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THE ROLE OF TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES  
IN FOSTERING DEVELOPMENT IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

The Case of Lebanon

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## **A. HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL FRAMEWORK**

Diasporas in modern Lebanon started to be structured and play different roles in the socio-economic development of Lebanon since the end of the nineteenth century. Emigration from Lebanon and the role of Lebanese returnees in Lebanon, were tightly related to the economic, political and cultural expansion of Western (mainly European) countries and their penetration in the Arab World in general and Lebanon in particular. We start this paper presenting very briefly the main historical and geographical patterns of contemporary Lebanese emigration.

A limited, migration, existed since the seventeenth century and before: Lebanese, migrating to Egypt for commercial purposes, and to Italy for studying.

In Lebanon and since the beginning of the second part of the nineteenth century, an important movement of emigration started, to Egypt, the U.S.A, to a lesser extent to Latin America, and on a very limited level to Australia and Sub-Saharan West Africa. <sup>(1)</sup>

Between the first and the second world wars (1918-1945) emigration from Lebanon changed in some aspects : On the one hand, Lebanese emigration to Egypt, the USA and Latin America, declined because of the world economic recession. On the other hand, emigration from Lebanon to South Saharian Africa developed, the sending and receiving country being generally under the same colonial rule : France. <sup>(2)</sup>

Between the end of second world war (1945) and the “oil boom” (1973), the patterns of emigration changed radically and was mainly an emigration to Arab oil producing countries. On the other hand, Lebanese emigration to South Saharian Africa persisted in spite of growing difficulties for the emigrants since the sixties. Emigration to USA, Canada and Australia remained on a limited level. From the first “oil boom” (1973), to the beginning of the second gulf war (1990), Lebanese migration started to be reoriented from a regional framework towards a global framework. Lebanese migration still developed to the Arab oil producing countries until the mid 1980 ies. But it was since 1975, gradually reoriented towards Western Europe, and specially the USA, Canada and Australia <sup>(3)</sup>

Since 1991, the globalization of the Lebanese migration developed in unprecedented way. It accelerated, and was mainly directed to Western and Eastern Europe, the Americas, Australia and on a limited base to Arab oil exporting countries. <sup>(4)</sup>

## **B. LEBANESE DIASPORAS AT HOME: THEIR ROLES**

These diversified flows of Lebanese emigrants at different periods and to different destinations resulted in the formation of a diaspora from Lebanese origin in the countries of destination. These diasporas are organized in several forms : on national Lebanese level, by region or village or town, by religious or family affiliations in Lebanon, by economic or professional activity in the country of destination (University graduates, medical doctors, chambers of commerce, engineers, etc...).

Part of these emigrants returned to Lebanon : generally most of the emigrants to the Arab oil exporting countries and to Sub-Saharan Africa. An other part remained in the countries of destination and were integrated or semi integrated there : generally an important percentage of the Lebanese migrants to industrialized countries (Europe, USA, Canada, Australia) and to Latin America.

The two categories of Lebanese diasporic groups have several roles in the socio-economic development of Lebanon.

In this text we try to describe and analyse the role of diasporas in the economic social and political development of Lebanon, the contribution of these diasporas to the social aspects of development of Lebanon, and the transfer of knowledge to Lebanon through Lebanese expatriates.

## 1. The Lebanese diasporas and the development of Lebanon

The main contribution of Lebanese diasporas to the economic development of Lebanon is through sending funds to be used in Lebanon.

### *a- The remittances from Lebanese Diaspora*

Lebanese Migrants in general and especially those who work in Arab oil exporting countries and Subsaharian Africa, send generally a part of their incomes to Lebanon. The remittances are of crucial importance in some periods. This was the case during the last fifty years and specially from 1973 to 1990, because of the “oil boom”, and the “wars for the others” on Lebanese territory (1975-1990).

These remittances had a limited role (5% to 7% on national income) in the fifties, and their role declined during the sixties (3,5% to 4,5% of national income). These two decades were on the one hand a period of prosperity for Lebanon, and Lebanon was receiving migrants mainly from arab origin (Palestine, Egypt, Syria,...). On the other hand the Arab oil exporting countries during the fifties and the sixties have sizable incomes from oil, but incomparable with their incomes in the seventies and the eighties. So the remittances were limited.

During the seventies and the eighties, the income of arab oil producing countries grew sharply, on the one hand, and the internal economy of Lebanon declined dramatically because of the “Wars for the others” on Lebanese territory. So Lebanese migrated massively and mainly to oil exporting countries and the remittances they sent had a crucial role for the Lebanese economy and society reaching 40% of the national income in the early eighties. This role declined later with the decline of the economy of receiving countries, but remittances were equal to 10 to 15% of GDP, between 1990 and 2004(see table 9 in Annex).

### *b- The use of remittances to support families and relatives in Lebanon*

Series of field investigations were undertaken in Lebanon to study this type of use of remittances.

This use, even difficult to be detected through statistical evidence, is detectable for the period studied by comparing the numbers of working emigrants to the total number of emigrants. This support is obvious in the case of emigrants to the Arab oil producing countries, where it is a work emigration mainly, with an important part of the family remaining in Lebanon in spite of the later trends towards family emigration. The same could be said concerning emigrants to West Africa.

Even emigrants to Western Europe, the Americas and Australia sending limited amount of hard currency to their families and relatives in Lebanon, had a non negligible role in the financial support of their families and relatives because of the higher exchange rates of foreign “hard currencies” in Lebanon since 1984 / 5. Field studies covering villages and towns in various parts of Lebanon show us the prominent role of remittances for families and relatives in towns like : Zahleh, (Bekaa); Saïda, Ansar, Kfar Rummane and Arab Salim (South Lebanon); Shartun, Kaakur and Beit Shabab (Mount Lebanon); Kfar Zeina, Karm El Mohr and Kahf al Malul (North Lebanon).<sup>(5)</sup>

A field study conducted in Saïda in 1981, shows the following distribution of the amount of remittances sent to the sample studied:

**Table1: Total amount of remittances received by 100 households having emigrants abroad, in Saïda 1981**

Amount of remittances	Nihil	Less than 25000 L.L.	25000 L.L. to 50000 L.L.	50000 L.L. to 75000 L.L.	75000 L.L. to 100000 L.L.	More than 100000 L.L.	Total
Number households	23	14	12	13	13	25	100
% of the total number of households	23%	14%	12%	13%	13%	25%	100%

**Source:** Michel El Hachem – op. cit. (in endnote 3) – p. 77

**Remark:** 1 L.L. = 23.2 US cents in 1981.

Given the fact that the average duration of migration of the group studied was 11 years, three quarters of the emigrants were sending less than 10.000 L.L. yearly. (2320 U.S. \$ at the average exchange of 1981). Such small amounts could hardly be used for investments, and were mainly financing family and relatives. This was boosting consumption, inflation, imports, and the deficit of foreign trade :

- Consumption was boosted because these amounts were not important enough for investment.
- Inflation was boosted because these amounts were increasing the supply of money in an economy with low productive capacities as a result of the war situation and the emigration of a part of the work force.
- Imports and trade deficit were boosted because of the growing demand resulting from the remittances, and the limited capacity of the local economy in meeting this demand.

