding of the underlying processes of the dispersion and redistribution of power that are taking shape in the shadows of the conflicts in Syria and Iraq.

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