Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Lebanon and Yemen

by

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To friends, family, and advisors, all of whom listened to me complain about my dissertation, but who forgave me anyway.

To the many brave Lebanese and Yemenis dedicated to making their countries better places to live for everyone. Keep going: your job is more important than mine.

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Chapter 1

Introduction:
Diversity and Development or Fragmentation and Failure?

1.1 Introduction

Why are so many ethnically diverse societies poor? On average, ethnically heterogeneous societies lag behind their more homogeneous counterparts on many measures of economic development, social well-being, and state breakdown. Numerous cross-national studies have found evidence of a negative association between ethnic diversity and a number of development outcomes, including slow economic growth, the under-provision of productive public goods and government services, the relatively poor quality of the public investments and services that are provided, bloated and inefficient civil services, swelling budget deficits and government debt, corruption and rent-seeking, political instability and civil war—the list goes on. And yet, for all the basket cases, there are also success stories of ethnically plural countries that have managed to avoid the poverty traps in which many of their peers languish. What accounts for this variation in outcomes? Does ethnic diversity *cause* economic underdevelopment, and if so, *how*?

Despite growing interest in the development hurdles faced by plural societies among both scholars and policy practitioners, we have only a limited understanding of how diversity impedes development, as well as the conditions under which it does so. Many of the accounts we have for the empirical regularities we observe more closely approximate narratives than explanations, citing ethnic tensions, loyalties, and

solidarities to account for political instability and civil war, patronage politics, poorly-performing bureaucracies, corruption, and other undesirable outcomes. Yet doing so merely labels what should be explained: why are these tensions, loyalties, and solidarities ethnic in origin? What makes them qualitatively different from, and implicitly more destructive than, their non-ethnic counterparts? Perhaps most importantly, *under what conditions* do they arise and become detrimental to development—when do we get basket cases, and when do we get success stories?

These empirical regularities, and the questions they beg, are the motivating observations and ideas that inspire this dissertation. The questions surrounding development in diverse societies are large, multifaceted, and have potentially sweeping implications, but the work contained herein is more modest in scope. My focus is on a set of smaller, more discrete questions on ethnic politics and institutions, which fit into a broader, on-going research agenda on diversity and development. I present this dissertation not on the more traditional narrative model, but rather in the three-article format, with a series of essays that develop ideas about several relatively self-contained ideas that nonetheless contribute to a more nuanced understanding of ethnicity and institutions and, hopefully, with implications for subsequent work on development in diverse societies.

The three essays I present take up some of the ramifications of ethnic political coordination according to different institutional incentives and aspirations. The first two essays concern themselves with attitudes toward and preferences over different elements of democratic and autocratic governance in diverse societies where institutional configurations themselves are frequently the loci of political contestation. The first essay, a study conducted in Lebanon and utilizing original survey data, addresses attitudes toward the extension of the franchise to marginalized groups—specifically, illiterate people—when who has the right to vote has normative, ethnic (sectarian), and distributional consequences. The second study, again conducted in Lebanon and

utilizing the same survey data, seeks to disentangle the competing and arguably diverging influences of religion—one as a nominal marker of ethnic group boundaries, and the other as a set of behavioral prescriptions and potentially shared ideals—on preferences over a varied set of autocratic institutional options. The final essay moves away from preferences over institutions themselves, and begins to examine the influence of specific institutional incentives on competition *within* rather than between ethnic communities, and some of the distributional consequences that result from the strength of this competition. This study, conducted in Lebanon and Yemen and relying primarily on original survey data collected in both countries, compares the competitive dynamics within the different sectarian communities as influenced by the different institutions used in Lebanon and Yemen.

Lebanon and Yemen serve as the two primary research venues and the sources of rich empirical data used in the three essays in this dissertation. Lebanon and Yemen are two Arab countries within which ethnic cleavages (specifically, sectarian, tribal, and regional)[1] are salient, but which use markedly different government institutions to channel them. Lebanon formally (if imperfectly) incorporates its ethnic categories into its system of government by using a quota system and other consociational principles. Yemen, meanwhile, functions on a plurality system and explicitly forbids partisan and political activity on the basis of ethnic categories in pursuit of an idealized vision of national unity. For several basic processes related to ethnic coordination, the key political actors and groups within the two countries behave in similar ways, yet the two countries differ in the institutions they use to channel these cleavages, and these differences enable me to assess how qualitatively similar ethnic processes can yield different outcomes given different government institutions.

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[1]Following the precedent set by Horowitz (1985) and subsequent scholars, I treat ethnic groups as a broad category of social categories, membership in which is defined by ascriptive descent (or descent-like) rules. Hence, sectarian, tribal, and regional affiliations are particular instances of this broader set of ethnic groups. Yet see critiques of this convention in Chandra (2006).

As I noted initially, development outcomes vary widely, not only between diverse and homogenous societies, but also among diverse countries themselves. The underlying argument I make is that variation in institutions helps explain this variation in outcomes. Cumulatively, then, these three essays help provide pieces to a larger puzzle connecting diversity to development and fragmentation to failure via the government institutions used to channel ethnicity into or away from politics and the political allocation of scarce resources. The essays each provide answers to smaller, more discrete questions. Yet they also represent the first step in a larger research agenda that seeks to understand the links between ethnic diversity and development outcomes.

The rest of this introductory chapter proceeds as follows. First, I present some suggestive cross-national evidence to help substantiate the empirical regularity of the negative link between ethnic diversity and development. Second, I review a sample of several lines of narrative seeking to account for this link, briefly discussing the underlying questions they ignore or otherwise leave unanswered. Third, I present a sketch of the theoretical framework which serves as the point of reference and departure for the three essays that provide the body of this dissertation. Finally, I preview the essays themselves to provide a preliminary overview of their themes and empirical findings.

1.2   The Ethnic Empirical Puzzle

A passing glance at countries around the world suggests that there is a puzzling disconnect between diversity and development, with diverse societies accounting for a large proportion of the state failures and growth tragedies that we observe. But is this because of, in spite of, or independent of the pluralism that characterizes these societies? Casual empiricism suggests a causal link, which sits comfortably next to the often unquestioned received wisdom that ethnic conflict is somehow more

destructive or detrimental to development than other kinds of conflict, a view that no doubt influenced the celebrated Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran when he wrote, "pity the nation divided into fragments, each fragment deeming itself a nation."[2] Pity the nation: this is a poet's lament, but is there a more prosaic truth contained within it? Is there, in fact, an ethnic effect, and if so, how does it work?

The Ethnic Effect in Search of an Explanation

As one of a number of plausible ways to give more substance to this empirical regularity, we can examine where various societies rank on the Failed States Index, prepared by the Fund for Peace,[3] according to a rough measure of how diverse they are.[4] Drawing on the 2006 index that ranks 146 states, Table 1.1 lists those countries placed in the worst- and best-performing categories, along with measures of diversity along eth-

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[2]A brief excerpt from Gibran's (1933, 14–15) *The Garden of the Prophet* reads:

> *Pity the nation that is full of beliefs and empty of religion.*
> *Pity the nation that wears a cloth it does not weave, eats a bread it does not harvest,*
>   *and drinks a wine that flows not from its own wine-press...*
> *Pity the nation whose statesman is a fox, whose philosopher is a juggler, and whose*
>   *art is the art of patching and mimicking...*
> *Pity the nation divided into fragments, each fragment deeming itself a nation.*

It takes very little effort to apply Gibran's passage to contemporary amoral ethnic-nationalist ideologies, foreign aid recipient states, and corrupt officials running such countries.

[3]The Failed States Index, initially calculated for 75 countries in 2005 and then expanded to 146 in 2006 and 177 in 2007, is prepared by the Fund for Peace and published in *Foreign Policy*. The index is a composite of 12 indicators, which measure among other things a legacy of vengeance and group grievances, uneven economic development along group lines, severe economic decline, and the deterioration of public services. In addition to their ordinal rankings, countries are classified in one of four categories from worst to best performers according to their composite scores. All data discussed here are from the 2006 index. Data and additional details are available at `http://www.fundforpeace.org/`.

[4]The data I use here come from Alesina et al. (2003), who report ethnic, linguistic, and religious fractionalization indices for most countries. The index, calculated as $1 - \sum p_i^2$, where p_i is group i's proportional share of the total population, measures the probability that any two randomly-selected individuals will be from different groups. The index ranges from 0 to 1, with more fractionalized societies asymptoting to 1. Although these indices are imperfect and suffer from a number of conceptual and measurement problems (Laitin and Posner 2001, Posner 2004), they do provide broad indications of magnitude, which is sufficient for the point I am illustrating here.

nic, linguistic, and religious dimensions. A cursory inspection of the list turns up a suggestive number of diverse societies, with several observations immediately presenting themselves. The three most extreme failures, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Côte d'Ivoire, are extremely heterogeneous African countries, whereas the three top performers, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, are homogeneous northern European countries. More broadly, among the 13 states that place in the category of best performers, *all* are OECD members, whereas among the 28 worst performers there are 15 African countries, 11 from Asia, and a handful of others.[5]

Because Table 1.1 reports more information than is easy to take in at a glance, Table 1.2 abstracts away from this detail and distills the information into a few key summary statistics that present the empirical regularity of interest in stark relief. In particular, Table 1.2 reports mean scores (and standard deviations) for each of the two categories, best performers and worst, on each of the diversity indicators, as well as the difference in means between the two groups. On both the ethnic and linguistic dimensions (but not religious), there is a substantively large and statistically significant difference between best and worst performers, with the latter notably more diverse than the former. Further, the differences remain large and significant when averaging across the three dimensions, and when considering only the most diverse dimension: worst performers are more diverse than best performers.[6]

Table 1.2 thus establishes an empirical regularity, and the takeaway point is this:

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[5]As members of the Arab League, Sudan and Somalia could alternately be classified with Yemen, Somalia's neighbor across the horn of Africa, and Iraq. Note, in passing, that the indices calculated in Alesina et al. (2003) (and most others) do not distinguish between different Muslim denominations (the most salient distinction being the Sunni-Shia split), meaning that religious diversity is dramatically underreported in Iraq and Yemen.

[6]Two-tailed difference-in-means tests (t-tests) assuming unequal variances: Ethnic $p < 0.001$, Language $p = 0.002$, Religion $p = 0.863$, Average $p = 0.006$, Maximum $p = 0.043$. The non-difference on the religious indicator may be an artifact of the coding scheme, in which the "Christian" category is subdivided into denominational families (thus raising the religious diversity score of the mostly Christian-dominant best performers) while other religious categories (e.g., "Muslim") are not subdivided in an analogous way, thus depressing the religious diversity score of the worst performers.

Table 1.1: Failed States Index and Diversity

Country	Failure	Ethnic	Language	Religion	Average	Maximum
Sudan	1	0.71	0.72	0.43	0.62	0.72
Congo, D.R.	2	0.87	0.87	0.70	0.82	0.87
Côte d'Ivoire	3	0.82	0.78	0.76	0.79	0.82
Iraq	4	0.37	0.37	0.48	0.41	0.48
Zimbabwe	5	0.39	0.45	0.74	0.52	0.74
Chad	6	0.86	0.86	0.64	0.79	0.86
Somalia	7	0.81	0.03	0.00	0.28	0.81
Haiti	8	0.10	(NA)	0.47	0.28	0.47
Pakistan	9	0.71	0.72	0.38	0.60	0.72
Afghanistan	10	0.77	0.61	0.27	0.55	0.77
Guinea	11	0.74	0.77	0.26	0.59	0.77
Liberia	12	0.91	0.90	0.49	0.77	0.91
CAR	13	0.83	0.83	0.79	0.82	0.83
North Korea	14	0.04	0.00	0.49	0.18	0.49
Burundi	15	0.30	0.30	0.52	0.37	0.52
Yemen	16	(NA)	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
Sierra Leone	17	0.82	0.76	0.54	0.71	0.82
Burma	18	0.51	0.51	0.20	0.40	0.51
Bangladesh	19	0.05	0.09	0.21	0.12	0.21
Nepal	20	0.66	0.72	0.14	0.51	0.72
Uganda	21	0.93	0.92	0.63	0.83	0.93
Nigeria	22	0.85	0.85	0.74	0.81	0.85
Uzbekistan	23	0.41	0.41	0.21	0.35	0.41
Rwanda	24	0.32	(NA)	0.51	0.42	0.51
Sri Lanka	25	0.42	0.46	0.49	0.45	0.49
Ethiopia	26	0.72	0.81	0.62	0.72	0.81
Colombia	27	0.60	0.02	0.15	0.26	0.60
Kyrgyzstan	28	0.68	0.59	0.45	0.57	0.68
Netherlands	134	0.11	0.51	0.72	0.45	0.72
Japan	135	0.01	0.02	0.54	0.19	0.54
Austria	136	0.11	0.15	0.41	0.22	0.41
Denmark	137	0.08	0.10	0.23	0.14	0.23
Belgium	138	0.56	0.54	0.21	0.44	0.56
Canada	139	0.71	0.58	0.70	0.66	0.71
Australia	140	0.09	0.33	0.82	0.42	0.82
New Zealand	141	0.40	0.17	0.81	0.46	0.81
Switzerland	142	0.53	0.54	0.61	0.56	0.61
Ireland	143	0.12	0.03	0.15	0.10	0.15
Finland	144	0.13	0.14	0.25	0.18	0.25
Sweden	145	0.06	0.20	0.23	0.16	0.23
Norway	146	0.06	0.07	0.20	0.11	0.20

Sources: Fund for Peace Failed States Index 2006 www.fundforpeace.org/
Diversity (fractionalization) data adapted from Alesina et al. (2003)

Table 1.2: Summary Differences Between Best and Worst Performers

	Ethnic		Language		Religion		Average		Maximum	
Best	0.23	(0.23)	0.26	(0.21)	0.45	(0.25)	0.31	(0.19)	0.48	(0.25)
Worst	0.60	(0.27)	0.55	(0.31)	0.44	(0.23)	0.52	(0.23)	0.65	(0.22)
Difference	**0.37**‡		**0.29**‡		−0.01		**0.21**‡		**0.17**†	

Group Average (Standard Deviation), $p \leq 0.01^{\ddagger}$, $p \leq 0.05^{\dagger}$

worst performers are more diverse than best performers, *on average*. It also, however, shows that there is meaningful variation within these broad categories. Another perusal of Table 1.1 reveals an additional aspect of the empirical puzzle: although there appears to be a negative relationship between diversity and performance, there are homogeneous basket cases as well as diverse success stories. In particular, amid their homogeneous peers among the best performers, there are several plural countries—Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, and Switzerland—whose diversity has not prevented them from developing.[7] The question, therefore, is not only why so many diverse societies perform so poorly, but also how some have managed to escape the poverty and failure traps in which so many of their peers languish.

Narrating the Ethnic Effect

Let us table, for the moment, the question of diverse success stories and focus instead on the basket cases. How do we explain these outcomes? Received wisdom suggests that poor performance in diverse societies is a product of that diversity. There are, in fact, a number of well-established tropes readily available to narrate this link, many of which cite some combination of ethnic tensions and group solidarities, primordial

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[7]Note that four of the five cases cited, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, were the exact cases analyzed in Lijphart's (1977) seminal study on consociational democracies, whereas the fifth case, Canada, also received treatment in the same study as a country that uses some elements of consociationalism. Although we should stop short of claiming causality, the fact that 5 of the 13 best performers are diverse, and that all 5 utilize consociational arrangments, appears too striking to be accidental.

animosities and ancient hatreds, strongly-felt loyalties that are in turn deeply-rooted in the psyche, and so on. Some are plausible, some are discredited, and some can be repackaged in less contentious language to enhance their credibility among scholarly audiences. We might consider such accounts convincing or we might consider them specious, but a more basic problem is that these tropes *narrate* but they do not *explain*.

In attempting to account for an ill-defined "ethnic effect," the bulk of these narratives proceed, in effect, by assuming an adjective. They commonly cite *ethnic* tensions and hatreds for political instability and civil war, *ethnic* loyalties and solidarities for patronage politics and misallocations of resources, and perhaps *strongly-felt* or *deeply-rooted* sentiments to account for the ethnic hatreds and solidarities. Notwithstanding these presumed strong and deep sentiments, however, such accounts do not tell us how or for what reasons the tensions and loyalties originate, nor why they must be *ethnic* tensions and loyalties to function the way they do. They do not tell us if ethnic dynamics are more destructive or otherwise qualitatively different than their non-ethnic counterparts. Citing an ethnic effect in this way merely labels what should be explained.

Attributing poor outcomes to a conceptually imprecise ethnic effect is more an indication of our own incomprehension of the processes at work than it is an explanation of those outcomes. This ambiguity in part reflects our uncertainties about how the processes of development themselves operate, making it more difficult to determine where and how diversity fits into the larger picture. Claiming that development is a function of diversity advances a directional effect, but not the functional form. It leaves unspecified the channels through which the ethnic effect operates, whether it is direct or indirect, and whether it is unconditional or contingent.

Given this ambiguity, we now have a range of narratives available to account for the ethnic effect, some of which simply repackage one or more of the tropes from

above, and others that attempt to clarify the channels and processes through which the effect influences development. Yet most of these narratives continue to suffer from a recurring set of problems. Those attempting to identify channels generally do so by examining how diversity impacts inputs to development outcomes. But this merely pushes the question one step back in the logical chain: it specifies a plausible path through which the ethnic effect influences development, but not the nature of the ethnic effect itself. Most narratives also leave unanswered the question of what makes ethnic processes qualitatively different from non-ethnic processes. This, in turn, leaves ambiguous whether the stories they narrate are about *ethnic* conflict, or about social conflict more generally. Finally, most attempts at explanation make the implicit assumption that the ethnic effect is unconditional and operates essentially the same way from society to society, regardless of the different institutional environments and incentive structures across countries. Yet this makes it difficult to account for both diverse failures and success stories simultaneously. To give more substance to these narrative shortcomings, let us briefly consider some prior attempts at explanation in slightly more detail.

Diversity increases political instability. One family of narratives posits that ethnic diversity, sometimes discussed in terms of polarization rather than fractionalization, increases political instability, which in turn reduces growth and slows development by lowering investment rates and increasing nonproductive public spending to appease or police competing groups (e.g., Annett 2001, Montalvo and Reynal-Querol 2005). A related strain on civil wars notes that grievance motivations ("ethnic hatreds") dominate public pronouncements but provide little explanatory leverage, whereas greed (capturing scarce resources) provides a much stronger account for war onset and duration. Ethnic links, in turn, help overcome collective action problems and provide cohesion in these greed coalitions (e.g., Collier 2000 and Collier and

Hoeffler 1998, but a dissenting view in Fearon and Laitin 2003).

Diversity inhibits the provision of public goods. Given that "ethnic hatreds" appears to provide little explanatory leverage, as well as the fact that there are far more instances of ethnic *peace* than of violent ethnic conflict (Fearon and Laitin 1996), an alternate approach focuses on differences in preferences on the use of common-pool resources. This narrative line posits that ethnic diversity inhibits the provision of productive public goods (more precisely, public investments and government services) such as roads and schools, both in terms of the quantity provided as well as the quality of these goods, and via this link slows growth and retards development (e.g., Easterly and Levine 1997, Kuijs 2000, La Porta et al. 1999). The basis of the quantity claim is that it becomes more difficult to reach agreement on the provision of such goods when there are increasingly heterogeneous preferences in society (e.g., Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly 1999). Hence, failure to agree on the type and quantity of such goods lowers the amount provided. The basis of the quality claim, less well-developed and expressed, appears to be that when such goods are provided, they are underfinanced and not subsequently maintained, resulting in poorer outcomes per unit of the good available.

Diversity provokes competition over public resources. Although framed as a discussion of public goods, the previous narrative in practice amounts to a discussion of publicly-provided goods, rival and excludable to different degrees, which are desirable as well as require scarce resources to provide. Hence, a related line of narrative postulates that diversity provokes competition, sometimes illicit, over public resources and the related benefits of modernity (Bates 1974). Ethnic competition over state resources (and the state itself) expands returns to nonproductive rent-seeking activities, provides greater scope for corruption, and privileges patronage expenditures, all of which lead to fiscally irresponsible policies, bloated government expenditures, and

large budget deficits (Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly 1999, Collier and Garg 1999, Ekeh 1975, Fearon 1999, Mauro 1995). All of these dynamics lead to a serious misallocation and dissipation of scarce resources on nonproductive activities, which in turn retards development.

Diversity impedes the rule of law. The emphasis on corruption and rent-seeking also relates to a related line of argument that diverse societies are less able to provide a legal and regulatory environment subject to the rule of law. Versions of this line of narrative suggest that patronage appointments, often coupled with underresourced and undermandated monitoring agencies, reduce bureaucratic efficiency as well as accountability. This, in turn, multiplies and complicates regulatory procedures, provides additional venues for corruption, and makes property rights insecure (Alesina 1998, Easterly and Levine 1997, Keefer and Knack 2002, Mauro 1995). All of this increases expenditures on nonproductive activities and lowers investment, both of which reduce growth and development.

Diversity reduces growth directly. In reality, explicit claims that diversity has a direct, unconditional effect on growth and development are rare. *Implicitly*, however, this claim is made all the time when scholars simply drop a measure of ethnic diversity into a regression equation. Doing so, moreover, makes strong implicit assumptions about the functional form of that relationship, transforming the general statement "growth is a function of diversity" into "growth is a linear-additive function of diversity with normally-distributed disturbances." This is not commonly what scholars wish to claim, but is in effect what they say mathematically when they include a diversity indicator in their regression equations on the logic that ethnic politics "matter" somehow.

To summarize, several families of narratives exist that link diversity, directly or indirectly, to poor development outcomes. The paths most often cited are via political instability, the underprovision of public goods and the poor quality of those goods that are provided, competition over public resources privileging nonproductive uses of resources for rent-seeking and patronage, a low premium on the rule of law, and even an implicit direct "ethnic effect" on development in general. Further, many of these paths are linked to one another, either explicitly or implicitly, in the various lines of argumentation.

Yet, with this proliferation of narratives and increasingly intricate web of links, it is difficult to adjudicate between the various claims, especially when many of them make roughly the same prediction, i.e., that diversity slows development. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the empirical record has produced mixed results. Although most studies that go looking for an ethnic effect are generally able to find one, how this effect works, and what the estimated effects mean, are not always unambiguous. Authors positing indirect links also find direct ones, effects appear stronger in some regions of the world than in others, those claiming that polarization is more important that simple diversity nonetheless find a diversity effect, prior findings can be overturned with different model specifications, and so on (Arcand et al. 2000, Fearon and Laitin 2003, Kenny and Williams 2001, Montalvo and Reynal-Querol 2005, Sala-i-Martin 1997). These mixed results, when taken as a whole, return us to the point at which we started: with an empirical regularity in search of an explanation. Yet the narratives we do have, however plausible they may be, do not actually explain what we wish to know.

Narrating Without Explaining

The first major difficulty encountered in most of these narratives is that, in describing a path through which ethnic diversity impacts development, they do not explain

so much as push the question back a step in the logical sequence. Citing "ethnic tensions" or "ethnic hatreds" as sources of political instability, for example, does not explain the origins of those tensions or hatreds except to label them ethnic. Doing so, however, assumes away rather than explains the background processes that produce the tensions in question. The set of greed coalition arguments suffers from a similar problem. Citing ethnic links as the means to overcome collective action problems in establishing and maintaining competing coalitions—either armed groups in civil war or patronage networks in civilian politics—generally relies on assuming the existence of "ethnic solidarities" or "ethnic loyalties" as the basis of these coalitions. Doing so, however, does not explain why such solidarities exist or why they prove so adept at overcoming collective action problems when other links fail.

Yet this silence on what makes ethnic solidarities particularly well-suited to collective action as compared to non-ethnic versions is a particular instance of a second broad class of difficulties with these narratives: by and large, they leave ambiguous whether they are about ethnic conflict in particular or social conflict more generally. Despite an implicit assumption that ethnic conflict is somehow more destructive and detrimental to development than other kinds of conflict, most narratives do not in fact establish what makes ethnic processes qualitatively different from their non-ethnic counterparts. Political instability narratives, for example, do not generally make explicit claims about why ethnic cleavages are particularly apt to cause instability as compared to other cleavages based on, for example, class, party, or ideology. Nor, in fact, is there always even an implicit claim to qualitative difference, as is the case when ethnic divisions are studied alongside disputes over land ownership or the division of wealth. Likewise, patronage networks and Chicago-style machine politics function in a number of venues along non-ethnic and cross-ethnic lines (e.g., Despres 2005, Mainwaring 1999). For this story to be about ethnic politics rather than patronage politics writ large, we must examine what makes ethnic links particularly receptive to

patronage (Fearon 1999)—without citing ethnic solidarities. Analogously, differences in preferences are endemic to politics, not just ethnic politics, and narratives based on heterogeneous preference models would appear to apply more effectively to class and socioeconomic cleavages.[8]

Finally, a major shortcoming in most of these narratives is the implicit assumption that ethnic dynamics function approximately the same way from society to society, which in turn implies that the negative impact of the ethnic effect is unconditional and applies everywhere there is ethnic diversity. Although this might account for differences in outcome between heterogeneous and homogeneous societies in a broad sense, such an assumption makes it difficult to account for the considerable variation in outcomes that we observe among diverse countries themselves. Political instability narratives, for example, must contend with the reality that there are many more instances of ethnic peace than ethnic conflict, yet postulating an unconditional "ethnic tensions" claim cannot account for both. In building patronage networks, politicians use party cues to reward supporters in some societies, and ethnic cues in others, yet an unqualified "ethnic solidarities" account does not help us specify the conditions under which the one is more useful than the other.

More generally, an unconditional ethnic effect claim cannot easily account for both ethnic basket cases and success stories simultaneously. It cannot tell us why countries such as Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Côte d'Ivoire sit atop the failed states index, while others such as Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland are ranked among the world's best performers *despite* their diversity. Yet there is good reason to believe, and considerable evidence to back up the claim, that ethnic dynamics vary under different incentive structures, one of the most important sources

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[8]One could, in fact, go farther and suggest that they apply to ethnic cleavages only to the degree that they overlap with class or socioeconomics (i.e., to the degree that the ethnic system is ranked, as described in Horowitz 1985).

of which is government institutions (e.g., Chandra 2004, Horowitz 1985, Lijphart 1977, Posner 2005). Failure to consider this important contingent effect, in turn, makes it more difficult to identify an ethnic effect in practice, perhaps accounting for some of the mixed results reported by the empirical studies.

To summarize, a wide range of narratives exist to account for the link between ethnic diversity and underdevelopment: some are plausible, some are less so, but for the most part they remain partial narratives rather than full explanations. In general, they suffer from three recurring sets of problems. First, in attempting to identify paths through which diversity slows development, they postulate *that* an ethnic effect exists, but not how it works. Second, and along the same lines, they generally do not explain how ethnic dynamics differ from non-ethnic dynamics, raising the possibility that the processes they describe are not specific to ethnic politics at all. Finally, they generally assume an unconditional relationship between diversity and development, despite the difficulty this causes in explaining the observed variation in outcomes *between* diverse societies. In the theoretical framework I sketch below, I attempt to provide an explanation that addresses each of these points.

1.3 Ethnicity and Institutions: Summary of the Theoretical Framework

Up to this point, I have put forward two central propositions. The first is that understanding the impact of ethnic diversity and the influence of ethnic politics on development requires that we identify more clearly the causal processes that link ethnicity to development, and the conditions under which these links actually take place. Much of what we know (or think we know), at least at the cross-national level, is based on a grab-bag of loosely theorized propositions and a few formal models that are tenuous in their connections to the actual processes under study, which are then tested via a series of arguably misspecified empirical models. The mechanisms are

often uncomfortably vague, and are not necessarily specific to *ethnic* dynamics at all. But leaving the mechanisms vague means we are not well-situated to understand when and under what conditions they actually operate, and when they do not. Thus, rather than continuing to paper over the large logical jump from ethnic diversity to underdevelopment, we must first understand the conditions under which ethnic cleavages become politically salient and ethnic groups politically relevant, and why these cleavages and groups are qualitatively distinct from other forms of social divisions.

The second proposition follows from the first: we should not expect ethnic dynamics to operate in the same way across all societies as if they were unconditional processes divorced from other aspects of politics. Instead, we should expect to see a conditional effect that is magnified in some societies and muted in others for systematic reasons. In particular, we should expect the ethnic effect to vary according to the different government institutions in place in different societies, which influence how ethnicity is channeled into or away from politics and the political allocation of scarce resources. To the degree that institutions help define political incentives, they can help us explain the conditions under which ethnic cleavages and groups become more or less politically relevant, and *how* they influence the development process, rather than simply *that* they do so. As such, before we can achieve a better understanding of the links between ethnic diversity and development, we must first understand how institutions, as a key intervening variable, channel ethnic politics.

This section overviews the theoretical framework I use throughout this dissertation to link ethnicity and institutions. The basic argument may be summarized as follows. Out of an extremely large number of latent social categories that exist in every society, the small number of actual groups that form do so largely through a coordination process that takes place in predictable ways. Especially in environments where reliable political information is scarce, repressed, or otherwise costly, group coordination on the basis of issue preferences is unlikely to occur because such preferences are difficult

to observe or infer. Instead, the coordination process privileges social categories with observable membership traits that serve as focal points for group formation. Informational restrictions on the viable categories around which groups may coordinate particularly privilege *ethnic* social categories, in which membership is relatively easy to infer via observables, and whose membership rule, putative descent, is common knowledge.

Despite this relative ease in coordination, however, ethnic groups are imperfect substitutes for programmatic coalitions in terms of social welfare. Ascriptive membership makes them somewhat like catch-all parties, but without the option of entry into or exit from the coalition. This provides elites with a captive audience and consequently an *ethnic subsidy*: elites become monoposonistic buyers of their coethnics' votes, and thus ethnic support is cheap. Given wide discretionary powers, elites can capture greater quantities of scarce resources as they buy cheap support from coethnics via selective incentives, reducing both coethnic and social welfare compared to a non-ethnic setting. Institutions can intensify or disrupt these dynamics, however. They can magnify the importance of ethnic categories as coordination points by closing off alternative sources of political information and other dimensions of contestation, and they can amplify the discretionary powers of elites with restrictions on monitoring and competition. They can also disrupt these dynamics by lowering the cost of information, inducing intra-ethnic competition, and providing effective monitoring mechanisms to limit elite discretionary powers.

Below, I expand on each of these points in turn. First, I discuss coordinating on social categories and groups in the abstract. Next, I identify conditions favorable to coordinating on ethnic categories, and the repercussions of such coordination. Finally, I address how institutions can modify incentive structures and consequently channel ethnic cleavages in different ways.

Coordinating on Categories and Coalitions

Let us first consider constraints on coordination in the abstract before examining the process of ethnic coordination. In a simple rendition of political coalitions, office-seeking politicians owe their jobs to the support of coalition members and, to the degree that the value of this support is the same across individuals, politicians are indifferent as to the composition of their coalitions provided that they are *winning* coalitions. Politicians attempt to employ scarce resources efficiently by targeting these resources to reward supporters without dissipating them on non-supporters.[9] All else equal, any two coalitions of equal size are equally viable as winning coalitions, which implies that both politicians and potential supporters/beneficiaries face a substantial coordination problem to overcome in selecting a winner (Hardin 1982, Marwell and Oliver 1993, Olson 1965).

Were social category size alone the only relevant distinction between potential coalition bases, then selecting one from such an immense pool of latent possibilities would be intractable from a coordination standpoint.[10] Social categories of course differ in various ways other than size, but here I direct the focus to variation on two key structural dimensions that influence the degree of ambiguity and uncertainty in category composition: membership observability and boundary permeability. Differ-

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[9]I use the term "efficient" here in the political sense, and emphatically *not* in the economic sense. We can think of this efficient targeting as either enabling politicians to maximize the rewards distributed to supporters, to allocate some but not all of the resources and reserve some in a political slush fund, or the standard cynical assumption of dispensing the minimal rewards needed to maintain support while privatizing or otherwise capturing the remaining resources.

[10]The number of latent categories in all but the smallest societies is extremely large, being the sum of all possible unique combinations of members of society. Given n individuals, there are $\sum_{k=0}^{n} \binom{n}{k}$ social categories, and because $\sum_{k=0}^{n} \binom{n}{k} = \sum_{k=0}^{n} n!/k!(n-k)! = 2^n$, the number of unique categories explodes exponentially as society gets larger. The subset of such categories that can form the basis of a minimum-winning coalition is smaller, but still huge in absolute terms. To provide a sense of magnitude, a 99-person society has $2^{99} \approx 6.3 \times 10^{29}$ (i.e., 63 billion billion billion) unique social categories, and under simple majority rule, $\binom{99}{50} \approx 5.0 \times 10^{28}$ of them form minimum-winning coalitions.

ences in the degree of compositional ambiguity, in turn, helps distinguish plausible candidates for coordination from implausible ones. In terms of membership observability, we would expect categories to vary in the ease with which members and non-members can be identified accurately. Greater observability reduces uncertainty in the composition of a given social category, and by enabling members to identify one another, helps create common knowledge about that category (Chwe 2001). In terms of boundary permeability, we would also expect categories to vary in the ease with which people join or leave them. Greater permeability enables easier entry and exit (Hirschman 1970), making category composition more ambiguous *over time*. This ambiguity, in turn, makes it more difficult to identify a coherent category, and thus hampers the generation of common knowledge about that category.[11]

Differences in membership observability and boundary permeability provide distinctions between categories and help produce focal points for coordination (Schelling 1960, 1978). Lower levels of compositional ambiguity, both at a particular moment and over time, help category members identify the category itself as well as one another, making their common interests *common knowledge*. We may expect people to leverage the focal points produced by variation on these two dimensions to focus on a relatively small subset of categories made relevant to politics by coordination rather than by something inherently meaningful in the categories themselves.[12] Yet whether

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[11]In the context of political coalitions, greater membership observability enables politicians to target rewards to members with increasing efficiency. But because rewards-for-support bargains are sequential rather than simultaneous, there is a time-inconsistency problem to overcome. Basing coalitions on categories with low boundary permeability helps mitigate this problem by reducing openings for opportunistic entry or exit, a particularly important trait in environments where more formal mechanisms to enforce commitments are absent or weak.

[12]Although we might alternately focus on "meaningful" social categories, doing so would be a purely static exercise, as well as potentially misleading. In the former sense, it would be an act of labeling rather than explaining, because such a focus would ignore the dynamics by which meaningful categories became relevant (meaningful) in the first place, as well as ignore how categories gain and lose relevance over time. Further, it is misleading to ignore these dynamics for inferential reasons: "meaning" is not assigned to categories in a random fashion, and ignoring this selection process (which categories become relevant) would disrupt our ability to make sound inferences on the

these categories form without conscious intent as emergent properties of the social system, or else as products of purposive behavior by political entrepreneurs with encompassing interests seeking to direct this coordination and willing to bear the costs of doing so, there are constraints on coordination in the form of the availability and cost of information. Variation in information, in turn, has repercussions for the types of categories that can become relevant through coordination, and consequently the types of interests expressed by the politically relevant categories.

Although we typically expect people to coordinate on common interests, we also recognize that interests in the form of ideal points on policy dimensions are difficult to observe. And although we typically expect people to infer interests via observable proxies such as party labels and other heuristic cues (Downs 1957, Lupia and McCubbins 1998, Sniderman et al. 1991), the *availability* and *quality* of such proxies cannot be taken for granted, especially in the low-information environments that characterize many developing societies. When useful proxies for policy dimensions are unavailable or uninformative, obtaining reliable information on these dimensions becomes costlier, and people are limited to inferior substitutes in the form of other, cheaper observables denoting options such as identity categories. The availability and quality of information thus influences what kinds of social categories become politically relevant by influencing their viability as loci of coordination, and from this affects which policy dimensions are politically salient in competitions between political coalitions.[13]

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outcomes of interest (which coalitions form). Although the social construction of meaning may be a plausible *description* of that selection process, focusing on membership observability and boundary permeability is an act of abstraction away from the details and toward the underlying structure. It is an attempt to extract the systematic variation within which meaning emerges.

[13]Better information makes it easier to coordinate on programmatic issues, although given the relative ease in coordination it also means a relatively larger number of relevant categories. In lower information environments, coordination is largely limited to a smaller set of relevant categories whose memberships are easy to identify and whose observability is difficult to disrupt.

Coordinating on *Ethnic* Categories and Coalitions

Previously, I proposed that variation in access to political information—both in terms of its availability and its quality—influences which types of social categories and interests are viable as points of coordination. More specifically, I suggested that the low-information environments that characterize many developing societies compel people to rely on imperfect substitutes for the more informative proxies found in high-information environments. Here, I will argue that information constraints particularly privilege *ethnic* social categories for coordination, with significant repercussions for the policy dimensions that become salient. Ethnic categories utilize variations on a simple, intuitive membership rule, with membership that is often easy to infer via inexpensive proxies as well as relatively stable over time. Thus, ethnic categories combine high observability, low boundary permeability, and a common knowledge membership rule, all of which make them focal points for coordination in the absence of higher quality, more informative cues with which to work.

Despite some surface variation, the rule structure defining membership in ethnic categories follows the broad theme of membership by ascriptive descent.[14] Unlike potentially more convoluted and unfamiliar rules defining membership in voluntary-based categories,[15] the descent rule is simple, intuitive, and deterministic—in theory if not always in practice. Moreover, the rule structure is common knowledge, based on *analogy* to preexisting rule structures for membership in family and kin groups

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[14]Note that I am following a long-standing convention in defining ethnic groups (Horowitz 1985). In some cases the descent rule is explicit, as when membership theory closely tracks genealogical logic by explicitly linking members to a common ancestor. In other cases the descent rule is implicit, as when individuals acquire membership by birth despite the lack of an explicit link to a common ancestor. Explicit descent is common in tribal systems, whereas implicit descent is prevalent among nations, peoples, races, and so on. Note that I have said nothing about *identity* or *identification* (Hardin 1995): the descent rule merely provides a means to categorize people independent of their desires to be so categorized.

[15]Compare the classificatory uncertainty over whether one is a sympathizer, supporter, or member of a political party, especially in societies where party membership is a novel or forbidden concept.

as well as *precedent* set by the establishment of other ethnic categories.[16] Although actual membership is only imperfectly observable, it is relatively easy and inexpensive to infer from a large set of covarying proxies such as name, skin color, accent, and so on (Chandra 2004), the compounding of which creates a focal point, albeit one that is hazy on the margins. Further, the descent rule defines a category whose membership is stable over time, given that neither entry into nor exit from the category occur by choice, in principle providing the continuity needed to make common interests common knowledge. This putative longevity—with ethnic ideologues tracing their groups' origins back into the romanticized "mists of time"—helps create not just imagined communities, but imagined, *nonfinitely-lived* communities (Alesina and Spear 1988, Anderson 1983, Hobsbawm 1990, Stokes 1999).[17]

Ascriptive descent, in terms of its rule structure, makes the social categories it defines comparable in terms of the characteristics and interests common to members. In general terms, ascription grants membership irrespective of occupation, education, ideological preferences, age, sex, and so on, making such categories societies-in-miniature (Bates 1974, Chandra 2004, Horowitz 1985).[18] This within-category het-

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[16]Analogy builds on the logic of family relations—arguably the single most basic form of social interaction across societies—and is an application of an existing rule rather than an innovation of a new rule. Coordination on one ethnic category, in turn, sets a precedent: by defining the in-group explicitly, the rule implicitly defines the out-group, as well as puts the rule structure into the public domain. Although this precedent may be the result of a rule structure innovation, either homegrown or imported from abroad, we may view analogy and precedent and reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive.

[17]I will discuss the importance of nonfinitely-lived groups more thoroughly in the theory chapter in the context of the folk theorem and overlapping generations models of organizations.

[18]Ethnic systems differ broadly in whether they are ranked or unranked (Horowitz 1985), i.e., whether they follow hierarchical status relationships between different categories, or whether the categories represent approximately status-equivalent segments of the broader society. In a perfectly unranked system, we would expect ethnic membership to tell us *nothing* about an individual's occupation, education level, and so on, whereas in a ranked system between-category variation would enable us to make probabilistic guesses about an individual's other characteristics, despite within-category variation.

erogeneity, in turn, restricts the types of interests that such categories can represent (or at least unify around). Policy dimensions on which members' ideal points vary considerably do not and cannot define common interests, resulting in the deemphasis, if not complete disavowal, of a wide range of policy dimensions. Those interests left over after eliminating the dimensions on which members differ are generally lowest-common denominator interests: those that benefit the bulk of the members, or the category as a whole in an abstract way. Although such demands could, in theory, be for the provision of true public goods—and ethnic rhetoric is full of references to justice, equality, the rule of law, development for all, and so on—in the absence of encompassing interests to make such rhetoric credible, the interests devolve to demands for the distribution or redistribution of public resources toward members. These characteristics make ethnic categories roughly analogous to patronage-oriented catch-all parties (Kirchheimer 1966, Mainwaring 1999), but with a key difference: whereas the boundaries of catch-all parties are commonly highly permeable, there is no entry or exit from ethnic categories.

The lack of entry and exit options, an implication of the ascriptive descent membership rule, makes ethnic categories qualitatively different from other types of social categories that we commonly view as voluntary. In particular, as constituencies, ethnic categories are captive audiences. Elites become monopsonistic buyers of their coethnics' votes: political support is cheaper than otherwise would be the case if entry and exit were not blocked off, and so elites benefit from an *ethnic subsidy* at the expense of their coethnics.[19] This dynamic, by which elites enjoy significant discre-

[19]In the theory chapter, I use the logical framework of a signaling model to motivate ethnic subsidies, and a variant of the chain-store game to further expand on ethnic monopsonies, which eliminate "voice" from the "exit, voice, and loyalty" triad (Hirschman 1970). There is a frequently-made claim about politics in ethnic systems that elites benefit from a wellspring of core support from their coethnics, often explained with reference to variations on the theme of "deeply-felt" loyalties or a desire to "bask in the glow of elite successes." These explanations cannot easily accommodate the evidence of disaffection and dissatisfaction of ethnic supporters at the mass level. The alternate explanation advanced here helps account for the seeming paradox of core support and disillusionment

tionary powers and can capture large quantities of scarce resources as they buy cheap support from coethnics, results from political market failures in the context of low information and minimal competition. Yet we should not expect these outcomes to obtain unconditionally: the extent of the monopsony, the size of the ethnic subsidy, and the scope of discretionary power may all be magnified or disrupted by government institutions.

Institutions as Channels

So far, I have put forward two broad proposals. First, information levels influence which types of social categories and interests are viable as points of coordination. Second, low-information environments privilege coordination on *ethnic* categories, which combine high observability, low boundary permeability, and an intuitive membership rule. Although coordination on ethnic categories may be better for members than no coordination at all, there are potentially undesirable ramifications in so coordinating. First, the structure of the ascriptive descent membership rule generates an ethnic subsidy at the expense of category members by allowing elites to act as monopsonistic buyers of their coethnics' political support.[20] Second, high observability and low boundary permeability, which aided in the coordination process in the first place, also facilitate the use of selective incentives, as elites can target rewards to supporters efficiently without dissipating resources on non-supporters. The disheartening ramifications include cheap rewards for coethnics, more captured resources for elites, and a shift of the nonappropriated resources toward selective incentives and away from productive public goods. The *politically efficient* use of these resources, in other words,

with ethnic elites by suggesting that coethnic support derives not from affection, but exists because no viable, credible alternatives exist—the result of a coordination process that privileges ethnic categories.

[20]By closing off exit and voice, the only option available to members of an ethnic constituency is (dis)loyalty. Elites need only reward supporters just enough to make them turn out to vote, rather than provide the higher payoff needed to retain their votes in a competitive election.

is *economically inefficient*, and this misallocation slows development.

Yet these dynamics are not unconditional. In particular, we should expect differing government institutional environments to magnify or disrupt these processes, and so channel ethnic politics into or away from politics and the political allocation of scarce resources. First, the degree to which elites can act as ethnic monopsonists, which determines the size of the ethnic subsidy, depends on the availability of viable substitutes for ethnic categories, which in turn depends on the institutionally-influenced ease of and returns to coordinating on non-ethnic categories. Second, elite capacity to claim a within-category monopsony—thus capturing the entire ethnic subsidy—depends on the degree to which institutions induce intra-ethnic competition for coethnics' votes. Third, the quantity of resources captured, and the extent to which elites may distribute some types of selective incentives, depends on the scope of the discretionary power they enjoy, which in turn may be influenced by institutional monitoring mechanisms. The right set of institutions, in other words, can create the right set of incentives to mitigate the potentially negative impact of ethnic politics on development, and the wrong set can magnify it.

Although institutions may arguably channel ethnic dynamics in various ways, I focus here on their impact via their provision (or non-provision) of three key conceptual public goods: information, competition, and the rule of law. Institutions can lower information costs and expand the availability and quality of information and so enable coordination on a wider range of social categories and interests, or they can restrict information and make coordination on non-ethnic categories more difficult, thereby compeling people to employ ethnic classifications and coordinate on ethnically-constrained interests. Institutions also can stimulate or stifle political competition, both along non-ethnic dimensions as well as intra-ethnically, with ramifications for the emergence of monopsonistic vote buyers, ethnic subsidies, and the degree to which elites utilize selective incentives to win support. Finally, institutions

impact the degree to which societies operate under the rule of law versus the rule of personalities, with monitoring mechanisms and checks and balances expanding or contracting the scope of elite discretionary power. Cumulatively, the degree to which government institutions provide these three conceptual public goods impacts shapes well they channel ethnic politics, and thus how much ethnic politics impact development.

1.4 Outline of the Essays

As previously mentioned, the format of this dissertation follows the three-article model rather than the traditional monograph style. As such, most of the body of this work is composed of three essays that address discrete elements of the theory sketch described above. Below, I lay out brief summaries of these essays, previewing their themes, the broad propositions I advance in them, and the empirics used to assess these propositions. I make brief mention of where these essays fall within the broader narrative forwarded above, a point to which I return subsequently in Chapter 5, which concludes the dissertation by synthesizing the ideas and findings in these three discrete essays into the broader themes raised at the outset of this introductory chapter.

Chapter 2: Democratic Talk and the Democratic Walk

Coordination problems play an important role early on in the chain of reasoning detailed in the theory sketch, in which coordination on ethnic categories provides imperfect substitutes for more precise coordination on specific interests. This implies that there should be considerable variation in preferences within ethnic groups over a number of issue dimensions, but this variation is submerged in pursuit of group unity in competition with similar groups. Among other things, this suggests that although individuals may "toe the ethnic line" in public, their personal preferences may in fact diverge from the claims they make.

Because of the impact of sensitivity as well as the norm to present a united public front on key issues, gauging the degree to which personal preferences differ from group preferences is difficult. Here, I utilize a revised, enhanced version of the list experiment—a data collection technique designed to nullify respondent incentives to misrepresent themselves, now coupled with a new statistical estimator I have developed—to investigate patterns of responses in which individual material interests would be expected to diverge in important ways from ethnic group interests. Empirically, I examine Lebanese attitudes toward voting rights for illiterate people, a sensitive question due both to its normative content and its sectarian implications. I show that, when people are asked directly whether or not illiterate individuals should have the right to vote directly, community membership determines their answers and material conditions do not. Yet, as expected, when incentives to misrepresent themselves are nullified with a list experiment, the polar opposite occurs: community membership has no influence on opinions, whereas material conditions have a strong effect.