The analysis of the distribution of remittances by size of amount, shows us that this distribution have the form of an inversed Gauss curve. The four middle categories of amounts (25000 L.L. to 100000 L.L.) put altogether, represent less than half of the sample. Meanwhile the two extreme categories of amounts (Nihil and more than 100000 L.L.) represented more than half of the sample. This could provide an indication on the role of remittances for the improvement of the social distribution of income.<sup>(6)</sup>

*c- The acquisition of real estate*

In Lebanon, this type of use, even existing before 1973, became one of the main component of the demand on the real estate market since 1977. Its role is clearly detectable by the increase of operations on the real estate market during the summer which is the traditional period of return of emigrants for holidays in Lebanon.<sup>(7)</sup> This acquisition of real estate covering land and buildings, was particularly noted in the Greater Beirut area.

Several Lebanese companies active in the Arab oil producing countries, East and West Africa, in the fields of trade and contracting have made important investments in real estate in Lebanon since 1975. Among these companies the following could be mentioned: Hariri group, Al Mabani group, Wedge group, Zaklem group, Lahoud Engineering.<sup>(8)</sup>, and firms mentioned in table 11 in Annex.

*d- Investing in firms of various sizes in different sectors of the economy*

In Lebanon the majority of this type of investment is in small firms, allowing an upward social mobility of the emigrant from the status of wage earner to the higher status of independent worker or small

entrepreneur. This case is frequent in the construction, transport, retail trade, and various services activities.<sup>(9)</sup>

Medium size firms are mainly established by white collars emigrants, small and medium entrepreneurs coming from Arab oil producing countries and West Africa. A field survey conducted in 1982 with emigrants from the town of Beit Shebab returning from Guinea shows that among two thirds of these emigrants established firms:

- 45% established medium size firms in the field of trade (textiles, supermarkets)
- 30% established medium size manufacturing firms
- 10% established firms in the service sector.<sup>(10)</sup>

Large size firms were also established in various sectors and they are generally better known :

Investments in agriculture and stock farming are frequent on the Southern coast, Central Bekaa and Akkar areas of rich and irrigated agriculture. These investments are gradually gaining the inner parts of South Lebanon, where they are changing gradually the environment characterized by traditional dry farming. These agricultural projects are carried out mainly by emigrants from West Africa who are numerous<sup>(11)</sup> among Southern Lebanese emigrants.

In the construction, public works and engineering sectors, several groups of Lebanese contractors from the diaspora, invested capital, mainly generated in Arab oil countries and Africa, in similar activities in Lebanon. (We mention in tables 10 and 11 in annex some of the groups).

80% of these contractors worked in the Arab oil exporting countries. Most of them invested in the construction and public works industry in Lebanon especially during the nineties, in the framework of the reconstruction process that started after 1990.

In the banking and financial sector, the identified investments of emigrants capital are also sizable. Lebanese emigrants invested capital is evident in forty two over 86 acting banks in Lebanon. (Table 12 and 13 in annex gives the data collected concerning these investments).

The 49 identified participations of Lebanese emigrants (in table 12) come mainly from Arab Gulf (20 participations) and South Saharian Africa (18 participations), followed by participations from Latin America (8), and very few participation from Asia (2) and Canada (1). This break down shows us here also, that emigrants to Arab Oil exporting countries and South-saharian Africa, are the most active among the Lebanese returnees in the banking sector of Lebanon.

Finally manufacturing industry have been also an important field for the investment of emigrants capital. An academic research, identified 35 manufacturing companies established by Lebanese emigrants in their home country from 1943 to 1975. (The detailed information available on these companies is presented in tables 14 to 19 in annex, showing the names of the companies, the investors and their country of emigration in addition to the year of establishment of the company and the type of out put produced).

Anyway the 37 participants identified in the manufacturing industry until 1975 around 50% came from Latin America (18), more then 20% came from Egypt, and the same percentage from South Saharian Africa, few participants came from the USA (2) and Europe (1).

In this period, before 1975, investment from Lebanese active in the Arab oil producing countries were not identified. They were probably still limited.

Since 1975 dozens of manufacturing companies were established, but the origin of their capital and the role of emigrants need to be studied more completely.

These are the main sectors, and in these sectors probably the main investments carried out by Lebanese emigrants in their home country since 1943 : There are other sectors where emigrants have also invested, such as : agriculture (table 21) tourism (table 22), insurance, transport, foreign and domestic trade (table 20), electricity and water works, etc... These investments need to be better known, and a comprehensive survey of emigrants investment in Lebanon should be a fruitful field for further research.

*e- Emigrants contribution to the opening of new markets for local products overseas*

This economic role of emigrants in Lebanon even existing since decades, has developed fastly these two last decades, because of the new competitiveness acquired by some Lebanese manufactured goods in the world market as a consequence of the sharp fall of the rate of exchange of the Lebanese pound and the low salaries in Lebanon since 1984.

Many emigrants, particularly in Europe, and North America are active in this field and contribute to the diversification of Lebanese exports. The markets for these exports shifted from a 95 percent orientation towards Arab markets in 1984 to a relatively diversified orientation, where Arab markets absorbed 60% of Lebanese exports in 2001 and 38% in 2002.

***2- The Lebanese diasporas and their contribution to some social aspects of development in their country of origin***

Lebanese emigrants have not invested only for their direct personal profit. Many of them funded projects of public interest, which are also worth to be mentioned.

This type of activity remind us of the “evergetism” of greek emigrants since the XIX<sup>th</sup> century.

Lebanese emigrants established or funded institutions of public interest in numerous fields. We try here to present some facts concerning this aspect of the role of emigrants in several fields (education, public health, water and electricity supply, social services, monuments). This presentation is far from being complete. The whole subject needs a systematic survey.

