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**Question:**

1. How can a Lebanese retain or lose his or her already acquired Nigerian citizenship
2. Social Contract Theory explains the evolution of states, what other theories explain the same and their strengths

**Answer:**

How can a Lebanese retain or lose his already acquired Nigerian citizenship.

To be able to answer this question we have to understand the basic and keywords;

**Who is a citizen?**

A citizen is a legally recognized subject or national of a state or commonwealth, either native or naturalized. A citizen is also an inhabitant of a particular town or city or country.

**What is Citizenship?**

**Citizenship** is the status of a person recognized under the custom or law as being a legal member of a sovereign state or belonging to a nation. The idea of citizenship has been defined as the capacity of individuals to defend their rights in front of the governmental authority.

A person may have multiple/dual citizenship. A person who does not have citizenship of any state is said to be stateless, while one who lives on state borders whose territorial status is uncertain is a border-lander.

**How to acquire citizenship**

Every country has its own law governing citizenship and other aspects of their nationality. It is known as Nationality Law. Based on the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, becoming a citizen of Nigeria is governed by the Nigerian Nationality Law. This law governs everything relating to citizenship and every other category of Nigerian nationality. There are four types of citizenship in Nigeria:

### **Citizenship by Birth:**

The provisions of section 25 of the Nigerian Constitution states that the following people are to be regarded as citizens of Nigeria by birth:

* People who were born in Nigeria before and after the date of independence.
* People whose parents, grandparents or other relatives belong to indigenous Nigerian communities. And what is meant by the indigenous communities from Nigeria? Nigeria is a country with hundreds of tribes and if your parents or grandparents belong to one of these tribes, you can be or become a citizen of Nigeria by birth. It includes Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, Efik and many other tribes.
* If your parents or grandparents were or are citizens of Nigeria, you can be or become a citizen of Nigeria by birth; this applies even if you were born in another country.

### **Citizenship by Registration:**

The provisions of section 26 of the Nigerian Constitution explain that a person who is not Nigerian by birth can become a citizen of Nigeria by registration. A person can apply to become a Nigerian citizen by registration if he or she satisfies these conditions:

* The person is of good character (This statement should be testified by two people, and one of them should be a religious minister).
* This person expresses and shows a clear intention of his inclination/desire/wish to be domiciled in Nigeria.
* This person has subscribed to the oath of allegiance to Nigeria, which is provided by the seventh schedule of the Nigerian Constitution.
* The provisions of section 26 of the Nigerian Constitution also state that the following categories of the citizen can apply for the Nigerian immigration: A woman who is or has been married to a citizen of Nigeria. It also includes every person who has parents or grandparents of any indigenous Nigerian tribe.

### **Citizenship by Naturalisation:**

If a person cannot apply to become a Nigerian citizen by birth or registration, he can still apply to become a naturalized Nigerian citizen if he meets these requirements:

* This person is of full age.
* This person is of good character (just like in the type before).
* This person has shown a clear desire to be domiciled in the country.
* The governor of the state where the person applying for citizenship wants to reside has to confirm the desire of the community to assimilate this person.
* The person should be capable of contributing to the wellbeing of Nigeria and its citizens.
* The person has lived in Nigeria for fifteen years preceding the application date.

## **Dual Citizenship:**

A person who is a citizen of Nigeria by birth can acquire the citizenship of another country. Nonetheless, its not an option for the people who became citizens of Nigeria by naturalization or registration. A person who wants to acquire the citizenship of Nigeria by registration or naturalization will have to renounce his/her other citizenships within 12 months.

Nigerian nationality law allows dual nationality of people of Nigerian descent either through birth or parentage. They are also allowed to hold public office in Nigeria. Some in Nigeria feel that dual nationality damages nationality unity of the country.

## Renunciation and Deprivation of Citizenship

A person of full age can renounce his/her citizenship by applying to the president. The president will register the application, upon which the person will cease to be a citizen of Nigeria. However, the president may reject the application if Nigeria is at war.

Also, any naturalized citizen of Nigeria can be deprived of their citizenship by a president if he/she gets imprisoned for more than three years within the seven years after the naturalization.

Any citizen of Nigeria by naturalization or registration can be deprived of citizenship if he/she proves disloyal. The statement of his/her disloyalty should be proved in a court of law.

The citizens of Nigeria by registration or naturalization can be deprived of citizenship if it can be proved that they are enemies of the country, or have collaborated with enemies of the country. This includes conducting business deals with organizations who fight against Nigeria, and applies to traitors who have fought against Nigeria.

The president can also make any decisions regarding the citizenship of anyone in the country, even though this is not written in the constitution. However, this kind of decision should be submitted to and approved by the National Assembly.

**Loss of citizenship**, also referred to as **loss of nationality**, is the event of ceasing to be a citizen of a country under the nationality law of that country. It is a blanket term covering both involuntary loss of citizenship, such as through denaturalization, as well as voluntary renunciation of citizenship.