Chapter 3: What Divides Unites

Government institutions, as argued in the theory sketch, serve as channelers of ethnic politics. Given this channeling role, different sets of institutions can privilege or handicap some ethnic groups at the expense or to the benefit of others, and consequently institutional choice becomes a salient policy dimension in diverse societies. When ethnicity is the relevant classificatory principle underlying political coalitions, a number of implications follow. First, coalitions do not engage in serious political contestation to win over new members—as coalitions are relatively fixed by reliance on ethnicity's descent principle—but rather compete over the choice of institutions that best achieves community interests. Yet there is also surprising flexibility in the seemingly inflexible descent principle underlying ethnic categorization in terms of the particular community of relevance: people may invoke both the logic and the vo-

cabulary of the classificatory system to imagine larger or smaller communities with inclusive or exclusive boundaries. Given these implications, preferences over different institutional options should behave in predictable ways.

Lebanon's sects constitute its most salient ethnic categories, yet religion provides both the nominal markers of group boundaries and membership as well as a set of behavioral prescriptions and shared ideals. Because religiosity and sectarianism are conflated, I show that it is important to disaggregate the influence of religion on attitudes toward democracy and autocracy. In particular, I demonstrate how politicized, sectarian attitudes may lead some individuals to adopt positions in favor of autocratic solutions, whereas religiosity can act to moderate attitudes by enabling the Lebanese to invoke shared religious ideals to imagine a community beyond the sect. Hence religion, the seemingly inflexible dimension which divides the Lebanese, also unites them, making Lebanese of all sects less supportive of autocracy and correspondingly more supportive of democracy as a a more inclusive means to govern themselves.

Chapter 4: Why Sunni Votes are Cheap in Lebanon but Dear in Yemen

As laid out in the theory sketch, coordinating on ethnic categories produces salient groups that, at least in principle, do not permit entry and exit. This raises the possibility that ethnic constituencies may become captive audiences to their elites, making possible the emergence of monopsonistic vote buyers who benefit from cheap support from their coethnics—an ethnic subsidy flowing from supporters to elites. Yet the size of this subsidy depends on the degree to which institutions induce intra-ethnic competition for coethnics' support. An implication of this process is that, under ethnic monopsony, constituents compete for patronage, and individuals must find ways to signal additional and enthusiastic support to elites in order to secure rewards comparable to what they would receive in an environment in which elites must compete for their votes.

Lebanon's quota system explicitly forces within-group competition between elites

over their coethnics' votes—although due to exogenous shocks a monopsonist has emerged in the Sunni community. Yemen's plurality system explicitly forbids competition along ethnic lines, producing a dynamic in which the Shia-dominated ruling party holds a monopsony over Shiite votes while facing competition for Sunni votes. Empirically, I examine Yemeni and Lebanese assessments of the importance of political connections in securing a government job, using an unobtrusive measure, respondents' displays of political party posters, as an indicator of signal strength. I show that signal-sending Lebanese Sunnis are much more likely to believe that connections are necessary to receive political rewards than are their non-signaling co-sectarians. This dynamic, a product of the monopsonistic environment in the Sunni community, is not evident in either the Shia or Christian communities, where there is considerable intra-group competition. In Yemen, in contrast, *Shiites* face a monopsonistic vote buyer whereas the Sunni vote market is competitive. Here, I show that it is Shiite signal-senders who are much more likely to believe in the importance of political connections to obtain rewards than are their co-religionists, whereas no such dynamic exists among Sunnis.

Chapter 2

Democratic Talk and the Democratic Walk

Would you be upset by a black family moving in next door? Do you support the use of suicide bombs against civilians? Have you accepted a bribe to perform an illegal service in the past week? *Which of these survey questions will be answered honestly?*

Racism, terrorism, corruption: political questions can be sensitive questions, and what makes them interesting is also what makes them sensitive. Yet what makes them sensitive also makes them difficult to study: illegal activities and socially undesirable attitudes are probably not just underreported, but underreported in systematic and unmeasurable ways. The problem is not confined to politics, of course: questions about the prevalence of drug use, pornography consumption, and child abuse are likely to be underreported precisely by drug users, pornography consumers, and child abusers.

To study sensitive topics, we are often stuck taking respondents at their dubious word. Since we do not observe their behavior or attitudes directly, we must rely on what people are willing to tell us—and when the topic is sensitive, what they are willing to tell us may very well be "not much." This problem is especially pronounced on formal and impersonal attitude surveys, where time constraints, non-repeated interaction, and standardized wording all stack the deck against interviewers gaining sufficient rapport with respondents to coax them into discussing sensitive topics openly. What a respondent might be willing to confide to an ethnographer after

months of repeated interactions may be simply unattainable in a one hour interview with a stranger who will never be seen again.

People misrepresent themselves on attitude surveys, and one can hardly blame them. Aside from some small satisfaction derived from adhering to the norm to "always tell the truth," there is little personal benefit they can gain from honesty. Meanwhile, the costs of answering questions truthfully need not be great to outweigh the minimal benefits: simple embarrassment at admitting to a distaste for blacks or a penchant for pornography will be sufficient to drive down the reported prevalence of these outcomes. The costs are even greater when the possibility of ridicule, stigma, or legal penalties, real or imagined, enter into a respondent's decision to discuss sensitive topics openly.

The fact that people may misrepresent themselves about sensitive topics on attitude surveys should force us to ask whether or not it is worth all the trouble to administer such surveys in the first place. How much damage do these misreports do to the data we collect and the inferences we try to draw from them? The answer is, unsurprisingly, "a great deal," if we proceed naïvely as if the data we have are not measured with bias. The intentional misrepresentation of true attitudes and behavior by some of our sample respondents does not just mean that our data are of poor quality, and that our problem is simply measurement error. If this propensity for misrepresentation is systematic, then the inferences drawn from our data are also wrong in a systematic way. Coefficient estimates are incorrect, signs can flip, and variables with no true explanatory power can appear to explain a lot. All this makes response bias not just an epistemological problem, but "an epistemological problem with teeth" (Brehm 1993, 20).

2.1 The Problem of Response Bias

Survey questions ask people to make public declarations about private information and, in this sense, the act of *reporting* what one does or believes is distinct from the actual doing or believing. The content of these public declarations may reflect not only the private information in which we are interested, but also other incentives and constraints that can cause self-reported outcomes to deviate from actual outcomes. Suppose, for example, that we wish to test hypotheses about processes leading to some outcome y^* but that we observe only y, which is the self-reported value of y^*. Were y^* not sensitive, we would have little reason to doubt that y is an accurate measurement of y^*, with deviations from the truth (due to misspeaking, misunderstanding the question, or whatever else) being wholly nonsystematic and falling into the error term. Yet if the processes are sensitive, then the outcomes presumably are as well, and we would expect self-reported outcomes to deviate from the truth in a systematic way. Supposing that this systematic deviation is the product of an incentive z^* to misrepresent one's answers, then the problem appears to be one of omitted variable bias: because what we observe is a function of both the truth and an incentive to misrepresent the truth, ignoring the latter leads to incorrect estimates. But there is a twist: because the true outcome y^* is sensitive, then the incentive z^* to misrepresent it is surely in part a function of this sensitivity.

To see this, assume that we observe y, the self-reported value of true y^*, and that the true model for observed y is given by $y = y^*\tau + z^*\lambda + \epsilon_1$, where self-reported y is a positive function of true y^* (with τ for t̲rue) and a negative function of an incentive z^* to misrepresent the truth (with λ for l̲ie, and thus $\lambda < 0$). For simplicity, assume that $\tau = 1$, meaning that deviation in self-reported outcomes from actual outcomes is a product only of z^* and the random error. Assume that values of y^* become more sensitive as they get bigger, and that incentives to misrepresent the truth become greater as the truth becomes more sensitive: $y^* = X\beta^* + \epsilon_2$ and z^* is a positive

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function of y^* such that $z^* = y^*\sigma + \epsilon_3$ (with σ for <u>s</u>ensitive, and thus $\sigma > 0$, because the more sensitive the behavior the more likely is the respondent to misrepresent this behavior).

For simplicity, consider a linear specification which omits z^* and models only $y = y^*\tau + \epsilon_1$. The least-squares coefficient estimate b^* is given by $b^* = A_X y$, where $A_X \equiv (X'X)^{-1}X'$, and thus:

$$
\begin{aligned}
b^* &= A_X y \\
&= A_X\big(y^*\tau + z^*\lambda + \epsilon_1\big) \\
&= A_X\big(y^*\tau + [y^*\sigma + \epsilon_3]\lambda + \epsilon_1\big) \\
&= A_X\big([X\beta^* + \epsilon_2]\tau + [(X\beta^* + \epsilon_2)\sigma + \epsilon_3]\lambda + \epsilon_1\big) \\
&= \beta^*\big(\tau + \sigma\lambda\big) + A_X\big(\epsilon_1 + \epsilon_2\tau + \epsilon_2\sigma\lambda + \epsilon_3\lambda\big) \\
E\big(b^*\big) &= \beta^*\big(\tau + \sigma\lambda\big)
\end{aligned}
\tag{2.1}
$$

Estimates of b^*, the coefficients of interest, are inconsistent. β^* is multiplied by $(\tau + \sigma\lambda)$, and this quantity is unambiguously less than one, as we have assumed $\tau = 1$, whereas the product of σ and λ is negative.[1] Thus, if the propensity to misrepresent one's behavior depends solely on the degree of the sensitivity of that behavior, then our coefficient estimates are biased downward, which can take the form of estimates attenuating to zero or even complete sign flips.[2] If we do not consider how incentives

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[1] Recall that we have assumed that σ takes a positive value (increased sensitivity leads to increased incentives to misrepresent the truth), while λ takes a negative value (lying leads to a reported outcome y lower than its actual value y^*).

[2] The results in (2.1) are for the simplest case in which propensity to lie is related only to the sensitivity of the behavior. Were the propensity to lie also related to some other covariates X_2 (such that $z^* = y^*\sigma + X_2\omega + \epsilon_3$, with ω referring to <u>o</u>ther covariates), the results become more complicated, deriving to $E\big(b^*\big) = \beta^*\big(\tau + \sigma\lambda\big) + A_{X_1}X_2\omega\lambda$, where A_{X_1} now refers to those Xs systematically related to y^* while X_2 refers to those Xs related to propensity to lie z^* but not to y^*. The resulting situation is worse still: in this more complicated situation we do not even have assurances as to the direction of the bias. The effect of the second term could be positive or negative

to misrepresent actual behavior and beliefs affect what people are willing to tell us on a survey, inferences we may try to draw from the resulting data will be inaccurate—perhaps marginally, and perhaps wildly so.[3]

One common approach used in anticipation of response bias is to change the question-phrasing somehow so that a sensitive question is no longer "sensitive." Yet the revised wording may or may not get at the underlying concept we hope to measure, and we might be concerned that, the more we sanitize, the less the question actually measures what we want. An alternative approach to handling response bias has been to consider and correct for *non*-response bias, i.e., unit non-response in which potential respondents fall out of the sample in a systematic way (e.g. Brehm 1993), and item non-response in which in-sample respondents systematically decline to answer certain questions (e.g. Berinsky 1999, 2004). If non-response is systematic, then we could model the selection process by which we observe self-reported outcomes given that we observe any outcomes at all. This is the procedure Berinsky (1999) uses to study support for government efforts to integrate schools, finding that at least some people who harbor anti-integrationist opinions hide their socially undesirable views by selecting a "don't know" response.

This approach is a great deal better than nothing, and probably the most useful given data limitations, but it remains an imperfect solution to the problem. Although the procedure may plausibly dampen the effects of response bias, it does not elim-

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depending on the relationships between X_1 and X_2, and in principle an upward bias introduced by the second term could overtake the downward bias of the first term.

[3]Simply controlling for the effect of z^* on y is insufficient for two reasons. First, we are no longer modeling what we say we are modeling: rather than estimating the propensity to engage in sensitive behavior y^*, we are now estimating y, the propensity to *report* engaging in sensitive behavior y^*. Although this *admission* may be of interest in itself, it is still a substantively different process than simply engaging in this behavior, even though the processes are related to one another. Second, it is extremely unlikely that we can measure z^* accurately in any way, because the measure of sensitivity is itself sensitive and would presumably also be subject to response bias—claiming not to engage in sensitive behavior y^* and then claiming that the answer reported for y^* is false is effectively admitting to engaging in the sensitive behavior.

inate those effects: respondents still face incentives to misrepresent their answers, and we can continue to expect to see false responses in the substantive categories. Likewise, the "don't know" category itself is subject to the effects of response bias, as it is composed of individuals who are attempting to hide their opinions and individuals who truly do not know. Further, the option of responding "don't know" does not necessarily alleviate the social desirability problem, as in some cases it may be interpretable as an intermediate category between the desirable and undesirable responses. Responding "I don't know" about school integration, for example, implies that the respondent is less than fully committed to the socially desirable outcome of integration. More starkly, responding "I don't know" to a question on whether or not one believes that the holocaust occurred essentially brands the respondent as a holocaust denier.

2.2   The List Experiment

One procedure with considerable potential to nullify incentives to hide the truth from interviewers is the list experiment (a.k.a. the item count technique), which is an unobtrusive means of eliciting truthful responses that was brought to salience in political science in Kuklinski, Cobb, and Gilens (1997) and Kuklinski et al. (1997).[4] As originally conceived, the survey sample is split into two groups. Control group respondents receive a list of non-sensitive, yes/no items and are asked to tell the interviewer *how many* of the listed items they do/believe, and specifically *not* which items they are. Treatment group respondents, meanwhile, receive the same list as the control group, *plus* one more item that measures a sensitive topic, and receive the same instructions. Respondent anonymity is assured transparently because no one, not even the interviewer or analyst, can know whether or not a treatment group respondent's

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[4]For an earlier treatment, see, e.g., Droitcour et al. (1991).

answer included or excluded the sensitive item.[5] We can then use difference-in-means tests between the treatment and control groups to infer the prevalence of the sensitive behavior/opinion.

For example, in a study on racial prejudice, Kuklinski et al. (1997, 405) prompt all respondents with, "now I'm going to read you three (four) things that sometimes make people angry or upset. After I read all three (four), just tell me HOW MANY of them upset you. I don't want to know which ones, just HOW MANY." They then give the following three list items to control group respondents:

1. The federal government increasing the tax on gasoline

2. Professional athletes getting million-dollar salaries

3. Large corporations polluting the environment

Meanwhile, treatment group respondents get a fourth item, "a black family moving in next door." In analyzing these data, they find evidence that white residents of the South are more likely than those living elsewhere in the country to express anger at the idea of having a black neighbor, and Kuklinski, Cobb, and Gilens (1997) report that this prejudice is concentrated in white southern men.[6] To draw these inferences, the authors make use of difference-in-means tests across a series of independent variables of interest: differences between the south and the non-south, between those with a high school education against those with a college education, and the like.

This is the state of the art as it stands. Unfortunately, difference-in-means tests

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[5]This is not strictly true: there is no ambiguity when respondents claim that they do/believe none of the items on the list (indicating that they must have answered "no" to the sensitive item) or all of the items on the list (indicating that they must have answered "yes" to the sensitive item). In application, we may deal with this shortcoming by including at least one item on the list to which a large majority of respondents would be likely to say "yes," and/or make at least two items on the list fairly strongly negatively correlated with each other, so that respondents are likely to respond "no" to at least one or the other of them.

[6]Compare also the application of the list experiment to analyze public reactions to the nomination of Jewish candidates for high public office in the United States in Kane, Craig, and Wald (2004).

are very crude procedures, and make multivariate analysis highly impractical.[7] As a data *collection* procedure, the list experiment has considerable potential to nullify incentives for respondents to misrepresent themselves to interviewers. This potential is largely untapped, however, because data *analysis* procedures are severely limited. To make this technique a serious, viable option for more rigorous applications, we need a procedure to model statistically the underlying data-generating process of the list experiment so that we may analyze the resulting data multivariately, in the same fashion as we would were we running something akin to basic ordinary least-squares. Here, I detail a new procedure and statistical estimator to enable multivariate analysis of list experiment data, which I call *listit*. To do this, I make one important change in the data collection technique: although the question posed to treatment group respondents works exactly the same as before, members of the control group are asked each of the list items *individually*. This difference in application makes it possible to model the procedure statistically.

2.3   Modeling the List Experiment

Intuitively, the data generated by the list experiment appear to analysts as a count of "yes" responses ranging between zero and the total number of list items. This count, in turn, is comprised of a number of Bernoulli outcomes, but we would expect list items to differ in their probabilities of producing a "yes," meaning that list experiment data are not distributed binomially in a simple sense. Although we do not know the individual probabilities associated with each item, we do know the sample *average* probability across the entire list, which enables us to model the process as if it were binomial. We cannot yet make inferences about the sensitive item, however, because

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[7]Essentially the only way to achieve "multivariate" analysis is to repeatedly split the samples and run difference-of-means tests, which quickly runs into problems with degrees of freedom and is extremely problematic when the variable of interest is continuous (such as income) or continuous-like (such as years of education).

an infinite set of combinations of probabilities can produce the same average probability that we observe. It is for this reason that we ask control group respondents each of the list items individually, which enables us to reduce the number of unknown probabilities to one (the probability associated with the sensitive item) by estimating the individual probabilities of the non-sensitive items on control group respondents and using these estimates to identify the probability of the sensitive item.

Formally, the binomial distribution assumes that the probability π of observing each of K total possible instances on Y is independently and identically distributed, such that $E(Y) = K\pi$. Although the assumption of independence among the K possible outcomes is not unreasonable here, we enter the list experiment estimation procedure assuming that each $k_j \in K$ may (and probably does) have its own π_j. In this case, we may average over all π_j and use the mean probability $\bar{\pi} = \left(\sum_{j=1}^{K} \pi_j \right)/K$ to predict the observed outcome such that $E(Y) = K\bar{\pi}$.

Treatment group respondents receive a list of K items, one of which is sensitive and the remaining $K-1$ of which are not. We are only interested in the π_i^* associated with the sensitive item, and the remaining $K - 1$ items are present only to help us estimate π_i^*. Utilizing the notational convention whereby quantities associated with the sensitive item are marked with a star (*) and those associated with the remaining non-sensitive items are marked with a dagger (†), we may express the mean probability $\bar{\pi}_i$ as

$$\bar{\pi}_i = \left(\pi_i^* + \sum_{\dagger \neq *}^{K} \pi_i^{\dagger} \right) K^{-1}. \tag{2.2}$$

Rearranging terms in (2.2), allows us to express the probability π_i^* associated with the sensitive item as

$$\pi_i^* = K\bar{\pi}_i - \sum_{\dagger \neq *}^{K} \pi_i^{\dagger}. \tag{2.3}$$

We can model the data-generating process that produces π_i^* by assuming that this

probability is distributed logistically, such that

$$\ln \left(\frac{\pi_i^*}{1 - \pi_i^*} \right) = X_i^* \beta^*, \tag{2.4}$$

but because we do not observe π_i^* directly, but only $\bar{\pi}_i$, we must substitute (2.3) into (2.4). Rearranging terms to produce (2.5), we may express $\bar{\pi}_i$ in terms of β^*, the parameters of interest, as

$$\bar{\pi}_i = \left[\left(1 + e^{-X_i^* \beta^*} \right)^{-1} + \sum_{\dagger \neq *}^{K} \pi_i^\dagger \right] K^{-1}. \tag{2.5}$$

Note that the right-hand side of (2.5) includes the heretofore unknow probabilities $\pi_i^\dagger$ associated with the non-sensitive list items. Their presence in (2.5) is what necessitates the change in the administrative procedure. Although unknown, and although we have no data from the treatment group respondents from which to estimate these probabilities directly,[8] we may estimate them indirectly via data from control group respondents. More specifically, assuming that each $\pi_i^\dagger$ is distributed logistically according to some set of covariates $X^\dagger$, the unknown quantity is

$$\sum_{\dagger \neq *}^{K} \pi_i^\dagger = \sum_{\dagger \neq *}^{K} \left(1 + e^{-X_i^\dagger \beta^\dagger} \right)^{-1}. \tag{2.6}$$

The crucial trick is that the parameters $\beta^\dagger$ are estimated on data drawn from the control group, and these estimates are then subsequently applied to the values of their corresponding covariates among treatment group respondents. Doing so allows us to express (2.5) as

$$\bar{\pi}_i = \left[\left(1 + e^{-X_i^* \beta^*} \right)^{-1} + \sum_{\dagger \neq *}^{K} \left(1 + e^{-X_i^\dagger \beta^\dagger} \right)^{-1} \right] K^{-1}. \tag{2.7}$$

The task remaining is to estimate the coefficient vector β^*—the parameters asso-

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[8]Recall that treatment group respondents receive only the list of items, to which they provide one response, and not the individual list items one at a time.

ciated with the sensitive item—given what we know about the characteristics of the treatment group respondents and $\bar{\pi}_i$. We may, at this point, proceed with maximum likelihood estimation. The full likelihood function, $L \equiv L\big(\bar{\pi}_i, \pi_j^\dagger, y_i^*, y_j^\dagger, N_t, N_c\big),$[9] must account for $\bar{\pi}_i$ distributed binomial, as well as each $\pi_j^\dagger$ distributed Bernoulli, and may be expressed as

$$
\begin{aligned}
L = \prod_{i=1}^{N_t} &\left\{ \binom{K}{y_i^*} \left(\bar{\pi}_i\right)^{y_i^*} \left(1 - \bar{\pi}_i\right)^{K - y_i^*} \right\} \\
&\times \prod_{j=1}^{N_c} \prod_{\dagger \neq *}^{K} \left\{ \left(\pi_j^\dagger\right)^{y_j^\dagger} \left(1 - \pi_j^\dagger\right)^{1 - y_j^\dagger} \right\}.
\end{aligned}
\tag{2.8}
$$

Consequently, the log-likelihood function is

$$
\begin{aligned}
\ln L = \sum_{i=1}^{N_t} &\left\{ \ln \binom{K}{y_i^*} + y_i^* \ln \left(\bar{\pi}_i\right) + \left(k - y_i^*\right) \ln \left(1 - \bar{\pi}_i\right) \right\} \\
&+ \sum_{j=1}^{N_c} \sum_{\dagger \neq *}^{K} \left\{ y_j^\dagger \ln \left(\pi_j^\dagger\right) + \left(1 - y_j^\dagger\right) \ln \left(1 - \pi_j^\dagger\right) \right\},
\end{aligned}
\tag{2.9}
$$

and the derivative of $\ln L$ with respect to β is

$$
\begin{aligned}
\frac{\partial (\ln L)}{\partial \beta} = \sum_{i=1}^{N_t} &\left\{ y_i^* \left(\bar{\pi}_i\right)^{-1} \left(\frac{\partial \bar{\pi}_i}{\partial \beta}\right) \right. \\
&\left. + \left(K - y_i^*\right) \left(1 - \bar{\pi}_i\right)^{-1} \left(\frac{\partial (1 - \bar{\pi}_i)}{\partial \beta}\right) \right\} \\
&+ \sum_{j=1}^{N_c} \sum_{\dagger \neq *}^{K} \left\{ \left(y_j^\dagger - \pi_j^\dagger\right) X_j^\dagger \right\},
\end{aligned}
\tag{2.10}
$$

where $\partial \bar{\pi}_i / \partial \beta$ is

$$
\frac{\partial \bar{\pi}_i}{\partial \beta} = \left(\frac{X_i^* e^{-X_i^* \beta^*}}{\left(1 + e^{-X_i^* \beta^*}\right)^2} + \sum_{\dagger \neq *}^{K} \frac{X_i^\dagger e^{-X_i^\dagger \beta^\dagger}}{\left(1 + e^{-X_i^\dagger \beta^\dagger}\right)^2} \right) K^{-1}.
\tag{2.11}
$$

Setting $\partial \ln L / \partial \beta$ to zero and solving maximizes the log-likelihood with respect to the

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[9]Where y_i^* are treatment group responses to the list question, $y_j^\dagger$ are control group responses to the individual non-sensitive questions, and N_t and N_c are the treatment and control group sizes.

parameters. Note what we are estimating. The estimates of β^* are the estimates that would be returned *if* we had asked the sensitive item directly as a yes/no question *and* respondents had not misrepresented their answers. Interpreting the coefficient estimates requires no more of the analyst than the ability to interpret logit coefficients, because they *are* logit coefficients.

2.4 Monte Carlo Simulations

To explore the behavior of the new listit estimator, I subjected it to a series of Monte Carlo simulations while varying four key elements of the administrative procedure: total sample size, the proportion of the sample size comprised of control group respondents, list size, and the probabilities associated with the non-sensitive list items. For simplicity, I focus here on simulations run in batches of 1000 repetitions with an intercept term parameter of $\beta_0^* = 0$ and a single covariate parameter set to $\beta_1^* = 1$, although results are analogous with different parameter settings and additional covariates.

The procedure used for each repetition is as follows. I draw individual covariate values randomly from a uniform distribution bounded at zero and one, and thus $E(X_1) = 1/2$. I use these covariate values to calculate the probabilities for the single sensitive item (π_i^*) and the remaining non-sensitive items $(\pi_i^\dagger)$ via logistic processes, and from these probabilities draw the yes/no responses for the sensitive and non-sensitive items. The outcome variable for treatment group respondents is a single list composed by adding together their responses to the sensitive and non-sensitive items, and the outcome variables for control group respondents are the set of binary yes/no responses to each of the non-sensitive items. I then run the listit estimator on these simulated values—a single response vector in list format for treatment group respondents, $K-1$ response vectors in yes/no format for control group respondents, and the matrix of covariates—and record the results.

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Although the true parameter values for the sensitive item are constant (here, $\beta_0^* = 0$ and $\beta_1^* = 1$) across all administration procedure variations, I vary the parameter values for the non-sensitive items systematically in order to examine the effect of greater or lesser certainty in the non-sensitive outcomes, that is, the expected probability of a yes for each item. To do so, I utilize the fact that $E(X_1) = 1/2$ to calculate appropriate parameter estimates by setting the intercept parameters to 0 and calculating the necessary parameter for the covariate as $\beta_1^\dagger = \ln\left[\bar{\pi}^\dagger/(1-\bar{\pi}^\dagger)\right] \times 2$. Thus, for example, when the average probability of yes for a non-sensitive item is set to $1/4$, $\beta_1^\dagger \approx -2.197$, when set to $1/2$, $\beta_1^\dagger = 0$, and when set to $3/4$, $\beta_1^\dagger \approx 2.197$.[10]

To present results from the simulations, I focus on β_1^*, the parameter associated with the covariate (hereafter dropping the subscript), and b^*, the estimated parameter averaged across the 1000 repetitions. These results show that, across a variety of combinations of administrative procedures, $\beta^* = 1 \approx b^*$. Figure 2.1 shows a histogram of the parameter estimates with a sample size of 2000, half the respondents in the control group, a list size of 4, and an average off-item (i.e., non-sensitive item) probability of $3/4$ (these constitute the baseline administrative conditions used in subsequent figures). Figure 2.2 demonstrates that the listit estimator returns consistent parameter estimates under a variety of administrative procedure regimes.

Figure 2.3 displays how different administration procedures affect the standard errors of the estimates. First note that the average standard error estimate maps tightly onto the sample standard deviation of the parameter estimate: the listit estimator returns the correct standard errors.[11] Next, note how the degree of certainty around

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[10]These calculations follow directly from the assumption of a logistic data generating process whereby $\pi/(1-\pi) = e^{X\beta}$, and thus $X\beta = \ln\left[\pi/(1-\pi)\right]$. By setting the intercept term to 0 and given that $E(x) = 1/2$, we have $0 \times \beta_0 + (1/2) \times \beta_1 = \ln\left[\pi/(1-\pi)\right]$, and thus $\beta_1 = \ln\left[\pi/(1-\pi)\right] \times 2$.

[11]In other words, the average standard error estimate is the standard error returned by the listit estimator and averaged over the 1000 repetitions. The sample standard deviation is the standard deviation of the coefficient estimates over the 1000 repetitions.
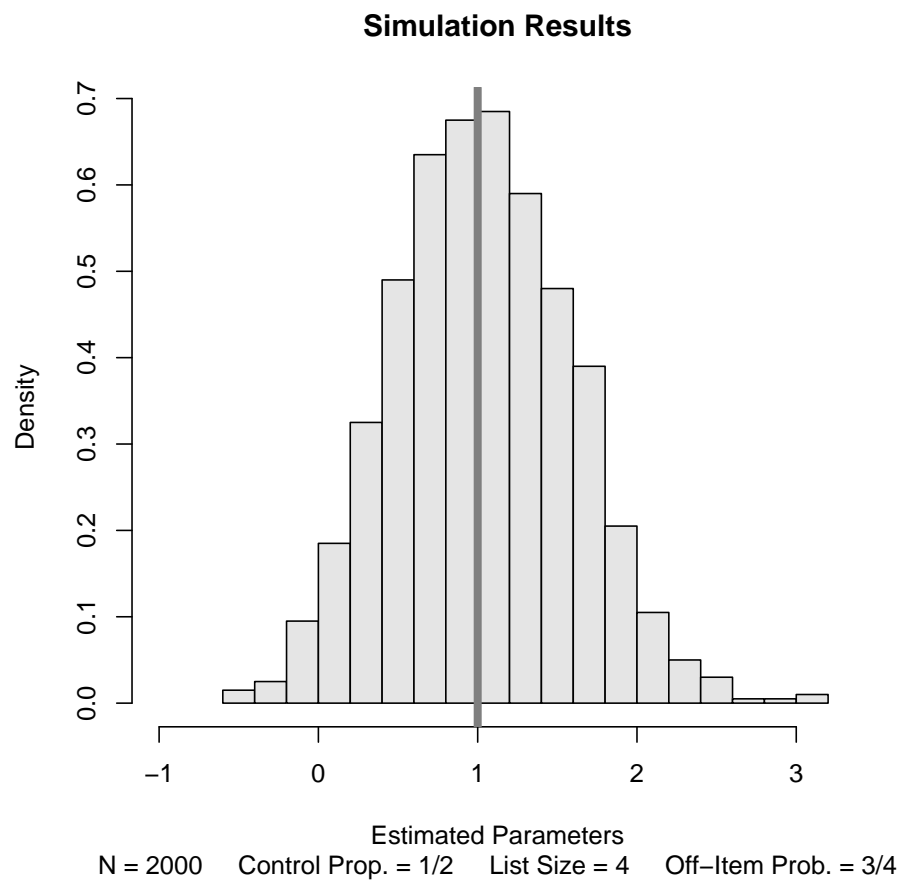
Simulation Results

Density

Estimated Parameters

N = 2000   Control Prop. = 1/2   List Size = 4   Off−Item Prob. = 3/4

Figure 2.1: Coefficient Estimate Distribution
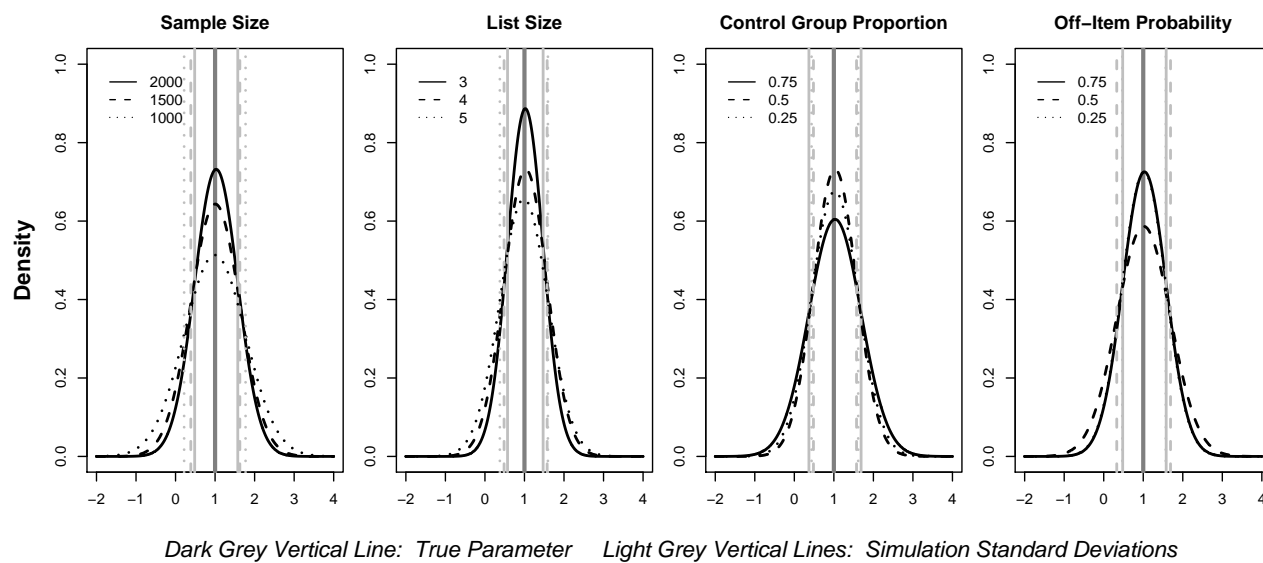
Figure 2.2: Estimates By Various Administrative Procedures

the coefficient point estimates varies with different administrative procedures. First, standard errors shrink at a decreasing rate at the sample size grows, as expected. Second, there is a curvilinear relationship between point estimate uncertainty and the proportion of respondents in the control group. Standard errors are at their smallest when the proportion is about half of the sample size, but differences in the magnitude of the uncertainty only become substantial when the proportion approaches extreme values. Third, standard errors appear to increase at approximately a constant rate with list size, implying that the uncertainty "penalty" analysts must pay to grant respondents anonymity does not become increasingly costlier as the list size grows. Finally, the relationship between point estimate uncertainty and the uncertainty of the non-sensitive items is also curvilinear. Standard errors are at their maximum when we are least certain on the non-sensitive outcomes—i.e., when there are equal chances of a yes or a no—and shrink on either side of the midpoint.[12] This result is consistent with the intuitive idea that greater certainty in the non-sensitive items enables us to guess answers to the sensitive item because we "know" more about the underlying composition of the list answers than if we are more uncertain about the answers to the non-sensitive items.

Finally, note that, under extreme conditions, the estimation procedure can break down, returning non-credibly large or small parameter estimates or otherwise failing to converge. Although this can occur with extreme values of the control group proportion and the off-item probability, I focus here on estimation breakdowns with small sample sizes. Figure 2.4 charts the failure rate of the estimation procedure for sample sizes between 100 and 1000 respondents, defining a failure as either a non-convergence, or an estimate three (corrected)[13] standard deviations above or below

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[12]The mean of a variable distributed Bernoulli is π with variance $1 - \pi$, and consequently we have the most uncertainty (largest variance) when $\pi = 1/2$.

[13]Failures resulting in non-credibly large (small) estimates cause the mean standard errors and

Effects of Question Administration Procedures on Standard Errors

Base: Sample Size = 2000   Control Proportion = 1/2   List Size = 4   Off−Item Probability = 3/4

Filled Squares: Simulation Standard Deviations   Empty Triangles: Average Estimated Standard Errors
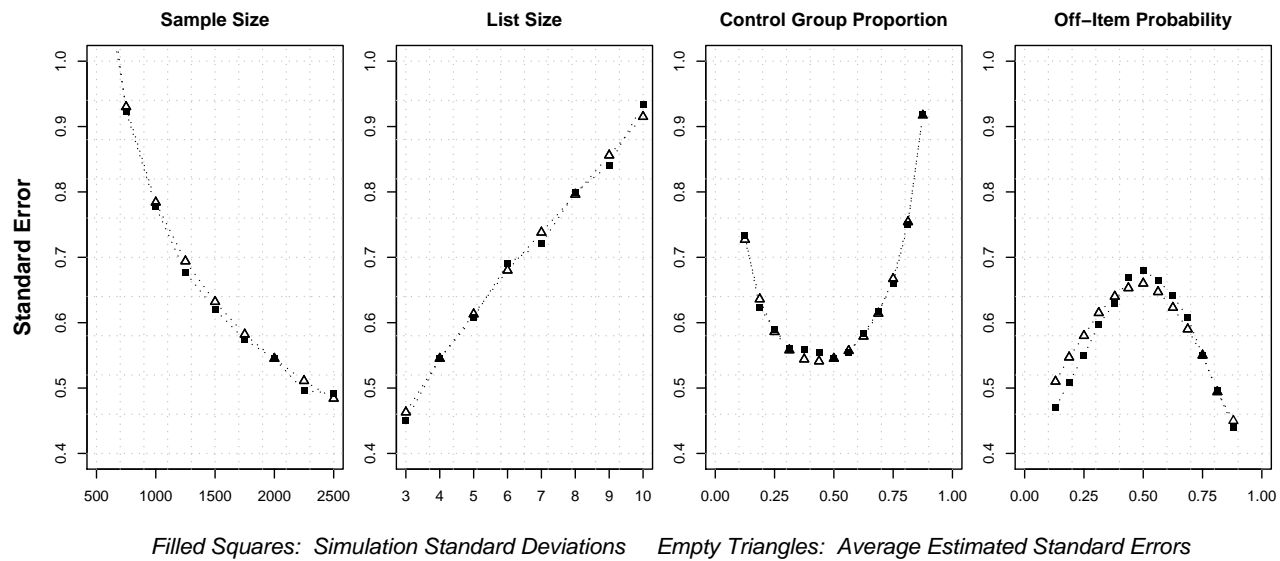
Figure 2.3: Standard Errors By Various Administrative Procedures

the mean.[14] Note that the failure rate is large at very small sample sizes, with failures occurring in approximately 150 of 1000 repetitions for a sample size of 100, but quickly growing smaller as sample size increases, with hardly any occurring once the sample size reaches about 1000 respondents. Although these breakdowns are likely to be at least partially the result of numeric limitations in the application of optimization algorithms (and thus may diminish as the coding improves),[15] early results suggest that this estimation procedure is not appropriate for small sample sizes, both due to the possibility of an estimation breakdown as well as the large standard errors returned at low sample sizes. In application, this suggests that the list experiment procedure may not be suitable for small-sample elite surveys, but rather works for mainstream mass attitude surveys utilizing larger sample sizes on the order of about 1000 respondents or more.

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sample standard deviations to balloon. I calculate the "correct" standard errors in the following manner, utilizing the formula that the standard error equals the standard deviation divided by the square root of the sample size. I first obtain the "true" standard deviation by multiplying the mean standard error for a simulation batch with a sample size of 2000 by the square-root of 2000 ($N = 2000$ chosen because the procedure appears very well-behaved at this point), and then recalculate the "corrected" standard errors for the smaller sample sizes by dividing this "true" standard deviation by the square-roots of the sample sizes. This procedure is of course not exact, but it is intended only to demonstrate the magnitude of the estimation breakdowns.

[14]Note that 1 minus the standard normal density at three standard deviations is approximately 0.001, i.e., 1 in 1000, and thus we should expect one "failure" per batch of 1000 repetitions under normal conditions.

[15]All simulations were conducted using the `optim` function in R, utilizing analytic log-likelihoods and first derivatives. Although the listit procedure is functional as scripted, I make no pretense that it is coded optimally.

Estimation Failure
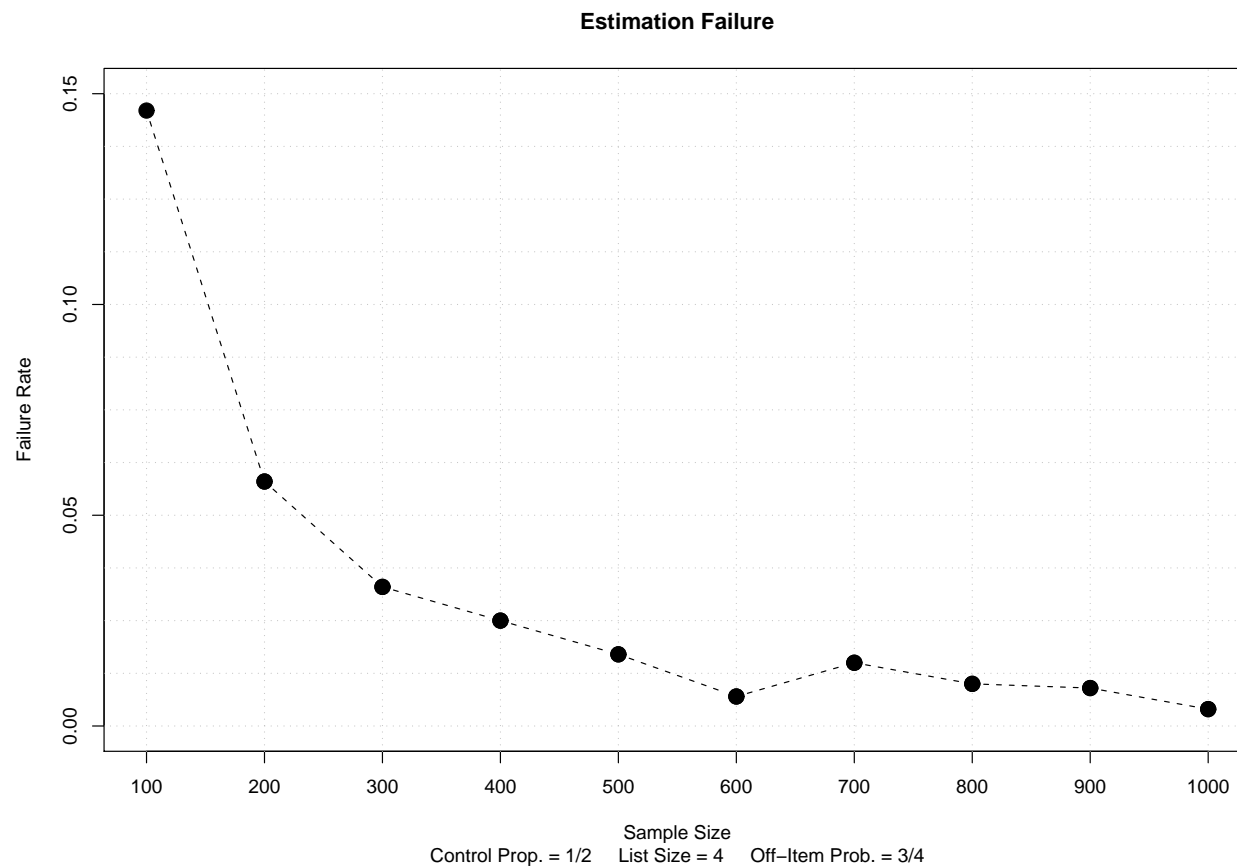
Figure 2.4: Estimation Failures

2.5 Field Test in Lebanon

In this section, I provide an overview of the first field test of the revised list experiment administration procedure and the new listit statistical estimator. This field test is based on an original public opinion survey conducted in Lebanon in the fall of 2005, designed to study mass attitudes toward ethnic (sectarian) politics and government institutions; the specific topic of study addressed here is the extension of voting rights. I first provide a very brief summary of the political and social context in Lebanon from which these data arise in Section 2.5. I next overview the ramifications of different suffrage regimes in Lebanon as a way to motivate rival hypotheses about the factors that influence support for the broad extension of the suffrage. I then proceed to the data analysis itself in Section 3.4, using the list experiment and listit estimation procedure to adjudicate between these rival hypotheses.

The field test analysis is based on data drawn from an original mass political attitude survey designed to study ethnic politics, institutional preferences, and the distribution of resources in Lebanon. Respondents were drawn randomly from a stratified sample of Lebanese adults across all provinces and religious communities, for a sample size of 1000 individuals. Beirut-based MADMA Co. administered the face-to-face interviews in the fall of 2005, in a period approximately equally distant from the spring 2005 pullout of the Syrian armed forces from Lebanon and the summer 2006 Israel-Hizballah armed conflict. MADMA's sample frame is based on household demographics surveys conducted in the late-1990s by the Lebanese government on tens of thousands of households, for which the president of MADMA was a consultant. Given the absence of official census data due to political sensitivity—the last census was conducted in 1932—this represents among the most reliable sample frames available in practice. The overall response rate was 70 percent, which did not vary significantly between members of the religious communities.

Lebanese Sectarian Politics

Section 2.5 provides a very brief explanation of the importance of sectarian politics in Lebanon, the key points of which are as follows.[16] First, sectarian (ethnic) cleavages are among the most salient in Lebanese politics. Second, these sectarian cleavages overlap with socioeconomic status differences, and despite significant within-community variation, Christian Lebanese are generally the wealthiest and best educated, and Shia Lebanese are on average the poorest and least educated. Third, the quota system defining the representation of the different religious communities in the formal institutions of the state is unequitable from a perspective based purely on demographic weight, with Christians somewhat overrepresented and Shiites especially underrepresented. These three broad contextual factors are important when considering attitudes toward voting rights, the subject of the data analysis.

Importance of sectarian cleavages. Lebanese society is a plural one, with its population distributed among close to 20 religious sects—mostly various branches of Christianity and Islam—none of which individually comprises a majority of the population. Although the Christian communities combined constituted the majority as of independence in 1943, subsequent demographic changes in the form of differential birthrates and emigration patterns have shifted the balance in favor of the Muslim sects writ large. Particularly notable has been the growth of the Shia Muslim community, formerly the smallest of the "big three" sects (along with Maronite Christians and Sunni Muslims), but now widely acknowledged to be the most populous single sect in Lebanon. Although religion provides the nominal boundaries of social group membership, political disputes are rarely over religious issues. Instead, Lebanese

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[16]I make no attempt to cover all of the intricacies of Lebanese public life, which at times can appear exceptionally Byzantine, but rather adopt the goal of providing sufficient background to enable readers with minimal prior exposure to the country to follow the arguments made and the rationale for the variables selected for analysis in Section 3.4.

politics are largely sectarian, taking on the general dynamics of ethnic politics in which the sects function as ethnic groups or, using the common Lebanese pejorative, "tribes."

Sectarian cleavages and socioeconomic disparities. A notable feature of Lebanese society is that sectarian affiliations are highly salient, and further, these affiliations correlate with socioeconomic status. Despite significant variation within communities, Christians are perceived to be richer, well-educated, and hold higher-status occupations such as lawyers and doctors,[17] and Shiites are perceived as poor, ignorant, and to hold low-status jobs such as day laborers and farmers.[18] Although this characterization was more accurate in the first few decades of independence, and despite the growth of a wealthier and educated middle class within the Shia community, the basic tropes about community differences persist. These stereotypes are based in part on conventional wisdom and in part on objective conditions, with Shia-majority areas of the country generally much poorer, less developed, and less connected to basic government services and infrastructure than other areas.[19]

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[17] According to survey results, Christians have attained significantly higher levels of education than have Muslims in general, as well as greater facility with foreign languages (particularly French, the language of the former Mandatory power and the adopted language of high culture), although there is little sampling difference between Sunni and Shia respondents on these measures.

[18] Anecdotally, the party newspaper of the Amal Movement, one of the two major Shia political parties along with Hizballah, is subject to considerable dark humor. One version of a prevailing joke is that the interior pages are blank because Amal members do not read. For more thorough accounts of the Shia in Lebanon, see, among others, Ajami (1986), Madini (1999ع), Fahs (1996ع), Gharib (2001ع), and Norton (1987).