*a- Emigrants role in promoting education*

For Lebanon, this role began before independence in 1943 and is obvious in several fields. We have to mention some major achievements in this field :

- The founding of the Yafeth Library at the American University of Beirut by the Yafeth family in Sao-Paolo.
- The funding of the Amiliya network of schools and other social institutions of the Amiliya association by Southern Lebanese emigrants to West Africa and the Arab Gulf.
- The funding of St. John Damascen Antiochian Orthodox University of Balamand by Issam Fares, Fouad Debbas, Rafik Hariri and other Lebanese, emigrants to the Gulf countries.
- Building and funding of schools : such as at Kfarzeina (North Lebanon) by emigrants to Australia and Dik el Mehdi (Metn) by emigrants to West Africa.
- The funding of “Université St Joseph” premises in South Lebanon by Rafik Hariri (emigrant to Saudi – Arabia).
- The funding of a network of training centers in IT by Mohamad Safadi in North Lebanon.
- Providing financial support for students and educational institutions by several emigrants (Rafik Hariri; Issam Farès, Fuad Debbas, Emile Bustani, Michel Eddé and his sons, Mohamad Safadi, Georges Frem and others) and emigrants funded institutions, like the “Islamic Association for higher education and career advice” funded by Lebanese emigrants to the Gulf. <sup>(12)</sup> (for further information see table 26 in annex).

*b- Emigrants support to the health sector*

We have to mention, the funding of Tell Shiha Hospital in Zahleh by emigrants originating from this city. <sup>(13)</sup> The founding of St Louis Hospital in Junieh by Lebanese emigrants to America, <sup>(14)</sup>. The funding of a health center in Bkassine (caza of Jezzine) by H. Ghanem, an emigrant originated from this village <sup>(15)</sup>. We have to mention also the numerous donations from Southern Lebanese emigrants to Imam-Al-Sadr’s and

Islamic Shiite Supreme Council's medical institutions in South Lebanon and in Beirut's South Western suburbs.

Canadian and American Lebanese emigrants donations are provided also to St. Georges Greek Orthodox Hospital in Beirut <sup>(16)</sup>, and the funding of Kfarfalous (caza of Jezzine) hospital by Rafik Hariri. The establishment of a dispensary in Bejdarfel, (caza of Batroun) by Raymond Abi Rached, a rich emigrant to the USA. Similar donations are also observable for many communities and regions of Lebanon.(for more information refer to table 25 in annex)

*c- Emigrants role in providing water, electricity supply and other basic infrastructure to under equipped villages*

In Lebanon, numerous cases in this field were observed in more than a region. We here mention some:

- The funding of the electrical net work of Ibl-El- Saki (caza of Merjeyun) by Karam El Rassi, a rich emigrant to Brasil from this village <sup>(17)</sup>.
- The funding of an artesian well to the village of Zrarieh (caza of Sur) by Hussein Taan, an emigrant to West Africa <sup>(18)</sup>.
- The funding of basic infrastructure in Bejdarfel (caza of Batroun), by Raymond Abi Rached a rich emigrant to the USA in the late nineties. <sup>(19)</sup> (refer to table 23 in annex for more information)

*d- Emigrants contribution to the building and funding of social welfare institutions*

We mention also here, few examples among a great number of donations :

- The building, funding and running of "S.O.S. Orphans Villages" in Bhersaf (Metn) Sfaray (Jezzine), Boksmaya (Batrun) by Michel Gemayel, an emigrant in Iran <sup>(20)</sup>.
- The fundind of a series of associations for social services by Rafik Hariri (Saudi Arabia) in many Lebanese regions.
- The funding of several institutions in this field by Elias Sharbine, an proeminant emigrant in Africa from Sur, particularly active in the aid to the institutions of all denominations located in his city of origin.
- The funding of various public institutions in Miziara by Shaghuri Family in (Miziara)
- The funding of various public institutions mainly in Akkar and other Lebanese regions by Issam Fares (Saudi Arabia-USA) and its foundations in the field of education, health, economic development, scholarship.
- The funding of the Imam El Sadr social welfare institution and those belonging to the Muslim Shia Supreme Council by Shia Southern Lebanese emigrants to West Africa and the Arab Gulf.
- The funding of many institutions in the caza of Jbeil by Emile Nawfal, an emigrant in Kuwait
- The funding of many institutions by Mohamad Safadi an emigrant in Saudi Arabia.
- The funding of welfare institutions in Batrun caza and elsewhere in Lebanon by Antoine Zahra an emigrant to the UAE
- (for more details refer to table 24 in annex)

*e- Emigrants contributions to the building of public monuments*

This is also a frequent way of symbolizing emigrants interest to their homeland villages and cities.

We mention here as examples:

- The funding by Miguel El Abd a prominent Lebanese emigrant to Mexico of the clock on the Parliament Square in Beirut, which was nominated "El Abd Square".

- The funding of Naum Labaki's monument (former Parliament Speaker in 1923-1924) in Baabdash, by emigrants to Brazil originating from this village.

Field and bibliographical research on these social contributions should be developed.

### ***3- Transfer of knowledge to the country of origin through Lebanese expatriates <sup>(21)</sup>***

We should emphasize an important experience in benefiting from Lebanese diasporas for the socio-economic development of the countries of origin. We mean the experiences concerning the transfer of knowledge through Lebanese expatriates. These experiences tend to transform some aspects of globalization from bad luck to positive opportunities.

Lebanon tried to attract some of its "expatriate brains" during the last decade: Private Lebanese institutions tried to attract them also. We shall list in this respect some of the measures already partly implemented in order to attract "Lebanese expatriate brains".

- The American University of Beirut Medical Faculty invites American medical doctors of Lebanese descent to teach and work in its hospital, and tries to expend cooperation with them.
- The Association of Lebanese Engineers organized in August 2001, a congress for Lebanese engineers in the world in order to interest them to engineering activities in Lebanon and the Arab world.
- The UNDP provided a support, even limited, to such moves, through a program known as: "Transfer of knowledge through expatriate nationals"(TOKTEN).
- In Lebanon, such a program was implemented in the 1990ies with UNDP, UNESCO, and the Center for Lebanese Studies in Oxford (UK). This program caused the return of several expatriates to work successfully in Lebanon.
- In the Council of Development and Reconstruction of Lebanon (CDR), after the end of the "War for the others" in 1991, when planning, financing and implementing activities were preparing for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon, CDR was in need to expand its technical staff in order to have more highly skilled staff with international experience. Needs in specific skills were announced in the international press. Hundreds of demands were received from Lebanese in Western Europe and North America. Dozens of people with appropriate competences were hired, at good conditions. The result was satisfactory at the levels of productivity and efficiency.
- The Lebanese American University is doing the same through its New York office, when it needs professors in some fields.
- This office contacts Lebanese professors and researchers working in American Universities and research centers in order to attract them.
- Several Lebanese public entities, banks and corporations, undertook similar steps to staff key positions with competent Lebanese working abroad in the 1990ies.
- The creation and or development of corporations in the field of consulting, manufacturing industry, and high tech services, with the cooperation of expatriate Lebanese professionals and scientists. In the high-tech field we can mention the computer programming firm created in Beirut by Nehmeh Tawk a computer specialist returned from France, this firm exports programs to France.
- This kind of move took place during the 1960ies and 1978ies. Such as the APD (Arab Project Development in Beirut) experience, and in several engineering, computer and other industries by Lebanese, and others Arab expatriate citizens. This model deserves a better study in order to be improved and generalized.
- The creation of hospitals and medical centers, by attracting expatriate medical specialists.
- This experience was implemented, through the creation of the "Eye and Ear Hospital" by Lebanese physicians working in the USA, Canada, and Europe. These Lebanese hospitals have a regional role around Lebanon, attracting patients from several Arab countries.