There are generally two categories of grounds for loss of citizenship. "Involuntary loss" may occur due to either automatic lapse of citizenship from the citizen for failure to take some action to retain citizenship, or active withdrawal of citizenship by the country. In contrast, "voluntary loss", often called "relinquishment" or "renunciation", is initiated by the citizen. It is not always easy to make a clean distinction between the two categories: loss of citizenship due to an initial cause undertaken voluntarily (for example, voluntarily serving in a foreign military or voluntarily naturalising as a citizen of a foreign country) could be seen either as "voluntary loss" or "involuntary loss".

The European Union Democracy Observtory, in a study of the nationality laws of thirty-three European countries, found nine broadly-defined cases in which a citizen of a country may lose his or her citizenship:

1. Voluntary acquisition of another citizenship
2. Residing abroad on a permanent basis
3. Fraud in the naturalisation process, including sham marriages, or failure to give up the other citizenship in countries which require that as a condition of naturalisation.
4. Serving in a foreign military or foreign government
5. Upon adoption by a foreign citizen, or other change in the child's legal relation to the parents such as annulment of maternity/paternity
6. For a minor, upon the loss of citizenship by the parents
7. Failure to fulfill conditions, for example in Japan, where Japanese children born with an additional citizenship lose Japanese citizenship if they fail to give up the other citizenship before the age of 22
8. Voluntary renunciation

Involuntary loss of citizenship does not necessarily mean automatic and immediate loss. Even if a country's laws state that under certain circumstances citizenship is automatically removed, until officials of the government or embassy are informed, that country's government will probably still retain that person's name in its citizenship records.

# **How a Lebanese can lose or retain its already acquired Nigerian citizenship**

1. **Through disloyalty**: A naturalized citizen can lose his citizenship if his activities are prejudicial to the country’s corporate existence
2. **Supporting Another country**: If a citizen is found supporting another country engaged in war with his country, his citizenship may be deprived him
3. **Imprisonment**: The individual can also lose his citizenship if within a period of say 5-7 years after of becoming nationalized, he gets involved in a criminal case, resulting in his incarceration for some years.
4. **Treason**: The nationalized citizen can equally lose his citizenship, if found guilty of this offence
5. **False Declaration**: If there is a fundamental breach of the citizenship agreement binding him e.g false declaration
6. **Renouncement**: The individual can lose his citizenship by renouncing it

**2.**Social Contract theory explains the evolution of states, what other theories explains the same and their strengths

**What is Social Contract Theory?**

Social contract theory, nearly as old as philosophy itself, is the view that persons’ moral and/or political obligations are dependent upon a contract or agreement among them to form the society in which they live. Socrates uses something quite like a social contract argument to explain to Crito why he must remain in prison and accept the death penalty. However, social contract theory is rightly associated with modern moral and political theory and is given its first full exposition and defense by Thomas Hobbes. After Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau are the best known proponents of this enormously influential theory, which has been one of the most dominant theories within moral and political theory throughout the history of the modern West. In the twentieth century, moral and political theory regained philosophical momentum as a result of John Rawls’ Kantian version of social contract theory, and was followed by new analyses of the subject by David Gauthier and others. More recently, philosophers from different perspectives have offered new criticisms of social contract theory. In particular, feminists and race-conscious philosophers have argued that social contract theory is at least an incomplete picture of our moral and political lives, and may in fact camouflage some of the ways in which the contract is itself parasitical upon the subjugations of classes of persons.

## Examples of Social Contract Theory

The idea of a social contract has a long history dating as far back as Ancient Mesopotamia. However, it was not until the **Enlightenment** of the 17th and 18th centuries that social contract theory gained widespread attention from philosophers and historians. The Enlightenment was a time when intellectuals began to question established views relating to religion, science, economics, and government.

Social contract theory challenged both the moral and political elements of traditional sources of power in Europe. In fact, morality and politics were seen as linked. Rulers were to govern fairly, and people were supposed to help improve societies.

Three Enlightenment thinkers are usually credited with establishing a standard view of social contract theory: Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. They each had different interpretations of social contracts, but the underlying idea was similar.

Thomas Hobbes held a dark view of humans, which was likely influenced by the chaotic political events he witnessed in England during his life. Hobbes believed that in nature, individuals had to do whatever was necessary to survive. But he also believed that people were still likely to fight even if they lived together. Therefore, a contract was necessary. In Hobbes' view of the social contract, people were not capable of living in a democratic society. A powerful, single ruler was needed. If everyone did his or her part, society could function relatively smoothly.

# **Advantages And Disadvantages Of Social Contract Theory**

The term social contractrepresents implied agreements by which people form democracy’s and maintain a social order. This means that the individuals give up some of their rights to a government in order to receive security and social order. The social contract theory rationalizes why it is in one’s best interest to willingly give up their natural rights in order to acquire the many benefits provided by a social structure. I will argue that the social contract theory justifies the concept that state authority must be derived from the consent of the governed and that the covenant of the governed rationalizes political authority, therefore Hobbes argument is more convincing.