[19] The principle areas of Shia population concentrations are in the South and Bekaa Valley provinces, and the southern suburbs of Beirut, the capital. Compare the description of the "misery belt" around Beirut and conditions in the South and Bekaa in Hudson (1968) with more contemporary accounts in Gaspard (2004) and Makdisi (2004).

Political malrepresentation of the sects. The Lebanese political system is based on power-sharing arrangements and a quota system dating back to the period of the French Mandate with antecedents in the Ottoman era, with seats in parliament and positions in the civil service distributed among the sects, and certain high positions of state reserved for particular communities. Decades of change upset the demographic balance on which this power distribution was initially based, and the country resurrected a modified version of the original system at the end of its 1975–1990 civil war that partially but incompletely redressed these imbalances by shifting some political power away from the Christian and toward the Muslim communities. Despite these reforms, however, Christians remain somewhat overrepresented in the formal distribution of power, and the Shia in particular face the largest degree of malrepresentation as compared to their respective shares of the population.[20] Most post-war political and social issues have retained a strong sectarian character. Although the bloc nature of these communities is often overstated, it is clear that the communities and their elites guard their prerogatives with care. Christians watch with anxiety as their population share erodes, Shiites with resentment as their population centers continue to be provided with comparatively meager government services and infrastructure, and non-Shiites with suspicion as Hizballah continues to grow in influence within the Shia community.

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[20]At independence, parliamentary representation was set to a 6:5 ratio between Christian and Muslim deputies—based on the Christian majority in the 1932 census of dubious accuracy—with a dominant (Maronite Christian) president, weak (Sunni Muslim) prime minister, and weaker still (Shia Muslim) speaker of parliament. The post-war reforms changed the parliamentary deputy ratio to parity, and strengthened the prime minister, cabinet, and speaker of parliament while diminishing the powers of the president. No census has been conducted since 1932 due to the political sensitivity of the results, but population estimates suggest that the Christian communities combined now account for around 40 percent of the population, and the Shia community is now the largest single sect (around 30 percent of the population, although estimates as high as 50 percent exist).

Voting Rights Under Ethnic Competition

Given the ramifications of who has the right to vote on eventual electoral and policy outcomes, we might wonder how ethnic (sectarian) competition influences attitudes toward the extension of the suffrage. In particular, we might wonder if attitudes are responsive to social group identity, or if they are responsive to socioeconomic differences that overlap with this group identity. In Lebanon's case, given the three broad points discussed in Section 2.5—the importance of sectarian cleavages, their overlap with socioeconomic status, and the underrepresentation of the largest and poorest community in the state's formal institutions—we might wonder if attitudes vary according to sectarian identity or according to socioeconomic conditions. If the former is true, we would expect Shiites, given their demographic plurality and their malrepresentation in government, to be particularly supportive of the most permissive view on voting rights, and to do so because they are Shiites rather than because they are poor. If the latter is true, we would expect poorer individuals to be particularly supportive of the broadest possible application of the suffrage for its redistributive repercussions, and to do so because they are poor rather than because they are members of particular communities.

Although these rival hypotheses are reasonably straightforward and make mutually exclusive predictions, adjudicating between them is significantly complicated by the fact that the extension of the suffrage is a sensitive topic, and answers to direct questions about who should have the right to vote likely suffer from response bias. First, the extension of voting rights, apart from their distributional consequences, is a normative question for which there is a clear socially desirable response in favor of universal voting rights.[21] Yet apart from these normative considerations, universal

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[21]Although restrictions on certain classes of individuals—resident aliens, minors, expatriates, and so on—are common across democracies and differences of opinion on these restrictions are accepted as legitimate, most countries have constitutional clauses against discrimination based on race, religion,

(or near-universal) suffrage also has significant redistributive repercussions, as the nineteenth-century debate in Europe over the extension of voting rights beyond the propertied classes demonstrated. Given the stylized fact that poorer people prefer more redistribution, we might expect wealthier individuals to be sympathetic to attempts to restrict the impact of the poor vote, but to be restrained from saying so given the normative implications of such a discriminatory restriction.

Given the discussion above, we might expect questions about the extension of the suffrage to be sensitive in Lebanon, and particularly so for *Shia* respondents. Recall that, despite the prevailing conventional wisdom that Shiites are generally poor and uneducated, there is nonetheless significant variation within this community, including a relatively new middle class as well as an upper class composed of both old and new money. In a recent study on the Shiites of the South (considered among the most backward in the community), one researcher noted that the individuals most disapproving of her choice of topic were well-heeled, educated Shiites "who embraced traditional urbane Lebanese formulas and prejudices with even more francophone fervor than their Christian compatriots" because the topic "touched an unhappy chord in their own identity" (Chalabi 2006, 1). Such individuals are caught between possibly conflicting influences: community-based interests to grant the broadest possible voting rights given their community's underrepresentation in power, and economic interests to limit the impact of the poor vote and thus the scope of redistribution. Given the importance of sectarianism in Lebanese politics and political discourse, however, it is particularly difficult to express support for policies that could disadvantage one's community against the others, making restriction of the franchise particularly sensitive for Shiites.

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ethnic group, sex, and so on.

Data analysis

Given the sensitivity due to the sectarian implications of extending or restricting the suffrage, as well as the normative implications that make broadly extended voting rights the socially desirable answer, I employ a list experiment procedure to analyze Lebanese preferences over who gets the right to vote. In particular, I use this procedure to adjudicate between the two rival hypotheses outlined in Section 2.5, the first being that preferences follow from sectarian affiliation, and the second being that preferences follow from material conditions regardless of sectarian affiliation.

I conducted this experiment in the context of important political changes in Lebanon which made debates over government institutions and electoral procedures particularly widespread. After the domestic political balance was upended by the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005, the subsequent mass demonstrations, and the Syrian pullout from the country, the public debate over electoral institutions and electoral laws took on added salience in the lead-up to the parliamentary elections held in late-spring of that year. Although the main discussion was over the relative merits of small versus large districts and proportional representation versus plurality voting, a sub-thread of this debate was a discussion of who should be allowed to vote at all. In particular, the question centered on young Lebanese and expatriates. Although the voting age is 21, many wanted it reduced to 18, while others pressed for the extension of voting rights to expatriates. Although both proposals would have sectarian implications, proponents and detractors on both issues discussed their positions openly.[22]

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[22]In particular, the more vocal supporters of reducing the voting age to 18 tended to be Muslim given that the Muslim communities are younger than the Christian communities, although numerous Christian leaders made public declarations of support for reducing the voting age as well. Meanwhile, the most vocal supporters of extending voting rights to expatriates tended to be Christian given the large size of the Christian expatriate community, although numerous Muslim leaders expressed willingness to support expatriate voting as well.

The list experiment was conducted as follows. After splitting the sample randomly into treatment and control groups on a 3:1 ratio,[23] all respondents were read the following prompt:

> There has been some debate recently over who should have the right to vote in Lebanese elections. I'll read you some different groups of people: please tell me if they should be allowed to vote or not.

Respondents were then given the following list of options:

1. Young people between the ages of 18 to 21

2. Lebanese expatriates living abroad

3. Illiterate people

4. Palestinians without Lebanese citizenship

Control group respondents were asked to give yes or no responses to each of the items individually. Treatment group respondents were asked to answer how many of the groups should be allowed to vote and not which ones.[24]

I selected the first and second groups, young adults and expatriates, based on the fact that their voting rights were salient and openly discussed in Lebanese public discourse, and thus helped to validate the prompt for respondents that there had

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[23]I chose to put three-quarters of the sample in the treatment group to ensure a sufficiently large number of responses should treatment group respondents not understand the procedure or else refuse to answer, although in retrospect these cautions were unnecessary and a more optimal 1:1 ratio split would have not have caused problems in practice.

[24]More specifically, treatment group respondents were prompted with the following statement, which replicates the prompt used in older applications of the list experiment:

> I'm going to read you the whole list, and then I want you to tell me *how many* of the different groups you think should be allowed to vote. *Don't tell me which ones*, just tell me how many.

recently been debate over who should have the right to vote.[25] I selected the fourth group, non-citizen Palestinians, to provide respondents with a group to whom most would not grant voting rights, and thus minimizing the chance that a respondent would say yes to all of the list items. The third group, illiterate people, is the sensitive option. Although there are plausible and socially-acceptable reasons for restricting the franchise in the cases of the other options listed, preventing people from voting simply due to low educational status is difficult to justify in normative terms. Further, in addition to the distributive implications of voting rights for illiterates—who are almost certainly poor and sympathetic to redistribution—there are also sectarian implications. In particular, "illiterate people" can be perceived as an indirect way of discussing Shiites given the conventional wisdom and stereotypes that persist in Lebanon's sectarian rank-ordering.

To adjudicate between rival hypotheses and to assess the impact of sensitivity on responses, I analyzed attitudes toward voting rights for illiterate people when the question is asked directly, and when it is asked indirectly via the list experiment. The former comes from control group yes/no responses to the "illiterate people" item on the list. Note that responses to this question are unnecessary for the purposes of analyzing the list experiment data (and thus ordinarily it need not be asked at all), but I asked it of control group respondents in order to provide a comparison between the direct and indirect means of eliciting respondent attitudes. For both estimation procedures, logit for the direct question and listit for the indirect list question, I utilized the same set of explanatory variables.

The first set of covariates comprises three community dummy variables, *Shia*, *Sunni*, and *Muslim Minority* (for Druze and Alawi respondents), making Christians

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[25]It is plausible that, without at least some list items grounded in actual public debate, respondents may be prompted by the novelty of the list options to look for the indirect rationale for asking the question—precisely what the analyst does *not* want. This point is an administrative rather than mechanical issue, and as such should be subject to further social psychological inquiry.

the baseline category. Because the question asks about voting rights for illiterate people, I control for *Education*, a five-point indicator rescaled 0–1 for ease of interpretation.[26] As a measure of material well-being and access to basic government services, I used *Electricity*, which is the average number of hours per day the electricity is off in the respondent's home, modeled with a square-root transformation.[27] Finally, I included *Deconfess*, an indicator variable taking on the value of 1 when respondents cited "the people" in an open-response question to who they believe would benefit most from the deconfessionalization of the parliament (i.e., removing the sectarian quotas for seats), and 0 otherwise.[28] *Deconfess* provides a measure of respondent attitudes toward fuller democratization in the majoritarian sense.[29]

If the sectarian affiliation hypothesis is correct, we should see a positive, statistically significant coefficient on *Shia*, indicating that Shiites are relatively more supportive than Christians (the baseline) of allowing illiterate people to vote—indicating

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[26]The question asks for the highest level of education the respondent has reached, with the following categories: Illiterate, Primary, Secondary, Bachelor's Degree, and Master's Degree or Higher.

[27]Using an alternate transformation of the natural log of one plus the number of hours produces qualitatively similar results. Note that electricity is provided by the much-maligned state-run electrical company, كهرباء لبنان–*Électricité du Liban* (`www.edl.gov.lb`). Note also that, unfortunately, large numbers of respondents refused to answer standard income questions, making it infeasible to measure material well-being with such an indicator.

[28]The open-response question text reads as: "Which Lebanese group do you think benefits the most from deconfessionalization of the parliament? This could be any group, for instance, a political party, a sectarian group, the middle class, or whatever." I categorized answers as "the people" when respondents used clear variants on that phrase, including such options as "citizens" or "the nation" (other answers given included particular parties, leaders, sects, and social classes). In the full sample, 705 respondents (70 percent) gave this answer, whereas in the community sub-samples, 66 percent of Shiites, 87 percent of Sunnis, 61 percent of Christians, and 46 percent of Muslim Minorities answered with "the people."

[29]Note that 241 of 251 (96 percent) of control group respondents answered in the affirmative for extending the suffrage to youths age 18–21, and 9 of 210 (4 percent) supported non-citizen Palestinian voting rights. Due to the fact that youth *no*s and Palestinian yeses are rare events which makes modeling with covariates unstable, I use the covariates described in the main text as predictors only for attitudes on voting rights for illiterate people and expatriates, whereas the youth and Palestinian list items are modeled with intercept terms only.

that they are more supportive precisely because they are Shia. If the material welfare hypothesis is correct, we should expect to see no significant results on any of the community indicators, but rather a positive coefficient on *Electricity*, indicating that poorer individuals who lack access to basic services are more likely to support illiterate voting rights, and to do so because they are poor rather than members of a particular community.

	LOGIT			LISTIT		
	b	se(b)		b	se(b)	
Shia	**2.017**	**0.775**	†	−0.351	0.953	
Sunni	0.372	0.500		−0.517	0.949	
Muslim Minority	−0.577	0.772		−0.439	1.365	
Electricity	**0.259**	**0.172**		**0.880**	**0.310**	†
Deconfess	0.531	0.440		1.619	0.968	·
Education	−1.279	0.953		−0.348	1.332	
Intercept	0.936	0.824		−1.341	1.036	
$\ln L$	−92.182			−951.918		
N_t	238			714		
N_c	· · ·			195		

$$p \leq 0.01^{\dagger} \qquad p \leq 0.05^{\star} \qquad p \leq 0.10^{\cdot}$$

Table 2.1: Experiment Results

Table 2.1 reports results in two columns: estimates from a standard logistic regression procedure applied to responses to the direct question asked of control group respondents (left), and estimates from a listit procedure applied to treatment group responses to the indirect question asked in the list format (right). Note that, because the coefficients returned by the listit procedure are in fact logit coefficients, the parameter estimates are directly comparable between the columns. Let us first examine what happens when we ask the question directly as if it were not sensitive and subject to response bias. As the left column of Table 2.1 reports, the only statistically significant factor influencing attitudes toward illiterate voting rights is membership in the Shia community. The very large, positive coefficient on *Shia* indicates that Shiites are much more likely to support illiterate voting rights and, because there

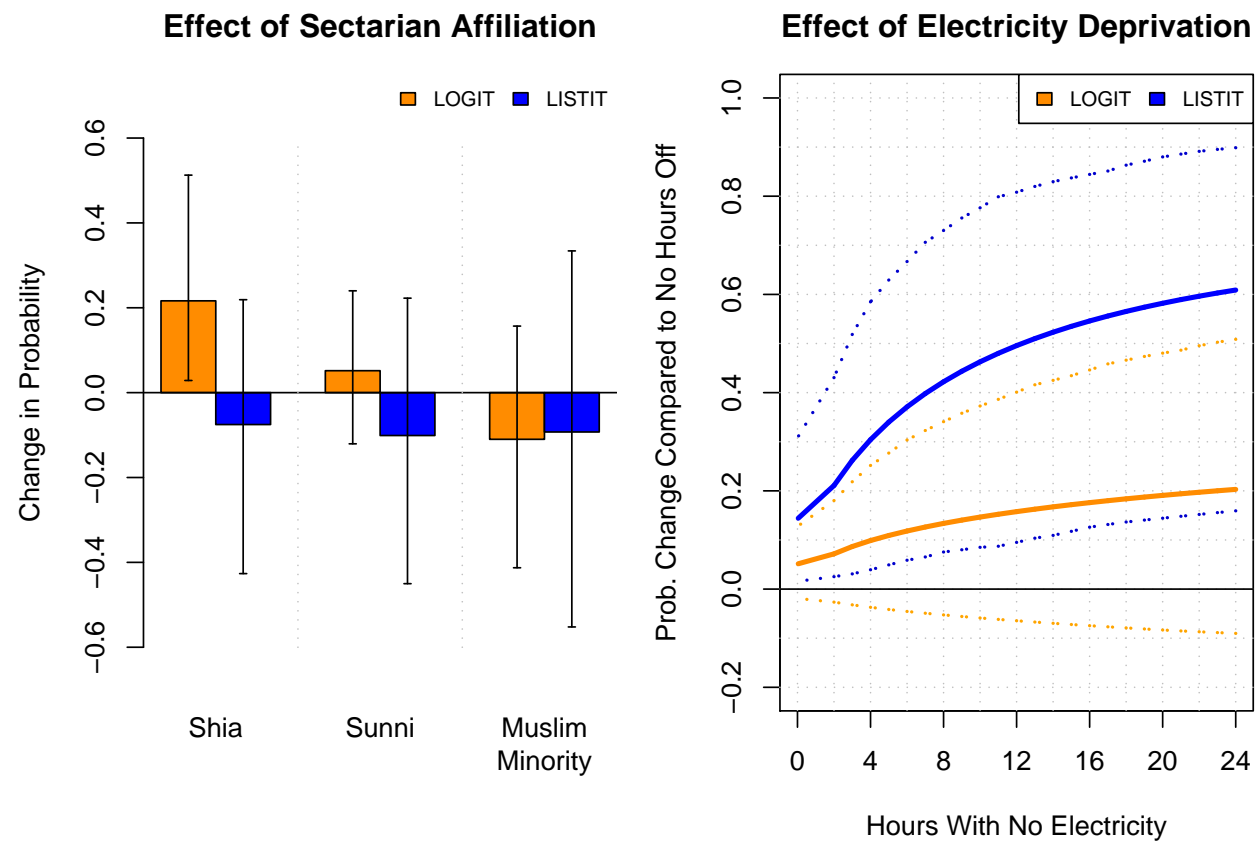# Support for Illiterate Voting Rights

Effect of Sectarian Affiliation

Effect of Electricity Deprivation

Figure 2.5: Probability Differences, $Deconfess = 0$
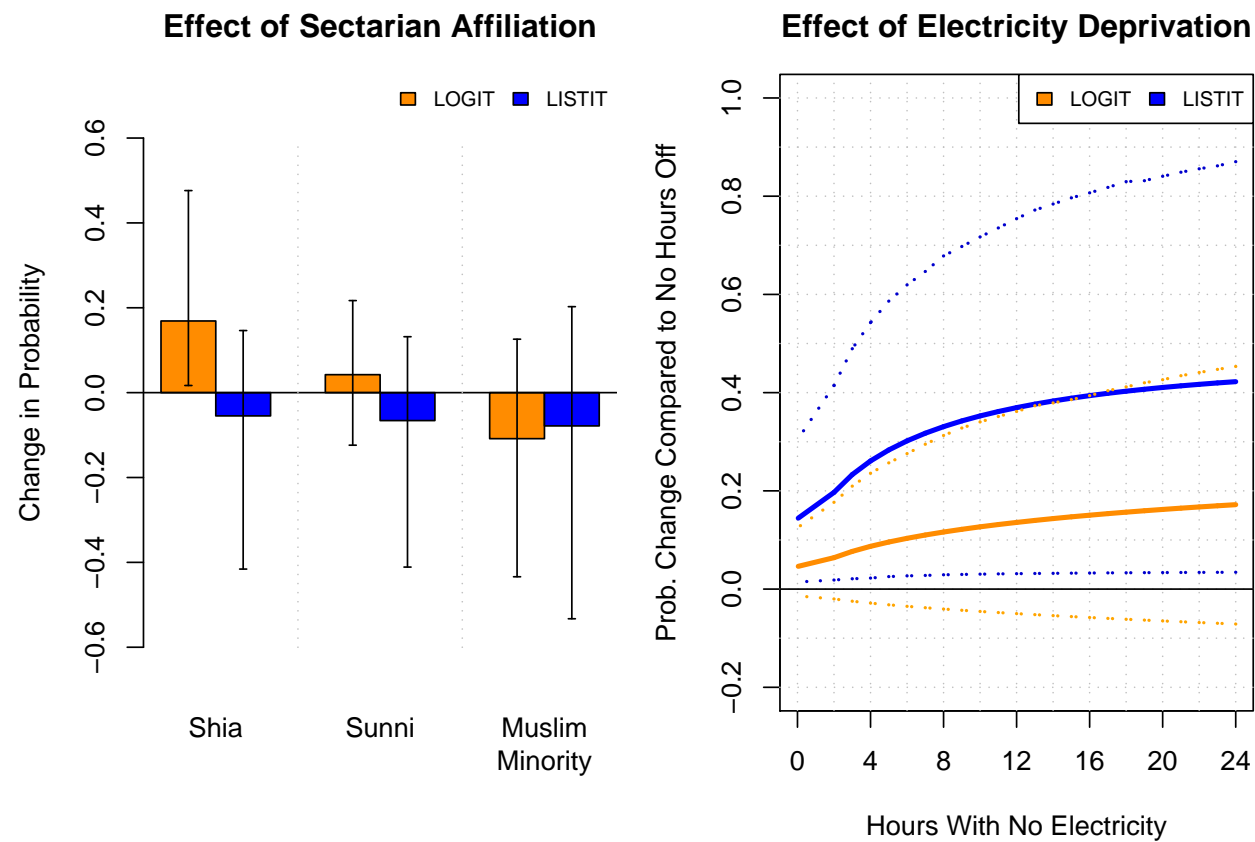
Support for Illiterate Voting Rights

Figure 2.6: Probability Differences, $Deconfess = 1$

are no statistically discernible effects associated with material conditions, to be more supportive because they are Shiite than because they are poor. These findings, if taken at face value, provide evidence in favor of the sectarian affiliation hypothesis, and against the material conditions hypothesis.

Let us now compare this first set of findings with what happens when we acknowledge and attempt to neutralize the sensitivity of the voting rights question by asking it indirectly via the list experiment. A brief glance at the two columns indicates that the estimates differ in substantively crucial ways and yield qualitatively different interpretations. First, after accounting for the sensitivity of the question, there are no direct sectarian community effects. The *Shia* coefficient shrinks dramatically to less than a fifth of its original magnitude, and the point estimate actually becomes negative. No community effects are even close to statistical significance, with standard errors that are roughly two to three times the size of their respective coefficient estimates. Second, the effect of material conditions is now both statistically and substantively very significant. The coefficient on *Electricity* is more than three times larger than reported in the direct question model, indicating that increasing deprivation leads to greater support for illiterate voting rights. Further, *Deconfess*, the effect of which was modest and statistically insignificant in the direct question model, is now substantively large as well as statistically significant (albeit at the marginal $p \leq .10$ level), indicating that individuals predisposed to fuller democratization in the majoritarian sense are also more likely to support voting rights for illiterates. Figures 2.5 and 2.6 illustrate these effects graphically as first differences with 95-percent confidence intervals around those differences.[30]

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[30]The left panel in either figure is the difference in probability of support between the named community and baseline Christians with *Education* set to the sample median and *Electricity* set to the sample mean. The right panel tracks the differences in probability compared to a baseline respondent whose electricity was never off, with *Education* set to the sample median. Figure 2.5 shows the effects when *Deconfess* is set to 0 (i.e., the respondent did not cite "the people"), and Figure 2.6 shows the effects when *Deconfess* is set to 0 (i.e., the respondent cited "the people").

In short, when asking a direct question about illiterate voting rights as if it were not sensitive, we get a sectarian answer: Shiites are more supportive of illiterate voting because they are Shiites. If, however, we acknowledge the question's sensitivity and attempt to do something about it by asking it indirectly, we find that support does not vary according to community membership, but according to individual material conditions. Shiites on the whole might be more supportive of illiterate voting, but this is because they are poorer than members of the other communities, and not because they are Shiites—and analogous conclusions follow for Christians, Sunnis, Druze, and so on. Hence, attempting to neutralize the sensitivity of the voting rights question via the list experiment yields *polar opposite inferences* from the ones we can make when we do not attempt to account for this sensitivity.

2.6   Discussion

In this paper, I have discussed some of the problems we encounter when attempting to study sensitive topics with self-reported survey data, and demonstrated how such data can be exceedingly misleading when we attempt to draw inferences. Although the list experiment (item count technique) provides a promising means for data *collection* when dealing with sensitive topics, this promise has been largely untapped due to a lack of adequate means to analyze these data. Here, I have extended the usefulness of the list experiment by improving our capacity for data *analysis* by deriving a new statistical estimator, listit, that enables us to employ multivariate analysis on list experiment data. I explored the properties of this estimator with Monte Carlo simulations, showing that listit returns consistent coefficient estimates, and that the degree of certainty about these estimates depends in part on how we administer the procedure to respondents. I then provided a first, practical application of this new procedure using original survey data from Lebanon, demonstrating how inferences can change dramatically when we acknowledge and attempt to neutralize the sensitivity

of the questions we ask.

Although I used Lebanese survey data to study attitudes toward illiterate voting rights when conducting the first field test of the new procedure, readers will undoubtedly have little difficulty in imagining applications of the list experiment to substantive questions and research venues chosen to fit their specific interests. Given the wide range of sensitive topics studied in the social sciences—race and politics, corruption, drug use, tax evasion, sexuality, support for terrorism, and the list goes on—there is clearly a large and diverse body of work that can make use of the improved list experiment procedure to address one of the most glaring and seemingly intractible problems on the practical data analysis side: question sensitivity. As the theoretical development of the response bias problem and the results from the Lebanon field test demonstrate, attempting to neutralize these sensitivity effects can have very marked effects on the inferences we are able to draw.

In particular, this suggests that those stylized facts about sensitive topics that have emerged iteratively from self-reported empirical data—findings that originated in data exploration, followed by theorizing, followed by more data exploration, and so on—should probably be reexamined with a procedure such as the list experiment. Although the original findings may very well hold up, if the initial data-derived explanations were in fact derived from faulty data suffering from sensitivity and response bias, a significant rewrite of the stylized facts may be in order. Further, question sensitivity may also help account for hypotheses originating in well-grounded theory that inexplicably have not held up well to empirics. Although it is always possible (albeit disappointing to its author) that a given hypothesis is simply wrong, it is also possible that the hypothesis is correct but response bias prevents the analyst from finding empirical support for it. This is not meant to be a call for a wholesale reexamination of discarded hypotheses, but rather to suggest that a common difficulty—good theory, no reliable way to test it—may no longer be quite so insurmountable if the

primary difficulty is question sensitivity.

The extended list experiment procedure developed in this paper is not without costs and limitations, of course. First, there is an unavoidable precision cost associated with using the list experiment procedure. Although the list experiment may help us neutralize incentives for respondents to misrepresent themselves and thus enables us to estimate consistent coefficients, the standard errors around these point estimates are non-trivially larger than they would be *if* we were able to ask the question directly *and* there were no response bias. This comparison is a somewhat misleading one to make, however, because we really do not have this choice to make in practice. If sensitivity is a characteristic of the data-generating process, we cannot assume or wish it away, but we can do something about it by acknowledging and attempting to neutralize it. Hence, larger standard errors are simply the cost of doing business when the question is sensitive. Further, it is a cost we should gladly pay: precise estimates around the wrong answer are precisely wrong, and far worse than more tentative estimates around the right answer.

Further, the precision of these estimates may be manipulated by changing elements of the question administration procedure. In some senses, precision is one of those rare issues that may, all else equal, be improved simply by throwing money at it: paying to administer more interviews increases the sample size and thus decreases the size of the standard errors at the familiar rate of quadrupling the sample size to halve the standard errors. Two other manipulations are available: changing the size of the list itself, and selecting non-sensitive list items that are more or less "sure things." Monte Carlo results show that standard errors are at their lowest when the list size is small and we are almost certain of the answer to non-sensitive items. Yet there is an important note of caution to make before choosing these administrative procedure parameters: the anonymity of the list experiment must appear credible to the *respondents*, not to the analysts. This, in turn, is no longer simply a mechanical issue, but

rather a social psychological one. The list size must be big enough for respondents to feel comfortable that their answers to the sensitive question are unidentifiable, and how big "big enough" must be is a question that requires psychological study.

Likewise, how respondents perceive the non-sensitive list items is a psychological rather than mechanical question. Items that are practically "sure things" are mechanically desirable because they increase the precision of the estimates in which we are interested, but may not be credible to respondents. If respondents do not believe that the non-sensitive items are sufficient to provide anonymity to their responses to the sensitive item, then the whole purpose of administering the list experiment has been compromised. In other words, an important next step is to research the psychology, rather than the mechanics, of the list experiment. This research is necessary to investigate how large a list is required to convince respondents of their anonymity (and if that size varies from question to question), as well as the composition of the non-sensitive items necessary to maintain the credibility of the list experiment.

Despite these limitations and unresolved questions, however, the revised list experiment procedure presented herein holds considerable promise as a means first to elicit honest responses to sensitive questions, and then to analyze these responses in a rigorous way. Although further research and successful field tests will of course increase our confidence in the procedure, the initial findings contained in this paper suggest that this additional work will be worth the effort.

Chapter 3

What Divides Unites:
Institutional Choice in Lebanon

Democracy is, by and large, scarce in Arab and Muslim countries. Is this because of, independent of, or in spite of Islam? Autocracies rule most states with large Muslim populations, and the democracies that do exist are new, fragile, or both. Casual empiricism suggests a link between authoritarianism and Islam, but the degree to which this form of government reflects the political preferences or cultural predilections of Muslims is the subject of a lively debate. Is Islam compatible with democracy? We have considerable evidence of what Muslim theologians and politicians think: the answers are *yes*, *no*, and *maybe*. Interpretation of doctrine could go either way depending on who does the interpreting and what pieces of doctrine are privileged. Yet this debate may be missing the point: Islam neither votes nor stages coups nor demonstrates—Muslims do. The more accurate question, albeit still polemical, is this: are *Muslims* compatible with democracy?

Systematic studies of what ordinary Muslims believe that use representative survey data rare. Those that do exist provide exploratory evidence demonstrating that the empirical link between religiosity and democratic attitudes among Muslims is weak and spotty—pious Muslims are only mildly more autocratic in their opinions, if at all. Yet there is an epistemological limitation inherent in these initial explorations: by and large, they only study Muslims, and furthermore, only Sunni Muslims. Put another way, in most existing studies examining the links between religion and democ-

racy, a key explanatory variable, religious doctrine, does not vary.[1] But without this variance, we cannot know if what we observe is actually the result of Islam at all. If we examine only Sunni Muslims in Sunni-dominant societies, we cannot infer, one way or the other, if the attitudes we observe are specifically Sunni attitudes, if they are common to Islam in its several doctrinal branches, or if they generalize across religions.

We must have variance in religious doctrine in order to make causal inferences. Islam may influence attitudes toward democracy among ordinary Muslims, but to find out we must also study non-Muslims. Further, Islam's effect on preference formation may be contingent on political context, but to know we must also study non-Muslims in the same context. We cannot meet these epistemological requirements simply by surveying a Shia- or Christian-dominant society and comparing the patterns of relationships with those found in a Sunni-dominant country. Not only would these societies differ in terms of religious traditions, but also in a host of other contextual and structural ways—types of government institutions, characteristics of salient political cleavages, levels of economic development, colonial experiences, and so on—that would hopelessly confound our ability to draw inferences on the specific influence of religious doctrine on attitude formation. In other words, to study the "Islam effect," we must have within-society comparison groups to introduce variation on the "religious doctrine" variable.

In this paper, I utilize the plural society found in Lebanon as a living laboratory to investigate the degree to which attitude formation toward democracy reflects specific

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[1]Compare, for example, Al-Suwaidi (1995), Grant and Tessler (2002), and Tessler (1997, 2002, 2003). More precisely, the surveys used have primarily targeted Sunni Muslims in Sunni-dominant societies. When non-Sunni minorities are present in the target population, such as Christians in Egypt, Jordan, and Palestine (i.e., the West Bank and Gaza), or Shiites in Kuwait, they are usually dropped from the sample or dropped from the analysis to aid comparability between Sunnis. Most studies focus on Sunni Islam at least in part because it is the doctrinal tradition of the majority of Muslims worldwide, as well as the tradition of the rulers in most Muslim countries.

doctrinal backgrounds, actual religious practice, and political incentives. Using data from an original political attitude survey, I show that religiosity has only a mild effect by itself, but, in conjunction with political awareness, helps moderate the impact of sectarianism on preferences over government institutions, thereby reducing support for a variety of autocratic options. I show, further, that when people express support for the use of religious law in public life, this support follows from a desire for religious guidance in economic rather than political affairs—religion for the sake of social justice rather than its own sake. These dynamics, furthermore, operate across religious doctrines.

Studying attitudes toward democracy in Lebanese society yields considerable epistemological gains. In particular, we find important variation in religious traditions among the Lebanese: in addition to Sunni Muslims, there are also sizable Shia Muslim and Christian populations, enabling us to assess the effects of doctrinal variation while holding political incentive structures constant. Yet these potential epistemological gains come with a complication. As is the case in many other religiously-diverse societies, religion enters politics in Lebanon only partially via doctrine *per se.* It also influences political competition via sectarianism, in which nominal religious group identity marks membership in the country's sects, or, to use the Lebanese pejorative, the "tribes." Although we must have variation in doctrine and therefore a multireligious research venue, we must also be able to disentangle the effects of adherence to religious *doctrines* with membership in religious *groups.* We must, in other words, parse out the effects of nominal religious group affiliation from personal religiosity, and personal religiosity from sectarianism.

Privileging Lebanese society for analysis means, of course, learning something substantive about Lebanon, but what Lebanon can teach us about a more general set of issues makes it of theoretical utility in a broader sense. Via study of this particular society, we can learn more about not only democratic attitudes and institutional pref-

erences in the Arab and Muslim worlds, but also politics in plural societies and the interaction of religion and politics. While such issues are perhaps most salient today in Iraq, there are clear applications to societies as different as those found in Northern Ireland, Nigeria, and the Balkan states, where religion helps define the boundaries of competing political groups, and more broadly to ethnically diverse societies however group boundaries are defined. Section 3.1 summarizes some of the main arguments about democracy and autocracy within Muslim tradition and Arab culture, as well as more general propositions about the interaction of religion and politics. Section 3.2 provides an overview of Lebanese society, focusing on key contextual aspects (government institutions and sectarian competition) we should expect to influence Lebanese institutional preferences, with hypotheses presented more explicitly in Section 3.3. Section 3.4 presents the data and analysis, and Section 3.5 discusses the implications of the findings.

3.1   Religion and Politics, Religion in Politics

Although democracy in Muslim societies appears to be a rarity, the Arab Middle East in particular stands out cross-regionally as an apparent bastion of autocracy. Among the competing explanations for this Arab exceptionalism is a recurring narrative that cites Arab culture and Islam as central and intertwined elements contributing to autocratic outcomes.[2] Such arguments are based, to greater or lesser degrees, on three broad planks: first, Arab (and Muslim) political culture is authoritarian in nature and biased toward veneration of strong leaders, second, Islam is incompatible with democracy, and third, Islam does not separate religion and politics. Yet these three broad points, either taken together or in isolation, do not provide adequate explana-

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[2]For a sampling of Arab and Islamic culture arguments, see Ajami (1981), Harik (1994), Kedourie (1992), and Korany (1994). For a sampling of arguments rejecting these narratives in favor of political economy explanations, see Crystal (1994), Posusney (2004) and contributors to the same symposium edition of *Comparative Politics*, and Waterbury (1994).

tions for the autocratic outcomes—or at least their *uniqueness*—that we observe. I discuss each point in turn.

Cultural predilections for strong leaders.   Arab political culture is widely cited as authoritarian in nature, with presumed negative consequences for the emergence of an autonomous civil society, a politically-active middle class, and internally-democratic political parties. According to this narrative, such cultural authoritarianism leads to the veneration of charismatic leaders and excessive deference to authority. Yet authoritarian political culture, to the degree that it exists, is not unique to the Arab world. Such claims have been advanced at various times about other world cultures that appear to suffer from a democratic deficit, with similar assessments surfacing over the years to account for autocratic outcomes in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Although we might question the explanatory power of cultural arguments, to the degree that they *are* valid, by themselves they cannot account for the uniquely pervasive autocracies in the Arab Middle East because authoritarianism is not unique to Arab political culture. This has led many observers to focus on Islam as one of the defining features of the cultural and political heritage of these societies that make them, if not exactly unique (compare the prevalence of Islam in the non-Arab societies of Africa and Asia), at least significantly different from Western societies.

Islam is incompatible with democracy.   One prominent view holds that Islam is an anti-modern force that is incompatible with modern democratic political systems. Kedourie (1992, 5–6), for example, elaborates this view:

> The notion of popular sovereignty as the foundation of governmental legitimacy, the idea of representation, of elections, of popular suffrage, of political institutions being regulated by laws laid down by a parliamentary assembly, of these laws being guarded and upheld by an independent judiciary, the ideas of the secularity of the state, of society being composed

of a multitude of self-activating, autonomous groups and associations—all these are profoundly alien to the Muslim political tradition.

Yet others observe that significant diversity has always existed within interpretations of Islam. Muhammad Fadlallah, one of Lebanon's most senior and influential Shia religious leaders, observes that "Islam is Islam: we do not have theoretical Islam or applied Islam, nor do we have extremist Islam or moderate Islam... For our purposes here, the understanding of Islam varies according to differences in interpretation."[3] Furthermore, although some traditionalists and fundamentalists do hold beliefs, consistent with Kedourie's assessment, that democracy directly contradicts Islamic thought because it relies on human rather than divine legislation, other Muslim intellectuals, variously labeled as reformists, modernists, and accommodationists, have sought to synthesize Muslim values and traditions with new, non-indigenous practices. This synthesis sometimes takes the form of citing Islamic doctrine as "anticipating" democracy, and builds on well-established Islamic principles of consultation, independent reasoning, and consensus.[4] More generally, the diversity with which Islam may be interpreted has clear analogues with other spiritual traditions. Bellin

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[3]Fadlallah interview with *al-Hasna'*, reprinted in Fadlallah (2001ع, 127–146), quote at page 131. The original Arabic:

فالإسلام هو الإسلام، ليس عندنا إسلام أصولي وإسلام فروعي، ليس عندنا إسلام متطرّف وإسلام معتدل. الإسلام يمثّل ما أنزله الله على رسوله، وما شرّعه رسوله بوحي من الله. غاية الأمر هنا، أنّ فهم الإسلام يختلف حسب اختلاف الاجتهادات.

Note that «إسلام أصولي» and «إسلام فروعي» refer to theoretical and applied *fiqh*.

[4]Compare (Abed 1995) and (Esposito and Piscatori 1991). Finding Islamic precedents for democratic practice follows from more than a desire to express democratic concepts in locally-relevant parlance. As Choueiri (1996, 24) notes, "in contemporary Islamic thought, democracy is denuded of its neutral connotations and descriptive attributes. Like socialism, it is considered to rest on a comprehensive worldview. Being an expression of a philosophical substructure, it cannot be confined to administrative procedures." Given the often-stated comprehensiveness of Islam, this implies that reconciling Islam and democracy is in part a theoretical exercise in reconciling two worldviews, rather than simply practicing Islam through democratic channels.

(2004, 141), for example, notes that other religious traditions, notably Catholicism and Confucianism, have faced claims of their incompatibility with democracy, yet have not prevented countries in Latin America, southern Europe, and East Asia from democratizing. Likewise, the Judeo-Christian tradition was once made consistent with political absolutism and the divine rights of kings, and was only later reinterpreted to accommodate democratic ideals. Islamic doctrine, in this regard, is similar to the doctrines of other faiths: one may find elements consistent with democracy and elements consistent with autocracy, and the religion's compatibility in principle with either depends on which points one stresses and which points one deemphasizes.

Islam does not separate religion from politics. Despite this room for interpretation, considerable bodies of both Western and Muslim scholarship continue to emphasize the inseparability of religion and politics within Islam, often contraposing the Christian "rendering unto Caesar" to an implicit Islamic "God *is* Caesar." Yet not everyone would cede even this distinction. Musa al-Sadr, the religious figure who played the leading role in mobilizing the Lebanese Shia into politics in the 1960s and 1970s, noted at one point that "both Islam and Christianity reject the separation of church and state... Christ said 'render unto God what is God's and unto Caesar what is Caesar's,' yet he refused to turn everything over to Caesar."[5] The extension of religion into politics is again not unique to Muslim societies, as evident by the proliferation of religious and reliopolitical movements around the world since the 1970s and 1980s. Eickelman and Piscatori (1996, 56) note that the presupposition of the union of religion and politics exaggerates the uniqueness of Muslim societies,

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[5]Sadr quoted in (Fadlallah 1997ع, 87). The original Arabic:

فصل الدين عن الدولة يرفضه الإسلام كما ترفضه المسيحية؛ لأنّ هذا الفصل هو محاولة لفرض نوع من العلمنة وما قول السيّد المسيح (ما لله لله وما لقيصر لقيصر) إلا رفض لتحويل كل شيء للقيصر.

citing movements as diverse as the (Protestant) Moral Majority in the United States, (Catholic) liberation theology and base ecclesiastical communities in Latin America, Sikh activists in India, and Buddhist monks in Burma and Vietnam as practitioners of religious politics that sometimes assert the indivisibility of religion and politics.[6]

Yet despite the common refrain that Islam does not separate religion and politics, the programs of Islamist movements, rest in many cases on particular, distinctive interpretations of religious doctrine that are at odds with ordinary Muslims' understandings of their faith, often disparaging the traditional religious practices that form the basis of popular faith and the rule of religious law (Nasr 1995). This dynamic suggests that *political* support for Islamist political movements may not necessarily follow from personal *religiosity.* One explanation for the divergence of Islamist programs from more mainstream interpretations of Islam is that, although some movements are headed by religious scholars, they are often led by lay individuals with little systematic training in Islamic law. Keddie (1998, 715) notes that, although the Iranian revolution gave impetus to the further growth of Islamist movements outside of Iran, these movements were nearly always headed not by clerical figures but rather by individuals with Western or Westernized educations. Al-Suwaidi (1995, 93) attributes the "quasi-totalitarian" character of Islamic opposition movements in part to the fact that their leaders are versed in neither Islamic jurisprudence nor even Islamic history. Furthermore, there is growing evidence that popular support for Islamist programs is based more on the political and economic conditions of the societies in which they operate rather than the religiosity of their inhabitants, and that personal religiosity may in fact act as a check on political radicalization. Although some Islamist movements may interpret Islam in ways inconsistent with democracy, Al-Suwaidi (1995, 93) notes that not everyone accepts these interpretations, and that their programs are

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[6]For overviews on the issue of religious revival and religion and politics more generally, compare, among a vast literature, Gill (2001), Iannaccone (1998), Juergensmeyer (1995), and Keddie (1998).

often too political to appeal to traditional mainstream Muslims. Tessler (1997, 93, 110–111), meanwhile, notes that some survey evidence exists suggesting that higher degrees of personal piety makes individuals *less* supportive of the political aspects of Islamist programs, a finding which contradicts the assessments of movement leaders themselves, who in most cases insist that their popular support derives from the religious faith of their mass constituencies. Popular support, in other words, may not be an unqualified endorsement of the political or religious programs of these movements, and may not have much to do with personal religiosity at all.

Given all of the above, there is at least some reason to be skeptical of arguments that link autocratic outcomes in Arab and Muslim countries primarily to the cultural and religious beliefs of their inhabitants. First, authoritarian political culture, to the degree that it does explain individual preferences over systems of government, is not unique to these societies. Second, Islam shares with other spiritual traditions a multiplicity of interpretations, with doctrinal elements that can be used to bolster support for autocracy as a political system as well as elements that are supportive of democracy. Third, contemporary Islamist movements present programs providing interpretations that amount to a mixture of religion and politics, some elements of which are outside of the mainstream of the religion as non-activists understand it. Evidence suggests, further, that popular support for these movements may not have much to do with the religiosity of the inhabitants of the societies in which they operate. Cumulatively, these points suggest that, to understand Muslim *political* views and preferences, we should look to the incentive structures generated by the political context in which Muslims live. In particular, to understand institutional preferences, we should examine the incentives created by prevailing political institutions as well as salient social and political cleavages.

3.2 Religion, Politics, and Sects in Lebanon

Lebanon, as a multireligious society with large Sunni, Shia, and Christian populations, provides a useful venue in which to adjudicate between competing explanations over the source of institutional preferences—that is, between arguments that such preferences are formed on the basis of religion, and those arguing that preferences are formed on the basis of political incentives. In particular, because religious doctrines vary and political context does not, we can parse out the degree to which preferences reflect simple community membership, religiosity across the different spiritual traditions, and political awareness and activism across the communities.

In this section, I present a brief overview of Lebanese political institutions and social cleavages in order to provide motivation for the hypotheses described in Section 3.3 and ground the subsequent analyses presented in Section 3.4. The key elements of public life on which I focus here, I argue, help define the incentive structures faced by members of the different religious communities. I first describe the pervasiveness of sectarian cleavages in Lebanese politics. I focus on the important point that sectarianism and religiosity overlap only imperfectly, arguably with countervailing influences on individual preferences and attitudes. I next discuss the governing institutions of the Lebanese state, noting in particular how they underrepresent the country's largest and poorest community, the Shia, in the allocation of formal political power. Cumulatively, these dynamics arguably influence individuals' preferences over democratic and autocratic institutional configurations. I discuss each of these points in turn.

Sectarian Cleavages

Independent Lebanon emerged in 1943 a mosaic society, the product of a "polite fiction of national unity" and elite-level compromises that were designed to substitute for (and hopefully build) a sense of common Lebanese identity. Although the power-sharing system adopted to reconcile conflicting visions of the polity survived

significant regional and domestic turmoil for the first three decades after independence, the country collapsed into a civil war lasting from 1975 to 1990, only to resurrect a modified version of the original system at the war's end.[7] A key aspect of Lebanese society is its plural nature, with numerous Muslim and Christian religious sects, none individually comprising the majority of the population, cohabitating in the country—with ramifications for the nature of salient social cleavages and political competition.[8]

Although the most prominent cleavage in Lebanese society is nominally religious, political disputes are only rarely about religion *per se*. Rather, Lebanese politics are essentially sectarian (or, more politely, "confessional"), in which political cooperation and competition either revolve around or are channeled through the religious communities and their elites. The centrality of the sects in Lebanese political life is lamented *ad nauseum*, with observers repeatedly using the pejorative terms "tribe" and "tribalism" to describe them. Salibi (1988, 55), for example, notes that, in the development of Lebanese politics, "the religious communities in Lebanon were essentially tribes, or in any case behaved as tribes, and the game that came to be played between them was a tribal game." More generally (and colorfully), Muhammad Fadlallah notes that:

> When we examine Lebanon, we see a society of advanced culture... But
> sectarian Lebanon, the Lebanon which nourishes its cultured people with
> sectarian sustenance—and here I of course do not mean religion, because

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[7]The quote is Salibi's (1988, 2). Lijphart (1977) cites Lebanon as an example of a consociational democracy, although both theory and application came under fire after the country's collapse.