- Corporations could also be created in cooperation between universities and private sector to develop scientific and technological projects. The St Joseph University of Beirut and Lebanese University in Beirut undertook similar initiatives.

Similar institutions are under implementation in Lebanon. This experience started in the public sector between 1991 and 1995 in collaboration with the french “technopole” of “Sophia Antiopolis”. This experience failed, and was started again by the St Joseph University Faculties of Engineering and Sciences. Between 1997 and 2000, this park with its incubators started working under the name of Berytech. It is now expanding in Beirut with the Faculty of Medicine of the same university.

Another technological park is under preparation in Lebanon, in collaboration between the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL) and the Municipality of Damur.

#### ***4- The Lebanese diaspora and the political development in Lebanon***

Diasporas role in Lebanon is not purely economic, even if its economic consequences are obvious. It’s a social role as we have seen, which is frequently a transition to politics. But it is only one of the ways for Lebanese diasporas to play a political role in Lebanon. There are several ways for diasporas to play a political role in Lebanon. These roles are the object of the following part of this text.

##### *a- The political impact of diasporas in the Lebanese state structure*

Lebanese emigrants began to play a political role in their home country since the beginning of the twentieth century, when the present Lebanese territory was part of the Ottoman Empire and during the French Mandate.

The period following political independence (in 1943), gave a new impetus to the political role of emigrants.

One of the consequences of the withdrawal of French political power from Lebanon was that Lebanese politicians obtained more and influence in the country. Emigrants played and are playing a political role through various channels in the state structure.

Since 1943, number of emigrants or sons of emigrants returning home (20 persons) were elected to Parliament in several Lebanese regions. They are listed in table N° 2 bellow.

***Table2: Emigrants and emigrants sons elected to Parliament in Lebanon from independence (1943) to the starting of the wars for the others...” in 1975***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Region represented in Lebanon</b>	<b>Area of emigration</b>
Yussif Estefan	Maronite	Zawiyeh	Australia
Antun Estefan	Maronite	Zawiyeh	Australia
Emile Bustany	Maronite	Shuf	Arab Gulf
Abdallah Saadeh	Greek Orthodox	Kura	Saudi Arabia
Assad Ashkar	Maronite	Metn	Ghana
Mirna Bustani	Maronite	Shuf	Arab Gulf – U.K.
Ali Arab	Shia'a	Sur	Nigeria
Raymond Eddeh	Maronite	Jbeil	Egypt
Pierre Eddeh	Maronite	Beirut and Metn	Egypt
Pierre Gemayel	Maronite	Beirut	Egypt
Maurice Gemayel	Maronite	Metn	Egypt
Hussein Mansur	Shia'a	Zahleh	West Africa
Najib Salha	Druze	Baabda	Sudan, Saudi Arabia

Manuel Yunes	Maronite	Batrun	Venezuela
Tufik Assaf	Druze	Aley	Venezuela
Yussef Hammud	Shia'a	Sur	Nigeria
Abdallah Rassy	Greek Orthodox	Akkar	Saudi Arabia
Jebrane Tawk	Maronite	Besharreh	Nigeria
Farid Gebran	Latine	Beirut	Cyprus, Egypt
Camille Akl	Maronite	Batrun	Colombia

**Source:** Who's who in Lebanon – 1988-1989 – Beirut – Gegeon Printing Press – 1989.

The figure is not impressive per se, as it is drawn from nine National Assemblies, each one comprising 44 to 99 members.

But we have to take into consideration that ten among them (Emile Bustani, Ali Arab, Raymond and Pierre Eddeh, Pierre and Maurice Gemayel, Hussein Mansur, Nagib Salha, Tufik Assaf, Abdallah Racy) were ministers, and four were important party leaders (Abdallah Saadeh, Assad Ashkar, Pierre Gemayel and Raymond Eddeh).

These politicians were able to use the education, skills, experience and especially the wealth acquired overseas, to gain influence through various channels by:

- Reinforcing their position inside their kinship network.
- Having key positions in their parties.
- Offering donations to institutions of public interest in order to acquire prestige and influence.
- Providing employment or subcontracts in order to create networks of political clients.
- Financing electoral campaigns.

In addition to this group we have to mention well know persons. Who occupied key cabinet and administrative positions in the state and have been emigrants for a part of their life.

- Henry Eddeh, Hussein Aweyni and Salim Hoss were ministers (and prime ministers for the last two) for a long time.
- Antoine Fattal, Fouad and Alexandre Ammun who occupied key positions in the civil, judiciary and foreign services were for a long period in Egypt.

In the pre war period (1943-1972), the percentage of deputies with a migration experience tended to grow especially when the number of parliamentarian seats grows since the end of the fifties, allowing an opening for new parliamentary elites.

**Table 3: Deputies with migration experience in pre (1975-1990) war Lebanon**

Parliaments	Number of deputies with migration experience	Total number of deputies	%
1943-1947	4	57	7.01 %
1947-1951	2	57	3.50 %
1951-1953	6	80	7.50 %
1953-1957	2	44	4.50 %
1957-1960	6	77	8.95 %
1960-1964	8	99	8.80 %
1964-1968	10	99	10.10 %
1968-1972	8	99	8.80 %

The break down by region and community, is in the tables 4 and 5 in annex.