[8]Lebanon's sectarian society is significantly richer (and more Byzantine) than the simplified version I present here. In addition to the Sunni and Shia communities, there are small heterodox Muslim sects (most notably the Druze) and, although I speak here of the Christian community, it would be more accurate to speak in the plural, as Christians in Lebanon are divided up among some dozen sects. Theoretically relevant distinctions between, for example, Maronites, Greek Orthodox, and the different Armenian communities are plausible, but due mainly to survey sample size limitations I consider the Christian "spiritual family" as a whole—though a useful extension to this research would oversample smaller Christian and Muslim groups and consider them separately.

sectarianism is a tribal condition while religion is a spiritual, intellectual one—roots the affiliation of each person within it in a given sect, and creates for each person the impression that his interests may only be advanced within this sect. It makes the cultured or religious person a sectarian animal who thinks instinctively and forgets all of what he has learned when sectarian feelings are aroused. Lebanon is highly cultured and advanced...yet this Lebanon exists in a state of effective political backwardness to a degree we might not have found among the first Arabs![9]

Sectarianism and Religion

As these statements allude, sectarianism, as an expression of communalism or group loyalties, is not synonymous with religiosity. Speaking of his own party's recruiting successes, for example, Hizballah's deputy secretary-general has noted that interest in party membership increased greatly due to the successes of its resistance to Israeli occupation of the south, but that some aspirants "have found that the membership

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[9]Fadlallah interview with *al-Hasna'*, reprinted in Fadlallah (2001ع, 127–146), quote at page 128. The original Arabic:

عندما ندرس المجتمع اللّبناني، فإنّنا نراه مجتمعا يملك مواقع متقدّمة ثقافيا، وخبرات متعدّدة ومتنوّعة اقتصاديا واجتماعيا، وربّما استطعنا اعتبار المجتمع اللّبناني من أكثر المجتمعات تقدّما في المنطقة ... لكن لبنان الطائفي، لبنان الذي تغذّي مثقّفوه تغذية طائفية ـ ولا أقصد هنا بالطبع التغذية الدينية، لأنّ الطائفية حالة عشائرية بينما الدين حالة فكرية روحية ـ كرّس انتماء كلّ شخص فيه إلى طائفة معيّنة، وأوحى لكلّ شخص أنّ مصالحه إنّما تتحرّك ضمن هذه الطائفة .. وجعل الإنسان المثقّف أو المتديّن حيوانا طائفيا يفكّر بطريقة غرائزية، وينسى كلّ ما تعلّمه واستهلكه عندما ثار الحساسيات الطائفية، ولهذا فإنّ لبنان المثقّف جدّا، والمتقدّم في مجال الخبرات جدّا، والذي يملك مواقع ثقافية واقتصادية واجتماعية على مستوى العالم العربي، وربّما أوسع من العالم العربي، هذا اللّبنان يعيش التخلّف العملي في ماهيته السياسية بدرجة قد لا نجدها لدى الشعوب العربية البدائية!

Note that الشعوب العربية البدائية, translated here as "the first Arabs," could also be made more forceful as the "primitive" or "primordial" Arabs, meaning the ancient tribes of the pre-Islamic Arabian peninsula.

conditions form an objective barrier. They believe in the party's resistance activity but are not committed to its Islamic though, or they believe in the party's political movement but do not observe Islamic practices and behavior."[10] More generally, sectarian individuals are not necessarily religious, and it is common to find Lebanese with extremely sectarian attitudes that are otherwise not particularly religiously observant in their daily lives. In noting the "great difference between religion and sectarianism," former Prime Minister Salim al-Hoss observes:

> Religion is a message which unites, while sectarianism is a chauvinism which divides. Islam and Christianity concur in their calls for shared human values, among them love, compassion, and brotherhood. . . [Sectarianism] is a chauvinism that rules over individual behavior and thought. . . It is among the remnants of tribalism in the psyche, and in reality is the modern face of tribalism.[11]

Thus, as these statements suggest, while religion provides the nominal boundary of group membership, that membership rather than religiosity *per se* is the key.

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[10]Naim (Qasim 2002ع, 87–88). The original Arabic:

ازدادت رغبة الكثيرين في الانتماء إلى الحزب بعد انجازاته الواضحة على صعيد المقاومة للاحتلال، واعتبر بعضهم أنّ شروط الانتساب إلى هيكليته المباشرة أو ما حولها تشكّل عائقا موضوعيا، فهم يؤمّنون بعمله المقاوم لكنهم لا يلتزمون بفكره الإسلامي، أو يؤمّنون بحركته السياسية لكنهم لا يلتزمون بعبادات وسلوكيات الإسلام ...

[11]The original Arabic:

شتّان بين الدين والطائفية. الدين رسالة، أما الطائفية فعصبية. الدين، بما هو رسالة، يجمع، فيما الطائفية، بما هي عصبية، تفرّق. فالإسلام والمسيحيّة يلتقيان على الدعوة إلى قيم إنسانية مشتركة، بما فيها المحبّة والرحمة والإخاء ... أما الطائفية تفرّق. فهي عصبية تسيطر على سلوك الفرد وتفكيره فتباعد بينه وبين محيطه ومجتمعه ... إنّها من رواسب القبلية في النفوس، لا بل هي في واقع الحال القبلية في وجهها العصري الحديث.

Salim al-Hoss, "Sectarianism and Religion" («الطائفية والدين»), *As-Safir*, 14 May 2005.

More generally, Keddie (1998, 708–710) notes that communalist movements do not necessarily involve high levels of religious belief, but utilize or invent popular religious symbols, stressing religion less and cultural heritage more in order to appeal to both more and less religious individuals, with the goals of strengthening one community at the expense of the others. In this respect, religion and sect are frequently conflated, sometimes incidentally due to imprecise use of the terms, but frequently purposively—Amil (1986ع, 130), for example, formerly one of Lebanon's foremost Marxist theoreticians, noted that sectarian thought is based on camouflage and the adroit confounding of religion and politics.

Governing Institutions

Lebanon's power-sharing institutions reflect (and, arguably, perpetuate) the salience of sectarian identification in political life. A system of explicit sectarian representation, written into the French Mandate-era constitution in 1926 with antecedents from the Ottoman period, was reinforced by the unwritten National Pact of 1943, which reconciled the Christian and Muslim "spiritual families" to a system of power-sharing based on population figures from a 1932 census of "dubious accuracy." The most immediately recognizable feature of the Lebanese system is the permanent allocation of seats in the Chamber of Deputies, cabinet posts, and civil service positions among the sects, with key senior positions the preserve of certain communities.[12] In addition to the most visible aspects of the power-sharing arrangement, the system was designed, first, to prevent direct electoral competition between members of different commu-

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[12]Considerable manipulation of census figures produced a balance favorable to Christians—the actual Christian majority was probably closer to 500 persons (Maktabi 1999). At independence the ratio of Christian to Muslim deputies was set at 6:5 based on the 1932 census, although the post-war settlement changed this to a 1:1 ratio to better (though still not accurately) reflect demographic changes. The 1943 pact was an unwritten gentlemen's agreement that designated the allocation of key positions *by custom* to different sects, but was written into the Document of National Accord (effectively a constitutional annex) explicitly upon the settlement of the civil war.

nities, second, to promote moderation in the candidates themselves, and arguably third, to maintain the political influence of notables and elites.[13]

The 1943 National Pact was clearly an imperfect solution to a seemingly intractable problem, although arguably the best (or perhaps "least worst") option available. Nonetheless, the "elite compromises" that produced the pact were not, in fact, compromises among elites of all the sects, but rather primarily between leaders of the Maronite Christian and Sunni communities. This partnership produced a dynamic in which their elites tended to view Lebanese politics through a bisectarian lense, especially given the degree to which the two communities lined up on opposite sides of the debate over Lebanon's identity in the era of pan-Arab nationalism. While Christians and Sunnis (and also the Druze) were active participants in the "tribal game," fighting for access to resources and patronage and contesting the future of the state, one key community, the Shia, remained essentially on the sidelines.[14] The Shia, as a community, neither won nor lost much of anything at all since they were accorded almost no political relevance by leaders of the other sects.

The Shia had long been impoverished, uneducated, isolated, and politically quiescent, nominally represented by a small number of traditional land-owning notables. Yet in the course of modernization, many Shiites had become increasingly aware of the contrasts between the poverty and neglect of their communities and the relative prosperity of other areas of the country, and were increasingly targeted for recruit-

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[13]Seats are allocated by sect within each electoral district—hence only Maronites may run for a Maronite seat, Sunnis for a Sunni seat, and so on—yet voters cast ballots for each seat in their district regardless of sect, privileging candidates who can generate cross-sectarian appeal. In practice, voters cast ballots for (open) lists of candidates in their district but, partly due to the weakness of political parties and the strength of the patron-client system, office-seekers commonly seek access to a "safe list" headed by a notable or boss, meaning that power nominally shared among the sects is also in practice shared among the country's elites. For a discussion of elections and parties, see el Khazen (2000ع, 2002ع, 2003), and Hashishu (1998ع).

[14]For helpful studies of the Lebanese Shia community, refer to, among others, Ajami (1986), Madini (1999ع), Fahs (1996ع), Gharib (2001ع), and Norton (1987).

ment by various leftist and Arab nationalist organizations. It was within this context that new Shia elites, headed by Musa al-Sadr, a reformist religious leader, began mobilizing the Shia for political action to represent them as a sect in competition with the leftist groups—who according to Sadr exploited his community, and wanted "to fight the Christians to the last Shiite."[15] This organization, which eventually became the Amal Movement, adopted a relatively moderate line in demanding the reform rather than abolition of the Lebanese system, with a redistribution of power and resources to the Shia community. After the 1982 Israeli invasion, however, Amal was compelled to compete with the radical organization that became known as Hizballah, which provided a vehicle for Iranian-influenced radical Shia religious leaders who, at least initially, sought to extend the Iranian revolution to Lebanon and create an Islamic republic.

The Taif Accord, adopted to end the civil war, amended the original power-sharing system to better reflect demographic realities, as well as Lebanon's "special relationship" with Syria, whose armed forces had been present in the country since the early period of the civil war. Although the accords reduced the Christian-to-Muslim parliamentary ratio to parity and redistributed some of the president's prerogatives to the prime minister and cabinet, in formal terms the system still overrepresents the Christian sects and especially underrepresents the Shia—due to differential birth and emigration rates now the largest single community in the country—according to population share. Yet post-war Lebanese politics has often taken place outside the bounds

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[15]Karim Pakradouni (1984ع, 118), the current head of one of the rival Kataib Parties, recalls how Sadr accused the leftist and Arab nationalist forces fighting the government at the beginning of the civil war of using the Shia masses as cannon fodder in their struggle with the Christians. The original Arabic:

اتّهم الحركة الوطنية بأنّها تستغلّ الجماهير الشيعية وتضعها في فوهة المدفع في صراعها ضد المسيحيين. وقد قال لي، في هذا الصدد: «تريد الحركة الوطنية مقاتلة المسيحيين الى آخر شيعي.»

of formal government institutions and within the context of informal arrangements overseen by Syria, which often served to compensate the Shia (via the strategic alliances of the two main Shia parties with Syria) for their underrepresentation in the formal system. The so-called Troika system[16] elevated the Shia speaker of parliament (the head of Amal) to de facto parity with the Maronite president and Sunni prime minister (with Syria often called in to break the inevitable deadlocks), and manipulation of electoral laws and districts privileged Syrian allies and kept Syrian opponents out of parliament.

While this overview by necessity simplifies Lebanese political and social dynamics, it is hopefully sufficient to clarify several points of importance in pursuit of the goal of assessing Lebanese institutional preferences. First, the political environment to which Sunnis, Shiites, and Christians are exposed is one in which sectarianism is the primary social cleavage, the centrality of which to public life is such that it is enshrined in the formal institutions of the state. Second, although sectarianism makes religion the nominal boundary of group membership, it is not synonymous with religiosity—sectarian individuals may indeed be religious, but they may not be. Third, the different religious communities face different degrees of malrepresentation in the country's formal institutions, with the Shia, long the poorest and now the largest community, being most underrepresented. These points are relevant for determining the factors which influence individual attitudes toward different governing systems. The following section presents hypotheses about Lebanese institutional preferences as influenced by religious and political factors.

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[16]Literally «الترويكا», the Troika system is the informal, extra-constitutional arrangement that approximately equalizes the influence of the three presidents—of the republic, the council of ministers, and the parliament—on government policy and appointments.

3.3 Theory and Hypotheses

My core contention, from which the hypotheses in this section follow, is that institutional preferences over democratic and autocratic systems of government reflect political incentives the choosers face—that is, those generated by the prevailing institutions and predominant social cleavages. Religion, to the degree that it is part of the political context, can influence the choice, but we should not expect a simple relationship along the lines of "more Islam, less democracy." The implication of this general proposition for Lebanon is that Lebanese institutional preferences follow from incentives generated by sectarian competition and the institutions available to channel it, rather than something inherent to the various religious traditions found in Lebanon.

It is important to distinguish between the influence of religion and that of sectarianism. Sectarian political competition, in Lebanon as in other societies in which such cleavages are prominent, is only nominally religious: religion defines the boundaries of social group inclusion and exclusion, independent of the degree to which members observe or practice the tenets of their faiths. Membership is ascriptive, practically speaking, causing sectarianism to fall under the more general categorization of ethnic politics. When Lebanese decry the degree to which subnational loyalties trump identification with Lebanon as a whole—a familiar lament in many of the world's plural societies—they generally refer to the most visible elements of zero-sum sectarian political competition as held against an idealized vision of national unity and public-spiritedness.[17] Identification with Lebanon as the broader community beyond the sect has always been weak—or at least allegedly so—in part due to the multitude

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[17]This loaded comparison is of course not unique to societies in which ethnic groups form the primary collectivities of political competition: compare the negative connotations of "playing partisan politics" and the positive ones associated with bipartisanship in the United States, and more generally the lament of partisanship in societies in which parties form the vehicles of political competition but fall short of the higher ideals (usually vague) set for them.

of conflicting visions among the Lebanese of what Lebanon is and should be. Yet in the absence of a clear and compelling vision of a unified community, the Lebanese utilize, I argue, an imperfect substitute to moderate the centrifugal influences of sectarianism by invoking the shared values contained within their religious doctrines. Doing so enables them to create a shared, consociational community beyond the sect, encouraging positive-sum compromises in place of zero-sum outcomes. Religion, in other words, provides both the nominal markers defining group differences as well as the shared ideals to lessen the sharpness of those differences.

I take up these ideas more fully in what follows. Note that I discuss the hypotheses presented below in terms of autocratic rather than democratic systems. I do this to align the terminology presented with the survey data used to test them. Unsurprisingly, there are few differences of stated opinion in Lebanon over democratic systems—practically everyone approves of democracy—whereas there is important variation in opinions over autocratic systems that provides leverage to test the hypotheses. I discuss this issue in greater detail in Section 3.4.

Hypotheses 1 and 2: Politics and Sectarianism

The first set of hypotheses follows from incentives generated by the centrality of sectarianism in Lebanon's formal institutions and salient political cleavages, which I contend influence Lebanese institutional preferences. As described in Section 3.2, the Lebanese political system—variously described as "sectarian," "constrained," "consociational," and other types of democracy-with-adjectives—is nominally democratic but not fully so *in the majoritarian sense*. As is generally the case with systems that utilize consociational elements, various institutional arrangements and practices deviate from pure majoritarianism, and, to the degree that we privilege majority rule in the definition of democracy regardless of checks on the rule of that majority, consociational systems are by definition less democratic than British-style systems (Lijphart

1977, ch. 2). Further, the "sectarian balance" does not represent all of Lebanon's communities proportionally, much less equally. Unsurprisingly, those seeking redress for this maldistribution of representation often implicate Lebanon's institutional arrangements, as when Amil (1986ع, 33, 43), for example, noted that the hegemonic balance in the distribution of power in fact made it a *minoritarian* system, and that those opposed to the adoption of majoritarianism in place of consociationalism believe that such a switch would amount merely to the replacement of one hegemonic sectarianism with another.

Previous to and in the middle of the civil war, Amil's implication was Christian fear of Muslim hegemony, and although this remains a notable element in Lebanese political discourse, after two decades of demographic change and political maneuvers, one could argue that there is now more specifically fear of a Shia hegemony among non-Shiites, who often build working majorities willing to oppose Shia interests (Norton 1999, 21 and *passim*). In particular, the Shia community is both the most populous sect in Lebanon[18] as well as the most underrepresented in the formal allocation of political power. Indeed, el Khazen (2000ع, 89–91, 177–178) shows that their demographic weight makes the Shia community decisive in as many as 17 more seats than the 27 (of 128) allotted to them formally.[19] The Shia, further, are also arguably better organized via political parties relative to the other communities, and both Amal and Hizballah have the dismantling of the sectarian quota system as well as the adoption of large electoral districts (ideally one country-wide district) with

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[18]According to voter rolls published in the daily *As-Safir* between 25 April and 12 May 2005 (according to the compiler, Interior Ministry figures), Shiites and Sunnis each accounted for 26 percent of the population eligible to vote, followed by Maronite Christians at 22 percent. Note that because of differential birth rates, these figures underreport the size of the Shia community, which is disproportionately young with a large cohort of members not yet old enough to vote.

[19]Note further that, despite the 1:1 Christian-to-Muslim ratio in parliament, the Shia must share the Muslim allocation with the Sunni, Druze, and Alawi communities, the latter two, regardless of doctrinal disputes, considered Muslim for the purpose of allocating parliamentary seats and civil service positions.

proportional representation as their preferred electoral system, all of which would enhance Shia representation and magnify the influence of the Shia parties.[20] Due to the size of their population share—the Shia would "win the census" were one to occur—as well as their political organization, the Shia would be the greatest beneficiaries of a fully democratic system and, we might expect, would be relatively unsupportive of political systems that constrain the influence of their demographic plurality.

Blanket statements about preferences at the aggregate community level must be approached with caution, however, as they can imply the existence of a political consensus *within* communities that differs *between* them when such a consensus does not exist in practice. Suggesting that members of the Shia community have particular reasons to support democratic systems does not imply a lack of committed democrats within other communities, but merely that Shiites are subject to community-specific incentives on top of those influencing Lebanese attitudes more generally. Nor does this imply a uniformity of preferences among Shiites, or that all members react similarly to the same incentives. Given the history of the politicization of the Lebanese Shia, there are, in fact, reasons to expect autocratic rather than democratic responses from a subset of this population.

There has always been considerable diversity of opinion within the Shia community, dating back to the beginning of its political mobilization in the 1960s. Whereas initially many politicized Shiites joined the various leftist political organizations operating at the time, by the mid-1970s the large majority were either affiliated with or expressed support for the Amal Movement. Yet Amal was essentially a Shia catch-all comprised of numerous political and ideological trends, the more militant and revo-

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[20]It is presumably no accident that Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement, currently allied with Hizballah and Amal in the opposition, is the only major Christian party to advocate the abolition of the sectarian system as well as the use of large electoral districts with proportional representation: it is arguably better organized than its major competitor for Christian votes, the Lebanese Forces, and could further hope to benefit from Shia votes whereas the Lebanese Forces could not.

lutionary of which began to split off in the early-1980s in response to a combination of the Israeli invasion of 1982, Iranian material and ideological support, and Syrian efforts to forestall Amal leaders from engaging in separate peace negotiations under American or Israeli auspices. Although Khomeini's controversial theory of the rule of the jurist (*wilayat al-faqih*) has provided the ideological backdrop to this militancy, the theory provides a distinctive interpretation of the religious texts that does not represent the mainstream of lay Shiites or religious scholars.[21] Arguably, however, the finer details of the theory may, like the radical leftist ideologies previously in vogue, be beside the point for many of its adherents. Instead, it provides an alternate path to political power, and although some supporters may in fact subscribe to the religious interpretation behind the theory, it also provides a communalist vision justifying Shia ascendancy regardless of the particulars. Thus, although we might expect Shiites in general to be particularly supportive of democratic political systems given the incentives stemming from their population plurality, we might also expect to see a subset of politicized Shiites favorable to autocratic options, particularly given the difficulty of reforming the existing system that underrepresents the Shia community.

Lebanon's power-sharing institutions are unlikely to change in the near term, at least by democratic means. Although both the National Pact of 1943 and the Taif Accord both call for the eventual abolition of political sectarianism, these clauses are mostly treated as statements of ideals rather than acted upon, while checks and balances within the system give members of other communities the capacity to block change should it arise. Further, as one critic notes, because the Lebanese system is one "where political offices become an expression of the interests of the sects and

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[21]Hizballah, formerly the foremost proponent of *wilayat al-faqih* in Lebanon, has withdrawn this slogan from circulation as the party has become more mainstream, possibly due to party leaders' recognition of the difficulty of implementing it in Lebanon, but certainly due to their recognition that the slogan does not sell well in the mainstream public. On this point, Norton (1999, 20) observes that the new Shia middle class "does not yearn to live in the Islamic Republic of anything, not least in the Islamic Republic of Lebanon."

their roles in political life," it "creates structural constraints which prevent any serious or root change, and obstructs any modification that disturbs the balance of power" upon which the system is based.[22] The explicit division of power among the sects was intended to take sectarianism off the table in day-to-day politics, but this in effect has meant that sectarian problems are often taken up outside established institutional channels. Though it may encourage coexistence under non-crisis circumstances, it hinders incremental change and means that modifications to the system can only occur as the result of major crises or via extra-constitutional means: the result has been a series of existential shocks occurring every 15 years or so throughout Lebanon's modern history.[23] This feature of the political system, as Madini (ع1999, 29) notes in a study of Amal and Hizballah, "makes it impossible to achieve a radical democratic solution except via a process of root change to the sectarian structure of the state."[24] In other words, despite the fact that the Shia are disproportionately

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[22]The original Arabic:

إلا انّ هذا النوع من الانظمة السياسيّة يمكن ان يكون مخربا للاستقرار السياسي في المجتمعات المتنوّعة طائفيّا، خاصة تلك التي يسود فيها التقاسم الطائفي ـ المذهبي للسلطة وفق محاصصة دقيقة تحفظ التوازنات المعقدة. في هذا النوع من الازمة يتقاطع السياسي مع الطائفي حيث تصبح المناصب السياسيّة تعبيرا عن مصالح الطائفة ودورها في الحياة السياسيّة، الأمر الذي يخلق كوابح بنيوية مانعة لأي تغيير جدّي أو جذري، ومعطّلة لأي تعديل يخلّ بموازين القوى التي تتركّب منها السلطة.

Abd al-Ghani Ammad, "Consociational democracy or veiled federalism?" (أم توافقية ديموقراطية«‬ مقنّعة؟»‬ فيديرالية), *Annahar*, 30 March 2007.

[23]Compare the mass demonstrations and Syrian pullout in 2005, the civil war's end in 1990 and start in 1975, the mini-civil war of 1958, independence in 1943, and the promulgation of the Mandate-era constitution in 1926.

[24]The original Arabic:

ولا شكّ أنّ أزمة النظام السياسي الطائفي ... أصبحت هي المولدة لهذا التناقض الذي خلق نوعا من التراتبية المواطنية، والذي لا يمكن حلّه حلّا ديمقراطيا راديكاليا إلا في عملية تغيير جذري للبنية الطائفية لهذا الدولة.

underrepresented by the current sectarian system and would benefit electorally (and hence distributionally) from a more fully democratic system in a majoritarian sense, they are in effect blocked from implementing tangible reforms to the current system. I argue that, given this institutionally-defined inability to bring about reform by democratic means, politicized, radicalized Shiites, in light of their recognition that they are blocked from achieving comprehensive change via democratic channels, may be more willing to consider more radical options and autocratic systems.

Given the arguments detailed above, we should expect two propositions to follow:

> **Hypothesis 1** *Shiites are less supportive of autocratic systems than Sunnis and Christians.*

> **Hypothesis 2** *Politicized Shiites are more supportive of autocratic systems than unpoliticized Shiites.*

Hypotheses 3 and 4: Religion and Consociationalism

As discussed in Section 3.1, Islam, and religion in general, may be used to justify many types of political systems—from democracy to the divine rights of kings—depending on which elements of doctrine are privileged and which are deemphasized. Within Lebanon, Gharib (2001ع, 198–203) has noted a diversity of views among three broad trends of Islamic thinkers and activists, from those seeking the establishment of a full Islamic system, to those seeking one conditionally and in stages, to those who see coexistence between religions as a historical reality and claim that nothing in the religious texts calls for the establishment of an Islamic state. In addition to this doctrinal ambiguity toward political systems, personal religiosity—to the degree that it connotes concern with spiritual welfare, morality, observation of religious tenets, and so on—does not address political preferences directly, and one may be personally pious within a wide variety of different political systems. In other words, religious doctrine can be interpreted to provide not one but several blueprints for political institutions, and to the degree that it provides a blueprint for personal life and practice,

its influence on political attitudes is likely to be mild. The knowledge that someone is personally pious may not, by itself, tell us much about his or her institutional preferences.

Due to the sectarian nature of Lebanese social cleavages and political institutions, religion is part of politics, but may not be the primary source of political *conflict*. Sectarianism, as opposed to religion but like ethnic politics more generally, is often associated with zero-sum and even negative-sum conflicts, and is occasionally discussed in those exact terms. Religion, meanwhile, is most often held in sharp contrast for its unifying, bridging properties that, in effect, help transform zero-sum conflicts into positive-sum outcomes. In emphasizing these shared elements, Muhammad Fadlallah notes that "religiosity means seeking out the vital elements in one's religion, which inevitably coincide with the vital elements of another's religion," and that, although there are differences between Christianity and Islam in the nature of their views on God, the prophets, and so on, the values they espouse "are very largely shared values."[25] Ghassan Tueni, the longtime publisher of the liberal daily *Annahar*, echoes this when he notes that "nothing will make sectarianism, and the heretical holy war fought in its name, vanish more than the deepening of true religious belief... in Islam as in Christianity, and strengthening the religious virtues found in both creeds."[26]

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[25]Fadlallah interview with *Awraq Siyasiyya*, reprinted in Fadlallah (2001ع, 443–356), passage at page 447. The original Arabic:

إنّنا نعتقد أنّ التعصّب ليس حالة دينية، بل هو حالة ذاتية فئوية متخلّفة، لأنّ تديّن أي إنسان يعني أن يبحث عن العناصر الحيوية في دينه التي لا بدّ أن تلتقي بالعناصر الحيوية في الدين الآخر، لأنّ أيّ دين لا يمكن أن يناقض القيم الأساسية في الدين الآخر. هناك بعض الفروق بين الأديان في طبيعة نظرتها إلى الله، كما بين المسيحية والإسلام، أو إلى النبوات أو ما إلى ذلك. أما بالنسبة للقيم الروحية والأخلاقية والاجتماعية والإنسانية، فهي قيم مشتركة بنسبة كبيرة جدّا.

[26]The original Arabic:

اتّنا لا نخاف الطائفية لأتّنا نعرف انّها محكوم عليها بالزوال، كعصبيّة قبليّة غريبة عن الدين،

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One prominent political expression of sectarianism, as is the case in many other plural and segmented societies, is via political parties and traditional political leaders, who act as spokespersons for their communities and guardians of their interests (often vaguely defined). One analyst, for example, describes the maximalism of the parties, most of which are sectarian in their structures and issue orientations, and observes that "the sectarian parties exploit what has been called consociational democracy in order to strengthen their positions... and employ sectarian solidarities in the political field, in which parties of a single sect engage in a sectarian bidding war" between themselves and with the traditional politicians over who can best defend the sect's rights.[27] Yet despite the divisiveness of sectarian activity, there is cause to believe

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مسيحيا واسلاميا لا فرق. وليس ما يزيلها، ويزيل الجهاد المارق باسمها، أكثر من تعميق الايمان الديني الحقّ وتنمية جذوره الروحانية، في الاسلام كما في المسيحية، وتعزيز المناقبيّة الدينيّة التي هي ذاتها في الديانتين.

Ghassan Tueni, "The crisis ends when we elect a prophetic president" (»تنتهي الأزمة عندما ننتخب رئيسا رسوليا«), *Annahar*, 2 April 2007.

[27]The original Arabic:

وعبرت في تركيبتها السياسية عن واقع تركيبة المجتمع اللّبناني ... فجاءت معظم الأحزاب ذات تركيبة طائفية، تتشكّل قواعدها من أعضاء من إنتماء طائفي وأحيانا مناطقي محدّد، وقيادات تعبّر في ممارساتها ومواقفها عن توجهات طائفية وتستغلّ العصبيات في توسيع رقعة انتشار الحزب وزيادة التلاحم داخله ... فأحزاب الطوائف استغلّت ما سمي بالديموقراطية التوافقية من أجل تعزيز مكاتها ... فعمدت إلى توظيف العصبيات الطائفية في المجال السياسي، ودخلت أحزاب الطائفة الواحدة في مزايدات طائفية. فالصيغة التوافقية القائمة على توزيع السلطة بين الطوائف تعزّز التنافس على السلطة داخل الطائفة الواحدة. كما دخلت في مزايدات طائفية مع السياسيين التقليديين محاولة إثبات عجز هؤلاء عن الدفاع عن حقوق الطائفة، والتأكيد على أنّ التنظيم الحزبي هو الأكثر فاعلية ودينامية في هذا المجال.

Assam Sulayman, "The partisan experience in its relationship to democracy and national unity" (»التجربة الحزبية في علاقتها بالديموقراطية والوحدة الوطنية«), *Annahar*, 26 June 1996, reprinted in Sulayman (1998ع, 120–126), quote at pages 124–125. Although some ideological parties operate, even organizations that started on an explicitly non- or anti-sectarian basis have over time become largely identified with a single religious group—the small but active Communist Party transformed over the course of the civil war into a Shia-majority party (with around 60 percent of members coming from that community), while the Progressive Socialist Party, formerly Druze-led but multi-sectarian in membership, is now almost exclusively Druze. See el Khazen (2002ع) for details.

that *religion* may in fact help ameliorate this conflict between sectarian partisans over group political interests by invoking positive-sum interests and principles of compromise between the religious communities that have developed to enable cooperation and coexistence in daily life. In a major study of Lebanese political parties, el Khazen (2002ع, 157) compares this culture of compromise to the maximalism of partisan practice by noting that, outside times of sharp crises, Lebanese sociopolitical culture is oriented toward unity and compromise, usually stressing cooperation and seeking shared positions between the spiritual families. Yet in Lebanese partisan political culture, he notes, the elements of conflict and sharp conflicts predominate, and that "the principle of compromise in political activity, generally speaking, is absent from the partisan political heritage in Lebanon."[28] The centripetal influence of compromise between religious communities, in other words, may help offset the centrifugal politics associated with sectarian group disputes. This proposition is consistent, in turn, with anecdotal evidence suggesting that, particularly among the politically aware, religiosity can encourage support for a live-and-let-live attitude between members of different faiths.

Taken together, the above points suggest two broad propositions. First, in view of the multiple existing interpretations of religious doctrine, piety by itself many not tell

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[28]The original Arabic:

ففي خارج أوقات الأزمات الحادة، الثقافة السياسية المجتمعية في لبنان ذات منحى توحيدي وتسووي. والأدبيات السياسية ومواقف المسؤولين في قضايا شائكة، كالطائفية مثلا، غالبا ما تشدّد على التقارب والتعاون بين «العائلات الروحية» فتسعى إلى إيجاد قواسم مشتركة بين اللّبنانيين بهدف معالجة المشاكل المطروحة. مقابلة بالثقافة السياسية المجتمعية، يغلب على الثقافة السياسية الحزبية المنحى الخلافي، لا بل التصادمي، إذ هي لا تشدّد على خصوصية مشروعها السياسي فحسب ـ وهذا أمر طبيعي ـ بل تؤكّد تمايزها العقائدي والفكري بأسلوب لا يخلو من الفوقية. إنّ مبدأ التسوية في العمل السياسي، بوجه عام، غائب عن التراث السياسي الحزبي في لبنان.

us much about the political preferences of individual adherents. Among the politically active and aware, however, we may in fact see religiosity as a moderating rather than polarizing influence, able to counteract the centrifugal influence of sectarian politics. This, in view of Lebanon's sectarian society, may translate into greater support for democracy and reduced support for autocratic solutions, in recognition of the fact that the Lebanese power-sharing system cannot function well outside of a democratic context. We thus might expect to see the following:

> **Hypothesis 3** *Personal religiosity by itself does not influence attitudes toward autocratic systems.*

> **Hypothesis 4** *Personal religiosity and political awareness combined decrease support for autocratic systems.*

Hypothesis 5: Religious Guidance and Social Justice

The pervasive positive-negative dichotomy between religion and sectarianism in Lebanon carries over to assessments of religious versus political leaders. As is the case in practically every society, politicians and political parties writ large are distrusted and held in low esteem, although this view is particularly prevalent in Lebanon due to the activities of the parties' militias during the civil war and what many see as their complicity in the Syrian-directed post-war order which purported to restore political pluralism but amounted to little more than the distribution of spoils at the expense of public welfare. One critic, for example, echoes this view by stating that "consociational democracy is the codename for the abominable system of sectarian quotas, and the weapon which the sectarian politicians use to attack the sectarian system as well as demand a share in it. It is a disingenuous catchphrase for the division of spoils and the distribution of benefits and jobs."[29] Further, it is not only the "sectarian" politicians and parties subject to this condemnation, but also the "ideological"

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[29]The original Arabic:

الديموقراطيّة التوافقيّة هي الاسم الرمزي لنظام التحاصّص الطائفي والمذهبي البغيض، هي القناع

parties as well. An activist from the anti-sectarian Syrian Social Nationalist Party, in noting that many such parties have allied with leading sectarian figures and have themselves come to resemble the sectarian parties in internal structure and leadership, states that "there is no doubt that a number of the ideological parties have come to take on the attributes of a sect. Their rhetorical attacks on and resistance to 'sectarianism' do not help them, for they practice the logic of sects in politics. . . in addition to operating within the sectarian system as sects!"[30]

Political leaders and parties are thus distrusted for their participation in the sectarian spoils system which, although a cornerstone of Lebanese public affairs since before independence, has become in the post-war era unambiguously larger in scope, more corrupt, and more detrimental to public finances and welfare. But whereas political leaders personify sectarianism as politics in practice, religious leaders represent the statement of ideals found within Lebanon's various religious traditions, and are often idealized as the country's conscience. In this regard, Abd al-Amir Qabalan, the vice-president of the Supreme Shia Council, noted in a Friday sermon that "we

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الذي يستخدمه السياسيون الطائفيون وهم يرجمون النظام الطائفي ويطالبون بحصّة فيه. إنّها الشعار الزائف لتقاسم الغنيمة وتوزيع الأسلاب والمغانم والمناصب. وهي في الوقت نفسه صيغة مخادعة لانّها توفّر خلفيّة اخلاقيّة لمشروع طائفي لا أخلاقي يكرّس الانقسام الوطني على حساب العيش المشترك، ويدعم الدويلات الطائفيّة على حساب مشروع الدولة الجامعة القادرة والعدالة.

Abd al-Ghani Ammad, "Consociational democracy or veiled federalism?" (»ديموقراطية توافقية أم فيديرالية مقنّعة؟«), *Annahar*, 30 March 2007.

[30]The original Arabic:

فلا شكّ أنّ عددا من الأحزاب العقيدية بات ينطبق عليه وبجدارة نعت »الطائفة«، ! ولا يسعف هذه الأحزاب هجومها الخطابي ومقاومتها الكلامية لـ»الطائفية« . فممارستها لمنطق الطوائف في السياسة ... وتحالفها الاستراتيجي مع بعض رموز الطائفية السياسية، وتشابه مسؤوليها مع مسؤولي أحزاب الطوائف ... كلّ ذلك يدينها، مضافا إليه تعاملها مع النظام الطائفي ... كطائفة!

Nadim Muhsin, "Between the party of the sect and the sect of the party" (»بين حزب الطائفة .. وطائفة الحزب«), originally published in *Annahar*, 25 December 1998, reprinted in Muhsin (2000ع, 11–15), quote at page 13.

men of religion must rectify the paths of the politicians. A politician works for his own private interests while a man of religion has no interests except the approval of God and the welfare of the flock."[31] Although this statement is of course more rhetorical than it is factual, it encapsulates a common refrain: politicians following narrow sectarian interests produce poor social outcomes, whereas individuals guided by religious tenets are better able to provide social justice. What "social justice" means conceptually is, of course, usually left hazy, but one of the main themes that accompanies it is the demand for a fairer distribution of resources (also ambiguous) and cleaner, more ethical government.

Arguably, then, when people express a desire for more religious guidance in public affairs, they refer to the idealized vision of public-spirited social justice and welfare contained within the doctrine rather than a desire to live under religious law writ large. This is likely to be the case especially in the context of a segmental system such as that found in Lebanon, in which the religious communities have long had autonomy over family law and largely manage their own educational systems, and thus where religious guidance already plays a prominent role in the key components of Lebanese life in which the extension of religious law is relatively straightforward. Whereas it is easy to imagine how religious tenets apply to marriage, divorce, and inheritance, it is much less easy to imagine what it means to extend religious law to the administration of, say, the public electricity company or the department of public works, except perhaps to say that it must be "clean" and "fair" administration, or possibly "more compassionate" to the poor. Considered in this way, government with

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[31]The original Arabic:

نحن رجال الدين علينا أن نصحّح مسار السياسيين، السياسي يعمل من أجل مصلحته الخاصة أما رجل الدين فلا مصلحة إلا رضا الله ومصلحة العبّاد.

"Qabalan responds to Bishops' statement..." (بدعة مخيفة :صفير ومواقف المطارنة بيان على يردّ قبلان), *As-Safir*, 14 May 2005. (يهدّد لا الدين ورجل للفيدرالية تؤدّي)

religious guidance becomes approximately analogous to "good government."

Thus, to the degree that people desire religious guidance in public affairs, they do so, arguably, out of desire for social justice and the ethical distribution of resources rather than out of desire for the application of religious law to all aspects of political life. We might thus expect the following:

> **Hypothesis 5** *Desire for religious guidance in economic rather than political affairs increases support for governance according to religious law.*

The next section presents data and analysis of factors influencing institutional preferences among Lebanese of different sects. To test the degree to which these hypotheses outlined above are consistent with reality, I utilize two unobtrusive measures of personal religiosity and politicization—and the opportunity to compare preferences between Sunnis, Shiites, and Christians—and also assess the degree to which a religion effect, should it exist at all, is specific to Islam or more generalizable across spiritual traditions.

3.4 Empirical Analysis

Section 3.4 presents an empirical assessment of the hypotheses just laid out. I first describe the data used, then present the rationale for the mapping of particular survey items onto the concepts discussed in Section 3.3. After presenting summary statistics for key dependent and explanatory variables, I describe the statistical models and present results from the main models, as well as robustness checks. The subsequent section discusses the implications of these findings.

The Data

To conduct these analyses, I draw on data collected via an original mass political attitude survey designed to examine linkages between religion, sectarianism, the distribution of resources, and institutional preferences. Respondents were drawn randomly from a stratified sample of Lebanese adults across all sectarian communities

and provinces, with a sample size of 1000 individuals. Beirut-based MADMA Co. administered the face-to-face interviews in the fall of 2005, roughly equidistant in time between the pullout of the Syrian armed forces from Lebanon in the spring of 2005 and the Israel-Hizballah conflict in the summer of 2006. MADMA's sample frame is based on household demographics surveys conducted in the late-1990s by the Lebanese government on tens of thousands of households, for which the president of MADMA was a consultant. It is among the most reliable sample frames available in the absence of official censuses, which are too politically sensitive to conduct. The response rate was 70 percent, which did not vary significantly between Shia, Sunni, and Christian respondents. Note that I have dropped the Druze and Alawis from the analysis because their small sub-sample sizes make it difficult to draw reliable within-community inferences.

Measuring Dependent Variables

Because "democracy" is not a value-neutral term, gauging democratic attitudes is not a matter of simply asking people whether or not they support democracy. First, the content of the term is open-ended: upon hearing the term "democracy," some may think "elections," others "civil rights," and still others may simply associate it with other desirable outcomes such as justice or even economic prosperity. Second, the normative connotations of the term make it difficult to express skepticism—this is a question with clear socially desirable answers. With these difficulties in mind, we may consider results presented in Figure 3.1, which reports proportions of responses to a battery of questions asking respondents to evaluate, on a four-point scale, how good or bad different political systems would be to govern Lebanon, asked in the following order:

- Having a strong head of government who does not have to bother with parliament and elections *(Strong Leader)*

- Having experts, not government, make decisions according to what they think is best for the country *(Experts Rule)*

- Having religious leaders make decisions for the country according to religious law *(Clerics Rule)*

- Having a democratic political system *(Democracy)*

As is evident in the leftmost panel in Figure 3.1, the overwhelming majority of respondents give democracy the highest rating on the scale, with a negligible number giving it low marks. These responses, if taken at face value, would appear to indicate that virtually *all* Lebanese, regardless of religious community, are committed democrats. It also presents a practical methodological problem: we cannot analyze variation in support for democracy when no variation exists to explain. To address this particular methodological problem, we can instead examine respondents' assessments of a variety of autocratic systems, which belie the apparent total commitment to democracy suggested initially. Responses to the strong leader option, for example, are not the mirror images to the responses about democratic systems one might expect. Although it is true that just over half of respondents rate this system as "very bad," the flip side to this is that just under half of respondents rate it higher than the lowest point on the scale, and over 10 percent actually rate the strong leader option positively. The overwhelming Lebanese support for democracy becomes still more tenuous when respondents are asked to gauge the option of rule by experts: less than half of respondents rate this option at the lowest point on the scale, and over a quarter of the sample rates it positively. Further, some differences by sect appear to emerge: the Shia are least supportive of the option of rule by experts, Sunnis are significantly more so, and Christians fall somewhere in between. Some differences also exist when asked about clerical rule. As with expert rule, about half of respondents rate this option at the lowest point of the scale and another quarter of the sample rates it positively. Sunnis, however, are far more supportive of clerical rule than either Shia
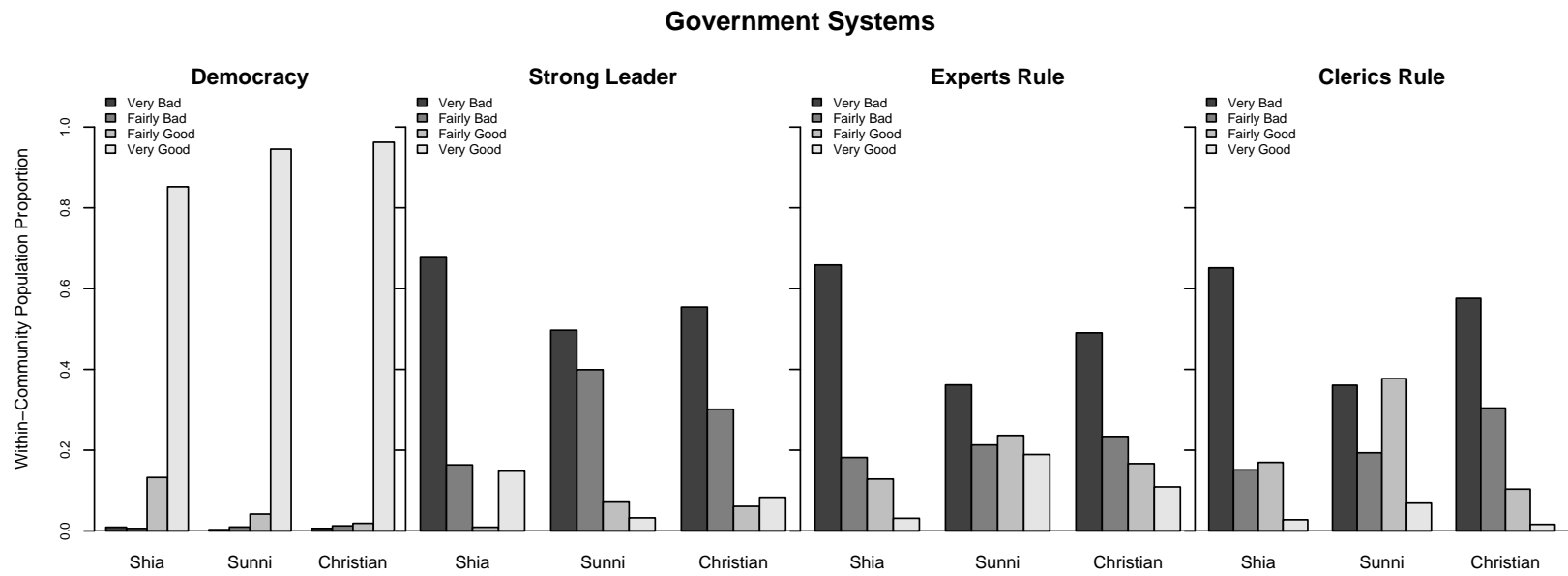
100

Government Systems

Figure 3.1: Support for Different Governing Systems

or Christian respondents.

Results from a set of simple ordered probit models (results not shown) using dummy variables for community membership reflect these mixed results at the aggregate community level. They indicate, first, that the three communities are statistically indistinguishable from each other on the strong leader option; second, relative to Christians, Shiites are noticeably less supportive of rule by experts and Sunnis noticeably more so; and third, Sunnis are more supportive of clerical rule than Shiites and Christians, who are statistically indistinguishable. Were we concerned only with raw comparisons between the three communities, we could simply stop here: these data provide tenuous evidence that Shiites are somewhat less supportive of autocratic options than are Christians (one of three indicators), and that Sunnis appear to be more supportive of such systems (two of three indicators). Yet these results, based as they are on extremely aggregated figures, rest on an implicit and false assumption of homogeneity within the three communities. Lebanese attitudes are, unsurprisingly, far richer than raw aggregates can capture, and in what follows I focus on a key aspect of that bigger story. I next present unobtrusive measures of religiosity and politicization as means to distinguish between the attitudes of the religiously devout, the politically engaged, and those who are both, as well as more conventional measures of support for religious guidance in public affairs.

Measuring Explanatory Variables

Measuring religiosity and politicization is not the simple matter of asking respondents how religious or politicized they are. The first problem is one of awkward metrics: these are latent concepts with no naturally-occurring or otherwise obvious scales on which to measure them. We may speak casually of individuals as more or less religious (or politicized), but we generally do so while leaving the metric vague. Most ordinary people are probably familiar with the latent concepts, but are unlikely to use

agreed-upon scales that are common from person to person—two self-identified "very religious" people, for example, may have quite different ideas about what it means to be "very religious." Further complicating the issue are differences between doctrines regarding prescribed religious rituals that we might otherwise use to measure religious practice. One common indicator (see, e.g., the citations in fn. 1), for example, is a count of the number of times per day that an individual prays. While such a measure is reasonable when studying members of single faith, it is unclear how to to make it comparable across doctrines: Sunnis are, in theory, obligated to pray five times a day, Shiites consider it permissible to elide some of them together such that only three separate prayers are said per day (although all five are also permissible),[32] and the number of daily prayers are not so explicitly defined for Christians. Similar concerns arise for other measures, such as frequency in attending religious services and how often one reads the religion's holy book or supplemental texts.

The second plausible issue that arises is that self-reports on religiosity and politicization may suffer from social desirability and response bias effects. Especially in environments where religiosity enjoys the positive connotations of piety, morality, and the like, respondents may simply report themselves to be "good Muslims" or "good Christians" even if, by some less normatively-charged standards, they are not. This may take the form of piety inflation—overly flattering reports of how often one prays, attends services, and so on—as well as refusals to respond at all, given the sensitivity of the matter.[33] In contrast, politicization is often associated with partisanship

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[32]At least among the Twelver Shia (the branch found in Lebanon), believers may run together, first, the noon and afternoon prayers, and second, the evening and night prayers, resulting in three rather than five daily prayers (Momen 1985, 178).

[33]This non-response is likely to be systematic as well. Fully 10 percent of the Lebanese sample refused to answer questions about how frequently they pray, attend religious services, or read the Bible or Quran. Simple models of propensity to respond using the unobtrusive indicators described in the main text show that, among all three communities on all three indicators, politicized individuals are significantly less likely to offer a response, as are religious Sunnis.

and sectarianism, both of which are held in low esteem, as well as inflexibility and radicalism.

Because of the measurement problems associated with self-reports, I utilize unobtrusive means of measuring religiosity and politicization that do not require respondents to use artificial and unfamiliar scales or discuss sensitive topics, or even tell us where they stand at all. For this, I draw on the propensity of Lebanese to reveal their religiosity and party affiliations via icons and symbols displayed around the home. As one travels around the different quarters of Beirut or among the mountain villages, one is struck by, first, the variety of religious iconography displayed above doors and in windows such as Quranic verses, the hand of Fatima, crucifixes, and figurines of the Virgin Mary. Second, one is subject to a bewildering array of party flags and militia symbols, as well as posters and photographs of political leaders. Some households have religious icons but not political symbols, some have political symbols but not religious icons, some have both, and some have none. These icons and symbols become useful tools in explaining differences in attitudes within and between sects because they allow us to measure religiosity and politicization *unobtrusively*.[34]

Figure 3.2 reports the proportional distribution of households displaying religious (R) and/or political (P) icons. These data were collected by instructing interviewers to note and describe any religion items ("such as pictures of religious leaders, Quranic inscriptions, or crosses," as described in the instructions) or political items ("such as political party flags, campaign posters, or militia symbols") displayed about the home. These basic summary statistics reveal intriguing differences between the sects. While

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[34]Although one might question the degree to which these icons reflect the opinions of the actual respondent rather than those of the head of household, there is good reason to believe that these are not large problems in practice given the degree to which families continue to be close-knit and play central roles in social life, and the degree to which partisanship and party loyalties are "inherited"—see for example Khashan (1992) and el Khazen (2002ع, 61-62 and *passim*), who describes contemporary party support as resulting primarily from "biological growth" based on inherited support from traditional forces such as family and village.

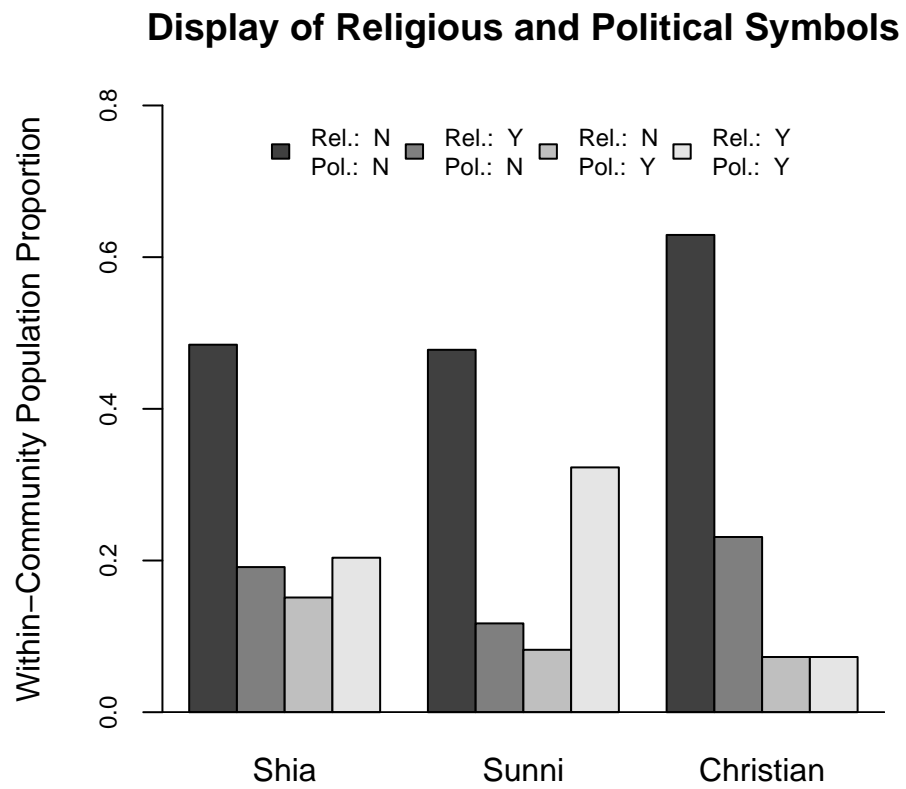# Display of Religious and Political Symbols

Figure 3.2: Religious and Political Symbols by Community

half of Shia and Sunni respondents display at least one type of icon or the other about their homes, only about a third of Christians do so. Within the Shia community, those displaying any symbols at all are roughly evenly distributed between those displaying only a religious icon, only a political icon, or both. In contrast, Sunnis displaying both religious and political symbols are far more prevalent than those displaying only religious or only political icons. Christians, meanwhile, are more inclined (relative to each other) to display religious symbols as opposed to political ones. Between communities, these figures could suggest that religion and politics are most tightly interwoven among Sunnis and significantly less so within the Shia community, while Christians are less expressive overall, and particularly in political symbology.[35]

Because a wide range of opinions on the role of religion in public affairs are accepted in Lebanon, social desirability is less of a concern and I turn to more conventional measures. In particular, I use responses to a battery of questions asking respondents to rate, on a five-point scale, the importance of religion as a guide to several aspects of public life—using the phrasing of religion as "providing guidance" rather than "the extension of religious law" to avoid any lingering sensitivity issues attached to the application of Islamic law.[36] Figure 3.3 presents summary statis-

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[35]This survey was administered approximately half a year after the February 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Note, however, that although most of the Sunni political symbols were, in fact, Hariri-related, the Sunni connection of religion and politics still stands: the number of respondents displaying only political symbols is actually lower than those displaying only religious symbols and far lower than those displaying both. To the degree that there was a specific Hariri effect for Sunnis, it induced them to display more of both religious *and* political symbols rather than one or the other. The relative dearth of Christian political symbology presumably reflects, in part, a forced depoliticization of the community in the aftermath of the civil war when the Lebanese Forces militia/party was banned and its leader, Samir Geagea, imprisoned, the Free Patriotic Movement banned and its leader, Michel Aoun, in exile, the Kataib Party split and discredited, and other key leaders were either in exile or prison. Although there was a considerable amount of Christian political symbology during the massive demonstrations in the spring of 2005, it is noteworthy that, when this survey was conducted only half a year after the most dramatic events occurred, there were still relatively few displays of political symbology compared to Shiites and Sunnis. For details, see el Khazen (2002ع).

[36]The question text reads, "in your judgment, how important a role should religion play in pro-

tics in the form of population proportions of responses for economic (*Rel. Econ.*), political (*Rel. Pol.*), and family (*Rel. Fam.*) affairs. These responses show significant variation within communities on economic and political affairs—opinions range widely—and between sects: Shiites appear to consider religious guidance somewhat less important than Christians, and Sunnis somewhat more so. There is far less variation in opinion, meanwhile, on religious guidance on issues of family law, with responses in all three communities clustering at the "important" end of the scale (although Christians in the aggregate consider it slightly less important than the other two communities). This is consistent with the observation made earlier that religious law is more explicit on family and personal status issues and, further, already plays a large role within Lebanon's sectarian system.

Model Results

I first assess the effects of religiosity and politicization by estimating three groups of ordered probit models in which the autocratic systems indicators, *Strong Leader*, *Experts Rule*, and *Clerics Rule*, act as the dependent variables. These models are reported in Table 3.1 and the first two columns of Table 3.2. Within each group, I first report results from a model using a parsimonious set of covariates, which includes the unobtrusive religiosity (R) and politicization (P) indicators, community indicators (*Shia* and *Sunni*, making Christians the baseline category), and their interactions. I then report an expanded model that includes a set of control variables as a robustness check.[37] Additional covariates for the *Clerics Rule* models, extended

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viding guidance in each of the following areas of public life?"

[37] In particular, *Rural* and *Female* are dummy variables indicating if the respondent lives in a rural area and if the respondent is female. *Education* is a five-point measure of educational attainment (rescaled $0 - 1$ for ease of interpretation). *Age* is the respondent's age utilizing a square-root transformation. *Electricity* is a measure of how many hours per day the electricity is off in respondents' homes (also with a square-root transformation). The latter is a broad measure of socioeconomic status, used because the more standard income measure suffers from the fact that many Lebanese respondents refused to declare their income. As an alternate indicator for
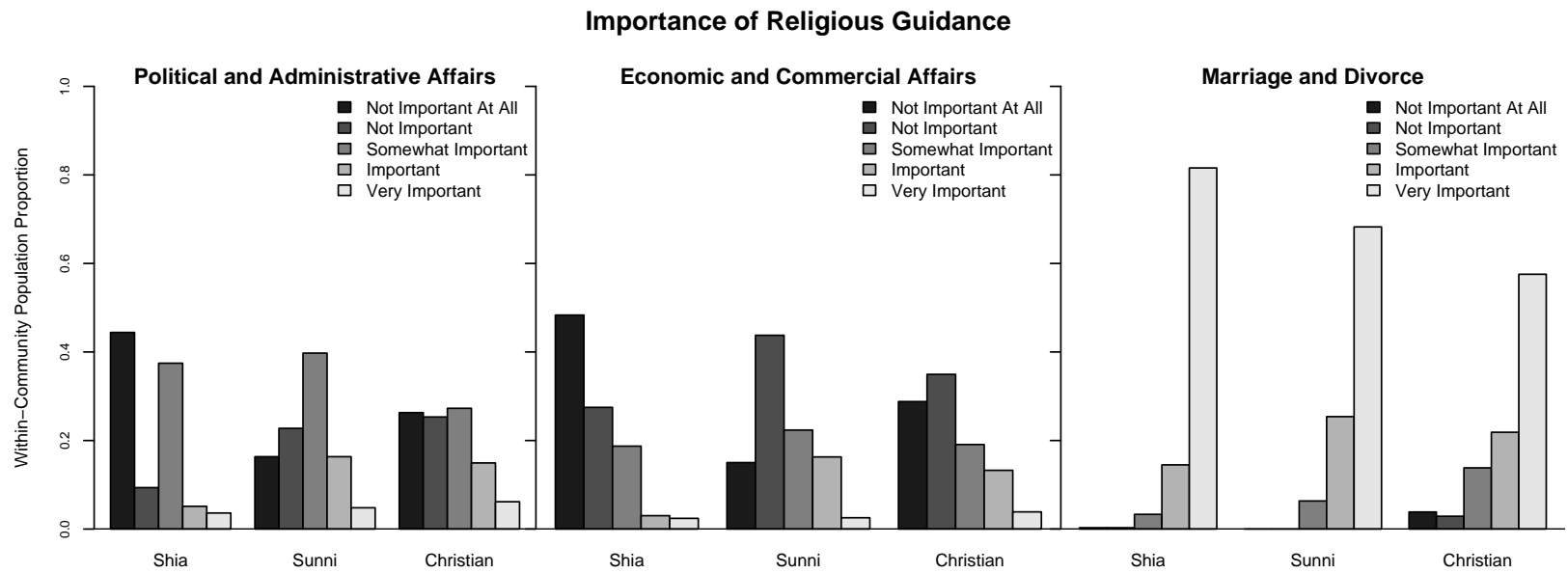
Importance of Religious Guidance

Figure 3.3: Religion as a Guide in Public Life

to test Hypothesis 5 and presented in the last two columns of Table 3.2, include the three religious guidance scales (rescaled $0-1$ for ease of interpretation), interacted with community.

Table 3.1: Model Results, Strong Leader and Experts Rule

	Strong Leader				Experts Rule			
	b	$se(b)$	b	$se(b)$	b	$se(b)$	b	$se(b)$
R	0.27	0.16$^{\boldsymbol{\cdot}}$	0.22	0.16	0.24	0.15	0.21	0.15
P	0.14	0.27	0.00	0.28	0.04	0.26	-0.03	0.27
$R \times P$	-1.14	0.43†	-0.97	0.46*	-1.37	0.44†	-1.39	0.47†
$Shia$	-0.80	0.15‡	-0.75	0.16‡	-1.11	0.15‡	-1.02	0.16‡
$Shia \times R$	0.47	0.25$^{\boldsymbol{\cdot}}$	0.45	0.26$^{\boldsymbol{\cdot}}$	0.59	0.25*	0.54	0.26*
$Shia \times P$	1.75	0.34‡	1.77	0.35‡	1.46	0.33‡	1.37	0.34‡
$Shia \times R \times P$	-0.67	0.52	-0.80	0.56	-0.07	0.53	-0.21	0.56
$Sunni$	0.34	0.12†	0.00	0.14	0.93	0.12‡	0.53	0.14‡
$Sunni \times R$	-0.49	0.26$^{\boldsymbol{\cdot}}$	-0.36	0.27	-0.83	0.26‡	-0.72	0.27†
$Sunni \times P$	-0.26	0.36	-0.21	0.37	-0.23	0.35	-0.23	0.36
$Sunni \times R \times P$	0.59	0.54	0.48	0.57	0.64	0.55	0.71	0.58
$Rural$			0.30	0.10†			0.17	0.10$^{\boldsymbol{\cdot}}$
$Female$			-0.34	0.09‡			-0.25	0.09†
$Education$			-0.69	0.22†			-0.71	0.21‡
Age			-0.03	0.04			0.07	0.04
$Electricity$			-0.23	0.04‡			-0.31	0.04‡
$Intercept$ 1	0.16	0.08$^{\boldsymbol{\cdot}}$	-0.96	0.36†	-0.07	0.08	-0.92	0.35†
$Intercept$ 2	1.15	0.09‡	0.07	0.36	0.60	0.08‡	-0.20	0.34
$Intercept$ 3	1.41	0.10‡	0.35	0.36	1.39	0.09‡	0.64	0.35$^{\boldsymbol{\cdot}}$
N	940		901		923		885	
$\ln L$	-903.16		-834.95		-997.81		-909.41	

$p \leq 0.001^{\ddagger}$, $p \leq 0.01^{\dagger}$, $p \leq 0.05^{\star}$, $p \leq 0.10^{\boldsymbol{\cdot}}$

Estimated results are broadly supportive of the hypotheses outlined in Section 3.3. Turning first to differences between communities, recall that Hypothesis 1 posited that members of the Shia community, at base, would be least supportive of autocratic systems. Evidence supporting this contention comes from the $Shia$ coefficient

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socioeconomic status, I also used a measure of room density (number of residents per bedroom) in place of $Electricity$, with substantively the same results for the variables of interest, but no discernible room density effect.

Table 3.2: Model Results, Clerics Rule

	Clerics Rule							
	b	$se(b)$	b	$se(b)$	b	$se(b)$	b	$se(b)$
R	0.25	0.16	0.20	0.16	0.27	0.16·	0.25	0.16
P	−0.17	0.29	−0.12	0.29	−0.20	0.29	−0.15	0.30
$R \times P$	−0.73	0.44·	−0.91	0.46*	−0.75	0.44·	−0.81	0.46·
$Shia$	−0.78	0.15‡	−0.62	0.16‡	−0.71	0.57	−0.74	0.58
$Shia \times R$	0.53	0.25*	0.45	0.26·	0.40	0.27	0.34	0.27
$Shia \times P$	1.71	0.35‡	1.50	0.36‡	1.37	0.36‡	1.30	0.37‡
$Shia \times R \times P$	−0.27	0.52	−0.33	0.55	0.05	0.54	−0.12	0.56
$Sunni$	0.87	0.13‡	0.34	0.14†	0.03	0.49	−0.45	0.51
$Sunni \times R$	−0.36	0.26	−0.18	0.26	−0.23	0.27	−0.17	0.27
$Sunni \times P$	0.24	0.37	0.13	0.38	0.41	0.38	0.30	0.39
$Sunni \times R \times P$	0.33	0.54	0.53	0.57	0.41	0.56	0.38	0.58
$Rural$			−0.17	0.10·			−0.13	0.10
$Female$			−0.11	0.09			−0.06	0.09
$Education$			−1.04	0.22‡			−0.73	0.23†
Age			0.00	0.04			0.02	0.04
$Electricity$			−0.33	0.04‡			−0.25	0.05‡
$Rel.\ Econ.$					0.77	0.41·	0.87	0.42*
$Rel.\ Pol.$					−0.17	0.39	−0.41	0.39
$Rel.\ Fam.$					−0.25	0.28	−0.31	0.29
$Shia \times Rel.\ Econ.$					1.19	0.73	0.82	0.77
$Shia \times Rel.\ Pol.$					0.30	0.68	0.32	0.72
$Shia \times Rel.\ Fam.$					−0.27	0.63	−0.06	0.65
$Sunni \times Rel.\ Econ.$					1.20	0.61*	0.60	0.63
$Sunni \times Rel.\ Pol.$					0.68	0.57	0.54	0.59
$Sunni \times Rel.\ Fam.$					0.02	0.58	0.48	0.60
$Intercept$ 1	0.29	0.09‡	−1.34	0.35‡	0.24	0.23	−0.89	0.45·
$Intercept$ 2	0.96	0.09‡	−0.61	0.35·	0.98	0.23‡	−0.12	0.45
$Intercept$ 3	2.19	0.12‡	0.74	0.36*	2.38	0.25‡	1.33	0.46†
N	934		895		913		874	
$\ln L$	-957.11		-854.55		-872.57		-804.85	

$p \leq 0.001^\ddagger,\ p \leq 0.01^\dagger,\ p \leq 0.05^\star,\ p \leq 0.10$·

estimates—indicating Shiites who are neither religious nor politicized—which, for each dependent variable in both the parsimonious and expanded models, is strongly negative and statistically significant. Substantively, this suggests that Shiites, at base, are less supportive than Christians of the three autocratic systems analyzed. Further, this is specifically a Shia rather than a Muslim effect: in five of the six models, the *Sunni* coefficient is *positive* and statistically significant, indicating that Sunnis, at base, are more supportive than Christians of the autocratic systems. Recall, however, that Hypothesis 2 contended that politicized Shiites would be more supportive of autocratic options than their unpoliticized cosectarians. These data also strongly support this proposition. In particular, the $Shia \times P$ coefficient estimates are always positive, of very large magnitude, and statistically significant, indicating a radicalization effect among this subset of the Shia community, which is significantly more supportive of autocratic options than are their cosectarians and members of the other communities.[38] This effect may be seen graphically at the top-left of Figure 3.4.[39]

We now turn to Hypotheses 3 and 4, which discuss the effects of religiosity and the intersection of religiosity and politics. Because the posited interactive relationship is difficult to see in the tables, I clarify the interpretation by presenting results from the *Strong Leader* model (others are substantively similar) graphically in the form of first differences—the *change* in probability associated with a change in the covariates— along with 95-percent confidence intervals around these differences in Figures 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6.

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[38]Note that the estimates on P and $Sunni \times P$ are always of small magnitude, occasionally flip signs, and are never statistically significant. This suggests that this radicalization effect is restricted to members of the Shia community.

[39]Note that Khomeini's theory is consistent with the three autocratic systems described here: the strong leader option in the form of the jurisconsult himself, rule by experts interpreted as religious scholars specializing in the interpretation and application of religious law, and most obviously in the option of clerical rule. This is not to suggest that politicized Shiites adhere to the particulars of *wilayat al-faqih*, but rather that this communalist vision of Shia ascendancy provides a framework consistent with these autocratic options.

Recall that Hypothesis 3 posited that personal religiosity, by itself, would have no significant influence on attitudes toward different institutions. As the bottom row of Figure 3.4 suggests, the data support this proposition, but with a major qualifier. Although there is little evidence of a religiosity effect among Sunnis and Christians—the only exception is among Sunnis on rule by experts, where the religiosity effect is actually negative rather than positive—there is a significant one among Shiites for all three autocratic systems. This implies that there may be doctrinal elements in Shia Islam as it is currently interpreted that are receptive to more authoritarian institutions. Particularly notable, however, is the interactive effect of religiosity and politicization. In broad terms, their intersection makes people less supportive of autocratic systems, consistent with Hypothesis 4. Among Shiites, politicization may make community members considerably more supportive of autocracy, but religiosity tempers this effect and sharply reduces these radicalizing effects. And although neither religiosity nor politicization alone, for the most part, influence Sunni and Christian attitudes toward these different institutional options, the processes in these communities are analogous to those among the Shia: combining religiosity and politics makes Sunnis and Christians less supportive of autocracy.

Turning now to Hypothesis 5 on support for religious law, first note that a careful comparison of results from the *Strong Leader* and *Experts Rule* models against the *Clerics Rule* results reveals that the simple model used so far is comparatively less strong in explaining support for rule by religious leaders, implying additional influences are at work. Although the broad dynamics detailed above are also evident for clerical rule, the effects are milder and not always statistically significant. Recall that Hypothesis 5 suggested that support for the use of religious law is based on a desire for religious guidance in economic rather than political affairs. Results presented in the last two columns of Table 3.2 are consistent with this proposition. The coefficient on *Rel. Econ.* is positive, large, and statistically significant, whereas no

Strong Leader First Differences

Politicization Effect

Religiosity Effect
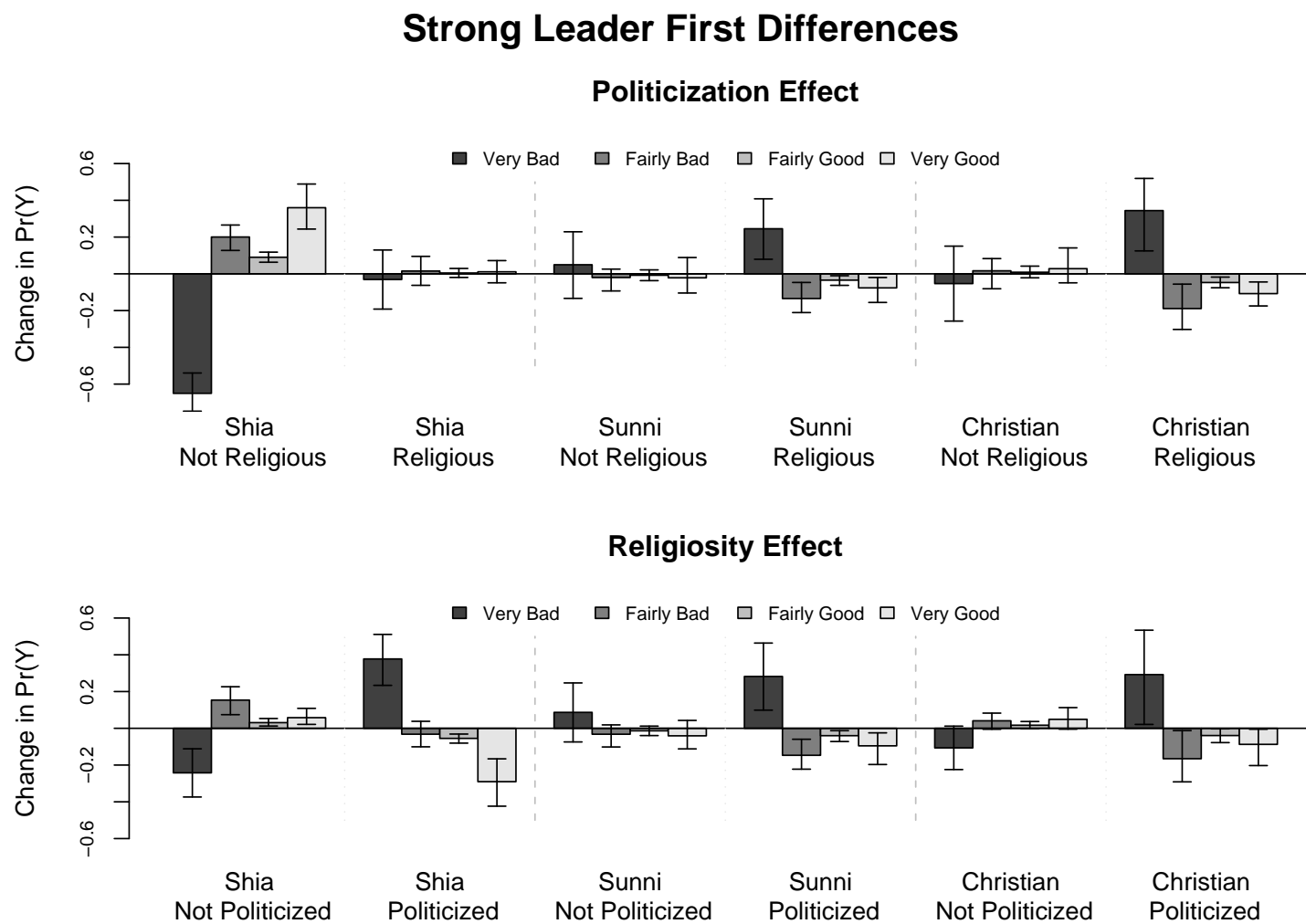
Figure 3.4: Strong Leader First Differences

Experts Rule First Differences

Politicization Effect

Religiosity Effect

Figure 3.5: Experts Rule First Differences

Clerics Rule First Differences

Politicization Effect

Religiosity Effect
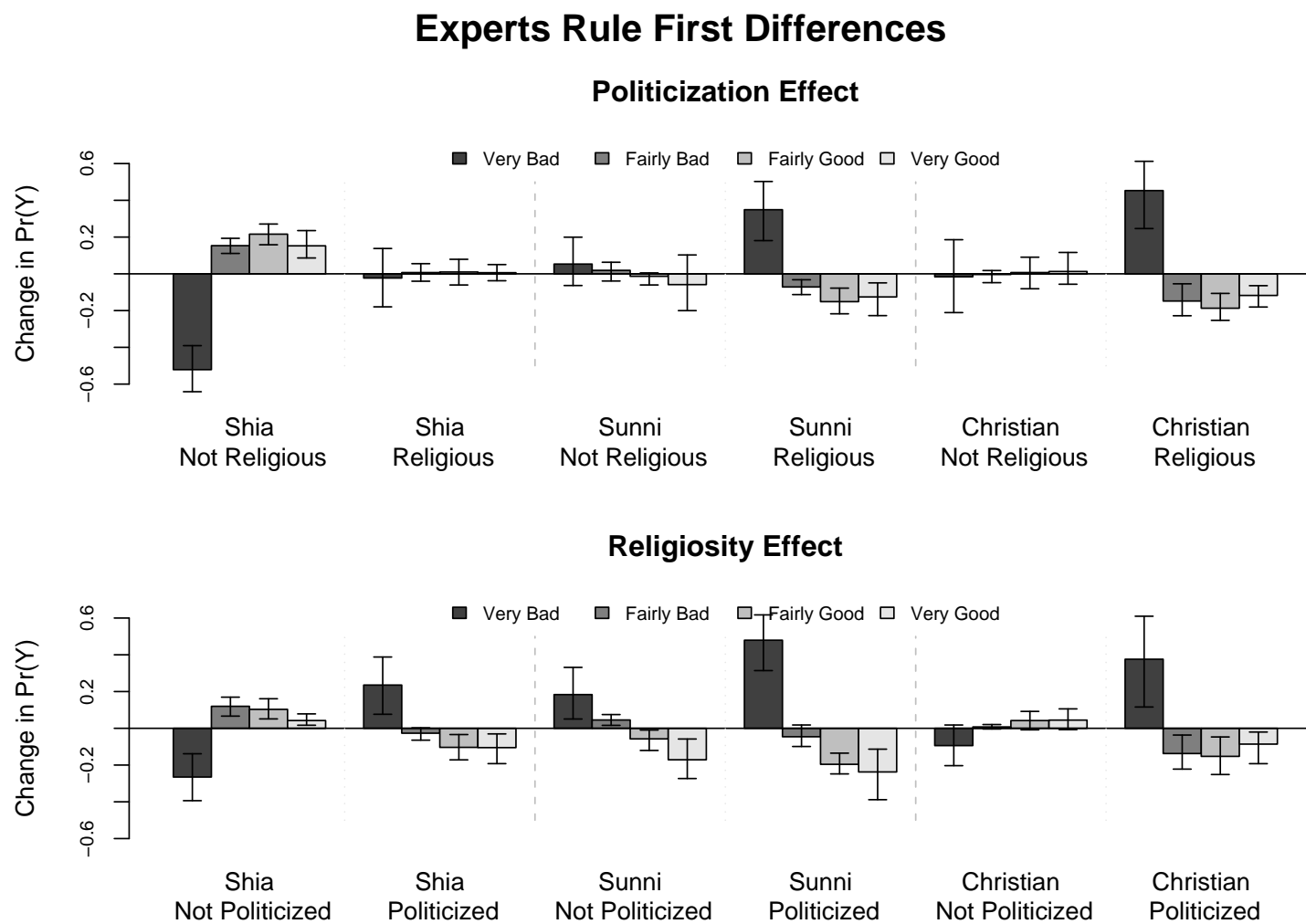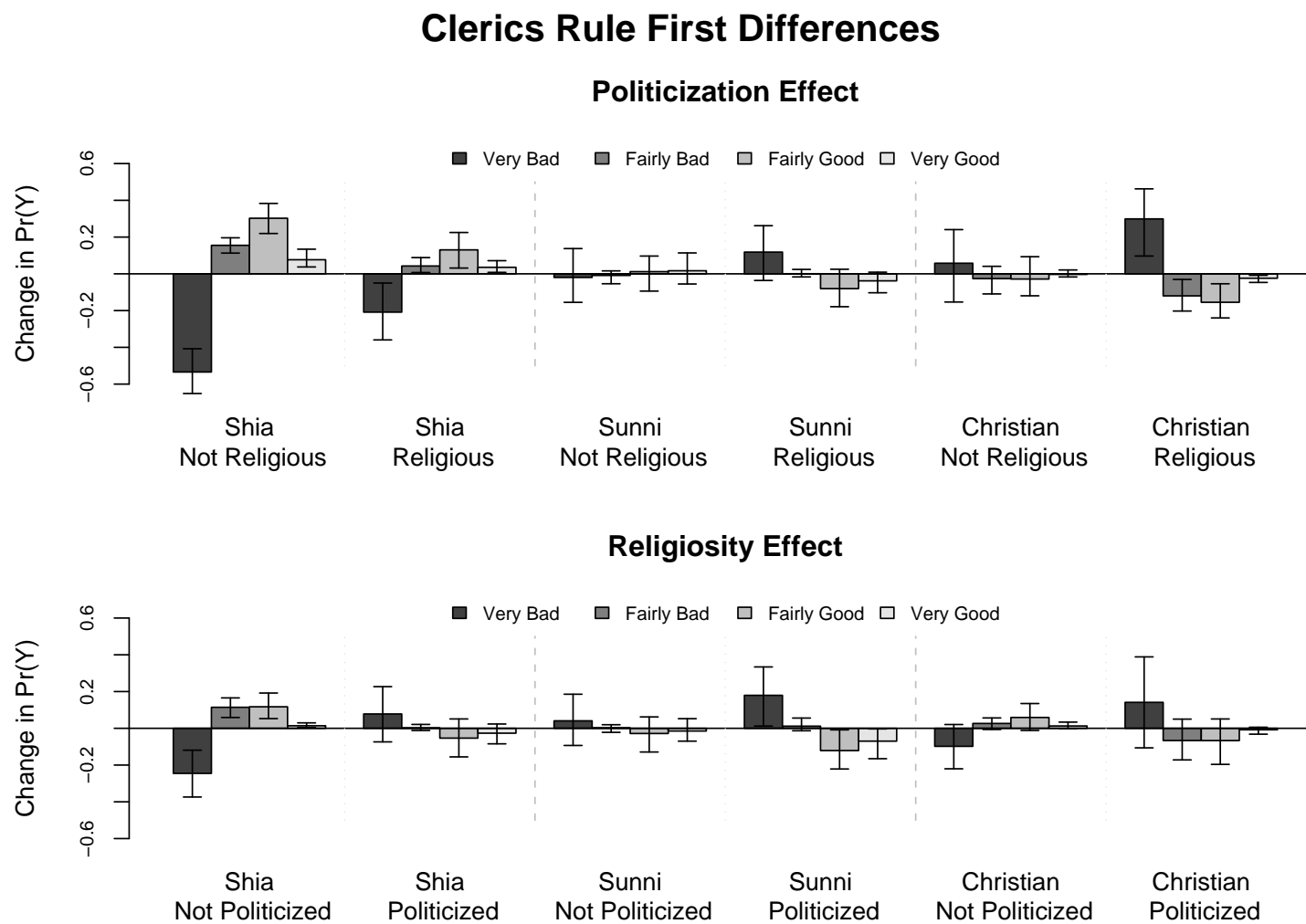

Figure 3.6: Clerics First Differences

estimates related to *Rel. Pol.* or *Rel. Fam.* are even close to statistical significance.[40] Note also that there are no longer any raw differences between the communities on their preferences toward clerical rule: Christians, Sunnis, and Shiites are, at base, not distinguishable from one another simply by virtue of community membership.

Robustness Checks

Two sets of robustness checks suggest that the dynamics described above are generally discernible across alternate model specifications. In the first check, I reestimate the models with a set of basic control variables as indicators for age, sex, rural residency, education, and socioeconomic status (see note 37 for details). Results are substantively the same for the main dynamics of interest.[41] In terms of the controls themselves, increased education always decreases support for autocratic systems. Likewise, increased poverty (proxied by *Electricity*) always decreases support for autocratic systems, with the interpretation that autocracy reduces the influence of the poor relative to democracy, with which they might hope to vote themselves a redistribution of resources. Women are less supportive than men of the strong leader and experts rule options, but with no discernible difference on clerical rule. The opposite dynamic occurs according to residency, with rural dwellers more supportive than urbanites of strong leaders and experts rule, but with no real difference on clerical rule.

The second check is for party affiliation effects, of particular interest among Shia

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[40]Also note that, in the third column, there is a very large, statistically significant coefficient on *Sunni* × *Rel. Econ.* (as well as one of similar magnitude on *Shia* × *Rel. Econ.* that just misses statistical significance at $p = 0.102$), indicating a very large effect for both communities above and beyond the effect for Christians. This additional effect disappears, however, when adding the control variables (column four).

[41]The only notable difference is that the religiosity effect among politicized Christians is significant at the $p = 0.10$ rather than $p = 0.05$ level. These dynamics are easiest to see via graphical means, but due to space constraints cannot be displayed here. All figures are available upon request, or on my web site.

respondents, given that one might plausibly argue that different dynamics occur among Hizballah supporters. As indicators, I use party (or party leader) identification as cited in open response questions.[42] Among the Shia, the major parties are Hizballah (Nasrallah) at 71 percent of respondents and Amal (Berri) at 22 percent. Among Sunnis, 70 percent of respondents identified with the Future Movement (Hariri), with no other major political competitor. Among Christians, the major parties are the Lebanese Forces (Geagea) at 26 percent and the Free Patriotic Movement (Aoun) at 47 percent.[43] Including these party indicators in the basic models leaves the results largely the same (results not shown). There is a substantial anti-autocratic Amal effect for all three systems, and no significant Hizballah effect. Lebanese Forces supporters are less supportive of rule by experts, and Future Movement supporters are more supportive of clerical rule. Further, the results of the basic models are substantively similar when estimated on subsamples of supporters of Hizballah, the Future Movement, and the Free Patriotic Movement, the three largest parties in the sample.[44]

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[42]The question reads, "please tell me which political party, political movement or gathering, or political leader you feel *closest to* politically."

[43]Practically speaking, party identification does not transcend community membership. Within this sample, 72 of 73 (99 percent) of declared Amal supporters are Shiites, as are 237 of 249 (95 percent) of Hizballah supporters. Among Future Movement supporters, 222 of 229 (97 percent) are Sunnis. Lebanese Forces supporters are all Christian (82 of 82), and Christians comprise 151 of 157 (96 percent) of Free Patriotic Movement supporters.

[44]All results are the substantively the same among Hizballah supporters. As is generally the case for Sunnis, the model performs less well for clerical rule, but is substantively unchanged for the strong leader and experts options. Among Free Patriotic Movement supporters, there is now an additional significant politicization effect (i.e., politicized but not religious) in favor of strong leaders and rule by experts (but not clerics).

3.5 Discussion

The results reported here indicate that Muslims do not comprise a monolithic bloc, either between or within Islam's doctrinal branches. It is not true that Lebanese Shiites and Sunnis share similar attitudes toward democracy and autocracy that are starkly different from those of Lebanese Christians. In fact, these data show that, in the aggregate, Shiites and Sunnis represent either end of the spectrum in Lebanon, with Christians falling approximately between them. Yet it is also clear that we must move beyond raw aggregate figures, which can tell only a very rough story: within-community variation produces both democrats and autocrats among Shiites, Sunnis, and Christians alike. These data have suggested that, in accounting for some of this variation in preferences over government institutions, members of all three communities respond in predictable ways to incentives generated by the salient political and social cleavages in their society, and the existing political institutions used to channel them.

Although differences between the sectarian communities exist, the more interesting processes are those that transcend sectarian lines. Two important dynamics, both related to the intersection of religion and politics, operate among all three communities. Given the characteristics of Lebanese social cleavages and political institutions, sectarianism is the defining feature of political life in Lebanon. Yet sectarianism is distinct from religion and religiosity. For while religion may be part of politics—by providing the nominal boundaries of group membership—it is not necessarily a part of political conflict. Like ethnic politics more generally, sectarian competition in Lebanon often plays out as a zero-sum conflict, or at the very least is perceived that way. Yet, in the absence of the ideals of public unity and strong identification with the broader, national community in Lebanon, religion provides a means of bridging sectarian differences, enabling the Lebanese to invoke shared religious values to create a shared community beyond the sect. The centripetal influence of compromise be-

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tween the religious communities helps offset the centrifugal politics of sectarian group disputes: overlap among the faiths provides an imperfect substitute for the secular religion of patriotism. The implications are evident, first, in preferences over institutions, where, among the politically active and aware, religiosity acts as a moderating rather than a polarizing influence and decreases support for autocratic solutions. The evidence suggests, further, that preferences for religion to play a role in public life does not necessarily follow from a desire for the application of religious law writ large, but for the guidance of religious ideals in economic rather than political affairs—religion for the sake of social justice rather than religious law for its own sake. Adding weight to these findings is the fact that the dynamics they describe occur in all three communities, suggesting that the response results from shared political incentives in spite of differing doctrines.

Two key themes from this study resonate beyond Lebanon. Methodologically, there is a clear epistemological gain to studying the "Islam and democracy" question by analyzing the attitudes and preferences of ordinary, lay Muslims rather than relying solely on elites and movement leaders. Studies of religious parties, movements, and theorists—especially comparative ones—are of course helpful, but they cannot do everything, and can tell us only obliquely how their putative mass constituencies respond to the agendas such elites hope to set. Further, we can magnify this epistemological gain by studying Muslims and non-Muslims together so that we may assess Muslim attitudes in comparison to others rather than in isolation. By studying similarities and differences between members of different religious traditions, we are better able to understand when findings are community-specific and when they generalizable across communities—that is, when an effect is an Islamic one, a religious one, or something else entirely.

Substantively, these findings suggest that blanket generalizations about Arabs or Muslims may be only mildly helpful in understanding the politics of the societies in

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which they live. Instead, focusing on the impact of political institutions and political economy, rather than assuming that politics must follow from culture or religion, will provide a more informative way to understand actual or potential political outcomes in these societies. More broadly, the results presented here reiterate that "religion and politics" is not synonymous with "politicized religion." In Lebanon, religiosity appears to moderate the influence of sectarianism, acting as a substitute for an idealized, public-spirited patriotism where the latter is allegedly weak—a condition that is pervasive in many societies in the developing world. This is not a call to cultivate religious organizations—especially those movements that represent group political interests under a religious veneer—as a panacea to the political disputes found in divided societies, but rather to acknowledge that the ideals they espouse can help create shared communities comprised of members of different faiths.

Chapter 4

Why Sunni Votes are Cheap in Lebanon but Dear in Yemen

Chapter 4 examines why ethnic patronage coalitions form in many diverse societies, and why politicians can buy off their coethnics on the cheap. It addresses a curious combination of empirical regularities found in many ethnically plural societies. First, a norm of ethnic favoritism appears to be endemic, with politicians distributing state resources as patronage to members of their own communities, who in turn provide political support to their own elites. Second, the benefits distributed to mass constituents along ethnic lines are often trivially small. These two empirical regularities appear difficult to reconcile, at least at first glance: how can a dynamic of ethnic favoritism coexist with a dynamic of ethnic neglect? Why, and under what conditions, does a dynamic of ethnic favoritism, or at least what we observe to be ethnic favoritism, emerge? Similarly, why, and under what conditions, can elites get away with distributing cheap rewards to their coethnic mass constituents?

I present the following claim here. Ethnic coalitions represent a solution to a severe coordination problem where, under low-information conditions, ethnic cues and categories provide focal points around which to coordinate for political activity. Ascriptive, descent-like rules defining membership in such categories make ethnic coalitions somewhat similar to broad catch-all parties, but without the crucial options of entry into or exit out of such coalitions. The lack of entry and exit options makes mass constituents a captive audience, and thus subsidizes support for their elites. Elites, to the degree that they can act as monopsonistic buyers of their coethnics'

votes, can capture this ethnic subsidy and provide inexpensive payoffs to supporters rather than return the subsidy to constituents in the form of greater benefits paid out to compete for their political support. This framework helps explain observations of both ethnic favoritism and poorly-compensated mass constituents simultaneously: coethnics get rewards not because they are coethnics, but because elites can buy their votes on the cheap. Yet government institutions can either magnify or disrupt these dynamics to the degree that they stimulate coordination on other, non-ethnic social categories to encourage inter-ethnic competition, or else by inducing *intra*-ethnic competition between elites for their coethnics' support.

Here, I develop this claim and tests some of its implications using original mass attitude survey data collected in Lebanon and Yemen. Lebanon's consociational system explicitly incorporates its sectarian communities into the formal institutions of the state by defining quotas in the legislature, executive, and civil service, and by strongly promoting intra-sect competition between elites for their cosectarians' support—yet due to exogenous shocks a monopsonist has emerged in the Sunni community. In contrast, Yemen's plurality system and explicit disavowal of sectarian, tribal, and regional divisions has enabled the Shiite-led ruling party to act as a monopsonistic buyer of votes in the minority Shia community, whereas it faces competition for support among the Sunni majority.

Empirically, I first show show that perceptions of the need for connections to obtain a government job (as a proxy for patronage) do not differ by sectarian community in Lebanon, whereas Yemeni Sunnis are much more likely to cite connections than are Yemeni Shiites. This dynamic provides supporting evidence that Lebanon's quota system prevents elites from making patronage appointments at the expense of other communities, whereas in Yemen it is possible for the ruling party to reward Shiite supporters disproportionately with state jobs at the expense of potentially more qualified (and more expensive) Sunni aspirants. Second, I show that the propensity to signal

support for elites, proxied here by publicly displaying political posters and photos of leaders, varies by the degree to which individuals perceive a need for connections to obtain government rewards—but *only among Lebanese Sunnis and Yemeni Shiites*. This dynamic provides evidence that, in a monopsonistic environment, coethnics realize that their votes come cheap and must find additional means to signal stronger support in order to obtain more lucrative politically-allocated rewards.

The rest of this essay proceeds as follows. I begin by addressing the two seemingly inconsistent empirical regularities cited—ethnic favoritism and ethnic neglect—using motivating examples from Lebanon and Yemen, suggesting a possible resolution to the apparent inconsistency in the competitive environments that prevail in either society. I then expand on the theoretical sketch outlined above, utilizing a signaling framework to help explain elite decisions over the value of rewards to despense, and to whom. I next show how this framework applies in Lebanon and Yemen, indicating how their institutions influence the degree of competition for votes, with ramifications for the rewards paid out for political support. Finally, I present empirical tests of some of the theoretical implications of this signaling framework using original survey data from both countries.

4.1 Ethnic Favoritism and Ethnic Neglect

Casual inspection of the political processes in many ethnically plural societies suggests the existence of the following apparent empirical regularity. The "who gets what" question of day-to-day politics—which group predominates in the civil service, where the roads get paved, who gets an import license—appears to be largely determined by ethnic connections. This appears to be so much the case that *ethnic favoritism* has become a standard narrative trope, alongside *ethnic tensions* and *ethnic solidarities*, used to describe politics in such societies and explain why they seem to perform poorly compared to their more homogeneous counterparts.

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Yet there is, in fact, more compelling evidence available than a simple flip through the newspaper to support this received wisdom. A large body of scholarly research shows how, in many societies where ethnic cleavages are highly salient, competition over scarce resources commonly runs along ethnic lines to the detriment of society as a whole. Ethnic links, according to the broad themes in these studies, provide the means for politicians to distribute patronage—whether in the form of jobs, contracts, public works projects, or whatever else—to members of their own community at the expense of non-members, as well as to engage in non-productive and counter-productive activities such as rent-seeking and corruption which remove scarce resources from productive use.[1] The implication of these narratives is that, when competition over resources occurs between ethnic communities, intra-ethnic unity and solidarity is desirable for members because it enables their community to compete more effectively against rival groups—despite the negative repercussions for society writ large.

Yet there is another, less-often noted empirical regularity found in plural societies that is difficult to reconcile with the first: despite the apparent prevalence of ethnic favoritism, the rewards paid out to coethnics are often *trivially small*. The simple narrative that community members benefit from intra-ethnic solidarity largely ignores how the returns to solidarity are shared out: *who* benefits, and by how much? Although a narrative based on ethnic connections determining where resources flow may help account for the empirical regularity of ethnic favoritism that we observe, it cannot easily explain the discontent so often evident among mass level constituents at what their coethnic elites do in fact provide. Such a narrative, in other words, may suggest why benefits flow along ethnic lines, but not why these benefits are often so meager.

Consider, for example, the dynamic in Lebanon, where the Future Movement

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[1]See, for example, Annett (2001), Bates (1974, 1990), Chandra (2004), Collier and Garg (1999), Ekeh (1975), and Mauro (1995).

of assassinated former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri (now headed by his son, Saad) is hegemonic within the Sunni community and, in principle, has access to sizable quantities of state resources that could be distributed as patronage. Yet many mass constituents see little of this potential largesse, a dynamic that is emphasized in a speech to residents of a Sunni-dominant city made by one of Hariri's rivals for the community's leadership:

> Where in Tripoli is the state, which had showered promises upon it just before the last elections? Where is the state's electricity and water? Where are the health and educational services, and relief for the poor?... Are you not the inhabitants of the biggest Sunni city in Lebanon? Do you not live in the poorest city in Lebanon?[2]

Notwithstanding the traditional rivalry between Sunni elites from Beirut and Tripoli, it is difficult to reconcile Hariri's unprecedented support within his community with the apparent neglect suffered by his mass constituents.

In Yemen, meanwhile, Zaydi Shiite tribesmen can ask themselves much the same question. Despite the widely-held perception that the ruling regime and ruling party are dominated by influential tribal figures, the Zaydi regions are among the poorest, least developed, and most lawless in the entire country. In speaking on the development challenges facing the tribes, the paramount shaykh of the powerful Hashid

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[2]Omar Karami, head of Tripoli's most prominent political family, is ostensibly Hariri's most credible competitor for leadership in the Sunni community, but lacks a political machine that even roughly approximates the Future Movement. Further, Karami's credibility suffered considerably from his tenure as a Syrian-backed prime minister after Rafik Hariri's resignation from that office and subsequent assassination. Karami, addressing supporters, notes:

اين الدولة في طرابلس التي اغدقة عليها الوعود عشية الانتخابات الاخيرة؟ اين كهرباء الدولة، ومياه الدولة؟ اين الصحّة والتعليم ولقمة الفقير؟ ... ألستم انتم اهل المدينة السّنية الأولى في لبنان؟ ألستم اهل المدينة الافقر في لبنان؟

"Karami launches harsh attack on Geagea: we are the Sunni Unionist Arabs," ﴾كرامي حمل بشدّة﴿ على جعجع: نحن العروبيون الوحدويون السنّة﴾, *Annahar*, 21 April 2007.