**Table 4:: Deputies with migration experience in each region in pre (1975-1990) war Lebanon**

<b>Parliaments</b>	<b>1943 Election</b>		<b>1947 Election</b>		<b>1951 Election</b>	
<b>Regions</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>
Mount Lebanon	4/20	20 %	1/19	12.5 %	3/25	12 %
North	0/13	0%	0/12	0%	2/16	0%
South	0/10	0%	0/10	0%	0/18	0%
Beirut	0/7	0%	1/9	11.11 %	1/12	8.3 %
Bekaa	0/8	0%	0/7	0%	0/9	0%

<b>Parliaments</b>	<b>1953 Election</b>		<b>1957 Election</b>		<b>1960 Election</b>	
<b>Regions</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>
Mount Lebanon	2/24	8.3 %	4/20	20 %	5/33	15.15 %
North	0/9	0%	1/16	6.25 %	0/18	0%
South	0/8	0%	0/11	0%	1/18	5.5 %
Beirut	0/7	0%	2/11	18.8 %	1/14	7.14 %
Bekaa	0/6	0%	0/9	0%	1/16	6.25 %

**Table 4 (continued)**

<b>Parliaments</b>	<b>1964 Election</b>		<b>1968 Election</b>	
<b>Regions</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>
Mount Lebanon	3/30	10 %	5/30	16.6 %
North	1/20	5 %	0/18	
South	2/17	11.76 %	2/18	11.11 %
Beirut	3/16	18.75 %	1/15	6.6 %
Bekaa	1/16	6.25 %	1/15	6.6 %

**Table5: Deputies with migration experience in each community in pre (1975-1990) war Lebanon**

<b>Parliaments</b>	<b>1943 Election</b>		<b>1947 Election</b>		<b>1951 Election</b>	
<b>Communities</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>
Maronites	3/20	10%	0/20	0%	5/25	20%
Greek Orthodox	1/7	14.2%	1/8	12.5%	0/11	0%
Greek Catholics	0/4	0%	0/3	0%	0/6	0%
Armenians Orthodox						
Protestants					0/1	0%
Shiites	0/10	0%	1/10	10%	1/14	7.14%
Sunnites	0/11	0%	0/11	0%	0/17	0%
Druzes	0/4	0%	0/4	0%	0/5	0%
Minorities	0/1	0%	0/1	0%	0/1	0%
<b>Parliaments</b>	<b>1953 Election</b>		<b>1957 Election</b>		<b>1960 Election</b>	
<b>Communities</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>
Maronites	2/13	15.3%	4/20	20%		
Greek Orthodox	0/7	0%	1/10	10%	5/31	16.12%
Greek Catholics	0/4	0%	0/6		1/15	6.6%
Armenians Orthodox	0%	0%	0%	0%	0/7	0%
Protestants	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shiites	0/8	0%	1/12	8.3%	0%	0%
Sunnites	0/9	0%	0/14	0%	2/19	10.52%
Druzes	0/3	0%	0/4	0%	0/21	0%

Minorities	-	-	0/1	0%	0/6	0%
<b>Parliaments</b>	<b>1964Election</b>		<b>1968Election</b>		<b>1972Election</b>	
<b>Communities</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>%</b>
Maronites	5/23	15.6%	3/23	9.37%	3/30	10%
Greek Orthodox	0/1	0%	2/13	15.38%	1/11	9.09%
Greek Catholics	0/6	0%	0/7	0%	0%	0%
Armenians Orthodox	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Protestants	1/1	100%	0/1	0%	0%	0%
Shiites	2/18	11.11%	2/19	10.52%	3/19	15.78%
Sunnites	1/21	4.76%	0/20	0%	0%	0%
Druses	1/6	16.6%	0/6	0%	1/6	16.6%
Minorities	0/1	0%	0/1	0%	0%	0%

After the 1975-1990 wars, the number of deputies with migration experience grew: from 11 in the 1992parliament, to 21 in the 1996 and 2000 parliament, to 25 in the 2005 parliament. This is a clear indication of the growing role of Lebanese diasporas in the political institutions (legislative branch) of Lebanon. This growth was accelerated in 2005 with the bigger implication of Lebanese politicians who were abroad in the legislative elections after the withdrawal of the Syrian Army from Lebanon end of April 2005, just before legislative elections.

**Table 6: Deputies with migration experience in post (1975-1990) war Lebanon**

Parliament	Total number of deputies	Number of deputies with migration experience	%
1992	128	11	8.59 %
1996	128	21	16.4 %
2000	128	21	16.4 %
2005	128	25	19.53 %

The break down of MP's with migration experience by region and community as described in tables 7 - 8

**Table 7: The role of deputies with migration experience in each community in post (1975-1990) war Lebanon**

Parliaments Communities	1992		1996		2000		2005	
	Number of deputies	%	Number of deputies	%	Number of deputies	%	Number of deputies	%
Maronites	3/34	8.82%	7/34	20.5%	6/34	17.6%	6/34	17.6%
Greek Orthodox	2/15	13.3%	4/15	26.6%	4/15	26.6%	4/15	26.6%
Greek Catholics	1/7	14.2%	1/7	14.2%	2/7	28.5%	3/7	42.8%
Armenian Orthodox	0%	0%	1/5	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Protestants	0%	0%	0%	0%	1/1	100%	0%	0%
Shiites	2/27	7.4%	4/27	14.8%	2/27	7.4%	5/27	18.5%
Sunnites	1/27	3.7%	3/27	11.1%	4/27	14.8%	5/27	18.5%
Druses	2/8	25%	1/8	12.5%	2/8	25%	1/8	12.5%
Alaouites			1/2	50%	1/2	50%	1/2	50%

*Table 8: The role of deputies with migration experience in each mohafazat after the (1975-1990) war.*

Regions	1992		1996		2000		2005	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Bekaa	1/23	4.34%	1/23	4.34%	2/23	8.69%	2/23	8.69%
Beirut	2/19	10.52%	3/19	10.78%	3/19	10.78%	3/19	15.78%
Mount Lebanon	4/35	11.42%	11/35	31.4%	10/35	28.57%	8/35	22.85%
South Lebanon	1/23	8.69%	3/23	13.54%	3/23	13.54%	5/23	21.73%
North Lebanon	2/28	7.54%	4/28	14.28%	4/28	14.28%	7/28	25%

*b- Political role of Lebanese diasporas in communal and populist organizations*

As a consequence of the wars using the Lebanese territory as a battle-field since 1975, the role played by emigrants towards communal institutions extended to militias. This role appears clearly as accelerating the evolution from a society dominated by the extended family structures to a society characterized by a preeminent role of sectarian communities. This evolution being probably one of the most important aspects of the social change in contemporary Lebanon.