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tribal confederation has claimed that, "transforming a tribesman from a warrior to a farmer is very easy to achieve, especially if agricultural and irrigation projects are established, wells are dug, and roads are run to his lands," noting that the provision of such services and infrastructure would encourage stability and enterprise.[3] Yet, as another important tribal shaykh with a senior post in the ruling party admitted, "no doubt about it: right now no services or infrastructure are going out to the tribal areas...[even though] everyone wants to put down his gun, go to school, take his kid to a clean clinic, and drink clean water."[4] The tribesmen, who ostensibly form a core constituency for the ruling party, have seen only minimal rewards at best for their political support. Whatever the returns to unity, few of the material benefits appear to reach the mass constituents whose votes put their coethnic elites in office.

As the examples above illustrate, we are faced with two related empirical regularities that appear inconsistent, if not contradictory. First, in ethnically plural societies, competition over resources commonly proceeds between communities rather than across them. To most observers, ethnic favoritism appears to be the norm: politicians pack the civil service with coethnics, build schools and pave roads in their own neighborhoods, and distribute contracts and licenses to supporters from their own communities. Second, however, the purported beneficiaries of this patronage,

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[3]Shaykh Abdallah bin Hussein al-Ahmar is both speaker of parliament and the titular head of the country's largest opposition party, as well as President Ali Abdallah Salih's tribal shaykh, at least nominally (the president's tribe, Sanhan, is part of the Hashid confederation). Ahmar notes (Yahya 2004ع, 23):

أمّا عمليّة تحويل رجل القبيلة من محارب إلى مزارع فمن السهل جدّا تحقيق هذا التحويل خاصة إذا أقيمت المشاريع المائيّة والزراعيّة وحفرت الآبار، وشقّت الطرقات المؤديّة إلى أراضيه ... كلّ هذا إذا توفّر سيساعد على الاستقرار والهدوء والعمل.

[4]Interview, Sanaa, 18 February 2006. That these regions are so poor compared to the rest of the country is attested to by the fact that foreign aid agencies have begun to target the "big five" tribal provinces for special attention and development programs. Interviews with USAID officials, Sanaa, 2005 and 2006.

the mass constituents whose votes put their coethnics in power, appear to benefit only minimally from their community links. They may get jobs in the civil service but are paid a pittance to do them, a school for their village without desks or even roofs, or a dirt-floor building for a health clinic without staff or electricity. Ethnic favoritism appears to coexist with ethnic neglect.

Although the patronage relationships found in ethnically plural societies often do appear to follow ethnic links, citing "ethnic favoritism" merely labels the phenomenon rather than explains it. It does not explain why the favoritism occurs along ethnic lines, nor is it clear what makes these dynamics particularly ethnic at all: switching in the terms *partisan* or *crony* yields the familiar description of machine politics the world over. Nor does it explain why mass constituents should continue to support their coethnic elites when they get so little out of it—except perhaps by citing *ethnic loyalties* or *ethnic solidarities*, which is tautological if not misleading. Yet these are the questions we should be asking rather than assuming away: why, and under what conditions, does competition over resources occur specifically along ethnic lines? Why do constituents support their elites despite the little they get to show for it? Do the dynamics that make ethnic competition qualitatively different from its non-ethnic counterparts really make it, as is often assumed implicitly, more destructive than competition along other cleavages, such as party or class? The resolution, as I propose below, is found in the coordination environments from which ethnic coalitions emerge, and the competitive environments within which they operate.

4.2 Ethnic Constituencies and Subsidized Support

Let us begin with a simple rendition of political coalitions, in which politicians reward coalition members for their political support, which they require to obtain and retain office. To the degree that the value of this support is the same across individuals—e.g., that a vote is a vote regardless of who casts it—politicians are indifferent to the

particular composition of their coalitions provided that they are *winning* coalitions.[5] Politicians, in dispensing rewards, attempt to employ scarce resources as efficiently as possible by targeting them to supporters without wasting them on non-supporters, who do not contribute the votes needed to put or keep the politicians in office.[6] Yet politicians do not observe potential constituents' latent levels of political support or their voting decisions—according to the letter and spirit of the secret ballot, votes are in principle completely *un*observable—and must instead find alternative means to infer the composition of their coalitions and distinguish supporters from non-supporters.

Imperfect Information in the Market for Votes

The situation sketched here, with politicians uncertain about the identities of their supporters to whom they wish to target rewards, approximates a classic case of asymmetric information in markets—in this case, the market for votes. In particular, voters have private information about their levels of political support that politicians lack, requiring the latter to utilize more easily observable, informative indicators of

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[5]I make this simplifying assumption of indifference in part because assuming ethnocentric behavior to explain ethnocentric outcomes is tautological; citing *ethnic loyalties* or *ethnic solidarities* to account for observations of ethnic favoritism does not explain why the loyalties and solidarities themselves should be ethnically based. Note that doing so makes the implicit *non*-assumption of in-group favoritism as a core behavioral principle (Brown 1986, Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis 2002), although we could of course build ethnocentrism into the model if we so chose (see related discussions in Akerlof and Kranton 2000, Bawn 1999, and Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). Rather than make in-group favoritism a core behavioral assumption, we can view it more accurately as an emergent social strategy whose prevalence and robustness indicate its competitiveness in a wide range of social environments (Hammond and Axelrod 2006).

[6]I use the term *efficient* here to mean political efficiency—the optimal deployment of resources to gain and retain office—rather than utilitarian economic efficiency. Note, in passing, that the coalitions being described approximate pork coalitions that focus on the distribution and redistribution of resources rather than coalitions over what we commonly think of as policy or ideology. Coordination on ethnic coalitions reduces the salience of many policy dimensions for which we might expect individuals to hold single-peaked preferences, focusing instead on competition over dimensions such as pork for which more is always better or worse (i.e., dimensions with monotonically increasing or decreasing preferences—see Fearon 1999).

that latent support on which to condition their decisions to dispense or withhold rewards. To understand the dynamics of this broad class of interactions between buyers and sellers (here, politicians and voters) under conditions of asymmetric information, signaling models—first originating in Spence's (1973, 1974) seminal analysis of job market signaling, with numerous subsequent applications (Banks 1991, Spence 2002)—have proven particularly useful.

In this framework, informative signals are those for which the cost of signaling is related to the latent attribute of interest, making it possible to infer levels of the latter from the strength of the former. In Spence's original formulation, for example, acquiring a given amount of education is more costly for low-ability workers than for high-ability workers. Although employers may be interested in latent ability rather than education *per se*, the latter serves as a credible signal of the former given that it requires more effort for low-ability workers to acquire a given level of education compared to high-ability workers, and thus the former require comparatively higher wages to compensate them for these higher costs.[7] In the context of the politicians and voters discussed here, an informative signal is one that helps politicians categorize voters as supporters or non-supporters for the purposes of distributing rewards.

Information and Ethnic Coordination

Although signals may help politicians make informed inferences about voters' levels of political support, the logical next question to ask is the following: what signals are available, and how informative are they? The information environment in which social coordination takes place plays a crucial role in influencing what types of signals exist

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[7]More technically, the marginal cost of education is higher for low-ability workers than high-ability workers for all levels of education. The substantive interpretation is that, although education may influence worker productivity, wages vary with education more than can be explained solely by the effect of education on productivity alone. For a more extensive discussion of equilibrium conditions and the profusion of equilibria that can occur in signaling models, see, e.g., Spence's original papers as well as the commentary in Gibbons (1992).

by influencing what types of social categories are relevant to politics. Even though common interests by themselves are insufficient for group coordination (Hardin 1982, Marwell and Oliver 1993, Olson 1965), when it does take place, coordination occurs over *some* set of interests shared by members, even if those members would individually prefer to coordinate on other issues. Yet interests in the form of ideal points on policy dimensions are difficult to observe, which in turn makes it difficult to coordinate around them: not only is it challenging to infer what those common interests are, but also that a putative set of interests is in fact common to a given set of people.

Although we typically expect people to infer interests from observable proxies and summary measures such as party labels and other heuristic cues (Downs 1957, Lupia and McCubbins 1998, Sniderman et al. 1991), not all such cues are available or informative in all societies. This is especially notable in the low-information environments that characterize many developing countries, where parties are often suppressed or uninstitutionalized, civil society organizations weak or state-controlled, and independent media unavailable, unreliable, or stifled. Under these conditions, many common political heuristics—party labels, union membership, newspaper readership, and so on—lose much of their information content. But as reliable political information becomes more scarce, it becomes increasingly difficult to coordinate on common interests. People lack not only the means to assess what those interests are, but also the likelihood that others share them and are aware that they share them—that common interests are *common knowledge* (Chwe 2001).

As reliable information becomes scarce and other options for coordination are foreclosed, people are increasingly compelled to utilize *ethnic* categories to coordinate for political activity. First, the ascriptive, descent-like rules used to define membership in such categories are simple, intuitive, and definitive (at least in principle).[8]

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[8] Following the precedent set by Horowitz (1985) and subsequent scholars, I treat ethnic categories as a broad set of categories within which membership is defined by ascriptive descent or descent-like

Moreover, ascription defines social categories with very low boundary permeability, keeping membership coherent—again, in principle if not exactly so in practice.[9] Further, ethnic membership, although only imperfectly observable, is relatively easy and inexpensive to infer from a large set of covarying proxies such as names, language, accent, region of birth, skin color, and so on (Chandra 2004)—cues which in turn are relatively difficult or costly to disrupt or suppress as compared to, e.g., party labels or union membership. The combination of high observability, low boundary permeability, and a simple, intuitive membership rule helps members coordinate for political activity—an imagined community whose common interests are common knowledge (Anderson 1983, Chwe 2001, Hobsbawm 1990).

Coordination on ethnic categories, however, has repercussions for which interests are, in fact, common to members. Defining categories by ascription rather than choice grants membership independent of occupation, education, ideological preferences, age, sex, and so on, in effect creating constituencies that are societies-in-miniature (Bates 1974, Chandra 2004, Horowitz 1985).[10] Yet coordinating on such constituencies, in turn, places non-trivial restrictions on the types of interests that can be salient for cat-

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rules. For critiques of the weaknesses and inconsistencies in this approach, however, see Chandra (2006). Note that I have said nothing about *identity* or *identification* (Hardin 1995): ascriptive, descent-like membership rules merely provide a means to classify people irrespective of their desire to be so classified. Personal relevance and political relevance are at best imperfectly correlated.

[9]Ascription, in principle, defines categories with *no* boundary permeability, although the application of this rule is only approximated in practice. The Yemeni tribes, for example, recognize a practice that may, for lack of a better translation, be glossed as "fraternization" (المؤاخاة), in which a clan or tribal segment seeks protection in and ultimately joins a new tribe, usually in response to some grave injustice. The practice, although it does not occur with great frequency, is sufficiently common that terms exist to distinguish the original constituent tribes in the large Hashid and Bakil tribal confederations from the "Hashidized" and "Bakilized" tribes (القبائل المتحشدة والقبائل المتبكلة) that joined later. See Abu Ghanim (1985ع, 72–74) for details.

[10]Note that there may in fact be significant and salient differences *between* communities on dimensions such as occupation or education, but this dynamic will occur in societies with ranked ethnic systems (Horowitz 1985), which are roughly analogous to caste systems. In perfectly unranked systems, however, ethnic category membership can tell us *nothing* about individuals' occupations, educational backgrounds, incomes, and vice-versa.

egory members as category members. Because of heterogeneity within the community resulting from the ascriptive membership rule, there is considerable within-category variation over a wide range of policy dimensions. Yet dimensions on which members vary greatly—issues over which there is widespread internal disagreement—cannot serve to unify members and constitute common interests. Instead, such issues are deemphasized in favor of interests on which the bulk of the members can agree. Yet given that so many dimensions we might consider to be "policy," "programmatic," or "ideological" are, in effect, closed off by this within-community heterogeneity, common interests default to distribution and redistribution toward the community, and hence a predisposition to patronage coalitions within which membership is marked by ethnic category.[11] This makes ethnic constituencies somewhat analogous to deideologized catch-all parties (Kirchheimer 1966, Mainwaring 1999), but with a key difference: whereas the boundaries of catch-all parties are commonly highly permeable, there is in principle no entry or exit from ethnic categories (Hirschman 1970).[12]

Ethnic Subsidies in the Market for Votes

Because ethnic categories are defined by ascriptive, descent-like membership rules, their boundaries are, in principle, impermeable: entry and exit are closed off.[13] This

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[11]Compare Chandra (2004), who argues that the low information environments found in patronage democracies compel elites and constituents to conduct "ethnic head counts," from which an equilibrium strategy of ethnic favoritism and ethnic voting emerges.

[12]This is emphatically not to claim that ethnic categories are primordial givens, nor that individuals belong to just one such category. The point is that adopting ethnic classifications and ascriptive membership rules changes how and over what political contestation occurs. Politicians do not compete to win over constituents from rival groups—in principle, they cannot leave their groups nor join new ones—but rather compete to define what categories are relevant, and the parameters for membership in those categories (e.g., how inclusive or exclusive they are). Political contestation using ethnic classifications does not take place over members, but over labels and boundaries.

[13]An alternate way to consider this is that, in principle, entry and exit do not occur by voluntary choice, but rather by birth and death. In practice, of course, there is some ambiguity and room for interpretation on the margins, as evident in such practices as adoption, conversion, excommunication, marrying into (or out of) a community, honorary membership, and disinheritance. The existence of

lack of entry and exit options makes ethnic categories qualitatively distinct from other types of social categories that we commonly view as voluntary. In particular, mass constituents become a captive audience to their own elites, effectively providing the latter with subsidized political support. Elites, in turn, enjoy a protected market, enabling them to act as oligopsonistic, possibly even monopsonistic, buyers of their coethnics' votes. In effect, an *ethnic subsidy* flows from mass constituents to elites. As a result, *coethnic votes are cheap.*

To see this, we may return to the signaling framework discussed above and apply it more rigorously to the market for votes when ethnic categories are salient.[14] An officeholding politician wishes to condition the benefits she pays out on potential constituents' degrees of political support. For simplicity, assume that voters may be either supporters or non-supporters of the politician. To the degree possible, the politician prefers to dispense resources efficiently by targeting rewards to supporters, whose votes keep her in office, and not dissipate them on non-supporters, all while minimizing the total amount of resources expended. Because the degree of political support is latent and unobservable, the politician must instead attempt to infer it from costly signals of support sent by individuals, which in practice could include such actions as attending a campaign rally, displaying her political poster, electioneering on her behalf, and so on.

The first important assumption is that supporters find these activities less costly than do non-supporters: the marginal cost of signaling support is lower for supporters than it is for non-supporters.[15] Yet ethnic categories, due to their salience and the

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ambiguity and the possibility of multiple interpretations opens up space for political contestation over the "proper" reading of formally definitive membership rules, and to which set of individuals such rules "actually" apply.

[14]The exposition here draws considerable inspiration from Spence's (1973, 1974) seminal papers and utilizes his basic model framework.

[15]This mirrors Spence's critical assumption in his job-market signaling studies that it is less costly for high-ability workers to acquire education than it is for low-ability workers.

coordination logic described above, also carry information about individuals' levels of political support.[16] Again for simplicity, assume that voters, in their degrees of ethnic similarity to the politician, may be either coethnics (E) or non-coethnics (N) and, further, that coethnics are more likely to be political supporters than are non-coethnics. The implication of these reasonably innocuous assumptions is that it is cheaper for a coethnic to send signals of support than it is for a non-coethnic, or equivalently, a coethnic may send a stronger signal of support for a given cost than can a non-coethnic.[17]

Figure 4.1 illustrates this dynamic by depicting indifferences curves between the costs of signaling (S) and the rewards gained from it (R) for coethnic (I_E in solid black) and non-coethnic (I_N in dashed grey) voters. At signal strength s_1, both coethnics and non-coethnics require a reward of r_1 to compensate them for the costs they bear to send the signal. Increasing the signal strength to s_2, however, requires a comparatively smaller reward paid out to coethnics than to non-coethnics to keep

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[16]Spence distinguishes between indices, which are immutable characteristics such as sex or race, and signals, which are alterable. Using this terminology, one could argue that ethnic categories are technically indices rather than signals, albeit indices which contain information about the latent variable of interest (political support). I choose not to pursue this distinction for several reasons, the most important of which is as follows. Individuals may, in principle, signal their *identification* with their ethnic categories to different degrees, e.g., by emphasizing their identities via conscientious efforts to use group slang and adopt its distinctive dress, or else by downplaying or attempting to conceal their memberships (passing, dissimulation, etc.). By treating ethnic observability as a given—politicians know rather than infer voters' ethnic memberships—the analysis here leans toward examining categories as informative indices rather than signals. In future work, however, I will explicitly analyze the more complicated environment with multiple signals—both political support and ethnic membership—and examine the conditions under which either signal becomes more or less informative, and the decisions made to invest in the one or the other.

[17]More formally, the cost of signaling c is a function of political support π and the strength of the signal s, $c = c(\pi, s)$, and political support is a function of the degree of ethnic similarity ϵ, $\pi = \pi(\epsilon)$. Assume that cost decreases in political support, i.e., that holding signal strength constant, $c_\pi < 0$. Assume as well that support increases in ethnic similarity, $\pi_\epsilon > 0$. Differentiating for cost and political support yields $dc = c_\pi d\pi + c_s ds$ and $d\pi = \pi_\epsilon d\epsilon$, and substituting the latter into the former results in $dc = c_\pi \pi_\epsilon d\epsilon + c_s ds$. Hence, the total derivative of signal cost with respect to ethnic similarity is $\frac{dc}{d\epsilon} = c_\pi \pi_\epsilon + c_s \frac{ds}{d\epsilon}$, and the partial total derivative holding signal strength constant (i.e., $ds = 0$) is equal to $c_\pi \pi_\epsilon$, which is negative due to the assumptions that $c_\pi < 0$ and $\pi_\epsilon > 0$. Hence, the cost of sending a given signal decreases as ethnic similarity increases, the graphical interpretation of which is that coethnics have flatter indifference curves than do non-coethnics.
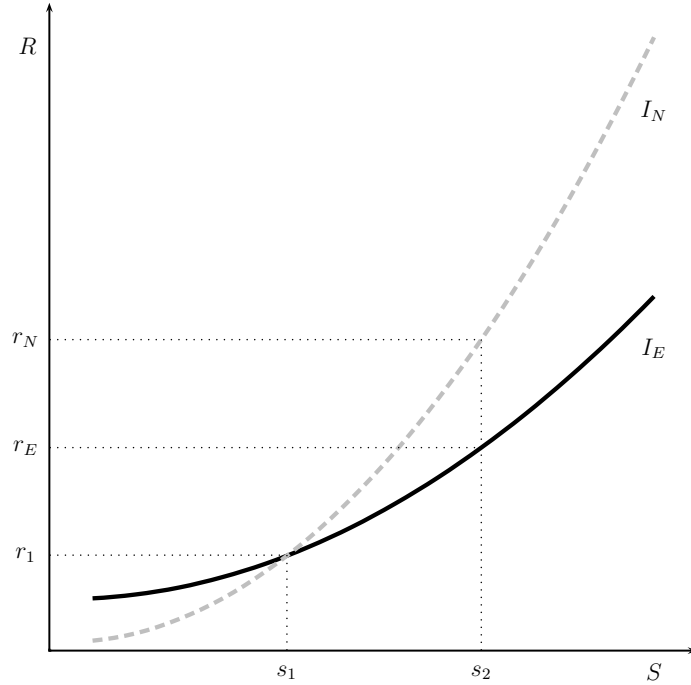
Figure 4.1: Signaling Indifference Curves for Coethnics (E) and Non-Coethnics (N)

them on the same indifference curve—r_E as compared to r_N—the latter of whom require relatively greater rewards to compensate them for the greater marginal signaling costs they bear.

Coethnics, in other words, require less compensation for their political support than do non-coethnics: coethnic votes are cheap. This, in turn, has several implications for how politicians in societies where ethnic coordination is prominent choose to distribute state resources, as well as ramifications for how the benefits of in-group solidarity and ethnic unity are shared out between elites and masses. First, the political allocation of state resources should appear to follow patterns of ethnic favoritism, with politicians packing the civil service with coethnics, fixing their parking tickets, and providing various other rewards to members of their own communities. According to these dynamics, however, ethnic favoritism occurs not because coethnics are coethnics—that politicians feel empathy for them or want to "do right" by their own communities—but because coethnics are cheaper sources of political support than are

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non-coethnics.

The second major implication follows from the first: although resources may flow along community lines as politicians target coethnics, these rewards can be remarkably stingy, at least at the mass level. Coethnics may get jobs in the bureaucracy, but are paid next to nothing to perform them; a school building for their village, but no books, desks, or teachers; exemptions from paying negligible monetary fines, and so on. The difference between the costs of rewarding coethnics and non-coethnics—in figure 4.1, $r_N - r_E$—amounts to an ethnic subsidy flowing from mass constituents to elites. The returns to in-group solidarity, in other words, go disproportionately to elites at the expense of their coethnics.

The political allocation of scarce resources in societies with salient ethnic categories and coalitions, in other words, should concentrate resources at the elite level over and above the level possible in societies in which ethnic categories are not politically relevant. Yet these outcomes do not obtain unconditionally. In particular, government institutions may exaggerate or mitigate this concentration of resources at the elite level. First, they may do so by expanding or contracting the scope of elite discretionary powers in distributing state resources, such as civil service exams, closed-bid contracting, independent judiciaries and auditing agencies, community quotas, and so on. Yet government institutions may also influence the competitive environment *within* ethnic communities, which conditions the degree to which elites may capture and privatize ethnic subsidies or be forced to return the subsidy to constituents in competition with other elites for their coethnics' votes.

4.3 Ethnic Monopsonies in Lebanon and Yemen

Ethnic social categories are highly conspicuous in both Lebanese and Yemeni society, and form the principle constituencies and building blocks of political coalitions in either country. The most prominent lines of distinction are sectarian, tribal, and

regional—albeit with the latter two more prominent in Yemen than in Lebanon—and these distinctions overlap in politically significant ways.[18] Further, the relative importance of these categories compared to each other varies with the locus of political contestation, with sub-national conflicts commonly activating narrower constituencies and national competition activating broader, more encompassing categories.[19] Due to the nonexistence of effective administrative decentralization measures or meaningful local governance in either country, however, competition over scarce resources centers on control of and influence in the national government. Here, I concentrate on sects as the mass constituencies most relevant in terms of size for the purposes of national-level competition over scarce resources, as well as smaller units within the sects—constituencies within constituences—that form the building blocks of these broader coalitions.

The sects in both Lebanon and Yemen are social categories whose nominal bound-

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[18]Sectarian and regional categories are based on implicit descent-like membership rules, and although it is possible to change one's membership—conversion, moving, and so on—doing so imposes significant material and social costs on individuals and their families, making these category memberships largely ascriptive. Tribal categories in Yemen are based on explicit descent rules that trace ancestry back to eponymous forefathers, and although there is room on the margins to change tribal affiliations, it is a costly procedure and occurs infrequently. On Yemeni tribes and the connection of tribalism to sectarian communities and geographic regions, see, e.g., Abu Ghanim (1985ع, 1990ع), Sharjabi (1986ع, 1990ع), Sumayri (2001ع), and Zahiri (1996ع, 2004ع). Although there are some kin groups in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley that roughly approximate Yemen's tribes, the Lebanese more frequently refer to the country's sects as "tribes" in a pejorative sense, or else refer to local families (especially the notable political families) as tribes or clans. Compare the use of the term "tribalism" in Lebanese scholarly writing such as el Khazen (2000ع) and Salibi (1988) to the use of the term in Kassir (2006), Muhsin (2000ع), and Sulayman (1998ع)—which are collections of essays and newspaper columns—and to its use in a series of interviews with prominent Shia religious leader Muhammad Fadlallah (2001ع).

[19]Thus, for example, the relevant cleavages differ at the national versus local levels. Tribal wars in Yemen are largely fought in the north of the country between Zaydi Shia tribes, making tribal affiliation salient and deemphasizing regional and sectarian categories, which in that context do not serve as relevant distinctions. Lebanese local elections (and parliamentary elections in homogeneous districts) are also frequently venues for electoral battles between local notable families in which sect and region do not provide relevant distinctions between contestants or constituents. Compare Posner (2005), who found evidence that the most politically relevant ethnic category under one-party rule in Zambia was tribal, but under a multiparty system the relevant category shifted up to more encompassing regional constituencies.

aries are defined in religious terms, but whose relevance to politics derives primarily from political competition rather than doctrinal differences. Further, with weak and largely uninstitutionalized political parties in both countries, the sects and their constituent subunits provide the most prominent focal points around which to coordinate for political activity in order to compete for scarce resources.[20] On this note, a prominent opposition party leader in Yemen pointed to "all the old divisions, Zaydis versus Shafais, mountains versus cities, north versus south…everyone's looking for the money. Where is it? It's with the regime."[21] Similarly, Muhammad Fadlallah, one of Lebanon's most influential Shia religious leaders, notes that "there are no Lebanese in Lebanon: there are Maronites working on behalf of Maronites, Orthodox for Orthodox, Druze, Sunni, Shia, and so on…every one of them goes back to their sectarian bases because they know they will not get anything except via the sect."[22] Given this background, let us now consider the competitive environments in the Lebanese and Yemeni markets for votes.

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[20]On parties and elections in Lebanon, see el Khazen (2000ع, 2002ع), Hashishu (1998ع), and Madini (1999ع). In Yemen, see Farah (2002ع, 2005ع), Mansour (2004ع), Saqqaf (2004ع), Republic of Yemen (2004ع), and Zahiri (2004ع).

[21]Note that "mountains versus cities" is one of several standard phrases used to refer to political competition between the (Zaydi) tribesmen of the mountains and the (Shafai) townsmen and city dwellers. "North versus south," depending on context, can take on the meaning of either the former northern republic versus the former southern republic, or the far north (i.e., the north of the former northern republic) compared to the rest of the country. Interview, Sanaa, 27 September 2005.

[22]Fadlallah interview with *al-Ahd* (Hizballah's party paper), reprinted in Fadlallah (2001ع, 223–249), quote at page 238:

<div dir="rtl">

أنا أزعم أنّه ليس هناك لبناني في لبنان، هناك ماروني يعمل لخدمة المارونية، وأرثوذكسي يعمل لخدمة الأرثوذكسية، ودرزي وسنّي وشيعي.. وما إلى ذلك، كلّ يعمل لخدمة هذا الطرف أو ذاك بحسب طائفته ... بحيث يرجع كلّ فرد منهم في ساحة الصراع إلى قاعدته الطائفية، لانّه يعرف أنّه لا يحصل على شيء إلا من خلال الطائفة.

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Institutional Incentives to Competition and Monopsony

As argued in Section 4.2, formal government institutions can have a significant impact on the competitive environments in the market for votes, which in turn has ramifications both for how resources are distributed between communities as well as for how they are shared out between elites and their mass constituents. Here, I focus on two key institutional differences that derive from Lebanon's adoption of consociational arrangements as compared to the disuse of formal power-sharing provisions in Yemen. First, Lebanon employs a quota system to allocate government positions explicitly among its sectarian communities. In addition to designating all seats in the parliament according to sect and reserving certain high executive offices for particular communities, the quota system extends to public employment in the civil service, diplomatic corps, the judiciary, and so on. Yemen, meanwhile, makes no such formal provisions to share power among its communities, although occasionally uses informal, non-binding arrangements to do so.[23]

Second, the electoral systems used in Lebanon and Yemen differ in how they structure competition for seats in the legislatures, with important ramifications for the degree of competitiveness in those elections. Lebanon, in light of its power-sharing principles, uses an unorthodox system that combines plurality voting, open lists, and, most importantly for the purposes here, the principle by which only cosectarians compete against each other for any given seat.[24] This practice, in effect, provides a strong,

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[23]The most prominent example has been the repeated re-election of Abdallah bin Hussein al-Ahmar, paramount shaykh of the Hashid confederation and titular head of the Islah Party, as speaker of parliament, despite the ruling party holding a majority of the seats since the 1997 parliamentary elections. Other examples include the conspicuous appointment of southerners as prime ministers, most recently Abd al-Qadir Bajammal, who was elected secretary-general of the ruling party in its seventh general congress in December 2005.

[24]Electoral districts vary in the number of seats they contain, each of which is assigned to a particular sect. Voters cast ballots for every seat in the district, not just those of their own sect, the winner of which is the candidate who wins a simple plurality. This has given rise to the practice of creating electoral lists headed by a local notable or party, although voters may mix candidates freely.

institutionally-defined stimulus to within-sect competition among elites for their sects'
seats and, consequently, their cosectarians' votes. Yemen, meanwhile, uses a more
conventional plurality system with single-member districts, and makes no special
provisions to encourage similar within-community competition. Hence, whereas the
quota system influences the distribution of power and resources *between* communities,
the electoral system has implications for the distribution *within* communities.

Competition and Monopsony in the Market for Votes

Lebanon's August 2007 parliamentary by-elections, held to replace two assassinated
deputies affiliated with the ruling coalition, underscored the stark differences that
exist in the competitive environments within the country's Christian and Sunni com-
munities. Despite repeated attempts over a period of months to find a consensus
candidate for the Christian seat—including a proposal to give the seat to the assas-
sinated deputy's father by acclamation in order to avoid the election altogether—
government- and opposition-affiliated Christian factions both put forward candidates
for what was expected to be an extremely close election. Simultaneously, however,
no such uncertainty lingered over the outcome of the election for the Sunni seat: it
was universally acknowledged that whichever candidate was selected by assassinated
former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's Future Movement (now headed by his son, Saad)
would win in a landslide.[25]

Electoral alliances, in effect, amount to vote-trading between elites, who instruct their cosectarian
supporters to vote for allied non-cosectarian candidates. They are usually extremely temporary in
nature and often contradict candidate policy positions or party platforms (el Khazen 2000ع, 2002ع),
as with many of the lists that formed with Syrian "encouragement" in the postwar elections. The
practice continued in the 2005 elections: see, e.g., "Hizballah with Jumblatt in Baabda and with
Aoun in Zahle and Jbeil" (»حزب الله مع جنبلاط في بعبدا ومع عون في زحلة وجبيل«), *As-Safir*, 1
June 2005.

[25]Recall that, in Lebanon's electoral system, parliamentary seats are assigned explicitly to each
of the sectarian communities, and candidates run only against their co-sectarians. The by-elections
were held to fill Walid Eido's Sunni seat in Beirut and Pierre Gemayel's Maronite Christian seat in
Mount Lebanon. The Christian competition was particularly prominent in part because it pitted
Gemayel's father, former President Amine Gemayel, against a candidate from Michel Aoun's Free

Electoral campaigning was essentially meaningless for the Sunni seat and was hardly reported in the press, whereas Christian campaign rallies drawing thousands of spirited supporters received widespread media coverage and seemingly endless political analysis and speculation. Election results, in turn, reflected the diverging competitiveness of the races. As expected, the Future Movement's candidate captured the Sunni seat in a landslide, winning some 23,000 votes (86 percent) against his nearest opponent's 3,500 (13 percent). The Christian contest, meanwhile, was decided by an extremely narrow margin: out of nearly 80,000 ballots cast, the opposition-aligned candidate won by a mere 418 votes, i.e., one-half of one percent.[26] Lebanese Christian elites have long complained about the lack of unity in their community, arguing that divisions make it difficult for Christians to balance against the Sunni and Shia communities. Yet the appeal for unity, regardless of its intuitive desirability, sidesteps a non-obvious question with large ramifications for social welfare: who benefits from that unity? Which, in fact, is more lamentable: the lack of unity among Christians, or the lack of *competition* among Sunnis?

We can ask analogous questions in Yemen where, particularly since the unification of the former northern and southern republics in 1990, "national unity" has dominated political discourse and been invoked repeatedly against dissenting voices. As one prominent Yemeni human rights activist has noted, "lots of people are unthinkingly in favor of unity," with the result that "now, we have the idea that there is 'one people,' and many [Yemenis] can't deal well with multiple ideas of how the state should work. People look at 'unity' as the path to a better future: to be bigger,

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Patriotic Movement—the largest Christian party in parliament—with Aoun and Gemayel widely seen as potential rivals in the country's presidential elections scheduled to be held later in the year.

[26]Note, as well, the difference in participation rates: 19 percent for the Sunni contest and 47 percent for the Christian one. For a breakdown of the vote by precinct, see "Fierce confrontation in Metn draws new political contours: Aoun wins election by 418 votes and Gemayel reaps the Maronite majority," "المواجهة الشرسة في المتن ترسم معالم سياسيّة جديدة: عون فاز انتخابيّا بـ ٤١٨ صوتا) (والجميّل حصد الغالبيّة المارونيّة)", *Annahar*, 6 August 2007.

richer, and so on."[27] As in Lebanon, however, the intuitive appeal and desirability of unity tend to overshadow the more problematic question of how the returns to unity should be shared out. Disputes over how to distribute resources between communities are of course common, but largely lost in the debate is how they are shared out *within* communities.

Exogenous Shocks and a Sunni Monopsony in Lebanon

Although the choices that produced Lebanon's institutions were not free of self-serving motives, the power-sharing arrangments were designed, nevertheless, to manage the country's plural society and channel its sectarian communities into politics in such a manner as to promote both inter-sect cooperation and within-sect competition. Hence, Lebanon's consociational institutions have largely produced oligopsonistic competition between elites in each sect for their cosectarians' votes. Yet despite these institutional inducements to competition, a monopsonistic vote-buyer has emerged in the Sunni community due to a series of exogenous shocks.

The most prominent parties now competing for influence in the Shia and Christian communities are effectively descendents of civil war-era militias, and consequently have organizational structures and support bases.[28] In contrast, the Sunni community's main "militia" during the war was, in effect, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which was effectively liquidated as a fighting force and its leaders expelled from Lebanon by the Israeli invasion of 1982, subsequent Syrian attacks on

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[27]Interview, Taiz, 13 August 2005.

[28]The Amal Movement and Hizballah are the two primary parties in the Shia community, and both were major militias. Many Christian parties were repressed or split in the postwar period, including the Lebanese Forces, a wartime militia that in turn had its origins in the Kataib Party, the "ruling party" in the Christian areas during the war. Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement technically does not derive from a militia, but Aoun's "war of liberation" against Syrian forces as army commander and one of two competing prime ministers at the end of the civil war, as well as his rejection of the peace agreement (the Taif Accord), meant that the movement was banned and kept Aoun in exile in France until May 2005.

remaining PLO forces loyal to Chairman Yasser Arafat in the north, and Amal's "war of the camps." A smaller Sunni militia that lacked the capacity of the larger forces, the Mourabitoun, was in turn forcibly disarmed in 1985 when Shia and Druze militias occupied West Beirut.

Hence, by the end of the war, there was no organizational base within the Sunni community on which to build, and the traditional political notables had neither the material resources nor the media empire to compete effectively against Rafik al-Hariri, whose electoral victories enabled him to serve as prime minister for all but a few years of the postwar period.[29] Hariri's assassination in February 2005, in turn, further consolidated the Sunni constituency behind the Future Movement, now led by his son, Saad, by implicitly equating opposition to Future, or support of its rivals, with betrayal of the community. Hence, whereas significant competition between elites occurs in the other sectarian communities, Hariri and the Future Movement have become, in effect, Sunni monopsonists. To substantiate this difference, we can examine Lebanese self-identification with particular parties across the sectarian communities as summarized in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2 reports the two most frequent answers to an open-response question asking survey participants to indicate the political party or leader to whom they feel closest politically.[30] Among Shiites, 71 percent cite Hizballah (Nasrallah) whereas

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[29]Hariri amassed his personal fortune, well into the billions of dollars, primarily through construction contracts in Saudi Arabia. On the expanded importance of money and broadcast media in postwar elections, see the discussion in el Khazen (2000ع). Salim al-Hoss and Omar Karami, traditional notables from Beirut and Tripoli, respectively, each served short periods as prime minister primarily when Syria backed them and not because of electoral successes or strong parliamentary blocs supporting them.

[30]Note that the number of respondents citing alternative options drops significant in each community relative to the main two competitors. Respondents were asked to "please tell me which political party, political movement or gathering, or political leader you feel closest to politically." For the purposes of Figure 4.2, respondents counted as supporters if they cited either the party or the party's leader.
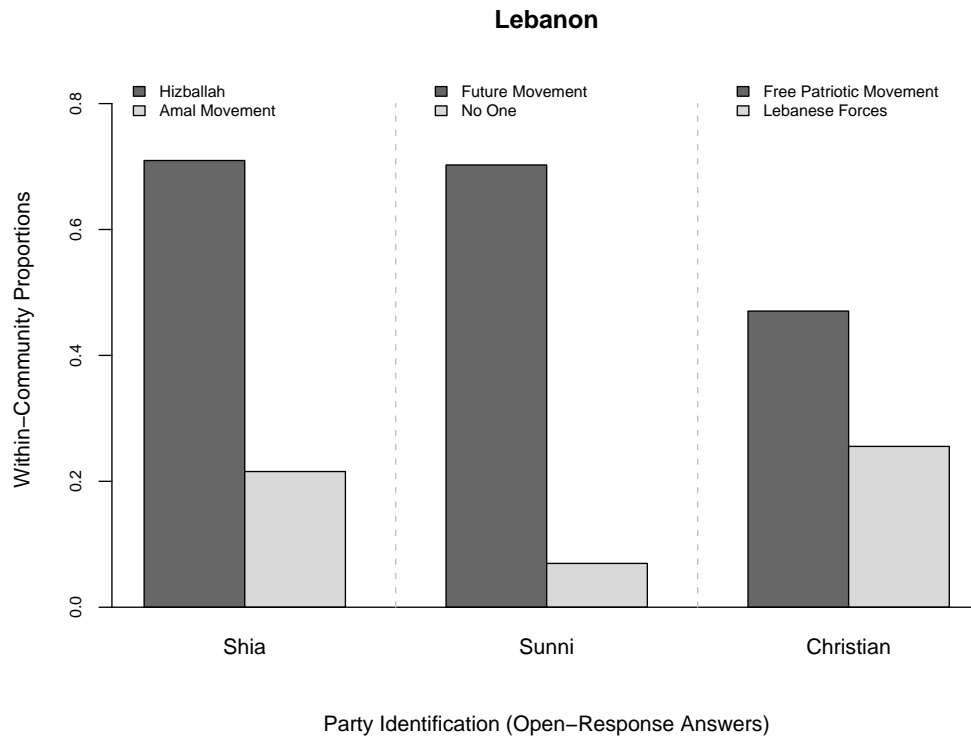
Lebanon

Figure 4.2: Lebanese Party Identification

22 percent cite Amal (Berri). Among Christians, 47 percent support the Free Patriotic Movement (Aoun) and 26 percent support the Lebanese Forces (Geagea). Yet the distribution of support among Sunnis differs starkly: whereas 70 percent support the Future Movement (Hariri), the next most frequent response is, in fact, "no one" (7 percent). Further, only three other identifiably-Sunni organizations or leaders received any citations at all, with one response each.[31] The key point to take away from Figure 4.2 is not the particular levels of support attached to each party, which have presumably shifted since the survey went into the field in fall 2005, but rather these different dynamics of support: credible competitors exist in the Shia and Christian communities, whereas no challenge exists to Hariri's Future Movement in the Sunni

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[31]The three were the Islamic Benevolence Group (al-Ahbash), the Popular Nasirist Organization, and Najib Mikati, the prime minister who headed the emergency cabinet that presided over the 2005 elections.

community.[32]

Institutional Choice and a Shia Monopsony in Yemen

Whereas Lebanon's institutions were promulgated in the name of pluralism, Yemen's were adopted in the name of national unity as leaders sought to integrate the two former republics along with the country's tribes and sectarian communities. These unity institutions, however, after the initial optimism that accompanied multipartyism and democratic elections faded, have been maintained and perpetuated by the president and ruling party at least in part to maintain their electoral dominance.[33] Yet whereas identifying a monopsonist in the Lebanese Sunni community is reasonably straightforward given the degree to which parties are mono-sectarian and elites draw their support primarily from their own communities (compare fn. 32), the existence of a comparable monopsonist is not immediately obvious in Yemen where, among other

[32]Practically speaking, party identification does not transcend community membership. Within this sample, 72 of 73 (99 percent) of declared Amal supporters are Shiites, as are 237 of 249 (95 percent) of Hizballah's supporters. Among Future Movement supporters, 222 of 229 (97 percent) are Sunnis. Lebanese Forces supporters are all Christian (82 of 82), and Christians comprise 151 of 157 (96 percent) of Free Patriotic Movement supporters. Although some ideological parties operate, even organizations that started on an explicitly non- or anti-sectarian basis have over time become largely identified with a single religious group—the small but active Communist Party transformed over the course of the civil war into a Shia-majority party (with around 60 percent of members coming from that community), while the Progressive Socialist Party, formerly Druze-led but multi-sectarian in membership, is now almost exclusively Druze. See el Khazen (2002ع) for details.

[33]Yemen's basic electoral system, simple plurality in 301 single-member districts, is written into the constitution and in principle is difficult to change. Yet the ruling party has amended the constitution on several occasions, notably to concentrate greater power in the presidency. The initial unity constitution defined a collective executive with a five-person presidential council elected by parliament, which was amended after the 1994 civil war to abolish the council in favor of a single president elected by the parliament, and then subsequently by direct popular elections with the entire country as a single district. Notably, numerous ruling party figures reacted with considerable hostility when the main opposition alliance, the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), proposed constitutional amendments to transform Yemen into a parliamentary system with proportional representation. The secretary-general of the ruling party, in fact, called the proposal "a coup against the constitution." See, e.g., "Political reform program inflames government against JMP," (برنامج الإصلاح السياسي يهيج السلطة »،), al-Wasat, 30 November 2005; "Iryani: The JMP... program is an overthrow of the «على المشترك system," («الإرياني: المشترك يربط هم الوطن بإواحة شخص.. ومشروعهم انقلاب على النظام»،), 22 Mayo, 8 December 2005.

factors, the political parties law explicitly forbids parties from organizing on the basis of sect, tribe, or region.[34] Yet numerous push and pull factors have enabled the president, himself a Zaydi tribesman, and the Zaydi-led ruling party to approximate monopsonistic vote-buyers among the country's Zaydi Shia community.

The most important pull factor is, no doubt, access to resources. The plurality system and single-member districts have enabled the president and ruling party to control the dispensation of patronage as well as utilize state resources and the state apparati on behalf of ruling party candidates. This dynamic is especially important in light of their ability to split the opposition vote and the inability of the opposition parties to project effectively into the rural areas.[35] This is particularly noteworthy given that the largest opposition party, Islah, began the multiparty period as a "marriage of convenience" between (Zaydi) tribal shaykhs—led by the titular party president, the paramount shaykh of the Hashid tribal confederation—and the (Sunni) Muslim Brotherhood, leading many commentators to distinguish between the party's "tribal wing" and "religious wing." Over time, however, the party's tribal constituencies have shrunk considerably, in large part after the ruling party gained sole control over patronage resources.

One opposition activist noted that most of Islah's support in the 1993 and 1997 elections came from the countryside because many tribal shaykhs won seats there under the Islah label. Yet after the ruling party secured a parliamentary majority in 1997 and could dispense with Islah's participation in a coalition government, it "went and bought off the shaykhs in the countryside, and now they're [ruling party]

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[34]For details on the parties law, see Mansour (2004ع, 163–180).

[35]Previous to the emergence of the Joint Meeting Parties, the ruling party was able to capitalize on animosity between the opposition parties, especially Islah and the Yemeni Socialist Party (the formerly Marxist ruling party of the southern republic). Further, it provides material and political backing for splits within the parties themselves in a process known locally as "cloning."

MPs," resulting in a flip in representation whereby most of Islah's electoral wins in 2003 came from the urban areas—most of which are demographically Sunni.[36] One high official in Islah's general secretariat, in turn, noted that, at the beginning of the multiparty period, they were able to attract about 20 percent of the shaykhs to the party, but after 1997, "they all pulled out. Most of the shaykhs left Islah for the [ruling party], because it could give resources and money to the shaykhs and the tribes."[37] One prominent leader in the Bakil tribal confederation, in turn, acknowledged that Bakil leaders made the decision to bring the confederation into the ruling party in the late-1990s: "We sat and talked with a number of shaykhs and said, look, we share so many interests with them that it is silly to stay in the opposition. So we all moved into the [ruling party]."[38]

Complementing the strong pull factor of patronage resources is an additional push factor: the political activism of Salafi and Wahhabi groups that target Zaydis. One high official in the general secretariat of the Haqq Party—a small Zaydi religious party affiliated with the Joint Meeting Parties—noted that "we're concerned about the Wahhabism in Islah. We're concerned about the sectarian politics of pitting one school against another." Other Haqq party leaders, in turn, were considerably less restrained in their criticism of Wahhabi and Salafi groups, whom they accused of targeting

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[36]Aside from the demographically-mixed capital, Sanaa, the other major cities in Yemen are located in primarily Sunni areas: Taiz, Ibb, Hudayda, Aden, Mukalla, and (to a smaller extent) Sayoun. Interview, Sanaa, 26 May 2006.

[37]Interview, Sanaa, 24 August 2005. A member of Islah's Consultative Council, in turn, noted that the "tribal wing" in Islah was really just composed of Ahmar's supporters. Interview, Sanaa, 19 December 2005.

[38]He further explained that Bakil was caught on the wrong side of the 1994 civil war because, in the early-1990s, Bakil was viewed to be lining up with the south because Hashid controlled the northern government. This was not, however, so much due to Bakil's support for southern leaders as it was an attempt to forge an independent way for Bakil. Interview, 13 April 2006.

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Zaydis for conversion as well as with violence and excommunication.[39] One journalist and correspondent on tribal affairs noted that Islah had been increasingly targeting Zaydis as the Salafi influence grew within the party, and that Zaydis, and especially the tribes, were turning much more to the ruling party as a result.[40] Although numerous opposition party leaders blamed state security agencies rather than Islah for supporting Salafi activities, one of Islah's top leaders acknowledged frankly that Islah is, nevertheless, increasingly coming to represent Sunni thought.[41] Further, no credible alternative Zaydi parties exist. Although the Haqq Party and Union of Popular Forces are both members of the opposition Joint Meeting Parties, both have minimal popular support bases and have been subject to government-sponsored pressure, splits, and cloning.[42]

In contrast to the Zaydi Shia community, whose support has become largely monopsonized by the ruling party, credible competition persists within Sunni constituencies. In addition to Islah, the other two main factions (i.e., those with parliamentary representation) within the Joint Meeting Parties, the Yemeni Socialist Party

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[39]Party leaders acknowledged that they used the terms "Wahhabi" and "Salafi" interchangeably, but that "Wahhabi" had a more negative connotation. Wahhabism is a particularly puritanical version of the Hanbali school of Sunni Islam, itself the most conservative of the four recognized schools. Interviews, Sanaa, 6 January 2006 and 10 January 2006.

[40]Interview, Sanaa, 15 August 2005.