The rise of communal institutions tends to weaken the power of notables based on a pyramidal familial hierarchy. For these migrants those institutions are good channels for their political promotions

We can in this respect mention the several examples:

- The role of Pierre Gemayel and Maurice Gemayel (both born in Egypt) in the creation and development of the Kataib Party.
- The role of Antun Saadeh (Brazil), Abdallah Saadeh (Saudi Arabia), Assad El Ashkar (Ghana), in the creation and development of the Syrian National Social Party.
- The role of Raymond and Pierre Eddeh (Both of them born in Egypt) in the development of the National Bloc Party.
- The role of the Shia'a Diaspora of Africa in the promotion of the Talaeh Party, established by Rashid Baydun.
- The role of the Shia'a Lebanese diaspora in the support of Imam Musa Al-Sadr and the Amal Movement, which was lead later by Nabih Berry (Sierra Leone).
- The role of the Shia'a Lebanese diaspora in the support of Hezbollah.
- The role of Rafik Al-Hariri (Saudi Arabia) in the foundation of the "Current of the Future" as the main present political expression of the Sunni Community in Lebanon.
- The role of mainly the Christian Lebanese diasporas of the USA, Europe (France in particular), Australia, Canada, the Arab Gulf in the support of General Michel Aoun's, Free Patriatic Movement.
- The role of the Christian Lebanese diasporas in support to the "Lebanese Forces" in Lebanon.

*c- The financial role of Lebanese disporas in the political field.*

Since decades, emigrants have played a preeminent role in providing financial support to populist and/or communal political parties in Lebanon.

Political parties like Kataïb, Syrian National Social Party (S.N.S.P.) established soon branches in many countries of emigration. The Amal Movement, the National Liberal Party, the Cedar's Guardians, the Hezbollah, the Socialist Progressive Party, the Baath Party, the "Current of the Future", the "Free Patriotic Movement" and others behaved in the same way decades later.

One of the functions of these branches is to collect funds for their organization in the home country.

Some parties achieved a remarkable financial organization of their "disapora". The S.N.S.P. in particular had an efficient financial network especially in West Africa. This network also supported party members flying from prosecution, or the families of the imprisoned party members, in an efficient way since the sixties.

The Amal and Hezbollah networks are mainly established among Shiaa emigrants in West Africa, the U.S.A. and the Gulf. It is a development of the tradition of fund raising established among Shiaa emigrants, by the Amiliya Association since the thirties and by Imam Mussa since the sixties.

The Progressist Socialist Party of the Druze leader Walid Jumblat and the Free Patriotic Movement of General Michel Aoun have recently developed similar activities.

*d- Leadership and membership of communal and/or populist political organizations in Lebanon emerging from the Lebanese diasporas.*

Memberships of emigrants in the overseas branches of political parties have been mentioned above. Many migrants returning to Lebanon have been involved in party membership.

Some of these parties were and are headed by emigrants or sons of emigrants:

- The National Bloc Party with Raymond and Carlos Eddeh.
- The Kataïb with Pierre Gemayel.
- The S.N.S.P. with Antun Saadeh, Assad Achkar, Abdallah Saadeh, Massaad Hajal.
- The Amal movement with Imam Mussa Al-Sader and Nabih Berri.
- The Free Patriotic Movement with Michel Aoun.
- The current after Future with Rafic and Saad Hariri.

Some returning migrants established populist militias and political groups like Henry Sfeir (Central Africa) in Kesrwan and Abdel Rahim Murad (Brazil) in the Bekaa valley.

It is interesting to notice that the role of emigrants is very weak in the traditional parties relying on notables and family loyalties: The "National Liberal Party" of Shamun, the "Progressist Socialist Party" of Jumblat, the "Bloc National" of Eddeh, etc... Emigrants seems to prefer modern populist political parties, (communal or secular) seeking for change. In this sense diasporas are a factor of political modernization in Lebanon. This leads us to deal with the relations between "communities" (Tawayif) and diasporas.

*e- The communal organization of the Lebanese diasporas in the world and its functions.*

Since the beginning of the "wars for the others" in Lebanon in 1975, the different Lebanese communities (tawayif) have begun, to set up world wide organizations for their emigrants.

Maronite lay politicians began in 1979 to set up a "Maronite World Union", who organized several conferences since its creation (Mexico, Montreal, Sydney, Los Angeles...).

The Druzes set up a similar organization since 1983, and have an annual international Druze congress.

The Greek Catholics set up later the "World Union of Greek Catholics".

Finally late Sheikh Muhamad Mehdi Shamsseddine President of the Moslem Shia'a Supreme Council announced the creation of a "Union of Lebanese Muslim Shia'a emigrants in the World", lead by Mohamed Mahmud Hammud, concerning West Africa, Australia, North and South America, Europe and the Middle East. This Union is a part of the Moslem Shia'a Supreme Council.

These organizations, in addition to their role of preservation of the communal identity and cohesion of Lebanese emigrants overseas, have the function of providing political and financial support to their communities in Lebanon, through the mobilization of their members overseas.

*f- Politically passive returning emigrants*

In urban as well as in rural areas many returning migrants with some wealth, are gradually forming a new local elite, independent from traditional notables from whom they are no more clients and keeping their distances from populist parties and militias.

This group could provide a base for the development of a new political liberalism (in the European sense of the last word), appearing since the 90ies and especially after 2004.

*g- The other face of the political role of emigrants in Lebanon.*

As it was the case during the Ottoman period, since independence, emigration tends to lower the number and force of young potential challengers of the political establishment. These challengers being generally recruited among young unemployed persons, and especially the educated fraction of this category. For these people, migration represents a chance for social promotion, but is also a kind of exile for new potential elites able to conduct processes of social and political change. In this sense migration is a safety valve for the political system and contribute to its perpetuation.

### **C- THE CHALLENGES OF THE INADEQUATE INFORMATION ABOUT DIASPORA**

After this short and selective presentation about what we know concerning the role of Lebanese diasporas role in fostering the development of Lebanon, we have to underline one of the main problems any researcher on Lebanese emigration is faced: inadequate information.

Here is provisional list of the fields were we lack information:

- Number of emigrants in each country of destination (registration in the consulates and embassies).
- Number of emigrants by village or town of origin (registration in the registry offices in Lebanon).
- Total number of emigrants by year.
- Economic, social, political, cultural, emigrants activity abroad.
- Different types of organizations of people from Lebanese descent abroad.
- Exact amount of remittances per year.
- Exact amount of capital transfers per year.
- The type of economic activity and investment of returnees.
- The contribution of emigrants to public infrastructure, education, health, social welfare, transfer of knowledge.
- The contribution of returnees and emigrants in the political life in Lebanon.

### **D- LEBANESE POLICIES AND PRACTICE TOWARDS DIASPORAS**

- During the Ottoman period the main governmental policy was to try to stop emigration as far as possible, considering that emigration was weakening the economy of the country. Ottoman government tried to use Lebanese abroad as tools for Ottoman presence and influence.
- During the Mandate period, official attempts were made in several fields:
  - An information mission was send by the Lebanese parliament in the twenties to visit important communities abroad.
  - French Consulates and Embassies were trying to register Lebanese emigrants and to use them as tools of French influence and interests in the countries of destination.
  - In French colonies the Africa, Lebanese emigrants were mainly supported by the French Colonial administration, as middle men between French commercial companies of import export and African raw materials producers and consumers of French products.

- An agreement was signed between France and Turkey in 1937 to finalize the citizenship options of the Lebanese who were subject of the Ottoman Empire, in destination countries. This finalization was achieved between 1937 and 1939. This was the final steps undertook by the French government in this field, after the citizenship provision implementation of the Lausanne Treaty (1924-1926), and the French High Commissary decisions N° 2825.
- The Lebanese government organized during the Mandate period, congresses for the Lebanese abroad during the summer season, to encourage their visits to the fatherland.
- After independence the Lebanese governments were more active with the diasporas, by opening Consulates and Embassies in the main areas of destination. A Directorate for the emigrants was established within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the responsibility of facilitating the relations between the diasporas and Lebanon in the field of registration, inheritance and property transactions, and of promoting cultural economic and political relations with the Diasporas. The name of the Ministry became "Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants". Several Congresses for the Lebanese diasporas were organized during the summers. In 1959, the Lebanese government promoted the "World Cultural Lebanese Union" :an international organization for people of Lebanese descent in the world, with chapters, by continents, countries and provinces. This was a relatively successful attempt to organize a flexible structure for the Lebanese Diasporas.

In the mid nineties, a Ministry for Emigrants was established to deal with the Lebanese abroad. It was very narrowly politicized, lasted for few years and was integrated in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which recuperated his former name.

In practice the attitude of the Lebanese government aimed mainly at attracting Diaspora investment to Lebanon, without giving the Lebanese abroad the right of participating in legislative elections. It also blocked the reintegration of emigrants from Lebanese descent in their initial citizenship, infringing laws and regulations, especially during the 1990-2005 period.

In this period the Lebanese government tried unsuccessfully to use the diasporas to promote its internal and regional policy. This promotion was unsuccessful in spite of several international convention regrouping:

- Parliamentarians of Lebanese descent.
- Businessmen of Lebanese descent.
- Engineers of Lebanese descent.
- Medical Doctors of Lebanese Descent
- Youth of Lebanese descent.

## **E- GOVERNMENT ACTIONS AND PROGRAMMES TO BENEFIT FROM THE INVOLVMENT OF DIASPORA IN POVERTY REDUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION**

The overwhelming part of the diasporas involvement in poverty reduction and employment creation we mentioned before was and is done independently from government action. All the investment realized in several economic sectors (construction, real estate, agriculture, manufacturing, industry, commerce, tourism, etc...) was realized without any support from the government. At the contrary, emigrant investors were victims of tentative of racketing and bribery. The only positive government move was the creation of IDAL (Investment Development Authority of Lebanon) that facilitated some investments. The TOKTEN program (transfer of knowledge through perspectives nationals) is also another small exception. The same could be said about diaspora implication in the creation or the improvement of collective services in the field of education, culture, sports, public health, water, electricity, roads, social welfare, public monuments. The end of the "wars for the others" in Lebanon in 1990 and the start of reconstruction facilitated some investment coming from the diaspora.

## **F- RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIONS TO MAXIMIZE THE IMPACT OF LEBANESE DIASPORAS IN DEVELOPMENT**

We list the main recommendations we could present in this respect:

- Restore emigrants of Lebanese descent in their citizenship with an appropriate legislation as it is the case in several countries including Syria.
- As a transitional step: authorize emigrants of Lebanese descent to enter Lebanon without visa, and to acquire property rights in Lebanon on an equal foot with Lebanese residents.
- Decide the vote of emigrants for legislative elections in the Lebanese embassies, consulates or elsewhere, as it's the case for many countries in the world Italy, France, Syria, Iran, etc...
- Facilitate really and promoting the investment of diaspora through reactivating IDAL, reducing red tape and corruption in the public administration and accelerating the judiciary procedures in order to have a real legal protection of free investment and business
- Work for the introduction, of the teaching of Arabic language and Lebanese history and culture in school curricula of the countries of destination , in order to facilitate the relations between Lebanon, and diasporas of Lebanese descent.
- Restore direct flights of the Lebanese national carrier M.E.A. to the main areas of destination of Lebanese emigrants: Western Europe, Gulf, West Africa, North and South America, Australia.
- Organise special courses of Arabic in all the schools in Lebanon to accommodate the returnees students, who didn't study Arabic when their families were abroad.
- Accelerate the registration of the children of Lebanese abroad in the registry offices in Lebanon and punish the civil servants who are blocking this process.
- Launch a program of research in order to complete the information lacking about diaspora, we mentioned above in point 3.

### ***Steps to be taken to attract "Lebanese brains"***

The first step should be to accelerate the knowledge we have of the "Lebanese brains" overseas, through:

- Associations of Lebanese University graduates abroad
- Specialized scientific and professional societies organized by Lebanese expatriates (Physicians, engineers, computer scientists, etc...). These societies exist in several industrial countries.

The second step should be to invite these societies and their members, more frequently to visit their country of origin.

The third step should be, giving more priority to technical assistance programs benefiting to Lebanon, using Lebanese expatriates technicians and scientists at the service of their homeland.

As a fourth step: Lebanese expatriate skilled specialists should be informed of the job opportunities for them in Lebanon.

- Lebanese Universities should be systematically linked to research and consulting activities, as in many industrial countries. This should start by easing administrative and financial constraints on these universities. Development programs should be created in all Lebanese Universities in order to allow these universities to offer scientific and consulting services to public and private institutions in their country and abroad. Companies could also be created in cooperation between universities and private sector to develop scientific and technological projects.
- University professors should be allowed to undertake consulting and research activities in their fields of competence. This will also encourage scientific and technological research, which is an urgent Lebanese

need in some fields : solar energy, wind energy, water treatment, improvement of the use of water, study of the most frequent diseases, soil science, protection of soils against erosion, desertification and pollution, agricultural research in the field of animal and plant production, biotechnology and applied biotechnology, communications and computer science in all their fields and applications.

- A special attention should be given to development of technological and scientific parks (technopoles), in cooperation between universities, research centers and high tech corporations.

- There is a necessity of wide spreading information on the volume and variety of Lebanese brain drain, and its consequences in deepening the gap between Lebanon and the Industrialised World.