[41]Interview, Sanaa, 27 September 2005. On the Muslim Brotherhood in Yemen, see Said (1995ع). On a roundtable the relationship of the ruling regime to the Islamist movement and Salafi groups, see Saqqaf (2002ع).

[42]Neither party holds any of the 301 seats in parliament. Haqq ran 11 candidates in the 2003 elections and secured 4,585 votes nationwide, and the Union of Popular Forces ran 13 candidates who secured a total of 11,967 votes (Republic of Yemen 2004ع, 186). The latter has been subject to competition from a regime-supported "clone," the Democratic Union of Popular Forces, as well as legal actions taken against leaders. Haqq, meanwhile, faces government pressure in part due to its links to leaders of a revolt in the northern province of Saada (the original leader of the Houthi rebellion was elected as a Haqq MP in 1993). Haqq's secretary-general surprised party members by dissolving the party in March 2007, which other party leaders who rejected the decision to dissolve allege was the product of government pressure.

(YSP) and the Unionist Nasirists,[43] draw their support bases respectively from the provinces of the former southern republic and from the southern provinces of the former northern republic, all of which are principally Shafai Sunni areas. One key opposition figure, who was instrumental in bringing together Islah with these parties, noted that the new generation in Islah has begun to realize that their opponents are not the leftists, but rather the ruling party: "They're starting to get closer to the YSP and the Nasirists...especially because [they] come from the Shafai areas. They feel that the ruling clique comes from one area and is against the people from other areas."[44] Furthermore, competition over political support extends into the Salafi constituencies as well. One prominent YSP leader, for example, claimed that the Salafi influence in Islah has been restrained, and that most of the support for militant Salafi groups comes not from Islah, but from state security agencies, who are "trying to force a split in Islah, but Islah realizes this."[45]

Although so far the opposition alliance has been unable to translate their ideological support into electoral gains, the existence of potentially credible challengers has required the government and ruling party to compete for political support within these constituencies. One opposition figure, for example, claimed that the government is currently spending three to four times more money per capita on infrastructure in the provinces of the former southern republic than in the north. Although this is in part because they had very little infrastructure to begin with, "the political impera-

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[43]At one point there were *nine* declared Nasirist factions—those citing the pan-Arab nationalist ideology of former Egyptian president Gamal abd al-Nasir—in Yemen, although now only three such parties operate: the true opposition Unionist Nasirists (the largest), and two others without parliamentary representation that are members of a ruling party-sponsored alternative opposition alliance. See Mansour (2004ع) for details.

[44]Interview, Sanaa, 25 September 2005.

[45]He further noted that "the Muslim Brotherhood was able to sideline Zindani [a prominent Salafi leader in the party] and the Salafis, and now Zindani is closer to the president than to the rest of Islah." Interview, Sanaa, 28 December 2005.

tive comes first and foremost: to prove to the southern population that they're better off in a united Yemen." Similarly, an official in the Ministry of Planning claimed that southern complaints of favoritism toward the north are unfounded: "I'm from the south, and I don't see it. Sometimes I think it's the other way around as we try to do too much for 'southern equality.'"[46] In short, the government and ruling party have been compelled to attend to the material demands of these areas, at least in part, to shore up political support.

Hypotheses

Lebanon's consociational institutions stimulate intra-community competition between elites for their coethnics' votes, but due to exogenous shocks a monopsonist vote-buyer has emerged in the Sunni community. Yemen's plurality institutions, meanwhile, have enabled the ruling party, led by Shia tribal figures, to become the dominant electoral force in the country, permitting it to approximate a monopsonist among the minority Zaydi Shia community. Further, Lebanon's consociational arrangements constrain elites' capacities to reward their cosectarian supporters at the expense of members of other communities, whereas Yemen makes no such provisions and permits governing elites to target their supporters disproportionately.

Two hypotheses follow from these institutional differences. First, Lebanon's consociational institutions prevent elites from rewarding coethnics at the expense of other communities, whereas Yemen's plurality institutions do not. Although by itself this makes no predictions about the overall pervasiveness of patronage relationships in either society, it does imply that members of all communities in Lebanon should observe such relationships as equally important, whereas in Yemen members of the Sunni community should view political connections and patronage as more important

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[46]Interviews, Sanaa, 17 November 2005 and 9 May 2006.

than its putative beneficiaries in the Zaydi Shia community. This gives rise to the following hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 6 (Constraints)** *Between-community differences in assessments of the importance of patronage narrow in quota systems and widen in non-quota systems.*

Second, mass constituents in monopsonized communities largely receive low-value rewards for their votes, compelling them to signal especially strong support for their elites in order to raise the value of the political rewards they receive. Empirically, we should expect to see signals of support respond strongly to assessments of the importance of patronage relationships among mass constituents in the monopsonized communities, Lebanese Sunnis and Yemeni Shiites, and not in the other communities, within which competition over their votes occurs. This, in turn, gives rise to the second hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 7 (Monopsony)** *Constituent propensities to signal political support for elites increase more strongly with constituents' material and patronage considerations in monopsonized communities than in more competitive communities.*

4.4 Empirical Analysis

Section 4.4 utilizes original survey data from Lebanon and Yemen to test implications of the theoretical framework developed in Section 4.2 and applied to these two research venues in Section 4.3. In particular, the empirical analysis here focuses on repercussions that are observable to mass constituents. Favoritism, patronage spending, rent-seeking, and corruption, because they are widely viewed with disdain as illegitimate and wasteful when they are not actually illegal, are largely camouflaged or otherwise hidden from public view, making it difficult to obtain reliable, systematic data about such practices. As an alternative, I utilize these survey data to study implications of favoritism and patronage processes that should be perceptible

to the constituents who are the putative winners and losers, relative to each other, of dispensations of favoritism and patronage.

The Data

The data used for the empirical analyses that follow come from original face-to-face mass attitude surveys conducted in both Lebanon (fall 2005) and Yemen (spring 2007). In Lebanon, Beirut-based MADMA Co. drew the sample and administered the interviews. Respondents were drawn randomly from a stratified sample of Lebanese adults across all provinces, for a sample size of $N = 1000$. MADMA's sample frame is based on household demographics surveys conducted in the late-1990s by the Lebanese government on tens of thousands of households, for which the president of MADMA was a consultant. It is among the most reliable sample frames available in the absence of official censuses, which are too politically sensitive to conduct. In Yemen, meanwhile, the Sanaa-based Yemen Polling Center, the country's first licensed independent polling agency, drew the sample and administered the interviews, with a sample size of $N = 1440$. Given the greater difficulties of acquiring a reasonable sample frame, we utilized a combination of area and cluster sampling techniques, drawing from half of the country's provinces and stratifying within them.[47]

Key Empirical Indicators

Here, I describe the empirical indicators I use when testing implications of the theory developed in Section 4.2. In particular, I describe measures for signal strength, the importance of connections to obtain material rewards, and understanding of the

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[47]The provinces sampled were Aden, Amran, Dhamar, Hadramawt, Hajja, Hudayda, Ibb, Marib, Sanaa (capital), and Taiz. Selection of particular provinces into the sample was semi-random, with their probability of inclusion based on their weighted population shares, subject to the constraint that both the capital (Sanaa) and at least two provinces from the former southern republic (in the sample, Aden and Hadramawt) be represented. Clustering and stratification were based on preliminary figures from the 2004 census down to the village or city neighborhood level, with individuals sampled via random-walk patterns.

political process. I motivate each indicator in turn, describe the survey instruments used to collect the data for each measure, and then present basic summary statistics for each of the communities in both Lebanon and Yemen.

Signal Indicator: Display of Political Posters

Because the theory developed in Section 4.2 utilizes a signaling framework, testing implications of that theory requires an empirical indicator that specifically measures an observable *signal* of latent political support rather than that latent political support itself. As it relates to the theory, the signal is the empirical proxy a *politician* (rather than a data analyst) would use to assess individuals' latent levels of political support for the purpose of distributing rewards, and so it is a measure of the signal itself, rather than the support it purportedly denotes, that we need. Consequently, standard survey items designed to assess party identification, placement on salient ideological dimensions, feeling thermometers, and so forth are inappropriate: they represent measures that are observable to the data analyst but *unobservable* to the politicians who are the signal's recipients.[48]

For the empirical analysis that follows, I utilize data on an indicator of a signal sent overtly by respondents, but collected unobtrusively, drawing on the propensity of Lebanese and Yemenis to reveal their political loyalties and party affiliations via political posters, symbols, and other paraphernelia displayed outside their homes. As one travels around the different quarters of the capital cities or among the mountain villages, one is subject to an array of colorful political posters and party flags, although Hariri-related items go virtually unchallenged in the Sunni areas of Lebanon while pictures of President Salih predominate in Yemen. These data were collected by instructing survey interviewers to note and describe any political paraphernalia

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[48]In other words, the measures and the estimates derived from them exist only in the survey data, which the signal receivers do not see.

("such as political party flags, campaign posters, or militia symbols," according to the instructions) displayed outside the respondent's home.[49] In Lebanon, the indicator is a picture or poster of a political party or leader, and in Yemen, for which more detailed descriptions of the items are available, the indicator is a picture or poster of the president.[50]
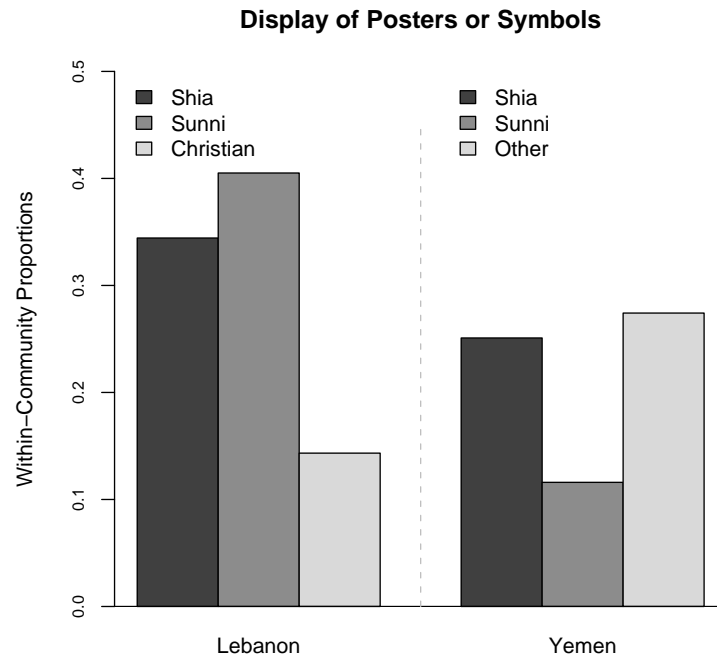

Figure 4.3: Display of Political Posters by Community

Figure 4.3 reports summary statistics of respondent propensity to signal support via a political poster across communities in both Lebanon and Yemen. Within

[49]The militia symbols example was only relevant in Lebanon, where allegiance to civil war-era militias/parties is still relevant. Interviewers were instructed to keep separate notes and descriptions of displays of religious iconography, such as Quranic verses, statues of the Virgin Mary, and so forth.

[50]This survey was first conducted in Lebanon, and not all interviewers supplied the level of detail in their descriptions as requested. When the survey was subsequently administered in Yemen, heavier stress was laid on the request for more detailed information, resulting in more precise classifications of the visible posters and political paraphernalia.

Lebanon, Sunni respondents are most likely to display political paraphernelia (almost entirely Hariri-related), followed by Shiites and, after a noticeable dropoff, Christians. Within Yemen, meanwhile, Shafai Sunnis are considerably less likely to display a poster of the president than are Zaydi Shiites or the Shafai Sunnis' ostensible core-ligionists in the "Other" category, the bulk of whom are likely Wahhabis.[51] Rather than concentrate on variation between communities, however, I turn the focus instead on *within*-community sources of variation over the decision to signal support for a po-litical leader, which according to the theory should respond to politically-distributed rewards and benefits. In doing so, I utilize two indicators designed to measure re-spondents' assessments of the need for personal connections and political patronage to secure employment.

Rewards Indicator: Importance of Connections

Two related implications of the theory developed in Section 4.2 is that coethnics of officeholding elites should disproportionately receive political rewards, but that these rewards should be cheap. To test these implications, I utilize two empirical indicators designed to measure respondents' appraisals of the importance of having connections to obtain jobs in the government sector, where political patronage likely plays a role an employment decisions, and jobs in the private sector, where employment should

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[51]Yemeni respondents, when asked to state their religious denomination, were given the options of "Shafai" (Sunni), "Zaydi" (Shia), "Ismaili," and "Other." The last category was included due to the potential social and political sensitivity associated with professing Wahhabi Islam, a particularly puritanical interpretation of the Hanbali school, itself widely acknowledged as the most conservative of the four recognized Sunni schools of jurisprudence. Wahhabism is not native to Yemen, but rather enters largely via Yemeni converts who had migrated to Saudi Arabia to work in the oil industry, and allegedly receives considerable Saudi funding for its propagation. The ruling regime has a long history, going back to the era of the two republics, of cultivating ties with such groups as counterweights to leftist and secular forces, so much so that officials from several opposition parties echoed a widespread view in interviews that the regime now has "a Sadat problem" (referring to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's use of religious groups and militants against leftist opponents). For a recent roundtable discussion of the connections between the Islamist groups in Yemen and the ruling regime, see Saqqaf (2002ع).

in principle be more likely to respond to market forces. Separating out the two indicators is important given the common tendency for people to cite "connections" in casual conversation as a general indictment of "the way things work here," yet to acknowledge when pressed that connections are more important in some circumstances than others.

Although the outcome of interest is measured by the first indicator, connections in the government sector, the second indicator, connections in the private sector, is necessary to scale the values on the government-sector indicator. In particular, the private-sector indicator provides a means to distinguish between respondents who cite connections for *everything*, and those who believe that different criteria exist for employment in the government and private sectors. Most importantly, respondents who cite connections for employment in both sectors essentially see no difference in the criteria used to allocate jobs in and out of government, whereas those who cite connections for the government sector but merit for the private sector are the respondents who most clearly observe the role of patronage specifically in the distribution of political rewards.

Respondents answered two forced-choice questions regarding their assessments of the criteria used to allocate jobs in the government and private sectors. In particular, respondents were asked which of two statements they agreed with more, one citing personal connections and the other citing merit and ability, and then a follow-up on whether they agreed strongly or just somewhat.[52] The questions were composed to prompt respondents to assess government and private-sector criteria separately from each other, rather than conflate them. The question texts, not including the initial boldface mnemonic summary labels, were presented in the following order:

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[52]The forced-choice format was used in part to help ameliorate aquiescence bias (the tendency to agree with all questions asked), which tends to grow stronger at lower levels of education. "Not agree with either statement" answers were accepted, although not prompted.

- ***Government:*** "What is the most important thing to get a good *government* job, as opposed to a job in the private sector?"

- ***Private:*** "How about the *private sector*?"

The forced-choice options with which respondents answered each of the two employment questions, text adjusted according, were presented in the following order (again, not including the mnemonic summary labels):

- ***Connections:*** "Personal connections are the most important things in getting [a *government* job; a job in *business or the private sector*]"

- ***Merit:*** "The most important factors in getting [a *government* job; a job in *business or the private sector*] are merit and ability"

Figures 4.4 and 4.5 report summary statistics of responses to the government-sector and private-sector questions, respectively, across the communities in Lebanon and Yemen, denoting within-community median responses with an M. There are two broad observations to make from these figures. First, there is more variation in responses to the private-sector question than the government-sector question, particularly in Lebanon but also in Yemen to a somewhat less dramatic degree.[53] Note that, in practice, the large skew among Lebanese respondents raises a practical issue of possible inference difficulties when estimating the statistical models using the Lebanese data. When estimating the models, I use a dichotomized version of the government-sector indicator, which takes on the value of 1 for respondents who an-

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[53]We should stop short of interpreting these broad differences between Lebanon and Yemen as indicative that connections are necessarily more important in Lebanon than they are in Yemen, nor that ability is necessarily more discounted. Although question wording is the same across both systems, respondents' points of reference are not, with a larger pool of job aspirants per capita qualified for civil service positions in Lebanon as compared to Yemen. Attempting to draw explicit conclusions about these broad differences would require that respondents use a common scale and common reference points (see, e.g., King et al. 2003), an issue not pursued here.
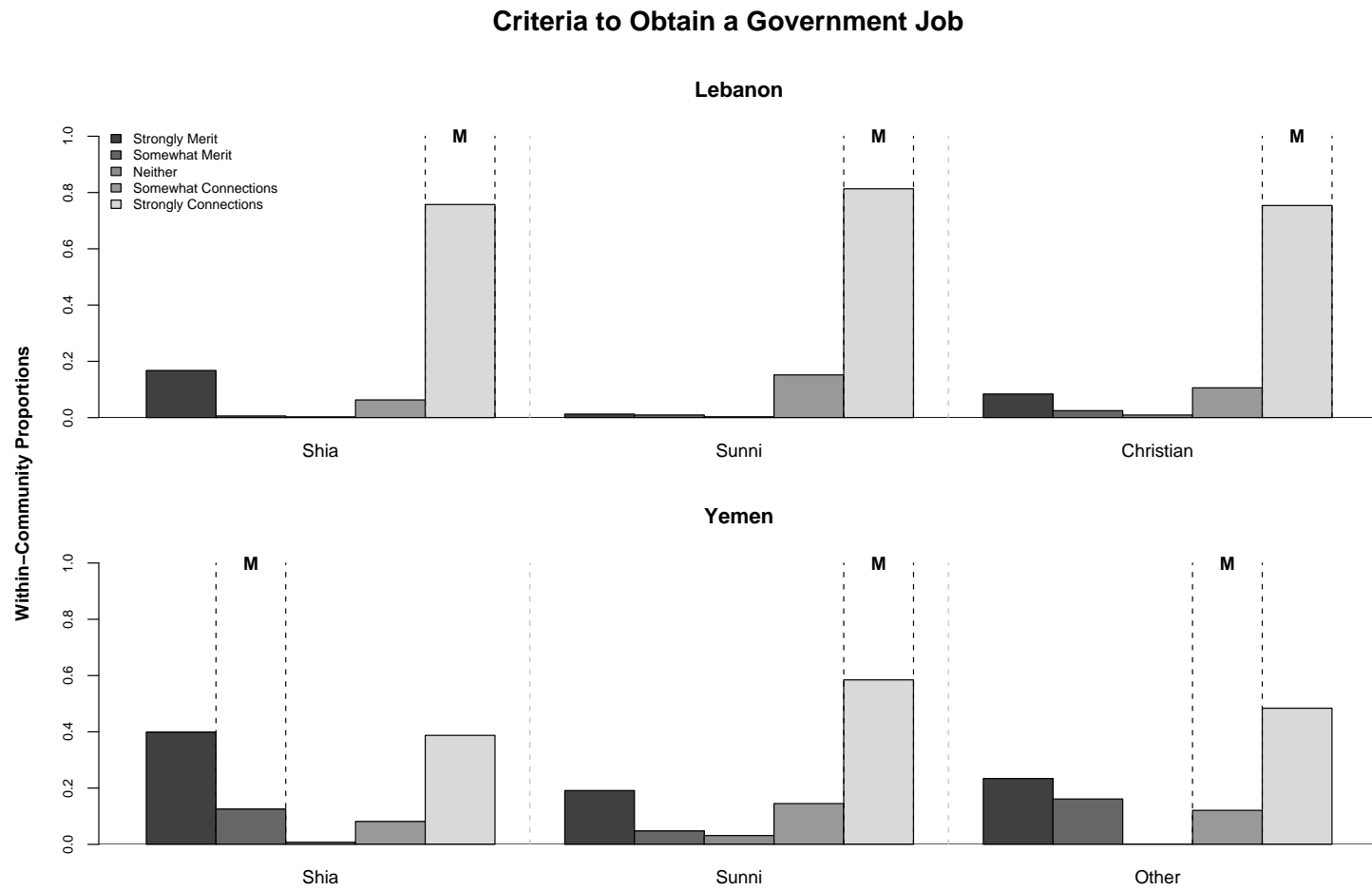
Criteria to Obtain a Government Job

Lebanon

Yemen

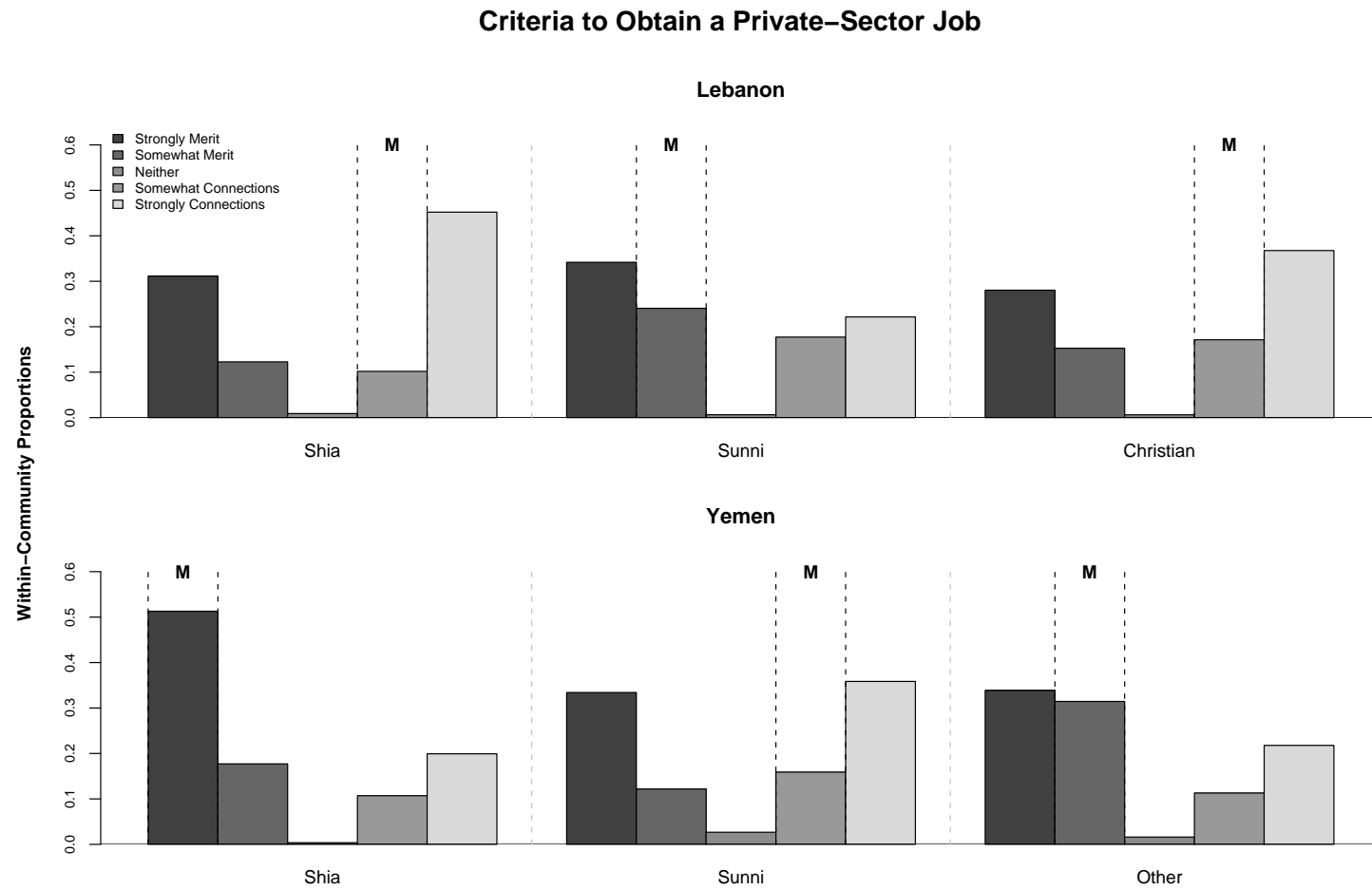Figure 4.4: Criteria to Obtain a Government Job

Figure 4.5: Criteria to Obtain a Private-Sector Job

swered "strongly connections" and 0 for all else.[54] Summary statistics for the dummy variable version of the government-sector employment question are reported in Figure 4.6.

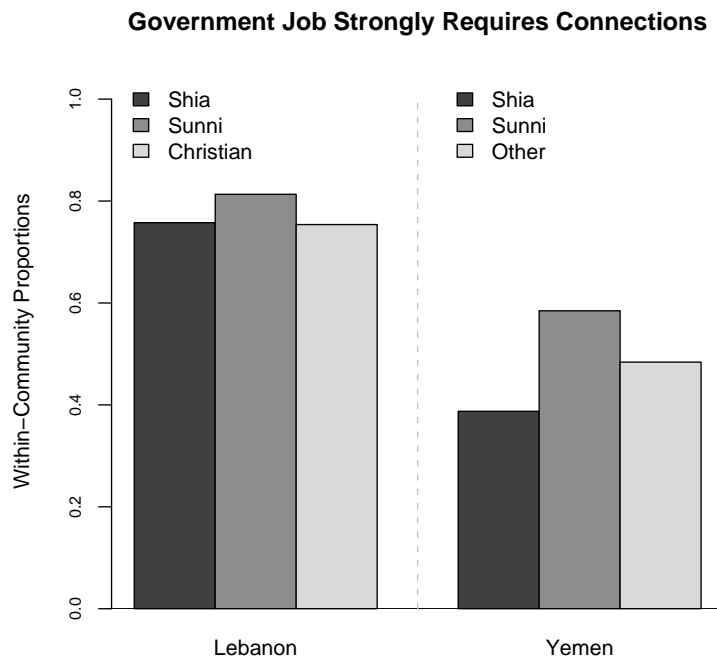**Government Job Strongly Requires Connections**

Figure 4.6: Criteria to Obtain a Government Job (Dichotomous)

Second, there are suggestive differences in the within-community median responses between communities. Although the median response on the government-sector question is the top of the scale ("strongly connections") in all Lebanese communities, in Yemen the Zaydi Shiite median is located toward the merit end of the scale whereas the medians for the other communities are located on the connections end of the scale. Further, the median response for Lebanese Sunnis on the private-sector question is located on the merit end, whereas the Lebanese Shiite and Christian medians are

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[54]The dummy variable indicator is used for both Lebanese and Yemeni respondents for comparability purposes. Model results for Yemeni respondents are qualitatively similar and, in fact, stronger when using the five-point scale in place of the dummy variable indicator.

located on the connections end. Meanwhile, the median response for Zaydi Shiites in Yemen is at the bottom of the scale ("strongly merit"), which compares especially to Shafai Sunnis, whose median is located on the connections end.

Variation on these connections indicators serves two purposes. As explanatory variables, they help test one of the implications of the signaling dynamics by explaining variation in respondents' propensities to signal political support. Yet the government-sector indicator also serves as an outcome variable, with another implication of the theory suggesting that connections will appear more necessary to members of some communities as compared to others. To help explain some of this variation I utilize a measure of how well respondents understand the political process in their country.

Political Understanding Indicator

As argued in Section 4.2, elites target rewards to coethnics disproportionately not out of empathy, but because coethnic political support is relatively cheap compared to that of non-coethnics. One of the implications of this argument is that members of some communities are more likely than others to observe favoritism and connections at work: members of out-of-power communities see state resources funneled to members of communities in power, and attribute these observations to ethnic favoritism and ethnic-based patronage perpetuated at their expense.[55] Yet we might expect that the size of the gap in assessments between communities varies with the degree to which individuals understand politics and the political process that channels resources along ethnic lines.

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[55]Note that this implication is observationally equivalent to ethnic favoritism explanations based on some form of elite empathy, or else on the argument that elites derive personal satisfaction or utility from augmenting the welfare of their coethnics. What distinguishes the theory developed here from these more standard explanations is the prediction that the rewards coethnics receive are small in value, whereas empathy-based arguments would predict that coethnics should receive lucrative benefits.

Respondents were also asked to provide a self-assessment of the degree to which they understand politics and the political process in their country, although the question format differed somewhat between Lebanon and Yemen. In the former, respondents answered the forced-choice question, "how difficult is it to understand politics in this country?" Their options were, first, "political life is often difficult for someone like you to understand," and second, "you usually have a good understanding of what's going on politically in this country," and after selecting one of the two statements, noted whether they agreed strongly with it or just somewhat.[56] In Yemen, respondents used a five-point scale to answer the question, "to what extent are government and political affairs so complicated that people like yourself often cannot understand what is happening?" Their options were "always," "usually," "sometimes," "rarely," and "never." Due to the different formats and the counterintuitive labeling of the response options on the Yemen question—where greater political understanding is associated with responses on the "rarely" and "never" side of the scale—I refer from here on simply to a five-point "political understanding" scale, ranging from low to high.[57]

Figure 4.7 reports summary statistics for the political understanding scale across the communities, again denoting within-community median responses an M. In broad terms, the median responses for the different communities cluster around the midpoint of the scale.[58] One mild surprise emerges in Lebanon. Christians, traditionally

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[56] "Not agree with either statement" answers were not prompted, but were accepted and treated as the midpoint response on the implied five-point scale.

[57] Although not ideal, the question wording and intent are similar enough conceptually between the two surveys to make them roughly comparable. The use of the exact same question formats across the samples would, of course, increase confidence in comparability. The Yemen version, selected well after the Lebanon survey went into the field, differs from the version used in Lebanon primarily for comparability purposes to legacy questions used on prior surveys conducted in other countries.

[58] Recall that the forced-response format used in Lebanon makes responses in the third category, here labeled "middle," less frequent because it corresponds to the "not agree with either statement"
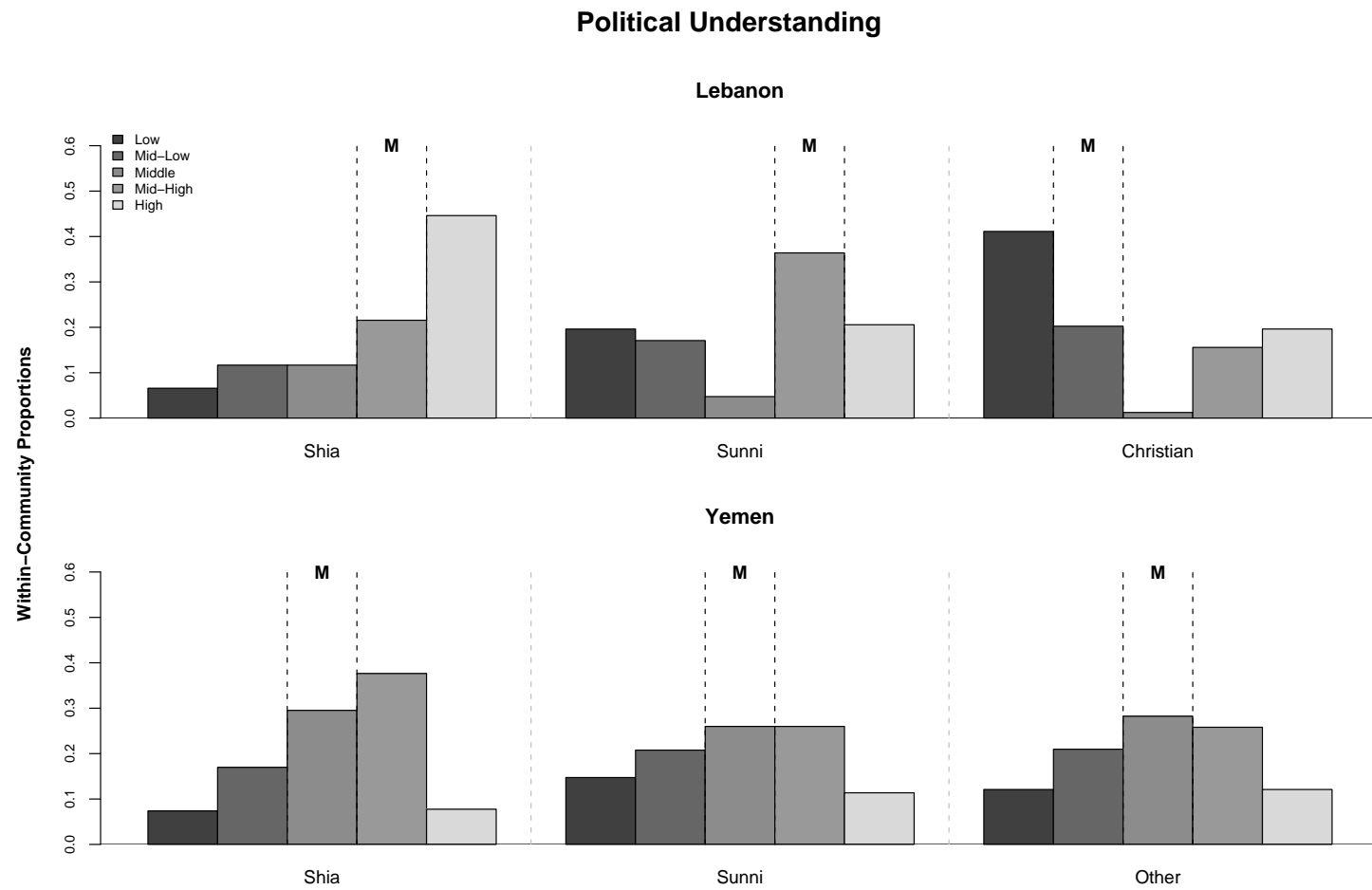
Figure 4.7: Political Understanding

better educated and more politically engaged than members of the other communities, appear to be least confident in their ability to understand the political process in their country. Meanwhile, Shiites, traditionally among the least educated members of Lebanese society, appear particularly comfortable in their understanding of politics in Lebanon.

Empirical Expectations in Lebanon and Yemen

Having described the empirical indicators to be used in the data analysis, we can now revisit the hypotheses presented conceptually above and restate them as empirical expectations given the particular indicators I use here. First, I present the expectation for between-community differences traceable to the quota system that is used in Lebanon but not in Yemen. Second, I describe the expectation for differences in incentives to signal support for elites in monopsonized as opposed to competitive communities in both countries.

Expectation 1: Quota System Constraints

Recall that Hypothesis 6 predicts that institutional constraints can be used to limit elite discretionary powers in the dispensation of state resources. Of particular relevance for comparative purposes between Lebanon and Yemen, quota systems defining set quantities of appointments per community can prevent elites from rewarding co-ethnic constituents with civil service appointments and other government sector jobs at the expense of members of other communities.

Among the consociational elements found in Lebanon's institutions is an explicit quota system that explicitly allocates not only seats in the parliament and key positions in the executive branch according to membership in the country's sectarian communities, but also for appointments to state jobs such as those in the civil ser-

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answer that was not read to respondents but accepted if they themselves offered it.

vice and diplomatic corps. Yemen, meanwhile, makes no such formal provisions for community representation—either elected or appointed—in the state apparatus. In practice, this grants officeholders in Yemen relatively greater discretion in how to distribute government sector jobs to supporters compared to officeholders in Lebanon. In particular, it allows Yemeni officeholders to privilege coethnics above members of other communities in their appointments, but prevents Lebanese officeholders from rewarding coethnics with jobs at the expense of other communities.

Mass constituents can be expected to observe different appointment processes at work depending on the presence or absence of a quota system for government sector positions. With no quota system in place, there should be clear differences between communities in perceptions of the importance of patronage and political connections in the appointment process. Members of out-of-power communities, who observe members of in-power communities taking a disproportionate share of the government positions, can be expected to place greater emphasis on connections than members of in-power communities, the purported beneficiaries of these connections. With a quota system in place, there should be no discernible differences between communities in constituent assessments of the role played by patronage and connections in the hiring process. Whatever the average prevailing level of importance individuals attach to connections—and it may in fact be very high—this level should be the same across communities. Although constituents may observe patronage at work in terms of who gets appointments and who does not, they do *not* observe disproportionality between communities due to the constraints imposed by the quota system on the officeholders making the appointments.

Note, however, that these perceptions are likely to vary systematically with the degree to which individuals understand how the political system functions. Those individuals with a relatively strong understanding should be better able to assess the role of patronage and connections in government appointments compared to individ-

uals with a weak understanding of how politics works. Consequently, differences in perceptions across communities should become increasingly accurate as constituents become increasingly politically well-informed. Given the above arguments, we may translate Hypothesis 6 into the following empirical expectation:

Expectation 1 (Constraints) *Conditional on how well respondents understand politics, assessments of the need for connections to obtain government jobs do not vary by community membership in Lebanon, whereas in Yemen non-Shiites are more likely than Shiites to cite connections as necessary to obtain a government job.*

Table 4.1 summarizes the expected between-community differences in Lebanon, with Sunnis as the baseline community, and in Yemen, with Shiites serving as the baseline.[59]

	Shia	Sunni	Other
Lebanon	0	⋯	0
Yemen	⋯	+	+

Table 4.1: Summarized Expectations, Constraints

Expectation 2: Signaling Under Monopsony

Recall that Hypothesis 7 predicts that decisions to signal support for elites differ between members of monopsonized communities and those in more competitive communities. More particularly, it predicts that material considerations and assessments of the importance of patronage connections figure more strongly into the decision to signal among monopsonized constituents as compared to members of non-monopsonized communities. Of particular importance for comparative purposes is the existence of monopsonized communities in both countries, Sunnis in Lebanon and Shiites in

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[59]Note that the "Other" category in Table 4.1 in Lebanon refers to Christians, and in Yemen literally to the "Other" category presented to respondents in classifying themselves by sectarian community (and most likely to be Wahhabis). For the latter, see fn. 51.

Yemen, alongside communities for whose political support greater competition between elites occurs. Of additional importance is the source of these monopsonies: exogenous shocks in Lebanon and institutional choice in Yemen.

As described above, Lebanon's institutions utilize a number of consociational arrangements, including explicit quotas for the sectarian communities in parliament. The electoral system, further, only permits cosectarians to run against one another for a given seat, which provides a strong inducement to intra-sect competition between elites for their cosectarians' votes. In principle, Lebanon's institutions stimulate oligopsonistic competition between elites rather than monopsonistic vote-buying, as is evident in the credible elite alternatives available in the Shia and Christian communities. Yet due in large measure to exogenous shocks, Hariri's Future Movement has emerged as a monopsonist in the Sunni community.

Yemen's electoral system, meanwhile, makes no such provision for explicit community representation in state institutions, and provides no special incentives to stimulate within-community competition between elites for constituent support. Yet the concentration of resources in the center, coupled with the lack of constraints on elite discretion in the distribution of those resources, has permitted the Shia-led dominant ruling party to approximate a monopsonist in the minority Zaydi Shia community. The lack of viable alternatives available to Shia voters, in turn, compares to the more credible competition that occurs over Sunni votes, especially in urban areas, where Sunni-preponderant opposition parties provide plausible electoral alternatives to the ruling party.

Yemen's governing institutions are the product of past choices made in the name of national unity, albeit with increasingly visible self-interested manipulations designed to expand the control of the president and ruling party. Although it is implausible to suggest that these institutions were consciously chosen specifically to create a vote monopsony in the Zaydi Shia community, this monopsony is an unanticipated but

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theoretically unsurprising by-product of the drive to concentrate political power in a hegemonic ruling party. Lebanon's consociational governing institutions, meanwhile, are also the product of deliberate choices, but choices made in the name of pluralism, designed to induce intra-community competition and cross-community cooperation in an environment where non-sectarian coalitions and competition were largely non-credible.

Yet the emergence of a monopsonist in Lebanon, although perhaps out of equilibrium in that system, provides useful comparative leverage to test one of the implications of the theoretical framework contained in Hypothesis 7. Ordinarily, institutional incentives should produce oligopsonistic competition in Lebanon but monopsonistic vote-buying in Yemen. Empirical comparisons should reveal *between-systems* differences that reflect these different competitive environments, but *within-system* variation between communities only in Yemen. Yet monopsony-stimulating exogenous shocks mean that we should now also see within-system variation in Lebanon as well, with qualitatively different competitive dynamics occuring among Sunnis as compared to Shiites and Christians. Given these arguments, we may translate Hypothesis 7 into the following empirical expectation:

> **Expectation 2 (Monopsony)** *Propensities to signal support for elites increase among respondents in the monopsonized communities, Lebanese Sunnis and Yemeni Shiites, as their assessments of the need for connections to obtain government jobs increase, whereas this relationship does not exist among respondents in the more competitive communities.*

Table 4.2 summarizes the expected within-community relationships in both countries in terms of the influence of the effect of increasing importance of connections on the propensity to signal support.

Model Results

To test Hypotheses 6 and 7 and assess the validity of their corresponding Empirical Expectations 1 and 2, I estimate two central statistical models with the empirical

	Shia	Sunni	Other
Lebanon	0	+	0
Yemen	+	0	0

Table 4.2: Summarized Expectations, Monopsony

indicators described previously, summarized here as

S Signal

J_G Criteria for a Government-Sector Job

J_P Criteria for a Private-Sector Job

U Political Understanding

C Vector of Community Indicators

Z Vector of Control Variables.[60]

Assessments of the necessity of connections for a government-sector job, J_G, is, as described previously, a five-point ordinal scale reduced to two categories for practical estimation reasons, whereas the signal of political support, S, is also a binary variable. I therefore model the probabilities of particular responses, $\Pr\left(J_G = j_G\right)$ and $\Pr\left(S = s\right)$, as generalized linear models with a probit link function, i.e., binary probit models. I use two core equations in testing Hypotheses (Empirical Expectations) 1 and 2, assessing *Constraints* via $\Pr\left(J_G\right) = \Phi\left(C + U + CU + Z\right)$ and *Monopsony* via $\Pr\left(S_C\right) = \Phi\left(J_G + J_P + J_G J_P + Z\right)$, where Φ is the normal cumulative density function and the subscript on the *Monopsony* equation indicates that estimations are performed within each community sub-sample.

Note that both equations utilize interaction terms, CU in *Constraints* and $J_G J_P$ in *Monopsony*, the former to capture a predicted conditional effect and the latter as

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[60]Z is a vector of control variables for basic demographics, education, and socioeconomic status. It includes dummy variables for sex and urban residence, age with a square-root transformation, a five-point education scale, and a count of the number of hours per day respondents' homes were without electricity (also with a square-root transformation). The latter serves as a proxy for socioeconomic status in place of the more standard income indicators, used in large part because nearly twenty percent of Lebanese respondents refused to state their income.

a scaling factor, both of which are described in more detail below. Because it can be difficult to interpret the substantive effects of key explanatory variables in the presence of interaction terms via tables of coefficient estimates and standard errors, I present results graphically in the main text as well as in tabular format. I report results for each of the two core models below.

Constraints Model Results

I first examine the effect of institutional constraints, operationalized here as the presence or absence of a formal quota system for government-sector employment, on elite discretionary powers, with observable implications for patronage distribution dynamics across communities. Here, I test the validity of Empirical Expectation 1, which predicts qualitatively different dynamics in Lebanon and Yemen in the distribution of government patronage, and consequently different perceptions of ethnic favoritism at the constituent level. In particular, Expectation 1 posits that, due to the explicit quota system used in Lebanon, there should be no discernible differences between communities in assessments of the importance of connections for obtaining a government job, whereas in Yemen, which does not utilize a quota system, Sunnis should observe government jobs going disproportionately to Zaydi Shiites and consequently perceive greater need for connections in obtaining those jobs.

Further, Expectation 1 posits that differences in perception between communities are conditional on the degree to which constituents understand the political process (and, by extension, the patronage process), with greater understanding enabling individuals to assess the importance of connections more accurately. This, in turn, implies the expectation that perceptions across communities should become more similar in Lebanon, and more different in Yemen, as respondent political understanding increases. Mechanically, I include the interaction term *JU* in the *Constraints* equation to capture this contingent effect of political understanding on community differences in perceptions.
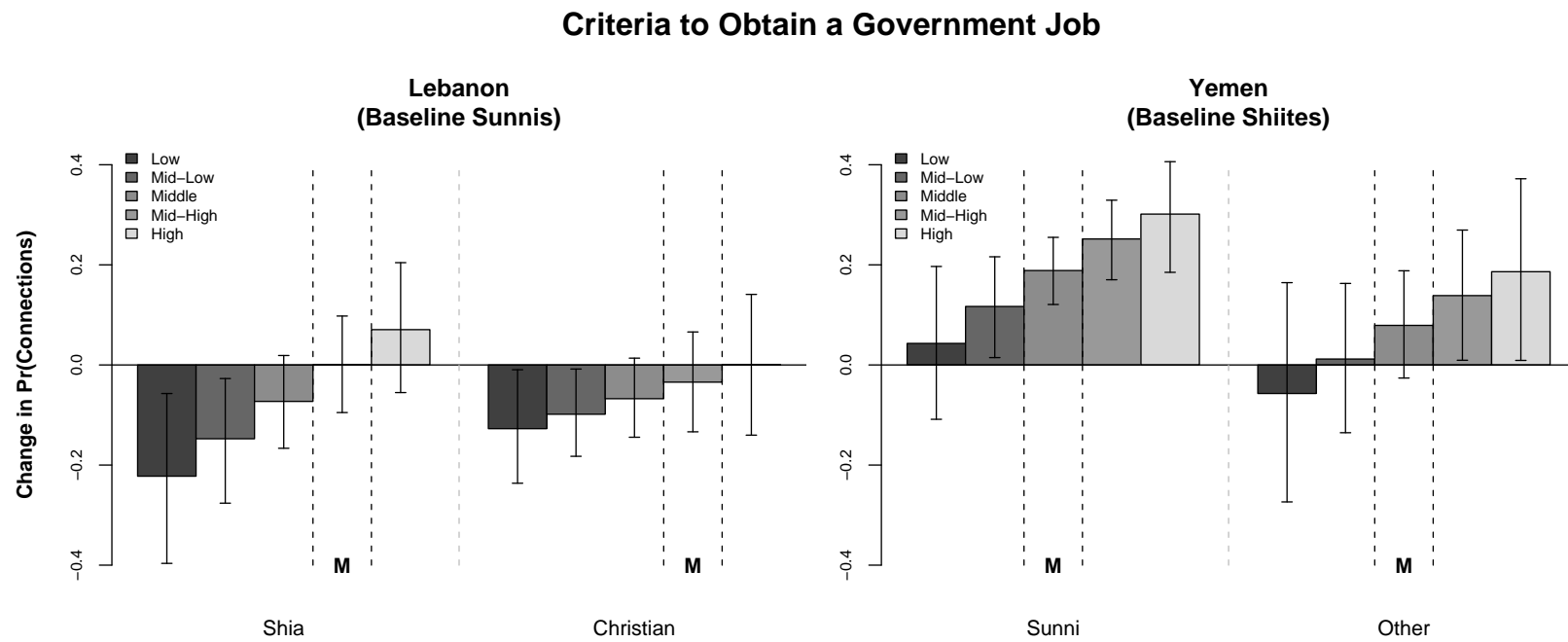
Criteria to Obtain a Government Job

Figure 4.8: *Constraints* Model Community Effect (First Differences)

Lebanon	b	se(b)	Yemen	b	se(b)
U	-1.03	$0.26^{\ddagger}$	U	-0.98	$0.30^{\dagger}$
$Shia$	-0.35	0.26	$Sunni$	0.11	0.20
$Shia \times U$	0.92	$0.37^{\star}$	$Sunni \times U$	0.75	$0.34^{\star}$
$Christian$	-0.63	$0.22^{\dagger}$	$Other$	-0.15	0.29
$Christian \times U$	0.43	0.33	$Other \times U$	0.70	0.48
$Rural$	-0.41	$0.12^{\ddagger}$	$Rural$	-0.13	0.09
$Female$	0.02	0.11	$Female$	0.09	0.08
$Education$	0.16	0.27	$Education$	0.06	0.12
Age	-0.12	$0.05^{\star}$	Age	0.05	0.04
$Electricity$	0.26	$0.05^{\ddagger}$	$Electricity$	0.01	0.02
$Intercept$	1.49	$0.43^{\ddagger}$	$Intercept$	-0.07	0.31
N	897		N	1214	
$\ln L$	-440.60		$\ln L$	-814.67	

$$p \leq 0.001^{\ddagger} \qquad p \leq 0.01^{\dagger} \qquad p \leq 0.05^{\star}$$

Table 4.3: Constraints Results

I present results for the *Constraints* model graphically in Figure 4.8, and report the corresponding coefficient estimates and standard errors, which are less easily comprehensible at a glance, in Table 4.3. Figure 4.8 plots the effects of community membership as *differences* in probabilities between the comparison communities against a baseline—Sunnis in Lebanon, Shiites in Yemen—as respondent political understanding increases, along with confidence intervals around those effects at the conventional 95-percent level.[61] For comparative purposes and a measure of central tendencies among respondents, I indicate median levels of political understanding for the baseline communities on the graph with an M. Substantively, positive differences mean that a given comparison community is more likely than the baseline community to cite connections as very important in obtaining a government job, and negative differences mean that the comparison community is less likely than the baseline to cite connections.