- Some aspects and mechanisms of globalisation could be used in order to serve the scientific and technological development of Lebanon and the Arab World : knowledge networks, linking expatriates to their country of origin appeared during the nineties, thanks to the possibilities offered by the new information and communication technologies (internet, video conferences,...). Expatriates could through these networks, if they are interested in the development of their country of origin, support the building of local companies, provide markets for their products and services in their countries of residence, share in common research programs, support the funding of Lebanon by international organizations. Job opportunities in local companies, universities, research centers, could be proposed to expatriates in their country of origin through internet, web sites <sup>(23)</sup>.

- Arab cooperation will facilitate the transfer of knowledge by arab including lebanese expatriate offering wider horizons for this transfer.

- Cooperation of private sector, academic sector, and public sector, will boost this transfer of knowledge, offering more efficient opportunities to it. The Government and the private sector should organize opportunities to attract skilled migrants. <sup>(24)</sup>.

- Dissemination of information on successful Lebanese and Arab experiences in this field, is of a paramount importance, in order to reverse the negative preconceived ideas, people have on the possibility of this transfer. This dissemination should also cover experiences like the Indian, the Taiwanese, and the South Korean experiences <sup>(25)</sup>.

- Lebanese emigrants, do not send only money, they send also new models and ideas, when they visit their country of origin, and when they return to it. If the country is enough developed these ideas could be transformed in projects like in South Korea and Taiwan, in the engineering high tech and other sectors.

Brain drain is not the only cause of under development; it is also one of its consequences.

## **G- POLICY ORIENTED PROVISIONAL CONCLUSIVE REFLEXIONS**

The Lebanese diasporas are having a growing economic and political role in their country of origin. This role was mainly to assist relatives at the end of the Ottoman period. Between the two world wars, emigrants have began to invest more in some important projects. After the independences and especially since the sixties, their investments accelerated as much as their support to projects of public interest and their political role as MPs and in the political parties. And since the oil boom, the inflow of remittances they send is again playing an important role for a great number of households. On the other hand, emigrants play a key role in several sectors of the economy : banks, construction, public works, manufacturing industry, and others.

Lebanese people are more dependant on emigrant's remittances, and less productive in their home country.

The whole economy of Lebanon and the exchange rate of the national currency in particular are highly sensitive to the inflow of remittances, and the productive base of the economy is narrowed by emigration. From all the evidence collected, we noticed that the economic, social and political role of the diasporas in Lebanon is growing by the time. This is a result of their growing relative wealth overseas, of their increasing numbers and also of their easier communications with the home country as a result of modern

means of transport and communications. The roles, Lebanese diasporas of each part of the world, are playing in their country of origin seem to be of unequal importance: emigrants to the Arab oil exporting countries, Europe, West Africa are generally more active and influential than those of North America and Australia. But the emigrants in South, and North America, Australia are more influential in their countries of destination.

These differences seem to be mainly a consequence of different degrees and patterns of integration and assimilation into the host countries : In West Africa and in the Arab oil exporting countries, emigration seems to be mainly a labor or a business emigration, and Lebanese emigrants are less integrated to the host societies. They make their money faster than in North America, Australia and Europe and they send more to the father land. Also they generally intend to return and to play there a more important role.

In Europe, the Americas and Australia, emigrants generally make less money and at a slower pace. The society and the economy are more integrative and assimilative even with policies of multiculturalism. Lebanese emigrants there, think less about returning to Lebanon and more about permanent settlement. They send less money, if any, and thus have a less important economic and social role in Lebanon but they have a far more important role in their countries of destination that role was and could be more used to serve Lebanon.

The relations between levels and forms of integration and assimilation of the emigrants in their host countries on the one hand, and the magnitude of their economic and social role in their country of origin on the other hand, are an interesting field for further research.

A better empirical knowledge of the economic, social and political roles of Lebanese diasporas, is a prerequisite for the success of policies tending at promoting a more positive role of Lebanese diasporas in the development of their country of origin.

We have also to mention that the socio-economic and political role diasporas are playing in Lebanon, is not mainly in the direction of a sustainable development of the country.

If development could be defined as the “social and mental changes enabling a specific population to increase in a stable, sustainable and autpropulsive way, its global product”, the “developmental role” of Lebanese diasporas in their country of origin needs some comments :

- On the positive side, some aspects of the use of remittances could be considered as a positive contribution to development (support of education, public health, housing, investment in agriculture, manufacturing industry, banking, public infrastructure, social welfare, etc...)
- On the negative side, we can mention other aspects : boosting consumption of imported goods, boosting inflation, boosting speculation in the real estate sector, embarking in prestige operations with few economic results, depriving the country of origin of a competent main power, and pushing the economy and the society to be more dependent on external sources of growth, generally neglecting local factors of development.

Until now, generally speaking, if emigration could have a positive impact on individuals, on the global and national levels negative consequences are stronger.

For these reasons policies towards Lebanese diasporas must tend to promote their positive contribution to socio-economic and political development in Lebanon and to curb the negative consequences of emigration and of the socio-economic role of diasporas.

To end these conclusive reflexions we have to add considerations with a wider scope:

- First: To benefit from the Lebanese diasporas, we need to introduce more freedom and modernity to our culture, society and political system, in order , to attract our emigrants, their knowledge, their capital, and their culture.

- Second: For Lebanon there is a necessity to eliminate barriers between the Arab national economies through free trade areas, and through the liberalization of the movement of persons in addition to the free movement of goods, services and capital. These are conditions for the building of an Arab economy with a critical mass for the 21<sup>st</sup> globalised century, in which the Lebanese economy and the Lebanese diasporas could play a more positive developmental role. Such an economy is certainly more attractive for Lebanese diasporas to contribute to the development of its country of origin, than the present narrow national economy.
- This “Arab economy” will provide job and investment opportunities more than the sum of jobs and investment opportunities of the present national Arab (including Lebanese) economies, due to the economy of scale effect.
- Third: This market approach is necessary but insufficient. We need to build Lebanese corporations of critical size in the national, sub regional and Arab framework by the private sectors of the different Arab countries (including the Lebanese private sector and especially the Lebanese emigrants). Some have been studied, few have been implemented, in spite of the disponibility of capital in the Arab (and especially in Lebanese) financial institutions, and the Arab financial markets.
- Fourth: In addition to the political, cultural and economic conclusions, we mentioned above, there is an urgent necessity to establish or reestablish and reinforce the rule of law in the Arab countries (including Lebanon), in order to attract emigrants, their skills and their capital <sup>(22)</sup>.

### Endnotes :

- 1) ) " : "(  
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- 3) - Boutros Labaki : “ Emigration during the war 1975-1989” in “Lebanese in the world” – Centre for Lebanese Studies – St Anthony’s College – Edited by Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadeh – Thauris Editor – Oxford – 1992 –  
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