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[61]The results reported in Figure 4.8 were calculated with sex set to male and residency set to non-city dwellers. Remaining control variables were set to their community sub-sample means and medians, as applicable.

The evidence presented in Figure 4.8 largely supports the predictions made in Expectation 1. Let us first examine the estimated community differences in Lebanon, displayed in the left panel. As anticipated, perceptions of the importance of connections converge to no difference across communities as respondents increasingly understand politics. At the median level of political understanding, in fact, the differences in perception for both Shiites and Christians against baseline Sunnis are neither substantively nor statistically significant. These findings are consistent with the argument advanced above that Lebanon's quota system prevents elites from rewarding cosectarians at the expense of members of other communities: although constituents may perceive an important role for connections in the distribution of government jobs, they do not perceive these connections to privilege one community disproportionately over others.

In comparison, let us now turn to the estimated community differences in Yemen—plotted in the right panel of Figure 1—which reveal dynamics that differ starkly from those found in Lebanon. Whereas perceptions converge to no difference between communities the better individuals understand politics in Lebanon, perceptions in Yemen *diverge* between communities as respondents increasingly understand how the political system works. In particular, Sunnis are increasingly more likely than baseline Zaydi Shiites to cite connections as important to obtain a government job. Although there is no discernible difference between communities at very low levels of political understanding, a divergence in perceptions emerges almost immediately thereafter. By median levels of understanding, Sunnis (Shafai Sunnis) are notably more likely to cite connections than are Shiites. The difference between "Other" respondents—many of whom, as suggested before, are likely to be Wahhabi Sunnis—and baseline Shiites is positive and barely misses statistical significance at the median, with this community difference becoming statistically significant in the categories above the median. These findings, in turn, are consistent with the argument that Yemen's

institutions permit the Shia-led ruling party to reward comparatively inexpensive Shiite supporters with government jobs, and to do so at the expense of non-Shiites. Although constituents in all communities may perceive connections to be important determinants of government employment, the divergence in these perceptions suggests that Sunnis observe Shiites to be winning such jobs disproportionately.

Overall, then, assessments of the importance of connections converge to no difference between communities in Lebanon, and diverge to large differences in Yemen, as individuals increasingly understand how politics work in their respective countries. These starkly different dynamics, in turn, are consistent with Empirical Expectation 1, which predicts no differences across communities under quota systems and differences in favor of in-power communities when quota systems are not in use. Although this interpretation may technically be open to debate given the small number of systems under study here—an issue to which I return in the general discussion that follows—in the absence of plausible rival alternatives, these data provide strong confirmatory evidence that formal institutional constraints can magnify or disrupt the influence of ethnic divisions on the distribution of scarce resources according to how those institutions channel ethnic links.

Monopsony Model Results

I now turn to the effect of the competitive environment in the market for votes on the cost to elites of mass constituent political support, and consequently patterns of the distribution of political rewards *within* communities, with observable implications in constituent assessments of the value of their support and strategies employed to increase the value of the rewards they receive. Here, I test the validity of Empirical Expectation 2, which predicts qualitatively different signaling dynamics in monopsonized communities, Sunnis in Lebanon and Zaydi Shiites in Yemen, as compared to communities for whose political support there is greater elite competition: Shiites and Christians in Lebanon, and Sunnis in Yemen. In terms of observable implications,

Expectation 2 posits that, given their different competitive environments, members of monopsonized communities should be more likely to signal political support as their assessments of the importance for connections to obtain government jobs increase, whereas there should be no such discernible relationship among members of more competitive communities.

Although Expectation 2 predicts that monopsonized respondents' propensity to signal political support increases as their assessments of the importance of connections in obtaining government jobs increase, it is important for inferential purposes to scale these assessments rather than take them in isolation. In particular, we must be able to distinguish between individuals who cite connections for *everything* from those who cite connections specifically for acquiring political rewards. In order to make this distinction, we may scale respondents' perceptions of the importance of connections in the government sector by their assessments of the importance of connections in the private sector, where merit is likely to play a comparatively more important role in hiring decisions. This, in turn, implies the expectation that propensities to signal become greatest among respondents who observe the greatest gap between the criteria for obtaining government jobs and jobs in the private sector: individuals who assess connections to be the most decisive factor in government, but *merit* to be the most important criterion in the private sector. Mechanically, I include the interaction term $J_G J_P$ in the *Monopsony* equation to capture this scaling effect.

As before, I present results for the *Monopsony* model graphically in Figure 4.9, reporting the corresponding coefficient estimates and standard errors as Tables 4.4 and 4.5. Figure 4.9 is analogous in layout to Figure 4.8, plotting probability differences in the propensity to signal against the baseline along with 95-percent confidence intervals around those differences.[62] Again for comparative purposes and measures

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[62]As before, the results reported in Figure 4.9 were calculated with sex set to male and residency set to non-city dwellers, with the remaining control variables set to community means and medians.

	Shia		Sunni		Christian	
	b	**se(b)**	**b**	**se(b)**	**b**	**se(b)**
J_G	0.23	0.37	1.66	0.46‡	−0.15	0.30
J_P	−0.31	0.12†	0.03	0.18	−0.33	0.18
$J_G \times J_P$	−0.09	0.16	−0.52	0.19†	0.21	0.19
$Rural$	−0.20	0.29	0.04	0.22	0.43	0.22
$Female$	−0.02	0.19	0.16	0.20	−0.44	0.24
$Education$	0.06	0.59	0.29	0.44	0.42	0.50
Age	0.04	0.11	−0.10	0.09	0.00	0.11
$Electricity$	−0.34	0.12†	0.05	0.07	−0.31	0.14*
$Intercept$	1.04	0.89	−0.68	0.77	−0.37	0.87
N	310		299		304	
$\ln L$	−128.91		−147.02		−102.84	

$$p \leq 0.001^\ddagger \qquad p \leq 0.01^\dagger \qquad p \leq 0.05^\star$$

Table 4.4: Lebanon Monopsony Results

	Shia		Sunni				Other	
	b	**se(b)**	**b**	**se(b)**	**b**	**se(b)**	**b**	**se(b)**
J_G	0.76	0.26†	−0.09	0.18	−0.06	0.19	−0.57	0.41
J_P	0.14	0.09	−0.03	0.06	−0.02	0.06	−0.02	0.13
$J_G \times J_P$	−0.24	0.12*	−0.01	0.08	−0.03	0.08	0.04	0.18
$Rural$	−0.24	0.22	0.40	0.15†	0.34	0.15*	−0.45	0.34
$Female$	−0.47	0.19*	0.16	0.13	0.20	0.13	0.73	0.29*
$Education$	0.09	0.31	0.22	0.19	0.22	0.19	−0.21	0.46
Age	0.04	0.08	−0.04	0.06	−0.03	0.06	0.02	0.16
$Electricity$	−0.04	0.06	−0.01	0.03	−0.02	0.04	0.30	0.11†
$South$					−0.75	0.27†		
$Intercept$	−0.75	0.59	−1.26	0.43†	−1.25	0.43†	−1.07	1.09
N	267		836		836		122	
$\ln L$	−142.45		−295.73		−290.70		−59.89	

$$p \leq 0.001^\ddagger \qquad p \leq 0.01^\dagger \qquad p \leq 0.05^\star$$

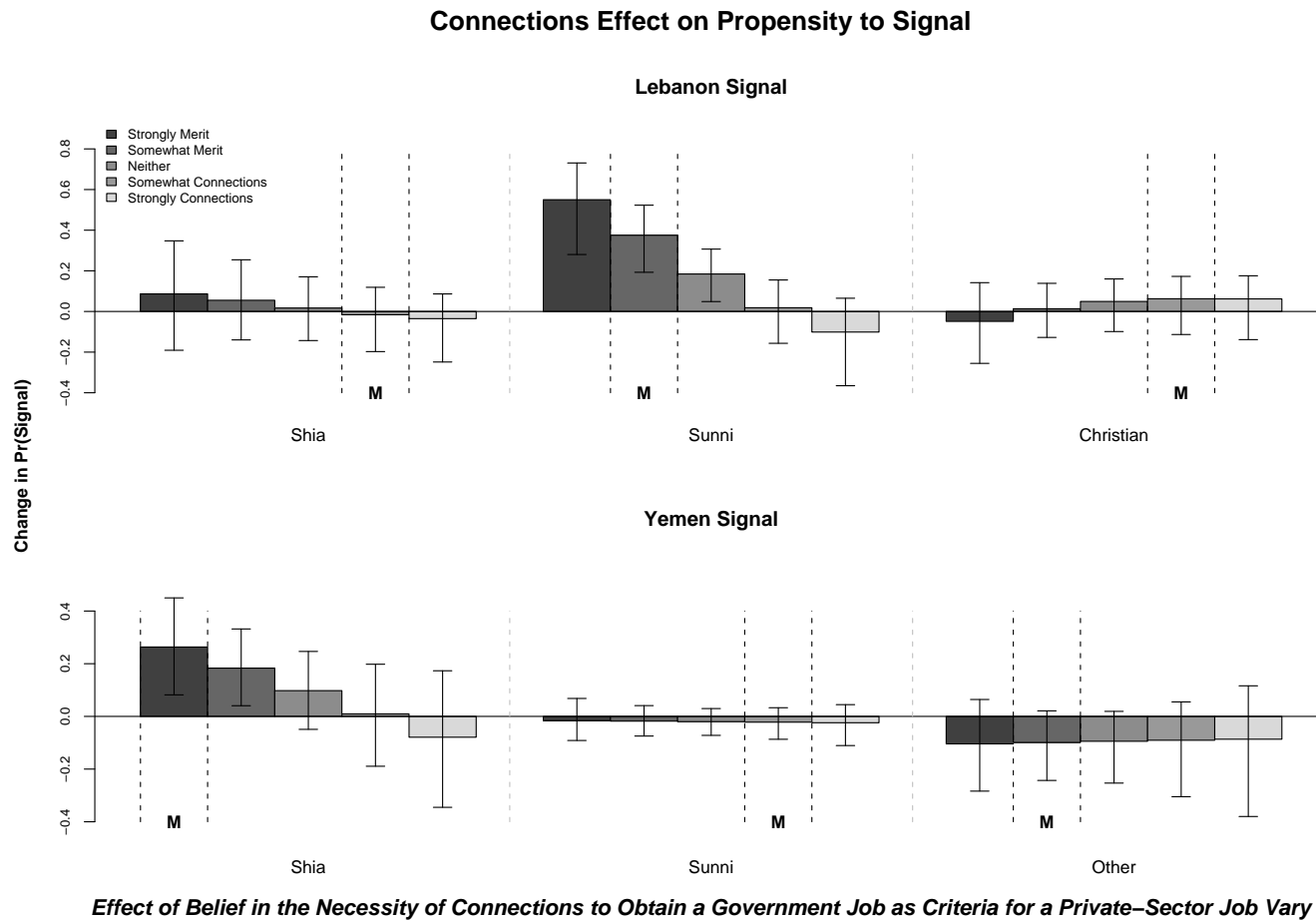Table 4.5: Yemen Monopsony Results

Figure 4.9: *Monopsony* Model Community Effect (First Differences)

of central tendency, I indicate with an M community median assessments of the importance of connections to obtain private-sector jobs. The nature of the baseline against which probability differences are calculated differs from Figure 4.8, however. The *Monopsony* model is estimated within each of the community sub-samples, and the probability differences reported in Figure 4.9 constitute the estimated differences between individuals who perceive connections to be very important for obtaining a government job and their baseline cosectarians who assess connections to be less important.

The evidence presented in Figure 4.9 strongly supports the predictions made in Expectation 2. Let us first examine the estimated effects by community in Lebanon, which are plotted in the top row. As anticipated, respondent propensities to signal political support in both the Shia and Christian communities do not vary with their assessments of the importance of connections in obtaining government jobs at any level of the scaling variable, private-sector connections. Yet the dynamics are starkly different in the Sunni community, where the propensity to signal support increases in government-sector connections as it decreases private-sector connections. Put another way, as the perceived gap in criteria for obtaining jobs in the two sectors grows—as respondents increasingly perceive connections to be the deciding factor in government but merit to be the key criterion in the private sector—Sunni respondents become increasingly likely to signal political support. Although no government connections effect is discernible when respondents cite connections as important in both government and the private sector, i.e., when they perceive no gap between the two sectors, the government connections effect is easily significant both substantively and statistically at the Sunni sample median for private-sector job criteria.

In Yemen, meanwhile, we observe similar dynamics in the analogous monopsonized and competitive communities, as plotted in the bottom row of Figure 4.9. As predicted, respondent propensities to signal political support among individuals in the

Sunni (Shafai Sunni) community and those in the "Other" category—again, likely to be largely composed of Wahhabi Sunnis—show no indication of varying with their perceptions of the importance of connections for obtaining government jobs at any level of their assessments of private-sector connections. In contrast, a government connections effect is both substantively significant and statistically discernible among Zaydi Shiite respondents, for whom the propensity to signal support increases in government-sector connections as it decreases in private-sector connections. Just as occurs among Lebanese Sunnis, as the perceived criteria gap between the two sectors grows—as connections increasingly become decisive for government jobs in comparison to merit in the private sector—Zaydi Shiite respondents in Yemen become increasingly likely to signal political support. Again, just as is the case among Lebanese Sunnis, no government connections effect is evident when respondents cite connections as important for both government and private-sector jobs, that is, when they perceive no gap in employment criteria between the sectors, the government connections effect is both substantively and statistically significant at the Zaydi Shia sample median for private-sector criteria.

Overall, then, in *none* of the competitive communities in either Lebanon or Yemen is there any evidence that signaling propensities respond to assessments of the importance of government connections, whereas a substantively and statistically significant connections effect is evident in both of the monopsonized communities. These starkly different dynamics between monopsonized and competitive communities, evident across systems, provide strong confirmatory evidence for Empirical Expectation 2. These data, in other words, are consistent with the argument advanced above that differing competitive environments in the market for votes help determine whether scarce resources are concentrated at the elite level or distributed to mass constituents, depending on how well formal government institutions stimulate within-community elite competition for their coethnics' votes.

Implications for Development in Diverse Societies

What can we take from the empirical evidence presented above? Here, I discuss the results in terms of overall themes and implications for the theoretical framework developed in Section 4.2. First, evidence from the *Constraints* model suggests that formal institutional constraints can serve to limit the scope of elite discretionary powers in the distribution of scarce resources as political patronage. The particular constraint examined, an explicit quota system to allocate government jobs among putatively competing ethnic communities, is used in Lebanon but not in Yemen. Lebanese elites, in other words, cannot reward cosectarians with government appointments at the expense of members of other communities, whereas Yemeni elites are under no such constraint.

The empirical evidence, in turn, suggests that mass constituents, the potential beneficiaries of government patronage, do observe these differing dynamics in practice. Lebanese respondents converge to no differences between communities in their perceptions of the importance of connections to obtain government jobs, whereas Yemeni respondents diverge in their perceptions in such a way as to indicate preferential appointment practices that favor Zaydi Shiites. Note that a quota system, by itself, does not remove politics or patronage considerations from the process of distributing government jobs and benefits to constituents: assessments of the importance of connections in obtaining government jobs are in fact high in both Lebanon and Yemen.[63] It does, however, prevent whatever favoritism that emerges from becoming *ethnic* favoritism, and prevents elites from rewarding coethnic supporters at the expense of members of other communities.

Second, evidence from the *Monopsony* model suggests that formal institutional

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[63]Note further that, to the degree we are comfortable with comparing responses directly across systems, Lebanese respondents actually perceive connections to be more important than Yemeni respondents.

rules can influence the degree of competitiveness in the market for coethnic votes, which can in turn magnify or disrupt the impact of the ethnic subsidy described in Section 4.2. Lebanon explicitly incorporates sectarianism into elected office by allocating all parliamentary seats according to sectarian community and permitting only cosectarians to run against each other for their assigned seats, which in turn provides a strong stimulus to intra-sect competition among elites for their cosectarians' votes. Yemen, meanwhile, makes no particular provisions to induce within-community competition, and in fact forbids political mobilization on behalf of its constituent communities in the name of strengthening national unity. Lebanese elites, in other words, must compete against one another for their cosectarians' votes, whereas no such stimulus exists for Yemeni elites.

As described above, although oligopsonistic competition among elites is the institutionally-induced norm in Lebanon, a series of exogenous shocks have produced a monopsonist in the Sunni community where one would otherwise be unlikely to exist. These exogenous shocks, in turn, provide leverage in comparing outcomes in Lebanon and Yemen, where in the latter a set of reinforcing factors has enabled the Shia-led dominant ruling party to approximate a monopsonist in the Zaydi Shia community. Thus, whereas we would ordinarily expect to observe competition within each sect in Lebanon but monopsonistic vote-buying among Shiites in Yemen, due to exogenous shocks we may expect to observe a monopsony among Lebanese Sunnis as well.

The empirical evidence, in turn, suggests that mass constituents utilize different signaling strategies—or alternately, signal for different reasons—depending the competitive environments within their communities. Among members of the competitive communities—Shiites and Christians in Lebanon, and Sunnis in Yemen—the propensity to signal support for elites shows no relationship to their perceptions of the need for connections to obtain government rewards. In contrast, the propensity to signal support among members of the monopsonized communities—Sunnis in Lebanon and

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Zaydi Shiites in Yemen—responds strongly to material and patronage considerations, consistent with the argument that members are compelled to find additional ways to demonstrate their support in order to increase the value of their otherwise scanty rewards. This, in turn, suggests that decisions to signal in competitive communities are largely expressive, but under monopsony serve much more overtly instrumental, rent-seeking purposes.

Inducing intra-ethnic competition between elites for their coethnics' votes does not, by itself, necessarily break up ethnic coalitions, nor prevent patronage from flowing along ethnic lines. One of the often-repeated criticisms of Lebanon's sectarian system, in fact, is that it *perpetuates* the relevance of sectarian social categories in politics. Rather, in the absence of credible non-ethnic competition, it reduces the impact of the ethnic subsidy that flows from mass constituents to coethnic elites on the distribution of scarce resources. In particular, it prevents elites from capturing the ethnic subsidy and concentrating resources at the elite level by forcing them to return a larger share of it to their mass constituents than would be necessary under monopsony by distributing better rewards in order to remain competitive against rival elites.

Although I have drawn these inferences from original survey data comprising thousands of individuals as data points, in some respects the critical explanatory variables are institutional. Consequently, with two systems under study, these conclusions are subject to many of the familiar inferential challenges facing small-N comparative research.[64] Lebanon and Yemen of course differ on other dimensions besides their formal institutions. Although some of the most important potential confounders have been addressed in case selection for comparative study, the degrees of freedom are

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[64]Were we to consider countries as the units of analysis, $N = 2$, and were we to consider ethnic communities within countries as the units of analysis, $N = 6$. Either way, whatever inferences we hope to draw are subject to the challenges of small-N research.

inevitably fewer in number than the remaining differences between the two countries. Although in principle it is possible that some other, unexamined difference between Lebanon and Yemen accounts for the outcomes we observe, plausible rival hypotheses are not immediately obvious. In explaining between-community differences in perceptions of the importance of connections in obtaining government jobs, the quota system that operates in Lebanon but not in Yemen is certainly the most relevant institutional characteristic, and plausible alternative explanations for the convergence of perceptions in Lebanon and their divergence in Yemen do not immediately present themselves. Further, electoral system differences that induce intra-ethnic elite competition in Lebanon but not in Yemen provide the most parsimonious and plausible explanation for where monopsonistic vote-buyers are likely to emerge. Alternative explanations that can account for the emergence of monopsonists in the two particular communities we observe are not readily apparent.

Overall, then, the arguments and evidence presented in this essay suggest that formal government institutions may serve as key intervening factors in societies characterized by highly salient ethnic cleavages. Institutions can magnify or disrupt the effect of ethnic divisions on development outcomes according to their capacities to channel those ethnic divisions into or away from politics and the political allocation of scarce resources. In general, the evidence presented above suggests that institutions designed to place constraints on elite discretionary powers can place important limits on the degree to which elites can channel government resources into patronage rewards to supporters by limiting the extent to which they can privilege coethnics at the expense of non-coethnics. Further, institutions designed to stimulate intra-ethnic competition among elites for their coethnics' votes can have important ramifications for the degree to which elites can capture scarce resources as opposed to circulate them among the mass constituents whom they purportedly represent. Although a perfectly competitive vote market is of course the gold standard—certainly as far

as mass constituents are concerned—approximations to perfect vote markets do not exist in many societies, notably those within which the prominence of ethnic social categories provides captive audiences and ethnic subsidies to elites. Under these conditions, oligopsonistic competition between elites over their coethnics' support is preferable to monopsonistic vote-buying.

What are the implications of these findings beyond Lebanon and Yemen? First, people respond to incentives, and we should not expect this to change simply when ethnicity and ethnic cleavages are salient. Coordinating on ethnic coalitions for political activity, rather than an irrational or otherwise unexplainable act, is in fact a rational solution to a difficult coordination problem. If we find these outcomes undesirable for developmental or normative reasons and wish to change them, we must do so by changing people's choice sets. As suggested here, we may use government institutions to change people's incentive structures by changing the feasible options they have.

Second, in terms of the developmental outcomes themselves, there are, in fact, qualitatively different processes at work when cleavages and coalitions are based on ethnicity rather than on other forms of social categories we might otherwise consider voluntary in membership. Structurally, ethnic coalitions privilege redistribution, rent-seeking, and other unproductive activities which dissipate scarce resources that could otherwise be put to productive use in the development process. Ethnic coalitions run largely on patronage, but particularly problematic is the fact that clients, because they are captive audiences, have very little leverage over patrons. Again, we may hope to change these undesirable outcomes by changing incentives. In particular, inducing development may largely be a matter of inducing competition, at least to the degree feasible. Societies within which ethnic cleavages are salient cannot be expected to recoordinate in the short term around non-ethnic coalitions simply with a change in institutions. Yet if competition between non-ethnic coalitions is not feasible, a second-

best solution is to make ethnic constituencies competitive *internally* to break vote monopsonies. Full competition may be the ideal, but barring that, some competition is far better than none.

To expand on the initial findings from this research, the next plausible step is to investigate the impact of additional institutional constraints and rules that can provide alternate mechanisms to channel ethnic divisions. Corruption, for example, is endemic in both Lebanon and Yemen, which both dissipates these states' scarce government resources on non-productive activities as well as largely withdraws them from circulation. Further, elite discretion over the dispensation of government licenses and permits, as well as *exemptions* from the rule of law, provide additional means by which elites can reward supporters whether or not they are coethnics. Future research can study the effect of constraints such as independent judiciaries, autonomous oversight and auditing bodies, civil service exams, and privately-operated free media. Yet, to the degree that we wish to maintain focus specifically on *ethnic* divisions as qualitatively different from other forms of social divisions, the institutions that we must study are those that influence social coordination on ethnic and non-ethnic social categories and privilege the formation of ethnic coalitions for political contestation.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

What can we conclude from the three essays collected in this dissertation? Chapter 5 reviews the concepts and findings from the essays and attempts to connect them to each other as well as to the larger agenda of diversity and development as described in the introductory chapter. In doing so, I highlight two broad themes. First, I discuss the importance of the descent principle to ethnic constituencies and its ramifications for coalition interests and dynamics. Second, I highlight the importance of government institutions, both as means to channel ethnic politics, as well as loci of political contestation when ethnic cleavages are salient to politics. Finally, I conclude with a short preview of future research topics on institutions when ethnicity is a salient social cleavage—their origins and the incentives they generate—with implications for the use and misuse of scarce resources in diverse societies.

5.1 Findings in the Essays

Section 5.1 provides a brief review of the essays presented in this dissertation. Each of the three selections takes up different but overlapping aspects of ethnic politics. Thematically, these include considerations of underlying motivations for what we observe to be "ethnic" choices and attitudes, preferences over some of the institutions that impact the distribution of political power and scarce resources between ethnic communities, and the influence of institutions on ethnic coordination and the competitive environments that obtain within ethnic communities. Here, I review each

essay in terms of thematic focus, the underlying propositions developed within them, and their central empirical findings. Subsequently, in Section 5.2, I will synthesize these findings and tie them to the narrative emerging from them.

Chapter 2: Democratic Talk and the Democratic Walk

Themes. Thematically, Chapter 2 addresses both methodological and substantive issues of import. As its methodological point of reference, it takes up the issue of the practical difficulties of studying sensitive topics such as ethnic politics when relying on self-reported attitudes and behaviors. Sensitivity provides incentives for people to misrepresent themselves in a systematic and unmeasurable fashion, and this response bias leads to huge inferential problems. Substantively, Chapter 2 addresses attitudes toward voting rights when ethnicity is a salient cleavage, that is, attitudes toward institutions when the institutions themselves have important ramifications for the distribution of political influence and scarce resources between ethnic communities. When ethnicity provides the classificatory scheme for political coalitions, it implies that such coalitions are internally heterogeneous over a range of policy dimensions, which in turn means that ethnic group interests and personal interests will likely diverge in predictable ways. Within the essay, I use the methodological innovations I develop with an augmented list experiment to provide one way to enable people to stop "toeing the ethnic line" and voice their non-public preferences.

Propositions. When ethnicity is salient and ascriptive descent is the underlying membership principle, the constituencies that ethnicity defines are likely to be very internally heterogeneous over a range of policy dimensions. When using ethnicity as the basis for political coalitions, members have coordinated on a set of salient issues and deemphasized another set over which they may have differing preferences. Because of this, and because much of ethnic politics is sensitive for normative reasons, empirical studies based on self-reported attitudes is a challenge due to systematic

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and unmeasurable misrepresentation on the part of respondents. These difficulties can be overcome, or at least mitigated, by utilizing unobtrusive and low-impact data measurement and analysis techniques that seek to neutralize respondents' incentives to misreport their attitudes and behavior.

Empirics.   Empirically, Chapter 2 examines Lebanese attitudes toward voting rights for illiterate individuals. This is clearly a sensitive topic, not only normatively, but also because of the sectarian and distributional ramifications of the question, with Shiites the poorest, least educated, and most underrepresented community in the country. Despite their comparative disadvantages in the aggregate, however, the Shia community is internally heterogeneous, as are the other communities: all have sizable poor constituencies and middle classes, and for many people, the interests of the sect writ large can be inconsistent with their own material interests. Given the sensitivity of the question, I employ the newly augmented list experiment to attempt to nullify individuals' incentives to misrepresent themselves. The results are as follows. When respondents are asked directly whether or not illiterate people should have the right to vote, they give sectarian answers. Community membership alone has a systematic effect on answers—Shiites are more supportive than others—whereas material conditions have no influence on attitudes. Yet when the same question is asked indirectly via the list experiment, the polar opposite occurs. Community membership has no influence on attitudes, whereas material conditions have a strong effect—poorer, more neglected respondents are systematically more likely to support voting rights for illiterates, who presumably share many of their material deprivations.

Chapter 3: What Divides Unites

Themes.   Thematically, Chapter 3 addresses the intersection of ethnic politics and religious politics, which is particularly salient for Middle Eastern societies where sectarian competition and conflict are prominent. This essay takes as its point of depar-

ture the "Islam and democracy" question, asking how religion, rather than specifically Islam, influences attitudes toward different government institutions. This question is best addressed in multireligious research venues, but this requires us to separate out some of the multiple, possibly conflicting influences of religion: as a raw marker of community membership (sectarianism), and as a set of behavioral prescriptions and ideals that may be shared across particular doctrines (religiosity). The underlying substantive theme is preferences over institutions when ethnicity (here, sect) provides the classificatory scheme for key social categories and political coalitions, as well as the use of religion to define and imagine more inclusive conceptions of community beyond the sect.

Propositions. Preferences over institutions follow from how particular institutional configurations will favor or disfavor particular ethnic communities, yet these preferences are also subject to how individuals conceive of the relevant community. Religion influences attitudes toward different institutional configurations in multiple ways, both as a nominal marker of group boundaries and membership (sectarianism) and as a set of behavioral prescriptions and ideals that are potentially shared among members of different religious communities (religiosity). As the basis for a social classificatory scheme, religion as the nominal marker of sect is a dividing factor. Yet the classificatory scheme is more flexible than it might first appear, and people may use the logic and language of the scheme to both widen and contract the relevant polity by invoking shared religious ideals to imagine a community beyond the sect. In this respect, that which divides, religion, also unites.

Empirics. Empirically, Chapter 3 examines Lebanese preferences over a set of *autocratic* institutional configurations, over which there is significant variation, as opposed to a preference for democracy, over which variation is all but nonexistent. Given the plausible sensitivity of the topics of religiosity and politicization, I turn to unobtru-

sive measures—displays of religious icons and political symbols about the home—to provide the empirical indicators. The results show that, at base, Shiites, the largest single community and Lebanon as well as the most underrepresented, are least supportive of autocracy, but that a radicalized subset of Shiites are considerably more open to autocratic options, as they are blocked from making root changes to the Lebanese system by democratic means. More interesting, however, is the effect of religiosity, which moderates sectarian attitudes among *all* communities by invoking shared religious ideals and a wider community beyond the sect. Religious, politically active individuals may be mobilized into Lebanon's sectarian framework, but are willing to accept pluralism by opposing autocracy and, conversely, incorporating members of other communities into the larger polity via democracy.

Chapter 4: Why Sunni Votes are Cheap in Lebanon but Dear in Yemen

Themes. Thematically, Chapter 4 addresses the curious combination of empirical regularities that resources tend to flow along ethnic lines in diverse societies, but that constituents appear to get so little out of their political support for their leaders— ethnic favoritism seems to coexist with ethnic neglect. This essay examines how information constraints privilege the use of ethnic heuristics for the purposes of coordination on political coalitions, as well as the ramifications of basing coalitions on ethnicity. In addition to defining patronage-friendly rewards-for-support bargains, ethnic coordination defines coalitions in which constituents are captive audiences, with important implications for the distribution of resources and rewards *within* communities, depending on the degree of competition to which elites are subjected. Competition, in turn, is influenced by government institutions and the incentives they define.

Propositions. When ethnicity provides the underlying basis for political coalitions, several important implications follow. Structurally, membership in ethnic categories is easy to infer, and because such categories are relatively fixed in the short run due to

the ascriptive descent principle, coalition membership is not subject to opportunistic joining and leaving. This enables elites to target resources and rewards as patronage to supporters without dissipating them on non-supporters. Yet because ethnicity defines coalitions for which entry and exit are difficult and costly, constituents effectively comprise captive audiences to their elites in a situation of imperfect competition. Yet the degree of that competition is, in turn, quite important: whether elites must compete against each other for their coethnics' votes (ethnic oligopsony), or else there is a single, monopsonistic vote-buyer, requiring *constituents* to compete for patronage. Institutional incentives and constraints can stimulate competition, or protect ethnic vote markets, as explored via the different institutional environments in Lebanon and Yemen.

Empirics. Empirically, Chapter 4 examines Lebanese and Yemeni perceptions of the importance of patronage links—proxied by the perceived importance of connections to obtain a government job—and the behavior that results from these perceptions. The results show that, first, patronage perceptions converge to no difference between communities in Lebanon, but diverge in favor the Shia community in Yemen. This result follows from the explicit quota system for government positions used in Lebanon that prevents elites from rewarding cosectarians at the expense of other communities, but not in place in Yemen where the Shia-dominated ruling party is under no such constraint. Secondly, the results show that constituents in monopsonized communities display overt signals of support for political leaders—proxied by display of political posters and flags—for instrumental reasons in pursuit of patronage, whereas no such dynamic is evident among members of other communities. This is consistent with the proposition that monopsonized constituents must compete against one another for patronage, and consequently seek to outdo each other in indicating their political support for patrons.

5.2 Integrating the Essays

What are some of the unifying themes that run through the three essays presented in this dissertation? In this section, I attempt to integrate the findings from these essays in the context of a broader research agenda on development in diverse societies. I do so by focusing here on two broad component themes addressed by the essays: first, the characteristics of ethnic political coalitions that make them qualitatively different from coalitions formed on the basis of other social categories, and second, the centrality of government institutions to ethnic political dynamics, both as loci of political contestation and as filters that channel ethnicity into or away from politics and the political allocation of scarce resources. The findings presented in these essays, in turn, serve as building blocks for future research on the empirical puzzles and questions that initially inspired this dissertation: does ethnic diversity cause underdevelopment, and if so, how? These findings, as I will suggest here, provide key component parts to a more integrated answer on both *how* and *under what conditions* ethnicity impacts development.

Throughout the essays, I examine political constituencies and coalitions that are based specifically on ethnicity. In order to understand how ethnicity influences development outcomes, we must first understand how ethnic constituencies and coalitions differ qualitatively from their non-ethnic peers, if they do so at all. Without an adequate comprehension of this distinction, we do not know if "ethnic political dynamics" are simply political dynamics with an adjective appended to the front—e.g., whether or not ethnic diversity is just another interchangeable form of "social diversity" or "preference heterogeneity"—and consequently it is difficult to justify a separate, specialized study of ethnicity, at least as it pertains to development. One recurring argument throughout the essays is that ethnic constituencies *are*, in fact, qualitatively different from their non-ethnic peers. This difference follows from the use of ascriptive descent as the core membership principle upon which ethnic social

categories are based, and the implications that follow from this principle in terms of constituency characteristics, structure, and interests.

For scholars of ethnic politics, ascriptive descent has, by now, become the widely-accepted core membership principle upon which ethnicity is based. The principle of descent provides the conceptual underpinning that unites ethnicity's particular instantiations from society to society—such as social divisions based on race, sect, language, or region—and makes it reasonable to discuss social categories that otherwise differ in their specifics. Hence, for example, the essays presented in this dissertation utilize Lebanon and Yemen as their primary research venues, within which sects, tribes, and regions are all politically salient to greater or lesser degrees. The descent principle provides a means through which it becomes comprehensible to conceive of these collectivities as structurally similar to one another—as particular instances of ethnic social categories—enabling us to make comparisons and discuss them using a common vocabulary.

Descent defines constituencies with considerable within-community heterogeneity in preferences and ideal points. For ethnic constituencies and coalitions, utilizing descent as the key membership principle means that membership is granted to individuals without regard to socioeconomic, demographic, and ideological features.[1] Yet these are some of the characteristics that we commonly believe influence people's broad policy preferences, which suggests that there is a much greater variance in the distribution of ideal points within an ethnic community as compared, for example, to a constituency such as a labor union or a chamber of commerce. This implies, first,

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[1]Note that this is not to suggest that there are not differences between communities writ large—the average level of education or income may be higher in one community than another, for example—but merely that membership is conditional only on the appropriate descent marker and is not conditional on these other characteristics. Except in cases with a stark ethnic ranking system—such as extremely rigid caste systems—there is likely to be significant between-community overlap in the distribution of preferences found within each community. As societies more closely approximate unranked ethnic systems, variation in policy preferences *within* communities can become significantly wider than variation in preferences *between* communities.

that ethnic coalitions must deemphasize issue dimensions over which their members hold widely varying opinions and focus instead on interests from which most members can hope to benefit: patronage and group-targeted redistribution. Yet it also implies that individual interests and group interests may diverge on many issue dimensions, and possibly quite widely.

Community membership is not a deterministic trump in attitude and preference formation, as Chapter 2 implies. In investigating attitudes toward the extension of the franchise to illiterate people in Lebanon, this essay provides evidence that, in the form of openly-stated discourse, attitudes vary for sectarian reasons. Yet, as suggested, there is considerable heterogeneity within sectarian communities. Although Lebanon is a ranked ethnic system, the rankings are not nearly as stark now as they once were, and there is considerable overlap between sectarian communities in material conditions: there are significant numbers of rich and middle class individuals in each sect, as well as sizable quantities of poor people. Given this reality, "toeing the ethnic line" in public can belie individual preferences, be they material interests or otherwise, that are held in private. Whereas Lebanese respondents give sectarian answers to direct, open questions, Chapter 2 also provides evidence that, underneath the veneer of open sectarian discourse, there also lie strong material interests that cross sectarian communities and influence attitudes and responses strongly—once respondents are provided with a means of expressing themselves freed of their discursive obligations in the sectarian system. Sectarian coalitions, in other words, are imperfect substitutes for many Lebanese. Although sectarian coordination is better than no coordination at all, many Lebanese might individually prefer coordination over coalitions stressing different policy dimensions—such as the traditional left-right or rich-poor axes—were such coalition options available or credible.

Studies of the political economy of ethnic competition commonly focus on the distributive implications of that competition, examining the "who gets what" and

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"how much" questions of day-to-day politics. The most immediately obvious point of interest is the distribution of resources *between* communities, and this is in fact what most studies examine. Yet the understandable focus on between-community disparities, or the lack thereof, ignores a complementary point of interest: the distribution of resources *within* communities. Ethnic coalitions are particularly well-suited for patronage relationships. Supporters are easy to target for rewards because ethnic memberships are easily inferable, and ethnicity's low boundary permeability mitigates against the opportunistic joining and leaving of political coalitions—helping to overcome the time-inconsistency problems of sequential rewards-for-support bargains. Yet the descent principle, by closing off entry and exit options, has important ramifications for intraethnic political dynamics. In particular, it transforms constituents into captive audiences for their coethnic elites, in effect providing subsidized political support for leaders. Distributionally, this implies that resources concentrate at the elite level to a greater degree than would be the case were membership in political coalitions not based on ethnicity's descent principle: elites need not reward constituents as lucratively because they have nowhere else to go.

As Chapter 4 suggests, institutions can have an important impact on the distribution of resources by influencing how much discretion elites have to reward their supporters with state resources, and by stimulating or retarding elite competition for constituent support within communities. The essay first focuses on the explicit quota system used in Lebanon but not in Yemen, showing that an ethnic quota on government employment slots constrains elites from rewarding supporters at the expense of other communities. Institutional constraints, in other words, can modify incentives and prevent (or enable) disparities *between* communities in access to state resources. Secondly, and more importantly, the essay suggests that tangible differences exist in patron-client relationships between communities within which there is credible elite competition for votes (oligopsonies), and those within which there is only a single

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credible vote-buyer (monopsonies). In the former, elites must compete for their co-ethnics' votes and consequently must offer them competitive rewards, whereas in the latter, constituents must compete for patronage. As suggested, Lebanon's consociational institutions stimulate elite competition within communities, whereas Yemen's plurality institutions provide no special incentive. Whatever the other merits or demerits of the two institutional configurations, on this dimension the stimulus to intraethnic competition makes the distribution of resources within communities more egalitarian.

Ethnic coalitions, based as they are on the logic of descent, are fixed in their short-run membership compositions. This property has implications not only for the "who gets what" and "how much" questions of day-to-day politics, but also for the more far-reaching, existential questions of the nature of the polity and the way it governs itself. Put another way, ethnicity impacts not only the distribution of resources between and within communities, but also which communities are relevant and which institutions can or should be employed to govern them. In particular, when ethnic coalitions compete in politics, the goal of winning over members of a rival coalition to one's own coalition is largely non-credible and non-achievable. Switching coalitions is incongruent with the logic of descent categories, and conceptually, there are no real analogues to swing voters, and practically, there are likely to be very few. This implication is consistent with the often-stated observations that, in societies where ethnic cleavages are highly salient, elections act as censuses and censuses as elections: political blocs do not change significantly unless demographic balances do so.[2] Political contestation, in other words, is not about winning over new members,

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[2]This is also consistent with the severity of the sensitivity of official censuses in diverse societies, where for political reasons questions on race, tribe, religion, and language are often not included, or official censuses are simply not conducted at all. Yemen is an example of the former, with no questions about tribal or sectarian affiliations, and Lebanon is an example of the latter, with the last official census conducted in 1932 in the pre-independence era.

but rather about the constituent make-up of the contests themselves: over community borders and over the institutions that translate demography into political power and access to resources.

Ascriptive descent appears, at first glance, to provide a very rigid classificatory system with which to divide a population into social categories: membership is theoretically deterministic and not the product of choice. Yet the descent principle can be surprisingly flexible within its own framework, and permits a great deal of political contestation over the borders between and meanings of social categories, both in terms of those that are salient already and those that activists might hope to make salient. Simply utilizing descent as the classificatory principle does not presuppose which particular descent-based categories are relevant to politics, either in terms of their levels of aggregation (what proportion of the population belongs to them) or in terms of their inclusiveness or exclusiveness. Rather than striving to convert members of rival coalitions to one's own coalition—e.g., Democrats seeking to win over Republicans, and vice-versa—political contestation takes an alternate dynamic of defining and redefining the relevant social categories, as well as debating and interpreting the membership principles by which they are composed. Put another way, it is the politics of moving borders given people rather than moving people given borders.

These dynamics are evident, for example, in Chapter 3. Religion provides the nominal marker that divides the Lebanese into sectarian communities. Yet it does not immediately follow that this is the only social category of relevance in Lebanon, as evident by the undercurrents of regionalism as well as family and village loyalties to which Lebanese are subject. More importantly, however, the Lebanese are able to invoke shared religious ideals to overcome sectarian divisions and imagine communities beyond the sect: religion, that which divides the Lebanese, also unites them. Christians and Muslims do not convince each other to convert to different doctrinal traditions—people do not move across borders—but rather attempt to expand the

borders of the relevant communities themselves. Likewise, in evidence not presented systematically in this dissertation, a similar discursive maneuver occurs in Yemen. Religious leaders frequently cite the common principles in the country's different Islamic denominations to deemphasize sectarian divisions, and tribal leaders commonly use a tribal register to classify people more or less exclusively by simply moving up or down the ladder of the segmentary system to larger or smaller aggregations. As in Lebanon, it is the politics of moving borders rather than moving people: individuals do not change their sectarian or tribal affiliations, but the borders that divide sects and tribes expand and contract.

Which ethnic communities are relevant, and how they are composed, can often take on the discursive features of an existential question. Another set of questions with far-reaching ramifications focus on government institutions and, more broadly, how the polity governs itself. A running theme throughout this dissertation is the importance of institutions as a means to channel ethnicity through the political system, and both politicians and their constituents are at least broadly aware that different institutions can impact their own interests and welfare in favorable or unfavorable ways, even if they are unsure about the details of how they would do so. Simply put, descent-based ethnic coalitions do not change in the short run, and unless a real change in the relevant communities along the lines discussed above becomes possible, the only other way to effect political change is to change the institutions themselves. Institutions and constitutions, in other words, are themselves on the table far more frequently and seriously in societies where ethnicity is highly salient than in societies where it is less so. Hence, rather than contesting policy given institutions, the loci of political contestation are frequently the institutions themselves. Again, given the importance of institutions as means to channel ethnicity, the frequency, intensity, and outcomes of these contests can have large subsequent ramifications for development in terms of political instability, uncertainty, and use of resources.

Some of the ramifications of particular institutional configurations can be seen in Chapter 4, in which institutions constraint (or fail to constrain) elite discretion in the use of state resources to reward supporters, and stimulate (or fail to stimulate) competition among elites for political support within their own ethnic communities. Chapters 2 and 3, meanwhile, provide evidence of the salience of institutions as points of political contestation. Chapter 2 examines voting rights when who gets to vote has implications for the balance of political power between ethnic communities and the distribution of resources among them. Chapter 3 examines preferences over different autocratic institutional configurations, with attitudes broadly predictable given individuals' ethnic (sectarian) affiliations. These are particular instances of debate over institutional choice, and fit into a larger pattern evident in both Lebanon and Yemen, where institutions perennially occupy a central position in political discourse and contestation. Constitutional changes are frequent, electoral laws change, sometimes dramatically, practically from election to election, whether and how to use quotas to represent communities continues to be debated, and even the constituent nature of the political system—consociational or majoritarian, plurality or proportional representation, presidential or parliamentary—have been recurring items on the national political agenda in both countries since independence.

5.3 Conclusion

The study of ethnic competition, and the political economy of diversity and development, must be a study of politics: ethnicity is not an economic variable, but is explicitly a political one. To understand development in diverse societies, we must understand how and why ethnic political coalitions emerge, and how ethnicity influences how societies utilize their scarce resources. As I have suggested above, utilizing ascriptive descent as their core membership principle, and the ramifications of descent, make ethnic coalitions qualitatively different from their non-ethnic competi-

tors. Ethnic coalitions are structurally predisposed to favor non-productive uses of scarce resources via patronage, redistribution, and rent-seeking. Further, they are predisposed to concentrate resources at the elite level and hindering their circulation within the polity. Institutions, meanwhile, can mediate the influence of ethnic competition by channeling ethnicity into or away from politics and the political allocation of scarce resources. Institutions can either constrain or grant discretionary powers to elites over the use and distribution of scarce resources, and can stimulate or hinder the need to compete for constituent support. Given their importance when political competition occurs between relatively unchanging coalitions, however, it is unsurprising that institutions themselves are loci of political contestation when ethnic cleavages are salient.

Future research on diversity and development must focus, at least in part, on institutions: who chooses them, the constraints under which such choices are made, the incentives they generate, and how well they function once chosen. Research, in other words, must focus not only on ethnic politics given institutions, but the origins of those institutions as well. Further, it must incorporate an understanding not only of how elites shape institutional outcomes, but also mass constituent preferences over these outcomes, and the conditions under which constituent preferences constrain the choices that their elites may take. Further, future research must consider institutions beyond electoral systems. We commonly, and with considerable justification, focus on the influence of electoral laws and rules on which coalitions win elections. Yet we must also consider how institutions may constrain elites once in power, which requires additional research on oversight and judicial institutions, as well as the rules and regulations that enable or retard the development of autonomous civil society organizations equipped to challenge leaders and politicians rather than simply acquiesce to them. How diverse societies utilize their scarce resources—investing them in development or dissipating them non-productively—depends on politics and political

incentives. Institutions may help build the rule of law and good government, but we must understand how and under what conditions they do so. Understanding institutions and institutional choice, in turn, can help us understand how some diverse societies emerge as success stories and others stagnate—whether the outcomes we observe are diversity and development or fragmentation and failure.

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